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## PECULIARITIES OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UZBEKISTAN

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### **Abstract:**

The opportunities for independent learning increase throughout Secondary School. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work and to learn to formulate their own next learning steps. Pupils are encouraged to think critically and take risks in the classroom in order to develop problem-solving skills, for we believe that making mistakes is a vital part of the learning process. Project work is an essential component both individually and in groups. There is also a range of opportunities for pupils to pursue their areas of interest in greater depth both in school and through relevant enrichment experiences beyond the classroom.

**Keywords:** educational resources, teaching English in secondary schools in Uzbekistan.

The years of independence have become for Uzbekistan, on the one hand, years of transformation in all spheres of life, both the state and the entire society, years of full-scale social, political and economic reforms, and, on the other hand, years of searching for new fateful solutions in all areas of social life, unexpected solutions, and solutions in difficult situations, years of extraordinary approaches to various problems. One of these issues that were crucial for the development of national statehood and social construction was the issue of the education system. The "law on education" and the national training Program were adopted [1]. One of the directions of reforms in the country's education system was the issue of a foreign language. This issue was one of the most difficult issues, as it was inextricably linked with all the difficulties and complex at that time socio-political changes and transformations taking place in society. First of all, the Uzbek language was declared the state language, as a result of which all other languages acquired the status of a foreign language. The new conditions of the socio-political system and the new requirements for the organization of society required certain changes and new solutions also in relation to foreign languages. This also applied to the status of a particular foreign language, to the hours allocated for teaching foreign languages, and to the issue of preferences and prerogatives of certain languages, which was reflected in the publication of educational and other interactive literature, training of specialists, and their professional development. It was necessary to rearrange the accents, which was done. English was in a better position, but not because special conditions were created for its training. Proficiency in English

promised promising employment and high-paying jobs; for admission to most universities, applicants had to pass tests in English, which required certain language skills. In addition, after independence, many young people had the opportunity to study abroad, which required passing exams based on new requirements. These exams were TOEFL and IELTS. All young people began to learn English in an intensive mode.

On December 10, 2012, a Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "on measures to further improve the system of teaching foreign languages" was adopted, which mainly dealt with the status of the English language [2]. In this document, it was noted that as part of the implementation of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "on education" and the National training program, the country is actively implementing a comprehensive system of teaching foreign languages, aimed at forming a harmoniously developed, highly educated, modern-minded younger generation, and further integration of the Republic into the world community.

Over the years of independence, more than 51.7 thousand foreign language teachers have been trained, multimedia textbooks on English, German and French have been created for grades 5-9 of secondary schools, electronic resources for learning English in primary classes, and more than 5 thousand language rooms have been equipped in secondary schools, professional colleges and academic lyceums. However, an analysis of the current system for organizing foreign language learning shows that educational standards, curricula and textbooks do not fully meet modern requirements, especially in terms of using advanced information and media technologies. Training is conducted mainly by traditional methods. We need to further improve the organization of continuous learning of foreign languages at all levels of the education system, as well as work to improve the skills of teachers and provide them with modern teaching materials. In order to radically improve the system of teaching foreign languages to the younger generation, train specialists who are fluent in them, by introducing advanced teaching methods using modern pedagogical and information and communication technologies and on this basis creating conditions and opportunities for their broad access to the achievements of world civilization and world information resources, developing international cooperation and communication, it was established that starting from the 2013/2014 academic year:

- learning of foreign languages, mainly English, in stages throughout the Republic will begin with the first grades of General education schools in the form of game lessons and speaking lessons, and starting from the second grade-with the acquisition of the alphabet, reading and grammar;
- teaching of certain special subjects in higher education institutions, especially in technical and international specialties, will be conducted in foreign languages (English, German, Russian, Italian or other);

- providing students and teachers of General secondary, secondary special, professional educational institutions with textbooks and educational and methodological complexes in foreign languages will be carried out free of charge at the expense of the working capital of the Republican target book Fund under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan in compliance with the established deadlines for their reissue;

