

Preface

Our goal in the development of *Tajiki: An Elementary Textbook* at the Center for Languages for the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR) at Indiana University was to create instructional materials that would make a difference in the classroom and provide instructors with wide array of activities to make their classes interactive. *Tajiki: An Elementary Textbook* offers a thematically organized and integrative approach to the Tajiki language and culture combined with current innovations in foreign language teaching. Some of these innovations include: a functional approach to grammar; an emphasis on integrated skills development; and extensive use of various authentic materials, especially videos filmed in the different regions of Tajikistan. We believe that the large number of the activities provided in the textbook and the supplementary materials, such as the audio-video and multimedia CDs, will help students to develop strong speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Tajiki: An Elementary Textbook is distinguished by the following features:

- emphasis on communicative activities and tasks
- step-by-step development of language skills
- presentation of Tajiki culture, integrated into all activities
- opportunities for classroom practice

Besides emphasizing Tajiki culture, the textbook contains universal topics and contemporary themes that are meaningful to learners.

While developing activities, we kept in mind the idea that languages are best learned when real-world tasks become the focus of language activities. Therefore, we organized the sequence of our activities by providing students with:

- sources for gaining information in Tajiki, such as texts, listening materials, real-life dialogues and videos
- the linguistic tools for understanding those sources
- tasks, activities and questions to use their linguistics skills and evaluate their own progress

Overall, we hope that our materials will make a difference in your classroom and that you will enjoy many hours of teaching and learning Tajiki.

A Note for the Instructor

Tajiki: An Elementary Textbook is developed specifically for classroom use. Its purpose is to provide learners and their instructors with a wide selection of materials and task-oriented, communicative activities designed to facilitate development of the language skills of the learner. The textbook is divided into fourteen thematic chapters. These chapters cover topics commonly found in beginning textbooks, such as work, study, family, shopping and travel. Language learners who successfully complete *Tajiki: An Elementary Textbook* are expected to be able to read simple texts, engage in conversation about simple topics, and write short texts in Tajiki.

Organization of the Text

Each chapter is divided into three or four sections, each section focusing on a particular topic, and a glossary. Each section has seven parts, four of them emphasizing one of the four basic skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), though all four skills will be practiced in the exercises; the first three parts introduce the topics and vocabulary in a given section, the next three parts provide further practice, and the last part ties the section together, allowing students to practice all four language skills with authentic video materials.

Part I: Сехри сухан

Part I includes new vocabulary that will be actively used throughout the chapter. The vocabulary items are introduced by audio, which the teacher should play in class so that all the students can practice out loud. This is followed by individual exercises and group activities intended to reinforce the vocabulary. If students are having trouble, the teacher should supplement the exercises in the book by pointing to various objects and asking students to name or describe them, for example.

Part II: Гуфтугӯ

This part focuses on speaking. The exercises are intended to lead students to practice the new grammatical structures in the section and understand them deductively.

Part III: Дастури

Part III explains new grammatical structures to make certain the structures practiced in Part II are clear.

Part IV: Хониш

Part IV focuses on reading skills. In this part authentic materials from magazines and newspapers are used as much as possible.

Part V: Гӯш кунед

Part V focuses on listening skills.

Part VI: Хат

This part of each lesson focuses on writing, often through exercises that call for students to write sentences and dialogues with each other.

Part VII: Тамошо кунед

Exercises based on short video clips filmed in Tajikistan. The purpose of these video clips is to introduce students to the authentic use of the Tajiki language while bringing together all the vocabulary and grammar covered in the section. The activities given in this section do not require the understanding of every single word or grammatical structure; instead students are encouraged to grasp the main idea and to be attentive to some non-linguistic features introduced in these videos. As the speakers use authentic language (dialogues were not scripted), it might be useful to revisit these video clips later in the course when students become more proficient in Tajiki.

Cultural notes

Every chapter includes notes describing elements of Tajiki culture, Барги Сабз. These notes are short; however, as an instructor, you might give further explanations regarding their content. Moreover, you may follow them up with short discussions that would encourage students to compare and contrast these cultural points with their own culture. Furthermore, the later chapters include some of the most commonly used proverbs and superstitions of Tajiki culture. The explanation of these proverbs is not provided, and it is hoped that this will create an interesting discussion between you and your students about the meaning and the use of these proverbs.