Linguistic Features of Uzbek

Emily Walton  
*Department of English, Boise State University*

Larina Lynne  
*Department of English, Boise State University*

Monica Nesbitt  
*Department of English, Boise State University*

Tyler Casperson  
*Department of English, Boise State University*

Michael Christensen  
*Department of English, Boise State University*

*See next page for additional authors*
Authors
Emily Walton, Larina Lynne, Monica Nesbitt, Tyler Casperson, Michael Christensen, Anna Cox, Janelle Derie, Zachary Espil, Claire Ivins, Erin Lind, and Anneliese Satz

This student presentation is available at ScholarWorks: http://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/as_10/10
Linguistic Features of Uzbek

Emily Walton, Larina Lynne, Monica Nesbitt, Tyler Casperson, Michael Christensen, Anna Cox, Janelle Derie, Zachary Espil, Claire Ivins, Erin Lind, and Anneliese Satz
BSUlinguists@gmail.com

Introduction

Over the course of a semester, students in the English Senior Seminar for the linguistics emphasis documented the Uzbek language as a group project. This allowed students to gain proficiency in linguistic fieldwork methodologies.

What is linguistic fieldwork?

• Gathering linguistic data from native speakers of a language not spoken by any of the students.
• Analyzing collected data and documenting phonetic, morphological, and syntactic features.

Why linguistic fieldwork for the Senior Seminar?

• Students apply linguistic topics and theories learned in other courses by documenting the distinct linguistic features of a language other than English.
• By recording elicitation sessions, the recordings will be made available for further analysis by linguists around the world.

Why Uzbek?

• Uzbek is spoken by refugees and immigrants in the Boise area.
• It is also under-documented in the linguistic literature.

Language Background

• (Northern) Uzbek is the official language of Uzbekistan and is classified as an Eastern Turkic language belonging to the Altaic language family.
• There are approximately 20,010,000 speakers of Uzbek living in Uzbekistan.
• As a former member nation of the Soviet Union, there are many Russian borrowings in the languages spoken in Uzbekistan.

Methods

• A 19-year old female native speaker of Uzbek was consulted for this project.
• Students met with the language consultant for 45 minutes on a weekly basis over the course of a semester.
• Audio and video recordings were made during consultations.
• All recordings were phonetically transcribed and analyzed.
• Each week, a different team of students led the data elicitation sessions and class discussion regarding the findings.

Linguistic Features of Uzbek

Linguistic Features – Phonology

There are 27 distinct consonantal sounds in Uzbek.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Postalveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>p h t d</td>
<td>k g q ?</td>
<td>m n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral Approximation</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Voiced consonants undergo devoicing in word-final position: [kʊz] ‘eyes’ → [kuz] ‘eyes’
• Nasals assimilate in place of articulation to the following consonant: [bʊz] ‘ten’ + [bɪq] ‘one’ → [bəbər] ‘eleven’

Linguistic Features – Morphology and Syntax

The following are personal pronouns in Uzbek:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular pronouns</th>
<th>Plural pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>[man]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>[san]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>[u]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs are conjugated to reflect person and number:

Subject | Object | Verb | Object | Pronoun
---|---|---|---|---
man | futbol | listen | casliman | aman
he/she/it | futbol | listen | casliman | u
you | futbol | listen | casliman | sen
she | futbol | listen | casliman | sen
he | futbol | listen | casliman | bani
you | futbol | listen | casliman | bani
they | futbol | listen | casliman | olim

Because each person and number has their own conjugation, pronouns are not required in Uzbek – it is a pro-drop language. Therefore, both of the following sentences mean the same thing:

1. [u] rakh muskəstn | [lad] | he/she/it | rock music | listen (3rd pers.sg.)
subject | object | verb
2. [rakh muskəstn] | [lad] | rock music | listens (3rd pers.sg.)
object | verb

Both mean ‘He listens to rock music’

Uzbek has at least one morpheme that marks direct objects, this is also known as the accusative marker. This is expressed in the form of a suffix [-n] or [-nn] attached to the object.

1. [u] rakh muskəstn | [lad] | he/she/it | rock music| listen (3rd pers.sg.)
subject | object
2. [musika] | manga | igom beradi | he listens to rock music
rock music | to me | inspiration | if gives(3rd pers.sg.)
object | verb

What next?

Our group is planning to submit abstracts and original manuscripts detailing our findings to linguistic journals and conferences in the fields of phonetics and phonology, language documentation, and Altaic linguistics.

Selected References

