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Phonological Problems Faced By ESL Learners of Burushaski

Sabir Gilgiti, M.A. English, Abdul Qadir Khan, Ph.D. Scholar and
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Abstract

The present study aims to look into the problems faced by Burushaski speakers while learning English. The study particularly focuses on the English consonants that are not found in Burushaski language and also on the role of native language in learning these consonants. The study proves that five English consonant phonemes; the post-alveolar voiced fricative /ʒ/, the dental voiceless fricative /θ/, the dental voiced fricative /ð/, the labio-dental voiceless fricative /f/, the labiodentals voiced fricative /v/ are problematic for Burushaski speakers, and are replaced with possible resembled Burushaski sounds /dʒ/, /tʃ/, /d/, /P^h/ and /w/ respectively. The study concludes that English language learners with Burushaski background should be properly trained to acquire correct English pronunciation. The study is limited to the investigation of English consonant sounds for Burushaski speakers of Nagar.

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Introduction

Burushaski is the language spoken by the Burusho people living in Gilgit Baltistan. Earlier it was known with the following names: Northern area of Pakistan, Blawaristan and Karakoram. In this area of Pakistan more than five influential languages are spoken, namely, Burushaski, Sheena, Balti, Khowar and Wakhi. These languages are totally different from each other. Each language has two or three dialects. If we talk about the other languages of Pakistan we come to know that each language has resemblance with its neighboring languages but in Gilgit Baltistan each language has its own peculiarities although the speakers of each language reside closely to each other. So, Gilgit Baltistan is rich in languages and a paradise of linguists.

Among these languages Burushaski language enjoys a dominant status though its speakers are not as numerous as the speakers of Balti and Sheena languages are. It is spoken in the three parts of Gilgit Baltistan; Hunza, Nager, Yaseen and one of the areas of Kashmir region in India with a population of three thousand people. Hunza and Nager are parallel to each other, between which Hunza Nager River flows. The population of Nager is more than the population of Hunza. Nager has two electoral constituencies whereas Hunza has only one constituency. In some of the areas of Nager and Hunza Sheena language is also spoken. In some of the areas of Yaseen Wakhi language is spoken.

Each area, where Burushaski is spoken, has some phonological and morphological differences. So, we can say that Burushaski has three dialects. Nagari dialect is known as Khajuna or Mishaski, the dialect of Hunza is known as Hunzashki whereas Yaseeni dialect is known as Yasiniski or Boltam.

In this research the researchers are not much concerned with the origin and history. Yet it is necessary to present some of the aspects of history to understand the nature of this language. The main focus of the researchers is phonological problems faced by Burushaski ESL learners.

Research Question(s)

- Do the English sounds which do not exist in Burushaski language create problems for Burushaski ESL speakers?
- How do the Burushaski speakers pronounce these sounds while speaking English?

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Significance of the Study

This is the first research that was carried out on this topic ever by any researcher with respect to Burushaski language. The purpose of carrying out this research is to have awareness about the phonological importance of Burushaski language. It deals with one of the aspects of phonology, so, it could pave way to the other aspects of phonology.

Being a limited language, Burushaski has not been the subject of researchers particularly the current topic. This research aims at tracing out the problematic sounds of English faced by Burushaski speakers and to state applicable solutions for these problems.

Literature Review

Burushaski, being a unique and isolated language, has not been the subject of linguists as others languages have been. So, it is lacking in written stuff. Some works have been carried out on this language but not as much as should have been done. In other words, we can say that this language has been ignored. Here we have selected a topic which has never ever been addressed by any researcher. So, in literature review I will deal with the origin and, to some extent, history of Burushaski language. It is necessary to include the above mentioned two components because unless we deal with these components we will not be able to understand the nature of language. To understand the nature of language we need to know some of the aspects of language. For this the origin and history of Burushaski is dealt with here.

Origin of Burushaski Language

Burushaski is the language of Burusho who reside in the extreme Northern tip of Pakistan and North West of Pakistan. It is an ancient and unclassified language as Basque, Ainu, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese, as they are yet not known to be related with any family of languages. So, Burushaski has not any genetic relation with any other language or family. Many linguists tried to relate this language with some family or language but all their efforts were in vain. According to the linguists there are twelve languages which are not yet known to be related with any other language family. These languages are known as 'isolated languages' and Burushaski is one of these isolated languages. It is spoken in Northern Areas of Pakistan which is officially known as Gilgit Baltistan. Burushaski is the dominant language spoken in three rugged mountainous areas of Hunza, Nager and Yaseen. Each of three valleys has a distinct dialect; most similarities are found among the Hunza and Nager dialects. However Yaseen's is geographically separated from these areas which brought about some more differences than the two dialects, Hunza and Nager. The difference between Hunza dialect and Nagar dialect lies in the field of Phonology and, to some extent, in

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morphology as well. But Yasini dialect differs from the aforementioned in both fields, but more in phonology. Hunza people and Nageri people understand each other easily but it does not happen with Yesenin's. It needs a curious concentration to understand the Yaseni dialect.

Burushaski Speakers

The total population of Burushaski speakers is not known exactly. In different books different numbers have been given. Tiffou (1993) states that 150,000 people speak Burushaski language, Muhammad Wazir Shafi (2006) also mentioned the same number as Tiffou did. Jamaee and Inaam, (2006) have given two numbers, one on page 4, where it has been stated that more than one and a half lakh of people speak this language while, on page 59, they wrote that 30,000 people speak it. But the number Tiffou and Wazir Shafi have given seems to be accurate.

