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IMPROVING PRONUNCIATION OF THE ADULT STUDENTS BY TEACHING STRESS-PATTERNS

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ABSTRACT

The present research is an attempt to create awareness about what do we mean by stress-timedness and how we can enhance the quality of our speech through learning the speech patterns of English. Unless we are at home in the suprasegmental parts of the language, we cannot acquire the rhythmic flow of English speech. Stress-patterns of English, if not learnt, cause the failure to understand what is said. That is why a gap occurs in communicative interaction. This experimental research was based on a large variety of pronunciation games, activities, dialogues and practice exercises that were designed to make a laborious task i.e., pronunciation learning an easier and enjoyable thing for the learners. As the task was to bring a change in their linguistic behavior and inculcate in them self-confidence and self-reliance such was attained to a large extent at the end of the whole process.

Keywords: Stress Patterns, Pronunciation, Communicative Approach

1. INTRODUCTION

English is now the most widespread language all over the world and the techniques for teaching English are inevitably prone to change because the external world is itself changing rapidly. Learning English is difficult for the foreigners because unfortunately there is no short way of acquiring the full knowledge of this language. In Pakistan, like many other multilingual countries, where people speak different indigenous languages, English has a particular role as a language of communication. Learning English requires certain skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. The major part of the spoken skill of English language entirely depends on pronunciation. Keeping this linguistic scenario in mind let us have a look on the factors that cause pronunciation problems.

The most important reason for faulty pronunciation of the sounds of English is the replacement of English sounds by their Urdu equivalents, wrong accentual patterns, leaving important words unaccented in the connected speech, faulty rhythmic patterns, wrong division of a long utterance into tone groups and wrong location of the nucleus or the tonic syllable in a tone group. Due to these factors, speakers create intelligibility for the native speakers. However, it must be accepted that if there is an occasion to speak with natives, the divergences in pronunciation may lead to communication breakdown. Spoken English is difficult to grasp than written. When teachers are unable or neglect to do this, their students won't understand spoken English and will try to avoid the speaking situation. This restricts communication and learning at the same time. We can expect L2 learners to be good writers but not good speakers. The teaching of pronunciation is the most neglected area in English language teaching because we lack good models (teachers) for teaching pronunciation in our country. Mostly students learn the language just through "imitation" but we should keep this fact in mind that not all the students have a natural flair or knack for languages or the ease for oral imitation and they feel themselves helpless in this regard.

Pronunciation is not just about sounds and sound contrasts, correct word-stress is almost more important in promoting understanding and sentence stress shows us what word/idea is important to the speaker, intonation can tell us about a speaker's attitude, among other things. So, learning pronunciation will be possible only by paying attention to both segmental and

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superasegmental part of pronunciation otherwise there will be problems not only for the speakers but for the listeners as well.

In our schools and colleges, teachers teach through Grammar translation Method with the focus on reading and writing. A good learner is one who "keeps the ears open". As it is said, language starts with ears; special emphasis should be put to the listening skill as well because it is the gateway to better spoken English. As students do have a restricted audience and do not have the opportunity to interact with the teachers and their fellows so they feel reluctance in speaking as they are not mostly exposed to the language. Language is a living entity and gets stagnant when the continuous flow ceases.

Our teachers are not trained and well equipped. Most of the teachers want to approximate a native accent and to be familiarized with several of the major accents of English in the World. Form the pronunciation-teaching point of view; special courses should be offered for them. The available spoken courses in the market are hard to grasp because these are too boring. It is the need of the hour that new techniques for teaching pronunciation should be introduced and developed according to the taste of the learners. In this way the cumbersome task of learning pronunciation will become comfortable, understandable and digestible.

The following areas dealing with stress are mostly neglected by the L2 speakers:

- *Stress as a factor in spoken grammar as marker of Nouns, Adjectives, and Verbs,*
- *Emphatic and contrastive stress on function words*
- *Word and variable stress (ty and teen stress)*
- *Stress in phrasal verbs*
- *Stress placement in the words of two or more syllables*
- *Stress in compound nouns*
- *Prominent and weak forms and later on*
- *Stress in sentences as an emotive factor*

2. RESEARCH QUESTION

How can the teaching of stress patterns of English improve pronunciation of the students effectively?

