

## METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TO TURKMEN LEARNERS

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*This article reviews different methods of teaching pronunciation and tries to highlight the shortcomings of each of them, while the main concern is to introduce some of the techniques that are useful for teaching English as a foreign language. The purpose of this article is to clarify the mistakes allowed by Turkmen students and to help teachers easily cope with this problem.*

English has become a quintessential medium in all the major growing countries, especially in the Asian countries. Teaching pronunciation incorporates considerable number of challenges. Nowadays, the development of human knowledge and awareness in all fields has caused traditional teaching and learning methods to lose their efficacy, so in order to keep pace with the changing world, one should look for new ways to increase and transfer knowledge. It is very important to clarify the students' doubt on Turkmen way of pronouncing several words due to the influence of their mother tongue. The aim of our research is to show the appropriate way of teaching pronunciation to Turkmen students for English teachers. The research allows Turkmen students avoid many possible pronunciation errors as well as phoneticians to foster theoretical knowledge in comparative linguistics.

Pronunciation is important for all who learns English. A consideration of learner's pronunciation errors and how these can inhibit successful communication is a useful basis on which to assess why it is important to deal with pronunciation in the classroom. A learner who consistently mispronounces a range of phonemes can be extremely difficult for a speaker from another language community to understand. This can be very frustrating for the learner who may have a good command of grammar and lexis but have difficulty in understanding and being understood by a native speaker. Aspects of student's first language can interfere with the pronunciation of a second language not only in terms of accent but also in terms of mood.

Not all pronunciation difficulties necessarily get in the way of communication. Let us consider the following example, which features that German accents might lead to German people sounding, completely unintentionally, abrupt or impolite when speaking in English. So if a German student wants to ask permission to open a window, for example, if she pronounces *window* as /vindow/ it is unlikely to get in the way of the message. It is necessary to recognize that even if students are not having difficulties communicating, they may often have their pronunciation mistakes brought to their attention. Teachers should be more attentive when it comes to pronunciation [1, p. 11].

The repeated argument in favor of protecting localized and deviant pronunciation features is that everything goes as long as we can communicate with speakers of other English. Nevertheless, it happens that from all levels of linguistic analysis pronunciation is the largest source of violation of speech intelligibility. One of the most dramatic reports on the intelligibility of nonnative Englishes is from professor Honey. Nowadays top-level managers, engineers, lawyers, and university lecturers are facing a serious problem of intelligibility in the professions in Britain. Not surprisingly, the frequency of speech intelligibility errors from original accents to non-original ones is also very high. Some students cannot use recordings, videos, and are always asked to repeat such materials, because they cannot understand them [2, p. 107].

There are two key problems with pronunciation teaching. The first one deals with neglect. The fact that pronunciation tends to suffer from neglect may not be due to teachers lacking interest in the subject but rather to a feeling of doubt as to how to teach it. Many experienced teachers may feel the need to improve their practical aptitude in pronunciation teaching. Despite of the fact that trainees are less tested teachers may be very interested in pronunciation, but their issue with grammar and vocabulary takes precedence. Whereas trainees often show considerable excitement for pronunciation, both teachers and learners often leave it neglected. Thus, teachers of pronunciation need: 1) a good grounding in theoretical knowledge; 2) practical classroom skills; 3) a good command of teaching techniques.

A lot of pronunciation teaching tends to be done in effect to errors, which students make in the classroom. Reactive teaching is a necessary method and will always be so. Educators should regard attributes of pronunciation as integral to language testing and lesson planning. Any analyses of language disregards sidelines features of pronunciation in order to give students a full picture, and therefore a better chance of being able to communicate successfully. Whereas planning, teachers should choose what pronunciation issues are relevant to

particular structures and lexis being filled within the lesson. They can also anticipate the pronunciation difficulties their students are likely to experience, and further plan their lessons accordingly. Some scholars divided this lessons into three main types: 1) integrated – lessons in which pronunciation forms an essential part of the language analyses, the planning process and the language practice within the lesson; 2) remedial (reactive) – lessons where pronunciation difficulty, which occurs in class, is dealt in order to facilitate the successful achievement of classroom tasks; 3) practice – lessons, in which a particular feature of pronunciation is isolated and practiced for its own sake, forming the focus of a lesson period [1, p. 14].

