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1 Terminology

1.1 Phonetics

Phonetics is the study of all language sounds, how we produce and hear them. **Acoustic phonetics**, how language sounds are represented by sound waves, can be useful for technological and identification purposes, but **articulatory phonetics**, how we move the vocal articulators such as lips, tongue, vocal cords, etc, would be our main instrument when explaining language sounds in the classroom.

1.2 Phonology

Phonology concerns the rules (= generally accepted pronunciation norms) of a particular language, and its inventory of sounds. One rule of English is that it can have a **cluster** of three consonants as in, for example, *spleen*, *asks*, *risked*, but can't have initial 'n' or 'm' plus consonant, as in *mtoto*, the Swahili for *child*. Another rule, for many non-rhotic speakers (those who don't pronounce the 'r' in *card*, etc.) is the **linking intrusive 'r'** rule, which applies when one word ends in a certain vowel and the following word starts with a vowel, e.g. *Thelma-r-isn't here; no law-r-against it* (the word *law* ends in a vowel sound, despite what the consonant letter tells you). This may extend to *drawing* being pronounced as *draw-r-ing*, etc.

A Chinese phonological rule is that a word can start with an 'l' but not an 'r', and can end with an 'r' but not an 'l'. Korean words can end with an 'l' but not an 'r'. A Turkish rule is that certain vowels must harmonise with the previous vowel.

Korean has no /f/ phoneme, Arabic has no /b/ phoneme. Spanish has no /v/ phoneme, English has no /ø/ phoneme (as in the French *ceux*, 'those'). And as you may know, quite a lot of languages but especially the Romance (Latin based) ones have /i:/ as in *beet* but not /ɪ/ as in *bit*, hence the 'sheep or ship' difficulty. Etc.

Obviously, knowing your learner's L1 can be of benefit when teaching, but of equal or greater importance is your ability to hear errors, to ascertain the cause and to help your learner eradicate them. I believe a knowledge of articulatory phonetics to be essential for this.

2 Consonants

2.1 Externally visible

Only a few consonant articulations are visible, demonstrable. They include the tongue lightly touching the teeth for the 'th' sound, either the voiceless 'θ' /θ/ in *think*, *width*, or the voiced 'ð' /ð/ in *this*, *weather*; also the lower lip meeting the upper teeth for the voiceless labiodental /f/ ('labia' = lips) or the voiced version /v/. Diagrams of these articulations but especially of articulations made further back in the vocal cavity and therefore not demonstrable may be found in the popular pronunciation books and on the Internet; some also in this book.

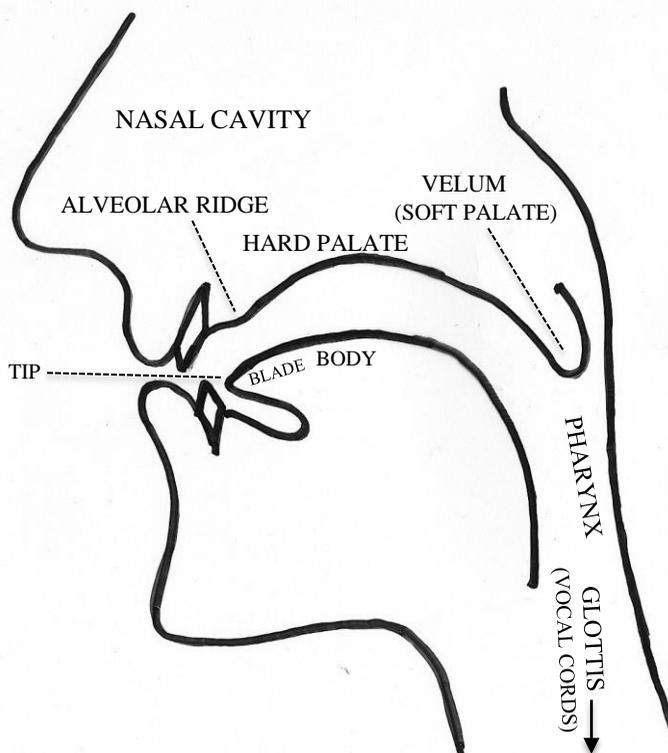


Figure 1: Main articulators in the vocal tract. Phoneticians use the term *front*, but I prefer 'body' for that part of the tongue behind the blade. Lips and teeth are not deemed to require labelling here.

