University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
Faculty of Education

TEACHER

International Journal of Education

ISSN 1857-8888

vol. 26
November 2023

University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola
Faculty of Education – Bitola

TEACHER
International Journal of Education

Vol. 26
Bitola, November, 2023

Publisher
Faculty of Education − Bitola

Namita Subiotto, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia,
namita.subiotto@ff.uni-lj.si

English Language Editor
Stela Bosilkovska, MA, University St. Kliment Ohridski, Republic of North Macedonia,
stela.bosilkovska@uklo.edu.mk

Technical Editor
Josif Petrovski, PhD, University St. Kliment Ohridski, Republic of North Macedonia,
josif.petrovski@uklo.edu.mk

CIP - Cataloging in Publication,
National and University Library "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Skopje.

TEACHER: Journal of the Faculty of Education – Bitola /
[Editorial Board Acad. Grozdanka Gojkov ...] Year XXI, No. 2 (2023) -.
- Bitola: Faculty of Education, 2023 -. - 29 cm., 65 p.

Unspecified

ISSN 1857- 8888 (online)

University “St. Kliment Ohridski“ – Bitola, North Macedonia
Faculty of Education – Bitola, North Macedonia

Address:
Faculty of Education
ul “Vasko Karangelevski“ b. b.
7000 Bitola, North Macedonia
Tel/Fax. ++ 389 47 253 652; 203 385

With the opinion of the Ministry of Culture no. 07-2699/2 from 15.04.1998, for the journal “Teacher” is paid preferential tax rate. In accordance with Article 20, paragraph 8 of the VAT Law (Official Gazette 44/99), for the journal “Teacher” is paid a tax of 5%.

The journal has no commercial nature.

Table of contents

University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola
Faculty of Education – Bitola

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

JUXTAPOSITION OF THE SOUND SYSTEMS OF THE ENGLISH AND MACEDONIAN AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR INTERFERENCE

Stela Bosilkovska
University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Republic of North Macedonia
stela.bosilkovska@uklo.edu.mk

Violeta Janusheva
University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Republic of North Macedonia
violeta.januseva@uklo.edu.mk

Abstract

A large number of studies confirm the influence that the native language has on the learning and use of English as a foreign language, especially regarding the correct pronunciation of sounds. Bearing in mind that the correct pronunciation of a foreign language sounds is one of the factors for successful oral and written communication among its foreign speakers and between them and the native speakers, in this paper, the sound systems of the Standard English (SEL) as a foreign language (EFL) and Standard Macedonian (SML) as a native language (MNL) are juxtaposed in order to detect the possibilities for interference, that is, the wrong perception and pronunciation of the sounds in the SEL, which consequently affects both the oral and written communication. The sample consists of the sound systems of both languages, which are juxtaposed by using contrastive analysis. The findings build on the results of worldwide research on this issue and show that the differences between the sound systems of these two languages do cause sound interference occurrences, i.e., the wrong perception and pronunciation of sounds in the EL, and consequently failed communication.

Key words: sound systems, SEL, SML, foreign language, native language, interference.

1. Introduction

It is generally known that when learning a foreign language, the sound systems of the NL and FL come into contact thus affecting the correct articulation of the sounds in the foreign language (Ellis, 1996). The differences of the sound systems of languages are barriers for many FL learners and speakers, and they only add to the obstacles to successful communication.

Although there are other factors associated with the correct pronunciation of sounds (Kenworthy, 1987), it is the NL sound system that is considered one of the most important factors which create conditions for interference. As Palmer states in his Grammar (1978), *it is the assumption that other languages will be like our own in their grammatical structure (as well as in their sound system and semantics) that makes it so difficult for people to learn foreign languages*. As a result of the differences between the sound systems and the influence of the mother tongue, foreign language learners face the challenge of pronouncing the sounds correctly as this is a condition for successful communication (Corder, 1981; Yule, 2010; Sriprabha, 2015; Rajan, 2018). Therefore, as Finch (1998) states, in order to improve the use of the foreign language, the one who teaches it must know the language quite well. In fact, grammar and vocabulary become useless if the learner cannot pronounce the words correctly (Harmer, 2000).

Hence, overcoming interference is associated with the role of the teacher (Corder, 1981) although many, such as Kelly (Kelly, 2000), for instance, emphasize that the teaching of sound pronunciation in class is neglected and instead of being planned, it is reduced to correcting students' pronunciation of certain sounds in class.

According to the above said, it is significant to juxtapose the sound systems of the English and Macedonian in order to detect the possibilities for interference, that is, the possibilities for the wrong perception and pronunciation of the EL sounds as a result of the influence of the the native ML sound pronunciation.