The Views and Works of Renowned Linguists

Some renowned linguists worked on this language, particularly on its genetic relationship with other families but no one succeeded in relating it with any family, though its sentence pattern is like Dardic languages or it resembles Dravidian languages, to some extent. Burushaski seems to have the influences of Caucasian languages. Naseer-ud-din Hunzai says that the Burusho nation has come from Hungary. That is why it resembles Hungarian languages, a language of Caucasians.

George Morgensitierne (1932) appreciated the work of Lorimer on Burushaski language and wrote about its importance. After this, at least for thirty years there was no any appreciable development on linguistic grounds. In the Institute for Eastern Studies of Hidelberg University, Hamman Berger worked on this language that paved the ways for other researchers. Dr Naseer-ud-din Hunzai (1970) worked on Burushaski alphabet in his book 'Inayi'. After four years of the publication of Naseer's "Inayi" Berger, on the basis of his previous study of Burushaski language, published a Burushaski grammar. E. Tiffou (1993) wrote 'Hunza Proverbs' in which more than five thousand and thirty Burushaski proverbs have been written.

Burushaski Sound System

Tiffou (1993) states that Burushaski primarily has five vowels, /i e a o u/. Various contractions result in long vowels; stressed vowels tend to be longer and less "open" than unstressed ones ([i e a o u] as opposed to [ɪ ɛ ʌ ɔ ʊ]).

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Berger (1998) finds the following consonants to be phonemic.

	<u>Bilabial</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Alveolo- palatal</u>	<u>Retrofle x</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Uvular</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Nasal</u>	m	n			ŋ		
<u>aspirated</u>	p ^h	t ^h		t ^h	k ^h	q ^h	
<u>Plosive</u>							
<u>plain</u>	p	t		t	k	q	
<u>voiced</u>	b	d		d	g		
<u>aspirated</u>		ts ^h	tɕ ^h	tʂ ^h			
<u>Affricate</u>							
<u>plain</u>		ts	tɕ	tʂ			
<u>voiced</u>			dʒ	dʒ			
<u>voiceless</u>		s	ɕ	ʂ			h
<u>Fricative</u>							
<u>voiced</u>		z				ʁ	
<u>Trill</u>		r					
<u>Approximant</u>		l	j	ɻ	w		

English Consonants

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Table 1 Chart of English Consonant phonemes

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Plato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d			k g	
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
Affricate					tʃ dʒ			
Nasal	m			n			ŋ	
Lateral				l				
Approximant	w				r	j		

Chart of English consonant phonemes adapted from (Peter Roach 1983 Adam Brown 1991 Daniel Jones 1972)

Chart of English consonant phonemes adapted from (Peter Roach 1983 Adam Brown 1991 Daniel Jones 1972).

The above two inventories of consonants of the two languages show that / f /, θ /, ð /, / v /, / ʒ / are found in English phonemic inventory but are not found in Burushaski inventory.

Research Methodology

The present study is concerned with the comparison of Burushaski phonology with English (RP), in order to highlight the areas that create problems for the speakers of both the languages. The background studies of both the languages show some contrastive phonological features that create problems for learners of both languages. There are some features that are found in Burushaski but not in English. On the other hand there are features that are found in English, but not in Burushaski. There are 18 consonant sounds in Burushaski which do not exist in English language.

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The consonant phonemes / f /, / θ /, / ð /, / v /, / ʒ / are found in English, but they are not found in the Burushaski language.

Participants

The data was collected from seven participants. These participants were from seventeen to twenty years of age. These participants were selected randomly from four different institutions. Three participants were chosen from three colleges and four participants were taken from one college. In all these institutions English was taught as a compulsory subject. All the participants were native speakers of Burushaski language. They all had background knowledge of English by studying it more than ten years in school as a compulsory subject. The medium of instruction in all these colleges and institutions was English. All these participants belonged to different localities of Nagar. They had studied English in different institutions. The sample we selected represents nearly all the major areas in Nagar where Nagari dialect is spoken.

Data Collection Tools and Procedure

The data was collected through recording from the participants selected for the study. The eight English consonants in RP were supposed to create problems in learning correct English pronunciation for Burushaski speakers. These consonant sounds were recognized. The problematic consonant phonemes are /ʒ/, / θ /, / v /, / f /, and / ð /. The words having these consonant phonemes in initial, medial and last position of different words were identified. Each participant had to pronounce the selected words two times. There were some words having not initial sound in the words were given the sound at word medial and word final position.

The data was recorded and then processed on speech analyzer, Praat. The formants through spectrograms were observed and the correct pronunciation of the consonant sounds was deduced.

RESULTS

The following sections discuss the results of the study.

The pronunciation of the English consonant /ʒ/

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The following table shows the pronunciation of the English post-alveolar voiced fricative /ʒ/ at word initial, medial and final position. In the following table the first left column shows the different realization of the pronunciation of the consonant. The other columns on the right show the number of occurrences of different realizations of the consonant at different word positions. The pronunciation of both the words by Burushaski speakers are given in the table below.