2.2 Position of the velum; nasal articulation

In the above diagram you will see that the velum is lowered, allowing air to enter the nasal cavity. To notice the movement from non-nasal to nasal say *lightning* very slowly. For the ‘t’, the velum is raised against the back wall of the pharynx, blocking air entry into the nasal cavity while the tongue, pressing against the alveolar ridge and side teeth, blocks air from escaping through the mouth. Then for the ‘n’ the velum is lowered, air enters the nasal cavity and the alveolar nasal consonant /n/ is pronounced.

Many GA speakers nasalize vowels before nasal consonants, like the /æ/ in *tan*, *cram* or *bang*, or the /e/ in *them*. Portuguese L1 learners may tend also to nasalize vowels in similar contexts, but to the extent of leaving the nasal consonant, if it is final, inaudible.

2.3 Voiceless and voiced

- *Voiceless* is when the vocal cords are open, allowing air to pass through without vibration, and the vocal tract muscles are tense.
- *Voiced* is when the vocal cords are vibrating and the vocal tract muscles are relaxed.

For most consonants *tense* and *lax** work better for me than *voiceless* and *voiced*. That’s why I have underlined the relevant phrases above. Hear and feel the difference by saying the words below, slowing down on the underlined letters, while blocking your ears with your fingers:

voiceless (tense)

‘th’ /θ/

think

width

teeth

‘f’ ‘ph’ ‘gh’ /f/

safe/graph/rough

voiced (lax)

‘th’ /ð/

this

weather

teethe

‘v’ /v/

save

Instead of *save*, above, *saver* would be a better example for ‘voiced’, because /v/ and other voiced consonants become devoiced in word final position. Try it as instructed above for comparison.

*The standard terms are *fortis* and *lenis*, but *tense* and *lax* (or for Ss, *relaxed*), normally used with vowels, would seem more ‘user-friendly’ with consonants also.

3 Difficulties with consonants

Errors such as the Spanish L1 ‘gwould’ instead of *would*, the Korean ‘pine’ instead of *fine*, the Brazilian Portuguese ‘hacket’ instead of *racket*, etc, will be assumed to be correctable by imitation and practice. Most of the errors dealt with in this book are ones that likely need more than just the ‘listen and repeat’ treatment.

3.1 Voiceless plosives (/p/, /t/, /k/) – aspiration

On the consonant chart (page 11) you will see ‘plosive/stop’ in the first row. This means that these consonants can start a word/syllable (plosive) or end it (stop). In fact they can have either name regardless of their position but it’s good to distinguish them in this way for now. Apart from the glottal stop, which is not a phoneme in English, there are three voiceless plosives, /p/, /t/ and /k/.

English voiceless plosives in word-initial position are *aspirated*, i.e. said with a following burst of breath. Notice the difference between *pet* and *bet*, *tin* and *din*, *call* and *gall*. Many languages’ voiceless plosives aren’t aspirated and the difference between them and their voiced counterparts is made in other ways, but in English an initial voiceless plosive is always aspirated; if not, it is difficult to distinguish it from its voiced counterpart.

The typical way to demonstrate aspiration is to hold a piece of paper in front of your mouth and say *pay* and *bay*, etc. The paper should move on *pay* but not on *bay*. Have Ss try it. You could also put a superscript ^h after the *p*, *t* or *k* when you write on the board. Show (with the ‘h’) and pronounce an extended burst of breath after the consonant, slowly moving on to the vowel, then graduate to a normal pronunciation.

phh-ay phh-ay P^hay t^heachers more.

He who p^hays the p^hiper c^halls the t^hune.

Figure 2: Boardwork showing aspiration indicators.

Another technique is to have students say ‘hay’, for example, a number of times, then pronounce ‘p’ (not ‘pee’, just a voiceless ‘peh’) followed by ‘hay’, then move the two together.

3.1.1 Aspiration on the following letter

Many learners will pronounce *played* almost as *blade*. Again, lack of aspiration is the cause of the error, and in this case the aspiration should carry onto the 'l'. Correct the error by showing the word with a superscript 'h' after the 'l' as in *pl^hay* and pronounce an extended voiceless 'l' after the 'p'. Similarly with *cl^hean*, etc, if required.