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study were:

i. To design and implement activities for teaching stress pattern in an EFL classroom.
ii. To find out the effectiveness of teaching stress pattern on the pronunciation of the adult EFL students.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND SAMPLING

Many educational problems require a sound attention and a proper solution, both practical and theoretical; in order to engulf the existing gap between the objectives and techniques applied to attain them. In this experimental research, based on prediction, the research measured the effect of some stress-patterns teaching techniques on the adult students, exploiting communicative approach. In order to achieve this purpose, data for this study was collected through pre-test and post-test recordings. For teaching stress-patterns of English, a wide variety of material was used i.e., language games, task based communicative activities, exercises, picture cards, drills practices, problem solving tasks.

Twenty students from the rural background from a Government College were selected randomly. They were of 16 to 18 years of age and their schooling was generally from government institutions. These students had Punjabi as their mother tongue and Urdu as L1. Classroom conversation was in Urdu and sometimes in English when the text was taught through GTM method.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistics is a wider term that encompasses a number of sub-fields, phonetics is one of them. As described by Crystal (1980), 'linguistics is a science of language. It is the subject whose practitioners devote their energy to understand why human language is the way it is' but phonetics is a science, which studies speech sounds. Phonetic elements used in the phonological form of meaningful entities produce a language. So, in this way phonetics is embedded in every language on the globe. Both linguistics and phonetic are correlated because both evaluate the function of a language in a social context and endeavor to recognize how speech sounds have changed, transformed, modified, developed over the years and how dialects and accents emerged in the light of merely signals speech sounds. As Shams-ud-Din (1983) illustrates, 'Phonetics is concerned with the study of the sounds of speech as they are made by the speaker and heard by a listener.' With knowledge of phonetics, we can organize and analyze the sounds of language and classify, describe and study each sound in relation to other sounds of language.

Pakistan is a multilingual country with six major and fifty-nine small languages (census report 1951-81 as cited in Rehman, 2003). Here, Urdu enjoys the status of being her national language that is mother tongue of only 2.65 per cent of total population. The speakers of English language (as 2nd language learners) face pronunciation problems and opacity in learning a new language because wrong stress placement causes unintelligibility for L2 learners who have Urdu as their mother tongue. 'It has been estimated that only about three per cent of the English population speaks RP', endorses Trudgill (1979).

In English, the word stress is emphasis loudness, or force with which a speaker pronounces a sound or a syllable. The stressed syllables tend to occur at regular intervals that is why it is said time and again that English is a stress timed language. English stress functions phonemically in words and partly as a feature of longer phrases and sentences. Within a word stress functions in one or more syllables having heavier stress and at phrase and sentence level with one or more than one words stressed heavier than the others. Almost in all the languages, and especially in English a word is made up of syllables. A vowel occupies a central position in each syllable. For instance: the main stress falls on the first syllable in such words as finish, answer, afterwards, on the second syllable in behind, result together, impossible; on the third syllable in understand, education, or the later in articulation, palatalization…. etc. In a word, one syllable receives generally longer stress that is pronounced as the loudness. It is said to have primary stress. Trager and Smith (1951) associate stress (lexical) with loudness. It is true that the distinction between a syllable with secondary stress and an unstressed syllable must always hinge on the occurrence of schwa, the so-called indeterminate vowel [ə]. In English this vowel can be consider to signal minimal or zero stress. A syllable containing any other vowel quantity, but not given prominence by the normal devices of English stress making, will then count as having secondary stress. Some words have optional stress.

Words ending with suffixes such as –tion, -ic, -ical, ically,-tial, -atory, -city, and some others have primary stress on the syllable immediately before the suffix. Stress not only coveys the phonological structure but also tells how many syllables are there in a word. In this way, stress defines the grammatical category of a word (either it is noun verb or adjective).
English stress can be mobile. This can be shown in the morphological related words in which stress shifts on to different syllables.

