



THE CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS HYPOTHESIS: A CASE STUDY OF AN UIGHUR-UZBEK-RUSSIAN MULTILINGUAL WOMAN

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ABSTRACT

In this case study, I will observe 30 year old woman learning Russian learning Russian as L2 while her L1 is Uighur-Uzbek. As her target language quite differ from her native one I will figure out errors by comparing her L1 with L2 and make out conclusions on the challenges she faces during her language learning process.

KEY WORDS : *language acquisition, multilingual, contrastive analysis, target language, L1, L2*

INTRODUCTION

The influence of mother tongue to the language learning process has been one of the controversial issues in second language acquisition for decades. This issue have been studied from different first language background to find an accurate answer to the influence of the native language on learning a foreign language. However, this is still disputable among language teaching professionals as well as linguists and there is still no agreement at present on what precisely it contributes or how. Moreover, Contrastive Analysis theory remains an influential construct in the field of second language acquisition; using comparisons of languages to explain areas of difficulty for learners. Following such a theory may contribute to a better understanding of the acquisition process of second language structures. As a method it distinguishes between what are needed and not needed to learn by the target language(TL) learner by evaluating languages (M.Gass & Selinker, 2008). In addition, CA is a technique to identify whether two languages have something in common, which assess both similarities and differences in languages, conforming to the belief in language universals. (Johnson, 1999). Both statements indicate that CA holds a principle which is important in order to identify what are required by the TL learner to learn in TL and what are not. If there is no familiar characteristic in the languages, it indicates that the learner might have difficulty in learning the TL. While much could be said about comparing languages, a more important aspect is about the influence from TL in first language (L1).

In this case study, I will observe 30 year old woman learning Russian learning Russian as L2 while her L1 is Uighur-Uzbek. As her target language quite differ from her native one I will figure out errors by comparing her L1 with L2 and make out conclusions on the challenges she faces during her language learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CA was first developed by Charles Fries (1945) as an integral component of the methodology of FL teaching (Alkhreshah, 2013). It was noted that in learning a FL, the learner tended to bring with him the knowledge of the L1, and suggested that this should be taken into consideration in teaching the L2. So, the psychological foundation of CA is transfer theory, substituting the L1 for the prior learning and the L2 for the subsequent learning. According to CA, the most effective materials for teaching a L2 are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learnt, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language (NL hereinafter) of the learner. The best way to achieve this was to undertake a comparative analysis of L1 and L2. Given this, CA assumes that those elements that are similar to the NL will be simpler to the learner, and those that are different will be difficult. Therefore, it is recommended that pedagogical materials be designed which would address the target language (TL hereinafter) in a systematic fashion based on the predicted difficulty of structures as derived from CA. It is believed that, carrying out 'CA' as well as planning the fitting course outline and instruction materials is as a result of the effort put in by Lane as cited by (Ammar and



Nina, 2006). Such analyses were envisioned to be carried out in terms of forms, meaning and distributions of linguistic and cultural units in both L1 and L2. Three major sources contributed to a general rationale for conducting CA studies: First, the observation by students of language contact of the phenomenon of interference. Such a phenomenon was defined by Weinrich as "those instances of deviation from norms of either language which occur in the speech of the bilinguals as the result of their familiarity with more than one language"(cited in Bowers, 2002, 186). The practical experience of teachers of FL and their identification of deviations attributed to the learner's mother tongue (MT hereinafter) provide the second source, whilst the learning theory of interference within L1 based on findings in psychology constitutes the third dimension. Given the above rationale, CA can be viewed in terms of three separate approaches: First, the purely linguistic approach, which maintains that CA is nothing more than contrasting for the sake of contrasting and the new knowledge it might provide. The second approach, on the other hand, maintains that CA is capable of encompassing all the errors which occur in SLA. Finally, there is a third position somewhere between these two points of view that contends that CA has been relegated much too high a position in language learning in the past, and further, on its own merits. CA does not hold a legitimate position in the general scheme of language teaching.

