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Deviant Pronunciation of English Consonants by Hindko Speakers of Peshawar

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ABSTRACT

The distinctive phonological features of a language and the intelligibility of the speakers have a deeper relationship. Native speakers of Hindko language consider pronunciation as a barrier during the fluent communication in English. The current study explores the influence of different phonological features of Hindko on the pronunciation of English consonants. Data is collected from the native Hindko speaking students of grade eleven in Peshawar, Pakistan who are studying English as a second language. The process of data collection included reading material, observation sheet and a tape recorder to collect the data regarding the incorrect pronunciation of English consonant sounds by the Hindko speaking Grade Eleven girls. The researcher, being a teacher of English, herself recorded the readings of students and used the recording after getting the informed consent of the participants. The analysis of findings signified that those consonants which were absent in Hindko but were present in English appeared to be difficult for the Hindko speakers to pronounce. Moreover, the non-native consonants of Hindko also caused difficulties in pronunciation for Hindko speakers of English. The findings also revealed that there is a considerable role of L1 in the pronunciation of Hindko speakers of English.

INTRODUCTION

Native speakers of any language possess the capability to identify non-native speakers due to many factors but one of the most noticeable is their accent (Kenworthy, 1987). Speakers differ in their accents and nationalities .and geography have a noticeable impact of them. Due to difference of accent, the problem of intelligibility occurs. Both native and non-native speakers of a language face problems in understanding each other. Thus, pronunciation is of high importance in terms of intelligibility. The communicative purpose of language fails due to the unintelligibility of speaker as well as the listener. In terms of definition, intelligibility is the ability of a speaker to be understood by the listener in a given situation (Kenworthy, 1987).

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Language shock results due to the lack of intelligibility on the part of learners (Haung, 2009).

The non-native speakers of a language may face problem in stress and intonation due to L1 interference, which lacks the verbal delivery as suggested in English language. Thus, the Pakistani speakers of English use tone without understanding the stressed syllables. Although it is a natural tendency which is resulted by the influence of mother tongue. However, it is considered as the main factor behind the deviant pronunciation that creates confusion while the speakers interact with each other.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the current study is not to degrade or glorify anyone, rather it only explores how English is used by the native speakers of Hindko language. English spoken in Pakistan, holds a unique variety of English, where the features differ from the standard English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociolinguistics is an interesting area for many research topics, amidst them, language and English language is a prominent member of Indo-European language family. English language Alphabetic system is based on letters that denotes vowels and consonants. There is the syllabic division which constructs the word that how it is pronounced.

The pronunciation of words in a sentence is dependent upon the stressed syllables in that sentence. English language is one of the languages which is also called stressed-timed (Winfuhr,1979). (C) (C) (C) V (C) (C) (C) (C) is the longest possible structure in English language syllable. V signifies the Vowels and C represents the Consonants. This structure reveals that English language allows maximum three consonants initially and four after a vowel sound in a word. An example of the same syllabic combination is the word “scrambles” / skraemblz/ where there I a cluster of three consonants at the initial and four at the end which construct the longest conceivable syllable in English language.

Table 1: The Longest Possible Combination of Vowels and Consonants

Words	Phonetic transcription	English syllables
I	/i/	V
An	/æn/	VC
Ask	/æsk/	VCC
apples	/æpls/	VCCC
She	/ʃi/	CV

Sir	/sɜ: (r)/	CVC
battle	/bætƏl/	CVCC
Hints	/hInts/	CVCCC
Free	/fri:/	CCV
Trees	/tri:s/	CCVC
stand	/stænd/	CCVCC
pranks	/præŋks/	CCVCCC
trampled	/træmpƏld/	CCVCCCC
Strew	/stru:/	CCCV
Sprig	/sprIg/	CCCVC
Sprint	/sprInt/	CCCVCC
strands	/strændz/	CCCVCCC
scrambles	/skræmblz/	CCCVCCCC

The above table shows that the consonant cluster occurrences in the onset and coda are possible in English language. English language allows three consonants in the beginning and four in the end with the exception of syllable initiated by a vowel.

