



THE IMPORTANCE OF USING INTERACTIVE METHODS IN TEACHING THE PHONETICS OF THE KARAKALPAK LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the scientific and practical significance, as well as the effectiveness, of using interactive methods in teaching Karakalpak phonetics. It demonstrates that the application of modern pedagogical and digital technologies in the educational process facilitates students' understanding of phonetic concepts, enhances their language skills, and improves their phonetic and orthographic literacy. Furthermore, the article provides methodological recommendations for using interactive exercises and game-based learning technologies in teaching the sounds that are specific to the Karakalpak language.

Today, the fundamental essence of the reforms being implemented in the education system is to transform the learning process from the traditional model of information delivery into a modern educational paradigm that fosters students' independent, creative, and critical thinking. In this regard, improving the methods of teaching phonetics—the foundational branch of language studies—has become one of the key priorities in preparing future specialists in the fields of the Karakalpak language and literature.

Since phonetics encompasses the system of speech sounds, stress, the phenomenon of vowel harmony (synharmonism), as well as the norms of orthoepy and orthography, mastering this subject requires students to develop both careful attention and practical skills. In particular, traditional lecture-based teaching methods do not always produce the desired outcomes in helping students correctly pronounce and accurately write the distinctive sounds and phonetic features of the Karakalpak language, such as **á, ó, ú, g, h, q**, and **h**.

One of the most effective ways to address this issue is to widely integrate interactive methods and modern pedagogical technologies into the educational process. Interactive teaching methods transform students from passive recipients of ready-made knowledge into active participants and independent learners.

In teaching Karakalpak phonetics, interactive methods play a significant role in applying theoretical knowledge to practice, increasing students' interest in the subject, and developing their independent and critical thinking skills. One of the most effective approaches is the **“Aquarium” method**, which encourages students to express their opinions freely on a particular phonetic issue, discuss their ideas with peers in a group, and develop teamwork and collaborative learning skills.

1. Organizational Structure and Stages of the “Aquarium” Method

To implement this method in the classroom, the following procedure is followed:

- **Creating the classroom environment:** Two concentric circles of chairs (an inner circle and an outer circle) are arranged in the classroom. The chairs in the outer circle face outward, while those in the inner circle face inward.
- **Dividing students into groups and assigning roles:** Students are divided into two groups:
 - **Group 1 (Outer Circle):** Acts as the “**Discussion Group**” Their primary task is to actively discuss and exchange ideas on the assigned phonetic topic or question.
 - **Group 2 (Inner Circle):** Acts as the “**Observers**” Their main responsibility is to observe the performance of the discussion group, evaluate the accuracy of the responses, and assess the correct application of theoretical phonetic knowledge.
- **Procedure for implementing the method:** The instructor presents a question for discussion. Students in the outer circle discuss the assigned question with the classmate seated to their left for **1–2 minutes**. At the instructor's signal, the “**Discussion Group**” moves one seat to the left and continues discussing the same question with a new partner. This process is repeated until each student has exchanged ideas with all of their classmates.

2. Application of the “Aquarium” Method to the Topic “Vowel Sounds” in Karakalpak Phonetics

The following is an example of how the “**Aquarium**” method can be applied to teaching one of the most fundamental topics in Karakalpak phonetics: “**Vowel Sounds in the Karakalpak Language**”.

- **Topic:** Vowel sounds in the Karakalpak language, their classification, and their phonetic characteristics.
- **Objective:** To provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the classification of Karakalpak vowel sounds, analyze their pronunciation and linguistic features, and develop students' collaborative discussion and critical thinking skills.

Discussion Questions and Expected Answers:

1. Discussion Question: What vowel sounds exist in the Karakalpak language, and how many are there?

Theoretical Answer:

The Karakalpak language has **nine vowel sounds**: a, á, ı, i, o, ó, u, ú, e.

2. Discussion Question: How are vowel sounds classified according to the horizontal position of the tongue?

Theoretical Answer:

- **Back vowels (juwan dawışlar):** a, o, u, ı;
- **Front vowels (jinishke dawışlar):** á, ó, ú, e, i.

3. Discussion Question: How are vowel sounds classified according to the participation of the lips?

Theoretical Answer:

- **Rounded vowels (erinlik dawışlar):** o, ó, u, ú;
- **Unrounded vowels (eziwlik dawışlar):** a, á, ı, i, e.

Evaluation of the Observers' Performance

During the discussion, the students in the inner circle (the **Observers**) evaluate the discussion based on the following criteria:

1. The level of participation of the **Discussion Group** and their correct use of linguistic terminology;
2. The accuracy of the classification of the distinctive Karakalpak vowel sounds (á, ó, ú, ı) and the identification of any errors;
3. The validity and clarity of the explanations provided regarding the phonetic characteristics of the vowel sounds.

3. Expected Outcomes and Methodological Effectiveness

The use of the “**Aquarium**” method in phonetics classes is expected to produce the following educational outcomes:

- Students not only memorize the **nine vowel sounds** of the Karakalpak language but also learn to analyze their classification (**back/front** and **rounded/unrounded**) through practical examples.
- Students develop communication, discussion, and collaborative learning skills, which contribute to the formation of **linguistic and methodological competence**, an essential qualification for future language specialists.
- By transforming learners from passive listeners into active participants and critical analysts, the “**Aquarium**” method promotes deeper understanding and longer retention of knowledge related to Karakalpak phonetics.

