

SKNR GOVT. ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGE, JAGTIAL
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Student Study Project

**A STUDY ON MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE IN ENGLISH
COMMUNICATION**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SKNR GOVT. ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGE, JAGTIAL

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the STUDENT STUDY PROJECT entitled **A STUDY ON MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE IN ENGLISH COMMUNICATION**, submitted by us. This project has been carried under the supervision and guidance of **Department of English, SKNR GASC JAGTIAL**.

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that JIGNASA – STUDENT STUDY PROJECT entitled **A STUDY ON MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE IN ENGLISH COMMUNICATION**, submitted by, is a bonafide work of above students, under the supervision and guidance of **Department of English, SKNR GASC Jagtial**,

Place: **Jagtial**
Date

Signature

A STUDY ON MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE IN ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

Language is a method of communicating ideas, thoughts, and desires by means of sounds for psychological and physiological survival. English acts as a second language. Even though it is not our mother tongue it has become a Global language. The aim of teaching English is not to imitate the native speakers or to develop the British or American accents. The aim of this article is to discuss the mother tongue influence in speaking English amongst students community and how one can overcome some of the problems encountered by an Indian learner of English.

When we begin speaking in the second language (i.e. English), we initially use sounds from our mother tongue. Thus, everyone has mother tongue influence (MTI) to begin with. With more and more listening to those fluent in the second language, practicing speaking yourself and correcting mistakes, you slowly learn to replace your mother tongue sounds with the original sounds of English. An example is the “z” sound, which is a common end to words in English but is not often found at the beginning of words.

Importance of the English in the modern world

English is without a doubt the actual universal language. It is the world's second largest native language, the official language in 70 countries, and **English**-speaking countries are responsible for about 40% of world's total GNP. English is very important in this modern world. Apart from our mother tongue we need to have a common language which makes us able to communicate with other part of the world. English is the common language which is known to most of the people in the world. It is very important to have good English because an effective communication can reach people better. English words used must be simple so that it can be reached to people easily as well as easily understood by everyone. Nowadays English is being taught to children at primary level itself. Students are strictly made to speak in English when they are in college premises. Communicating in English has quite a big role in day to day life. English is used in banks, railway stations, bus stations, airways, educational sector, medical, private sector, etc. English is a trade language with other countries. Many students fly aboard for education and jobs. If their mode of communication is English they can manage their communication with the local people. And students are prime learners of English because if they want to build up a good career, they have to have good English speaking skills and confidence to face many people in interviews.

Mother tongue disrupts the smoothness of communication. Students with lack of confidence tends to use mother tongue instead of proper English.

- Many students from different native cannot pronounce many words correctly. Some are „measure“, „pleasure“, „treasure“, „support“, „develop“, „college“, „bus“, „school“, „zero“, „Pleasure“, „treasure“, „smart“ etc....

English is an evolving Language. We can also speak English without the influence of mother tongue slowly. It cannot be done in overnight.

- For example North Indians have the accent of pronouncing “Sh” as “Is”. This is called Mother tongue influence. While pronouncing “S” it is as “J”. For example the word “Position” as “Bojision”
- If a south Indian and a north Indian suffer from this and are talking about making things „simple“, you might hear it as either “simbl” or “simpal”. Or you could hear “konstrukson” (construction), “bhaat” (what), “aadio” (audio), brekphast (breakfast). These are the few symptoms of this “disease”. So, beware of “the disease”.

- In learning second language students must concentrate in pronunciation. As English has been an accepted as the language of Travel.
- English is the language of commerce and higher learning .It helps the students to incur some social status. So they have to speak continuously and regularly.
- Many students feel shy to communicate with others. They endeavor to speak very rarely hence mother tongue influences.
- It is always good to think in ENGLISH leaving our mother tongue. The best way to control mother tongue influence. Tone and clarity will also be augmented. If we want to really excel in language of your choice you must make it habit to choose it as a target language .We must learn in each given opportunity.
- Learning English language doesn't require you to have high IQ, but a high interest in it.
- Most L-2 learners subconsciously transfer language rules of L-1 to L-2, sound system or word order. Thus, heavy mother tongue influence happens because your native language sounds have not yet been replaced with the second language sounds.
- He worst part of mother tongue influence (MTI) is that it kills our confidence. You as a speaker know you sound wrong and even funny. It makes you self conscious and requires hard work for a long time to get over.
- Just as each language has different words, letters and script – so does each have different sounds. Thus there are some sounds which are found in Hindi but not in English and some sounds may be found in English but not in Tamil.
- For example: in the word "Treasure", the second syllable is a sound not found in Hindi. It's not "Trezar" and it's not "Treshar" – it is the mix of sounds of "z" and "sh". Thus, for native Hindi speakers with insufficient English speaking exposure, pronouncing pleasure (or measure or leisure) correctly takes time and practice.
- Practising speaking is one of the most fun and rewarding parts of learning English. Once you can speak even a little English, there are loads of ways to improve your skills quickly while having tons of fun. Here are ten top tips for improving your spoken English and having a great time while you do it!
Speak, Speak, Speak
- Be confident and speak as often as possible to as many people as you possibly can! Do not be shy to make mistakes! The more you practice the better and more confident you will become in your pronunciation and vocabulary. Remember, speaking is a skill like learning a musical instrument or new sport – the only way you can get good is to actually do it!