Some strong claims were made of the CAH by language teaching experts and linguists. Robert Lado (1957, p. vii), for example, in the preface to *Linguistics Across Cultures*, said, "The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and the culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student." An equally strong claim was made by Banathy, Trager, and Waddle (1966, p. 37): "The change that has to take place in the language behavior of a foreign language student can be equated with the differences between the structure of the student's native language and culture and that of the target language and culture."

Such claims were supported by what some researchers claimed to be an empirical method of prediction. A well-known model was offered by Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin (1965), who posited what they called a hierarchy of difficulty by which a teacher or linguist could make a prediction of the relative difficulty of a given aspect of the target language. Further, they posited eight possible degrees of difficulty for phonological systems and 16 degrees for grammar. Clifford Prator (1967) subsequently reduced those numbers to six degrees for both phonology and grammar.

Level 0—Transfer. No difference or contrast.

Level 1—Coalescence. Two items in the LI become coalesced into one item in the L2.

Level 2—Underdifferentiation. An item in the LI is absent in the L2.

Level 3—Reinterpretation. An item that exists in the native language is given a new shape or distribution.

Level 4—Overdifferentiation. A new item entirely, bearing little if any similarity to the native language item.

Level 5—Split. One item in the native language becomes two or more in the target language.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The subject is my uncle's 30-year-old wife who was born in the family with Uzbek background, in one of the Uighur spoken cities of China. Although she was born in Uzbek family, but she firstly learned to speak in Uighur as her whole family spoke only Uighur, except her grandfather who was originally Uzbek from Andijan. The subject had spent 7 years in Uighur city till her family decided to move to Andijan where she started to go to Uzbek school. As she was young and surrounded with Uzbek environment in a year she had learnt Uzbek. She had code-switching as she used Uzbek only with her friends at school, yard, but with her family members she switched into Uighur. She had only spoken Uighur, couldn't write, read in it and wasn't aware of its grammar as well. She also wasn't good at Uzbek grammar during her school years as she said, she was quite good at reciting poems rather retelling by comprehending their meaning. Her family was quite far from European culture and related languages, so she didn't have any interest to learning Russian as L2 at school. Then at her twelve's she started learning Arabian language to be able to read Quran, but she only learned Arabian letters and how to read them, without knowing or understanding their meaning. At the age of 17 she started learning Uighur as its' letters were similar with Arabian, so she learned the letters easily and learnt reading in Uighur, yet cannot write in it. She tried to apply to study at Madrasah in order to be enhance her religious knowledge and learn Arabian deeper, but as she got married all her language competence left in its' that level. Years passed her children started going to Russian school and they needed help to catch up all subjects in quite unknown for them language, as the only language they knew was uzbek and at home everybody speaks in pure uzbek without any interference of Russian. Then my subject decided to learn Russian in order to understand and be able to explain given to children homework. She spent a year attending Russian courses but all her effort was fruitless, because she could not understand the grammar and notion of absolutely new for her language. Furthermore, she practiced Russian only at class and other time she used her native language, as she did not have any Russian



speaking friend or acquaintance to practice it . actually she speaks in Uzbek with her husband as he is pure Uzbek and his relatives, with her children , with her friends from Andijan only in Uzbek; but with her relatives, with her sisters, brothers, parents in Uighur. She had changed her tutors many times thinking that they could not convey knowledge to her properly and that's why she still can not learn Russian, due to tutor's poor experience and methods. After a year- break the subject started again attending Russian courses. This time she liked classroom atmosphere and tutors friendly approach, this makes her not to miss classes and learn Russian with enthusiasm. She also mentioned that she can not catch up with task accomplishment in class and her tutor is pure Russian ,who does not know uzbek, my subject can not ask questions if she misses something or can not do tasks independently unlike her group mates. However, when she is at home alone, after getting explanation in native language from me about the theme, topic, they had at class, she can accomplish task independently.