The Consonants of English Language

English language consists of 26 letters in which 12 are vowels and 24 consonants. There are also Diphthongs which are 8 in number. There are total 44 phonemes in English language. (Sousa, 2005). Although, linguists disagree with this number of English phonemes but the difference is not huge; they suggest these exist 43 to 45 phonemes in general. The following Table shows the manner (vertically) and place (horizontally) of articulation of these English Consonants.

Table 2: English Consonants

Table of English Consonants								from DJPD16 p. x
	Bilabial	*Labio-dental*	*Dental*	*Alveolar*	*Post-alveolar*	*Palatal*	*Velar*	*Glottal*
Plosive	p b			t d			k g	
Affricate					ʧ ʤ			
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ		(x)	h
Nasal	m			n			ŋ	
Lateral approximant				l (U006C)				
Approximant	w			r	j			

The above Table shows the place and manner of English Consonants. In the first line, six plosives are there which are divided into three classes. /p, b, t, d, k, g/ bilabial, alveolar and velar plosives. The bilabial plosives /p, b/ are produced by both lips while obstructing the air flow in mouth. The sound is produced when the two lips are opened to release the air. /p/ is voiceless and /b/ is voiced (vibration of vocal cords occur)./p/ gives an aspirated sound in initial and middle positions followed by a stressed vowel un-aspirated at the final position. If /p/ followed by "s" sound in the middle of a word, it remains as un-aspirated.

The alveolar plosives /t/ and /d/are produced when the tongue touches the alveolar and soft palate. The tip of the tongue closes the air passage completely. The sound is produced when the tongue lets the air to make the plosive sound. /t/ is voiceless/k/and /g/ the velar plosives voiced during the production of their sound the air passage is obstructed when placing the back of the tongue against the soft palate.

The next line shows the articulation of fricatives (the consonants which produce hissing sound during production. There are nine fricatives in English language /f, v, o, s, z, h, f, z/. In these consonants /f, v, o, z/ are voiced and the others are voiceless. These fricatives belong to different categories; sibilant voiced fricatives /z/and sibilant voiceless fricatives /s/.post-alveolar voiceless sibilant fricatives /f/ and /z/ is voice. Some others are voiceless labio-dental fricatives /f/ and labio-dental voiced fricative. /h/ is voiceless glottal fricative which is glottal consonant sound. /o/ and /o/ are linguo-labial fricatives that is voiced.

The Table suggests that there are three Nasal Consonants of English Language which are /m/ /n/ and /n/ sounds. In these /m/ is bilabial and is a nasal consonantal sound whereas /n/ is dental alveolar and /n/ is a velar consonant sound. /n/ sound cannot occur at the beginning rather as it always occurs at the words ending an ending sound whereas /m/ and /n/ can occur initially.
Two of the post-alveolar affricates also have been shown in the Table which differ each other with the quality of being voiced and voiceless.

There is another category of consonants shown in the table and is called as Approximant consonants including /r/ /j/ and /w/ sounds. /r/ is used in the middle vowels like in the word 'very' which is called as Alveolar Tap. /r/ sound has different allophones some are retroflex tap as in the word 'hard' and 'serene'. /j/ is palatal and /w/ is a velar approximant.

The last one in the row is Lateral Approximant /l/. It is produced when the back of the tongue is touched to the velum. It has four allophones according to its different usage. Clear /l/, Dark /l/, Dental /l/and voiceless/l/. The example of clear /l/ is 'love' the beginning point. The example of Dark /l/ is 'rival' the ending point. These two are more frequently used than the other two. Dental /l/ is produced using the teeth and tongue as in the word 'wealth'. The voiceless /l/ example is the word 'clay'.

