



CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS: THEORY AND METHODS

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Abstract: *Contrast linguistics is a field of study that studies the similarities and differences between languages in order to better understand language structure and learning processes. This article examines the theoretical foundations and methodological approaches of contrastive linguistics, focusing on English and Uzbek. A comparative-descriptive method was used, supported by textbook analysis, real texts, and observation of student errors. The findings show that structural differences such as word order, article usage, and tense systems significantly affect second language acquisition. The study also highlights the practical importance of contrastive analysis in language teaching and curriculum design. However, it is also emphasized that contrastive linguistics alone cannot explain all learner difficulties, as psychological and contextual factors also play a role.*

Keywords: *Contrastive linguistics; language comparison; second language acquisition; language transfer; English-Uzbek comparison; language teaching; learner errors.*

Introduction

Contrastive linguistics is the branch of linguistics that compares two or more languages to find similarities and differences. It was popularized through the work of Robert Lado, who argued that differences between languages often create difficulties in learning, while similarities facilitate learning. Today, contrastive linguistics is used in language teaching, translation, and curriculum development. It helps to explain common student errors and improves teaching methods by focusing on problem areas between languages.

Methodology

This study uses a comparative-descriptive approach and focuses more on real student experiences.

Data sources:

1. Grammar textbooks (English and Uzbek)
2. Real written texts
3. Observation of students' errors in the classroom

Process:

Description - each language structure was described separately

Comparison - the structures were analyzed side by side

Interpretation - learning difficulties were identified based on differences

Unlike traditional approaches, this study also includes real student errors, which makes the analysis more practical and student-oriented.

Results

A comparison between English and Uzbek reveals several key differences:





TANQIDIY NAZAR, TAHLILIIY TAFAKKUR VA INNOVATSION G'OYALAR



1. English has a fixed SVO word order, while Uzbek is flexible.
2. English uses articles (“a”, “the”) that are not found in Uzbek.
3. The tense system in English is more complex than in Uzbek.

These differences often cause difficulties for learners of Uzbek, especially in grammar and sentence structure. There are some similarities, such as the use of suffixes and adverbial structures, but they are limited compared to the differences.

Discussion

The findings confirm that structural differences between languages have a strong impact on second language acquisition, as suggested by Robert Lado. For teaching purposes, this means that teachers should pay more attention to problem areas such as articles, tenses, and word order. Contrastive analysis is useful for improving teaching materials and reducing common errors made by students. However, it cannot explain all errors, as psychological and social factors also play a role. Therefore, it should be combined with other approaches to language research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, contrastive linguistics remains an important approach to understanding how languages differ and how these differences affect language learning. A comparison between English and Uzbek shows that structural differences, especially in grammar and sentence structure, are the main sources of difficulty for learners. At the same time, similarities between languages help to master certain structures more easily. The study confirms that contrastive analysis is a useful tool in language teaching, especially for identifying potential problem areas and improving teaching materials. However, it should not be used alone, as it cannot fully explain all errors in language learning. The combination of contrastive analysis with other linguistic and psychological approaches allows for a more complete understanding of second language acquisition.

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