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SOME DIFFICULTIES OF KYRGYZ STUDENTS IN PRONUONCING ENGLISH SOUNDS

This article deals with the phonetics of the English and Kyrgyz languages in communication and difficulties of Kyrgyz students in pronouncing some sounds. The article describes the pronunciation peculiarities, offers methods on its effective mastering and renders difficulties that are usually faced by Kyrgyz learners.

Key words: phonetics, sounds, intonation, speaking, effective communication foreign language, teaching, students, pronunciation, teaching phonetics.

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НЕКОТОРЫЕ ТРУДНОСТИ КЫРГЫЗСКИХ СТУДЕНТОВ В ПОВТОРЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЗВУКА

Статья посвящена обобщению роли преподавания практической фонетики студентам вуза в современной коммуникации и определенным трудностям кыргызских студентов при произношении некоторых английских звуков.

Ключевые слова: Фонетика, звуки, интонация, устная речь, эффективное общение на иностранном языке, обучение студентов

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КЫРГЫЗ СТУДЕНТТЕРИНИН АНГЛИС ТИЛИНИН ТЫБЫШТАРЫН ЖАКШЫРТУУДАГЫ КЭЭ БИ КЫЙЫНЧЫЛЫКТАРЫ

Бул макалада англис тилинин фонетикасынын бүгүнкү күндөгү өз ара баарлашуудагы ролу жана кыргыз студенттердин англис тилинин кээ бир тыбыштарды айтуудагы кыйынчылыктары жөнүндө баяндайт.

Негизи создор: Фонетика, үндөр, инновация, оозеки речь, чет тилде эффективдүү баарлашуу, студенттерди окутуу.

The most distinctive feature of a language that makes it different from another language is its sound scheme. Phonetics is the study of speech-sounds, or from a practical point of view, the art of pronunciation. Phonetics is to the science of language generally what

mathematics is to astronomy and the physical sciences. Without it, we can neither observe nor record the simplest phenomena of language. So the main attention is directed to the necessity for some difficulties in teaching practical phonetics in higher education institutions and difficulties that are usually faced by Kyrgyz learners. The article contains the results of approbation of new teaching methods.

The article reviews the main difficulties Kyrgyz-speaking students encounter while studying the phonetics of the English language, the mistakes that are often made English phonetics, students' mistakes. The process of learning a foreign language includes studying its four aspects: the phonetics, the vocabulary, the grammar and the stylistics. Learning these four aspects forms a student's skills of understanding and reproducing oral and written speech. Phonetics describes the main approaches to the formation of phonetic skills. The importance of teaching phonetics of a foreign language is the basic principle of effective communication.

Phonetics forms a tool of paramount importance that is used in the teaching of pronunciation. Pronunciation is defined as "the manner in which speech sounds, especially connected sequences are articulated by individual speakers or by speakers generally". In the light of this definition, pronunciation seems to be closely linked to the study of phonetics which involves the scientific study and description of speech sounds [2].

The actuality of the theme is that Kyrgyz students have many mistakes in pronouncing English sounds because of absence of some phonemes. For example [æ], [w], [ʒ], [ð], [θ]. For instance, in any description of the English sound system, speech sounds are categorized into consonants and vowels. Consonants can be described depending on the movements of the mouth during the articulation (bilabial, dental, alveolar, palatal, velar) or depending on the nature of the airstream, the place and movement of the tongue, and also whether the voice is used or not (voiced, voiceless, plosive, affricate, fricative, nasal, lateral). On the other hand, vowels are described mainly in terms of the position of the tongue and lip rounding.

Despite there being just 26 letters in the English language there are approximately 44 unique sounds, also known as phonemes. The 44 sounds help distinguish one word or meaning from another. Various letters and letter combinations known as graphemes are used to represent the sounds [3].

The 44 English sounds fall into two categories: consonants and vowels. Below is a list of the 44 phonemes along with their International Phonetic Alphabet symbols and some examples of their use. Note that there is no such thing as a definitive list of phonemes because of accents, dialects and the evolution of language itself.