The pronunciation of the English consonant /ʒ/

Pronunciation of /ʒ/	Number of occurrences by different speakers at different positions of the word.		
	Word initial position	Word medial position	Word final position
/ʒ/	00	00	02
/dʒ/	20	10	14
/g/	00	00	04
/z/	00	10	00

Table 2: Pronunciation of English /ʒ/ at different positions of the word by Burushaski speakers.

The above table shows that the consonant was pronounced correctly as /ʒ/ two times by one participant, twice by a single participant at word final position, but the same participant pronounced it as /dʒ/ in the first and second word. It was pronounced as /dʒ/ twenty times by ten participants at word initial position, ten times by five participants at word medial position and fourteen times by seven participants at word final position. This sound was pronounced as /g/ four times by two participants and all occurred at word final position. This sound was pronounced as /z/ ten times by five participants. These ten times occurred at word medial position.

The pronunciation of /ʒ/ at word initial position

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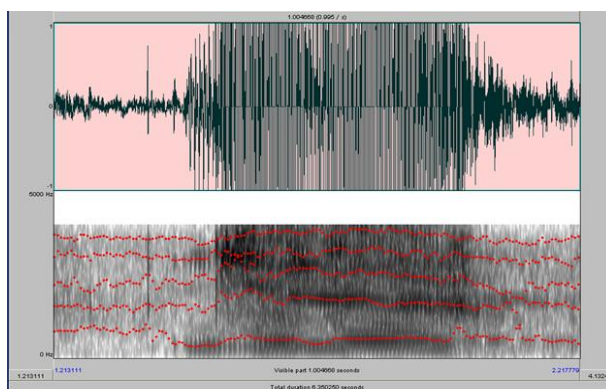


Figure 1: Pronunciation of English consonant /ʒ/ at initial position as /dʒ/ by Burushaski speakers

The above spectrogram shows that the English phoneme /ʒ/ was pronounced as /dʒ/. Because Burushaski does not contain any voiced post-alveolar fricative. So the Burushaski speakers go for the nearest sound of /ʒ/ which is palato-alveolar /dʒ/. In Burushaski the sound /dʒ/ is found that is why they do pronounce it easily. In the above given spectrogram the word “genre” was pronounced by a Burushaski speaker. The same participant pronounce the same sound in the word “vision” as /z/ but at word final position he pronounced as /dʒ/

The pronunciation of /ʒ/ at word medial position as /z/

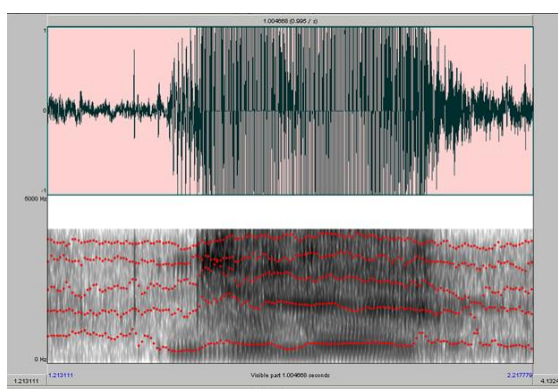


Figure 2: Pronunciation of consonant /ʒ/ at medial position as /z/ by Burushaski speakers

The above given spectrogram shows that the given word “vision” was pronounced by Burushaski speaker as /z/ at word medial position. On 0Hz level in this figure it was shown that the tongue touches alveolar ridge. /z/’s place of articulation is alveolar ridge so the speaker pronounces alveolar /z/ instead of post alveolar /ʒ/. Actually speaker is not influenced by any native sound in this word but he has dearth of knowledge of English sounds. Most of the students of Burusho often misunderstood “sion” as /ʃ/ or /z/.

The pronunciation of /ʒ/ at medial position as /dʒ/

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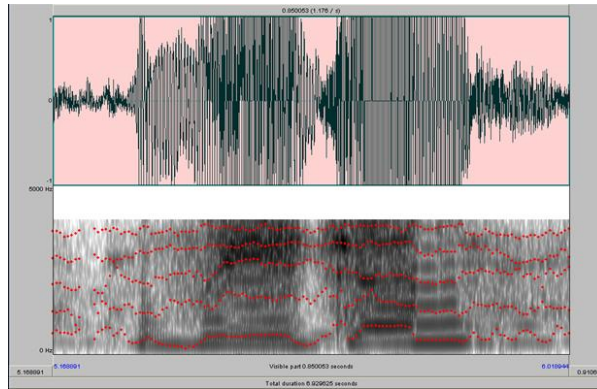


Figure 3: Pronunciation of English consonant /ʒ/ at medial position as /dʒ/ by Burushaski speaker

As above it was shown that how the sound /ʒ/ was pronounced at word initial position but here the same sound was pronounced as /dʒ/ at word medial position. In this spectrogram just after vowel a plato-alveolar sound was pronounced which is /dʒ/. This speaker pronounced /ʒ/ as /dʒ/ at all positions of words.

The pronunciation of /ʒ/ as /g/ at word final position

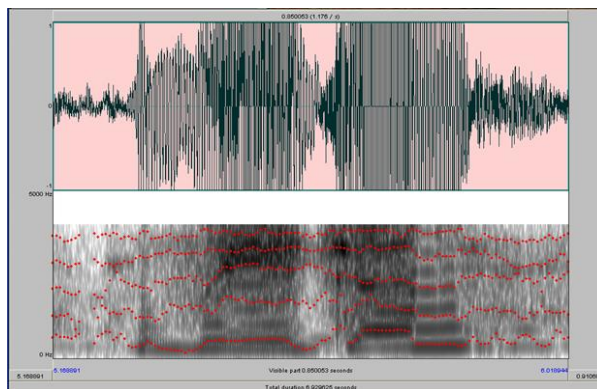


Figure 4: Pronunciation of consonant /ʒ/ at word final position as /g/ by Burushaski speaker.

