CROSS-CULTURAL TEACHING OF RUSSIAN IN UZBEK SCHOOLS: A LINGUODIDACTIC FRAMEWORK AND INTERFERENCE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This article explores the theoretical and methodological foundations of cross-cultural teaching of Russian as a foreign language (RFL) in Uzbek schools. The research examines linguistic worldview differences between Russian and Uzbek, analyzes graphic interference caused by script divergence, and evaluates the effectiveness of culturally adapted instructional materials. The study integrates linguodidactic principles, ontolinguistic findings, and interference theory. Experimental implementation of specialized coursebooks demonstrates measurable improvement in early-stage acquisition among Uzbek-speaking learners. The findings confirm that cross-cultural methodology significantly enhances linguistic competence and reduces structural interference when teaching Russian in a bilingual educational environment.

Keywords: cross-cultural education, linguodidactics, Russian as a foreign language, bilingualism, linguistic worldview, interference, graphic interference, Uzbek schools.

1. Introduction

The teaching of Russian in Uzbekistan occurs within a multilingual and multicultural environment shaped by historical, political, and sociolinguistic factors. Russian functions as a language of interethnic communication, academic mobility, and international cooperation. However, for many students in Uzbek schools, Russian is acquired as a foreign rather than a second native language.

The formation of personality and social identity is inseparable from linguistic development. B. G. Ananyev emphasized that the individual's position in society is conditioned by the structure of the community within which that individual develops. Language thus acts not only as a communication system but also as a mechanism of cognitive and social integration.[2]

Language represents a system of phonetic, lexical, and grammatical means that serves as an instrument for expressing thought and transmitting cultural values. As V. I. Dahl defined it, language is the totality of a people's words and their correct combination for conveying ideas. Modern linguistic theory views language as a social phenomenon inseparable from thinking and collective experience.[2]

Each linguistic community develops a specific linguistic worldview reflecting culturally embedded interpretations of reality. Therefore, teaching Russian in Uzbek schools requires

recognition of differences between the Russian and Uzbek worldviews encoded in grammar, semantics, and orthography.

The purpose of this study is to examine cross-cultural linguodidactic principles in teaching Russian in Uzbek schools and to analyze graphic interference as a major obstacle in early acquisition stages.[1]

2. Literature Review

The concept of linguistic worldview originates in the works of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who argued that language embodies the "spirit of the nation" and shapes perception of reality. According to this view, language is not merely a tool but a formative principle of cognition.

In modern Russian linguistics, the idea of linguistic worldview has been developed further. Emphasizes that worldview is reflected in lexical categorization and grammatical structures. Cultural differences between Russian and Uzbek manifest in conceptual organization of space, temporality, politeness formulas, and grammatical gender.

Cross-cultural methodology aims to integrate language and culture in educational practice. Weinstein associates cross-cultural research with comparative cultural analysis, while considers it a foundation for tolerance in multicultural societies.[7]

In language pedagogy, cross-culturality implies:

accounting for native language structures,

comparing grammatical systems,

introducing cultural context through texts and narratives,

preventing ethnocentric bias.

This approach is especially relevant in Uzbekistan, where Russian and Uzbek differ typologically: Uzbek belongs to the Turkic language family, characterized by agglutination and absence of grammatical gender, whereas Russian is inflectional with a complex case system.

Research conducted by S. N. Tseytlin and the St. Petersburg ontolinguistic school demonstrates that language acquisition follows universal developmental patterns. Even in formal instruction, learners build internal grammatical systems progressively. Instruction must therefore correspond to cognitive readiness and avoid overloading early stages with excessive abstraction.

Interference is defined as deviation from target language norms caused by influence of the native language. In bilingual contexts, interference affects phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, and orthography.[6]

In Uzbekistan, graphic interference is particularly significant because Uzbek uses Latin script, whereas Russian uses Cyrillic. Visual similarity of letters leads to systematic reading and writing errors.

3. Methodology

The study combines theoretical analysis with classroom-based experimental observation.

The pilot project was implemented in School No. 11 (Turakurgan district, Namangan region). Participants were primary school students aged 8–9 whose native language is Uzbek.

The coursebook *Polyot. Uzbek Version* (Golubeva, 2021) was used. The course consists of:

reference book,

two workbooks,

reading skills manual,

audio materials.

The program is рассчитан for 2–3 hours weekly and targets Pre-A1 level.

The structured lexical-grammatical minimum included: basic parts of speech, word composition, gender category, plural formation, singular case declension, personal and

possessive pronouns, basic verb forms, sentence types, word order, prepositions and conjunctions.

Observations, reading tasks, pronunciation analysis, and written assignments were used to evaluate progress and identify interference patterns.

4. Results

Significant improvement was observed after the third instructional phase. Students acquired:

numerals,

days of the week,

months,

basic self-introduction structures,

elementary politeness formulas.

Audio materials improved pronunciation accuracy.

The narrative structure (travel across Russian cities) enhanced cultural awareness and motivation.

