

PROBLEMS IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract: This article analyzes the main problems encountered in the process of learning English as a foreign language, as well as their causes and possible solutions. In the context of globalization, English has become increasingly important in international communication, education, science, technology, tourism, business, and diplomacy. Therefore, effective English language learning is considered an important competence for modern individuals. However, learning a foreign language requires regular practice, strong motivation, effective teaching methods, and continuous effort from learners. English language learners face various difficulties in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

Keywords: English language, foreign language, language learning, language teaching, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, motivation, communicative competence, interactive methods, language environment, digital technologies.

Nowadays, the expansion of economic, political, scientific, and cultural relations among countries has significantly increased the need to know foreign languages, especially English. English is one of the most widely used languages in the world and serves as an important means of communication among people from different countries. The Internet, international education programs, scientific research, modern technologies, and the international labor market have made knowledge of

English increasingly important. Learning a foreign language is not simply a matter of memorizing words and grammatical rules. A language learner must master the phonetic, grammatical, lexical, and syntactic systems of a new language and, at the same time, develop the ability to think and communicate in that language. Therefore, it is natural for learners to encounter various difficulties in the process of learning English.

English can be particularly challenging for learners whose native language differs considerably from English in terms of structure, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. For example, English articles, tense forms, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, and word order represent grammatical features that either do not exist in Uzbek or function differently. Developing speaking skills is also a major challenge for many learners. A student may have a good knowledge of grammar and a large vocabulary but still experience difficulties expressing ideas freely during real communication. One of the main reasons for this is the insufficient connection between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

The main purpose of this article is to identify the problems encountered when learning English as a foreign language, analyze their causes, and discuss effective ways of overcoming them. Knowledge of English is one of the important factors that expands a person's educational and professional opportunities in modern society. Many scientific articles, technical manuals, international conference materials, and electronic resources are published in English. Therefore, people who know English have access to a wider range of information sources.

English also plays an important role in education. Many prestigious universities around the world offer educational programs in English. Knowledge of English is also an important requirement for international scholarships, student exchange programs, and academic internships. Furthermore, English is highly important for learning modern technologies. A large amount of information in

programming, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, computer technologies, and other fields is presented in English. Learning English is important not only for professional development but also for personal development. Knowledge of a foreign language allows people to become familiar with the culture, history, and worldview of other nations. At the same time, learning English requires considerable time and regular practice. It is difficult to master a language perfectly within a short period. Therefore, learners need to have a clear goal and continuous motivation.

There are various problems associated with learning English as a foreign language. These problems can be divided into several major groups:

- phonetic and pronunciation problems;
- grammatical difficulties;
- problems with vocabulary acquisition;
- difficulties in listening comprehension;
- problems with speaking;
- difficulties in reading and writing;
- lack of motivation;
- psychological barriers;
- lack of a suitable language environment;
- difficulties in organizing independent learning effectively.

These problems are closely interconnected. For example, a learner with insufficient vocabulary may have difficulty speaking. Similarly, a learner who lacks confidence in pronunciation may avoid communication. One of the most common problems in learning English is pronunciation. Many sounds in English are different from those in Uzbek. As a result, learners may have difficulty producing certain English sounds correctly.

For example, the English sounds /θ/ and /ð/ do not exist in Uzbek. Consequently, learners may replace them with other sounds. In addition, the

pronunciation of sounds such as /w/, /r/, and /ŋ/ can also cause difficulties. The relationship between English spelling and pronunciation can be another challenge. English words are not always pronounced exactly as they are written. Words such as “write,” “right,” and “night” demonstrate the differences between spelling and pronunciation. This can be confusing for beginners. Stress and intonation are also important aspects of English pronunciation. The meaning or communicative function of an utterance can change depending on stress and intonation.