The above spectrogram shows that the word “montage” was pronounced wrongly by Burushaski speaker. It shows that at the end of the word a voiced stop has been pronounced which is velar /g/. This sound was pronounced as /g/ only by two speakers and rest of them has pronounced it as /dʒ/.

The pronunciation of English Consonant / f /

The following table shows the pronunciation of the English labio-dental voiceless fricative /f/ at word initial, medial and final positions.

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The pronunciation of English consonant / f /

Pronunciation of / f /	Number of occurrences by different speakers at different positions of the word.		
	Word initial position	Word medial position	Word final position
/ f /	09	05	20
/ ph /	11	14	00
/ p /	00	01	00

Table 3 : Pronunciation of English consonant / f / at different positions of the word by Burushaski speakers.

The above table shows that / f / at word initial position was rightly pronounced by five participants in which one student once pronounced the same sound in the same word as / ph /, while it was pronounced as / ph / at the same position by eleven in which one participant pronounced the same word twice differently, though it was not pronounced as / p / at initial position by anyone. At word medial position it was pronounced as / f / three participants where one's occurrence was not right while seven students pronounced it as / ph /. One occurrence was found as / p / at word medial position. At word final position neither it was pronounced as / ph / nor / p / by any student but pronounced as / f / by all students.

The pronunciation of / f / at word initial position

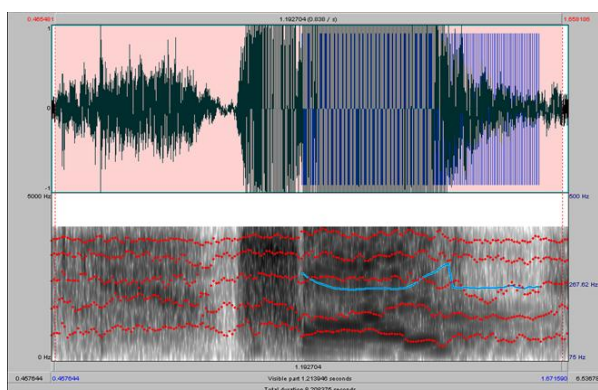


Figure 6: Pronunciation of consonant /f/ at initial position as /ph/ by Burushaski speakers.

The above spectrogram shows the pronunciation of / f / at word initial position by Burushaski speaker. At 0Hz it is vivid that the air from the lungs was not obstructed as it was observed in the figure 5. So it shows the actual pronunciation of / f / at word initial position.

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The pronunciation of / f / at word medial position

As in the table that was given above it was shown that how many students pronounced it rightly and how many pronounced it as / ph / and / p / at word medial position by Burushaski speakers. Now here the spectrogram is given to show the differences of each.

The pronunciation of / f / at word medial position

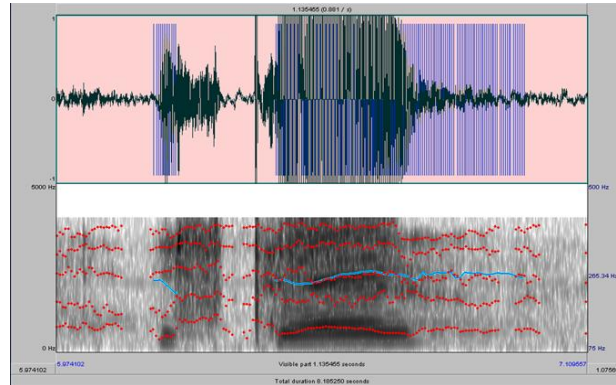


Figure 7: Pronunciation of consonant /f/ at medial position as /ph/ by Burushaski Speaker

The above spectrogram shows the pronunciation of / f / as / ph / in the word ‘sphere’ by Burushaski speaker. Almost at 120 Hz the blackest area shows the stoppage of air before the pronunciation of / f / as / ph /. Again here the air from the lungs was blocked behind the closure of lips then the closure was opened with extra puff of air which results / ph /.

Now below the spectrogram is given that shows the pronunciation of / f / as / f / at word medial position.

The pronunciation of / f / at word medial position

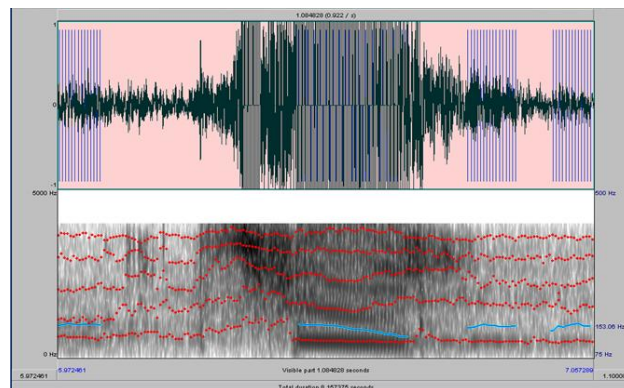


Figure 8: Pronunciation of consonant /f/ at medial position as /f/ by Burushaski Speakers.