2. Broader research context

Numerous research studies have been focused on examining the role of the EFL learners' native language in the correct pronunciation of the English sounds. In this regard, Moosa (1972) examines the differences between the Arabic and English sound systems, and Pennington & Richards

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

(1986) indicate that Russian speakers transfer the rule of palatalization of sounds when pronouncing English sounds. Sajavaara & Dufva (2001) investigate possible sources of difficulties in Finnish pronunciation of English sounds. Hakim (2012) analyzes the pronunciation of certain sounds in English by Javanese students. The influence of the Nigerian language on the pronunciation of English sounds was investigated by Apeli & Ugwu (2013) and Hassan (2014) showed the difficulties that Sudanese speakers have when pronouncing English words. Hago & Khan (2015) highlight the problems of Saudi students in the pronunciation of English consonants. Roopa (2016) shows that there are many regional varieties of English in India as a result of the influence of the first language in a particular region and that many students do not recognize the non-phonetic nature of English. Dhilon (2016) discusses the influence of the Batak Toba language on the pronunciation of sounds in English. The problems faced by Indian learners in the pronunciation of English sounds are discussed by Reddivari (2021). Widiantari & Sahraw (2021) analyze the influence of native Malay on the pronunciation of English soundless stops. Shanmugasundaram & Jebakumar (2022) elaborate on the influence of Tamil on the pronunciation of English words. Abdominal qizi Abdullayeva (2023) examines the influence of Uzbek and Russian on sound pronunciation in English.

The English and Macedonian sound systems – from the aspects of both phonetics and phonology, have been researched by many linguists: the Standard EL by Jones (1977), and Roach (1991); EFL by Mihailović (1975); Siljanovski (1976); Vidović (1979); Filipović (1986); Bosilkovska (1999; 2002); the Standard ML by Kepeski (1946); Koneski (1967); Minissi, Kitanovski & Cinque (1982); Savicka & Spasov (1991); Bosilkovska (2015); and the differences between the two by Lunt (1952); Friedman (2002); Siljanovski (1976); Bosilkovska (1999; 2002; 2015); Kirkova-Naskova (2011; 2012).

Although in all the research papers of the afore mentioned authors the influence that the ML has on the acquisition and pronunciation of English sounds is mentioned, an all-encompassing and systematic contrastive analysis of the sound systems of these two languages, highlighting the sound interference occurrences, has not been found but in few research papers, i.e. in the doctoral thesis by Siljanovski (1976); in the research by Kirkova-Naskova (2011; 2012) and in the master thesis by Bosilkovska (2015) dealing with the sound interference that simultaneous interpreters experience when interpreting political speeches from Macedonian to English and vice versa.

3. Methods

In this research, the sample is represented by the sound systems of the English and MLs, i.e., it is a target sample. The determination of the sample is in line with the view of Dörnyei (2007), and Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & McKibbon (2015) on what represents the sample. The sample determination takes into account the researcher's judgment that the selected sample will provide various and rich apprehension of the phenomenon, which is in accordance with Yin's (2011) indication that the discernment is extremely important. At the same time, this sample is purposeful in view of Lincoln & Guba's (1985) claim that each sample is determined in order to achieve certain goal. The data juxtaposition relies on the contrastive analysis.

The qualities of the respective sounds of these two sound systems are juxtaposed as in isolated utterance, i.e., they are not analyzed on a phonological level regardless of the few examples given. The analysis contrasts the SEL as a foreign language and SML as a native language which imposes the necessity to have a clear picture of the similar and different sounds between them as one of the prerequisites for a successful acquisition of the foreign language sound system and pronunciation on the one hand, and for overcoming interference issues on the other.

4. Analysis, results and discussion

The division of speech sounds in the two languages is not the same from the very start neither in number nor in classification because of the non-phonetic nature of the SEL is non-phonetic vs. the orthography of the SML which is phonemic. SEL has alphabet orthography, i.e. 26 graphemes and 185 grapheme combinations for representation of the 44 nominal phonemes. Thus, it is considered as a language with defective orthography.

In the SEL, according to Jones' English Pronouncing Dictionary (1977), there are 44 sounds, i.e., 24 consonants and 20 vowels, out of which 12 are monophthongs and 8 are diphthongs. Among

University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola
Faculty of Education – Bitola

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

some Balkan ones who have researched the EL, the number of sounds varies from 46 for Mihailović (1975), who adds /w/ and /j/ to the vowels as well, to 49 for Vidović (1979), who adds four "consonant groups" /ts/; /dz/; /tr/; /dr/, and the glottal stop /ʔ/ to the consonants. Vidović (1979) includes another group in the division, namely the triphthongs, which some English and Balkan phoneticians do not highlight at all.

On the other hand, there are 31 sounds in the SML, i.e. 26 consonants and 5 vowels. And there are no diphthongs and triphthongs.

