**CHALLENGES OF ENGLISH LEARNING FOR KAZAKH SPEAKERS: A LINGUACULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

Кукыбаева Дина Героевна

Старший преподаватель кафедры «Мировые языки»

Yessenov University

dina.kukybayeva@yu.edu.kz

**Abstract**: Due to the continuous processes of globalization the languages are interconnected and interwoven. The strengthening of economic, political and cultural ties between different countries of the world continues to change the conditions for the functioning of languages, requiring proper study and mastery of a foreign language. Studying the language and culture of another people, students have the opportunity to expand their social-cultural knowledge. Knowledge of the foreign language alone is not enough to effectively communicate with representatives of other cultures. As English and Kazakh languages are very different in many important aspects, a second language learner has a tendency to transfer his habits from his mother tongue to the second language system. Studying foreign languages students face some difficulties in syntax and phonology, in grammar and pronunciation, it is the ‘language interference’.

**Key words:** international communication, cultural awareness, learning foreign languages, mistakes, language interference, interaction, differences

In their historical development, social communities, no matter their names, have not existed in isolation, but have established contacts of the most diverse nature with each other leading to mutual influences on various levels of social life. Language, as an expression of society, is a testimony to intercultural relations.

“Having studied the language and culture of other peoples, a person becomes equal among them”. Once the great Abay called the Kazakhs to study the Russian language, realizing that through the Russian language and Russian culture, our people will be able to join the world culture [1]. In the 21st century, we face new challenges: while remaining faithful to our origins, developing our native language and culture, we must enter the dynamic global technological and humanitarian processes. This opportunity is provided by knowledge of the English language.

The current language policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is due to the current language situation and the realities of modern life, require not only the preservation and development of the Kazakh language as a state language, but also the formation of Kazakh-English bilingualism. Knowledge of the foreign language alone is not enough to effectively communicate with representatives of other cultures.As we know, one of the most significant functions of the language is the cumulative function, which means that the language is a link connecting generations; it is the storage and a means of transmitting the extra-linguistic collective experience, as the language not only reflects the contemporary culture, but preserves all its previous stages.

Cross-cultural awareness means understanding and cognition of such things as the social domain, social rules and norms, values, beliefs, habits and customs of the target-language. It is really vital to achieve an organic integration of language and culture in the teaching process. In order to achieve this, in the first place, teachers should know clearly where the cultural information is located in the teaching resources and how to make efficient use of it.

Learning a foreign language makes the students acquainted with the life, customs, and traditions of the people whose language he studies through visual material and reading material. Together with this, it should be emphasized the cardinal differences of the Kazakh and English languages ​​are due to the belonging of these languages ​​to typologically and genealogically different languages. Due to internationalization and  globalization  it  has  become important for  everybody to master more languages  than one's mother tongue and we are  thus witnessing  a  change of focus  in the  teaching  and  learning  of languages towards  making foreign languages  more accessible, so every aspect of our world is undergoing a transformation. The changing and fast evolving times have witnessed the growing importance of English language in all spheres of life. Conscious and unconscious use of English words in our everyday conversation hears evidence to this fact. As we know very well that language learning is a great fascinated experience especially the learning of a second language, but the influence of mother tongue has become very important area and is usually referred to as „Language Interference.” It is known that “the number of errors in foreign language speech associated with the interfering influence of the native language can reach 70% of all errors”[2]. No matter what their mother-tongue was, people would still make the same mistakes, which leads us to what we called “language interference”. The interfering influence of the Kazakh language in the generation of speech in English is an undesirable consequence of some similarities (similarities of the sentences, their functional load, etc.) and cardinal differences (the presence of prepositions and articles in English, case forms in the Kazakh language, etc.) in the structures of sentences of the Kazakh and English languages.

Language interference can be regarded as the transfer of elements of one language into another at different linguistic levels. In terms of phonology, for instance, linguistic interferences are related to foreign aspects such as intonation, pitch, accent and speech sounds from the first language influencing the second. Grammar of the first language would interfere with the second language by affecting it on the level of usage of pronouns and determinants, verb tense, mood and even double negation and, equally important, word order. As far as lexis is regarded, language interference means word borrowings from one language alongside word transformations as to sound more naturally in the other language.

