PEDAGOGICAL PHONETICS OF ENGLISH AND ITS PHILOSOPHY
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Abstract. This article is devoted to pedagogical proficiency of would be teachers of English. It embraces the aims of teaching a FL, content of teaching – whom to teach, what to teach, how to teach the linguistic materials of phonetics, lexis and grammar. For this case the fresher students ought to know a number of priorities concerning segmental and suprasegmental units. The acquisition of correct pronunciation depends on the following factors: age of the learners, presence of “better ear” for foreign languages, the keen interest to the subject, the professionalism of the teacher, lingua – didactic knowledge of the subject, its presentation ways and activation, then the auditory hours given to the subject.

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Linguistics is the study of language. Linguists assume the ability to acquire and use of language is an innate biologically – based potential of modern human beings, similar to the ability to walk, others claim that the ability to learn language is a product of human cognition and human only.

There are 3 attributes of language which differ human from non-human communication: phoneme production; morphological paradigms, i.e. conjugation and declension of words and word forms; syntax (or arrangement) of word classes (Maksumov, 2012, pp. 17-18).

Language is made up of socially shared rules that include the dichotomical branches: language and speech. This distinction was made by Swiss linguist F. de Saussure. Language consists of phonetic, lexic and stylistic levels. The units of these levels – sounds – syllables, words put together to form sensible word forms, phrases and sentences. They depend on each other as a system of systems.

Speech consists of “articulation” – how speech sounds are made? What activities are needed to utter various types of speech sounds?

Speech is talking, one way that language can be expressed by means of articulation. It’s the result of using language. Speech is an activity, and the language is code, which makes the communication possible. Speech is the result of the five mechanisms: the brain activity, the presence of breathing, the work of vocal folds as vibrators, the active/passive articulators which filter or convert the “infant voice” into definite vowel, sonorant and consonants as resonators.

Thus, speech may be expressed as a “window of language”, through which we see the workings of the units of articulatory, acoustic, perceptive and linguistic aspects of language.

Learning a foreign language properly can be achieved in three ways by: a) residence or living in a foreign community; b) long association with the native speakers of the language; c) the consciousness of articulation, i.e. learning the nature, structure of vocal organs, their description, production and classification rules of speech sounds and other phonetic means (syllable, stress and intonation) that compose meaningful sentences in the auditorium. They constitute the “science of phonetics” (Vassilyev, 1979).

Teaching pronunciation is not exclusively a linguistic matter. Whom? What? and How to teach fresher students foreign language segmentals and suprasegmentals is a psychological, physiological and pedagogical factors.

Phonetics has the practical, pedagogical and theoretical goals. The practical aims are the academic priorities the learners ought to know:

Before entering on the study of speech sounds themselves, it’s necessary to have some knowledge not only of the organs of speech, but also their work in dynamics. The constitutive parts of the voice producing apparatus, then its two biological (breathing and eating, chewing, swallowing, drinking) functions, and one linguistic function – “speaking”.

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How is the speech formed? What are the sources of speaking are the first matters the language teachers get to know? Lungs are the organs without which we could not exist. Breath is the life of whole living beings, as well as of human existence. It is the source of “voice”. The voice can be depended on the activities of the vocal organs – the lungs, the vocal folds and the articulators – the tongue, the lips, the jaw, the alveolar and the soft palate.

The learners must be able to note the positions of the vocal organs and their behavior. Observe and sense the work of the vocal organs. Learners should use the hand mirror in order to see what is happening inside and outside of mouth cavity.

In 2nd or FL teaching the trainer of English has to be the model whether he/she likes it or not. That’s why the teachers can be an adequate model or be competent speakers of the teaching language.

Conscious training is suitable for fresher and advanced learners of foreign language, whose profession is to be English language trainer. The competent teacher should face the class, speak at normal speed and talk with the listeners to model the word, sentence for learners to imitate the timbre of the sounds.

One of the teaching priorities is to explain how to make the sound or phone. The teacher ought to have the students repeat the sounds in chorus. Have individual students repeat the sound. Say the sounds clearly in isolation so that students can focus on them. Because to pronounce an accurate English monophthong, diphthong or diphthongoid is an art! If students have difficulty in producing foreign sounds it is often useful to show the diagrams of the segments and describe how they should be pronounced.

Classics of English pronunciation W. Ripman, N. Armfield, L. Soames, H. Sweet, D. Jones, H.Palmer warned before trying to produce the English sounds first learn to isolate the students’ own language. The object in so doing is many folds:

To overcome that shyness and nervous hesitation which in many cases prevents learners from producing English own sounds. They are needed for correct acquisition of the learning language phonetic work (Palmer, 1928, p. 33).

To become conscious of the known sounds (mother tongue) and to achieve a good command over them as a preparation for the more difficult work of producing unknown learning language sounds.

