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# Teaching English in Intercultural Communication

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**Abstract:** In modern conditions, the issues of optimizing the process of teaching English are especially relevant. University courses should not only maintain traditional high standards, but also take into account the changed linguistic realities of recent decades. The author gives specific recommendations for teachers, highlighting the most significant units of the phonetic system of modern English as a means of intercultural communication.

**Keywords:** teaching, intercultural communication, modern language realities, phonetics, optimization of the learning process

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the global challenges for the system of universities will always be to find a delicate balance between established theory and modern realities of the surrounding reality. It is obvious that professionals entering the practice who have just received higher education diplomas must have up-to-date knowledge of significant global trends, especially in areas directly related to their profession. Language, as a multifaceted and constantly evolving phenomenon, is of particular difficulty in this regard. The linguistic reality of recent decades has undergone significant changes, and inattention to them can significantly reduce the practical applicability and, accordingly, the usefulness of teaching languages in universities, especially in non-linguistic ones.

At the beginning of the third millennium, globalization became one of the dominant global social trends. It is obvious that the successful functioning of both the state and the individual in the conditions of actualized intercultural communication is impossible without adequate knowledge of the universal language of international communication, which is currently the English language.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

It has become difficult to travel anywhere in the world without coming into daily contact with English, especially in big cities. The English language dominates international culture, primarily through radio and television pop music and unrubbed films and television shows in English. It plays a significant role in the public life of many countries, even those where it is not the primary language. English is now actively used on the signs of the largest cities in the world, in the names of products and enterprises, as well as in advertising.

The arguments for a global language can be summarized as follows:

1. The wide scope of communication between different people and peoples is increasingly demanding the development of common forms and means of international communication.

Ethnic and cultural conflicts have grown into a world, global problem, testifying the need for a "common language" for humanity in modern conditions.

2. The globalization of the economy, because of which the number of international companies is rapidly growing, both in production and - especially! - trade. The development

of these companies and their prosperity, including financial, largely depends on the ability easily and effectively communicate in one - "global" - language.

### 3. Creation and functioning of international political and public organizations.

In 2017, 26 million websites were surveyed by a special commission of the United Nations (UN), which tried to find out the linguistic characteristics of the modern Internet. The results announced by the UN Secretary General turned out to be quite predictable - 21.2 million pages are English-language resources. However, noteworthy is the fact that 56 percent of the traffic to US sites are visitors from other countries. This suggests that Internet users around the world have adopted English as the main means of intercultural communication. With the advent of the Internet, the role of the English language has become even stronger. The wide and rapid spread of the Internet has a huge impact on the development of international communication.

Now, it is almost impossible to predict with certainty which way the development of the English language will go, as more and more people use it as a foreign language, and not their native language. It can be argued that now no one has a monopoly on the English language - it has moved from the UK, the USA and other English-speaking countries to countries where it is a second language.

At the same time, English as the main means of intercultural communication faces a number of specific problems. Being a means of communication between representatives of different nationalities and people from different systems of the native language, English acquires new, previously uncharacteristic features, and its norm becomes more and more unsteady and ambiguous. These changes especially pronounced in such an aspect of the language as its phonetics. However, it is phonetics the sound of speech. That primarily determines the potential success of communication, the ability of the interlocutor to understand the message addressed to him. Scientists studying the functioning of the world language, primarily phonologists and phonetics, are faced with the task of determining the most significant aspects of the language that play a key role in ensuring successful intercultural communication, and, accordingly, developing requirements for the process of teaching English as an international language. Such information is especially important in the training of specialists whose work requires the highest level of language competence: translators, teachers, international lawyers.

Unfortunately, the well-known problems of our higher education often do not allow non-linguistic universities to pay sufficient attention to modernizing the requirements for students' knowledge and skills in the field of English phonetics. As a result, two different and equally wrong points of view are formed: universities either prefer to adhere to the pronunciation standard fixed in the classical works of half a century ago and do not reflect modern language trends, or they completely stop paying attention to phonetics. This problem is especially acute in non-specialized faculties, where the lack of teaching hours devoted to the language really does not allow studying phonetics in the proper amount. Nevertheless, at the faculties of foreign languages, when studying a second language, similar problems arise.

