

UDC 81`342

ENGLISH AND TURKMEN PRONUNCIATION: COMMON ERRORS AND THEIR CAUSES

GUNCHA MEREDOVA, ELENA POTAPOVA
Polotsk State University, Belarus

In our research we study Turkmen students' pronunciation problems that are connected with their interference peculiarities. The aim of our research was to find out possible phonetic mistakes in speech production and try to explain them. As a result, we found the most common problems and their causes. The research allows Turkmen students avoid many possible pronunciation errors as well as phoneticians to foster theoretical knowledge in comparative linguistics.

All around the world, there are a lot of people who want to learn English and sound like a native speaker. There is lots of research devoted to the phonetic system of the English language itself and the problems of its interference. The major manifestation of bilingualism is interference. Language interference is a process and a result of the interaction and mutual influence of the language systems being in contact. [1, p170]. Many studies were devoted to the errors made by the non-native speakers and attempts to systematize them. So the researchers concluded that the main problem of the speakers of other languages who speak English, are:

- substitution of sounds i.e. they substitute the sounds that they don't have in their native language, with other sounds which are close to them in the place of articulation e.g. they replace /p/ with /b/, /t/ with /z/;
- pronouncing every letter in the words;
- devoicing of the sounds.

Although similar problems exist in different languages and they were studied in many European and Asian phonetics, the Turkmen language hasn't been studied before from this point of view. So that is why this research was carried out.

The importance of this study is the fact that this problem was not broadly investigated before. This study is aimed at helping Turkmen students and teachers of English to evade these errors. We all know that the pronunciation problems are very important for everyone who studies foreign languages. As far as English is a popular language many people of different countries want to study English. That's why a lot of researchers contributed their papers to the problem. These works may be divided into two groups: the works of English researches and the works of other scholars studying the language and the interference. The first group of authors usually speaks of the practical ways to improve English, of the pronunciation exercises or theory of pronunciation, of different accents. In their works they rarely mention the influence of other languages on English. For example, such authors as Mark Hancock (Hancock 2003, 124), Martin Hewing's (Hewings 2007, 15), Susan Cameron (Cameron 2012, 121), Gerald Kelly (Kelly 2001, 12) give some theoretical information. They explain how the sound should be pronounced, how to differ the sounds and give examples, exercises and so on. Almost all of the authors don't mention the possible difficulties for the speakers of different languages. They just show and give the examples to follow. The second group of authors usually focus on the influence of the mother-tongue, which is called interference. There are many papers devoted to the problem of phonetic interference of the native language while learning English. For example, such authors as Budnik E. A., Vinogradov V. A., Vorobieva V. V., Borisova L.V., Metlyuk, E.B Karnevskaaya devoted their works to the problem. These researches are frequently conducted and it is noted that there are a lot of common pronunciation problems even among the speakers of different language families. The researchers think that the general reason is that some English sounds do not exist in other languages and vice versa. But according to this main problem there are lots of specific sounds in each language and they should be studied. Unfortunately nowadays only main European and Asian languages are done properly. It is possible to find researches on the Turkic, Arabian language, but not so many. The works, devoted to the Turkmen language and its influence on English are very rare, for example, such authors as Kopirina M. V. and Shadshikov E. T. worked on it. So this research aims to study the problems of interference of a native language to English in the Turkmen context. To study the most common errors the researcher 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 weren't any new or unfamiliar words.

Linguistics, literature, philology

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. Then the tapes were transcribed and analyzed. At the end of the process the errors were analyzed descriptively and statistically.

Text 1

The UK is a leading \ industrial[IndAstriQ] nation. Britain ranks as an important steel producer. The rest is used in Britain to make hundreds of[qv]products. Much steel is used in automobiles[Ltqmqbj] /trucks, buses. The country is \ one of the world's largest producers [prq'dHsqz] = of tractors. Other products= include \ cranes, [krelns'] earth movers, road[rPVd] / graders and so on. British Aerospace ['QeroVspels] = makes \ a wide range of jet aircraft['eqkrQft]. It's the largest aerospace company in Europe. The chemical industry ['Indqstri] = in Britain \ produces a variety of products from industrial chemicals to plastics and soap. It's pharmaceutical industry, tenth largest in the world =and plays an important role [roVI] in the economy. The UK= is one of the world's chief centers of[qv] \ printing and publishing. British companies =print paper money and postage stamps [Stxmps]/ for many countries. Processing of foods= and beverages= ranks \ as one of Britain's major ['melGqr] industries. For example,Scotch whisky= has a large world market [mRkqt]. Other British industries manufacture bricks, cement, furniture, leather goods, glassware ['glxsweq] and paper. Britain remains= an important [Im'pLrtnt] producer of cotton and woolen ['wVlqn]textiles. Britain =has \ one of Europe's largest clothing industries. But today Britain imports [Implts] = more clothing than it exports [Ik'spLrt] \ because many countries with lower ['IPVq] labor costs can produce clothing more cheaply / than the British can.