Some difficulties in pronouncing:

The failure originated from difficulties in learning foreign language is caused by the differences between the students mother tongue und English target language. The differences of some sounds make students produce so many errors in pronouncing English sounds, because they never pronounce this kind of sounds. They do not know what the native speaker said and they rarely look for the correct vowels in pronunciation, so the students get difficulties in pronouncing the words correctly. The students may face some difficulties in the pronunciation when they find new sounds in the target language. A lot of errors are made by the students especially in pronouncing English sounds. Language has an important role in communication, people need to communicate to each other. English as foreign language has been established as important in the world. As an international language, English is very important to make one become successful in mastering science and technology: that's why we still need foreign language [9].

Even though Kyrgyz students have been learning English for several years, they still couldn't express their thought in English correctly because there must be some reasons which bring failure of them in mastering English, especially in pronouncing English sounds.

There are 25 consonants in the Kyrgyz language: б, в, г, д, ж, з, й, к, л, м, н, ң, п, р, с, т, ф, х, ц, ч, ш, щ and

English has 20: /b/, /f/, /g/, /h/, /j/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /p/, /ŋ/, /r/, /s/, /t/, /v/, /w/, /y/, /z/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/, /ʃ/, /θ/, /ð/

Kyrgyz consonants are classified as soft or hard. Soft consonants are pronounced with a voice and a whisper, these are: б, с, г, д, ж, з, у, и, м, н, р [5].

English consonant sounds can be further subdivided:

Labials: [p] [b] [m] [f] [v] [w] - articulated with the lips

Coronals: [θ] [ð] [t] [d] [n] [s] [z] [ʃ] [ʒ] [ʧ][dʒ] [l] [r]- articulated by raising the tongue blade

English consonants: manner of articulation:

Stops: [p] [b] [m] [t] [d] [n] [k] [g] [ŋ] [ʧ][dʒ] [ʃ] – produced by completely stopping the air flow in the oral cavity for a fraction of a second

Fricatives: [f] [v] [θ] [ð] [s] [z] [ʃ] [ʒ] [x] [ç] [h] – produced by severely obstructing the airflow so as to cause friction [8]

Vowels are classified by how high or low the tongue is

- High vowels: [i] [ɪ] [u] [ʊ]
- Mid vowels: [e] [ɛ] [o] [ə] [ʌ] [ɔ]
- Low vowels: [æ] [a]
- Front vowels: [i] [ɪ] [e] [ɛ] [æ]
- Central vowels: [ə] [ʌ]
- Back vowels: [u] [ʊ] [o] [ɔ] [æ] [a]

whether or not the lips are rounded

- Round vowels: [u] [ʊ] [o] [ɔ] – Produced by rounding the lips – English has only back round vowels

Kyrgyz (Kyrgyz tili, Кыргыз тили) is a member of the Turkic branch of the Altaic language family. The earliest reference to the Kyrgyz people, who were living in the Upper Yenisey region in north-central Mongolia, is found in a 9th century Orkhon inscription discovered during an 1889 expedition to the Orkhon Valley monuments in Mongolia. The spread of the Mongol Empire in the 13th century caused the Kyrgyz people to migrate south and settle in the area of present day Kyrgyzstan. Numerous Turkic and Mongol invasions forced some Kyrgyz people to migrate to Turkestan. By the mid-18th century, the Kyrgyz were under Chinese control. After Kyrgyzia was forcibly incorporated into the Russian Empire, some Kyrgyz speakers migrated to Afghanistan. In 1936, Kyrgyzia became a Soviet Socialist Republic of the USSR. After the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1990, Kyrgyzstan became an independent Republic of Kyrgyzstan [1].

Today, Kyrgyz is spoken by 2.45 million people in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan where it is the national language. Many Kyrgyz speakers in Kyrgyzstan also speak Russian. Kyrgyz is also spoken in Afghanistan, China (close to half-a-million speakers), Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. The worldwide population of Kyrgyz speakers is estimated at 2.9 million. The language is widely used in electronic and written media [1].