Other second letters to carry the aspiration are 'r' as in *pr^hayed* (possibly heard, if pronounced without aspiration, as *braid* or *bread*), *tr^hy*, *cr^haft*, and 'w' as in *kw^hality* (*quality*). But as we maintain throughout, there's no need to base a lesson on 'suspected' difficulties. Wait to hear the error before correcting it!

3.1.2 Position dictates aspiration

We have said that voiceless plosives (/p/, /t/, /k/) are aspirated in word initial position, but in fact the aspiration occurs when they are in stressed syllable initial position:

P^hease pr^hay for the dep^harted.

Because *-part-* is the stressed syllable in *departed* above, the 'p' is aspirated (I mark stressed syllables on the board with an accent).

Voiceless plosives have little or no aspiration when in unstressed syllable initial position, e.g. the 't' in *dep^harted* above (or note the difference between the two 't's in *tótal*) or the 'p' in /ɪn'sɪpɪd/ (dictionaries show primary stress with a preceding apostrophe). They are unaspirated following an 's', e.g. in *spell, mistake, discover*, etc.

3.1.3 'p' and 'b' highlighted

I have focused more on the 'p' and 'b' than the other pairs of plosives, because 1) more words begin with the letters in this pair, and 2) Arabic doesn't have two bilabial plosives ('p' and 'b'), just the one, close to the English 'p' but never aspirated; and some other languages don't have the same distinction between their labial plosives as English does.

I have seen the written work of Arabic L1 students contain errors like *We rowed the poat*, proving that the teaching of correct phonemic pronunciation would also help the listening skill and ultimately the writing skill, a point often overlooked in discussions on pronunciation teaching.

3.2 The 'l' and 'r' difficulty

3.2.1 L1 phonological rules

Phonological rules concerning the distribution of [l] and [r] in three Oriental languages are (roughly stated):

Chinese can start a word with an 'l' but not an 'r', and can end a word with an 'r' but not an 'l'. (There is an initial 'r' but it's not the same as the English 'r', being a fricative /ʒ/.)

Korean has a similar constraint but mainly in reverse, i.e. a word can end with an 'l' but not an 'r'; a small number of words start with 'r', none with 'l'. (To be precise, both the 'l' and 'r' sounds are represented by the same letter, which is pronounced either way according to the environment; this includes like a flapped 'r' between vowels and like an 'l' before a consonant.)

Japanese has an 'in-between' sound for both, but more like an 'l' initially and an 'r' between vowels. It doesn't occur finally.

3.2.2 Articulation – drawing is often best

When a student pronounces 'l' instead of 'r' they are holding the blade of their tongue in contact with the alveolar ridge instead of just raising it towards but not touching the post-alveolar area (pronounce 'l' and 'r' yourself and feel the movement of the tongue). See figure 1 on page 9 and figures 3 and 4 on the following page for elucidation on these terms and articulations. Also read 3.2.3 and 3.2.4.

Use visuals to help students become aware of problem articulations. You can point to these while doing intensive practice routines such as minimal pairs (see 3.2.6-7). Using board drawings is much faster and less hassle than making photocopies or fussing with projector and equipment. It also engages students – you can elicit as you draw.

So, to work:

Just start drawing from the nose and follow to the end of the hard palate; there's usually no need to continue on to the velum (soft palate) or draw the back wall of the pharynx. Then start the lower part from the lower teeth, moving to the left and finishing with the chin. Finally, draw the tongue in its correct position for the phoneme, ideally using a different colour marker or chalk. After a few tries you will be able to do this in seconds, earning major respect from your students.

3.2.3 Articulation of /l/

The blade of the tongue makes contact with the alveolar ridge (the ridge behind the upper teeth). The sides of the tongue are brought in (indicated by the dotted line) to let the air escape laterally. Try pronouncing 'atl' of *at least* slowly to perceive this – the 't' stops air front and sides, then there is a 'lateral release' of the air.