To overcome pronunciation problems, learners should use audio materials, videos, and specialized pronunciation exercises. Teachers should regularly monitor learners’ pronunciation and explain their mistakes clearly and constructively. The grammatical system of English is one of the most challenging areas for learners. Verb tenses, articles, prepositions, modal verbs, auxiliary verbs, and sentence structure often cause difficulties. The large number of English verb tenses can be confusing. For example, Present Simple, Present Continuous, Present Perfect, and Present Perfect Continuous are used in different situations. Understanding their differences and applying them correctly in real communication requires regular practice.

Articles can also be difficult for Uzbek-speaking learners because Uzbek does not have the same grammatical category. Learners need to understand when to use “a,” “an,” and “the.” Prepositions can also cause problems. Prepositions such as “in,” “on,” “at,” “for,” “to,” and “from” are used in different contexts. Simply translating them into Uzbek is not always sufficient. It is more effective to learn prepositions through context.

The structure of Uzbek sentences differs from English sentence structure. English generally follows a relatively fixed subject-verb-object order. Therefore, learners may make mistakes when constructing English sentences because of the influence of their native language. To overcome grammatical difficulties, learners should not rely only on memorizing rules. Grammar should be reinforced through

practical use and real-life situations. Vocabulary is one of the fundamental components of foreign language learning. The more words a learner knows, the more effectively they can express their thoughts. However, learning new words and remembering them for a long time can be difficult. Some learners try to memorize a large number of words in a single day, but they may quickly forget them because they do not use them in practice.

It is more effective to learn words through sentences and contexts rather than memorizing isolated words. For example, instead of simply memorizing the word “decision” as “qaror,” learners can study it in the expression “make a decision.” This helps them use the word correctly in communication. Synonyms, antonyms, idiomatic expressions, and phrasal verbs can also make vocabulary acquisition more challenging. For example, “look,” “look for,” “look after,” and “look at” have different meanings and functions.

To improve vocabulary, learners should study a certain number of new words every day, review them regularly, and use them in sentences. Writing in English requires grammatical, lexical, and logical knowledge. Sentence structure, tenses, articles, punctuation, and spelling are important in written communication. Learners often try to transfer sentence structures from their native language directly into English. This may result in grammatically incorrect sentences.

To develop writing skills, learners should regularly write diaries, short texts, emails, essays, and personal opinions in English. It is useful to write a text in several stages. First, learners should collect ideas about the topic. Then they should create an outline, write a first draft, and finally revise and correct mistakes. Motivation is one of the most important factors in language learning. If learners do not have a clear reason for studying English, it can be difficult for them to continue studying regularly for a long period.

Motivation can be both intrinsic and extrinsic. With intrinsic motivation, learners are interested in the language itself. Extrinsic motivation may include goals such as achieving a good examination result, finding a job, studying abroad, or developing a professional career. Recognizing learners' achievements can increase their motivation. For example, learning new vocabulary, giving a short speech, or understanding an English text independently can be considered important achievements. It is also effective to divide large goals into smaller objectives. For example, learners can set goals such as learning a certain number of new words each month, listening to several English audio materials each week, or reading a short text every day.

Psychological factors also play an important role in learning English. Some learners lack confidence in their abilities, are afraid of speaking in front of others, or feel embarrassed about making mistakes. Such feelings can increase language-learning anxiety. The more anxious a learner becomes, the less likely they are to speak and participate in communication. Teachers should create a positive and supportive classroom environment. Instead of strongly criticizing every mistake, teachers should explain the problem and provide the correct form.

Pair work and small-group activities can also reduce psychological barriers. Learners may feel more comfortable expressing their ideas in a small group rather than speaking in front of the entire class. Learners studying English in a non-English-speaking environment often face the problem of limited exposure to English. Without regular communication with English speakers, it can be difficult to develop communicative skills. Modern technology and the Internet can partially solve this problem. Learners can watch English-language videos, listen to podcasts, participate in online conversations, and use various educational platforms to create an English-speaking environment. Educational institutions can also organize English clubs, conversation groups, and discussion sessions.

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