The following important step is to analyze the problems of interference of a native language to English in the Turkmen context. To find the most common errors, we asked Turkmen students to read a text. There were words and phrases, which were expected to be difficult to pronounce by the students. The texts were chosen from a course book so there were not any new or unfamiliar words. The students were to read the text one by one; they were not allowed to listen to each other. Their voices were recorded on a digital recorder tapes, then they were transcribed and analyzed. At the end of the process, the errors were analyzed descriptively and statistically. The analyses of results obtained allows us to make a general table (Table 1), where the errors in the pronunciation of sounds, stress and pauses are presented.

Table 1. – Students' common mistakes

Vowel		Consonant		Stress	Pause
[q]=14	[l]=7	[v]=5	[r]=5	Important, exports, imports, major, industry, aircraft, industrial, aerospace's, Guinea, forest, over collecting, beautiful, loggers, collecting Economy, developed, measured, domestic, product, exporter, importer, composed, industrialize, empire, presented, global, account, dominates, particularly, major	43
[L]=8	[Ql]=5	[m]=4	[A]=4		
[qV]=7	[J]=2	[G]=4	[s]=2		
[E:] =3	[eq]=4	[t]=2	[D]=2		
[el]=3	[Vq]=2	[j]=2	[k]=2		
[OV]=2	[x]=2	[C]=1	[b]=1		
[R]=2	[V]=2	[p]=1			

Analyzing the recordings, we found out that as there are no diphthongs in the Turkmen language, so Turkmen students often make mistakes in pronouncing diphthongs. Another important fact is that the sound [N] is in Turkmen, as in English, so we did not notice the error of this feature anywhere. Moreover, Turkmen students make most stress mistakes when it comes to nouns – 14 mistakes, then verbs – 7 mistakes, adjectives – 6 mistakes and adverbs – 1 mistake. The students from Turkmenistan make almost the equal amount of mistakes pronouncing both vowels and consonants. The majority of consonant coincidences are observed at the place of their formation, but it must be remembered that there is no aspiration in the Turkmen language, typical of the English consonants \p, t, k\ . In the English and Turkmen languages, there are phonemes that are completely unmatched, similar phonemes, but differ to some degree

The Turkmen word receives stress on the last syllable. If a word consists of one-syllable, then no additional emphasis is placed on its pronunciation. When suffixes are added to a word, the stress falls on the last syllable [4, p. 44].

Therefore, it is important to note that learning difficulties can cause not only sounds, but also stress. There are factors in the Turkmen language system that can be qualified as creating difficulties, as well as favorable for mastering the stress of a foreign language. These include:

- not longitudinal, tonal word stress;
- the lack of reduction in the Turkmen language;
- the lack of identity in linguistic significance of verbal accents;
- tension, clarity, predominance in duration, loudness, intensity (not necessarily the full set of features)

in the second syllable from the end of the word as a result of the correlation of stressed and pre-stressed syllables, stress and unstressed, as well as positional placement of longitudes;

- tension manifested in the closed syllable due to its structure and properties of consonant phonemes;
- the participation of word stress (along with longitude) in the rhythm structure of a word.

It should be noted that consonant clusters are limited in the Turkmen language. Moreover, in the Turkmen language, combinations of consonants at the beginning of the word are almost rare (with the exception of borrowed words); this is a consequence of the harmony law inherent in the Turkic languages. Under the influence of the phonetic system of the native language, students can insert vowels between consonants. The Turkmen language is characterized by a uniform distribution of functional load between consonants and vowels.

The Turkmen consonants are characterized by great possibilities for variation, and the vowels are practically devoid of positional changes.

Teaching pronunciation can be organized with the help of three main methods: analytical, imitation and mixed. The most acceptable pronunciation study is the latter where necessary and is based on the transfer of skills already formed from the native language, if possible. This path is also called analytical-imitation. It is also noted that pronunciation training should not be limited to teaching individual sounds, but should necessarily include teaching phrasal accent, speech rate, intonation and rhythm, taking into account the movement from simple to complex. In this case, intonations, as a combination of melodic and dynamic modulations of voice and tempo-rhythmic design of the speech flow, are given great attention, since through intonation the lion's share of the semantic flow of speech is clarified. It also has a great syntactic and emotional meaning [5].

