



Formation and Control of Skills of Listening and Pronunciation in Teaching Russian as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

The article deals with the formation and control of audio-lingual skills at the stage of pre-university training in teaching foreign students the Russian language as a means of communication in the social, educational and scientific field.

Control is an integral part of the educational process in any educational institution. Control in didactics is a test of students' knowledge, skills and abilities. Rational and effective management of student learning is impossible without a clear, scientifically organized system of control.

Pronunciation skills from the point of view of the tasks of teaching oral and written communication in a foreign language in terms of control should be understood as correct automated pronunciation of sounds and combinations of sounds, correct stress and intonation of statements in the process of speech communication. Prosody – the melody, stress placement and rate of speech - takes a special place in speaking. A special aspect of correct pronunciation is mastering Russian intonation, including familiarity with the main types of intonation constructions (IC) and their use, the rules of syntagmatic articulation, the concept of IC center and its place in a sentence, with the tone movement on the IC center. Students usually make a lot of mistakes in intonation, thus disrupting communication.

As it turned out, the common mistake in studying Russian intonation is the lack of necessary lowering of tone on the stressed and non-stressed parts of IC-1, which creates the impression that the statement is incomplete and therefore there is a violation of the communicative types of sentence (narrative, interrogative).

In conclusion we can claim that it is prosodic skills - the skills of correctly performing prosodic operations that should be the object of control of pronunciation.

Keywords: *audio-lingual skills, stress, syntagmatic articulation, intonation constructions;*

1. Introduction

Study of any foreign language presupposes mastery of the sound system of the language, presence of audio-lingual skills – it is a compulsory condition of communication in any of its forms. That is why it is necessary to stress the importance of formation of both components of sound pronunciation skills:

- the auditory one, which enables us to differentiate elements of oral speech and correlate them with certain meanings;

- the pronouncing one, thanks to which the sound, accent-rhythmic and intonation part of an utterance is carried out. The methodical work on setting and correction of pronunciation is more often carried out at three stages of training: introductory phonetic-grammatical course, accompanying course and corrective phonetics course.

Requirements to the level of audio-lingual skills depend on the aims and conditions of training.

The first acquaintance of foreign students with the main features of Russian articulation base occurs at pre-higher institution stage training at lessons of introductory phonetic-grammatical course (IPGC), which is calculated on 10 lessons. The purpose of the course is to introduce students to the main features of Russian articulation base, teach them correct Russian pronunciation: free transition from articulation of apical sounds to articulation of velar ones; forming of mechanism of pronunciation of hard/ soft sounds; achievement of free transition in pronunciation from hard to soft sounds and vice versa; having mastered the articulation of voiced and deaf consonants, to teach to pronounce words, containing these sounds freely; to teach reading groups of consonants and vowels in words and collocations. During the course we solve tasks of training accentuation and rhythm of Russian words and word combinations. Mastering of Russian intonation is carried out on the base of small communicatively significant dialogues and



monologues [5]. There are seven basic intonation constructions in the Russian language (IC). At the elementary stage of training foreign students meet with IC - 1, IC - 2, IC - 3, IC - 4, IC - 5 and with the remaining ones – at the advanced stage [1]. After 10 lessons of introductory phonetic-grammatical course there is a test, which includes a syllabic dictation, a record of familiar words, narrative, interrogatory and exclamatory sentences, reading of syllables, setting stress in familiar words, reading a text with familiar words (50-60 words). Accompanying phonetics course aims at removing difficulties of work at new lexical and grammatical material. Selecting material on phonetics the teacher needs to consider language phenomena, which can cause difficulty with foreign students. The corrective course serves to improve audio-lingual skills and takes into account the already formed features of audio-lingual skills of native speech. Identification of similarities and discrepancies in the systems of native and studied languages is very important for the formation and control of audio-lingual skills.

2. Methodology

The formation of audio-lingual skills at pre-higher institution stage is held in two aspects: the aspect of training of general knowledge and the aspect of training in future specialty, which is called scientific style of speech (SSS). This aspect, as well as the aspect of general knowledge of the Russian language, consists of introductory linguistics, elementary and first certificate levels. For the formation and improvement of audio-lingual skills in the aspect of scientific style of speech we use exercises from the textbook compiled by a team of authors. [7].