Origin	Original	Originality
ˈɒrɪdʒ(ɪ)n	əˈrɪdʒənl	ərɪdʒˈnɑlɪti

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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JALT

Constitution kɒn(t)stɪtju:ʃn	Constitutional kɒn(t)stɪˈtjuʃn(ə)l	Constitutionality kɒn(t)stɪtjuʃəˈnalɪti
Photograph ˈfəʊtəgrɑ:f	Photography fəˈtɒgrəfi	Photographic ˈfəʊtəgrafɪk
Diplomat ˈdɪpləmɑt	Diplomacy dɪˈpləʊməsi	Diplomatic dɪpləˈmɑtɪk

We use the term “weak” & “strong” to refer to characteristic of syllable. We could describe them partly in terms of stress or unstressed. Strong syllables are those that are stressed and weak syllables are those which have only four types of peaks: the vowel schwa (ə), a front unrounded vowel /i:/ and /ɪ/ a close back rounded vowel u: [u]a syllabic consonant. (a syllabic consonant is one that can alone stand for a full syllable. It is possible for the consonants to form the nucleus of a syllable in the speech of the English speaker. / l/, / n/ are capable of forming full syllable)

In sentences, stress creates the rhythm of the language. As Mortimer (1976) elucidates, ‘if there are any stressed syllables between stresses, these have to be filled in without delaying the regular beat of stress pulses. The more stressed syllables there are after a stress, the quicker they must be in order to catch the next pulse’. An important thing to note down in a sentence is that stress is accent on one syllable within a word and sentence stress is accent on various words within a sentence. Usually, a word has two types of words: content words and structure words. As the structure words carry the most important information or sense so these are stressed. Structure words are not as essential to convey meaning because even if you remove them, you can understand the conveyed meaning.

Moving to primary stress in a sentence in a sentence leads to different emphases and contrasts. Not all the words in a sentence carry equal importance. Some words are more important than others in that they carry special significance.

The part of the utterance over which the patterns of pitch change is called tone group. Tone unit may consist of only one syllable such as and it may consist of more than one syllable. It is further divided into:

i. Tone syllable: In tone unit, the syllable which carries tone is called tonic syllable. Primary stress falls on the tonic syllable. ii. Pre tone syllable: The syllable or part of utterance which lies before tonic syllable in tone unit is called pre-tonic syllable or Head.

iii. Post tone syllable: It often happens that some syllables follow the tone syllable. Any syllable between the tonic syllable and that of tone unit are called the tail.

The IPA diacritic for stress is a short vertical line (ˈ) placed as a symbol for the stressed sound or syllable (for primary stress) and for secondary stress. For convenience, an accent above or after the stressed vowel (as used in many dictionaries) or capitalization of the stressed syllables are simple and handy devices, but they do not lend themselves to systematic display of different levels of stress.

Some phoneticians have suggested that further type of stress other than just primary and secondary need to be distinguished. Gimson (1989) points out the same pronunciations of ‘examination’ may allocate stress to each of the five syllables. He says that the syllables may be articulated with the following order of energy /neɪ /zæ/, /ɪg/,/ʃn/ i.e so that there is no single syllable that can be described as unstressed. For American English, Trager and Smith (1951) stated that four degrees of stress must be specified (i.e. primary, secondary, tertiary, weak). Collins and Meels (2003) state that in English, four phonetic variables appear most significant as indicators of stress: intensity, pitch variation, Vowel quantity and vowel reduction. Intensity

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in physiological terms is the greater breath effort and muscular energy associated with stressed syllables. It is closely related to what is perceived by the listener as loudness. Pitch variation is the most important single factor in determining stress. In English higher pitch tend to be associated with stronger stress.

Vowel Quantity is an important factor for indicating stress. Whether a vowel is central or peripheral, determines stress. Take the English vowel in the noun 'present' /preˈzənt/ as opposed to the verb (to) present /ˈprezənt/. The stressed syllables contain the peripheral vowel degree/e/, whereas stressed syllables have a central vowel /ə/ (Note that the first word, it is possible for the vowel in the unstressed syllable to be further reduced to the syllabic consonant /n/; in the second word some speaker may use another non-peripheral vowel, Kit). The peripheral vowel in the unstressed syllable is actually replaced by another phoneme – the most commonly by, e.g., /ə/, sometimes by /ɪ/ or /ʊ/, or even syllabic consonant. e.g., attention /ətenʃn/ excitable /ɪksaɪtbl /. If we neglect the vowel reduction, it results in unstressed syllable having undue prominence.

Duration of vowel is an important factor in indicating stress. In English other things being equal, vowels are shorter in unstressed than in stressed syllables i.e., Sarcasm /sa:kæzm/, sarcastic /sa:kæ:stɪk/ , T.V / ti:vi/.