Use technology

A smartphone can be a powerful tool for learning languages. Use it to record yourself speaking then listen back to see how your English sounds to other people. Make the most of all your favourite productivity apps to organise your practice time and make a note of all the new words you learn.

Listen

Listen to news bulletins and songs in English to listen to the pronunciation of words. You can also learn new words and expressions this way. The more you listen, the more you learn! Try copying what you hear to practice your pronunciation and learn which words in a sentence are stressed.

Read out loud

Read the newspaper or a magazine out to yourself. You could even find a script for your favourite TV show and act it out! This is a great way to practice pronunciation because you only need to concentrate on making sure you English sounds great and don't need to worry about sentence structure or grammar.

Learn a new word every day

Choose a word you would like to work on and use practice it in different sentences. Use the word until you have learnt it and keep using it regularly.

Watch films

Watch movies in English and pay attention to new vocabulary and pronunciation. Imitate the actors and have fun with it.

Make friends

Make friends with English speakers or others learning to speak English and compare notes. Talk about things that you have learnt and exchange ideas.

Do interesting activities in English

Take a cooking course in English or join a book club! Anything you enjoy doing, make sure you do it and communicate it in English. Using English to talk about things you enjoy will make practicing a positive experience.

Have a debate

Debate all the topics that interest you with friends in English. Try to use as much vocabulary as you can to get your point across and listen to the other arguments carefully so you can argue against them effectively.

Use a dictionary

Online dictionaries often have audio examples so you can check your pronunciation and there are lots of great dictionary apps that you can take everywhere with you on your Smartphone. Make sure not to become too reliant on these tools, though. Have a go at saying the words first then check afterwards to see if you were right!

So, with all these practice tips to choose from, which one are you going to try first?

HOW TO OVERCOME MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE

1. Communicating with our associates and peers in English makes the other end people to point out the errors.
2. Listening to the English channels principally news will definitely make us to trounce MTI. Pay attention English news and note down the un familiar word or the word which is influencing you. Then try with correct English pronunciation.
3. Constant practice by uttering the words/ sentences in front of the mirror will not only enhances our pronunciation but also improves the confidence level of speaking without MTI.
4. Reading books can also gradually increases to surmount MTI.
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7. Constant practice by uttering the words/ sentences in front of the mirror will not only enhance our pronunciation but also improves the confidence level of speaking without MTI.
8. Reading books can also gradually increase to surmount MTI.
9. Put into practice of using few tongue –twisters regularly.
10. Make a list of frequently used words and ask the one who speaks good to pronounce and record it and listen leisurely.

MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON SPOKEN ENGLISH

English is valued highly in the Indian society with a lot of prestige being attached to the language. A lot of time and energy is dedicated to teach or learn English in the Indian schools. Despite this, not much attention is given to enhance the speaking skill in the average Indian classroom. That the learner will pick up the skill from general classroom activities and instructions over a period of time is a false assumption made. As a result, the learners are not able to develop this skill and hence lack confidence while conversing in English.

To further this, though articulation of individual sounds while teaching this language is addressed, teaching of pronunciation is not given much importance either. In regular Indian classrooms, the importance of native-like accent is not given due stress. One strong reason that could be attributed to this could be that number of dialects found is so large that it is practically impossible to address all the accents in a classroom. This is a serious challenge in the Indian classrooms. The areas of sound relating to spoken English and to pronunciation in the Indian context need to be consciously addressed to counter this challenge and to make native-like accent in Indian learners more plausible.

The importance of pronunciation in communication cannot be denied. In fact it is as important as grammar and vocabulary. Yet, the evidence of *mother tongue influence* on English is very obvious. This manifests in the form of incorrect pronunciation.