On audio level the system of work on improvement of audio-lingual skills on the SSS material we take the same themes as the ones that are used at the level of training of general knowledge of language, for example, in vocalism: 1) front vowels of medium and upper rise ([э-и], *молекула лития, растение - растительный, жутик эвглены, реснички парамеции*); 2) top rise vowels of front, middle and back rows ([и-ы-у] *литий - железо - ртуть; атомы лития - атомы железа - атомы ртути; молекулы лития - молекулы железа - молекулы ртути*); 3) vowels of the back row of the top and middle rise [о-у] *йод - ртуть*). In consonantism: 1) voicelessness - sonority, (*сера - азот, серебро - золото кислород, водород, углерод; входит в состав*); 2) hardness – softness of consonants and free transition from hard consonants to soft ones and vice versa (*тело амёбы, тело эвглены, выделительная*); 3) single focus-double focus consonants (*семь- шесть, золото- железо, простейшее*); 4) fricative - affricates (*семь - цифра, семнадцать, тысяча, процесс, цитоплазма, свет - цвет*); 5) affricates - occlusives (*двадцать, двенадцать, цитоплазма - тело, свинец- ртуть, процент*); 6) hard and soft fricative (*шесть - вещество*); 7) soft occlusive - affricate (*тело - четыре, тело парамеции*); 8) velar occlusive and fricative (*кислород - хлор, хлорная кислота*) [7, 8].

During listening sessions the formed audio-lingual skills provide the adequacy of understanding the received information. Absence of such skills in listening can lead to distortion of the perceived information or to complete misunderstanding. In order to form audio-lingual skills as a basis of development of all types of speech activity at the elementary stage we offer special tasks aimed at forming and controlling skills of adequate perception of words, word combinations and sentences as well as skills to correlate sound and graphic images of words, which undergo position and combinatorial changes in speech flow. The listening and reading tasks first offer individual words, then word combinations and texts.

- Read. Mind your pronunciation. Write and memorize words.
- Listen. Read. Pay attention to the stress and reduction.
- Listen and read the text. Mind your pronunciation.
- Listen. Read. Repeat, without looking into the book. Mind the intonation: pay attention to the intonation center in the question and in the answer. Remember, that in a question the voice rises on the intonation centre of the phrase. In the answer the voice falls on the information centre of the phrase.

For the development of audio skills and writing skills students are offered the following tasks:

- Listen. Write the dictation. The teacher dictates and checks the dictation himself. The dictation, written on the blackboard by one student, is checked by the whole group under the teacher's supervision.
- Listen and write words and sentences in abbreviated form. Read what you have written.

The objects of control of the formation of audio-lingual skills during the study of introductory course on scientific style of speech as well as at the training of general knowledge are the skills of pronunciation on audio level, test of skills of using accent and rhythmic models of separate words and



word combinations and the skills of applying correct intonation in sentences:

- Listen and mark stress in the words. Determine, in what pairs of words the stress is fixed: моле́кула – моле́кулы, числó – числа, кле́тка – кле́тки, бело́к – белки́;
- What accent and rhythmical scheme татаТА́, ТА, таТАта, ТА́тата, ТА́тата, таТА́та татаТА́ corresponds to the words: нау́ка, веще́ствó, фтор, хи́мия, ма́рганец, прсто́е веще́ствó;
- At training and control of intonation the student should choose from two sentences the one, which corresponds to what they have read (the narrative or interrogative sentence).

Вода – простое вещество. Вода – простое вещество?

In the basis of training of Russian pronunciation on scientific style of speech material lies one of the basic concepts of modern techniques of teaching Russian as a foreign language - textocentrism. Audio-lingual skills should be formed not only on the level of words, word combinations and sentences, but also on the level of the text. A foreign student should understand oral text on hearing, be able to record it on hearing, read it correctly, with a certain speed, reproduce the text with correct pronunciation. At training Russian pronunciation on scientific style of speech material large work on syntagmatic division should be conducted. The skills of division of written text into syntagms, united pronunciation of syntagms with increasing degree of prevalence as well as the skills of adequate perception of syntagmatic division in oral speech are formed. Students gradually get acquainted with different types of syntagms and possible variants of their lexical and morphological structure.

The following types of syntagms are studied: subject, predicate, object, attribute, adverbial modifier and various types of mixed syntagms. For example, the syntagm of the subject or predicate, consisting of one word: Амёба / - животное. Then we give syntagms consisting of two words: Амёба - простейшее животное. Then we introduce syntagms consisting of noun in the Nominative case + noun in the Genitive case: тело амёбы, тело эвлены, органелла движения. Then occurs spreading of syntagm due to its lexico-grammatical filling: noun in the Nominative case + adjective + noun in the Genitive case: тело простейшего животного. Then the analysis of syntagmatic division of a phrase and its intonation is done.