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This spectrogram shows the pronunciation of / f / as / f / at word medial position in the word 'sphere' by Burushaski speaker. Before pronouncing the phoneme / f / the sound / s / has been pronounced as it is clear in the spectrogram. So the actual pronunciation of / f / is vivid in it.

Below, the pronunciation of / f / as / p / is given. This sound was pronounced by one speaker though the same speaker pronounced it as / ph / once in the same word.

The pronunciation of / f / at word medial position

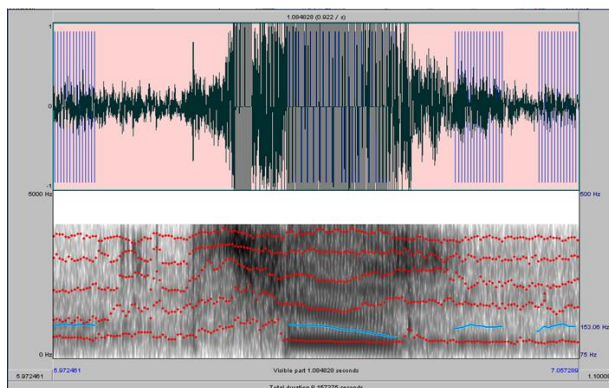


Figure 9 Pronunciation of consonant /f/ at medial position as /p/ by Burushaski Speakers.

This spectrogram shows that there is a complete closure behind the lips then the air from the lungs is suddenly opened that results the sound / p /.

The pronunciation of / f / at word final position

It was mentioned earlier that this sound was pronounced correctly by all participants at word final position. In the following a sample of spectrogram is given that will show the actual pronunciation of / f / at word final position.

The pronunciation of / f / at word final position

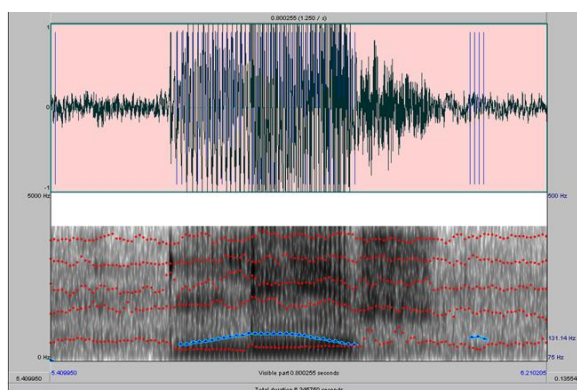


Figure 10: pronunciation of consonant /f/ at final position as /f/ by Burushaski Speakers.

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The pronunciation of English consonant / v /

The following table shows the pronunciation of the labio-dental voiced fricative / v / at word initial, medial and final position.

The pronunciation of English consonant / v /

Pronunciation of / v /	Number of occurrences by different speakers at different positions of the word.		
	Word initial position	Word medial position	Word final position
/ v /	02	00	00
/ w /	18	00	14
/ f /	00	00	06
/ eʊ /	00	20	00

Table 4: Pronunciation of English consonant /v/ at different positions of the word by Burushaski speakers

The above table shows that all the participants except one pronounced the labio-dental voiced fricative like glide / w / at word initial position. At word medial position it was pronounced as / eʊ / by all participants. In English language there is no any sound like / eʊ / but the Burushaski speakers pronounce like a combination of two vowels as first / e / then / ʊ / which has been given here as / eʊ /. At word final position seven participants pronounced it as / w / while three participants pronounced it as / f / six times. It was pronounced as / f / neither at word initial position nor at word medial positions but at word final position it was pronounced as / f / by three students six times.

The pronunciation of / v / at word initial position

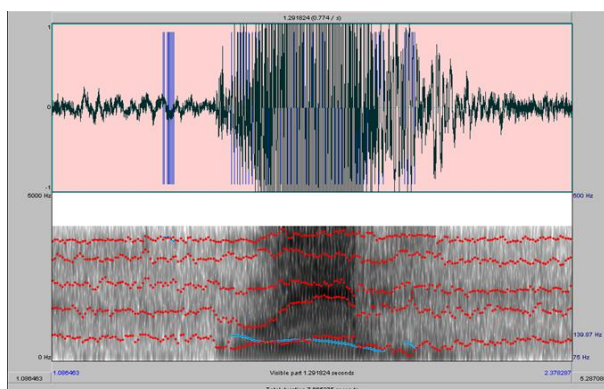


Figure 11: Pronunciation of consonant /v/ at initial position as /w/ by Burushaski speakers.

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This spectrogram shows the pronunciation of /v/ as /w/ at word initial position in the word 'van' by Burushaski speakers. Almost by the level of 180 Hz the blackest area has extended at a larger part of area as compare to at the level of 300 Hz to 400 Hz, this shows that it was pronounced as /w/ by Burushaski speakers.