It’s obvious that today’s need of forming the linguacultural competence in the foreign language classroom it’s a system of knowledge about the culture and set of skills to operate this knowledge in a particular speech situation. The effectiveness of communication, knowledge of the language depends on many factors, conditions and culture of communication, the rules of etiquette, knowledge of non-verbal forms of expression, social norms of verbal and nonverbal behavior, the presence of deep background knowledge, and others.

Nowadays students, trying to learn foreign languages and in their way to achieve their aim, they might face many problems, making mistakes.

A second language learner has a tendency to transfer his habits from his mother tongue to the second language system. The sources of errors are too many, but the most important and obvious are the following, as we have mentioned before: Transfer of Native language. Native language transfer is an unavoidable factor in studying the foreign language [3]. We know transfer of two kinds: positive and negative. They can be called 'positive transfer' or 'facilitation', or it may be called 'negative transfer' or 'interference'. When we begin speaking in the second language (i.e. English), we initially use sounds from our mother tongue Thus, everyone has mother tongue influence to begin with.

In the process of studying of foreign languages students may face with two main sources of errors, namely, inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. Inter-lingual (Interference) errors are those errors that are traceable to first language interference: (1) overgeneralization, (2) ignorance of rule restrictions, (3) incomplete application of rules, and (4) false concepts hypothesized.

**Overgeneralization** is when students apply a grammatical rule across all members of a grammatical class (e.g. verbs) without making the appropriate exceptions. For example, goed (meaning went), a form they are unlikely to have heard, suggesting that they have intuited or deduced complex grammatical rules and failed only to learn exceptions that cannot be predicted from a knowledge of the grammar alone.



**Fossilization**. Fossilized errors are errors which the student makes constantly. They know they make these mistakes. They know the rules. They are able to correct themselves swiftly when the teacher points it out. However, they continue to do it over and over again. Many teachers will agree that it is much easier to teach their student new material rather than correct their fossilized errors.  For Kazakh learners it is difficult to differentiate 3rd person Sg, really difficult to choose what to say ‘he’ or ‘she’, because in Kazakh language they have no category of gender. To fossilized errors we also may refer the plural forms of nouns, in such words as ‘childrens’, ‘mans’ or ‘womans’.

**Simplification**. Simplification is a result of an attempt to adjust the language behavior to the interests of communicative effectiveness. In order to avoid redundancy, students always use simplification: comed, goed instead of came and went.

The greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative the effects of interference are likely to be. English and Kazakh languages are very different in many important aspects. Even if the languages are different they also have some closeness. This closeness of languages makes it easier for people to learn the languages as second or foreign languages. Yet the dissimilarities of the languages make people face some difficulties to learn other languages. Here we have made an attempt to figure out some differences and similarities of sentences in English and Kazakh languages in order to provide concrete language learning and teaching.

Like other Turkic languages, Kazakh is an agglutinative language, and it employs vowel harmony. As Kazakh language is considered a language belonging to the agglutinative type (synthetic), it is rich in morphemic composition, which leads to the relative mobility of words within the sentence. Thus, due to the specific word order Kazakh simple sentence has some features, differing sharply from the English word order. The basic order of words in a Kazakh sentence is: subject -   object -  predicate. The predicate, either noun or verb predicate, stands at the end of the sentence. The predicate always includes the person indication.

 Although the Kazakh language is considered a language with a firmly fixed position of words in a sentence, in some cases, case endings play a major role.

Eg: *Аңшы арыстанды өлтірді. Арыстанды аңшы өлтірді.*

In the English sentence, such permutations lead to a radical change in content and meaning.

Eg: *The hunter killed the lion. (Аңшы арыстанды өлтірді).*

 *The lion killed the hunter. (Арыстан аңшыны өлтірді).*

A.I. Smirnitsky notes that "… in English, in which the system of inflectional forms is not so developed, the word order is of particular importance ". Consequently, the order of words in a sentence of the English language is more important than the order of words in a sentence of the Kazakh language. Due to the richness of morphological forms of communication between the members of the sentence, the Kazakh language is distinguished by the relative mobility of word forms, therefore, in terms of syntactic communication, it is distinguished by greater variability. Due to the fact that in English the system of inflectional forms is not as developed as in Kazakh, the arrangement of elements in a sentence is the most important means of syntactic communication.