The Use of the Jigsaw Method and Icebreaker Activities in Teaching Karakalpak Phonetics

To enhance students' mastery of theoretical knowledge and develop their independent thinking skills in teaching Karakalpak phonetics, it is essential to make effective use of modern pedagogical technologies. Among these approaches, the **Jigsaw method** and **Icebreaker** interactive activities, which help create a positive psychological atmosphere at the beginning of a lesson, are particularly effective.

1. The Essence and Stages of the Jigsaw Method

The term “**Jigsaw**” refers to a learning strategy in which a complex and comprehensive topic is divided into several parts. Students learn these parts collaboratively, teach one another, and share responsibility for mastering the entire topic. This method is based on the principles of cooperative learning, peer teaching, and individual accountability.

The method is implemented through a **four-stage cycle**:

Stage 1: Forming the Initial Groups

Students are divided into initial groups of **four to five members**. Each group receives handouts containing a specific section of the overall phonetics topic to be studied.

Stage 2: Individual and Group Work

Group members read and analyze the assigned text or task. Each student becomes an “**expert**” on their assigned section and considers how to explain the material clearly and effectively to other students.

Stage 3: Forming the Expert Groups

The initial groups are reorganized, and students who studied the same section come together to form **expert groups**. Within these groups, each expert explains their assigned topic to the

others, allowing participants to deepen their understanding and develop a comprehensive view of that section.

Stage 4: Returning to the Initial Groups

Students then return to their original groups. Each member shares the knowledge acquired in the expert group, enabling the group to integrate all sections into a complete understanding of the topic. As a result, every participant gains a comprehensive understanding of the entire phonetics lesson through collaborative learning.

Advantages of the Method

- **Active Participation:** Every participant becomes an active contributor throughout the lesson rather than a passive listener.

- **Skill Development:** The method enhances students' teamwork, communication, and self-expression skills.

- **Comprehensive Development:** Listening, speaking, and reading skills are developed in an integrated and mutually reinforcing manner.

2. Using Icebreaker Activities at the Beginning of the Lesson

At the beginning of the lesson, short and engaging **Icebreaker** activities are conducted to help students become acquainted with one another, create a relaxed learning atmosphere, and increase classroom participation. These activities prepare students psychologically for the lesson.

Option 1: "Hidden Vowel" Game (Jasiringan ses)

- **Objective:** To develop students' quick thinking skills and reinforce their knowledge of consonant sounds.

- **Procedure:** While answering the teacher's question, students must pronounce the word **without its vowel sounds**.

Example:

- **Teacher:** *What season is it now?*

- **Student:** J-z (*Jaz*).

- **Teacher:** *Which language is our lesson conducted in?*

- **Student:** Q-r-q-l-p-q (*Qaraqalpaq*).

Outcome:

The student who accidentally pronounces a vowel sound becomes the first member of the group to complete the expert task.

Option 2: "Sound Chain" Game (Sesler shınjırı)

- **Objective:** To activate students' prior knowledge before introducing the topic "Consonant Sounds".

- **Procedure:** Students quickly say words in a chain. Each new word must begin with the **final consonant sound** of the previous word.

Example of a Chain:

- **Mektep** (*p*)

- **Pikir** (*r*)

- **Ruqsat** (*t*)

- **Talap** (*p*)

- **Párman** ...

3. Transition to the Main Lesson and Conclusion

After the games, the teacher smoothly transitions to the main lesson by saying:

*"As you have just seen, today's lesson focuses on one of the fundamental components of words—consonant sounds. We will explore this topic in an engaging and effective way using the **Jigsaw** method."*

This approach not only reinforces students' theoretical knowledge of phonetics but also contributes to the development of their **linguistic and methodological competencies**, which are essential for future language teachers.

Conclusion

Replacing traditional teaching methods with **interactive teaching strategies** and educational games such as **Icebreakers** is one of the most effective ways to improve the quality of instruction in Karakalpak phonetics. The methods analyzed in this article—the **Aquarium** and **Jigsaw** techniques, together with the **Hidden Vowel** and **Sound Chain** games—have demonstrated high effectiveness in helping students master phonetic phenomena and the distinctive sounds of the Karakalpak language.

Based on the analysis and methodological developments presented in this study, the following conclusions were reached:

1.Integration of Theory and Practice:

Interactive methods enable students not only to memorize the classification of vowels and consonants but also to analyze them collaboratively, exchange ideas through problem-solving activities, and draw independent conclusions.

2.Development of Linguistic and Methodological Competence:

Through the **Aquarium** and **Jigsaw** methods, students alternately perform the roles of **discussion participant**, **observer**, and **expert**. This process develops not only their linguistic knowledge but also the listening, speaking, communication, and teaching skills that are essential for future educators.

3.Motivation and Psychological Readiness:

The use of **Icebreaker** activities at the beginning of the lesson creates a positive classroom atmosphere and encourages students to transform from passive listeners into active learners and critical thinkers.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to develop and widely implement **special methodological manuals** and **interactive learning resources** enriched with interactive tasks, digital platforms, and educational game technologies for students majoring in **Karakalpak Language and Literature**, particularly in the study of phonetics.

It is also recommended that interactive teaching methods be integrated with **digital and multimedia technologies** to increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process..

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