- it will be allowed to carry out targeted admission to higher educational institutions for foreign language teachers from among people living in remote areas and rural localities who have an urgent need for foreign language teachers in General education schools, secondary special and professional educational institutions, based on the recommendations of local government authorities, which will allow to train personnel for remote rural areas on a targeted basis; There are approximately 9,700 schools including about 1,850 secondary schools, 1,919 high schools, 75 evening schools, 107 centers of adult education, and 85 special schools for disabled children. In the year's 1999 to 2000, the number of pupils in these schools reached over 5.7 million. Compulsory-type education provided by the State (Republic of Uzbekistan) is free. This form of education allows the country to reach the 98 percent literacy rate. The Uzbekistan government builds schools; purchases equipment, material, and textbooks; educates teachers; conducts research; creates curricula and methodologies of teaching; and establishes examination procedures. The school system includes both urban and rural schools, all of which fall under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Education. Secondary education is divided into two stages. The first stage includes nine years of compulsory schooling with the same programs all over Uzbekistan. The second stage covers education and vocational training after nine years. It includes general secondary education and specialized secondary education. Young people receive general secondary education while staying in school for the tenth and eleventh grades. Upon successful completion, they get a Certificate of Complete Secondary Education. Formerly, Soviet-type schools had one curriculum for all schools across the union. Today, the curriculum is less rigid and defined. However, there are two new subjects: the Uzbek language and a basic ecology course included in every teaching plan. All students of the same grade study together and change classes together. Teachers grade oral answers during lessons and test papers. Standardized tests and multiple-choice tests are rare. At the end of the quarter (semester), grades are averaged. Exams, written or oral, are given at the end of the year. At the completion of secondary school, a certificate or diploma is awarded. The first certificate is awarded for the completion of the compulsory ninth grade after which the individual can go to any type of school. The second certificate, Certificate of Complete Secondary Education (*attestat zrelosti* or certificate of maturity), is awarded after the eleventh grade. Those

who graduate from technical colleges receive a diploma that is legally equal to the certificate and also qualifies them in technical fields.

Teachers in the secondary education schools must be graduates of the pedagogical institute (old Soviet-style) or graduates at the Master's degree level in the new system. Teachers are taught many background professional subjects; general courses in philosophy, language, literature, and education-related courses like psychology (general, developmental, and educational); the history of education; and general educational methodology. They also study methodology in their area of specialization, for example, the methodology of teaching math or a foreign language. Teachers specialize at least in two subjects and traditional pairs are as follows: language/literature, math/physics, chemistry/biology, English/German (or French as a second foreign language), and history/geography. Another source of teachers comes from the professional community. For example, engineers would teach drafting and accountants would teach mathematics. In vocational schools, professionals teach their own specialties.

Students who fail to pass exams in one or two subjects are normally given a re-examination. Teachers and peers provide help. When the student fails a year exam, summer classes are prescribed, and a re-examination is given in the fall. A student who fails all possible reexaminations, demonstrates a poor attitude, and also has discipline problems must repeat the grade. Education is compulsory and dropping out is not permitted. Only a serious family reason, (such as the pupil being the only wage earner in the family, a trouble-maker, or a runaway) causes students to be considered dropouts. Teachers and administration do everything possible to keep children in school and to educate them to the required level.

The end of 1990's and beginning of 2000's marked a new era in foreign languages teaching in Uzbekistan when all stakeholders including teachers, students, schools, colleges, and universities started to feel that they were ready for change in the way foreign languages were taught and learned. Nevertheless, there was uncertainty on how these changes would be implemented, what kind of changes should be introduced, who would be the initiator of the changes and what people's reactions would be to the changes in the education sector (Jalolov 2013). The reason for uncertainty was due to the fact that for almost a century Uzbekistan was under the Soviet Union and there was not held any consistent reforms in foreign language teaching (Jalolov 2013). The reforms in foreign language teaching in Uzbekistan mainly touched upon teaching English language in all levels and stages of education. The start of incorporating English language teaching into the education system of Uzbekistan started in 1932 (Hasanova, 2007). Nevertheless, teaching and learning of English as well as other foreign languages were carried out in secondary schools at the beginning of the fifth grade when learners

were at the age of 12 (Hasanova, 2007). Hasanova (2007, p4) states that most of the lessons in 1930's-1990's were held mainly in student-centered approach and classes were mainly dedicated to the study and analysis of grammatical rules, analytical reading, and grammar translation exercises. In addition according to Bereday and Pennar (in Shafiyeva and Kennedy, 2010) in the Soviet Union, grammar-translation method was justified by the dominating political system

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