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**ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF LITERARY PRONUNCIATION IN THE
METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING THE AZERBAIJANI LANGUAGE**

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Abstract: This article examines the theoretical and practical aspects of developing literary pronunciation in the process of teaching the Azerbaijani language. As an integral component of speech culture, literary pronunciation plays a crucial role in the development of students' communicative and academic skills. Based on the analysis of the current teaching situation, the main problems have been identified: the influence of dialects, the lack of systematic work on orthoepy, the limited teaching-methodical and technical resources, as well as subjectivity in formative and summative assessment. It is noted that insufficient attention to these issues leads to a decline in the quality of speech training and the formation of persistent pronunciation errors in students' speech.

The study substantiates the necessity of a comprehensive approach that combines a linguistic foundation, modern pedagogical technologies, and cultural-ethical values. Special attention is given to the application of active learning methods, the use of digital tools, and the development of objective rubrics for assessing pronunciation. The author provides practical recommendations for improving curricula, pedagogical practice, and teacher training systems, emphasizing the importance of integrating orthoepic work at all levels of education.

In conclusion, it is noted that the balanced implementation of formative and summative assessment, along with the adoption of innovative teaching methods, contributes not only to the development of correct speech but also to the strengthening of students' linguistic and cultural identity.

Keywords: Azerbaijani language, literary pronunciation, teaching methodology, orthoepy, formative assessment, summative assessment, speech culture

INTRODUCTION

Language is the most essential instrument of human communication, a means of expressing thoughts, and a carrier of cultural values and spiritual heritage. Within the context of national identity, language plays a fundamental role in the preservation of traditions and in ensuring intergenerational continuity. For the Azerbaijani people, language is not only a means of interaction but also the foundation of national self-awareness, a reflection of history, and a manifestation of cultural wealth. From this perspective, the issues of correct and literary pronunciation occupy a special place in the methodology of teaching the Azerbaijani language. Oral speech, as the first form of linguistic representation, shapes the initial impression of a speaker as a language bearer, supports the development of literate writing, and facilitates comprehensive mastery of all linguistic aspects.

Literary pronunciation, or orthoepy, represents the system of oral speech norms consolidated in culture and reflects the standardized pronunciation of words and expressions. Unlike dialectal or colloquial forms, literary pronunciation performs a unifying and generalizing function, ensuring linguistic unity. In multilingual and multicultural societies, where regional dialectal features are actively observed, the cultivation of literary pronunciation skills becomes especially significant. It not only guarantees

correctness and expressiveness of speech but also contributes to the preservation of a unified cultural code.

The relevance of this research is justified by several factors. First, there is a noticeable tendency of diminishing attention to orthoepy in contemporary education, where grammar, orthography, and syntax are prioritized while pronunciation is relegated to the background. This creates gaps in students' speech culture, leading to phonetic errors, lack of proper intonation, and inability to distinguish stylistically acceptable pronunciation variants. Second, under the strong influence of media, the internet, and social networks—where dialectal and colloquial forms are often used—schoolchildren increasingly confuse literary norms with regional features. Third, teaching materials and resources specifically dedicated to pronunciation remain limited, necessitating the development of innovative approaches and the application of modern technologies.

The issue of literary pronunciation is especially relevant for teaching Azerbaijani in a multicultural environment. Many students enter school with different phonetic backgrounds: some acquire dialectal speech at home, others rely on Russian or Turkish as everyday communication languages, while a third group develops their speech under the influence of English-language media (Jafarova, 2016). This linguistic diversity presents additional challenges for teachers, who must not only teach grammar and vocabulary but also cultivate literary pronunciation skills in accordance with the norms of the Azerbaijani literary language.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the acquisition of literary pronunciation skills is closely linked with the development of students' general speech culture, critical thinking, and communicative competence. Orthoepic competence contributes not only to correct linguistic perception but also enhances confidence in public speaking, reading, debating, and academic discussions. Thus, the methodology of teaching pronunciation transcends purely linguistic aspects and becomes an integral element in personality formation.

