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SOI: [1.1/TAS](#) DOI: [10.15863/TAS](#)

International Scientific Journal Theoretical & Applied Science

p-ISSN: 2308-4944 (print) e-ISSN: 2409-0085 (online)

Year: 2019 Issue: 01 Volume: 69

Published: 15.01.2019 <http://T-Science.org>

QR – Issue



QR – Article



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**SECTION 13. Geography. History. Oceanology.
Meteorology.**

FROM THE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN UZBEKISTAN (AS AN EXAMPLE IN THE PERIOD OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT)

Abstract: The author of the article has attempted to analyze the demand for teaching foreign languages in Uzbekistan basing on the works done by the government concerning this issue, real conditions of schools, normative documents, history literature and archive database.

Key words: language, national, native, foreign, school, teacher, education, resolution, scope.

Language: English

Citation: Tursunov, B. B. (2019). From the history of the development of teaching foreign languages in Uzbekistan (As an example in the period of Soviet government). *ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science*, 01 (69), 63-66.

Soi: <http://s-o-i.org/1.1/TAS-01-69-13> **Doi:**  <https://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2019.01.69.13>

Introduction.

As the need to integrate with the globe on international affairs has been getting more and more demanding, the economic and political affairs, science of our country has been requiring multilingualism (being polyglot) [1, 3]. The most important processes of all which takes a long period of time i.e. several centuries, in the history of humanity is the comprehension of the world. The knowledge of the humanity about the world is so relative that the characteristics of the objects we have not been aware of yet is left as a twist for us. The human being understands, comprehends, sees, feels, thinks, obtains information, compares, concludes, broadens his/her horizon, develops and enriches thinking of his/her own about the world. When the issue of national identity of a particular language is logically analyzed in relation with the human worldview, it can be understood that “the national language – national thinking.”

The language which is the means of communication between people can be gained practically in a natural atmosphere (in a family or community) or during lessons forming units. The child of a man learns the mother tongue in a daily life, that is – in the family, preschool educational establishments, directly among people. The mother tongue is the first language which has an important position on the development of thinking. When it

comes to the second language, it is estimated as the language of another nation made up from fellow nation or neighbors. The language is an important factor and invaluable means for people to get acquainted with other people, to make friends of each other and to communicate with one another.

The nations using various languages established shared neighborhood relationships with each other which simulated the need to learn the language of each other that latterly led to study of their customs, traditions and lifestyle. As the commercial and cultural relations were involved, the study of foreign languages for practical and educational purposes was organized. Ancient Syria and Egypt, Greece and Rome the cultural maturity phases were noted for the study of languages of other nations. The emergence of methodological styles in teaching Western European languages occurred at the end of XVIII century, from this point on, teaching such languages at educational establishments became customary.

The population of Eastern countries that spoke Arabic, Persian or Turkish yearned to gain at least two or all three of them at once. Especially, the enlightened layer of the society attempted to master more languages than common people. Our great ancestors Abu Nasr Farabi (mastered 70 languages), Muhammad ibn Muso Al-Khorazmi (the scientific term “algorithm” was taken from his name), Abu Rayhon Beruni (he translated scientific books from

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ancient Indian– Sanskrit into Arabic freely), Alisher Navoi (bilingual poet) and many more famous people lived after them and created unique works inspired other people to learn foreign languages. During the Renaissance period, as in other European countries, Latin was taught in Russia as well. When the development of the language is observed, as occurred in every part of the world, it was a good custom to be aware of the language of other nations except one’s own mother tongue in the lands of Uzbekistan too. It is clear from the information on great people that there has always been huge demand for learning and mastering foreign languages all the time. The first requirement for claiming to be a great thinker is considered to be being bilingual or multilingual; this requirement is also peculiar to the common people as well. The Uzbek could speak Tajik [2,345] and the Tajik could speak Uzbek freely from childhood. The local people knew the language of each other; these languages were the main factor for their closeness and establishment of marriages. Arabic and Persian were widely used among the population.