Thus, it is obvious that the problem of determining the significant phonetic aspects of intercultural communication, as well as the gradation of these aspects depending on their role in ensuring the effectiveness of speech impact, is of great interest both for modern phonetic science and for the practice of teaching English. The definition of these aspects will make the learning process more efficient, focusing it on the most significant phonetic moments.

However, it is important to focus not only on the minimum requirements that contribute to the understanding of the statement. The needs of the individual in the tools to ensure success

in the process of intercultural communication also require the definition of aspects that provide a high level of socio-cultural assessment of the presentation in the process of such communication. In other words, it is important not very understood, but also to like your speech, and be ready to agree with your opinion.

In addition, the new paradigm of teaching the phonetics of English as an international language faces two fundamental difficulties. The first is the need to harmonize the pronunciation aspects of the language. In its use by non-native speakers in such a way as to ensure understanding of speech in situations of cross-cultural communication. The second is the need to respect the norms of the largest group of English users, that is, non-native speakers.

In the practice of studying and teaching English, two ways of solving the described problem have been formed. The first of these is an attempt to develop some simplified, neutral, universal pronunciation that would be understandable and acceptable to both native and non-native speakers of English - a kind of phonological equivalent of "nuclear English" developed by R. Kuerk for syntax and morphology of international English. One of the attempts to create such a pronunciation option was the "rudimentary international pronunciation" developed by A. Gimson. Gimson reduced the set of English phonemes - 24 consonants and 20 vowels - to 14 and 15 respectively (Gimson2017).

Such an approach contains a rational grain, but it is obvious that few English users, native or non-native speakers, will accept such a pronunciation transformation as understandable or acceptable. Another difficulty for the implementation of such schemes is the incredible difficulty of controlling the correct implementation of phonological "correspondences". Without constant control, some kind of international pronunciation police, nothing can force people, firstly, to accept such phonological norms, and secondly, to follow them invariably in the process of communication. Users of international English, whether they are native speakers or not, constantly exposed to British and American media on the one hand, and local pronunciation norms on the other.

These factors limit the possibility of successfully establishing a universal pronunciation standard. Any neutral, universal forms of English pronunciation, simplified or not, are most likely to be unplanned, naturally developing "from below" rather than being established and imposed "from above".

The second, perhaps more promising approach to solving the problem of determining, the phonetic norms of the international English language is proposed by variationists, in particular, Martha Pennington in her book *Phonology in Teaching English. International Approach*". The author advocates the development of a variety of phonological models for both native and non-native speakers of English. The focus in the process of teaching English as an international language, according to the author, should be teaching generalized norms in accordance with the needs and choice of an individual student. Such an approach must also be accompanied by the rejection of a narrow focus on British or American pronunciation norms.

According to another prominent contemporary researcher, J. Jenkins, at present, none of the described approaches can resolve the contradiction between the need for a global understanding of the English language and the influence of local pronunciation norms. The situation further complicated by the fact that the understanding of English by non-native speakers representing different countries and cultures has not been the object of serious scientific study. As a result, most of the literature on English phonology, both scientific and methodological, is mainly devoted to the achievement of understanding of English speech by

native speakers of this language, and not by English learners of the "expanding circle". Such studies provide important information about how English speakers structure and decode oral messages using a system of super segmental units (stress, rhythm, and intonation). However, it seems impossible fully accept the conclusions of these works as equally relevant to the situation of intercultural communication. There is no doubt that for a native speaker, it is the super-segmental units that are especially important for ensuring understanding, but in intercultural communication it is important to pay equal attention to both them and segmental units, i.e. sounds (Jenkins 2018).