Prosodic skill at reading presupposes the ability to read and divide a text into the following units:

- syntagm, matching the division of sentence into parts (groups of subject, predicate, adverbial modifiers etc.), into word combinations (verbal, nominal);
- sentences of various structural and semantic types (various models) - simple, complex, compound with various subordinate clauses;
- sentences of various communicative types - question, request, statement etc.;
- components of actual division - theme and rheme.

To control the audio-lingual skills in reading the following forms of work may be used:

- reading aloud of graphically submitted printed text or group of sentences;
- reading to oneself and doing exercises in specified time;
- repeated reading aloud of one and the same passage each time stressing a new logical predicate [2];
- expressive reading of a text, which requires mastery of the whole complex of audio-lingual skills as well as the control of formation of all components of their operations. Reading represents the process, consisting of reading techniques and understanding what you have read. Acquiring skills of reading techniques is basically connected with reading aloud (in chorus and individual).

Reading aloud students should not only understand the contents of the text, but also transmit it to other listeners.

Reading skills should ensure the perceptive processing of the written text, decoding of optic signals into semantic units.

Exercises, aimed at producing these skills, are based on pronouncing elements that get more and more complex - letters, combinations of letters, word combinations, syntagms, sentences, microtexts. Beginning with the level of words, reading such elements should be combined with the establishment of the meaning of the spoken text.

During the control of formation of reading techniques great attention is paid to the speed of reading. Educational program in the Russian language as a foreign one has requirements in reading at every training stage (elementary, basic, first certificate). At elementary level the volume of the given text is 250 - 300 words, the number of unfamiliar words - 1 - 2%, reading time - 20 min.

For basic level the volume of the text is 600 - 700 words, the number of unfamiliar words - 3-4%,



reading time - 30 min.

At first certificate level the volume of the text is 900-1000 words, the number of unfamiliar words is 5-7%, reading time - 30 min. Recommended reading speed - 40-50 words a minute at learning reading; 80-100 words at reading with the purpose of general familiarization with the contents [3].

In speaking the following skills become the object of checking:

- putting correct verbal stress;
- correct choice of rhythmic and intonation model for phrases of different structure to transfer their communicative intentions to the listeners (request, order, request for information);
- correct choice of rhythmic and intonation model for expression of actual division - definition of the given and new (theme and rheme) in a message, emphasizing the main information of the text with the help of logical stress;
- correct division of the text into semantic segments, correct semantic division of the text;
- correct syntagmatic division of phrases in accordance with grammatical organization of statements and the speaker's communicative task [4].

Thus, there is no doubt that without the formation and control of audio-lingual skills, which are the foundation of all types of speech activity, it is impossible to prepare foreign students for social, everyday communication, educational and scientific sphere, or for professional training in Russian higher education institutions.

3. Conclusion

- Audio-lingual skills are the base, the foundation for all types of speech activity: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Without the formed audio-lingual skills in the Russian language it is impossible to form the communicative and speech competence for foreign students to participate in social, everyday and educational sphere of communication.
- Significant work on the formation of audio-lingual skills along with grammatical and lexical skills should be conducted at lessons on general knowledge and scientific style of speech taking into account the interfering influence of the students' native language.
- Setting Russian pronunciation on the general knowledge material and the material of teaching scientific style of speech the concept of level organization of the phonetic system of the Russian language is fundamentally important. Students comprehensively master the sound, accent, rhythmic and intonation peculiarities.
 - There should be permanent control of pronunciation skills of foreign students not only by the teacher, but also self-control with the help of recording pronunciation on dictaphone and further analysis of mistakes. Such form of control gives possibility to estimate one's level of mastery of pronunciation and determine difficulties, emerging in conditions of speech environment.
 - The formation and control of audio-lingual skills should be done at all stages of teaching the Russian language on up-to-date lexico-grammatical material, corresponding to the aspect and substantive content.
 - Automation of audio-lingual skills has great importance for the solution of the main task of a foreign student - studying at the main faculty, where they are supposed to listen to lectures, read and understand unadapted texts in their major specialty in the Russian language, participate in colloquiums, various seminars and conferences.

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