The next point to pay attention is the situation with negation in English, as also one of the points where Kazakh learners, following their L1 rules of expressing negation, face some difficulties. The following lists are common negative words, adverbs and verbs used to illustrate a negative idea: No, None, No one, Nobody, Nothing, Nowhere, Never. Double, triple and multiple negations is a norm in Kazakh language. While in English, double negative is correctly used in an affirmative way ("Nobody doesn't like Sara Lee"), or alternatively may be used to convey a meaning of irony, but in the Kazakh language it is allowed. And most of the students trying to use negation in their answers make those kinds of mistakes. To the question: "Have you seen anyone in the house?" In English, a negative response may be phrased as either: "I haven't seen anybody." or: "I have seen nobody." but normally not as: "I haven't seen nobody." In the Kazakh language, the form ("Мен ешкімді көрдім.") is highly unusual, and may not be understood to mean the same as its English analogue, and will be unlikely to be understood correctly. The correct usage corresponds to the form ("Мен ешкімді көрмедім."), and as such the corresponding English structure, while not considered proper in English, is likely to be used especially by those who are still new to English, and are speaking by translating Kazakh words into English words one by one. Translating of such kind of sentences as ‘Ешкім ағылшын тілінде сөйлей алмайды’, caused difficulty and Kazakh learners may translate it as ‘Noone cannot speak English’.

The verb systems in English and Kazakh languages express rather different kinds of meaning. All the verbs in English are divided into regular and irregular verbs. Kazakh learners cannot see any differences according to what principles the verbs are divided in such a way. And due to linguistic interference, the formation of past verb forms is a kind of a nightmare for foreigners of English: they just form it by adding **–ed** to all the verbs, with analogy to ‘live- lived’, ‘work –worked’ to the irregular verbs as ‘begin –beginned’, ‘make-maded’.

Pronunciation plays a huge role in mastering the skills of speech. Incorrect pronunciation of English sounds leads not only to accent, but also to a violation of the meaning of words. Distortion of speech intonation also leads to an incorrect understanding of the utterances. Without appropriate explanations and exercises Kazakh students will read and speak in English with Kazakh intonation.

It is important to concentrate learners’ attention to the general differences of English phonetic systems as a whole. The most important thing is that Kazakh vowels and consonants stand for one sound, as it is given in the alphabet. There are nine vowels in Kazakh alphabet and so many corresponding sounds (some vowels have only invariants in Kazakh), where as in English there are six ones in the alphabet, but the number of vowel sounds doesn’t coincide with the number of those vowels in English alphabet. Main differences between vowel systems of two languages are:

1. In English combination of two even three vowels is possible which is impossible in Kazakh. For example, in English words **eat**, **faint**, **meet**, **built**, **tie**, **bye** combinations of **ea**, **ai**, **ee**, **ui**, **ie**, ye are read in a different way, not as in an alphabet. But as for Kazakh, all vowels are read as they are sounded corresponding to their names in an alphabet.

2. One and the same vowel can be read differently according to its position in a word and types of a syllable, for example, the letter “**a**” in different types of a syllable is also read as a different sound but not as in an alphabet: name -[neim], pan – [pæn] , bar- [ba:], care - [kɜə], similar- [similə]. We see in the given examples the letter ” a” is pronounced as different sound, because one and the same letter in different cases is sounded in a different way and different vowels are read alike with each other i.e. as one and the same vowel, which are not characteristic to Kazakh vowels.

3. In English vowels are classified long or short sounds. It means it is very important to pronounce more distinctively long and short sounds because it can change the meaning of a word, but in Kazakh it doesn’t matter to pronounce vowels short or long. It doesn’t change the meaning.

Concerning to the articulation of vowels there are also difficulties, even there are similar sounds, but articulation is different from vowel sounds in Kazakh. For example in English sounds [a:], [x], [o], [u], etc.look similar in Kazakh [a], [o], [y]. But their articulations are different.

In Kazakh thirty three consonants, English has twenty three (or twenty two, depending on how affricates are analyzed) consonants. What’s new and unfamiliar for Kazakh speaking learners is:

1. **consonant combinations** such as **th**, **ph**, **ng**, **wh**, **wr**, **sh**, **ch**, etc. are read as one sound and different from their alphabet name. In Kazakh all consonants are read corresponding to their name in their alphabet. One consonant is read as one sound. There are no combinations of consonants.

2. **omission of consonants**, which is also not acceptable in Kazakh. For example, in consonant combinations **kn,lf, sc, mb, bt, mn** one of the consonants is not read, i.e combinations of two consonants are read as one consonant sound. That’s why Kazakh speaking learners will encounter difficulties in reading English words **know**, **knife**, **knit**, **science**, **scissors**, **tomb**, **bomb**, **column**, **debt**, **cash**, **shelf** etc.