Table 1. – Mistakes of the first student

Vowels	Consonants	Pause	Stress
[q], [qv], [L], [e], [PV], [eq], [L], [V], [Vq], [A]	[s], fricative [t], stop [r], Rhotic [l], lateral [j], gliding [S], fricative [m], nasal [k], stop	[14]	Important, exports, imports, major, industry, aircraft, industrial, aerospace's
5 – diphthongs, 3 – back vowels, 1 – central vowel	3 – Fricative, 2 – Stop, 1 – Gliding 1 – Nasal, 1 – Lateral, 1 – rhotic		2 – verbs, 3 – adjectives, 2 – nouns

Text 2

The economy / ['kRnqmi] of [qv] the United Kingdomhighly developed [dl'velqpt] = and /market['mRrkqt] oriented. It is the/ [Dq] largest national ['nxSqnl] economy = in the world = measured ['meZqd] by / nominal = gross domestic [dq'mestik]['prRdAkt] product. In 2016, = the UK was the tenth[tenT] largest goods / exporter[ek'spLrtqr] = in the world[we:rld] =and the fifth largest goods importer [Im'pLrtqr]. The UK= is one of the most globalized economies, = and it is composed [kqm'pqVzd] of [qv] the economies = of England, Scotland, = wales, = and Northern Ireland. In the 18th century ['senCqrl] = the UK was = the first country to industrialize, [In'dAstriqIz]= and during the / 19thcentury['senCqrl] =it had a dominant role= [roVI] in the global economy. From the late / 19th century = the second industrial [In'dAstriq] revolution/in the United states =and the / German empire['empQlqr] = presented/ ['pri'zantqd] an increasing [In'krisIN] economic challenge = for the UK. The costs of fighting World War 1 = and World War 2 = further weakened / the UK's relative position. [pq'zISn] In the 21st century, = however, [hQV'evqr]= it remains a global ['glPVbq[l] power ['pQVqr]. The service sector dominates =['dRmqneits] the UK economy. Service industries account =[q'kQVnt] for / [fLr] around 80% of GDP. More than 70% of workers [we:r'kqrz]= are employed in service / industries. The financial / services industry is = particularly [pqr'tlkjqlrli] important, = and London is one of the world's largest = financial center. Major

[melGq] financial companies / ['kAmpqnlz] in London = include the Bank [bxnk] of England, = the London Stock/ Exchange = and so on.

Table 2. – Mistakes of the second student

Vowels	Consonants	Pause	Stress
[q], [l], [qV], [x], [R], [L], [E:], [lq], [Ql], [QV], [Vq], [el], [A]	[v], fricative [t], stop [D], fricative [Z], fricative [m], nasal [T], fricative [k], stop [r], rhotic [C], affricate [l], lateral [b], stop [G], affricate	[15]	Economy, developed, measured, domestic, product, exporter, importer, composed, industrialize, empire, presented, global, account, dominates, particularly, major
6 – diphthongs, 2 – back vowels	4 – Fricative, 3 – Stop, 2 – Affricative, 1 – Lateral, 1 – Nasal, 1 – Rhotic		6 – verbs, 3 – adjectives, 5 – nouns, 1 – adverb

Text 3

Manus island ['Qlqnd] = north of new \ guinea, ['glnl] is covered ['kAvqrd] with / rain forest['flrlst]. The Manus Island tree snail, = a small animal with a bright green shell, = lives in the tops [tOps] of the trees = in / this forest. Over collecting ['qVvq] = has been a serious ['siqriqs] problem \ for these small animals. Many people ['pjpl] like to collect the shells / of Manus Island \ tree /snail = because [bi'kOz] of[qv] their\ beautiful ['bjHtqfVI] color. The 1,6-inch-long shells are[Rr] \ often used for = jewelry ['GHqiri]. Another['qnADqr] big problem \ for these snails is \ the loss of the forestswhere they live. Loggers ['lLgarz] are cutting down more and more trees / of the Manus Island \ rain forest. Little is known about the \ habits of this little animal. If the logging and collecting[kq'lektIN] continue, = soon there will be no Manus island \ tree snails = left to[tq] study.