Table 3: Consonantal Chart of Hindko Spoken in Peshawar

	Bilabial	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	p p̆4 ph b	t̪ t̪̆h d̪	t t̆ th d	-	k k̆ kh g	-	-
Affricates			ʧ ʧ̆ʧhdʒ				
Nasals	m	N	-	ɳ	-	-	-
Fricatives	F v	S z			ʃ	x ɣ	h
Lateral		L					
Trill/Flap		R		ɽ			
Glide					j		

According to this chart, Hindko language contains 16 stop, 4 affricates, 3 nasals and 4 approximants. Affricates are pronounced by the alveolar, stops are articulated through bilabial, alveolar and palatal sources. Nasal sounds are articulated through bilabial, dental and retroflex. The place of articulation of fricatives is bilabial, palatal, velar, dental and glottal. Approximants are also produced by three places of articulations which are palatal, retroflex and lateral. About Hindko Vowels Awan describes nine vowels which are oral. six vowels are long /a: /,/3:/,/e/,/e:/, /i:/ , /o:/ , /u:/ and three are short vowels /a/ , /i/ , /u/ .

Rashid (2011) focused upon the Hindko in Azad Kashmir in which he revealed that Jammu Kashmir's Hindko language has nine oral vowels in which six are long and three are short. He also researched upon the consonant clusters and syllabic features of Hindko of Jammu Kashmir.
Two dictionaries of Hindko language have been introduced. Sakoon (2002) wrote a dictionary containing more than seven thousand words which reflected the dialects of Abbotabad, Mansehra and Haripur. The other lexicography was written by Awan in (2008) that reflected the vocabulary of Peshawari Hindko. It contained thirty thousand words. Other material published about Hindko language is beyond the concern of the researcher. Awan researched about the phonemes of Peshawari Hindko. Rashid researched upon the vowels of Kashmiri Hindko regarding acoustic phonetics. The current study shows the deviant pronunciation of British English by The Hindko speakers because of the consonantal differences between both languages.

Consonants of Peshawari Hindko

Consonants are those sounds in the production of which the air passage is first obstructed and then the air, coming from the Lungs is passed through the Lyranx to the lips, is released to pronounce the sound. Voicing of the consonants is also an important element. A consonant is either voiced or voiceless. Voiced consonants are pronounced by using vocal cord. The vocal cord stretches across the Larynx at the back of the throat. These vocal cords balance the flow of air coming out of the Lungs. The speaker can feel the vibration of vocal cord while producing the voiced sounds. 'B, D, G, J, L, M, N, Ng, R, Sz, Th, V, W, Y, and Z' are voiced consonants. On the other hand, the voiceless sounds do not need to use the vocal cord rather they allow the air to pass freely. Ch, F, K, P, S, /S/, T, and they are voiceless consonants. The consonantal system of Hindko consists of 12 stops, 8 fricatives, 3 nasals, 3 liquids and 1 glide. Hindko language also has geminates (Clark, et al., 2007).

Table 4: Consonant Sounds of Hindko not Present in English

	P **b**	**T** **D**		**ʈ ɖ ɳ** **kh**	**k** **g**	**q**	
	M	**N**			**ŋ**		
	F	**S** **Z**		**ʃ**		**ɦ** **ʔ**	**H**
		Ts **ʤ**	**tʃ** **j**				
	w	**L** **R**		**ɽ**			

Table 5: Consonant Sounds of English not Present in Hindko

	p **b**			**t d**			**K** **G**		Gh
					tʃ **ʤ** ʒ				
	m			**N**			**ŋ**		
		F v	**ϴ** **ð**	**s z**	**ʃ** **ʒ**			**h**	
				R		**j**	**W**		

These tables reveal the differences of consonant sounds in both languages. The highlighted sounds in Hindko language table are not there in English, and those highlighted in the English language table are absent in Hindko language. The consonants which are absent in Hindko language are /v, ʒ/ and those consonants which are not present in English language are/ ṭ, ḍ ṇ, kh, gh, ṛ, x, ɦ, ʔ, y, /. It reveals that the Hindko learners of English need to learn only four new consonant sounds whereas those consonantal sounds which are not present in English should be ignored by Hindko learners and so as to reduce the interference of L1 Coming towards the individual description of each consonant. The plosive sounds /p/ and /b/ are voiceless and voiced respectively, and they are present in both languages. Plosives in Hindko exist at the initial, medial and final positions, whereas /p^h/ is restricted only initially and medially.