The pronunciation of /v/ at word initial position

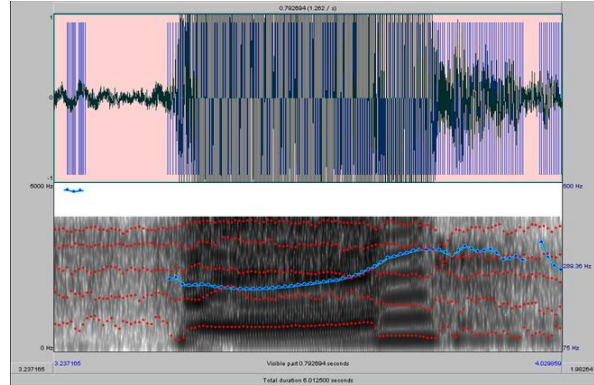


Figure 12: Pronunciation of consonant /v/ at initial position as /v/ by Burushaski speakers

The above spectrogram shows a complete difference between the sounds /v/ and /w/. The blackest area is here different from the figure 11 as it has quite vertical in figure 12. As it has already been mentioned that only one participant has pronounced it as /v/ but the same participant pronounced it as /w/ at word medial and final positions.

The pronunciation of /v/ as /v/ at medial position

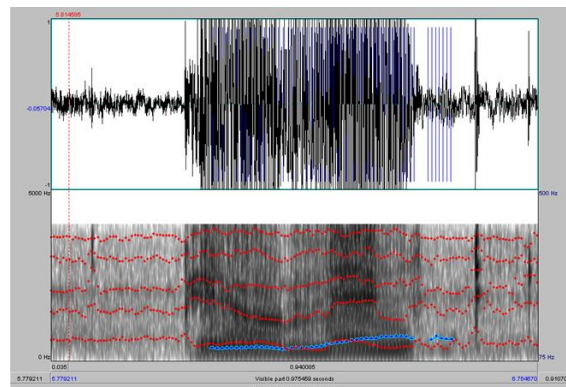


Figure 13: Pronunciation of English consonant /v/ at medial position as /v/ by Burushaski speakers

The above spectrogram shows that the pronunciation of /v/ at word final position as /v/ in the word 'pavement' by Burushaski speakers. In the spectrogram between the pronunciation of bilabial voiceless stop and bilabial nasal phonemes there is a complete sign of vowel

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sound. Though such a sound does not exist in English but it has been pronounced as combination of two vowels.

The pronunciation of English consonant / θ /

The following table shows the pronunciation of the dental voiceless fricative / θ / at word initial, medial and final position.

The pronunciation of English consonant / θ /

Pronunciation of / θ /	Number of occurrences by different speakers at different positions of the word.		
	Word initial position	Word medial position	Word final position
/ ʈ /	20	20	20

Table 4 Pronunciation of English consonant / θ / at different positions of the word by Burushaski speakers.

The above table shows the pronunciation of the dental voiceless fricative / θ / as a voiceless dental plosive / ʈ / at word initial, medial and final positions. All the participants pronounced it in the same way as / ʈ /, that of Burushaski not of English. It was pronounced not like the alveolar voiceless English plosive, but like the voiceless dental plosive of Burushaski. The following spectrograms of the pronunciation of this sound at different word positions further verify this observation.

The pronunciation of / θ / at word initial position

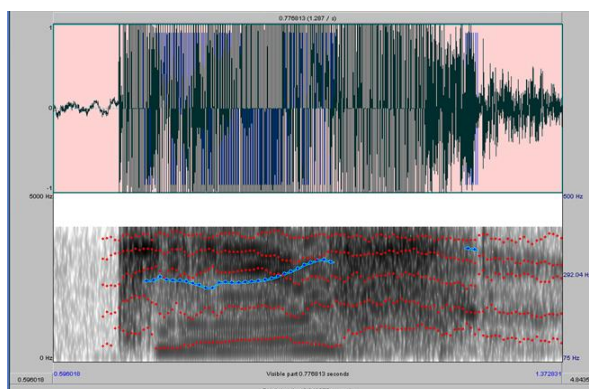


Figure 14: Pronunciation of consonant / θ / at initial position as / ʈ / by Burushaski speakers.

The above spectrogram of the dental voiceless fricative / θ / shows the pronunciation of sound as dental voiceless plosive / ʈ / at the initial position of the word. At word initial position the sound / θ / was pronounced as / ʈ / in the word 'thief'. The spectrogram shows it to be a stop

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rather than a fricative. The complete silence interval during the occlusion of the stop and the release burst for the voiceless stop is noticed from the spectrogram. There are no noticeable frequencies in higher region which shows that it is not a fricative. Burushaski has dental plosive, but no dental fricative, so English dental fricatives are replaced by dental plosive.

The pronunciation of / θ / at medial position

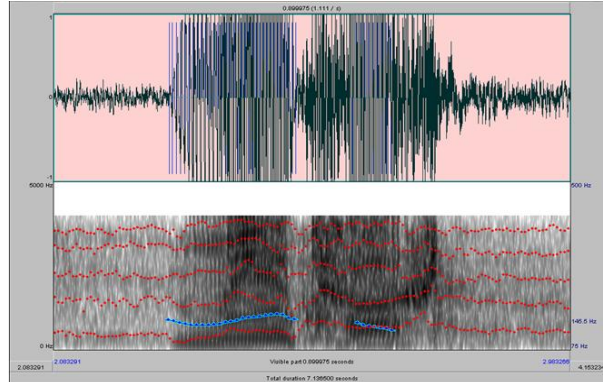


Figure 15 Pronunciation of consonant / θ / at medial position as / ʈ / by Burushaski speakers.

At word medial position the sound / θ / was pronounced as / ʈ / in the word ‘method’ by Burushaski speakers. The spectrogram at this position of the word also verifies it to be the pronunciation of a dental plosive. But again this sound is influenced by the sound preceding and following. There are no noticeable frequencies in region for fricatives.