Table 3. – Mistakes of the third student

Vowel sounds	Consonant sounds	Pause	Stress
[q], [Ql], [i], [J], [A], [e], [qV], [lq], [O], [R]	[r], Rhotic [p], Stop [t], Stop [G], Affricative [D], Fricative	[14]	Guinea, forest, over collecting, beautiful, loggers, collecting
3 – diphthongs, 2 – back vowels, 3 – central vowels	1 – Fricative, 2 – stop, 1 – Affricative, 1 – Rhotic		1 – adjective, 5 – nouns

Linguistics, literature, philology

The analysis of the results obtained allows us to make a general table, where the errors in the pronunciation of sounds, stress and pauses are summed up.

Table 4. – Common mistakes

Vowel	Consonant	Stress	Pause
[q]=14 [l]=7 [L]=8 [Q]=5 [qV]=7 [J]=2 [E:]=3 [eq]=4 [e]=3 [Vq]=2 [OV]=2 [x]=2 [R]=2 [V]=2 [A]=4	[v]=5 [r]=5 [m]=4 [G]=4 [s]=2 [t]=2 [D]=2 [j]=2 [k]=2 [C]=1 [b]=1 [p]=1	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	[43]
26 – central vowels 23 – diphthongs, 12 – back vowels	8 – Fricative, 7 – stop, 3 –Affricative 3 –Rhotic 2 – nasal, 2 – lateral, 1 – gliding	12 – nouns, 8 – Verbs, 7 – adjectives, 1 – adverb	

- 12 – nouns: exports, imports, aircraft, aerospace's, Guinea, forest, loggers, Economy, product, exporter, importer, empire, over collecting, collecting, industry.
- 8 – verbs: developed, measured, industrialize, presented, dominates, account
- 7 – adjectives: important, major, industrial, beautiful, domestic, composed.
- 1 – adverb: particularly

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 they differ to some degree.

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.

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:

- a) not longitudinal, tonal word stress;
- b) the lack of reduction in the Turkmen language;
- c) the lack of identity in linguistic significance of verbal accents;
- d) 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;
- d) tension manifested in the closed syllable due to its structure and properties of consonant phonemes;
- e) the participation of word stress (along with longitude) in the rhythm structure of a word.

After doing a research, 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 well as in English, so we did not notice the error in producing the consonant 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 mistakes in vowel pronunciation are in the following: 26 central vowels, 12 back vowels, 23 diphthongs. The mistakes in consonant pronunciation are in the following: 8 – Fricative, 7 – stop, 3 – affricative, 3 – rhotic, 2 – nasal, 2 – lateral, 1 – gliding.

The mistakes in stresses are as follows: 12 – nouns, 8 – verbs, 7 – adjectives, 1 – adverb.

REFERENCES

1. Практическая фонетика английского языка : учеб.-метод. комплекс / сост.: О.И. Любецкая, Е.Н. Потапова ; под общ. ред. О.И. Любецкой. – Новополоцк : ПГУ, 2006. – Ч. 2. – 136 с.
2. Теоретическая фонетика английского языка : учеб.-метод. комплекс / сост. М.Д. Пустрова. – Новополоцк : ПГУ, 2006. – 195 с.
3. Филологические науки в России и за рубежом : материалы V Междунар. науч. конф., Санкт-Петербург, дек. 2017 г. –СПб. : Свое изд-во, 2017. – 82 с.
4. Borisova, L.V. Theoretical phonetics / L.V. Borisova, A.A. Metlyuk. – Minsk, 1970.
5. O'Connor, J. Intonation of Colloquial English / J. O'Connor, G. Arnold. – L., 1973.
6. Metlyuk, A.A. Experimental phonetics / A.A. Metlyuk, E.B. Karnevskaya. – Minsk, 1974.