'Everything that is spoken in English, a word, a phrase, or sentence is spoken with both stress and intonation' endorses Kenworthy (1999). We produce a word or sentence in various ways: angrily or kindly, t or with interest or without taking interest, emphatically, emotionally, generally, specifically, interrogatively, with exclamation or command. All these differences are largely dependent upon the tunes we use in their production. So, the words do not change their meaning but the tune which is added by the speaker bringing holistic change in the meaning of the sentences. The way of exploiting the tunes is called intonation. Stress placement is meticulously related to intonation as far as sentence stress is concerned.

Communicative approach focuses on the message being conveyed instead in what form it is transferred to the listeners. In the late 1960s and 1970s pronunciation factor got importance in spoken English due to this modern approach and a lot of emphasis was on the training of the teachers in this area. As Pennington (1989) suggested: "…. teachers, with formal training in pronunciation and teaching suprasegmentals in communicative language program can make a difference. As for as the teaching of stress-patterns is concerned, CLT can contribute a lot because the aim of both these is to inculcate in learners the ability to use the language appropriate to a given context. To do this, learners need knowledge of the linguistic forms, meaning and functions. They need to know that many different forms can be used to perform a function and also a single form can often serve a variety of functions. They must be able to choose among these the most appropriate forms, given social context and the role of interlocutors. They must be able to manage the process of negotiating meaning with their interlocutors. Stress, the suprasegmental aspect of language, in easiest way can be described as the prominence with which on part of a word or of a longer utterance is distinguished from the other parts. For the native speaker it is not difficult to use stress-patterns because this ability is inbuilt in them. Their perceptual capabilities allow them to say how many syllables a word has, in the absence of any conscious knowledge of what syllable might be or how it might be defined. But for the second language learners it is the most complex matter. Kingdom (1958) elucidates that there are no rules for English stress and that a student must learn the stress-patterns individually for each word.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

In English pronunciation Stress affects the vowel quality of unstressed syllables. Stress causes the squashing of the syllable or the reduction of the vowel sounds and sometimes it even causes

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JALT

the loss of the syllable. But the students were not aware of the reduction or centralization of the unstressed syllables (pre-test recordings).

1.They mispronounced vowels, i.e. /ˈbrekfəst/, as /brekˈfæst/, /əˈsɪstənt/ as /əsɪsˈtænt/ /resˈtrænt/ as /resˈtɒrnt/ and so on (recordings and test sheet pre-test).When <a> is stressed, it is pronounced / æ/ but when <a> is unstressed, it is pronounced as /ə/.

2. When the reading list or passages were given to them for reading, most of them automatically put the stress on the last syllable of the words without being aware of the grammatical category of the words.i.e. /ˈkɑnvɪkt/ as /kənˈvɪkt/, /ˈsəspekt/ as /səsˈpekt/, /ˈprɪzənt/ as /prɪˈzent/.

3. They were also unaware of the difference between the stress-pattern of an adjective and a verb. They pronounced /əˈlæbrɪt/ as /ələbəˈreɪt/ and /dɪˈlɪbrɪt/ as /dɪlɪbɪˈreɪt/.

The students had no idea of syllabification so they did not know on which syllable they had to put stress.

4. Another noticeable area was that of syllabic consonants. They always used a vowel sound between consonant clusters of sounds. For example, they pronounced: /tɑʊˌl/ as /tɑˈwəl/, /ˈspeʃlɪ/ as /speʃəlɪ/, /ˈkæpətlˌ/ as /ˈkæpɪtəl/ and so on (listen in the recordings of the passages).

5. Students were not aware of the use of weak and strong forms of the words. They pronounced them equally without acknowledging whether the next word starts with a vowel or consonant sound. They made mistakes in pronouncing weak form such as /ən/, /tə/, /əv/, /ə/, /ðə/, /ðː/, /fə/, /ət/ (pre- test recording of reading passage and dialogues). Usually, students put stress on every word either it sounds bad to the ears.

6. Good rhythm in English involves not only clear difference between stressed and unstressed syllables but also grouping syllables together into longer units. That is why, it is necessary to place pause in the right place and link words together in the phrases. This phenomenon was totally missing in their readings. (Recordings of the dialogues)

7. The students did not know that, in English, syllables before pauses are lengthened. They did not know that beats or stress pulses in connected speech follow each other at roughly equal intervals of time and for this purpose sometimes last syllable of the word and first syllable of the next word are linked. They made the reading without sensitizing this factor.

