DEFRICATIVISATION IN TELUGU-ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

In 16th century, a Venetian explorer, Nicolo di Conti, recognised the brilliance of Telugu literature and it is the reason why out of several languages he had come across, he chose to call Telugu as "Italian of the East". On the other hand, English is an international language and widely used for communication. Especially Telugu people are very close in using this language, because of the availability of the sounds in the Telugu language. Though Telugu and English belong to two different families of language but both of them come from Indo-European language. English language belongs to Indo-Germanic whereas Telugu belongs to the Dravidian group of languages. Telugu words generally end with a vowel. They never end with a consonant except in the voiced bilabial nasal /m/, whereas in English, it is different. English words can end either with a vowel or a consonant. The present study is aimed at identifying whether Telugu people are pronouncing English fricatives accurately as in R.P (Received Pronunciation).

KEYWORDS: Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Dravidian, Fricatives, Telugu, English

INTRODUCTION

Skill in speaking involves ability to speak any given language accurately, clearly and fluently. All languages modify complicated sequences in connect speech in order to simplify the articulation process – but the manner in which this is done varies from one language to another. English is a world language, which is used in all walks of life- trade, diplomacy, media and education. So it is essential for the Telugu people in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to learn English along with their mother tongue in order to meet their professional needs in future. There are five fricatives (approximately) in Telugu, whereas in English, they are nine. In English, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the letter and the sound it represents which makes it difficult for non-native speakers to learn the pronunciation of the English language.

English in Andhra Pradesh and in Telangana

In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, three-language formula is implemented in schools. English is taught in schools as a second language from Classes III to X. It is a compulsory subject in schools. People in trade and commerce are making an extensive use of English as a lingua franca at intra- and inter- state level. In media too English is used extensively for various reasons. Apart from the fact that English is a world language, in a multi-lingual society in India, English is the preferred link language. Even within the state English is used as a second language extensively by Telugu speakers.

The Theory of English Fricatives

There are nine fricatives in English, they are /f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ/ and /h/. According to Gimson (1962) in the articulation of a fricative consonant, two organs are brought and held sufficiently close together for the escaping airstream

to produce local air turbulence; fricatives are, therefore, like plosives and affricates, characterised by a noise component. This turbulence may or may not be accompanied by voice.

Earlier Research Reviews

Telugu verbal Bases: A comparative and Descriptive Study by Bh. Krishnamurti, in the year 1956. In this work an attempt has been made to show the place of Telugu in the whole family of the Dravidian languages by setting up isoglosses for the distribution of phonological, an attempt is also made to describe the phenomenon of cohesion in written texts of English and Telugu and to compare and contrast the devices used for this purpose in the two languages.

A study of the intonation of Colloquial Telugu, which has been carried out by B.A. Prabhakar Babu. According to him, the patterns of pitch variation in Telugu operate at the level of phrase or sentence to bring about different shades of meaning. Difference of meaning brought about by intonation is not lexical in Telugu, but it is mostly attitudinal and to a certain extent grammatical. Tone groups of various types were examined. It is found out that a Telugu tone group contains a nuclear word (or two nuclear words in some cases) and may have one or more non-nuclear words also. The syllables preceding the nuclear syllable have the head, and those following it comprise the tail of that tone group. There are tone groups without a head or a tail or both, but each tone group must have a nuclear word.

Discourse in English and Telugu, a contrast analysis made by A. Subba Rao. It attempts to contrast the structural differences between Telugu and English in terms of word order and the study also puts different viewpoints in one place and proposes, with special reference to narrative discourse organisation in written English and written Telugu.

Attitudinal Meaning of Intonation – An experiment in Telugu-English, a research project made by S.Nagalakshmi in the year 1994. This work aims at examining the intonation patterns used to convey different attitudes by Telugu speaker of English. The project also examines how these patterns are received by a set of listeners belonging to different categories, and to what extent these patterns differ from those used by the speakers of R.P.

