



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UZBEK AND ENGLISH SENTENCE STRUCTURES IN ACADEMIC WRITING

Aralova Madina Baxtiyor qizi

SamSIFL Narpay Faculty of Foreign Languages

Foreign Language and Literature (English)

2nd stage student of group 23.01

Abstract

This article deals with Uzbek and English sentence structure differences in academic writing. The paper compares syntactic features of the two languages and explains how these differences are manifested in Uzbek students' English essays. Drawing on a qualitative analysis of 30 academic essays and 5 authentic Uzbek texts, the paper reveals main problems such as word order interference, lack of articles, and misuse of passive voice. The findings show that explicit contrastive grammar instruction can improve students' writing.

Keywords: Uzbek language, English language, sentence structure, academic writing, contrastive grammar, passive voice, article usage, linguistic transfer.

Introduction

In the realm of academic writing, clarity, coherence, and structural precision are essential features that determine the effectiveness of scholarly expression. These qualities, however, are often influenced by the writer's native language. For Uzbek students writing in English, structural differences between **Uzbek and English sentence patterns** can result in syntactic errors, awkward phrasing, and miscommunication.

Uzbek is an agglutinative, **subject-object-verb (SOV)** language, while English is **subject-verb-object (SVO)** and analytic in nature. These fundamental distinctions affect not only word order but also clause linkage, use of articles, passive constructions, and subordination strategies. As Kaplan (1966) noted in his contrastive rhetoric theory, a student's native language can shape their thought and writing patterns even in a second language.



This paper explores the main differences between Uzbek and English sentence structures in academic writing and examines how these differences manifest in the English essays of Uzbek students.

Methods

This study applied a **comparative and qualitative analysis** methodology. A corpus of **30 academic essays** written by second-year university students majoring in English philology was collected. The essays were evaluated based on sentence structure, cohesion devices, and grammatical accuracy.

In parallel, five authentic academic texts written in Uzbek were analyzed to identify dominant sentence patterns and common stylistic features. The syntactic features were compared with English academic conventions, using guidelines from Swales and Feak (2012), and Biber et al. (1999) for English academic writing norms. In classroom observation of authentic scenes, findings were also given support: students who wrote an essay on topic "The Role of Technology in Modern Education," followed the majority the SOV pattern, whereas in English although there is direct SVO requirement, this used to confuse them since their logical argumentation would not follow for English because word order and packaging of information didn't fall in the category of expectations of academic English.

The analysis focused on:

Word order and clause structure

Use of passive voice

Articles and determiners

Subordination and conjunctions

Sentence complexity and information packaging

Results

The analysis revealed several **systematic differences** and **interference patterns**:

Word Order Transfer: In over 70% of student essays, sentence structures followed Uzbek word order (SOV), resulting in awkward English constructions such as:



“I to the library went to study for the exam.”

This sentence structure is in accordance with Uzbek grammar, but English requires an SVO sequence for coherence. One student wrote the following: "He university to study went," instead of "He went to the university to study." This form is frequently used through direct L1 syntax transfer, as seen from the student's work.

Article Omission: 88% of the essays showed inconsistent use or complete omission of **definite and indefinite articles**, which do not exist in Uzbek.

For instance, a student wrote: "He is teacher," instead of "He is a teacher." The absence of articles has a tendency to obscure meaning, as the inability to differentiate between specificity and generality is not a feature of Uzbek.

Overuse of Complex Sentences: Uzbek academic writing tends to use **long, clause-heavy sentences** with participial and relative clauses. Students often transferred this to English, creating run-on or overly convoluted sentences. For example, one essay from the corpus contained a sentence like: “The study focused on the effects of modern technology on education systems and how it improves student learning environments, transforming them into dynamic and interactive environments, as has been observed through the large-scale deployment of e-learning platforms, especially during the pandemic.” The sentence is simple in Uzbek academic writing but overlong and cumbersome in English. English academic writing prefers clarity and brevity and uses shorter, more readable sentences.

Passive Voice Misuse: Passive constructions in Uzbek academic writing are less common. English academic writing, however, relies heavily on passives to maintain objectivity. This led to underuse or incorrect usage among students.

For example, one student had: "The research by the experts," when it should say: "The research was carried out by the experts." This lack of passive constructions is problematic when students struggle to adhere to English academic writing conventions that are objectivist and typically at the cost of the passive voice.

Logical Connectors: Uzbek texts use repetition and lexical cohesion more than explicit logical markers (e.g., however, therefore). Students underused these connectors in English, weakening paragraph coherence.



One of the students did the following: "The internet has many advantages it is used by millions of people." The sentence lacks the needed conjunction to ensure smooth flow, which in academic writing can be difficult. English academic writing, however, necessitates explicit transitions, for instance, "The internet has many advantages. For instance, it is used by millions of people."

Discussion

The findings support the idea that **linguistic transfer** from L1 to L2 affects sentence construction. As Odlin (1989) argues, transfer is not always negative, but in cases of fundamental structural differences, it often leads to **interlanguage errors**. In this study, the majority of students failed to internalize English-specific patterns, especially in terms of **information focus, sentence rhythm, and noun phrase complexity**, as described in academic style guides (Swales & Feak, 2012). From a practical perspective, one of my students having trouble with English writing explained to me, "I never knew my sentences sound strange in English since I was imitating the pattern of my native language without even knowing it." This is how deeply L1 patterns are entrenched in shaping the way that we structure ideas in a second language.

Furthermore, the lack of formal instruction in academic English syntax and limited exposure to authentic academic texts may exacerbate these structural inconsistencies. According to Hyland (2006), explicit instruction in genre and discourse conventions is critical for non-native English writers.

This comparative analysis highlights the need for **contrastive grammar training** that directly addresses differences between Uzbek and English academic writing styles. Teachers should design writing tasks that emphasize clarity, conciseness, and typical English academic sentence constructions.

Conclusion

Uzbek and English have dramatically different sentence patterns, and this affects the manner in which Uzbek students compose when writing in English. The most prevalent difficulties include word order interference, article overuse, and underuse of passive voice and logical connectors. Targeted intervention and exposure to model texts are some of the ways these concerns can be mitigated to better the academic writing ability of the students.



Future studies may examine whether translation-based exercises or corpus-based comments could assist students in internalizing English syntactic norms more effectively.

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