

*Materials of Conferences***ENGLISH PHONETICS FOR ESP
LEARNING AND TEACHING PURPOSES**

Vishnevskaya G.M.

*Ivanovo State University, Ivanovo,
e-mail: galamail2002@mail.ru*

Martin Hewings has underlined the growth of ESP (English for Special Purposes) activity in to-day's world and has highlighted a number of trends, which will presumably have a continuing influence on how ESP develops over the next decade or so. The trends the scholar names are the following: *internationalization, specialization, growth of Business English, continued influence of genre analysis, corpus analysis and SFL, the effect of English as an international language* (Hewings 2002). What is more, Martin Hewings seems to be one of the few researchers in the field of ESP who consider phonetics of oral speech essential for ESP learning and teaching purposes.

In the present research ESP terminology has been analyzed from the phonetic point of view: how the phonetic (accentual) form is reflected in the pronunciation dictionaries and how the terms are actually pronounced by native and non-native speakers. Accentual characteristics of economic terminological units researched in the dictionaries and the experimental data show their complex character determined by several variation factors.

As it appears from the analysis of the experimental corpus of binary word-combinations found in the language of economics the most numerous group of them is represented by the nominal terminological units. Morphological, word-building, semantic, recessive and other factors can strongly influence their accentual patterns. Prosodic characteristics of such terms are very much varied. There have been established several accentual patterns of the terminological units at issue. According to authoritative pronunciation dictionaries (EPD and LPD) there have been discovered 9 types of accentual variation of the binary nominal word-combinations. The accentual variation of English terminological units presents a lot of difficulties to the Russian learners of English being mainly guided by the word stress patterns of their native (Russian) tongue which has a limited number of degrees of stress (no secondary or tertiary stress) as compared to several degrees of word-stress in the target (English) language. As a result, Russian students tend to have either two strong

stresses on both parts of the binary nominal terminological unit, or make the first element of it too prominent while the second part of it is reduced too much. The analysis of phonetic stress variables has demonstrated that in the speech of EFL students terminological word compounds are characterized by a limited number of patterns, both on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic levels of speech production, whereas in the standard native English pronunciation the accentual patterns of such terminological units are more varied. The differences between native and non-native performance can be quantitative (number of stresses within a word) and qualitative (accent placement and degree of word-stress).

Native speakers employ the rules of stressing English words and word combinations automatically whereas non-native speakers cannot be guided by intuition alone. The results of this research show that Russian learners of English tend to simplify the stress patterns of English economic terms using one and the same model all the time with the prominence placed randomly within the accentual pattern of a word-combination. They avoid using several degrees of stress within a compound word. Distortions of stress-patterns ruin the rhythmical pattern of a sentence and thus cause the ruin of prosodic continuity and coherence of an utterance. Our interviews with the students show that they feel frustrated at not finding the pronunciation of special (economic) terms in the references they are using. This fact makes designing of pronunciation dictionaries for ESP highly compelling.

There is one more important problem at issue which cannot be overlooked in the use of English for Specific Purposes on the intercultural level of communication. Foreign learners' competence in the use of a foreign language is very much connected with his ability to speak fluently and with the proper accent. Here the term «accent» is understood as «the cumulative auditory effect of those features of pronunciation which identify where a person is from, regionally or socially» (Crystal 1995: 2). Differences between accents spoken by different groups of people (with different language backgrounds) may be systematic, structural, selectional and realizational (Laver 1994). They are possessed by a majority of this or that accent group. An accent can be regarded as a marked variation of speech constituting a unified entity and betraying the non-native origin of the speaker (in the case of a bi-lingual contact) which can be detected both

in the segmental and the suprasegmental characteristics of oral speech. Most importantly, accents are voice characteristics that immediately attract the attention of people in every day professional communication and influence them, both personally and socially.

Foreign accent in business communication is a topic that has scarcely been touched upon in the general study of the effectiveness of human interaction. However, the success of oral communication is much dependent on the evaluation of a personality, his intelligence, educational background, and his voice. A listener's impression of voice characteristics may affect such crucial areas of social interaction as job opportunities, boss – office-worker relations, international business, etc. The foreign accent 'syndrome' is rather a complicated case of language deficiency. It can't be cured overnight. The inferiority complex accompanying the speaker with a foreign accent makes him/her self-conscious in speech communication, which is a serious drawback, especially in business communication.

The communicative effect of an individual's accent upon a native speaker can be either positive or negative. The quality of speech supplied by the label «foreign accent» can be regarded as one of the cases of speech variation determined by the influence of the mother tongue and revealed through the deviation from the «pattern», which is, in our case, the pronunciation norm of English. The study of interference effects resulting from the overlap of the two prosodic systems (the primary language prosodic pattern and the target language prosodic pattern) presents a lot of data showing a certain prosodic model of accented speech containing both the universal and the specific features of the foreign learner's error performance. Ignoring these differences in the phonetic form may cause serious misunderstandings in the process of professional communication between native and non-native speakers. The social effect of one's voice and pronunciation idiosyncrasies is of great importance. A marked (broad or slight) foreign accent can influence one's life career in many ways (Honey 1989).

The teaching of English pronunciation in a non-native classroom includes a thorough error analysis with a special reference to the effect produced by their foreign accent upon a partner in professional communication, upon the general result of such communication. The «contaminated» portrait of a bilingual speaker belonging to a different speaking community marks him/her in many ways, which may be both obvious and hidden. They deserve to be researched with the aim of making a professional's English adequate for

achieving the desired communicative effect of professional interaction. Since many Russian University graduates nowadays start their business careers in international business they are often facing the three most important problems of effective communication: to be adequately understood (which means to have a good enough standard of English with a minimum degree of Russian accent), to be able to understand the many varieties of English spoken by the representatives of foreign firms (that is to be aware of the diversity of English accents) and, finally, to adequately react to accented speech (especially it refers to telephone talks). Improving one's vocal impression and oral performance is one of the ways to reduce the damage and become a more effective communicator in international or multicultural settings of the modern world.

References

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SOCIONIM AS A COGNITIVE PRESENTATION OF REALITY

Khvesko T.V.

*Tyumen State University, Tyumen,
e-mail: khvesko@inbox.ru*

A study of American geographical and place names reveals some general classes: those embodying personal names, chiefly the surnames of pioneers or of national heroes; those transferred from other and older places, either in the eastern states or in Europe; Indian, Dutch, Spanish, French, German and Scandinavian names; Biblical and mythological names; names descriptive of localities; and names suggested by the local flora, fauna or geology. The names of the first class are perhaps the most numerous. Some consist of surnames standing alone, as Washington, Cleveland, Bismarck, Lafayette, Taylor and Randolph; others are contrived of given names, either alone or in combination, as Louisville, St. Paul, Elizabeth, Johnstown, Charlotte, Williamsburg and Marysville. All our