A comparative study of plosives and nasals in Telugu and English by JayaPrakash. In this work the author found out that the plosives of English relatively do not pose much problem to Telugu speakers when they speak English, mainly because all the plosives in English are available in Telugu. However, spelling pronunciation is a problem. In comparison with other consonants in English such as fricatives, plosives and nasals are less problematic to Telugu speakers. Some English fricatives are alien to Telugu speakers.

Aim of the Study

The present study is aimed at identifying whether the Telugu speakers are able to pronounce English fricatives correctly. If not, which phoneme was replaced in it?

Choice of the Informants

For this study, the author selected 5 informants, whose educational qualification is minimum Post Graduation with English specialization.

Test Material

Faith	Visualization	Seizure	Assess
Theft	Zoo	Garage	Method
Half	Shave	cash	Father
Hives	Ahead	This	With
Genre			

Data Collection

All the speech samples were recorded by using a good quality of Sony Voice recorder in a closed room to avoid the outside noise. Before they read aloud the words, they have also been given a personal profile sheet which includes the name, age, mother tongue, educational qualification medium of instructions at their schooling, UG and PG colleges, Place and State of the informant, and English learning resources.

Analysis of the Data

Analysis can be done on two levels, acoustical, and auditory perception. For study the former, author used PRAAT software, and for the latter auditory perception of the author.

Results of the Study

The following table shows how the informants rendered each word

Word	Transcription	Informant – 1	Informant – 2	Informant – 3	Informant – 4	Informant - 5
Faith	/feɪθ/	/feɪt̪/	/feɪt̪/	/feɪt̪/	/feɪt̪/	/feɪt̪/
Theft	/θeft/	/t̪eft/	/t̪eft/	/t̪eft/	/t̪eft/	[t̪ʰeft]
Half	/hɑːf/	/hɑːf/	/hɑːfʊ/	/hɑːf/	/hɑːf/	/hɑːf/
Hives	/haɪvz/	/haɪvs/	/haɪvz/	/haɪvs/	/haɪvs/	/haɪvs/
Assess	/əses/	/eses/	/əsesʊ/	/eses/	/əsesʊ/	/əses/
Visualization	/vɪʒʊəlaɪzeɪʃən/	/vɪzʊəlaɪze:ʃən/	/vɪzʊəlaɪzeɪʃʌn/	/vɪdʒʊəlaɪdʒe:ʃən/	/vɪzʊəlaɪze:ʃən/	/vɪzʊəlaɪze:ʃən/
Zoo	/zu:/	/dʒu:/	/dʒʊ/	/dʒu:/	/dʒu:/	/zu:/
Shave	/ʃeɪv/	/ʃe:v/	/tʃe:v/	/ʃe:v/	/ʃe:v/	/ʃe:v/
Seizure	/si:ʒə/	/si:dʒə/	/si:zər/	/si:zər/	/si:zər/	/si:ʒə/
Garage	/gæraːʒ/	/gære:dʒ/	/gæraːz/	/gære:dʒ/	/gære:z/	/gærodʒ/
This	/ðɪs/	/d̪ɪs/	/d̪ɪs/	/d̪ɪs/	/d̪ɪs/	/d̪ɪs/
Father	/fa:ðə/	/fa:d̪ər/	/fa:d̪ər/	/fa:d̪ər/	/fa:d̪ər/	/fa:d̪ə/
cash	/kæʃ/	/kæʃ/	/kæʃ/	/kæʃ/	/kæs/	/kæʃ/
Ahead	/əhed/	/ehed/	/ehed/	/ehed/	/ehed/	/əhed/
With	/wɪð/	/ʋɪt̪/	/ʋɪt̪/	/ʋɪt̪/	/ʋɪt̪/	/ʋɪð/
Method	/meθəd/	/met̪əd/	/met̪a:d/	[met̪ʰəd]	/met̪əd/	/met̪əd/
Genre	/ʒɑːnra/	/dʒɑːnra/	/dʒɑːnra/	/dʒɑːnra/	/dʒɑːnre/	/ʒɑːnre/

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

Informant - One

Out of nine fricatives in English the informants rendered four as in Received Pronunciation (R.P). They are /f/, /s/, /ʃ/ and /h/. /v/ is realised as /ʋ/, and /θ/ is as /t̪/ in all the positions. /ð/ is realised as /d̪/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *this* and *father*, and as /t̪/ in the final position of the word *with*. /z/ is realised as /dʒ/ in the initial position of the word *zoo*, and as /s/ in the final position of the word *hives*. /ʒ/ is realised as /dʒ/ in the initial and final position of the words *genre* and *garage*, and as /z/ in the medial position of the word *visualisation*.

