Developing Pronunciation

Learning Enhancement Team
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Developing Pronunciation:

‘I don’t like my accent’ Session Aims

— To find out about different varieties of English
— To discuss accent and identity
— To develop knowledge of the phonemic chart
— To practice speaking with more clarity
Target & Expectation

There are a number of factors to consider when thinking about pronunciation. For example:

- What is desirable socio-culturally?
  - Where/how/in what context will you use English?
- What is achievable physically?
  - What is your native language?
  - How does it differ from English?
- Think about aiming for ‘mutual intelligibility’?
English Pronunciation as a Global Concept

English is now widely accepted as an international language (some even argue it is the global language). With this growth has come a number of important considerations:

— Where is English spoken?
— Why is English spoken there?
— How does English differ in these places?
  • varieties, dialects, accents
— What are the ‘politics’ of English as an International Language?
— What is meant by convergence and divergence?
Kachru’s Circles

Inner Circle:
UK, USA, Australia, Canada..
Traditionally monolingual
‘Native’ accent

320-380 million

Outer Circle:
India, Singapore, some African countries..
Post-colonial
English as an official / second language

150-300 million

Expanding Circle:
China, Russia, South America, Asia, EU...
Learning English as a foreign language
Business English
Other varieties

100-1,000 million

Developing Pronunciation – “I don’t like my accent”
The Politics of Pronunciation

Considering the information given what do you think about the following important questions when discussing pronunciation:

1. Do you want to ‘lose’ your accent? Is it even possible?
2. How does your language represent you?
3. Who decides what is right or wrong?
4. What does ‘intelligibility’ mean? Why is it relevant?
5. Do we use the same language in every situation – how do we talk to our friends? A police officer? A doctor?
Pronunciation quiz

1. How many letters are there in the English alphabet? 26

2. How many sounds are there in English? 44

3. What is the most common sound in English? Schwa: /ə/
# Phonemic Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>monophthongs</th>
<th>dipthongs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>bat</td>
<td>ee</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
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<td>p</td>
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<td>map</td>
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<td>ring</td>
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</table>
Phonemic chart apps

- British Council
  - “Sounds Right”
  - iPad App only
  - Hear three words for each sound of the chart

- Macmillan Publishing
  - “Sounds: The Pronunciation App”
  - Android and iPhone
  - Hear one word for each sound of the chart
  - For a fee get practice activities
Teaching Accent and Dialect for Acting
Elocution benefits and techniques

Improving pronunciation:
- Use **whispering** to train your voice
- **Listen to accents you like** – listening is how you learnt to speak as a child, so use this skill as an adult
- **Imitate** a voice you like to help you become used to the sounds
- **Record** yourself over a time period to identify changes
- Use **tongue twisters**

Projecting your voice:
- Use a **pencil/straw** to develop sounds
- **Repeat sentences/passages** to help your voice become stronger and used to the sounds you want to improve
- **Sing!**
Tongue twisters

Why are *tongue twisters* helpful for accent training?

— Exercise the jaw, mouth, tongue and muscles to produce English sounds.
— Practice helps the brain remember how to produce the sounds which may be difficult/new.
— Practise with a pencil and when whispering help to build the necessary functions for sound development.
Tongue twister examples

What sounds do you think these are helping with and why?

1. A proper cup of coffee from a proper copper coffee pot.
2. The three grey geese were in the green fields grazing.
3. My father bought a Jaguar and drove it rather fast.
4. She received her picture of six eagles sitting on three igloos.
5. The women went swimming in the swift, deep river.
6. Does the criminal still steal political secrets?

Get more examples here or use the QR code
## Monophthongs

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<td>/ɪ/</td>
<td>/ʊ/</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>That</th>
<th>bus</th>
<th>can't</th>
<th>stop</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/æ/</td>
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<td>/a:/</td>
<td>/ɒ/</td>
<td></td>
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Practice using the techniques highlighted earlier. Does this make a difference?
What can you do outside of this workshop to help you?

Reading aloud every day action plan:

**Weeks 1 – 3:**
- Spend between 5 – 10 minutes a day reading out aloud from Facebook, Twitter, magazines etc.

**Weeks 4 – 5**
- Spend no more than 5 minutes a day reading out aloud from Facebook, Twitter, magazines etc.
- Spend between 5 – 10 minutes a day reading aloud from academic papers from your school at MDX.

**Weeks 6 and onwards:**
- Read aloud every day from academic texts, at least for 10 minutes.
- [Only use non-academic texts to give a break].
Other Developing Pronunciation Workshops

- Getting the small sounds right
  Individual sounds, the schwa, and word stress

- Timing and Tone
  Stress-timed speaking, and sentence stress

- “I don’t like my accent”
  Accent and rhythm

- “I don’t sound natural”
  Intonation and attitude

- “I can’t understand other people”
  Connected speech and its benefits for pronunciation
Where now?

— Need more detailed assistance? Book a tutorial!

— Want feedback on a specific section? Drop in to Get Your Assignment Ready!

— Want somewhere quiet to write, and get on the spot assistance? Try The Writing Space!

— Got a few quick questions? AWL Office Hours at [The Study Hub] are for you!

— AWL Open Workshops can be booked here!

  • Suggestions:
    – Using Your Voice Effectively
    – How To Give Presentations
Developing Pronunciation

Questions?