In both languages, according to the manner of articulation the consonants are divided into: plosives, affricates, and fricatives.

Yet, there is another division of sounds in both languages: plosives, fricatives, affricates, and sonants. The sonants of the English language, according to Roach (1991), encompass /l/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /r/, /j/ and /w/, and the Macedonian, according to Koneski (1967) include /l/, /ɫ/, /m/, /n/, /ɲ/, /r/ and /j/.

In the table below, following the IPA division of sounds, the English sonants /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/, and the Macedonian sonants /m/, /n/ and /ɲ/ are placed into the group of nasal plosives.

	E. oral plosives	/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/
	M. oral plosives	/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/,
	E. nasal plosives	/m/, /n/, /ŋ/
	M. nasal plosives	/m/, /n/, /ɲ/
	E. affricates	/tʃ/, /dʒ/
	M. affricates	/tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ts/, /dz/, /c/, /ɟ/
	E. fricatives	/f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /θ/, /ð/
	M. fricatives	/f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /x/
Sonants	E. lateral approximants	/l/
	M. lateral approximants	/l/, /ɫ/
	E. Approximant/tap or flap	/r/
	M. vibrant/trill	/r/
	E. semi-vowels	/j/, /w/
	M. semi-vowels	/j/

According to the place of articulation, the division of the SEL and SML consonants is as follows:

E. bilabial	/p/, /b/, /m/, /w/
M. bilabial	/p/, /b/, /m/
E. labial dental	/f/, /v/
M. labial dental	/f/, /v/
E. dental	/θ/, /ð/
M. dental	/t/, /d/, /s/, /z/, /l/, /n/, /ts/, /dz/
E. alveolar	/t/, /d/, /s/, /z/, /l/, /n/, /r/
M. alveolar	Ø
E. palato-alveolar	/tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/
M. palato-alveolar	/tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /ɫ/, /r/
E. palatal	/j/
M. palatal	/j/, /ɲ/, /c/, /ɟ/;
E. velar	/k/, /g/, /ŋ/, /w/
M. velar	/k/, /g/, /x/
E. glottal	/h/, /ʔ/
M. glottal	Ø

University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola
Faculty of Education – Bitola

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

According to the manner and place of articulation of the consonants it can be noted that in both the EL and ML, the consonants /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/ and /g/ belong to the group of oral plosives, and according to the place of articulation /p/ and /b/ in both languages are bilabial and /k/ and /g/ in both languages are velar. There is a difference between /t/ and /d/, though, as both consonants are alveolar in the EL, whereas in the ML they belong to the dental consonants.

Regarding the consonants /m/ and /n/, they are nasal plosives by manner of articulation in both languages, but according to place of articulation only /m/ is bilabial in both languages. As for /n/, it is alveolar in the EL, and dental in the ML. The English nasal /ŋ/, which is velar, does not exist in the Macedonian sound system, and the Macedonian nasal /ɲ/ which is palatal does not exist in the English one.

According to the manner and place of articulation, the consonants /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are classified as affricates and palato-alveolar in both languages. In the ML, there are four more affricates, /ts/ and /dz/, and /c/ and /ɟ/. In the EL, on the other hand, according to the division of English sounds by Jones (1977), the Macedonian affricates /ts/ and /dz/ do not exist, and according to the division by Vidović (1979), their equivalents would be found exactly among those four a/m mentioned sounds that he places in consonant groups.

The situation with the fricatives is interesting because /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, and /h/ in both languages appear under this classification according to the manner of articulation, but according to the place of articulation there are differences. The sounds /f/ and /v/ in both languages are labiodental. The fricatives /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ are palato-alveolar in both languages. The fricatives /s/ and /z/ in the EL are alveolar, but dental in the ML, which goes in favor of another interference with the English dentals /θ/ and /ð/. On the other hand, the EL fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, which are dental consonants, do not exist in the ML at all; so, the largest number of the Macedonian learners and speakers of the EFL unconsciously "pack" these consonants into their "brain drawers" designated for the oral plosives /t/ and /d/ which are dentals: /t/ thank ≠ tank; cloth ≠ clot; thrips ≠ trips; width [wɪdθ] ≠ wid. ≠ wit; moth ≠ mot; and /d/: loathe [loʊð] ≠ load [loʊd]; ≠; wreathe [riːð] ≠ read [riːd] ; writhe ≠ ride ≠ write ≠ rise; *worthy* [wɜːʳði] ≠ [wɜːʳdi]. Sentence e.g.: *Thrip* inconveniences happen on warm still summer days. ≠ *Trip* inconveniences happen on warm still summer days. You are not *worthy*. ≠ You are not *wordy*.

