



ENGLISH COMMUNICATION AND MOTHER TONGUE

DR. PRADNYASHAILEE BHAGWAN SAWAI

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Government College of Arts and Science, Aurangabad

Maharashtra. **INDIA**

ABSTRACT

Mother Tongue is part of growing up from an infant into an individual. Learning additional language is known as second language acquisition. There is a significant relationship between second language acquisition and mother tongue language. Language is an essential tool for human growth. Language acquisition is a process which helps people to convey and exchange their views and thoughts to each other. During this process, we use certain words belonging to a particular language to understand and communicate. This process involves learning and using syntax, phonetics, and a wide vocabulary.

Key Words: *Mother, Tongue, English, Language, Influence*

Teachers introduce the proper speaking skills in the classroom setup. It is believed that the learners will pick up the skill from the classroom environment, but often even the teacher's pronunciation skills are colored and the learners acquire the colored skills from the classroom thereby being unable to acquire the proper skill in spoken English. Another reason why learning pronunciation is difficult is because by the time the learners are introduced to the second language sound system they have a fossilized sound system of their mother tongue, which hinders the acquisition of the other language.

We need to be willing to give ourselves and others time to learn these skills. We need to be patient with each other. In the history of language, standard words become non-standard words, some words acquire new meanings while some other lose their original meanings. Hence words which are considered to be having native influence, in the long run, might be accepted.

‘Curry’ is a north Indian word widely used in foreign countries and it has gained a place in standard English dictionaries. Words like ‘pre-pone’, ‘redressal’, and ‘wheatish complexion’, expressions like ‘I am understanding it’, ‘She is knowing the answer’, preposition usage like, ‘discuss about’, ‘pay attention on’ and frequent use of question tags like, ‘you are going, no?’ etc.

In the study of language, redundancy is the construction of a phrase that presents some idea using more information than is necessary for one to be able understand the idea. Often times, redundancies occur in speech unintentionally, however, redundant phrases can also be deliberately constructed for emphasis, in order to avoid the possibility of others’ misinterpretation of a very important idea.

In rhetoric, the term “redundancy” tends to have a negative connotation and may be perceived as improper because of its use of duplicative or unnecessary wording (and some people expand the definition to include self-contradictory wording, similar to double negation); however, it remains a linguistically valid way of placing emphasis on some expressed idea. Through the use of repetition of certain concepts, redundancy increases the odds of predictability of a message’s meaning and understanding to others.

Redundancy typically takes the form of tautology: phrases that repeat a meaning with different though semantically similar words. Common examples are: “a variety of different items”, “an added bonus”, “to over-exaggerate”, “and etc.”, “end result”, “free gift”, “future plans”, “unconfirmed rumor”, “to kill, murder, or electrocute someone to death”, “past history”, “safe haven”, “potential hazard”, “completely surrounded”, “false pretense,” and so on.

It is this feature of redundancy that has been said to be important in allowing humans to acquire a complex grammar system. A child acquiring language must abstract away grammatical rules based on the input which he hears. The ability to pick and learn a language distinguishes human beings from other organisms. Infants learn their native language or mother tongue with only a little input.

Linguists have long studied the relationship between second language acquisition and mother tongue. The focus of the studies and research is to discover the influence of the mother tongue on the process of second language acquisition and the role of the mother tongue in second language learning. The latest comparative studies in this area have demonstrated that the learning of a second language has a positive result on the use of the mother tongue. According to one study, it was found that level of understanding of the mother tongue of multilingual persons is better than that of monolingual people. In addition, the proficiency in the mother tongue is demonstrated in a different manner if you are acquiring the second language in a natural environment or learning a foreign language in a classroom setting.

The process of second language acquisition is quite different from acquiring the mother tongue. Our knowledge of the mother tongue makes it easier for us to learn and acquire a second language. By the time we start learning a second language, we already have experience in language learning. We also have cognitive maturity which is important for acquiring a language. We can easily comprehend situations and words we have learned in our mother tongue. It helps us translate them easily into the second language vocabulary.