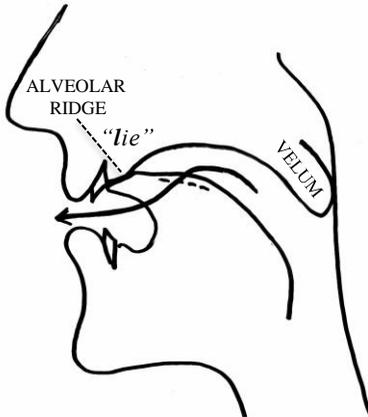


Figure 3: Articulation of /l/.

3.2.4 Articulation of /r/

The tip of the tongue is raised to the post-alveolar region, but doesn't touch it. With some speakers it may be brought further back in a retroflex action. The back rims of the tongue are in contact with the upper molars, otherwise there is no impedence of air. The central part of the tongue is 'hollowed'.

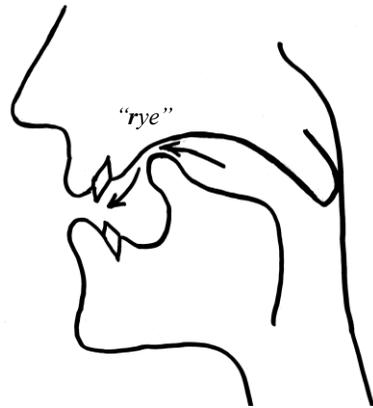


Figure 4: Articulation of /r/.

3.2.5 Clear 'l' and dark 'l'

In GB the 'l' tends to be 'clear', with the back of the tongue low, as in *live, filly* (before a vowel), or 'dark', with the back of the tongue high, as in *bill, film* (word final or before a consonant). However, GA, ScotE and AuE speakers generally prefer the dark 'l' for all positions, while IrE and West Indian English speakers prefer the clear 'l' likewise.

3.6 Past tense forms

Past tense pronunciations are easily shown on the board. As you know, words ending in ‘t’ or ‘d’ have a pronounced /-id/ ending in the past tense form, which you may show as **want-wantid**, **land-landid**, etc.

Then the other words require special treatment. I put a large ‘T’ after voiceless consonants and ‘D’ after voiced ones, e.g.

final voiceless consonant	final voiced consonant
<i>skip</i> – <i>skipT</i>	<i>rob</i> – <i>robbD</i>
<i>miss</i> – <i>missT</i>	<i>cause</i> – <i>cauzD</i>
<i>risk</i> – <i>riskT</i>	<i>beg</i> – <i>beggD</i>
<i>fetch</i> – <i>fetchT</i>	<i>cage</i> – <i>cageD*</i>
<i>crash</i> – <i>crashT</i>	-

*Sometimes it's necessary to retain the ‘e’ to avoid presenting the word with a new pronunciation, like ‘cagd’.

The table above is for presentation here only; this technique is assumed to be used for correcting errors as they arise. If, however, a pronunciation lesson in past tense endings is earnestly requested by your students then you should oblige, but it would be vital to include meaningful sentences (*I ~~missed~~ missT you during the holidays*), showing the normally spelled version of the focus word minimized and/or crossed out, situated ideally above the adjusted version. When drilling, gesture with clenched fists for the voiceless ‘T’ and with a calming gesture (palms downward) for the voiced ‘D’.

When correcting a past tense form error stay with the consonant concerned, voiceless and voiced version if you like, but no other; the student may not like being ushered into an unrequested ‘lesson’ covering other consonants.

3.7 Cats, dogs and horses

Another example of ‘voiceless/voiced’ assimilation (see 4.2) is with the appended ‘s’. Observe: **cats**, **laps**, **bucks**, but **dogz**, **labz**, **bugz**.

And then for ease of pronunciation, **horsiz** (and **washiz**, **switchiz**, **foxiz**), which mirrors **wantid**, above. There’s no need to go into further detail here – what you need to do is listen out for errors and show and practise the correct form.

4 Connected speech

4.1 Same or similar consonants

Gas station is often pronounced, especially by Spanish L1 students, as *gas-estation*. Write and drill as **gass** station then **gasstation**. Likewise, to cure the habit of stopping between words like *won't tell*, show and drill **won'tell** – the (brief) glottal stop generally interests students.

Again, unify and stretch the appropriate joining sounds in *serve five*, *lip balm*, etc, and show the glottal stop in *won't do*, *can't tell*, etc.