RESEARCH DESIGN

During two weeks I have observed subject's L2 acquisition and basic focus was given on grammar competence, as her new tutor started first month of the courses from introducing them basic grammar notions of Russian. The subject faced problems with differentiating gender in Russian (ОН,ОНА,ОНО) he/she/it, as in Uzbek for this is applied one word "U" . Furthermore she had quite enough errors in putting endings to the adjectives according to the phrase following them (Appendix B) as in Russian adjectives also change according to the gender, which lacks in Uzbek.

For example; Subject: |Новый тетрадь- but it should be – новая тетрадь Красный ручка-- but it should be -красная ручка

From these examples we can see that subject has negative transfer while learning L2 which does not have any similarities to compare with her L1, moreover lack of grammar competence of her native language has caused challenges on her language learning process. Besides that subjects difficulties with pronunciation should also be mentioned here, because she still can not correctly pronounce words with sounds a letters in Russian like Ы , Ъ. While observing her mistakes on her handouts I have noticed mistakes according to hierarchy of difficulty which was divided into 6 degrees of difficulty according to Clifford Plators notion and these are following ones:

Level 1—Coalescence. Two items in the LI become coalesced into one item in the L2. Gender distinction: Russian *ее.ее* (his/her) in Uzbek the only word for both genders "uning"

Level 3—Reinterpretation. An item that exists in the native language is given a new shape or distribution. New pronunciation of

"J" in Russian (Ж); jahon(as in English word jolly) – жук (two sounds 'dj')

Level 5—Split. One item in the native language becomes two or more in the target language. Third person pronoun in Uzbek "U" divides into three forms "ОН,ОНА,ОНО" (he, she, it)

DATA COLLECTION AND FINDINGS

Observations done on hierarchy of difficulties according to Clifford Plators reduced degrees only 3 levels were found out while contrasting 2 languages which differ from each other quite deeply. These degrees were analyzed from subjects errors done on her handout and have clarified the root of her problems which affects her language learning process.

CA is defined as a pedagogical procedure which explains errors committed by L2 learners by comparing between the two systems of the TL and NL of the learners. In other words, CA can also be defined as a linguistic comparison of the structures of two or more languages so as to demonstrate their differences and similarities. It stipulates that when the L1 and L2 are different, learning might be relatively unsuccessful or difficult. As we can see from the subject's experience where we have compared and contrasted her L1 and L2 and despite the fact that she had learned till her 27 languages which were similar to each other easier, rather the one she did not know at all, such as learning Uighur reading relying on her Arabian, which made language acquisition process faster. However, still she has incomplete base of each language that she know and learn, in terms of grammar, phonology, lexicology and each time when she introduced new topic to learn lots of questions turn around her mind and leads her to confusion during the lesson and accomplishing tasks much more slower than others.

CONCLUSION

I have analyzed Contrastive analysis hypothesis in this case study where multilingual woman's L2 has been compared with her L1. According to my findings on CAH of that the influence of mother tongue to target language is vital, it can serve as a base to L2 learning, shaping idea about language acquisition. Thus subject chosen for this theory can be clear explanation to the correctness of CAH in terms of her difficulties, errors she has been doing so far. Adopting CA theory by some of the latest studies is a good indicator to its effectiveness in describing L2 learners' errors especially those which can be due to interference from the MT. There are numerous studies that show the effectiveness of the CA. According to these studies, the knowledge about the kinds and degree of differences and similarities between languages on a number of linguistic levels helps in the process of predicting possible difficulties faced by L2 learners. From the pedagogical perspective, it could be revealed that CA helps students to see clearly some of the



problems they might face. CA remains an influential construct in the field of SLA; using comparisons of languages to explain areas of difficulty for learners. Following CA may contribute to a better understanding of the acquisition process of English L2 structures. It could be said that one of the undoubted merits of CA is the fact that it offered a natural, even if only partial explanation to the errors committed by L2/FL learners.

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1

TESL 5230 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Mazkur hujjat 3 nusxada bo'lishi zarur. Tadqiqot ishtirokchisida bir nusxa, sizda bir nusxa va yana bir nusxa fan o'qituvchisida saqlanadi. Hujjatning qisqartirilgan yoki tarjima qilingan nusxasi ham qabul qilinadi.