Pronunciation is one of the areas where it is prevailing view that imitation is essential part of the learning process in foreign language teaching. Some people are better at imitation than others are, but one thing is distinct: in order to imitate correctly one must have heard correctly, what is to be imitated. There is not so much the teacher that can do to help his students to hear successfully. The teacher can obvious the students' attention to sound differences and give them substantial opportunity to listen, but he cannot give them the aptitude to hear them.

As with any training, motivation is a very valuable factor in pronunciation. The more you need to improve the student's speech, the more useful the training will be. For productive imitation, students need to listen to themselves. Most people cannot control their own speech, and tape assistance can be invaluable. Listening by type, unlike the speech model, not only convinces the student that he has achieved or failed to succeed, but also gives him tips for further improvement.

Interference in the native language is equally applicable to super segmental. Foreign judgments of English as unfriendly or even very polite are often based on an erroneous interpretation of their intonation, while the English judgment of some foreign speakers as mushroom-like or aggressive is usually based on a similar erroneous interpretation. Intonation and stress habits, as well as the common tone of the voice, are thus prevaricating, deeply entrenched, and even more incomprehensible than vowels and consonants, which can often be physically demonstrated that it is difficult for people to accept that there is a systematic distinction between one language and another. Thus, if a foreign speaker makes a mistake in the pronunciation of a segmental speech, he is released from the performance of the function of the foreigner, and his speech is interpreted more or less correctly depending on the context.

However, if he makes arrogant segmental mistakes, the judgment is made by his personality, not his language. Thus, the German speaker can call someone and use the unsuccessfully intonation "Mr. Smith! » as it would be appropriate in German. This will make him authoritative, and perhaps impolite in English, a gentle polite call requires an ascending intonation. Such intonation differences are a source of misunderstanding even among English speakers from different regions [3, p. 58].

With this in mind, there are two main types of techniques, such as drilling and chaining. Drills aims to help learners achieve better pronunciation of language items. Being able to drill properly is a basic and fundamental language teaching ability. Drilling simply involves the teacher saying a word or structure and getting the class to repeat it. The teacher's main rule in drilling is that of providing a model of the word phrase or structure for the students to copy. Choral drilling can help to build confidence and of course drilling maybe individually. Teachers usually select individuals more or less at chance; doing so is seen to help keep students on their toes. Chaining can be used for long and difficult sentences utterances, which prove difficult for the students to pronounce. In this technique, the teacher separate certain parts of the sentence, modelling them irrespectively for students to repeat and the students should make sentence up until it is complete.

Teachers can use minimal pairs to good advantage, which have been causing difficulties for learners. Spelling and pronunciation activities make sense to tie pronunciation work closely in with spelling work. Homographs and homophones can provide useful values for such work. As for listening activity, it can play a key role in helping students to notice the existence of a pronunciation feature. For example, prior to doing a listening task, students can have the meaning and the pronunciation of a particular aspect of language brought to their attention, and practice it in very controlled ways. When it comes to reading activity although the medium is the written word, and work on pronunciation can be successfully integrated here too. The main argument against it is that it can interfere with successful pronunciation; spellings can clearly affect pronunciation accomplishment heavily. Nevertheless, reading aloud offers opportunities for the study of the links between spelling and pronunciation, of stress and intonation, and of the linking of the sounds between words in connected speech.

Taking into account what has been said, we should stress the idea that pronunciation is an important aspect of teaching a foreign language although it is often neglected in the process of teaching. Teaching pronunciation

relies on three main methods – analytical, imitation and mixed – the latter being the most acceptable one since it is based on the transfer of already formed skills from the native language. As far as teaching techniques are concerned, drilling and chaining are the most popular ones as well as the use of the minimal pairs. Phonetic lessons can be divided into three main types: integrated, remedial and practice, although a great deal of pronunciation teaching tends to be done in effect to errors which students make in the classroom.

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