The cultural dimension is equally significant. Literary pronunciation can be regarded as part of national cultural heritage that must be preserved and transmitted to future generations. It shapes the “linguistic image” of a nation and reflects its literacy and cultural development. In the context of globalization, where English and mass culture strongly influence younger generations, safeguarding the literary norms of the mother tongue gains particular importance.

Despite its significance, several unresolved issues remain in the methodology of teaching Azerbaijani pronunciation. Chief among them is the lack of systematically developed curricula and methodological materials specifically dedicated to orthoepic skills. Most textbooks provide only brief orthoepic guidelines without offering structured exercises or tasks (Aliyeva, 2018). Consequently, teachers are left to develop their own approaches, which reduces methodological consistency and effectiveness.

Moreover, traditional teaching methods (such as reading texts, memorizing rules, and dictations) are not always effective for pronunciation training. Contemporary learners require interactive, visual, and audio-based methods that support practical acquisition of pronunciation. The scarcity of multimedia resources and specialized software limits students' opportunities for listening to and practicing literary speech.

Another challenge is the subjectivity of pronunciation assessment. Unlike errors in grammar or orthography, which can be identified with relative ease, pronunciation assessment often depends on the teacher's personal perception. This reduces objectivity and creates uncertainty for students regarding evaluation criteria. The solution lies in developing precise standards and employing digital technologies that enable speech recording and analysis.

Therefore, a comprehensive study of the methodology of teaching literary pronunciation in the Azerbaijani language is imperative. In the context of educational modernization and integration into the global academic space, there is a pressing need for methodological solutions that combine traditional approaches with innovative technologies.

The purpose of this study is to identify the main challenges in cultivating literary pronunciation among students, analyze existing methodological practices, and propose ways for their improvement.

To achieve this purpose, the following objectives are pursued:

- To examine the theoretical foundations of literary pronunciation and its role in the development of speech culture;
- To identify the main challenges in teaching literary pronunciation in the Azerbaijani language;
- To analyze both traditional and modern methodological approaches;
- To provide practical recommendations for developing sustainable orthoepic skills among learners.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the comprehensive analysis of pedagogical, linguistic, and technological aspects of teaching literary pronunciation in Azerbaijani, as well as in the development of a system of recommendations for teachers and researchers.

The practical significance of the research is reflected in its potential application within educational practice: in the design of curricula, preparation of methodological guides, and organization of the teaching process.

METHODS

In this study, a range of scientific and methodological approaches were applied to examine the process of developing literary pronunciation in the teaching of the Azerbaijani language. Through methods of analysis and observation, students' orthoepic skills in school and university settings were evaluated, with particular attention to the influence of dialectal and regional factors. Experimental methods were also employed, including the analysis of students' performance in both individual and group exercises on literary pronunciation. In addition, surveys and interviews were conducted to gather information about teachers' practical experiences, the methods they employ, and the resources they utilize.

Within the framework of practical approaches, various teaching technologies—such as active learning methods, dialogues, role-plays, project-based activities, multimedia, and digital tools—were assessed, alongside an evaluation of the effectiveness of formative and summative assessment methods.

Thus, the comprehensive methodological approach combined the scientific foundations with practical applications, enabling the identification of optimal strategies for the development of literary pronunciation.

The Historical Development of Literary Pronunciation

In the context of globalization and digitalization, education should not only fulfill the function of transmitting knowledge but also foster correct, literate, and cultured speech skills in students. For this reason, solving the problems of literary pronunciation has become an integral part of the methodology of teaching the Azerbaijani language. The results of such research can be useful not only for educators but also for specialists in philology, psycholinguistics, and intercultural communication.