4.2 Assimilation

A sound can take on an aspect of an adjacent sound. For example, at normal speaking speed, *ten people* will be pronounced as *tempeople*, the 'n' preparing for the bilabial aspect of the 'p'. *Ban kissing* can be heard as *bang kissing*. Internally, *batman* becomes *babman*, etc. Also, the voiced /v/ in *have to* becomes voiceless /f/, so when you hear a delay between *have* and *to* drill *haffta* or suchlike.

4.3 Elision

Some sounds become elided, lost, for example the 'd' in *wind down* (*wine down?*), *held tight* (*hell tight?*), *robbed jewellery* (*rob jewellery?*). Intensive listening exercises (dictation, dictogloss) often reveal difficulties with elision and other aspects of connected speech; carefully monitor, correct and drill. Beyond such 'hot' corrections there is little need for formal pronunciation lessons in this area.

4.4 Consonant 'hopping'

When one word ends in a consonant and the following word starts with a vowel, like *an apple*, *switched on*, *big old*, the consonant will be attracted to the vowel, i.e. the sound of the aforementioned is *a-napple*, *switch-don*, *bi(g)-gold*. There is a tendency among certain learners to insert a glottal stop, even an 'h' between the words ("an happle"). The glottal stop may mistakenly lend emphasis to the following word, or just sound awkward, whereas the 'h' may cause the creation of an unintended word. This can be corrected with practice accompanied by visual assistance like that in the boardwork shown below. Drill *napple* then *anapple*, drill *don* then *switchdon* and similar.

A nāpple = dāy keeps the dōctō rōway.

Figure 8: Two examples of *catenation*, what I call ‘consonant hopping’. The second example may be known as *linking ‘r’*. Note smaller size of the schwa. Stress marking and (rising-) falling final intonation line are included.

Be careful not to over-apply these strategies. For example *not old* may appear to be a candidate for similar treatment, but rewritten as *not-told* it would contain a phonological misrepresentation, because the plosive /t/ (and the other voiceless plosives /p/ and /k/) are normally fully aspirated (see 3.1) when in word initial position, e.g. in *told*, which is not the case here. If correction is required (of “stop-e-over”, “not-e-?old”, “break-hup”, etc.) ensure that the linkage is made with an unaspirated /p/t/k/ or in the case of /t/ an alveolar tap [t̬] (see 1.3).

4.5 Vowel to vowel: linking [j]

When one word ends in a high front vowel (‘ee’ sound) and the following word starts with a vowel, there is a short linking [j] (this consonant glide is the ‘y’ in *you* or the first sound in *useful* or the letter ‘u’ – see pages 11 and 12). Hence *tee off* should be shown and drilled as *tee-yoff*, *many ancient buildings* as *many-yancient buildings*, etc. (see figure 9 below). This should rectify the error of inserting a glottal stop or ‘h’ between the words.

4.6 Vowel to vowel: linking [w]

When one word ends in a rounded vowel (‘o’ or ‘u’ type) and the following word starts with a vowel, there is a short linking [w]. Hence *are you in tonight*, *blue ice cream*, *who are you* and similar should be shown and drilled as *Are youwin tonight*, *bluewice cream*, *whoware you*. This should rectify the error of inserting a glottal stop or ‘h’ between the words.

Don't cry^y over spill milk.
blue^w ice cream

Figure 9: Boardwork for vowel-to-vowel linking.

There are many other difficulties with consonants. We don't have enough space to deal with them, but we hope that having read the above you will be better able to identify errors and help your students correct them.

5.5 All monophthongs on the vowel chart(s)

All the English monophthongs (pure/single vowels – not diphthongs) are represented on the vowel charts below. Lip rounded vowels have adjacent visuals (only the second member of /əʊ/ is rounded).