The pronunciation of / θ / at word final position

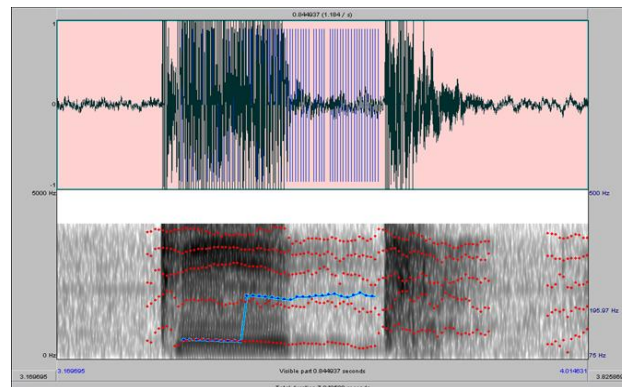


Figure 16 Pronunciation of consonant / θ / at final position as / ʈ / by Burushaski speakers.

At word final position the sound / θ / was pronounced as / ʈ / in the word ‘teeth’ by Burushaski speakers. The above spectrogram of the dental voiceless fricative / θ / shows the pronunciation of sound as dental voiceless plosive / ʈ / at the final position of the word. There is the same interval of silence and then the release burst of the plosives, which are noticed from the frequencies of the spectrogram.

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The pronunciation of English consonant / ð /

The following table shows the pronunciation of the dental voiced fricative / ð / at word initial, medial and final positions.

The pronunciation of / ð /

Pronunciation of / ð /	Number of occurrences by different speakers at different positions of the word.		
	Word initial position	Word medial position	Word final position
/ d̪ /	20	00	00
/ t̪ /	0	20	20

Table 6 Pronunciation of English consonant / ð / at different positions of the word by Burushaski speakers

The above table shows that the participants have pronounced the dental voiced fricative in two ways. They have either pronounced it as like the dental voiced plosive of Burushaski or the dental voiceless plosive of Burushaski. The sound at the initial position was pronounced as / d̪ / by all participants, but at medial and final positions not a single participant has pronounced it as / d̪ /. The sound was pronounced as / d̪ / twenty times at all positions by all the participants, all these occurrences occurred at word initial positions. At word medial and final position it was pronounced as / t̪ / by all participants. It was mostly because of the orthography of the words written with the letters ‘th’ which the participants considered to be the / θ / sound, which they pronounced as / t̪ /. But we considered this pronunciation to be an incorrect pronunciation and analyze these two pronunciations with help of spectrograms.

The pronunciation of / ð / at word initial position

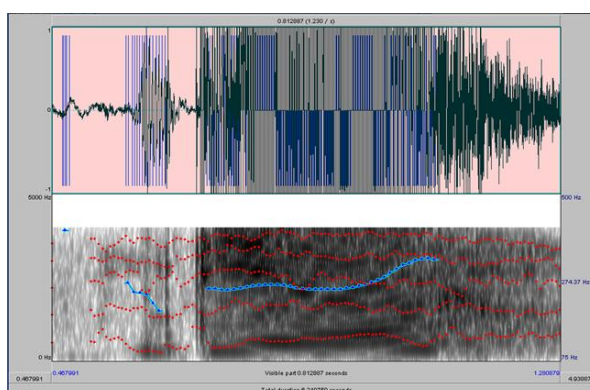


Figure 17 Pronunciation of consonant / ð / at initial position as / d̪ / by Burushaski speakers.

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The above spectrogram shows the pronunciation of the dental voiced fricative / ð / as dental voiced plosive / ɖ / in the word ‘there’ by Burushaski speakers. The silence interval during the occlusion and the release of the plosive can be observed in the spectrogram. The only difference with the sound of voiced dental fricative is the difference of voiced and voiceless sound. Here the release burst of the occlusion is not like that of the voiceless dental plosive. Burushaski has dental voiced and voiceless plosives, but no dental fricatives, so the English fricatives are mostly replaced by Burushaski plosives.

The pronunciation of / ð / at word medial position

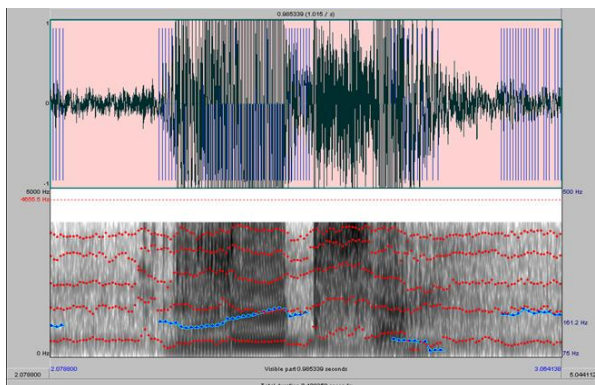


Figure 18 Pronunciation of consonant / ð / at medial position as / ɖ / by Burushaski speakers.

The spectrogram above shows the same results for dental voiced fricative as dental voiceless plosive by Burushaski speakers at medial position of the word. For testing the word ‘loathsome’ was given. There is a complete interval just after the vowel sound and there is complete stoppage of air and sudden burst that results the sound / ɖ /.