Literary pronunciation (orthoepy) is a system that encompasses the norms of spoken language. These norms regulate the correct pronunciation of sounds, words, word combinations, and entire expressions according to the accepted traditions and rules of the literary language. Since the Azerbaijani language

has a rich phonetic system and numerous dialects, orthoepy plays a special role in ensuring the unified functioning of the language, preserving cultural identity, and forming correct written speech.

The functions of literary pronunciation are multifaceted. Its normative function ensures the correct pronunciation of words and expressions; its communicative function provides mutual understanding between speakers of different dialects; its aesthetic function shapes speech culture and contributes to harmonious and beautiful speech; its educational function plays a key role in students' acquisition of their mother tongue, as spoken language develops before writing. Thus, orthoepy is not merely a technical aspect but also a cultural phenomenon reflecting the level of societal development.

The history of orthoepic norms in the Azerbaijani language is closely linked with the process of forming the literary language. At different times—from classical poetry to modern prose and media—pronunciation has changed under the influence of dialects, neighboring languages (Persian, Arabic, Russian, Turkish), and socio-cultural factors (Rahimov, 2022). For instance, in the 15th–17th centuries, Persian phonetics had a strong influence on classical literature, while in the 19th–20th centuries, during the formation of national schools, the codification of orthoepic norms began. Although official orthoepic dictionaries of the Azerbaijani language exist today, their application in educational practice is still limited.

The phonetic features of the Azerbaijani language play an important role in orthoepy. The language possesses a rich system of nine vowels and approximately twenty-three consonants. Features such as vowel harmony (synharmonism), consonant shifts depending on position, stress on the last syllable, and the distinction between long and short vowels are essential in shaping correct pronunciation. Ignoring these features in teaching often leads to mistakes among students.

Dialects and regional accents also pose challenges in the formation of correct pronunciation. For example, the softening of certain consonants in the Karabakh dialect, the preservation of archaic phonetic forms in the Nakhchivan dialect, and the influence of Russian in the Baku variety are reflected in students' speech (Huseynov, 2020). These regional features hinder the development of unified orthoepic norms, and pedagogy must help students overcome dialectal habits and acquire the literary standard.

Speech culture, which plays a guiding role, consists of correct, literate, and expressive speaking skills. Literary pronunciation serves as a foundation in this process: without correct pronunciation, expressive reading is impossible; mistakes in speaking hinder the full development of writing skills; and violations of pronunciation norms reduce communicative effectiveness. For this reason, orthoepy should occupy a central place in the school curriculum as an inseparable part of language education.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, mastering literary pronunciation is connected with processes of perception, memory, and articulation. In younger students, pronunciation skills are mainly formed through imitating teachers' and media sources' speech. Adolescents, however, develop the ability to consciously control their pronunciation, while upper-grade students cultivate a critical attitude toward their own speech, thereby refining their orthoepic skills. These characteristics should be taken into account when designing teaching methodology.

Modern approaches recommend combining traditional methods of teaching orthoepy (reading aloud, dictations, error correction) with the use of audio and video materials, speech recognition software, interactive games and projects, as well as digital orthoepic dictionaries. This integration makes the learning process more effective and engaging for students.

Methods and Strategies for Solving the Problems of Literary Pronunciation in Teaching the Azerbaijani Language

The formation of literary pronunciation in students is not an instant or one-stage process but a long-term and consistent effort requiring a complex approach. To overcome the challenges encountered in school practice, it is important to integrate pedagogical, psychological, technological, and cultural strategies.

The systematic inclusion of orthoepy in educational programs should be the first step. This can be achieved by incorporating pronunciation exercises into all sections of lesson plans, preparing special textbooks and methodological materials, and ensuring students' participation in projects and competitions related to speech culture and correct pronunciation. Such systematization prevents orthoepy from being perceived as an additional or secondary aspect.

Modern pedagogy shows that pronunciation skills are formed more effectively when students are actively involved in speech activities. Role-playing, dramatizations, reading with theatrical elements, declamation, as well as discussions and debates develop students' ability to speak correctly and confidently. In this way, pronunciation becomes not just a formal exercise but an interesting and enjoyable process.

