

BEHAVIOUR OF CONSONANTAL PHONEMES IN AN ADULT DYSLALIC

R. VAIDYANATHAN, V. V. ATHAVALE AND R. K. OZA*

1. Introduction

William Hass (1963) who has done the Phonological analysis of a dyslalia case of a six and half year old boy with normal hearing, and free from any Physiological handicap found the Phonemic system of the boy varied quite a lot in comparison with the standard English. In this article an attempt is made to bring out the consonantal Phonemic system of an adult dyslalic and is compared with standard Marathi. The vowel system of the patient is not considered since it was observed in screening articulation test that he had no defective vowels. Moreover vowels (McDonald, 1968) are produced by relatively simple articulatory movements.

2. The Problem (Dyslalia) Defined

Dyslalia can be defined (Ann Stewart 1968) as 'Defect of articulation or slow development of articulatory patterns including substitutions, distortions, omissions and transpositions of sounds of speech'. The articulatory sounds used in speaking can be accurately described through the science of Phonetics. They may be defined according to their mode of articulation, place of articulation and so on—

3. Subject

The subject selected for this study is an adult aged 23 years. The subject's mother tongue is Marathi. The Ear, Nose, Throat examination of his oral cavity is normal. Audiological examination shows his hearing is normal. He has no psychological problems.

4. Procedure

To arrive at the consonantal Phonemic system of the subject nearly 1000 words were collected and responses were recorded in a close phonetic transcription. Words containing the defective sounds in various phonetic context were recorded using a OKI tape recorder for further verification.

* Audiology and Speech Therapy Department, B. Y. L. Nair Charitable Hospital, Bombay-8-

5. Discussion

The analysis suggests that the vowel system of the subject is not defective. Most defects are concerned with only consonants. The consonantal phonemes of the subject were arranged according to their phonetic characteristic.

The consonantal system is comparatively simpler with the affricates being completely absent. Simple comparison of his phonemic system with that of standard Marathi (Kalelkar 1965) reveals that the subject's system lacks certain Phonemes which are characteristic of Marathi. The comparison is done in a systematic way below.

5.1 *Plosives*: In the Plosive series the subject has only labial and velar plosives both voiceless and voiced. Dental and Retroflex plosives are absent in the subject's system and they are substituted by velar plosives, the substitution being one of the characteristics of Dyslalia. It is interesting to note the strange behaviour of (d) when it occurs medially and finally. In the initial position it is substituted by (g). Medially the phoneme (d) which is phonetically a flap (r) is substituted by (g) in intervocalic position, while it is retained as (r) when it occurs as the 2nd or 3rd member of the consonant cluster. Finally it is substituted by the Alveolar flap (r).

5.2 *Affricates*: The Alveolar and Palatal affricates characteristic of Marathi are absent in his system. The Alveolar affricates (c) and (j) are substituted by velar Plosives (k) and (g) respectively. The Palatal voiceless affricate predominantly has the tendency towards becoming Palatal Plosive, while its counterpart is being substituted by velar voiced plosive (g).

5.3 *Nasals*: The subject has only two nasal phonemes (m) and (n) as against the four (m), (n) and (ɲ) and (ŋ) of standard Marathi. The Retroflex and Velar nasals are substituted by Alveolar nasal. Dental and Palatal nasals which can be analysed as the allophones of Alveolar nasal in standard Marathi are absent in the subject's system even at the phonetic level.

5.4 *Fricatives*: While the subject retains the Phoneme (h) it will be interesting to note the Phonemes (s) and (v/ s) have merged into a single phoneme viz. (>) which can be described as Post alveolar fricative.

5.5 *Laterals*: The only lateral phoneme found in the subject's system is Alveolar lateral (l). The retroflex (ɭ) one of the characteristic sound features of Marathi is substituted by Alveolar lateral (l) in the subject's system.

5.6 *Flap and Semi Vowels*: The two semi vowels which are found in the standard Marathi are retained in the subject's system. The Alveolar flap (r) is also retained.

5.7 *Aspiration*: Aspiration which occurs with all Plosives, affricates, nasals except (q) and laterals, semi vowels and flap behaves in a strange way in the subject's system. Here also the aspiration is considered only with reference to Plosives

and Affricates since aspiration with other sound categories was not observed. In the subject's system the aspiration was observed to occur only with (p), (b) and (k) while the subject has unaspirated (k), the aspirated (k') is substituted by (k̤). The other interesting thing is while the voiceless aspirated plosives such as (f), (t') and affricates are substituted by (>), their voiced counterparts are substituted by (g').

6. Conclusion

The consonantal Phonemic system of an adult dyslalia is analysed and is compared with standard Marathi language. The subjects system is found to be simpler than the standard Marathi. Place substitution is observed to be more predominant than manner substitution (Singh 1972).

Our grateful thanks to: The Dean, T. N. Medical College and B. Y. L. Nair Charitable Hospital and Dr L. H. Hiranandani Prof, and Head of Ear, Nose, Throat Dept., T.N. Medical College, for having allowed us to use the data and to present this paper in this conference.

REFERENCES

1. A. M. Ghatage (1970): Marathi of Kasargod. Indian Linguistics, Volume 31.
2. Ann Stewart (1968): Disorders of articulation in children, BJCD, Volume 3.
3. Eugene T. McDonald (1968): Articulation testing and Treatment. A sensory-motor approach" Stanwix House inc.
4. Muriel E. Morley and J. Fox. (1969): Disorders of articulations: Theory and Therapy. BJCD Volume 4.
5. Kalelkar (1968) : Marathi : Monographs on Indian Languages.
6. Sadanand Singh and Diana C. Frank (1970) : A distinctive feature analysis of the consonants substitution pattern. Language and Speech. Volume 15.
7. William Hass (1963) : Phonological analysis of a case of dyslalia : JSHD. Volume 28.