8. The pronunciation of plosives /pʰ/, /tʰ/, /kʰ/ at initial position was also wrongly dealt by them (pre-test reading of passage --- and reading list). This made them put stress on the wrong syllables.

6. TREATMENT PHASE

After critically analyzing the weak areas of the students, it was more convenient to map out a guideline for teaching phase. During this period, the students were taught for 60 hours about the use of stress placement in words and at sentence levels.

Firstly, they were taught about word stress-placement and for this purpose they practiced an activity. For teaching stress in words with suffixes and prefixes, a pronunciation game was devised that was interesting for the students. Our students face problems in pronunciation because they are unaware of syllable division and stress placement on syllables. To deal with this situation, students were taught about syllable division and they practiced it through an exercise and a game. Students also learnt about stress in word families and did an exercise. Mostly, we come across this situation that not only the students but also the teachers put the stress in compound nouns equally though it may mar the actual meaning of the sentence. The student learnt about this phenomenon with the help of some picture cards and after that they

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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

did an exercise. For practicing “ty” and “teen” stress, pronunciation a game was developed that would increase the understanding among students. They also learnt about Auxiliary verb stress and did an exercise based on it. They were taught about the emphatic use of stress in sentences with the help of some exercises, drill practices and games. They practiced the weak forms and learn some rules regarding that. They practiced pausing and linking words in sentences with the help of an exercise based on a passage.

7. POST-TEST

After improvising the available teaching material in the treatment phase and critically analyzing hours of recorded material, a tremendous change was observed in the linguistic habits of the students.

1.The production and reduction of the vowel sounds were no more beguiling tasks for them and they were quite at home in using the vowel sounds in the middle or at the final positions as they correctly pronounced the words like /wɔːl/ instead of /waːl/, /wɒnts/ instead of /wɑːnt/, /klɑɪmət/ instead of /klɑɪmeɪt/, /həʊ ˈ tel/ instead of /ˈhəʊtəl/, /ˈkɒndʌkt/ instead of /kən ˈ dʌkt/, / ˈ prəʊgres/ instead of /prəˈgres/, / ˈsʌbʤækt/ instead of /səbˈʤakt/, /ˈɒbʤækt/ instead of /əbʤekt/, /əˈprəʊpɪət/ instead of /epraːprɪeɪt/. It was observed that there was a noticeable improvement regarding this area.

1. As the students were repeatedly told that the stress placement affects the grammatical category of the words, they got much awareness about this sensitive issue. At the end of the test session, they were able to put the accurate stress on the words. As they pronounced the given words correctly: Contrast as noun / ˈkɒntrɑːst / and as verb/ kɒnˈtrɑːst /, Contract as noun / kɒntrækt / and as verb/ kəntrækt /, Export as noun /ˈekspɔːt / and as verb / ɪkspɔːt /, Frequent as noun /frɪːkwənt / and as verb / frɪˈkwent /, Perfect as noun /ˈpɜːfɪkt / and as verb/ pəˈfekt / , Record as noun / rekɔːd / and as verb/ rɪkɔːd/, Project as noun /ˈprɒʤekt /and as verb / prəʊˈʤekt/ and so on.

   Students achieved enough awareness about syllabification and stress on right syllables through extensive practice. Most of them placed accurate stress on the words like: /ˈkɒmpərəbl/ (1st syllable stress), /ˈkʌrəntli/ (1st syllable stress), /ˈdefɪnət/ (1st syllable stress), /ˈnɪtɪŋgeɪl/(1st syllable stress), /həʊˈtel/(2nd syllable stress), /bʊˈkʱeɪ/ (2ndsyllable stress), /stəˈnɒgrɒfi/ (2nd syllable stress) /əˈprəʊpɪət/ (2ndsyllable stress), /prɒblәˈmætɪk/ 3rd syllable stress),/prɒbəˈbɪlɪti/ (3rd syllable stress) /sɪvɪlɑɪˈzeɪʃn/ (4th syllable stress) and so on.
2. In the area of syllabic consonants, they enhanced their understanding and pronounced them accurately. i.e., /mekənɑɪzeɪʃn̩/, /deɪkɒreɪʃn̩/, /sɪvəlɑɪzeɪʃn̩/, /kɒmpərəbl̩/. Stress placement in compound nouns was a difficult task for them to handle. Most of learners still made a lot of mistakes in pronouncing the words like /ˈkɒmən ruːm/, /ˈwɔːl peɪpə/, /ˈdəʊn steə(r)z/.
3. Practice of plosives / pʰ /, / tʰ /, / kʰ/ at initial position in words was found and learners were able to pronounce the word in a better way like: post-test /pʰəʊst tʰest/, currently /ˈkʌrəntli/, pre-test / pʰrɪ tʰest/, permit /ˈpʰɜmɪt/, comparable / kʰɒmpərəbl/.
4. Students overcame successfully the most of the problem in the use of weak and strong forms. They understood the difference between ‘THE’/ ðə /(used before consonant sounds) and /θiː/ (used before consonants) and tə (used before consonants), /tu/ before vowel sounds, Are /ə/ (before consonant sounds), /ər/ (before vowel sounds), /ɑː/ (in final position).