Frequent confusions included:

П / Р

И / Й

Е / З

Т / Г

Ч / У

difficulty distinguishing Ъ and Ь

These errors result from visual similarity and absence of analogous letters in Uzbek orthography.Statistical observation indicates that girls demonstrated faster orthographic adaptation than boys; however, long-term data are required for conclusive interpretation.

5. Discussion

The results of the study provide substantial evidence that cross-cultural linguodidactic principles considerably improve the effectiveness of teaching Russian as a foreign language in Uzbek schools. The observed progress cannot be attributed solely to the structured presentation of grammatical material; rather, it reflects the interaction of cognitive, cultural, and methodological factors operating simultaneously within the educational process.

First, the integration of cultural content into language instruction demonstrably increases learners' motivation and deepens contextual comprehension. When language is introduced as a system embedded in cultural narratives, historical references, and everyday practices, it ceases to be perceived as a purely formal structure. Instead, it becomes a meaningful communicative instrument connected to real social experience. The travel-based narrative structure of the coursebook, which guides learners through Russian cities and landmarks, functions not merely as thematic decoration but as a cognitive scaffold. It situates vocabulary and grammar within recognizable sociocultural contexts, thereby facilitating associative memory and semantic anchoring. In such conditions, language learning transforms from mechanical memorization into culturally mediated cognition.

Second, the ontolinguistic sequencing of grammatical material plays a decisive role in reducing cognitive overload and promoting sustainable acquisition. Research in developmental linguistics indicates that language learners construct internal grammatical systems progressively, following identifiable stages of morphological and syntactic development. The instructional design observed in this study aligns with these developmental trajectories: learners first acquire lexical units and simple syntactic constructions before engaging with case inflection and more abstract morphological categories. This gradual internalization prevents premature abstraction and supports stable grammatical competence. In particular, the introduction of gender as a

grammatical category—absent in Uzbek—requires careful conceptual framing and repeated contextual reinforcement. The data suggest that when morphological categories are presented in a cognitively sequenced manner, learners are more likely to integrate them into their emerging linguistic system.

Third, explicit comparison between Cyrillic and Latin orthographic systems significantly reduces graphic interference. Script transition constitutes a critical threshold in early-stage Russian acquisition for Uzbek-speaking students. Without systematic contrastive exercises, visual similarity between letters may lead to persistent decoding errors. The instructional strategy applied in the experiment—visual differentiation tasks, paired-letter comparison drills, and phoneme-grapheme mapping exercises—proved effective in minimizing confusion between problematic letter pairs such as П/Р and И/Й. The findings confirm that graphic interference is not merely a technical difficulty but a cognitive phenomenon rooted in established perceptual habits formed within the native script. Addressing this interference requires deliberate metalinguistic awareness rather than simple repetition.

Fourth, recognition of differences between Russian and Uzbek linguistic worldviews prevents conceptual misunderstanding at deeper levels of grammar and semantics.

The Russian grammatical system encodes distinctions—such as gender, case inflection, and aspectual opposition—that do not have direct equivalents in Uzbek. If these categories are introduced without comparative explanation, learners may attempt to interpret them through the conceptual framework of their native language, resulting in structural misinterpretation. The cross-cultural approach adopted in the study emphasizes systematic comparison, allowing learners to recognize not only formal distinctions but also underlying conceptual differences. For example, the category of grammatical gender in Russian is not merely morphological but affects agreement patterns across sentence structure. Clarifying this structural interconnectedness enhances learners' metalinguistic awareness.

Beyond structural considerations, the cross-cultural methodology supports the formation of intercultural competence. Exposure to Russian cultural narratives fosters tolerance, empathy, and openness—qualities essential in multilingual societies. In this sense, language education transcends its instrumental function and becomes a component of civic and humanistic development. The pedagogical model implemented in the study aligns with contemporary educational paradigms that emphasize learner-centered instruction, dialogic interaction, and cultural mediation.

Moreover, the results suggest that cross-cultural linguodidactics contributes to the harmonization of bilingual cognitive systems. Rather than suppressing the native linguistic framework, the methodology acknowledges it as a cognitive resource. By systematically comparing Russian and Uzbek structures, learners develop analytical flexibility and enhanced metacognitive skills. Such bilingual competence strengthens not only foreign language proficiency but also overall cognitive adaptability.

Finally, the persistence of certain interference patterns indicates that cross-cultural instruction should be sustained over extended periods and supported by digital reinforcement tools. While early progress is evident, long-term retention and automatization require continuous practice. Therefore, future methodological development should integrate multimedia exercises and interactive orthographic training modules.

In conclusion, the expanded analysis confirms that cross-cultural linguodidactic principles operate on multiple interconnected levels: motivational, cognitive, grammatical, orthographic, and cultural. Their combined effect produces measurable improvement in early-stage Russian language acquisition among Uzbek-speaking learners.

6. Conclusion

Cross-cultural teaching of Russian in Uzbek schools must integrate linguistic, cognitive, and cultural components. Graphic interference remains a central challenge requiring systematic methodological solutions.

The experiment confirms the effectiveness of culturally adapted materials and structured lexical-grammatical progression. Future research should expand empirical base and incorporate digital learning technologies.

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