

## Exploring the Effect of Interference on the Phonetic Errors Committed by the Persian-speaking Learners of Russian

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### Abstract

Russian and Persian languages, regardless of the linguistic worlds, are special languages in terms of phonetic system, grammar, vocabulary, etc. and have differences with each other. Since the learners have already internalized the linguistic knowledge of the first language in their minds, they are very likely to commit errors in the process of learning a second language. This phenomenon, which is mostly natural and unavoidable, is referred to as interference. The present study aims to explore the effects of interference on the errors by providing evidence from the usual errors committed by the Persian-speaking learners of Russian in the elementary level. First, the authors attempt to detect and classify the speaking errors of the learners in terms of the type of interference, and then the authors provide an analysis of them. Phonetic tests are used to collect the data. The participants of the study were 51 elementary level students in Isfahan, Guilan and Gonbad universities. The analysis of the data suggests that the target language (Russian), as one of the influential factors contributing to interference, has a drastic impact on the errors committed by the Persian-speaking learners of Russian.

**Keywords:** Interference, Phonetic errors, Persian-speaking learners of Russian, Interlingual errors, Intralingual errors, Russian language, Persian language.

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## 1. Introduction

The present study examines the role of interference and its effect on the occurrence of such errors by referring to some common mistakes of Persian-speaking Russian learners of elementary level. The purpose of the present study is to investigate and identify the phonetic errors of Persian-speaking Russian learners, which are categorized and analyzed according to the type of interference, and the source of errors and the frequency of occurrence of each of them are specified separately. In this study, the authors seek to answer the following questions:

1. Do the language system and rules of the language being taught interfere with the corresponding rules in Persian?
2. Which type of Mistakes are due to interlingual or intralingual errors made by Russian-learning students at the phonetic levels ?

## 2. Literature Review

The term "interference" was first adapted from physics by linguists. In linguistics, the subject of interference was first used in the second half of the nineteenth century, through which linguistic phenomena arising from the connection of one language with another were studied. The subject of interference has been discussed by many linguists and researchers, including Rosenzweig (1972), Weinrich (1972), Selinker (1974), Ziahosseiny (1999, 2009), Azimov and Shokin (2009), Choybonova (2009), Yar Mohammadi and Rashidi (2009), Barakhta (2015). Among the few studies that are somewhat close to the subject of the present study in the Russian language, the following works can be mentioned:

1. Elham Babaei Veleni (2013) in their dissertation "Comparative study of the phonetic system of Persian and Russian";
2. Gholami (2005) in a study entitled "On some common mistakes of

Iranian language learners in Russian speech".

### **3. Innovation**

In the last two decades, valuable and comprehensive studies in the Russian language - mostly based on areas such as Morphology, syntax, semantics, etc. - have been conducted by Iranian researchers, but no necessary and extensive research has been done specifically and separately in the field of Interference in the occurrence of phonetic errors of Persian-speaking Russian learners of the elementary level of the Russian language.

### **4. Methodology**

The research method in the present article is based on the description and analysis of errors. The statistical population of this research consists of 51 students of the elementary level of the Russian language entering the universities of Isfahan, Guilan, and Gonbad-e Kavus in 1398. The instrument used to collect research data was the phonetic test.

### **5. Discussion and analysis**

In this study, it was found that with the help of error analysis, it is possible to identify problematic cases in the field of phonology that Russian-learning students can potentially face with. In relation to phonetic interference, four categories of errors were identified: stress errors on the pronunciation of words, substitution of consonants and vowels, pronunciation of several consonants in a word, and finally errors related to the pronunciation of hard and soft consonants. The results showed that in terms of frequency of occurrence, the stress errors on the pronunciation of words has a significant share of errors, which indicates a significant difference compared to other errors in this area; in terms of the origin of the frequency of production, three categories of errors, the main cause of which is the influence of the Russian

language on Persian, are more common than the error of pronouncing the sequence of two or more consonants in a word that has an interlingual origin. Therefore, based on the obtained results, it seems that phonetic interference has occurred as a result of the difference between the mother tongue (Persian) and second language (Russian) systems and, of course, the influence of the Persian phonetic system from Russian.

### **6. Conclusion**

Overall, the results of the study confirm that in the process of learning Russian as a foreign language, the first language system (Persian), which is often imprinted in the minds of Russian students, does not play a significant role in errors and students often make the mistakes due to difficulty and lack of paying attention to the rules governing the language being taught. Based on the analysis of the types of errors studied and according to the results of this analysis, practical solutions can be provided to reduce the occurrence of errors in facilitating Russian language teaching for students. Description of errors can cause the teacher to pay more attention to solving problematic issues in order to advance the educational goals. It is recommended that the content related to the analyzed errors be included in the educational resources and appropriate exercises be included in the curriculum to minimize the amount of errors in language learners.