Sinf tadqiqotida ishtirok etishga rozilik

Men Najimova Nargiza AQSHning Webster universiteti magistratura bo'limining ta'lim yo'nalishi (TESL 5139) talabasiman. Mazkur bo'lim talabalariga ikkinchi tilni o'rganish jarayonini tadqiqot etish maqsadida chet tilini o'rganuvchilar haqida og'zaki va yozma ma'lumotlar to'plash vazifasi berilgan. Siz ushbu tadqiqotda ishtirok etishga taklif qilasiz.

Tadqiqotning bir qismi sifatida siz bilan bo'ladigan 10-20 daqiqalik intervyu yozib olinishi mumkin. Yoki sizga yozma so'rovnoma berilib, turli masalar yuzasidan o'z fikrlaringizni bayon qilish so'raladi. Berilgan savollarga javob berish yoki bermaslik sizning ixtiyoringizda. Shuningdek, sizga yozma test yoki topshiriq ham berilishi mumkin. Barcha audio, video yoki yozuv namunalari transkripsiya qilinganda sizning shaxsingiz sir tutilib, taxallus orqali beriladi. To'plangan barcha ma'lumotlar faqat mazkur kurs, TESL 5230 da ta'lim maqsadlarida foydalaniladi. Barcha yozuvlar, namunalar va qaydlar maxfiy saqlanadi.

Mazkur tadqiqot ishtirokchisiga kompensatsiya berilmaydi. Istalgan vaqtda siz (a) ishtirok etishdan bosh tortishingiz, (b) sinovni to'xtatishni talab qilishingiz, (c) yoki siz bergan ma'lumotlardan foydalanishni ta'qiqlashingiz mumkin. Agar savollaringiz bo'lsa, 903121949 raqam orqali men bilan bog'laning. Shuningdek kurs TESL 5230 o'qituvchisi, Alimova Kamola bilan 94 6400887 raqami orqali bog'lanishingiz mumkin.

Sizning imzoingiz mazkur hujjatni o'qib, tanishib chiqqanligingiz va tadqiqotda ishtirok etishga roziligingizni bildiradi. Mazkur hujjatni imzolab bo'lganingizdan keyin ham ishtirok etishdan bosh tortishingiz mumkin. Sizga ushbu hujjattan bir nusxasi beriladi.