The plosives /p/ and /b/ which are present in both languages, are voiceless and voiced respectively. The phoneme /p/ in Hindko is voiceless and un-aspirated whereas /b/ is voiced. Plosives in Hindko occur in all the three positions, initial, medial and final as well. /t/ and /d/ the alveolar consonants present in both languages. In English /t/ is un-aspirated at initial position, at the medial position after the phoneme /s/, and also before an unstressed vowel sound. Phonemes /ṭ/ and /ḍ/ the retroflex sounds in Hindko, are not present in English and are different from English /t/ and /d/.

/k/ and /g/ both are velar plosives in English and Hindko both. /k/ is voiceless and /g/ is voiced. In Hindko, these velar consonants are substituted with /x/, /ɤ/ the velar fricatives. /k^h/ is replaced

with /x/ whereas /g/ is substituted with /ɤ/ after the long vowel. The table below gives a clear example of these replacements.

kʰɑd̪	fertilizer	lɪx	write
əgg	fire	kɑɤ	crow

The fricatives /f/ and /v/ voiceless and voiced respectively are present in both languages. The sound of /w/ does not exist in Hindko, which creates problems in pronunciation of the Hindko speakers of English. As word "watch" is pronounced as labiodental whereas it is produced by moving the two lips round. Coming to /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, these sounds are present in Hindko and English both but the sound of /ʒ/ is not there in Hindko thus the Hindko speaking girls feel difficulty in the pronunciation of this sound. /θ / exists in both languages. /h/, /ɦ/and /ʔ/ are present in Hindko whereas English has only one of these consonants which is /h/. These are uvular fricatives. /h/ is articulated in same manner in Hindko and English both.

Coming to the nasals, /m/, /n/, and /ɳ/ are present in both languages but the one /ɳ/ a retroflex consonant of Hindko is lacking in English. /m/ is bilabial nasal, /n/ is alveolar nasal while /ɳ/ is velar in both languages. All these are voiced. The former two appear in all positions initial, medial and final, whereas the one in the last is not found word initially. Awan (2004) and Robinson and Rehman (2011) claimed about the presence of four nasal stops in Hindko. Three are mentioned above, while the fourth one is /ɳ̍/ which is only allophone of /n/. In fact, /n/ is velarized in monosyllabic verbs at the final position such as [ɑn] 'bring' or when a disyllabic noun possess this as its onset, as in [renɑ] 'the act of living'.

The affricates /ʧ/ and /ʤ/ exist in English and Hindko similarly. /ʧ/ is voiceless and /ʤ/ is voiced in both languages. Both are un-aspirated. Hindko has three affricates in total, with the addition of /ʧʰ/ which is voiceless aspirated. In Hindko these affricates occur in all the three positions. /r/ is alveolar approximant in English. The difference lies in its allophones for example between the vowel "very" , /r/ is a retroflex tap as in "park" and voiced as in "serene"./r/ an alveolar trill, produced by repeatedly vibrating the blade of tongue against the alveolar ridge. (Davenport & Hannahs, 2005) is articulated in prevocalic as well as in postvocalic positons.as in [rəṯṯa] "memorize" in Hindko. /ř/ it appears inter-vocally as in / ʤuřva/ "twins".

METHODOLOGY

The research paradigm applied for this study is both qualitative and quantitative. In the qualitative approach, content analysis by developing themes or categories were tabulated based on those sounds where mispronunciation was expected. Regarding the quantitative approach, just descriptive statistics were utilized. The target population or sampling frame, as Creswell (2005) view it, to be a group of those individuals that share some distinctive characteristics (Peshawari Hindko speaking intermediate level female students in this case) through which a list of nominees was identified. In terms of reading material, firstly, the minimal pairs were listed on the page, and particular pieces of newspapers were arranged in hard form. Secondly, these materials were scanned and sent to the participants. A one-to-one session with each and every

participant was conducted. Participants were informed about the conduction and objectives of the session. After this informed consent, participants were let to read in a natural way and the process ended in the recorded reading.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table: 6 Comparison of Pronunciations Between English and Hindko