The fricative /h/ occurs as an equivalent according to the manner of articulation in both languages, but in the EL it is a glottal sound, while in The ML it is a velar, soft palatal sound. According to Lunt (1952), /h/ in the ML varies from a voiced, breathy /h/ to a voiceless velar fricative /x/.

The lateral approximant /l/ is alveolar in the EL but it is dental in the ML. However, it is interesting to note that Jones (1977) lists as many as three of its realizations in the EL: "… a 'clear' /l/ (with a front vowel resonance) before a vowel or /j/, e.g. in 'leaf, million'; a 'dark' /l/ (with a back vowel resonance) finally, before a consonant and as a syllabic sound, e.g. in 'feel, help, middle'; and a partially or wholly soundless /l/ … following stressed /p, k/, e.g. in 'please, clean'…". On the other side, Lunt (1952) states that the Macedonian /l/ corresponds to the English /l/ in the American English and gives as an example the word 'leap' which, in fact, refers to the 'clear' /l/. As for the Macedonian lateral /ɬ/, it does not exist in the English sound system, although some allophonic perceptions may occur.

In the EL, there are many different realizations of the approximant /r/, such as trilled /r/, tapped /r/, retroflex /r/, etc. However, the most common type of its realization is as an alveolar approximant. In the ML, by definition, /r/ is a voiced apical trill which functions both syllabically and non-syllabically. It occurs in the service of a vowel in the literary language, known as vocalic 'r'. In root-initial position, followed (but not preceded) by a consonant, /r/ is realized as [ər] or [ʌr]: 'pж /ərʒ/ (rye);'pŕa /ərja/ (rust). This situation occurs only at the beginning of a word, or in a very few cases where a prefix ending in a vowel has been added to such a word (Lunt, 1952).

The situation with semivowels varies in the two languages. Thus, palatal semivowel /j/ occurs in both languages. Yet, in the Macedonian language "...the non-intensive pronunciation of /j/ is the reason for the phenomenon that this sound, when between certain vowels, is sometimes perceptible and sometimes not at all..." (Koneski, 1967). These occurrences can help in the acquisition of some of the English diphthongs and triphthongs. Similar thing happens in the EL diphthongs which include a sound that is nearly identical to the vowel-like quality of these two semi-vowels in their pronunciation:

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

/eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /əʊ/, /aʊ/, /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/. As for the English /w/, which is sometimes a bilabial, and sometimes a velar semivowel, it does not exist in the SML (except in some of its dialects). The semivowels in the SML: /r/, /l/ /ɬ/ and /j/, defined by Lunt (1952) as its four semivowels, can also occur as semi-vowels in the SEL with the exception of /ɬ/. According to Koneski (1967) the sounds /l/ and /ɬ/ occur as semivowels only in some vernaculars.

From the contrastive juxtaposition of the SEL and SML the following pairs of consonant full equivalence are established according to the manner and place of articulation:

- The plosives /p/ and /b/ in both languages are bilabial;
- The plosives /k/ and /g/ in both languages are velar, soft palatal;
- The affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ in both languages are palato-alveolar;
- The fricative /f/ in both languages is labiodental;
- The fricatives /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ in both languages are palato-alveolar;
- The fricative /v/ in Macedonian and in English exists as a labio dental and does not initiate interference except in those words which begin with /w/ in which cases a great number of Macedonian learners and speakers pronounce it as /v/;
- The nasal /m/ in both languages is bilabial;
- The lateral /l/ in both languages is alveolar;
- The semivowel /j/ in both languages is palatal.

Furthermore, the contrastive analysis indicates the following pairs of consonant partial equivalence according to the manner and place of articulation, i.e. equivalent either by place or by manner of articulation:

- The plosives /t/ and /d/ in English are alveolar, and in Macedonian they are dental consonants and they may initiate interference with the other English dental pairs of /t/ and /d/, i.e. with the fricatives /θ/, and /ð/;
- The fricatives /s/ and /z/ in English are alveolar, and in Macedonian they are dental, yet, they do not initiate interference except in some cases where sonority and the phonemic quality of the MNL influence the EFL learner/speaker, e.g.: ice /aɪs/; eyes /aɪz/;
- The fricative /h/ in English is a glottal sound, while in Macedonian it is velar and can initiate interference when it is at the beginning of a word before a short monophthong or in final position, e.g.: hit [hɪt]; him [hɪm] her[həʳ] – especially when it comes to the weak form of pronunciation or the American pronunciation: US /hɝ:/ /hɚ/ /ɚ/;
- The approximant /r/, which is alveolar in the EL, in the ML is realized as an alveolar vibrant and cannot be said to initiate interference except when it is non-rhotic, i.e., silent when preceded by a vowel and followed by a consonant (barking /ˈbɑːkɪŋ/, horn /hɔːn/, turn /tɜːn/), or when in final position car /kɑː/, blur /blɜː/, sir /sə; *strong* sɜː/, sugar /ˈʃʊgə/. In these cases, Macedonian EFL learners and speakers are more inclined to the rhotic /r/ due to the phonemic quality of their native language;
- The nasal /n/ in the EL is alveolar, and dental in the ML, but it does not initiate interference.