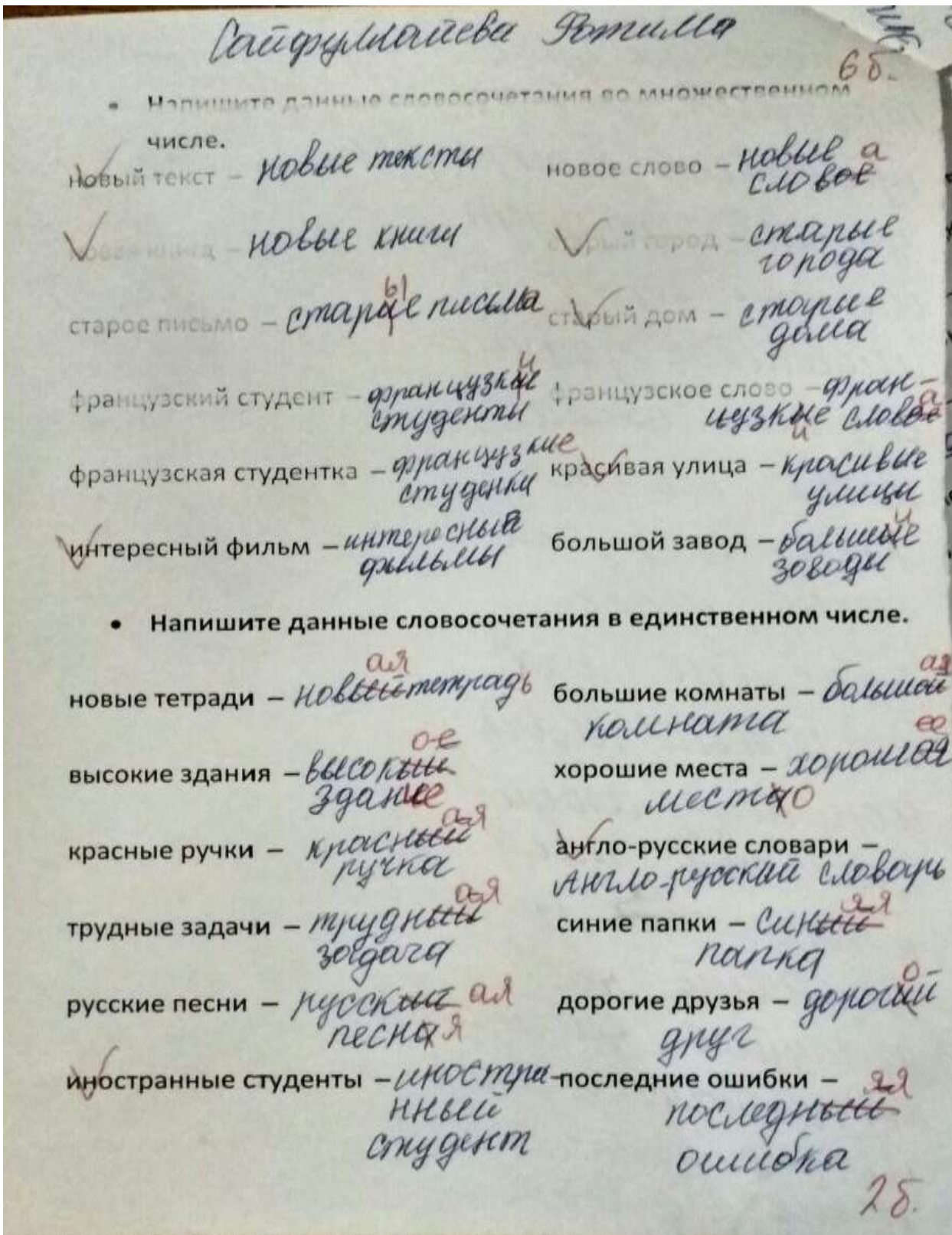
J Saipulova Buxatimayimovna (imzo) 24.10.2018 (Sana)
Ishtirokchi (yoki ota-ona, vasiy)