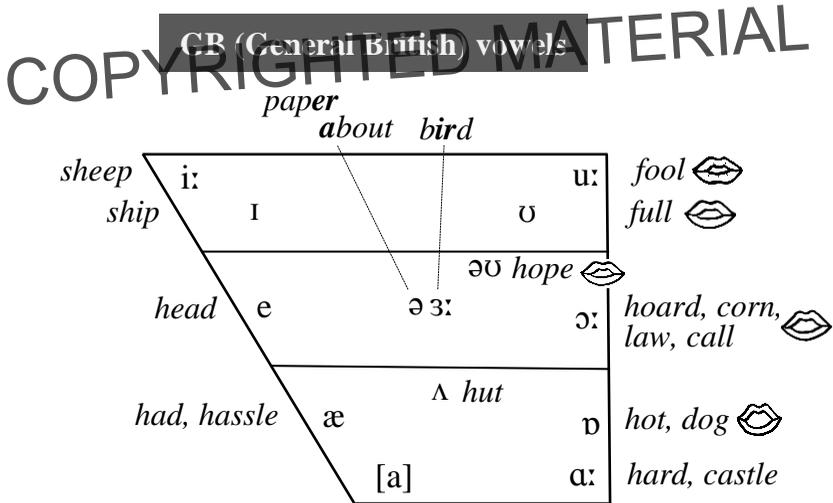


Figure 15: Vowel chart of GB monophthongs. One diphthong, /əʊ/ as in *hope*, is included for comparison purposes (see 5.8).

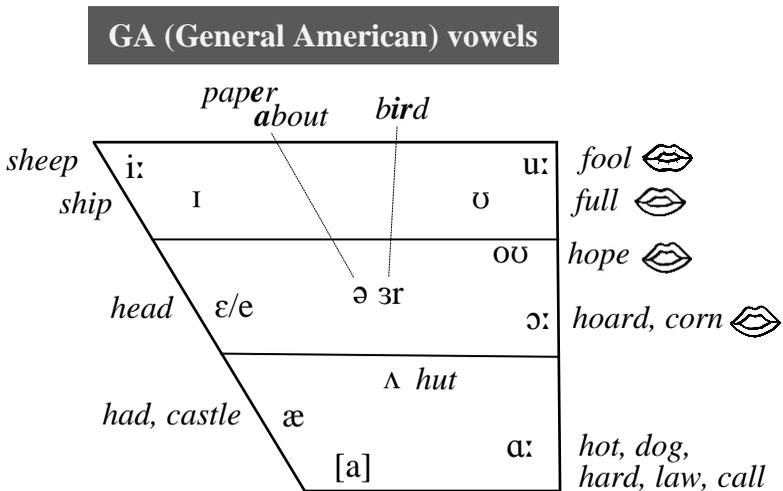


Figure 16: Vowel chart of GA monophthongs. One diphthong, /oʊ/ as in *hope*, is included for comparison purposes (see 5.8).

For the vowel in *bird*, etc, you may see /ɜ:r/ or /ər/ or even /ə/ used instead of /ɜr/. The symbol /ə/ represents the simultaneous pronunciation of schwa + ‘r’, which is known as an ‘r-coloured vowel’.

5.8 Diphthongs

Diphthongs are pronounced by moving from one monophthong position to another. They form the vocalic element of one syllable.

Most accents	GB	GA
/eɪ/ male, mail, bay, great, veil	/əʊ/ no, sew, soap, soul	/oʊ/
/aɪ/ I, eye, fine, sign, sigh, buy	/ɪə/ dear, deer, pier	/ɪr/
/ɔɪ/ boy, oil	/eə/ pair, pear, where	/er/
/aʊ/ house, how	/ʊə/ tour, ensure, boor	/ʊr/

Here are five diphthongs as they might appear on a vowel chart:

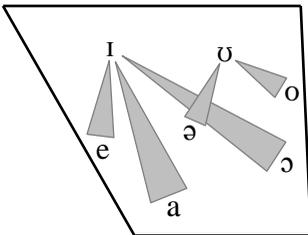


Figure 17: Diphthongs as in *bay* /beɪ/, *buy* /baɪ/, *boy* /bɔɪ/ and *beau* /bəʊ/ or in GA /boʊ/. Start and end positions of diphthongs may be a little different from their monophthong values.

There are just a few widely-heard diphthong variants:

AuE /eɪ/ is pronounced as /aɪ/ (*race* sounds like ‘*rice*’) and

/aɪ/ is pronounced (roughly) as /aə/ (*rice* sounds like ‘*raw-ess*’);

Canadian and IrE /aʊ/ is pronounced in certain positions as /ʌʊ/ or /əʊ/ (*house* /haus/ sounds like ‘*heh-ouse*’).

