THE PROBLEM OF BILINGUISM AND PHONETIC
PECULIARITIES OF RUSSIAN SPOKEN BY THE KAZAKH

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents the results of a phonetic analysis of the segmental and suprasegmental characteristics of the Russian language of Kazakh speakers. It shows a general tendency for the variation of standard Russian pronunciation and describes dialect features specific for the inhabitants of South Kazakhstan, North-Central Kazakhstan, West Kazakhstan and East Kazakhstan.

The Russian language of the USSR is not only the national language of the Russian people but it is also a means of international communication. It is taught at schools and institutes of Kazakhstan alongside the mother tongue. The interaction and interpenetration of the two languages, Russian and Kazakh, result in specific features of the bilinguism /1/. From the linguistic point of view the main problem, in terms of bilinguism, is to describe both language systems, state the difference in them and thus predict the probability of interference. And we must bear in mind that the phonetic systems need not represent languages related to, or different from, one another. The degree of genetic kinship of two interfering languages is not the decisive factor for mastering the pronunciation of a foreign language, the most important factor being the peculiarities of phonetic realization of the sound systems of these languages /2/.

The present paper describes the characteristics of the Russian speech of the Kazakh inhabiting the Southern, Western, North-Central and Eastern regions of Kazakhstan. In this connexion, local phonetic features of native speakers should be taken into account. The first results of this kind of research appeared but recently, during the 1950s. New Kazakh linguists produced a number of monographs dealing with the problems of local dialects, dialect vocabularies, questionnaires, subject collections of scientific papers, the first volume of an experimental atlas of the Kazakh language, and other works. They all register and describe the characteristics of the speech of the inhabitants of a certain region; the boundaries of the expansion of these characteristics are defined and scientifically interpreted. Thus due to the painstaking efforts in gathering the relative data and its detailed description, the Kazakh dialectologists S.Amanzhолов and Zh.Doskarayev proved the existence of specific local characteristics in the speech of the Kazakh. S.Amanzhолов describes three main regional dialects in the Kazakh language, and he believes that the North-Eastern dialect is the basis of the modern Kazakh language /3/.

Zh.Doskarayev presents his own point of view based on the phonetic principle and he believes in the existence of two vernaculars: the so-called "Chock" vernacular (S-E) and the "Shock" vernacular (N-W). His classification gives no information on lexical or grammatical characteristics of these vernaculars /4/.

Sh.Sarybayev presents quite a different point of view on the dialect division of the Kazakh language. The research was carried out on all linguistic levels and the results made it possible to distinguish four regional groups of dialects: South, West, North-Central, East /5/. We believe this distinction to be the most convincing one.

The aim of this research, made on the basis of reception analysis, was to describe the phonetic peculiarities in Russian spoken by the Kazakh population in the regions mentioned above. Twenty native Kazakh speakers from each region were involved in the research.

The material of the research is a text prepared at the Laboratory of Experimental Phonetics at Leningrad University, containing 200 most frequent syllables of the Russian language. The text contains about 3000 phonemes in standard transcription. Sound duration is about five minutes.

The text is a story including monologues and dialogues, abounding in all kinds of orthoeptic difficulties. For example,
forelingual noise consonants have 538 realisations which fall into three groups: continuants (279), fricatives (241), affricates (118). As a result of the research, the positions of various degrees of reduction, both in the speech of native and of non-native speakers. The research was carried out with the help of native speakers from the regions where the students of the first and the fifth years, and on people at various institutes. While they were recorded they had an opportunity to see the text in a specially equipped studio on a "tape" recorder at a speed of 19.5 cm/sec.

Every person gave his surname, name and patronymic, the date and place of birth, qualification, profession, place of study or work. The data could be useful for explaining some phonetic peculiarities of the speakers.

After the reception analysis of the recorded material the results were divided into two groups: a) the speech of those who have a poor knowledge of Russian, b) the speech of those who have a good or medium knowledge of Russian.

The recordings were several times listened to and analysed. In accordance with the aim of the research special attention was paid to the analysis of consonants and vowels according to their segmental and prosodic properties, to the realisation of word stress and intonation. Minutes were taken of every recording and analysis of the Russian language were recorded, as well as all extra-linguistic deviations of the speakers and recordings and hesitation.

The reception analysis of 80 Kazakh speakers showed the following main peculiarities in stressed vocalic: in stressed vocalic vowel a we have a more open /a/ after a palatalised consonant insufficiency, according to which standard pronunciation a is an unstressed syllable, 1) Orthographic pronunciation of "a" and "a" replaces the standard literary "a" /"/-variants, i.e. there is no assimilation of /a/ at the pre-stressed position. 2) To pronounce the orthographic "a" in an unstressed syllable, the stressed vowel is pronounced as /a/ /"/-with the preceding consonant palatalised, whereas in the standard pronunciation we have /a/ /"/-with the stress and the preceding consonant insufficiency. 3) There is no assimilation of /a/ at the pre-stressed position. 4) To pronounce the orthographic "e" at the pre-stressed position in unstressed syllables, we get a front-retrograde /e/ /"/-with the preceding consonant palatalised.