Najimova Nargiza (imzo) 24.10.2018 (Sana)
Tadqiqotchi

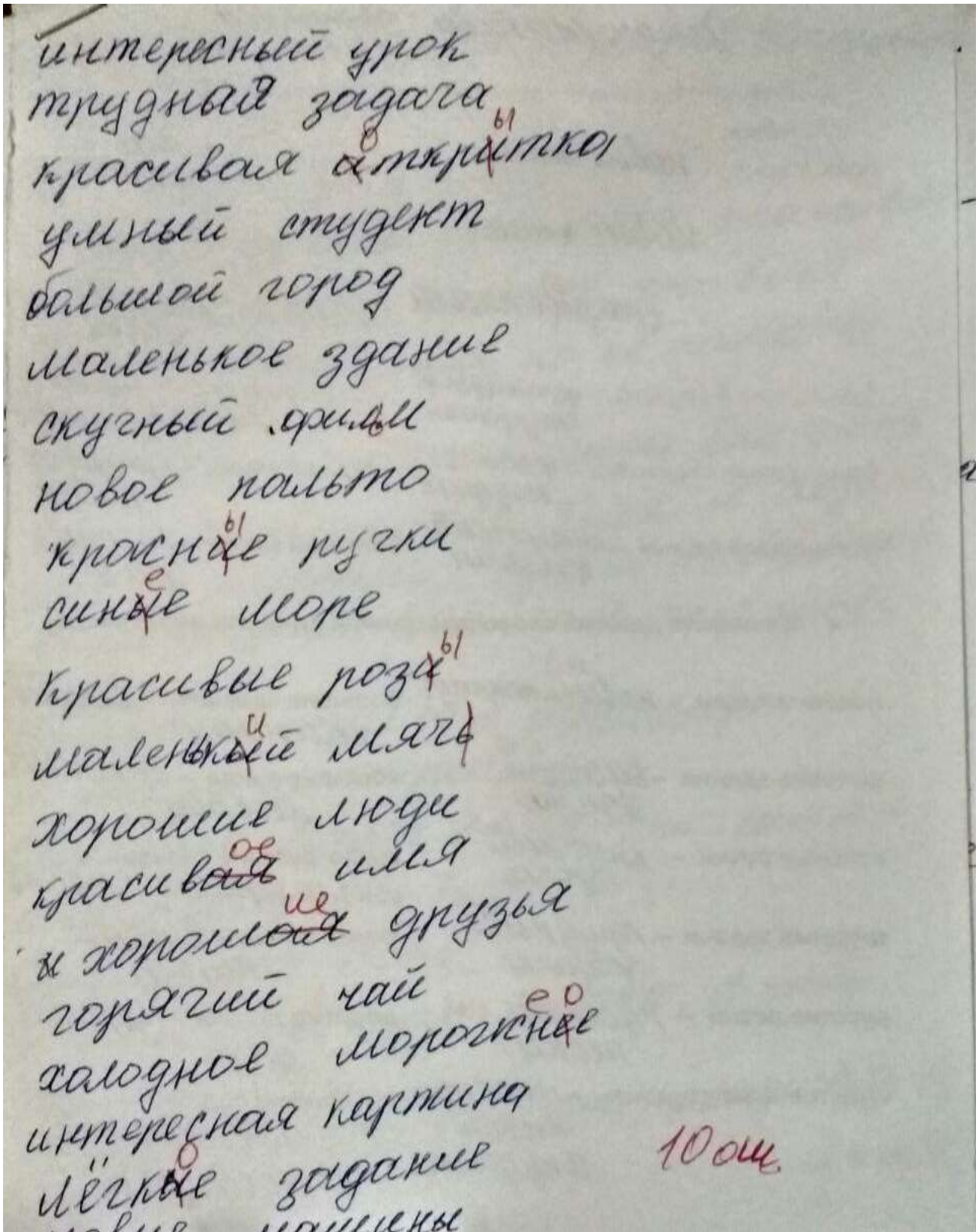
Modified form – Source: University of Illinois, Course: Second Language Acquisition (EIL 589)

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Appendix: A



Appendix B



Appendix C



Упражнение 52. В данных предложениях допишите окончания прилагательных.

1. Твой синий шарф лежит на стуле. 2. Твоя зимня шапка лежит на столе. 3. Твоя зимня обувь стоит в углу. 4. Твое зимне пальто лежит на кровати. 5. Все мои зимне вещи лежат в шкафу. 6. Мой старший брат женат. 7. Моя старшая сестра замужем. 8. Мои младшие братья учатся в школе. 9. Мой друг уже сделал домашнее задание, а я пишу последнее упражнение. 10. Это последня страница учебника. 11. Это вчерашня газета, а сегодняшние газеты лежат на столе. 12. Зимние каникулы начинаются в январе, а летние каникулы начинаются в июле. 13. Март, апрель, май – это весенние месяцы.

38.

Упражнение 53. Допишите окончания прилагательных в данных предложениях.

1. В нашем общежитии хорошая столовая. 2. Рядом находится небольшой магазин. 3. Здесь всегда есть свежий хлеб и свежая булка. 4. Сколько стоят эти горячие пирожки? 5. Он пьет горячий сладкий чай, а я пью горячее молоко. 6. Марта купила теплые перчатки и теплый шарф. 7. Мы купили спортивные костюмы. 8. Я купил синий костюм, а мой друг – черный костюм. 9. Сейчас мы делаем домашнее задание. 10. Мой друг повторяет старый текст, а я учу новые слова. 11. Саша и Миша – мои младшие братья. Они хорошие друзья. 12. В этом киоске всегда есть свежие красивые цветы. Вчера я купила там крупные красные и белые розы.

8,5

Сайт учителя. 99

Appendix D