To make the learning subject more intelligible to the fresher students, the consonants and sonorants are preferred to teach before vowels sounds as being more easier and have observable obstructions. Because most of the consonants and sonorants are found in the mother tongue of the learners. [p/b, m/n, t/d, k/g, s/z, ʧ/ʤ], though their articulations are somewhat different, but they are known sounds.

Some other priorities which the teacher can follow are the minimal pairs to practice the monophones - “will/well, sit/set, miss/myth, cot/caught, living /leaving”.

Model the minimal pairs and then ask students to tell the difference between them: bit/beat, sit/seat, ox/box, pot/port, away/word, full/fool, He bit them/ He beat them, and ask which sounds are similar and which ones are different.

One more priority is to train the voiced and voiceless sounds – “bus/buzz, bet/bed, back/bag”.

To develop the pronunciation of the morpheme “-ed”, which is added to regular verbs to form past tense/past participle -d/t/id: wished -kissed -wanted, needed, begged.

To develop the pronunciation of the ending "-s or -es" - s/z/iz: hours, says, kisses, churches, grocers, prices, etc.

It is needed to teach the aspiration of initial plosive consonants in English – [pʰ tʰ kʰ]: pen, ten, pet, cool, key, team.

Syllabic sonorants require due attention. Most of the 2nd language learners have difficulty in correctly pronouncing such types of words: “label, title, sudden, idle, sycle”, as there is only one vowel sound in these words.

To group the vowel, consonant and sonorant segments due to place, manner and other priorities - horizontal, vertical positions of the tongue, long/short, rounded/unrounded, tense/lax features.

Describe and analyze the mute points of English segments: neutral vowel, length of vowels, affricates, fortis/lenis features, unstressed vocalism and its varieties due to phonetic context.

Understand the notion of phoneme, phone, allophone, opposition, distinctive features of vowel and consonant segments.

Acquire some amount of theoretical knowledge of the phonetic notions as vowels, consonants, syllable, stress, rhythm, tone and their constitutive, distinctive and recognitive functions. In phonetic literature it is
written that the distinction between vowels and consonants depends on the presence and absence of constriction. But being a phonetician and personal observation make us conclude that their distinction is based on the “presence of inner obstructions of some kinds to the outgoing airstream and their degree”, not on the “absence of obstruction”.

That’s why vowels are termed as front, front-retracted, central, back and back-advanced (see the diagrams of English vowels).

Acquire those phonetic and phonological terms without which it is impossible to learn the phonetic system of the English language.

The pedagogical goals are: the lingua-didactical and professional experience, and the skills of teaching. By the term "pedagogical" we understand "the application of the knowledge and skills of the phonetician to the teaching of pronunciation" or "the ways of pronouncing the isolated segments, words, phrases and sentences due to the orthographic norms of language", i.e. What to teach? Whom to teach? How to teach? When to teach? And how many hours are needed for the linguistic materials for their cognition.

There are certain requirements in this domain before one can teach the pronunciation units. It’s necessary to know native language materials and then turn into the unknown (new) learning language materials. For this case the knowledge of the articulatory phonetics is needed. Teaching pronunciation should be based on mere imitation of teachers’ articulation of segments and suprasegmentals. But this is not possible for all language learners. Some adults have “good ear” for foreign languages, some have not.

The principle of understandability was proposed. In this case the teacher must train the learners to achieve a certain degree of accuracy and fluency in acquiring a learning language pronunciation in communication, i.e. understandability and responding.

The learners ought to compare the English language segments with the mother tongue sounds, define their specific features. This must be done by careful articulatory (mouth) and auditory (ear) training.

One of the methods of teaching pronunciation is the physiological (or articulatory) training. Imitation is not enough itself to produce heard sounds properly. Attention should be made on the ability to perceive and produce segmental and suprasegmental units in some degree of approximate to native speakers. For this case there must be materials which offer diagrams of segments.

The phonetic analysis of words, phrases and sentences are needed. This includes the analysis of the phonetic structure of them. The analysis must be practical and theoretical.

The next priority is the "phonetic training".

It consists of:

1) ear training by frequent dictation of sounds, syllables, words and types of sentences;
2) exercises for movements of active/passive articulators and their modified allophones;
3) exercises for learning the sequence of sounds in word initial, word-medial and word-final positions to avoid sound insertions.

- The application of the phonetic transcription, which is the base of teaching pronunciation and useful tool in the development of phonetics. In order to avoid the misunderstanding each vowel and consonant sounds was devised by special mark. Each segment ought to be associated with certain symbol just as each musical note is associated with written note. Pronunciation is based on the principle of “one sound one symbol”, “one symbol and one sound”. The learners must be able how to transcribe the English vowels due to four types of syllable formation and division rules in square [...] and slanting lines /…/.

One more priority is the notion of intonation and its tone patterns. The use of these and that tone distinguish the communicative types of sentences.

References