The contrastive juxtaposition indicates the following consonants with no equivalent in the other language neither by manner nor by place of articulation:

- The affricates /c/ and /ɟ/ in the SML do not exist in SEL except as allophonic occurrences and therefore do not initiate interference;
- The affricate /ts/ in the SML does not exist in SEL, except as an allophonic occurrence when /s/ is preceded by /t/ and does not initiate interference. This example uses a glottal stop in place of the /t/ sound – the glottal stop is not used in SEL but it is used in regional accents such as Cockney and Yorkshire; and it does not exist in SML either; it does not initiate interference;
- The affricate /dz/ in SML does not exist in SEL except as an allophonic occurrence when /z/ is preceded by /d/ and does not initiate interference;

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

- The fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ in SEL do not exist in SML and initiate exceptionally frequent interference;
- The nasal /ŋ/ in SEL does not exist in SML except as an allophonic occurrence when in the Macedonian language it is followed by /k/ or /g/; it does initiate some interference, e.g.: Macedonian EFL learners and speakers perceiving /ŋ/ as /n/ as in sin instead of sing; ton instead of tongue;
- The nasal /ɲ/ in the SML does not exist in the SEL, except as an allophonic occurrence when followed by /j/;
- The lateral /ɬ/ in the SML does not exist in the SEL although the realization of the English 'clear' /l/ (with a front vowel resonance) before a vowel or /j/, e.g., in 'leaf, million', is often perceived as /ɬ/ by Macedonian learners and speakers of EFL. The London School of English even uses the same symbol to represent its realization as an approximant /ɬ/ next to the approximant /l/;
- The semivowel /w/ in the SEL does not exist in the SML. This sound initiates exceptionally frequent interference, and Macedonian learners and speakers of EFL often replace it with the sound /v/;
- In their speech realization, the sounds /j/, /l/, /r/, /h/ and /w/ appear as sound pairs of the vowels /i/, /iː/, /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɑː/, /ɒ/, /ɔː/, /ʊ/, /uː/, /ə/, /ɜː/, e.g.: /ɑː(l)/ and /ʌ/ calm/come; /h/ and /i/ hit/it; him /'im; /h/ and /ɜː/ call her/caller; herb (Br)/herb (N. Am).

Other possibilities of interference are found with the following consonants: /g/ and /ʒ/ as in rogue /rəʊg/ and rouge /ruːʒ/; dʒ/ and /ʒ as in message /ˈmesɪdʒ/ and massage /ˈmæsɑːʒ /; /m/ and /mb/ in lam/lamb (when preceded by /m/, /b/ is not pronounced) – which only adds to the argument that in phonetic languages the voice is also associated with an image, i.e. with its graphemic representation, which greatly adds to interference in EFL oral production.

When it comes to the vowels, we can immediately point out that there is a discrepancy in the SML versus SEL vowels: there are twelve monophthongs: /ɪ/, /iː/; /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɑː/, /ɒ/, /ɔː/, /ʊ/, /uː/, /ə/, /ɜː/; eight diphthongs, i.e., nine according to Jones (1977): /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /əʊ/, /aʊ/, /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/ and /ɔə/; and eight triphthongs: /ɛiə/, /ɛiɔ/, /aiə/, /ɔiə/, /auə/, /əuə/, /əui/, /əue/ (Vidović (1979), Roach (1991), and IPA in the SEL as opposed to five monophthongs in the SML. The sounds /j/ and /w/ are added to the group of monophthongs in the English language as they have both a consonantal and vocalic function in the SEL (Mihailović, 1975).

The larger number of vowels in the SEL indicates a larger number of SEL vowel qualities in contrast to the SML vowels. Thus, the SEL distinguishes vowels according to the vowel height (vertical position of the tongue), backness (horizontal position of the tongue), vowel's rounding (shape of the lips/mouth), vowel's tenseness (position of the tongue root), nasality (raised or lowered velum), and length (duration). In the SEL analyses, when describing a vowel, these qualities are listed in the following order: length – tenseness – height – backness – rounding – nasality.

The SML distinguishes vowels according to vowel height (vertical position of the tongue), backness (horizontal position of the tongue), vowel's rounding (shape and position of the lips), and vowel's tenseness (position of the tongue root). Although some prolonged utterance occurs (Savicka & Spasov, 1991), the SML does not distinguish long and short vowels.