By the dawn of XX century, the attention had been drawn to the study of foreign languages besides eastern languages and Russian. The attitude towards the methodology of teaching foreign languages of the time was changed a bit after the October Upraise of 1917. The Public Education Ministry of Turkestan declared a resolution for general labor school as follows “...the native language at the primary school, one of the languages of French, German, English – considering the interest of the pupil – to the pupils of secondary school is compulsory [3, 137]”. The resolution opened the way for spread of foreign languages in Turkistan. The value of teaching foreign language in practice was low. There are unique reasons for that of course. The social-political situation was hard, the World War I was still going on, diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with foreign countries had been broken. There was the shortage of personnel. The main reason, the educational purpose of foreign language studying material was controversial. Teaching foreign languages to the common people began in higher educational institutions, not at secondary schools. The Institute of foreign languages was founded under the cabinet of Turkestan People’s University in the summer of 1918. Teaching foreign languages at higher educational institutions was further intensified. The number of Uzbek students among the listeners of Central Asian University that belong to local people increased in 1921 [4, 122].

There issue of whether to teach foreign languages or not at schools was the main topic during 1917-1923. Some methodologists put forward an idea against teaching foreign languages at schools. That is why, during the years of 1923 and 1924 foreign languages was taught as facultative activity,

in other words, only those who had intention was taught [5, 61].

The foreign languages were divided into two categories at Uzbek educational establishments until 1917: the first category was eastern languages which were taught at religious educational institutions, the second one was European languages taught at Russian educational establishments. Therefore, there were not any special educational materials published for the Uzbek. The resolutions under the title “On preparing foreign languages teachers” numbered 3485 [6, 36] and “On betterment of teaching foreign languages at schools” numbered 3488 [7, 38] adopted by the Soviet government in 1947 relatively intensified the study of foreign languages in Uzbekistan. Some schools taught only German as a foreign language.

The main issue standing in front of the Republic people’s education ministry was introduction of teaching foreign languages at every school and the secondary issue was rational distribution of teaching western European languages. The primary task on the issue was provision of schools and higher educational institutions with professional staff who knew foreign languages. That is why; the government of Uzbekistan made a resolution numbered 68 “On organization of preparation of foreign language teachers” on January 15, 1948 [8, 37].

In order to resolve the existent drawbacks basing on the resolution of the soviet government under the number 3485 [9, 2] adopted in 1947, Tashkent foreign languages pedagogy institute (Current Uzbekistan State World Languages University) was founded in 1948. Correspondence course department and evening courses were began to be offered in 1949 and 1960 respectively. The first academic year of Tashkent foreign languages pedagogy institute began with the full number of new accepted students who were former applicants that could not succeed in entering into the universities of their wish [10, 4]. The accepted students dropped out for several reasons including lack of knowledge on foreign languages, lack of demand and conditions for acquiring a language, and the low rate of interest for acquiring a foreign language even in the first half of the year.

Although Tashkent foreign languages pedagogy institute was founded, the shortage of foreign language teachers throughout the whole Republic, more specifically, in rural areas was still a problem. This led to the adoption of the resolution “On organization of preparation of foreign languages” under the cabinet of philology faculties of all universities starting from the years of 1951-1952 in 1950. There was even a special thirty-student place for Uzbek students at each of Kiev, Odessa Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov foreign language specialized higher educational institutions. As it was

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mentioned above, for *the first direction* Tashkent foreign languages pedagogy institute accepted 117 students in 1951, this number increased to 154 for the following year before reaching to 222 in 1953. German, English, French languages were taught at foreign languages faculty. In accordance with the education plan of the government the personnel on foreign languages had to enlarge by three times during a five-year period of time.

Unfortunately, members of the local nation were not sufficiently attracted to learn foreign languages. This was caused by the fact that rural schools did not teach foreign languages that its true cause was the shortage of teachers who used to teach foreign languages in villages. In truth, since there was not enough foreign language teachers at schools in rural areas, the pupils had to finish school without fully finishing the curriculum for the foreign languages. The young of the local population sometimes even did not know Russian. The male at the age of military service were forced to learn Russian during their military service which lasted to two to three years. The female of the villages nearly did not know Russian at all.

