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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TELUGU RHYTHM AND ENGLISH RHYTHM

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The flavour of language maybe lost, if the rhythm of the language is superimposed on another language which has a different rhythm. 'Rhythm' is a word that refers to the length of time between each major "beat" of a group of regular, evenly spaced beats feels stronger than the others. When we write music down, we put each group in bars. The first beat of the bar seems stronger than the others. These are all very important aspects to speak English accurately.

RHYTHM

Rhythm is-

- The recurrence of certain patterns of - colour, - designs, or -sound.
- At regular intervals of space or time
- Periodicity
- Sound- Dog barking - bow wow wow

"The initiatory activity seems to be parcel out into relatively equal chunks that are often longer than the syllable is rhythm" - J.C. Cat Ford.

"Speech wholly is partially repeating the same figure of sound is rhythm." - Manely.

The rhythm of spoken English is based on a unit known as 'Foot'. A spoken sentence has a succession of feet. Each foot consists of a number of syllables. Every foot consists the elements of,

- a) ictus or salient or stressed or strong syllable.

- b) remiss or non-salient or unstressed or weak syllable.

The first syllable of a foot is usually a salient or stressed. The salient syllable (ictus) carries the beat. Sometimes, the foot can begin with a non-salient syllable, if the foot follows a pause or has an initial position in the tone group. It does not disrupt the rhythm. The salient beat is marked by ('). The time taken by each foot is more or less the same time but the whole tempo (speed) may change. The unstressed or weak syllables are squashed or crushed in the foot in speech.

Rhythm can be said to be a recurring pattern of relatively strong and relatively weak syllables. Languages fall under two types of rhythm.

TYPES OF RHYTHM

1. Stress-timed Rhythm:

Isochronous-stress occurs at

regular intervals of time.

Isodynamic-initiatory power is distributed at regular intervals of time.

Stressed syllables occur in regular intervals of time; in stress-timed rhythm stress syllables are isochronous.

"The number of unstressed syllables caught between two stressed syllables may vary." - M.J. Ball.

Russian, Arabic and English languages are examples for stress-timed rhythm.

In an utterance/sentence, the time taken from one stressed syllable to the next is roughly equal but not exactly equal. The rhythm is maintained by compressing the syllables or by expanding the syllables.

2. Syllable-timed Rhythm

Isochronous-syllables occur at regular intervals of time

Isodynamic- syllables occur at

regular initiatory power.

There are stressed and unstressed syllables, syllables occurred at regular intervals of time, syllables take an equal amount of time and syllables are isochronous.

"The number of unstressed syllables caught between stressed syllables is more or less the same"
- M.J. Ball.

Telugu, Yoruba, French and many other Indian languages are examples for syllable-timed rhythm.

That's why when you hear those languages; it is different from the English Language.

In Russian, the stressed syllable occurs at the end of a foot. In Russian, each foot has unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. 'M.J. Ball' introduced first IPA chart for the "speech disordered people". A foot with five syllables will usually take longer than a foot with one syllable but no five times of long. The content (lexical) words have dictionary meaning. Noun, verb, adjective and adverb are stressed. The function (structure) words are auxiliary verbs, prepositions, conjunctions and unstressed. The use of function words is essential for maintaining rhythm in English. In English function, words have two or more qualitative and quantitative patterns depending on whether they are accented or unaccented.

The accented realizations of the functional words are strong forms; the unaccented realizations of those words are weak forms. Accentuation in English as contrastive function although the accentual patterns are freer and largely determined by the meaning conveyed. Some words are free disposed of by their function in the language to receive the accent; these are content/lexical words. Many monosyllabic form words are subjected to qualitative variation according to whether they receive accent or not. On the other hand mono, syllabic words retain their full vowel value (quality of the vowel). weak forms are manifested by a reduction of the length of sounds and elision of vowels and consonants. In normal conversation, the number of weak forms syllables tends to exceed the number of stressed syllables. The rhythm may faster if there are a large number of unstressed syllables.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TELUGU AND ENGLISH RHYTHM

The differences between Telugu and English as far as stress is concerned, have generally been considered to be the following:

- a) English is a stress-timed language and Telugu is a syllable timed language.
- b) Unlike English, Telugu has no word stress.
- c) Stress in English is phonemic. Even if Telugu does has some kind of stress, it is not phonemic.
- d) In Telugu first syllable takes the primary stress, in some case if it is a long one probably Telugu word does not end with long vowel.
- e) Language like English, it has phonological function and Telugu language has phonetic function.

TYPES OF RHYTHM IN ENGLISH

There is a popular belief that there are two basically different kinds of speech rhythms classified as "syllable timed" and "stress-timed" rhythms (Pike 1946, p.35). Abercrombie (1967) defines syllable timed and stress timed in the following way:

In one kind, known as a 'syllable-timed' rhythm, the periodic recurrence of movement is supplied by the syllable producing process: the chest pulses, and hence the syllables recur at equal intervals of time.....