English is the third language in Kyrgyzstan, the secondary language is Russian. Kyrgyzstan became independent in 1990, since it was ruled by the Soviet Union, so Kyrgyzstan is deeply influenced by Russia. All food packages, most of the popular world films, cartoons are in Russian language. The grammar and concept of Russian are quite different from English, during learning English, they always mix up somethings with Russian. They need to change the habit of speaking Russian while speaking English.

The Kyrgyz alphabet is the alphabet used to write the Kyrgyz language. The Arabic script was traditionally used to write Kyrgyz before the introduction of the first Latin-based alphabets in 1927. The Turkic Alphabet was used in the USSR in the 1930s until its replacement by a Cyrillic script. The Kyrgyz Cyrillic alphabet is the alphabet used in Kyrgyzstan. It contains 36 letters: 33 from the Russian alphabet with 3 additional letters for sounds of the Kyrgyz language: Ҥ, Ү, Ө [1].

А а	Б б	В в	Г г	Д д	Е е	Ё ё	Ж ж	З з	И и	Й й	К к
Л л	М м	Н н	Ң ң	О о	Ө ө	П п	Р р	С с	Т т	У у	Ү ү
Ф ф	Х х	Ц ц	Ч ч	Ш ш	Щ щ	Ъ ъ	Ы ы	Ь ь	Э э	Ю ю	Я я

Kyrgyz and Russian are languages that can be pronounced by how it is written, so English is difficult for them in pronouncing and reading at the beginning. Kyrgyz is also a kind of language with more syllables. So they can identify the syllable easily. If they know phonetic symbols and use a dictionary, they can catch up pronouncing them easily.

Kyrgyz has eight vowel phonemes, i.e., sounds that make a difference in word meaning. The vowel system is very similar to those of other Turkic languages. As all other Turkic languages, Kyrgyz is characterized by vowel harmony, a type of phonological process that involves constraints on which vowels may be found near each other in a word. Vowels in Kyrgyz words must harmonize with one another in terms of front versus back, and rounded versus unrounded. For example, if the first vowel in a word is a front rounded vowel such as /y/ or /ø/, then all other vowels in that word must also be /y/ or /ø/ since these are the only two front rounded vowels in Kyrgyz. Stress in Kyrgyz words normally falls on the last syllable [5].

From the point of view of phonetics, the Kyrgyz language, in comparison with other Turkic languages, is characterized by 8 short, 6 long phonemes. Long vowels are divided into primary and secondary length. The word stress falls mainly on the last syllable. The law of vowel harmony is characterized by the implementation of harmonization, depending on the quality of sound, place of formation, tongue position, labialization, indicating a phonetic, grammatical peculiarity of the Kyrgyz language in comparison with other Turkic languages. There are 20 consonants in the Kyrgyz language. There are 6 sonorants or semivowels (л, м, ц, н, р, й / l, m, ц, н, r, j), 6 soft consonants (б, в, д, з, ж, г / b, v, d, z, zh, g) and 6 voiceless consonants (к, п, с, т, ч, ш, ф, х / k, p, s, t, ch, sh, f, h). In the modern Kyrgyz language only vowels can form syllables [5].

Most English and Kyrgyz sounds are similar. Similarities and differences of the English and Kyrgyz languages:

Kyrgyz sounds – а, б, в, г, д, е, ж, з, к, л, м, н, о, п, р, с, ч, ш, и,

English sounds - a, b, v, g, d, l, dʒ, z, k, l, m, o, p, s, tʃ, ʃ, i

Consonant sounds are paired and unpaired. Sounds very close in pronunciation and sound are called paired consonants: б-п, г-к, д-т, ж-ш, з-ц. There are 39 sounds in the Kyrgyz literary language, including 14 vowels and 25 consonants.