8. FINDINGS

After critically evaluating recorded material of Post-test, it was observed that the following areas are the most problematic for the students:

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

i. There is no variation of length and stress very often. The wrong syllable of word is often stressed. The participants each syllable has approximately the same length. For example they pronounce /ˈəʊpən/ as /ɔ:pen/, /enˈtə/ as/ enˈtɜ/, / ˈaɪdɪə/ as / aɪˈdɪə/.

ii. There is no grouping of syllables into rhythmic units as in English.

iii. /ə/ is never used in weak syllables and to the weak forms of the contracted words as weak forms do not exist in Urdu. Students think that if they will put stress on every word/ syllable, it will make their speech more effective. The wrong application of stress-patterns is the main cause of mispronunciation.

iv. Linking and pausing is missing in the participants connected English speech. This thing breaks the flow of speech. The linking / r / is a great problem for the participants. RP speakers pronounce /r/ in certain phonetic context. The general rule is that /r / is only pronounced before vowel; never before consonant and/r / is never pronounced at the end of word only if immediately following word begins with a vowel. Completely unaware of the rules, all participants pronounce /r/ in all positions because there is no intrusive /r/ in the phonological system of PE.

v. All the participants completely failed to identify the important words on which tune shape partly depends.

vi. All the participants had an over-even rhythm.

vii. They were unaware that same word can give different meaning if only the stress pˈattern changes. For example: They pronounced /ˈprɒʊʤekt/ as / prəʊˈʤkt/,
/kənˈvɪkt/ as /ˈkɒnvɪkt/, /ˈpreznt/ as /prɪˈzent/. Most of the participants put stress on the last syllable of the words.

viii. It was noticed during the research that mostly in our government institutions students are taught through Grammar Translation Method (GTM) that has not been fruitful, though students can improve their syntactic knowledge. This method neglects the phonological aspects of language that's why when the students are exposed to some social given context; they feel reluctant to speak English.

ix. Urdu is a syllable -bound language whereas English is stress -timed language. The problem occurs when most of the L2 speakers put stress on the last syllable of every word due to interference of Urdu speech patterns. For instance, most of the participants pronounced /əˈsɪstənt/ as /əsɪsˈtent/, /ˈpreʤədɪs/ as /prædʒuˈdes/,
/əpɑtˈmənt/ as /əpɑrtˈment/, /ˈdʌzn/ as /dʌˈzən/ and so on.

x. The superasegmental feature of English and the factors like fluency devices make the performance of learners slower as they belong to a linguistic background where these phenomena are the most neglected one.

xi. In normal speech, function words are stressed in order to emphasize it or call attention to it for the special reason. These words are always higher pitched but students put stress on all the words without caring either a word is 'structure word' or 'content word'.

xii. Words with variable stress also cause problem for the learners. They are not aware that the last word is stressed when it occurs at the end of a sentence or phrase and first syllable is stressed when it is immediately followed by another word in a sentence. They treat both these phenomena equally.

xiii. The pronunciation of compound- nouns is also beguiling. In compound nouns first element (first word) is stressed but students put the stress on the last element. For example: ˈGreen ˈhouse, ˈWashing ˈmachines, ˈHot ˈdogs, ˈDark ˈroom, ˈToy ˈstore, though it totally changes the meaning of a word. It is noticeable that the students are not sensitized about accurate stress placement in compound nouns.

xiv. All the participants are unaware of the stress rules in suffixes and prefixes and always put the stress on the final syllable.