Experience tells us that individuals differ from one another as to their ability to pronounce English correctly. At least six factors have been identified by teachers of English. These are:

1. The influence of the learner's native language.
2. The learner's age.
3. The learner's exposure to English – length and intensity of exposure.
4. The learner's innate phonetic ability.
5. The learner's attitude and sense of identity.
6. The learner's motivation and concern for good pronunciation

The socio-economic class of the learner, whether he comes from a family in which members already know and use some English, and whether there are opportunities available in the community to continue to practice English outside the classroom, may also have an impact upon the level of proficiency attained in the pronunciation of English. The socio-political attitudes towards learning and teaching English which prevail in the nation appear to influence the performance of students in the rural areas

Sociolinguistics is the study of language and society. Sociolinguistics, or the study of language in relation to society, is a relative newcomer to the linguistic fold. Sociolinguistics is more interested in real speech, within and among communities. Their overriding concern is with the way in which language varies according to the social context in which it used and the social group to which it belongs. The social variables that influence speech include personal factors such as age and education, as well as more general ones like nationality, race and gender. Linguistics is a scientific study of language. Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbol. It is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used by human communication by means of which a social group co-operators. One dialect differs from another in sound system, vocabulary and syntax. For example, Hindi is a language and Brajhasha, Khari Boli, Bundelkhandi, Avadhi, Bagbeli and Bhojpuri are its dialects. Marathi is a language and puneri, Airani, Kokani, Agri and Varadi are dialects. They are closely related to Marathi

Pronunciation really matters among the speaker of English in India. According to Languages of India, 1991 (census) In India there are 18 scheduled languages, 114 other languages, 216



mother tongues, 96 non- specified languages, approximately 1000 languages. Despite the different languages and dialects, most of the official languages speakers have developed a standard of speaking language which has become the accepted style of speaking for that language. There are many varieties of English spoken in India, each being influenced by the mother tongue of the speakers of these varieties of English. There are numerous examples of the influence of mother tongue on the speaker of English in India. - Malayalee speaker of English pronounce the /p/in 'temple' and ample as /b/ the /t/ in 'canteen' as /d/ - Bengolee speaker pronounce 'sip' and 'ship' alike. In 'Variety of English' the communicators use a different style in 'rule of address'. Indian society has several classes based on economy and professions. Each class has individual rules of address. 'Babu', 'Huzoor', sahib, 'may-baap', Malik-Mahajan are the general terms sociologically lowered class people use to their respective higher-class people. Indian speaker of English use various Indian words (Indian dialects) into 'Indian Variety of English' register. i.e. gajra, kajal, bindi, kurta, kamij, hakim, bibiji, chappal, swadeshi, namskar, Kumkum etc. Indian writers in English used various typically Indian affixes in their writing.

Pronunciation refers to the way a word or a language is spoken, or the manner in which someone utters a word. If one is said to have "correct pronunciation", then it refers to both within a particular dialect. A word can be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors, such as: the area in which they grew up, the area in which they now live, if they have a speech or voice disorder, their ethnic group, their social class, or their education. Syllables are counted as units of sound (phones) that they use in their language. The branch of linguistics which studies these units of sound is phonetics. Phones which play the same role are grouped together into classes called phonemes; the study of these is phonemics or phonematics or phonology. Phones as components of articulation are usually described using the International Phonetic Alphabet(IPA).

Words such as Congress-wallah, Bibiji, Driverji, Rickshaw- wallah etc are widely used in English writings. Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Arundhati Roy, Chetan Bhagat, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Urvashi Butalia, Arvind Adiga, V.S.Naipul used Indian words to bring the sense of Indianness in their writing.

India is a multilingual country where English commuters have impact of mother- tongue on their communication. Their pronunciations are varied as per their region and use of Indian words in English a routine for them. It is important to avoid technical explanations. Instead, provide exercises using words which would be of immense practical value to the students in their day to day use of English. Rules of pronunciation should not be memorized, but taught through abundant practice so that the learners will internalize these rules and the exceptions in their own way, in an unconscious manner.

It must also be remembered that teaching correct and appropriate pronunciation of English to adult learners of English is indeed a very difficult task. It is advised that one should not

expect to eliminate all traces of their native language from their English utterances. The goal is to make them speak English in a manner that their speech, though with the accents of their language, will still be understood fairly well by the native speakers of English.

The mother tongue has influence on every aspect of the decoding process of the second language including acoustics, phonetics, serial perception, phonological level, lexical access, and sentence and text comprehension. If a child has weaker decoding abilities in the mother tongue, it will reflect low performance in second language acquisition as well. The main prerequisite for a successful learning of a second language is strong perception and comprehension capabilities in the mother tongue.

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