

## **Common Mistakes in Pronunciation: A Study of Mother Tongue Influence Among the English Speakers of Dakshina Kannada**

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A number of studies have demonstrated that the people of the district of Dakshina Kannada in Karnataka are prosperous, well educated, multilingual community. With the increased importance assigned to travel and tourism in the district, and a plethora of educational , especially at higher level, many people have shown a keen interest in the use of English in their day to day interaction. One important aspect of language which I tried to focus in my studies is pronunciation. Pronunciation can always be studied from two points of view: the Phonetic and the Phonological.

Pronunciation is one of the most common problem facing non-native speakers of English. Most of the Indians in spite of having a lot of job skills are not able to find a job in the western countries because of the bad pronunciation. One can realize the importance of good pronunciation only by visiting a dominantly English speaking country and talking to the native speakers.

As I have said earlier, people of different faith and language live in Dakshina Kannada in harmony and mutual trust. The influence of mother tongue and regional languages among the speakers of English is obvious. My interaction, with the people in and around the city and the students of various colleges, has made a note of the errors people commit while they pronounce some of the common words and sounds which are not pronounced properly are as follows:

### 1. Receipt

Most of the people pronounce this word with audible friction of the sound /p/ which is supposed to be silent.

### 2. The wrong use of /g/ sound instead of /k/ is found among many students and people. For example, the word 'maximum'

### 3. The following words are pronounced without using the /j/ sound in words such as, /students/ and /stupid/.

### 4. The use of nasal sounds is a problem for many of the speakers of the region.

In the following words all the nasal sounds are not used appropriately. The words are as follows:

- i. English
- ii. Restaurant
- iii. Anxious
- iv. Uncle

5. Sometimes people interchange /f/ with /p/ sound. For example:

- i. Instead of 'lipstick' people say 'lifstick'.
- ii. Instead of 'poverty' they say 'foverty'.

Wrong use of /r/ sound in the following words with audible is found among some of the speakers. Some of the words are:

- i. Girl
- ii. Surf
- iii. Bird
- iv. Daughter
- v. Sister

Interchange of /t/ sound with /th/ is found wrong the speakers of Dakshina Kannada. Instead of 'taught' they use the word 'thought'. Instead of the word 'thumb' they say 'tumb'.

Majority of the people are nto aware of the Allomorphs and their usage. They are not aware when the use /s,z,lz/ in plurals. For example: bus+s= buses, bush+us= bushes, pencil+s= pencils, book+s=books.

Let me also list a number of words that are not pronounced correctly by the speakers of Dakshina Kannada due to different reasons. Some of the reasons are as follows:

1. Peer group influence
2. Parental influence
3. Imitation of their teachers
4. Inability to catch the right pronunciation.