ISSN E: 2709-8273
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JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
JALT

xv. There is a lot of difference between written and spoken English. This Urdu transliteration produces wrong speech habits. For example they pronounce /ˈreɪdieɪtə/ as /rædiˈeɪtɜ/ /ˈgʌvənmənt/ as /gəʊrˈmɪnt/ /ʃɑ:p/ instead of /ʃɒp/.

9. CONCLUSION

The importance of pronunciation is a widely discussed issue in the language teaching circles. Most of the teachers seem to suggest that teacher can make little or no difference in improving their students' pronunciation skill. In contrast, there is the current research which indicates that the teacher can bring a noticeable change in the speech habit of the students if certain criteria, such as teaching of supera-segmentals, i.e., stress-patterns, linking, pausing, weak forms, vowel reduction, syllable stresses with listening practice are fulfilled. Supera-segmentals should be introduced at the initial stage of learning, as it brings the idea of "contextualized" sounds into connected speech. Unless we pay attention to the stress-patterns of English, we cannot achieve cohesion and coherence in speech. If most of the past language programmers gave any importance to pronunciation teaching that was only occasional correction of individual sounds. The recent research and current pedagogical thinking on pronunciation learning proposed new roles for the teacher and students in the communicative classroom.

In a nutshell, this research gives a vivid picture of the existing problems and a new hope by establishing new prospective on priorities for pronunciation that are fewer in number and more realistic than the previously set.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this article, the ways to lessen the predicament of second language learners regarding perception and recognition of stress- patterns of English are proposed. Though the audio-visual method for teaching pronunciation is quite helpful in EFL classrooms but the communicative approach can also be useful as it provides real life situations and implementation of authentic material for the practice of English language. Teaching phonetics is primarily a lab-oriented subject but by lecture-methods different techniques of teaching stress patterns can be devised in actual classroom settings. To improve the learning process, communicative approach can be helpful in flipped leaning. In almost all the universities where the courses on phonetics are offered the emphasis on learners' demands is less sufficient. To make the learning process easier the more techniques should be developed and researches should be conducted in this area. With the burgeoning needs of the hour, mixed method approach can also be helpful in data collection so that the problems of the learners and effects of teaching may be assessed in a better way.

In the communicative classroom, the teacher holds the central position and works as a facilitator for the interlocutors. He should speak English accurately with due regard to correct sound and tone as is considered befitting to make himself reasonably intelligible and acceptable. It's his part to present English sounds in meaningful sequences, in words and sentences in a bid to impress upon the learner to listen to them accurately and render them correctly too. In other words, he should be a good model to follow. Imitation, let's not forget, plays an important in language learning but blind imitation creates havoc. If the teacher is a good model, students should be aware of the mistakes regarding stress-patterns of English; they should practice through varied situational drills and make persistent effort to develop oral skills through various activities outside and inside the classroom. In this way, they can feel self-development and self-improvement in their linguistic behavior. In the last few decades, there has been an attempt to promote the standard of Pakistani English (PE) but by and large nothing has changed despite all the persuasive arguments in its favour. Mostly people are in favour of Standard English (BBC English) so this should be adopted in our institutions without feeling any sort of prejudice. Students should pay attention to those features of English pronunciation (stress placement) which do not exist in vernacular languages. Stress- shift can change the

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meaning of the word. Our students usually pronounce the word with equal stresses that creates ambiguity. The chief problem arises out of contrasting patterns of sounds of mother tongue. These inferences should be avoided.

In most of the helping books of text books, at primary and secondary level, we see that the writers are in the habit of Urdu transliteration (to write English words in Urdu script). The danger of it is that the students pronounce the English words as they are expressed in Urdu. This sort of practice has marred the correct pronunciation of our students that should be discouraged. There is a lot of difference between written and spoken English so learners should be taught not only the sounds in isolation but also in the connected speech at as early stage as possible. Learners should be taught suprasegmental features of L2 since they linguistically belong to an isosyllabic language whose suprasegmental patterns contrast with that of their target language. Encouragement on the part of the teacher carries great importance. If students make mistakes, they should not be discouraged rather guided in a positive way.

This is the need of the hour that teachers should be trained because only they can bring a change. The refresher courses should be arranged for the purpose of awareness among teachers.

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