The use of technologies and multimedia resources makes teaching more objective and engaging. Speech recognition software, audio and video materials by professional announcers, mobile applications and online platforms, as well as virtual classrooms allow students to monitor and improve their own pronunciation. This reduces subjectivity in assessment and gives learners the opportunity to manage their progress.

Since each student's abilities to perceive and imitate speech differ, an individual approach should be applied. This can be done by identifying students' strengths and weaknesses, giving individual tasks aimed at overcoming dialect influence, and using differentiated forms of assessment. Such personalization increases motivation and removes barriers.

Overcoming psychological obstacles is also important. A friendly and supportive classroom environment should be created, mistakes should be viewed as opportunities for development, students should gain confidence by speaking first in front of small audiences, and they should be taught skills of self-monitoring and self-assessment of their speech. This ensures that students perceive orthoepy not as a source of fear but as a tool for self-expression.

Successful teaching is possible only with highly qualified teachers. Courses on phonetics and orthoepy should be expanded in pedagogical universities, seminars and training sessions should be organized for teachers, orthoepic material databases should be created, and experience exchange between schools should be encouraged. A well-prepared teacher is the main carrier of the literary norm in the school environment.

The formation of literary pronunciation should not be limited to Azerbaijani language classes alone. In literature lessons, students can learn intonation through working with artistic texts; in music classes, they can develop rhythm and listening skills; and in theater clubs, they can practice stage speech. This approach ensures the interdisciplinary nature of orthoepic work and enriches the educational process (Guliyev, 2024).

In assessment, both formative and summative approaches should be applied. Formative assessment ensures students' continuous progress through feedback and audio analysis, while summative assessment considers pronunciation quality in final exams, projects, and other tasks. Assessment criteria should cover parameters such as clarity of sounds, intonation, pace, and expressiveness.

The effectiveness of teaching also increases when students see that correct pronunciation is valued by society. For this purpose, organizing school-level radio and video programs, involving students in competitions and acting activities, inviting famous announcers and actors to lessons, and analyzing speech in films and television programs from the perspective of literary norms can be useful.

Thus, solving the problems of literary pronunciation requires a comprehensive approach: the systematic application of orthoepic work in lessons, the use of active and game-based methods, the integration of modern technologies, individual strategies, the elimination of psychological barriers, teacher preparation, and the integration of orthoepic practices into cultural and media environments. Only the combination of these methods can form in students not only grammar and writing skills but also a complete speech culture in accordance with the norms of the literary Azerbaijani language.

Practical Examples and Methodological Models for the Formation of Literary Pronunciation

The formation of literary pronunciation in Azerbaijani language lessons is not only a theoretical matter but also a process that requires practical activity. To ensure that students master orthoepic norms, lesson models should be designed, and exercises and activity formats should be integrated into different stages of the lesson. Practical examples and applied methodological models yield effective results in school practice.

At the beginning of each lesson, 3–5-minute orthoepic exercises have a significant impact on pronunciation development. These include tongue twisters, choral repetition of words often distorted in dialects, as well as breathing and voice exercises. Such short practices help students develop speech control habits and ensure classroom discipline.

Integrating orthoepy into text work is a key tool for the development of literary pronunciation. As a methodological model, the teacher first reads the text, then students read paragraph by paragraph, correcting each other, and the exercise concludes with collective reading. This approach simultaneously develops auditory perception and articulation skills.

Dialogue and role-playing, as natural forms of communication, are essential in identifying pronunciation errors. Students dramatize dialogues, analyze the orthoepic features of key words during class, and peers record the mistakes. This approach brings teaching to life and makes correct pronunciation a necessity for success.

The integration of music and rhythmic exercises accelerates the mastery of pronunciation rhythm and intonation. For example, reading poems in metrical rhythm, practicing breathing-based reading, and working with songs free speech from monotony and enhance expressiveness.