The pronunciation of / ð / at word final position

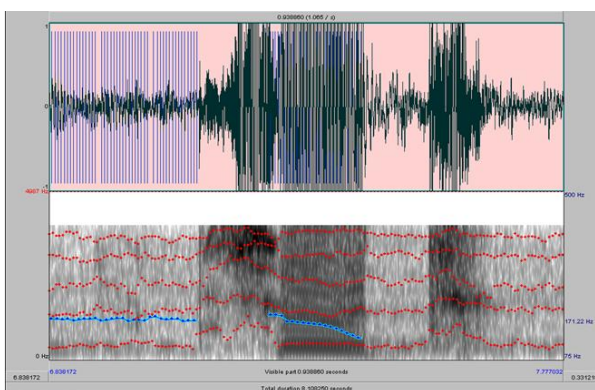


Figure 19 Pronunciation of consonant / ð / at final position as / ɖ / by Burushaski speakers.

The above spectrogram is the pronunciation of the dental voiced fricative at final position of the word. This sound was pronounced as / ɖ / in the word by Burushaski speakers. There is a Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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complete short interval just after the vowel sound and after that there is complete stoppage of air and then the burst of air is observed. In Burushaski there is dental voiced stops and voiceless but not any voiced fricative so they replace this sound with the Burushaski voiceless stop, / t̪ /.

Discussion

The study took into consideration those English consonant sounds which are not present in Burushaski language create problems for Burushaski speakers in learning correct pronunciation. In the study we observed that the Burushaski speakers replaced the English consonant sounds by Burushaski sounds having different manner or place of articulation, like the replacement of English labial and dental fricatives by labial and dental stops by Burushaski speakers. Most of the replacement of English consonant sounds was observed in fricatives.

The results of the present study indicate that Burushaski speakers had problems while pronouncing the selected English consonants correctly. This difficulty is because of the phonological differences of both the systems. That is why most of the participants have pronounced these English consonant sounds like Burushaski consonant sounds.

English palato-alveolar voiced fricative / ʒ / is pronounced as / dʒ / by Burushaski speakers though the place of articulation of both sounds is same but their manner of articulation are different. In Burushaski there is not any sound like English palato-alveolar voiced fricative except palate-alveolar voiced affricate, so, Burushaski speakers go for this sound. But the pronunciation of this consonant sound as velar voiced stop by some of the participants was because of the confusing spelling of the selected words along with unfamiliarity of these words for most of the participants. If the L2 learners are familiar with correct pronunciation of English, only then they can pronounce the sounds of the target language correctly.

The pronunciation of labio-dental voiceless fricative as bilabial voiceless aspirated / ph / stop by Burushaski speakers shows that there is no labio-dental voiceless fricative in Burushaski. At all positions of the words thirty four occurrences were correct in which twenty occurrences were correct at word final position while nine occurrences were correct at word initial position. Some different results were observed in the pronunciation of the labio-dental voiced fricative that it was pronounced as glide / w / at word initial position and a combination of two vowels as / eʊ / at word medial position by Burushaski speakers. Even this pronunciation as a glide was not like English glide, but the glide found in Burushaski, where the lips are not rounded. Because of this the labio-dental voiced fricative seemed to a noisy bilabial / w /.

The pronunciation of dental voiceless fricative / θ / as dental voiced stop / t̪ / by Burushaski speakers shows that there is no dental voiceless fricative in Burushaski language. In the same way dental voiced fricative / ð / was also pronounced as dental

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voiced stop /d̥/. At word initial position it was pronounced as /d̥/ by all participants but at word medial and final position it was pronounced as /t̥/ by all participants.

From the above discussion we have deduced the result that the Burushaski speakers try to pronounce the English consonant sounds which do not exist in native language with the possible resembled phonemes that do exist in their language as dental fricatives are replaced with Burushaski dental stops because these dental stops are more near to English dental fricatives than any other Burushaski sound.

Table showing the findings of the present study

Selected English Consonants	/ ʒ /	/ f /	/ v /	/ θ /	/ ð /
Pronunciation by Burushaski Speakers	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
	/ dʒ /	/ ph /	/ w /	/ t̥ /	/ d̥ /

Table 9 shows the findings of the present study

It is a universal phenomenon that it is difficult to learn new sounds because tongue is habitual of gliding for those sounds which are produced in routine but when there is a need of a new glide for the tongue it does not do correctly initially. So, it needs a regular practice to make it habitual. So far as the second problem is concerned, it is not that much serious as the first one.

Conclusion

It is evident from the above discussion that all the selected English consonant sounds were found to create problems for Burushaski speakers in learning correct English pronunciation. Because no two languages have the same sounds, either consonants or vowels, and when one tries to pronounce the sounds of the target language, he falls back upon his first language in pronouncing the words of the target language.

The study concludes that the English pronunciation of Burushaski speakers is affected by the phonological gap between the two systems. The incorrect pronunciation of the consonant sounds proves that the learners should take into account all the differences between the two systems, and teachers should give particular attention to those sounds

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which are problematic for their learners, like some of the consonant sounds analyzed in the present study. The similarity of L1 with the target language should be fully utilized, but the differences should not be ignored and special practice should be given to learners in terms of such sounds in order to bring their pronunciation more near to native speakers like in order to improve their overall performance in English language learning. The study suggests an elaborated and detail contrastive study of English and Burushaski languages. Other studies should focus on all the relevant elements in learning correct English pronunciation. The effect of the vowel sounds, syllabification rules and stress placement should be studied in detail to suggest overall measures for English language learning.

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