S. No.	Words	English pronunciation	How participants pronounced
1	Centre	/ˈsɛntə/	/ˈsɛntər/
2	Watch	/wɒtʃ/	/vɒtʃ/
3	Ghost	/gəʊst/	/kəʊst/
4	Measure	/ˈmɛʒə/	/ˈmɛjər/
5	Treasure	/ˈtrɛʒə/	/ˈtrɛjər/
6	Pleasure	/ˈplɛʒə/	/ˈplɛjər/
7	Confirm	/kənˈfəːm/	/kənˈfər ə m/

8	Student	/ˈstjuːd(ə)nt/	/ˈs ə tuːd(ə)nt/
9	Class	/klɑːs/	/k ə lɑːs/
10	Wait	/weɪt/	/veɪt/
11	Water	/ˈwɔːtə/	/ˈwɔːtər/
12	Clear	/klɪə/	/kəlɪə/
13	Clarity	/ˈklarɪti/	/ˈkəlarɪti/
14	Wing	/wɪŋ/	/vɪŋ/
15	Decision	/dɪˈsɪʒ(ə)n/	/dɪˈsɪj(ə)n/

Table 7: Cumulative Percentage of Consonants

English consonants absent in Hindko	**Summary of Findings**											
	P 1	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**	**P8**	**P9**	**P10**	**Out of 10**	**Overall %age of a sound**

K	**Pronounced as /gh/**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**5**	**50 %**
W	**Pronounced as /V/**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**yes**	yes	**yes**	**yes**	**6**	**60 %**
ST	**Consonant cluster Pronounced as putting (ə)**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**_**	**2**	**20%**
(r)^{x}	**Pronounced as /r/**	**_**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**6**	**60 %**
S	**Pronounced as /ʃ/**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**_**	**yes**	**_**	**_**	**1**	**10 %**
ʒ	**Pronounced as /j/**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**_**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**9**	**90 %**
	Per participant mistakes %age	**3/6 50 %**	**1/6 16 %**	**4/6 66 %**	**2/6 33%**	**1/6 16 %**	**5/6 83 %**	**3/6 50 %**	**5/6 83 %**	**2/6 33 %**	**4/6 66 %**	**30/60**	**50%**

The overall percentage of the consonant sounds better indicates the level of weakness and thus points to improve these. The higher the percentage the more it needs to be improved. The table shows the highest rate of incorrect pronunciation of sound / ʒ/ which is 60% pronounced as incorrect. Secondly /w/ and /r/ show the same level of mispronunciation. Hence these three sounds are found to be the most difficult consonant sounds which are incorrectly pronounced by most of the participants. Other sounds also need to be improved for they are also not pronounced correctly by some of the participants. The table above clearly indicated the different consonant sounds which are differently pronounced by the participants, which best serves the purpose of the first objective of the current research project.

As it is mentioned in chapter one that the variety of English spoken in Pakistan is referred as Pakistani English. It is also said that this restructuring of words is need based which Pakistani speakers use to suite their purpose. Riaz (2015) in her research article regarding the deviant pronunciation of Pakistani Punjabi speakers of English concluded that Pakistani speakers of English pronounce /r/ where it is silent. As it is seen in the case of participant no 3.

It is noticed in the observation that most of the participants of grade 11, belonging to the typical Hindko families pronounced the sounds of / ʒ/ as /j/ and /gh/ as /k/. /w/ as /v/. The absent consonants caused difficulties in the accurate pronunciation of the participants. / ʒ/ and /w/ were found the most frequently pronounced incorrect sounds which means that these sounds need to be practiced more for a better pronunciation.

It is also mentioned that they also ignore the aspirated sound at the initial positions of words. They do not understand the difference between /w/ and /v/ which can be seen in the case of most of the participants. Riaz, (2015) also claims that in Pakistani English the sound of /w/ is adapted as /v/.