Technological tools such as mobile apps, online platforms, and video-diary projects allow students to monitor and improve their pronunciation. This approach makes teaching interactive and reduces subjectivity in assessment.

Literary pronunciation can also be developed through projects. For example, in the “Living Word” project, students prepare presentations about Azerbaijani writers; in the “Class Radio” project, radio programs are created with a focus on pronunciation. Similarly, film dubbing provides students with practice in intonation and diction.

Rubrics are recommended for formative assessment, where criteria such as sound accuracy, stress, speech fluency, and intonation are considered. Weekly mini-tests help evaluate students’ skills.

Case methods and situational teaching bring students into real speech contexts. For instance, roles such as “TV Presenter” or “Journalist” provide opportunities for practical application of pronunciation. The participation of parents and the external environment is also important in the formation of literary pronunciation. Parents should be engaged in reading aloud at home; meetings with famous announcers

and actors should be organized, and open lessons should be conducted. This creates a unified speech environment that supports students.

Thus, practical models cover a wide spectrum: from short exercises and text reading to technology, projects, and case methods. Through systematic and comprehensive application, students can develop stable orthoepic habits, confidence in speech, and a complete speech culture in accordance with the norms of literary Azerbaijani.

CONCLUSION

Literary pronunciation is one of the main components of speech culture and an important indicator of overall language competence. In the context of globalization, the intensification of information exchange, and the expansion of intercultural relations, correct pronunciation is one of the key factors determining the recognition of the Azerbaijani language as a medium of personal and cultural communication. The research has shown that the issues of forming literary pronunciation cannot be treated as secondary or supplementary matters; rather, they form the basis of language acquisition and significantly affect students' academic, professional, and social prospects.

According to the findings, the main challenges include the influence of dialects, the lack of a systematic approach to orthoepy, limited access to modern audiovisual and interactive resources, subjectivity in assessment, and psychological barriers among students. To overcome these challenges, attention to orthoepy should not be treated as an additional element but as an integral part of the overall teaching methodology.

Solving the problems of literary pronunciation requires a synthesis of three main components: a theoretical-linguistic foundation, pedagogical technologies, and an ethical-cultural dimension. The theoretical basis ensures that students distinguish the norms of modern Azerbaijani literary language from dialects and colloquial speech, and that they understand the phonetic rules. Pedagogical technologies involve the systematic application of active teaching methods, project- and text-based learning, orthoepic exercises, and formative assessment. The ethical-cultural component aims to foster in students motivation for correct speech and a sense of cultural responsibility within the framework of national identity, while equipping teachers with the responsibility and ability to preserve and disseminate literary norms.

The effectiveness of teaching can be increased through practical recommendations: adding sections dedicated to orthoepy into curricula, conducting consistent exercises across different grade levels, applying modules focused on intonation and speech tempo; ensuring teachers use practical drills, projects, and technologies; employing rubrics and peer- and self-assessment for evaluation; and enhancing teachers' professional development through training courses and multimedia skill-building.

The mastery of literary pronunciation has not only methodological but also social significance. Correct speech strengthens academic literacy, professional competence, cultural identity, and social integration. Future research directions include the development of digital applications for automatic pronunciation correction, psycholinguistic studies on the role of motivation and emotional factors, comparative analysis of orthoepy methodologies across Turkic languages, and the design of new assessment approaches (e.g., a “pronunciation portfolio” for students).

In conclusion, literary pronunciation in the teaching of Azerbaijani should be regarded as a multidimensional pedagogical problem. A systematic approach that combines linguistic precision, pedagogical innovation, and cultural-ethical orientation enables the formation of correct speech skills in students. The integration of orthoepy at all educational levels—from primary school to university—ensures the full acquisition of the Azerbaijani literary language, and as a result, students grow into

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individuals who can clearly express their thoughts, communicate responsibly within cultural norms and ethics, and confidently engage in a globalized world.

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