In addition to the different number of qualities used to describe the different number of vowels in the two languages, there is a diverse description of each of the articulatory qualities of the vowels in the two languages. Therefore, for easier juxtaposition of the vowels in these two languages as well as for the sake of clarity, SEL vowels are described within the range of the articulatory dimensions of vowels specific for both languages. The tenseness and nasality are omitted in this overview because these qualities are influenced by the environment of the vowel.

Due to the said inequality in vowels number and qualities, the juxtaposition overview of the vocalic systems of the two languages seems scarcer than the one of consonants.

University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola
Faculty of Education – Bitola

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

ENG. MONOPTHONGS	LENGTH	HEIGHT	BACKNESS	ROUNDING
/ɪ/	short	mid-high	front to central	unrounded
/i:/	long	High	Front	unrounded
/e/	short	mid-high to mid-low	Front	unrounded
/æ/	short	mid-low to low	front|	unrounded
/ʌ/	short	mid-low to low	central|	unrounded
/ə/	short	mid-high to mid-low	Central	unrounded
/ɜ:/	long	mid-high to mid-low	Central	unrounded
/ɑ:/	long	Low	central to back	unrounded
/ɒ/	short	Low	Back	rounded
/ɔ:/	long	mid-low	Back	rounded
/ʊ/	short	mid-high	Back	rounded
/u:/	long	High	Back	rounded

MCD. MONOPTHONGS	LENGTH	HEIGHT	BACKNESS	ROUNDING
и/i/	/	High	Front	unrounded
е/e/	/	mid to mid-high	Front	unrounded
а/a/	/	Low	Central	unrounded
о/o/	/	mid to mid-high	Back	rounded
у/u/	/	High	Back	rounded
the facultative phoneme /ə/	/	Mid	Central	unrounded

It is important to note that a smaller inventory of vowels in a language initiates a greater mobility of the language vowels, which can be seen in acoustic analyses of the Macedonian language.

In addition, according to the length of articulation of the vowels, the situation between the SEL and SML vowels is obvious because in the Macedonian language vowels do not have long counterparts. Moreover, they are shorter than the long ones and longer than the short ones in the English language (Siljanovski, 1976), and their length is variable both depending on the accent and the contextual environment. The length of the articulation of the vowels in the Macedonian language is determined by the accent and according to Siljanovski (1976), it is a redundant articulatory dimension. Furthermore, the SEL vowel length must not be confused with the 'gemini' occurrence in the SML.

As for the space between the jaws during articulation, there is again a wide diversity in the description of English vowels in contrast to Macedonian vowels. Thus, this feature, just like the vowel's rounding, tenseness, and nasality, is rarely used for distinction during sound analysis (of these two languages), i.e., it is redundant (Siljanovski, 1976: 396).

The juxtaposition of the remaining articulatory qualities of the vowels of the two languages indicates the following situation:

- In the SEL high vowels are /i:/ and /u:/, and in the SML they are /i/ and /u/. In addition, in both languages, these vowels share the same qualities of backness, but not of length;
- The SEL short vowels: mid-high, front to central /ɪ/, mid-high to mid-low front /e/, and mid-high to mid-low central /ə/, can be juxtaposed to the SML short, mid to mid-high, front /e/, and the mid, central facultative vowel /ə/. Although the long mid-high to mid-low central /ɜ:/ is not included as a counterpart of the said Macedonian facultative phoneme because of its length, its articulation can be compared to the articulation mentioned in the a/m situations when speaking about the Macedonian 'p' /r/: 'pж /ərʒ/ (rye);'pŕa /ərja/ (rust) It is interesting that the Macedonian vowel /e/ can also be defined as mid-high, according to Lunt (1952), in given contextual situations, and according to Savicka & Spasov (1991), Macedonian /e/ and /o/ are generally higher than their

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

doublets in Slavic languages. This may be the reason for the frequent wrong perception of the English /ɪ/ by the Macedonian users of the English language, e.g.: /sɪt/ ≠ /set/;

– The SEL mid-low to low, front /æ/ and mid-low, back /ɔ:/ do not have vowel counterparts in the Macedonian language; /æ/ has no equivalent in terms of any of the properties of the vowels in the Macedonian language (except in the dialects) and the Macedonian /o/ is higher than the English /ɔ:/;
– Furthermore, the SEL mid-low to low, central vowel /ʌ/ does not exist in the SML, except as an allophonic occurrence of the facultative vowel /ə/;
– The English low vowels /ɑ:/ and /ɒ/ the former of which is central to back, unrounded, and the latter – back, but rounded, also differ from the Macedonian low, central, unrounded /a/ and the mid to mid-high, back, rounded /o/ as they are higher in the SML. On the other side, the English mid-high, back /ʊ/ is lower than the Macedonian high, back /u/ which appears to have the true counterpart in the English high, back /u:/.

