

PATTERNS OF ENGLISH ACCENTUATION

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Modulation of voice is a character which is immensely individualistic and differs from person to person in relation to geographical and climatic environments. In the rough regions or hilly tracts, accustomed to rough work, the people have stern habits and use their local language in such a way that they use vocal organs while conversing among their fellow beings. This attitude has a major influence on their learning a language as well as their accentuation. It will have an effective stress over their intonation, and may cause considerable interference and problems for the community at large.

Intonation, as defined by Grimson, is "the variations which take place in the pitch of the voice in connected speech". It has three levels:

1. the rising intonation,
2. the falling intonation and
3. the level intonation.

All these three levels of intonations are never used by the learners adopting English as a second language. The Pakistani students mainly learn, at present, a foreign language as a second language. Hence, they do not devote much time to learn it as accurately as it must be and as precisely accentuated as by a native speaker. Moreover, the regional linguistic interference enhances the problematisation in many cases.

Most of the learners whose mother tongue is Urdu, are used to pronounce English in Urduized version: such as the word station is spoken as "istation". It is one of the many examples in this case.

Pronunciation of a few words is also a problematic controversy. The word schedule

is spoken by many old teachers as "shedule" on British pattern. Whereas, with the advancement and moderation planning of American society, it is spoken as "skedual". This also creates a dubious notion in the minds of the taught.

English is a "stress" language. Hence, strange or ambiguous stress patterns of speech may render the speaker virtually incomprehensible to the listener. If he is forced to repeat those words, he would pour out quite a different context.

Native speech habits also play a role disadvantageously in learning and pronunciation in the whole community. The efforts put in even wholeheartedly would go to the dogs; the time and energy would go waste entirely in that community as the natural and spontaneous speech habits cannot be altered by mere instructional assignments.

At times, the personal mood of the speaker affects the pronunciation. He may omit a stressed or unstressed syllable, causing a disturbed mental perception and psychological maltreatment to the listener.

Men exhibit a wider range of intonation than women. They give much emphasis on the correct form of language tones and tunes. Incorrect intonation easily results in a breakdown in communication when the listener is unable to distinguish between the speaker's native speech pattern and what he is trying to say in the new language.

Woman is man's mate. She is a fine species. A simple dialogue between these two opposite sexes will reveal the hoarseness and fineness of the tone of speech-sounds emerging from the mouth organs. So nicely

emanating words with sweet melodious pronunciation of fine woman-folk give us a live example of predominant faculty of their vocal cords which may be copied for further amendment and improvement of pronunciation by the learners. Such an attitude of the language spoken is trustworthy and praiseworthy, and it can mitigate the shortcomings of majority of students.

Of all the six languages spoken in Pakistan, some of these shed a dire shadow over the pronunciations of the language; with the exception of one/two which have a close nearness in natural character between languages, like that of English language. Such an affinity is an exception and may not

be juxtaposed in any other regional linguistic character.

FURTHER READINGS

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