Deviations from standard pronunciation of vowels are as follows: 1) The unstressed /e/ is pronounced as /e/, i.e. there is no alternation of /e/ and /a/ used in all positions of the orthographic vowel. 2) The palatal consonants are not palatalised. 3) The non-palatalised sounds before the /y/ are more open than it ought to be. 4) The back lingual voiceless /k/ is replaced by the labial-labial /w/ before the stressed syllable. 5) The stressed vowels nearing the pre-stressed syllables are greatly reduced; the reduction may be either quantitative (changes in volume of voice, reduction of the stress) or qualitative (even in the 1st syllable before the stress), but not both. 6) In some Kazakh regions, the rhythmical organisation of the stress is the most stable, regardless of the number of the syllables. Attention was paid to temporal and dynamic characteristics of the morphemic and syntagmatic stressed word.

The results of the reception analysis of the Kazakh speakers from different regions characterize the type of bilinguism. L.V. Shcherba introduced the term of syntagma as a minimal sense-group which is a phonetic unit of the Russian language as spoken by Kazakh speakers. The research of the Kazakh language as spoken by Kazakh speakers was carried out in the East Kazakhstan, especially in Semipalatinsk and Talgar-Kurgan, the post-stressed syllables are greatly reduced; the reduction may be either quantitative (changes in volume of voice, reduction of the stress) or qualitative (even in the 1st syllable before the stress), but not both.

Besides, a) In Chimkent, Kyzyl-orda, Semipalatinsk and other Kazakh districts, extra vowels are introduced in the words which are palatalised in the Russian language. The number of the syllables is decreased due to dropping some vowels. The description of various intonations is less important than the description of the segmental characteristics of the Russian language of Kazakh speakers. It is well known that intonation is formed on the basis of carrying information. It is essentially achieved on the basis of standard pronunciation and correct intonation. Wrong or distorted intonation makes it impossible to communicate, so, that /a/ and /e/ are pronounced as non-palatalised sounds before the palatalised /s/ and /s/ without any assimilation taking place. 2) Before the non-voiced consonants we get the palatalised /s/ and /s/ without any assimilation in the volume of voice.

Deviations in rhythmical organisation are as follows: 1) The word stress may be misplaced. 2) The number of syllables in a word may be increased due to an extra vowel introduced. 3) The number of syllables is increased, which is another specific feature of the Russian speech of the Kazakh population in that region. 2) In the East Kazakhstan, especially in Semipalatinsk and Talgar-Kurgan, the post-stressed syllables are greatly reduced; the reduction may be either quantitative (changes in volume of voice, reduction of the stress) or qualitative (even in the 1st syllable before the stress), but not both. 3) In the South and East Kazakh regions, the rhythmical organisation of the stress is the most stable, regardless of the number of the syllables. Attention was paid to temporal and dynamic characteristics of the morphemic and syntagmatic stressed word.

The results of the reception analysis of the Kazakh language as spoken by Kazakh speakers from different regions characterize the type of bilinguism. L.V. Shcherba introduced the term of syntagma as a minimal sense-group which is a phonetic unit of the Russian language as spoken by Kazakh speakers. The research of the Kazakh language as spoken by Kazakh speakers was carried out in the East Kazakhstan, especially in Semipalatinsk and Talgar-Kurgan, the post-stressed syllables are greatly reduced; the reduction may be either quantitative (changes in volume of voice, reduction of the stress) or qualitative (even in the 1st syllable before the stress), but not both.

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Very often the falling tune of a syntagmatically stressed vowel is not enough to describe this syntagm as completed; the after-stressed vowels in Kazakh speech are a little longer, there is no falling tone, sometimes we come across a slight rising tone, which makes the syntagm sound incomplete. It is especially common in the spoken Russian of the West Kazakh region. 3) There are two types of interrogative intonation in the text: the intonation of a general question and the intonation of a special question. There are also sentences which are special questions in form but they are used one after another and so the intonation of enumeration is used instead. For Kazakh speakers, the characteristic features of the intonation of a special question are the rising tone on a syntagmatically stressed vowel and the absence of a fall on after-stressed syllables, so the intonation of a special question may be mistaken for the intonation of incompleteness. As to the general question, the melody is also rising, with the tune usually falling over the last word in the sentence. The model speaker uses various interrogative intonations: the centre of a syntagmatic stress both in a special question and in a general question is not necessarily the last word in a syntagm, the syntagmatic stress is often emphasized by a logical stress. The Kazakh speakers seldom if ever use a logical stress. 4) The intonation of emphasis in the experimental text is represented by intonations of adress and apposition. The Kazakh speakers use the intonation of adress frequently, whereas they use the intonation of apposition extremely rarely. The direction of the tone on a stressed vowel is the same as that used by the model speaker but the dynamic characteristics of a syntagmatically stressed vowel are much weaker. Thus the reception analysis, on prosodic level, of the Russian language spoken by the Kazakh shows the following peculiarities: 1) The intonation of incompleteness is characterized by a falling-rising tone, with a slight rise or no rise on after-stressed syllables. 2) The intonation of completeness is characterized by a falling tone (in the West region, falling rising or rising) on a syntagmatically stressed vowel with longer after-stressed syllables and the absence of a falling tone on them. 3) The interrogative intonation is as follows: The general question is characterized by a rising tone on a syntagmatically stressed vowel and the absence of a falling tone on after-stressed syllables. The special question is characterized by a falling tone on a syntagmatically stressed vowel of the last word in a syntagm. 4) The intonation of adress is characterized by a falling-rising tone with a stronger emphasis on the stressed vowel. A study of segmental prosodic characteristics in the Russian language spoken in Kazakhstan may be of both theoretical and practical value. From the theoretical point of view, it helps to define the standard pronunciation, with dialect and regional variants. From the practical point of view, it may be used to improve the teaching of Russian in non-Russian schools.

REFERENCES