3. English consonant sounds [ð], [θ], [w] don’t occur in Kazakh. Kazakh speaking learners usually substitute these sounds for [s,z, v]. Hence, English contrasts such as thistle –this’ll, ether – either, think – sink, bath – bus, breathe – breeze, will – yield, want – vote are troublesome for Kazakh speaking learners. Specific consonants of English are [w], [θ], [dЗ]. [w] - they are double lips, fricative, sonorous sound. There is not such sound in the Kazakh language.

4. English [t], [d], are alveolar but in Kazakh they are dental. However this difference doesn’t constitute a major problem in learning of English, but in Kazakh dental consonant sounds are pronounced without any aspiration, and in English they pronounced with an aspiration especially at the end of the word or in an isolated word.

 We know that learning the second language is different from acquiring the first language. At the semantic level, interference manifests itself at the level of word meanings. It is connected with the fact that the phenomena known to the speaker are reflected in a foreign language differently than in the native one. Kazakh people who are learning English as his / her second language does not have this perception about different situations, he / she just learns the language. The concept of the word "cousin" for an English people is completely different from that of Kazakh and the Kazakh "ауыл" and the English "Village" refer to a small settlement outside the city, but the living standards, conditions and lifestyle in Kazakhstan and Britain in such settlements are slightly different.

Any language in the world doesn’t exist alone. Due to the continuous processes of integration and globalization the languages are interconnected and in some kind interwoven.[4] New words enter the language: some of them are adopted with their meaning, some change their forms to the norms of the target language and some change their initial meanings. There are quite a few words that sound similar in English and Kazakh, but that have different meanings or shades of meaning. Such loan of words are called the ‘false friends’. Examples are: biscuit, salute, moment, meeting, record, notebook, gymnasium, character, artist, repetition, cabinet.

The main difficulty is that these words don’t have the meanings of the words they resemble. They sound similar in English and Kazakh, but that have different meanings or shades of meaning. Learners most probably lack necessary knowledge about the different meaning references of the pair of false friends, and misinterpret the message in the target language[5]. So, to avoid such kinds of mistakes teachers should use different methods and involve students to lexical games, as “Find the wrong word”, ‘What is correct’ and others. Together with this teachers should give the situation or context to work with or to be involved in. This is very useful for learners to participate, because acting in the given situation let all of them remember for longer the so called ‘false friends’ and be more careful in their usage.

So, we have considered the main types of linguistic interferences in learning English as a second language. They are not full, but we’ve chosen errors that are mostly often made in the productive skills of the Kazakh learners. Language interference takes place speaker’s everyday language and undoubtedly influences in learning target language. The greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative the effects of interference are likely to be. Language is not only takes the main role in forming the thoughts of young generation, but also it is important in studying the culture. It also involves understanding the different cultures, languages and customs of people from other countries. Studying the language and culture of another people, students have the opportunity to expand their social-cultural knowledge.

For successful foreign language teaching and the formation of students’ linguacultural competence, a teacher should possess both professional knowledge, the teaching methodology, to know the culture of the countries of the studied language, its history and contemporary problems; and the art of communication, creating an open, friendly atmosphere of the educational process with establishing a strong feedback. It is important for teacher to know the differences and similarities between learner’s native language and the target language. By knowing them teacher will be easier to decide what strategy, methodology or what material that will be used in teaching second or foreign language.

**Literature:**

1. Interference as a result of bilingualism // Қазақ тіл білімінің өзекті мәселелері: Материалы международной научно-теоретической конференции, посвященной 110-летию профессора К.Жубанова. – Алматы: «Кие» лингвоелтану инновациялық орталығы», 2009. – c.266.
2. Khasanov B., Tursunov D. , A comparative grammar of the Russian and Kazakh languages. Аlma – Ata, 1967
3. Bazarbaeyeva Z.M., Kazakh intonation, Аlmaty, 2008, p. 283
4. Tursunov D., “Errors due to the influence of the mother tongue”, Russian language in Kazakh schools
5. Swan M. , Smith B. , Learner English. A teacher’s guide to interference and other problems. ”; Cambridge, 1987, p145

**Сведения об авторе**: Кукыбаева Дина Героевна, г. Актау Yessenov University факультет «Туризм и Языки» старший преподаватель, dina.kukybayeva@yu.edu.kz, 87013018613.