Pronunciation error may be due to many issues. Guesswork or vagueness of the correct form of a word or sentence, or a general ineptness of the language could be the reason of mispronunciation. The most common reason is transfer or interference from the mother tongue. Generally, errors made in pronunciation are due to difference in the sound system and spelling symbols between the mother tongue and English.

As a regular practice the teacher is seen as a model for correct speaking in class. The learners are expected to be introduced to the pronunciation of words in English by their teacher during the day-to-day interaction. It is when the teacher her/himself has coloured pronunciation that the learners are unable to acquire correct skills in spoken English. The pronunciation samples they are exposed to in their classroom environment being inappropriate, the learners are most likely to adopt a similar pronunciation skill.

Added to this is the challenge of the fossilised sound system of the mother tongue of the learners that inhibits the acquisition of the pronunciation and sound system of the second language. It is understood that if the second language is introduced to the learners before puberty, the chances of attaining a native-like pronunciation skill is easier. This challenge can surely be met by using the mother tongue removal tool offered in good *digital language lab*. *Words Worth English Language Lab* has an inbuilt facility to meet this requirement.

To help reduce this problem in Indian schools, it is vital that while on one hand spoken English be encouraged and promoted, on the other hand, such sound patterns as which are likely to be confused and faltered be identified and drilled. The learners should be able to practise these sound patterns over and over again using a model voice to emulate. It has been realised that such activities when done in digital language labs, not only help eliminate the mother tongue influence, but also hasten the acquisition

of the target language. *Digital language labs* equipped with this facility allow learners to listen to correct pronunciation of a word and check their own learning during the practice session.

Identifying Mother Tongue Influence

Every language affects English learners differently, so we can't simply list out all the common mistakes, this post would be too long! If you're a complete newcomer to the country you're in, then it can be hard to identify at first. The longer you stay, the more often you'll notice the same mistakes occurring, which is likely a sign of the mother tongue interfering. Pay attention to mistakes your students make, and when you come across the same ones over and over again, ask somebody who speaks the local language if it might be caused by that language.

It's definitely worth doing this, because letting students know when they're being influenced by their mother tongue is a good way of stopping it happening again.

Equally, if you start learning the local language, you'll find yourself understanding mother tongue influence a lot more, and will be able to correct it far more easily. This is an added bonus of taking the plunge and learning the language. You can also use other people's research. There are plenty of "How [language] affects English learning" articles online and many books have been written on the subject too. All you need to do is find one that applies to the language(s) of the country you're in, and you'll be set.

Also, be aware that words have different connections in different languages, or words that have multiple meanings in English might not have the same (or any) alternate meanings for other languages. This means that you should take extra care when presenting new vocabulary, as sometimes there are ambiguities that you wouldn't have thought of.

What Kind Of Things Are Influenced By Mother Tongue?

As mentioned earlier, different languages affect English learning in a different way. For some, sentence word order can be a problem. You might hear sentences like "I for breakfast eat toast" or "I tomorrow will go to Japan".

This is usually easy to rectify, you just need to remind students of the correct word order, and practice, practice, practice. In fact, most errors are fixed by just practicing more. In other languages, pronunciation might be a problem. The classic example is Germans pronouncing "W" as "V" and saying sentences like "Welcome to my home". French people not pronouncing the letter "H" is another well-known mother tongue influence.

In many languages, speakers will have a "schwa". This is where they add a sound onto the end of words, such as saying Bird, "Birda" or "Dogga" instead of Dog. This is usually caused by two things, the first being that they were taught phonics incorrectly, or have let it slip.

The other cause of a schwa is because their own language has very distinct sounds and pronunciations, such as Chinese. When trying to cope with the softer sounds that English can have, it can be difficult. This is also the reason why some people struggle with correctly pronouncing different vowel sounds. We can't do away with mother tongue influence completely. In fact, to ease our pain, certain Indian peculiarities of pronunciation have actually become acceptable and that's what neutral Indian accent is. For us Indians, the target should be to reduce our mother tongue influence so much that from a Punjabi/Bhojpuri/Tamil/Marathi or Bengali English speaker, we become an Indian English speaker.

Conclusion:

We learn our mother tongue automatically from our mother, family members and the environment without bothering about the grammar. First we observe the words spoken by others and listen, next we try to imitate the words. This principle is applicable to learn any language other than our mother tongue. English is learnt through practice only. We need not fear about the mistakes. Whenever you get a chance to converse in English with others, just utilize it. Through consistent practice you can reduce the mother tongue influence in English communication. Soon you can become a fluent speaker. All the best.