Only the minority, 12 out of 370, in other words just 0.3 % of the accepted students to Tashkent foreign languages pedagogy institute made up Uzbeks. Several years' intense attempts, agitations finally gave fruit which means the number of local nation members began to increase. The proportion of Uzbek students made up 46% – 545 out of 1163 in the academic year of 1956-1957, 72% – 997 out of 1377 during the 1961-1962 academic year, 84% – 2267 out of 2672 during the 1970-1971 academic year. Well, the issue of preparing teacher staff from local nation members found its solution in the beginning of the seventh decade of the previous century.

The second direction, in other words the issue of teaching foreign languages at schools where such subjects were not being taught, the People Commissars Soviet of Uzbekistan SSR made a resolution on betterment of teaching foreign languages at schools in January of 1941. In accordance with the resolution, all schools had to teach foreign languages from 5th form starting from the 1941-1942 academic year, and latterly all rural schools were also meant to conduct lessons on foreign languages. If a pupil could not acquire a foreign language, he/she would stay at the same form whereas students of the higher educational institution were also not permitted to pass to the next course. However, the outbreak of the World War II slowed down the implementation of the resolution. There were changes after the war ended, for example, if the number of hours separated for foreign languages constituted to 395 in 1946-1947, this figure was grown to 462 from the 1947-1948 academic years. It was mentioned that the lessons on foreign languages

had to be conducted dividing the class into two if the total number was over 25 from the 1961-1962 academic year.

The third direction, in other words, a special plan was worked out so as to ensure the rational distribution of western European languages. According to the plan, until 1952-1953 academic year the foreign language taught at schools was meant to be divided that 45% of schools was to teach English, 25% was to conduct lessons on German, 20% was expected to offer French classes and the Spanish was also expected to be introduced at schools from the same year. The curriculum and the practical lessons did not support one another. For instance, in accordance with the plan 30% of all of the schools were meant to be teaching English from 1948 whereas only 7.7% schools were able teach English. This chaos was caused by uncalculated plan that Tashkent foreign language pedagogy institute could produce graduates only after five years from the year it was established.

The fourth direction, in other words, the provision of study material to the educational establishments was not a great success since most of the educational materials provided to schools were just restricted with translating although they were worked on at educational materials and programs center. The main issue was wrong consideration of Uzbek language on publishing foreign language materials. Another disproportionate was the result of illogical time management that although 702 hours were freed for the study of foreign languages at schools in Russia, this number was equal to 468 hours in total in Uzbek schools in the 40s of XX century.

The various approaches towards teaching foreign language, the difference in timing, the inappropriate study materials worked out not considering the national mentality were the reasons of emergence of new kinds of challenges. The resolution of the government adopted in 1961 brought a new dawn in the republic on learning foreign languages. Afterwards, the educational materials were prepared in partnership of Russian and local personnel putting the national characteristics into consideration. There is a unique history of preparing educational materials for Uzbek schools. The project of the plan was initially announced (in Russian) in 1968. The project was discussed thoroughly that it was implemented at schools from 1970-1971 academic year (until that the materials used at Uzbek schools were just translation of materials created for Russian speaking people). This was how the schools were provided with educational materials and methodological programs from the 60s of the XX century.

The fifth direction was the introduction of more strict supervision over improvement of teaching quality that the People's Education Ministry's next

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step was to introduce strict supervision over teaching of these subjects. It should be noted that the supervision over teaching of foreign languages was very weak up until 1948. After necessary resolutions were adopted, the positions of foreign language methodologist were assigned at expertise development institutions for the people's education inspectors and teachers of region on foreign languages. If the new direction established in educational field had put teaching foreign languages in sequence, another priority was that it created a comfortable atmosphere for re-preparation of teachers since it was under the control of professional staff.

Conclusion.

To conclude, these means latterly created opportunities to establish atmosphere to conduct scientific researches on foreign languages. The scope of teaching foreign languages at schools as a school

subject began through five rational stages. Afterwards, the issues of preparing a professional staff, production of study and methodology materials and further modifications into improving quality of teaching foreign languages were resolved. The interest of common people to acquire foreign language further increased after the State declared her independence that the relationship with foreign countries were enlarged and state embassies were opened in foreign countries. The people who had acquired foreign languages were on demand for such institutions. For that reason, teaching foreign language has been further discussed that the conception of teaching foreign language and the National program of Preparing Cadre were worked out. These documents emphasized to teach foreign languages with further modifications and to provide stable education of foreign languages at educational institutions.

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