Informant – Two

Out of nine fricatives in English the informant pronounced three as in R.P. They are /f/, /s/, and /h/. /v/ is rendered as /ʋ/, and /θ/ is as /t̪/ in all the positions. /ð/ is rendered as /d̪/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *this* and *father*, and as /t̪/ in the final position of the word *with*. /z/ is rendered as /dʒ/ in the initial position of the word *zoo*. /ʃ/ is rendered as /tʃ/ in the initial position of the word *shave*. /ʒ/ is rendered as /dʒ/ in the initial position of the word *genre*, and as /z/ in the medial and final positions of the words *visualisation* and *garage*. Though the informant rendered four fricatives as in R.P but because of the mother tongue influence /ʋ/ is inserted at end of the words *half* and *assess*.

Informant – Three

Out of nine English fricatives the informant rendered four fricatives as in R.P. They are /f/, /s/, /ʃ/, and /h/. /v/ is pronounced as /ʋ/, and /ʒ/ is as /dʒ/ in all the positions. /θ/ is pronounced as /t̪/ in the initial and final positions of the words *theft* and *faith*, and as [t̪ʰ] in the medial position of the word *method*. /ð/ is pronounced as /d̪/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *this* and *father*, and as /t̪/ in the final position of the word *with*. /z/ is pronounced as /dʒ/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *zoo* and *visualisation*, and as /s/ in the final position of the word *hives*.

Informant – Four

Out nine fricatives in English the informant articulated three fricatives as in R.P. They are /f/, /s/, and /h/. /v/ is articulated as /ʋ/, and /θ/ is as /t̪/ in all the positions. /ð/ is articulated as /d̪/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *this* and *father*, and /t̪/ in the final position of the word *with*. /z/ is articulated as /dʒ/ in the initial position of the word *zoo*, and as /s/ in the final position of the word *hives*. /ʃ/ is articulated as /s/ in the final position of the word *cash*. /ʒ/ is articulated as /dʒ/ in initial position of the word *genre*, and as /z/ in the medial and final positions of the words *visualisation*, and *garage*. As the informant Two, the informant also pronounced /ʋ/ at the end of the word *assess*.

Informant – Five

Out nine fricatives in English the informant rendered four fricatives as in R.P. They are /f/, /s/, /ʃ/, and /h/. /v/ is rendered as /ʋ/ in all the positions. /θ/ is rendered as [t̪ʰ] in the initial position of the word *theft*, and as /t̪/ in the medial and final positions of the words *method* and *faith*. /ð/ is rendered as /d̪/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *this* and *father*. /z/ is rendered as /s/ in the final position of the word *hives*. /ʒ/ is rendered as /z/ in the medial position of the word *visualisation*, and as /dʒ/ in the final position of the word *garage*.

CONCLUSION

In Telugu-English all the informants rendered /v/ as /ʋ/, and /θ/ as /t̪/ in all the positions, /ð/ as /d̪/ in the initial and medial positions and as /t̪/ in the final position respectively. All the informants rendered /z/ as /s/ in the final position of the word *hives* and ignored the rules of the realisation of the plural markers. The author identified the insertion of a vowel at the end of the words in some of the informants. This indicates Telugu is a vowel ended language. Spelling pronunciation

too identified in Telugu-English. Majority of the informants articulated /ʒ/ as /dʒ/ in the initial and medial positions of the words *genre* and *garage.* Hence, it is proved that Telugu speakers may not articulate all fricatives as in R.P (at the time of the study only) but only some fricatives (/f, s, ʃ/, and /h/). The result is defricativisation. To avoid defricativisation, rigorous training is needed.

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