In the other kind, known as a 'stress-timed' rhythm, the periodic recurrence of Movement is supplied by the stress producing process: the stress-pulses, and hence the stressed syllables (p.97) recur at equal intervals of time.

Indian languages are classified as languages with syllable timed rhythm, and English on the other hand, is classified as a language with stress timed-rhythm. As a result of this belief, it has been said that Indian languages, which have 'syllable-timed' rhythms, cannot have any stress in the sense

that English has. It is in this sense that Jones (1950) states that Indian languages like Hindustani and Marathi are “stress-less languages”.

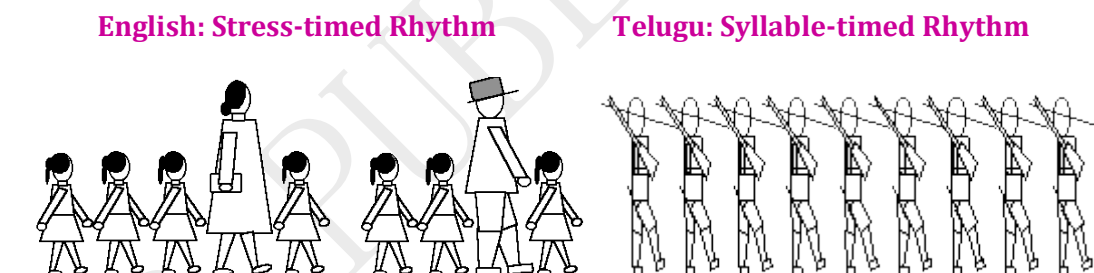
In present years, however, this accepted difference between English and Indian languages has been called into question. Had it been the case that Indian languages had a syllable timed rhythm, the duration of each syllable should be approximately the same. On the contrary, it is quite well known that the reduction and even deletion of certain vowels is a frequent phenomenon in Indian languages (Stress in Tamilian English, K.G. Vijayakrishnan, 1978).

Before we discuss the English rhythm, we may have to explain what rhythm is. What is rhythm? In Dauer’s Accurate English (1993), the unit “Rhythm” opens:

“When we speak naturally, words are parts of phrases and longer sentences. What we hear is a sequence of syllables in time, like notes in music. The time relationships among syllables make up the rhythm of language.” (p.83)

Rhythm, actually, is timing patterns among syllables. However, the timing patterns are not the same in all languages. There are, particularly, two opposite types of rhythm in languages: stress-timed and syllable-timed. According to Mackay (1985), stress-timed rhythm is determined by stressed syllables, which occur at regular intervals of time, with an uneven and changing number of unstressed syllables between them; syllable-timed rhythm is based on the total number of syllables since each syllable takes approximately the same amount of time. English, with an alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables, is obviously stress-timed, while Chinese, with nearly equal weight and time in all syllables, is syllable-timed. These two languages, therefore, are very different in rhythm.

Unfortunately, many Telugu students seem not to be aware of this remarkable variation. As an outcome, they tend to apply the rhythm of Telugu (syllable-timed rhythm) when speaking English. They do not even know that their English speech rhythm is affected by the rhythm of Telugu, nor do they know that this improper rhythm makes their English speech unnatural and hard to be understood. In order to help students realize that English rhythm is so different from Telugu rhythm, we can use the following illustrations to show a contrast between the two rhythms.



Pronunciation is important. (Modified from Prator and Robinett’s fourth edition of Manual of American English Pronunciation, 1985)

In the above illustrations, the English rhythm is composed of adults (stressed syllables) and children (unstressed syllables), which suggests that English has different syllable length and weight; by contrast, the Telugu rhythm is composed of soldiers (each soldier represents a syllable), which suggests that Telugu has the same length and weight in all syllables. Through the figure, it is easy for the students to perceive the difference between the English rhythm and the Telugu rhythm.

- Rhythm can be defined as the patterned, recurring alternations of contrasting elements of sound as speech.
- A repeated set of things that can differ in length of time and type.
- The pattern of musical movement through time. A specific kind of pattern, formed by a series of notes differing in duration and stress.

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, the teaching of English pronunciation equals the teaching of English sounds: vowels and consonants. For English learners, many of them also believe that if they want to get good pronunciation, they just need to work on individual sounds. Learning these sounds indeed, is essential for students, especially for beginning learners.

Although we have focused on English rhythm, we do not mean to imply that teaching rhythm is the only task or the most important task in pronunciation instruction. Rather, our intention is to arouse English teachers' attention to the importance of teaching English rhythm to Telugu students.

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