The situation as presented above confirms the difficulties that Macedonian EFL learners and speakers have to cope with especially when taking into consideration the accompanying phonological processes and phonotactic rules (not analyzed in this paper) that their native language system has enrooted in them versus the same to be acquired with the foreign language use.

Besides, due to the fact that the SML has neither diphthongs nor triphthongs, some of which are often reduced to a monophthong or diphthong respectively, the numerous traps for foreign learners mistakes are obvious. Teaching and performance assessment records and evidence illustrate that the length of articulation of English monophthongs and some of the diphthongs is the most common cause of interference for Macedonian learners of the EL. By not distinguishing length in their native language, they tend to not make difference between the minimal pairs. With the phonemic quality of their native language, i.e., the orthography following the orthoepy and vice versa, it is easy to understand and foresee that the interference occurs not only in speech but in writing as well:

/ɪ/ and /i:/ as in: deep/dip; leap/lip; heat/hit;
/e/ and /æ/ as in: bed/bad; dead/dad; said/sad;
/ʌ/ and /ɑ:/ as in: cut/cart; come/calm; done/darn;
/ɒ/ and /ɔ:/ as in: cot/cought; dock/dork;
/ʊ/ and /u:/ as in: full/fool; pull/pool;
/ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/ as in: course/curse;
/ɒ/ and /ʌ/ as in: box/bucks;
/ɪ/ and /e/ as in: sit/set; lit/let.

Furthermore, the Macedonian learners' exposition to both UK and US English, and the pronunciation differences between these two generate even more frequent interference:

/ʌ/ and /ɜ:/ as in: courage (UK/US);
/ɔ:/ and /ɑ:/ as in: saw (UK/US);
/ɒ/ and /ɑ:/ as in: box (UK/US);
/ʊ/ and /u:/ as in: soot/suit (US).

Examples when the diphthong is replaced with, i.e., reduced to a monophthong, which happens when the first element is weaker than the second one:

/eə/ ⇒ /æ/ or /ə/ chairperson; /ɪə/ ⇒ /ɜ:/ dear; /əʊ/ ⇒ /ə/ protest; /ʊə/ ⇒ /ɜ:/ sure; /eɪ/ ⇒ /ɪ/ rainbow; /aɪ/ ⇒ /ɑ:/ my.

The obtained results clearly showcase that as many speakers of EFL worldwide, the Macedonians learners of the English as a foreign language experience difficulties as well when trying to pronounce the English language sounds especially the ones that are different from the native Macedonian language.

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

5. Conclusion

The results are to be used for further development of the research. It is significant to mention that the results of this juxtaposition give valuable information as they indicate the very sounds that create difficulties for EFL students and speakers. In addition, the differences presented serve as a starting point for acoustic analysis of utterances of the sounds in isolation and in words, i.e., in connected speech when most frequently interference occurs.

References

Abdominal qizi Abdullayeva, U. (2023) Mother tongue: The impact on English pronunciation. *Universal Journal on Innovative Education, 2*(4), 248–252.

Apeli, C. U., & Ugwu, E. N. (2013). Phonological interference in the spoken English performance of the Izon speaker in Nigeria: A product of systemic and interlanguage factors. *Afrrev Laligens, 2*(2).

Bosilkovska, S. (1999). English sounds formation teaching importance. *Proceeding from the Second National Conference For ELT*. Skopje.

Bosilkovska, S. (2002). Macedonian dialects and the EL. *Proceeding from the Symposium organized by British-Macedonian Association and Science and Arts Society*. Bitola.

Bosilkovska, S. (2015). *Glasovite vo angliskiot, vo makedonskiot i vo srpskiot jazik i mozhnata interferencija koja vodi do greshki pri tolkuvanjeto politichki govori* [The sounds of the English, Macedonian and Serbian language and the possible interference which leads to mistakes when interpreting political speeches]. Unpublished master thesis. Skopje: Filoloshki fakultet „B. Koneski".

Corder, S. P. (1981). *Error analysis, and interlanguag*e. London: Oxford University Press.

Dhilon Singh, P. B. (2016). Does mother tongue affect the English pronunciation? *Proceeding from the Fourth international Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation* (121–132).

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: OUP.

Ellis, N. C. (1996). Sequencing in SLA: Phonological memory, chunking, and points of order. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18*, 91–126.

Finch, G. (1998). *How to study linguistics*. Macmillan Press Ltd.

Friedman, V. (2002). *Macedonian*. (Languages of the World/Materials 117). Munich: LINCOM Europa.

Gentles, J. J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J., & McKibbon, K. A. (2015). Sampling in qualitative research: Insights from an overview of methods literature. *Quality Report, 20*(11), 1772–1789.