To develop means of ensuring speech understanding in English in a situation of intercultural communication that would not limit the ability of speakers to use their own pronunciation norms, J. Jenkins offers a third approach, which is a kind of compromise between the two positions described above. This proposal is that special attention in the process of intercultural communication in English be paid to three of its phonetic aspects: segmental units, primarily consonants, nuclear stress and the most correct use of articulation to implement the first two factors (Jenkins 2020).

One of the most noticeable differences between a non-native English speaker and a native speaker in terms of the implementation of segmental units of the language is that a non-native speaker can deviate from the patterns accepted in the language precisely in the implementation of sounds. That are considered "basic" sounds of the English language and which are necessary be implemented with maximum approximation. This "basic" or "core" property belongs to most consonants, to the distinction between historically long and historically short vowels. In addition, to forms of cluster simplification, especially the dropping of consonants in certain combinations, such as dropping /t/ in the center of a sequence of three consonants, which is observed, for example, in the word *postman*, which is pronounced /paʊsman/ (Jenkins 2018). When implementing such models, non-native speakers not only deviate from the forms typical for native speakers, but also differ significantly from each other due to the different nature of the interferences affecting them.

The correct implementation of the "basic" sounds in itself does not guarantee the understanding of the message in the process of intercultural communication. Nevertheless, its absence not only complicates perception, but can also distort the meaning of the message. This is explained by the fact that participants in intercultural communication, who are mostly non-native speakers, have a smaller lexical reserve, as well as a not so high tolerance for different allophones. An error in the implementation of the "nuclear" sound can paradoxically, further emphasized by the correct placement of the nuclear stress on a syllable that contains an incorrect sound or consonant elision.

Proper use of nuclear stress is no less important in the process of intercultural communication in English. The correct setting of stress is of particular importance when using contrastive stress, through which additional meanings conveyed in English by shifting the nucleus from the last word in a syntagmatic or sentence to some other word. According to J. Jenkins, systematic training in the use of nuclear stress can be the most important factor in overcoming the receptive-productive imbalance, when non-native speakers quickly acquire English for perception, but experience significant problems using the language to generate their own statements.

Mastering the articulatory setting of the English language will make it easier and more correct to implement the "basic" sounds of the language, as well as to use these sounds for setting nuclear stress, that is, to lengthen the sounds, pronounce them with greater volume and excellent frequency characteristics.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, J. Jenkins offers the following set of factors that are most significant for achieving mutual intelligibility in cross-cultural communication:

1. Correct realization of consonant sounds.
2. Adequate simplification of consonant combinations (clusters).
3. Distinguishing vowels by longitude.
4. Nuclear stress. (Jenkins 2018).

These aspects are called the "phonological core of lingua franca". Jenkins notes that the advantage of the highlighted phonological aspects is not only that they can be taught, but also that they are relatively easy to learn - they are systematized, and not overloaded with complex exceptions and subtle differences. Jenkins also emphasizes that other aspects of phonology are not necessary for intercultural communication in English. International English must be prepared both to accept some "non-native" norms, and to abandon those norms, the loss of which does not pose a danger to achieving mutual understanding in the process of intercultural communication.

Of course all of the above should in no way be taken as a call to abandon the traditions of the Russian phonetic school in favor of some kind of "simplified" version. A high level of language training, including in phonetic terms, has always been a hallmark of our university graduates. At the same time, attention to the phonological core of the international English language can as already noted, make the teaching process more efficient and more adequately reflect the linguistic reality that graduates of non-philological universities in Uzbekistan will have to face in their professional activities.

The experience of teaching English in the national groups of universities of the Republic of Uzbekistan shows that where the difficulties of the English language taken into account in comparison with the peculiarities of the grammatical structure of the native language, students' knowledge of English is stronger. Taking into account the peculiarities of the native language contributes to the prevention of typical mistakes made by students when learning English, explained by students when learning English and explained by the influence of the grammatical norms of the native language. Thus, to improve translation work, it is recommended conducting training exercises, question-answer conversations or using part of the text for writing a dictation, presentation, as well as oral retelling in English, which is one of the most important stages in the process of teaching coherent speech, taking into account intercultural communication.

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