The researcher in her daily interactions has also experienced some other errors by Hindko speakers while speaking English. It is also seen that Hindko speakers who are less educated or even sometimes the educated ones also pronounced /s / as / ʃ / when combine d with another consonant for Example STAND is pronounced as /ʃtand /, STICK as /ʃtɪk/, STORE as / ʃtɔr /, STYLE as / ʃtʌɪl / and so on. Here, again the L1 interference plays vital role for Hindko language does not deal with such words which possess consonant cluster initially.

It is noticed in almost all of the participants' pronunciation that they pronounced /w/ as /v/ which is also due to the fact that Hindko language has no /w/ sound rather its nearest sound /v/ is there. Almost all the participants have replaced /w/ with its closest counterpart that is /v/ which also indicates the L1 interference. Therefore, it is analysed that those sounds which are absent in Hindko language, create difficulty in pronunciation of English consonants for the Hindko speakers of English. It is noticed that all those consonant sounds have been pronounced incorrectly which the Hindko speakers do not experience in their mother tongue. This clearly shows the impact of mother tongue on the incorrect pronunciation of English consonant sounds.
Riaz (2015) mentioned that /ə/ sound is included between different consonant sounds occurring in words final position, such as between /l, f/ , /s, l/, /r, f/, /b, r/, /k, r/, /r, tʃ/, /p, r/, /n, s/, /r, m/, /ʃ, n/, /tʃ, n/, /r, n/, /n, s/. For example, wolf‟, „march‟, „park‟, „form‟, „facial‟, „final‟, „pencil‟, „horn‟, „information‟, „license‟ and „alarm‟ etc.

The Hindko speakers of Peshawar cannot maintain aspiration contrast on many positions. English voiceless plosives are mostly aspirated in the initial position of words and also on the onset position of stressed syllabic word but it remains unaspirated in unstressed syllabic positions for example after "s" speak, steal and ski and also on coda positions. Previous researches have also confirmed that English stops are produced as unaspirated by Hindko speakers of Peshawar.

Aspiration contrast in English language is allophonic but in Pakistani languages it is phonemic. Thus, aspirated stops and unaspirated stops in English are at interdependent distribution with one another whereas in Pakistani languages they create minimal pairs.

Afsar and Kamran (2011) states that "Pakistanis even produce /t/ as without retroflex in words such as "steal". The third formant of the tense vowel in word "teach" produced by Pakistanis was significantly lowered but that in "steal" was not lowered compared with that of the native speakers of BE. This confirms that /t/ is produced as a retroflex in words like "teach" (where /t/ occurs on syllable-initiation position) but the same is produced without retroflex in words like "steal" (where /t/ occurs after /s/ on syllable-initiation position in /st/ cluster)".

The reason is that /s/ and /t/ both are produced with two opposite articulatory gestures in Pakistani English. Pakistani speakers cannot produce two opposite gestures at the same time in while producing /st/ clusters which they normally produce as [st̪].

Another influence of retroflexion in Pakistani English is that Pakistani speakers/learners produce /t/ in words like "steal" (where /t/ appears in /st/ cluster at initial position) with comparatively longer VOT but in words such as "teach" with shorter VOT. This is contrary to the British English. The reason is that, a stop that is produced with retroflexion has shorter VOT than the one that is produced without retroflexion.

All the above examples from the previous researchers have been practiced by the researcher herself during the observation of pronunciation of different consonants which the Hindko learners of English do not have to use in their mother tongue (Riaz, 2015).

CONCLUSION

The current study was conducted to investigate those English consonants which create problems in pronunciation for the Hindko learners of English. In this regard , the study dealt with two major objectives which were firstly to investigate the mispronounced consonants of English by the Hindko speakers , and secondly to carry out whether there exists any role of L1 in the pronunciation of those English consonants ,which are absent in Hindko language .The observation method was used to meet the two objectives. The results of findings revealed that those English consonants which are absent in Hindko resulted in pronunciation problems. The findings also revealed that mother tongue influence plays a fundamental role in the pronunciation of those English consonants which are absent in Hindko language.

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