- Of the vowels, eight are short: а, о, ө, ы, и, у, ү;
- six - long: аа, ээ, оо, өө, уу, үү;
- seven - middle and back row: а, аа, о, оо, ы, у, уу;
- seven - front row: э, ээ, ө, өө, and, ү, үү.
- Six vowel sounds - sonorous: м, н, ң, р, й, л;
- six - voiced: б, в, г, д, ж, з;
- ten - deaf: п, ф, с, ш, щ, ч, х, к, т, ц.
- Vowels are divided into hard and soft:
- Solid – А, Я (ya), У, Ю (yu)
- Soft – Э, И, Ө, Ү
- Vowels can be long:
- solid - АА, ОО, УУ
- soft - ЭЭ, ӨӨ, ҮҮ

There are some differences between English and Kyrgyz sounds:

[w] – in the pronouncing the phoneme [w] the soft palate is raised. The lips are tense, rounded and slightly protruded; forming a round narrowing while the back of the tongue is raised

towards the soft as for [u] or even higher. The sides of the tongue are raised, and air-passage is open along the central part of the tongue. The air passes through the round narrowing between the lips without any audible friction. The vocal cords are drawn near together and vibrate. The sound is very short and weak. The tongue and lips immediately glide from the position for [w] to that of a following vowel. Kyrgyz language has not this kind of sound.

[æ]-in pronouncing the phoneme [æ] the bulk of the tongue is in the front part of the mouth cavity. The tongue is rather low in the mouth. The middle of the tongue is slightly raised, but not so high as for [e]. The lips are neutral. The opening between the jaws is wide. The vowel [æ] only occurs in closed syllables. This sound is similar to Kyrgyz sound [a], but when we pronounce [a] the opening between the jaws is not wide as at English [æ]. Students always make mistakes when pronouncing this sound [1].

[ʒ]- in the articulation of this phoneme the soft palate is raised. The tip and the middle part of the tongue are simultaneously raised. A flat narrowing is formed by the tip and the blade of the tongue held close to the back part of teeth-ridge for the primary focus, and by the middle of the tongue raised in the direction of the hard palate to form the secondary focus. As the middle part of the tongue is raised, these sounds are slightly palatalized. The lips are rounded and slightly protruded. The air passes through the narrowing with friction. The vocal cords drawn near together and vibrate. Kyrgyz language hasn't this kind of sound. This sound is similar to Kyrgyz sound [ɣ], but when we pronounce [ɣ], the vocal cords are kept apart and do not vibrate. Kyrgyz students have no problems while pronouncing [ʒ], because they are used to pronouncing Russian [ж] [5].

[ð], [θ] – when we pronounce this sound the soft palate is raised, the tip of the tongue slightly projects out between the upper and lower teeth, the blade of the tongue is placed against the upper teeth to form a flat narrowing, the main part of the tongue being fairly flat and relaxed, while the air passes through the narrowing with friction. In the pronunciation of [θ] the vocal cords are kept apart and do not vibrate, whereas in the articulation of [ð] they are drawn near together and vibrate. So [ð] is voiced and [θ] is voiceless. Kyrgyz students have big problems in pronouncing these sounds because they never pronounce before this kind of sound. [6].

In order to solve this problem, we must work with articulation of this sound individually. We must work with the tip of the tongue and give examples of these sounds. These sounds are unusual for them; sounds with transcriptions will show the difference of the sounds. For example: [tenθ], [iːlevnθ], [twelvθ], [θiɛtə]-let every student to pronounce it and ask is [θ] voiced or voiceless. Then examples to the sound [ð]- [ðei], [ðæt], [ðous], [mɒðə], [weðə] and

a question - Do you hear voice or not? Yes of course, so this sound is called voiced. We must explain the difference of these sounds. In order to overcome these difficulties students must listen speech of native speakers, do much listening, watch videos in English and work hard on pronunciation of these sounds [7].

So we can say the factors that cause difficulties in pronouncing the English sounds are:

- 1) native language interference,
- 2) students' low motivation in learning English,
- 3) infrequent of pronunciation lesson,
- 4) unconducive learning atmosphere.

To teach English pronunciation is a difficult job. From the first day of learning English we must pay great attention to spelling and pronunciation, in order to do as native speakers do. The organs of speech and their work must be the first in teaching phonetics. The tutor must explain and how do they work when they pronounce unusual sounds as [æ], [w], [ʒ], [ð], [θ]. Learning the organs of speech and their work gives motivation to students to pronounce new sounds.

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