Hago, O. E., and Khan, W. A. (2015). The pronunciation problems faced by Saudi EFL learners at secondary schools. *Education and Linguistic Research, 1*(2). Macrothink Institut.

Hakim, M. A. R. (2012). An analysis of phonetics b, d, g, j, ʤ, and ð into English pronunciation for Java students. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2*(2).

Harmer, J. (2000). *How to teach English*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Hassan, E. M. I. (2014). Pronunciation problems: A case study of English language students at Sudan University of Science and Technology. *English Language and Literature Studies, 4*(4), 31–44.

Jones, A. C. D. (1977). *English pronouncing dictionary*. (14th edition, extensively revised and edited by A. C. Gimson). Aldine Press for J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

Kelly, G. (2000). *How to teach pronunciation.* Longman.

Kenworthy, J. (1987). *Teaching English pronunciation*. New York: Longman.

Kepeski, K. (1946). *Makedonska gramatika* [Macedonian Grammar]. Skopje: Drzhavno knigoizdatelstvo na Makedonija.

Kirkova-Naskova, A. (2011). Megjujazichna fonologija: Sporedba na konsonantskite sistemi na angliskiot i na makedonskiot jazik [Interlingual Phonology: Comparison of the Consonant Systems of the English and the Macedonian language]. *Godishen zbornik na Fiolоloshkiot fakultet, kn. 37* (259–275). Skopje: Filoloshki fakultet „B. Koneski".

Kirkova-Naskova, A. (2012). Megjujazichna fonologija: Sporedba na vokalnite sistemi na angliskiot i na makedonskiot jazik [Interlingual Phonology: Comparison of the Vocalic Systems of the English and the Macedonian language]. *Godishen zbornik na Fiolоloshkiot fakultet, kn. 38* (141–152). Skopje: Filoloshki fakultet „B. Koneski".

Koneski, B. (1967). *Gramatika na makedonskiot literaturen jazik* [Grammar of the Macedonian Literary Language]. Skopje: Kultura.

Lincoln, S. Y., & Guba, G. E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lunt, H. G. (1952). *Grammar of the Macedonian literary language*. Skopje.

eISSN: 1857- 8888
UDK: 811.163.3:811.111'342.3
811.163.3:811.111'344
DOI: 10.20544/teacher.26.05

Minissi, N., Kitanovski, N. & Cinque, U. (1982). *Fonetika na makedonskiot jazik – The Phonetics of Macedonian – La fonetica del macedone.* Napoli: Bibliopolis.

Mihailović, Lj. (1975). *The Phonemic elements of modern EL*. Beograd: Nauchna knjiga.

Moosa, M. H. (1972). *Difficulties of learning the pronunciation and structural differences between Arabic and English*. MA Dissertation. Texas: Library of Saudi Arabia, Educational mission.

Palmer, F. (1978). *Grammar*. Penguin Books.

Pennington, M., & Richards, J. (1986). Pronunciation revisited. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(2), 207–225.

Rajan, S. D. (2018). Phonetics and effective communication. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, *5*(12), 193–197.

Reddivari, M. 2021 Mother tongue influence in English pronunciation: Problems of learning English as a second language in India. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Cycle Research, 13*(9), 65–77.

Roach, P. (1991). *English phonetics and phonology, A practical course* (2nd ed.). CUP.

Roopa, S. (2016). Neutralization of mother tongue influence – its importance. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature* (RJELAL), *4*(2) 573–575.

Sajavaara, K., & Dufva, H. (2001). Finish-English phonetics and phonology. *IJES, 1*(1), 261–256.

Savicka, I. & Spasov, LJ. (1991). *Fonologija na sovremeniot makedonski standarden jazik* [The Phonology of the Modern Macedonian Standard Language]. MANU.

Shanmugasundaram, R., & Jebakumar, N. A. (2022). Mother tongue influence on English pronunciation: A case study in College Students. *Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers, 13*(4), 312–316.

Siljanoski, V. (1976). *Kontrastivna analiza na fonoloshkite sistemi megju makedonskiot i angliskiot jazik* [Contrastive analysis between the phonological systems of the Macedonian and the English language]. Skopje.

Sriprabha, M. (2015). A study on mother tongue influence in English communication. *International Journal of English Literature and Culture*, *3*(11), 296–300. Doi: 10.14662/IJELC2015.100.

Yin, K. R. (2011). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. The Guilford Press.

Yule, G. (2010). *The study of language* (4th ed.) CUP.

Vidović, V. (1979). *Engleski glasovi, naglasak, ritam i intonacija* [English sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation]. Beograd: Nauchna knjiga.

Widiantari, I., & Sahraw, A. (2021). An analysis of mother tongue interference in English pronunciation. *Journal of EL Teaching and Education*, *2*(1).