5.9 Hear phonemes and more online

If you wish to hear phonemes as you see them on a chart you can go online, either to one of the major ELT publishers (search with their name and ‘pronunciation chart’) or Youtube (search ‘phonetic chart’ etc.). To compare British and American pronunciations you can use online dictionaries. There are also apps which can record and assess your pronunciation.

6 Difficulties with vowels

6.1 /i:/ as in *sheep* and /ɪ/ as in *ship*

Again take a look at the position of the tongue for the vowel /i:/ as in *sheep*, *machine*, and now also for /ɪ/ as in *ship*, *result*.

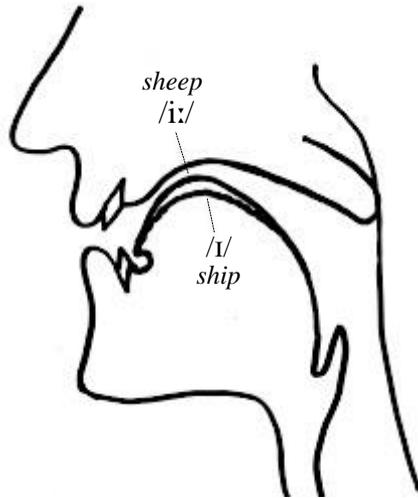


Figure 18: Articulation of /i:/ and /ɪ/.

For the pronunciation of /i:/ as in *sheep*:

1. The tongue (body, not tip) is high and towards the front – so close to the palate that there may be some friction.
2. The tongue is tense.
3. The sound is long (indicated by the colon after the ‘i’).
4. The lips are spread.

For the pronunciation of /ɪ/ as in *ship*:

1. The tongue is a little lower than for /i:/ and towards the centre.
2. The tongue is relaxed (I draw the tongue with a wavy line to suggest this – see figure 18). The technical term is *lax*.
3. The sound is short.
4. The lips are loosely spread.

6.6 Diphthongs: lack of prominence on first element

Most English diphthongs are pronounced with more prominence on the first element than the second. So, *fate* /feɪt/ is pronounced something like FAYt, not fayEET. Chinese doesn't have this distinction, consequently learners will first pronounce *fate* somewhat like *feet*, etc. Listen out, show the phoneme in the diphthong, in this case something like *féɪt*, and practise it with exaggerated prominence on the first element. Russian L1 learners also tend to put more or equal prominence on the second element rather than the first.

6.7 Diphthongs: pronounced as monophthongs

French L1 students often pronounce words like *fade* as *fed*. Similar reductions of diphthongs to monophthongs can be heard from other L1 students, including Italian, German, Thai. Showing the phonemes with some basic practice, and monitoring over time, will resolve the issue.

6.8 Influence of final consonant on preceding vowel

Pronounce the words in italics below (left to right):

voiceless final consonant	voiced final consonant
<i>rope</i>	<i>robe</i>
<i>mop</i>	<i>mob</i>
<i>back</i>	<i>bag</i>
<i>heartbeat</i>	<i>hard bead</i>
<i>leaf</i>	<i>leave</i>
<i>price</i>	<i>prize</i>
<i>batch</i>	<i>badge</i>

You may notice that voiceless final consonants shorten the preceding vowel, and voiced final consonants lengthen it. This does not apply in some languages, and carried into English such non-differentiation can cause mishearings, because in listening we often tend to be guided by the length of the vowel as much as by the consonant in end position, which is never as prominent as it would be in initial position (say *gag* or listen to it in an online dictionary and notice the difference between the two 'g's).

German in effect has no final voiced consonants, and consequently those L1 learners may unwittingly give the impression of abruptness when they use voiceless (tense) final consonants with shortened preceding vowels instead of voiced (lax) ones with lengthened preceding vowels. But recently I found myself correcting *We won first price* in a Spanish student's written work – proof perhaps that this difficulty is experienced by all learners whose L1s have constant vowel length, and again proof that phonemic correction benefits not only the spoken skill.

I have often been asked by a learner (no, not the same one) how to differentiate between *price* and *prize*. This difficulty is commonly noticed because of the high frequency of those words, but listen out for less frequent pairs that tend to go under the radar and correct as required. Business English students especially may not want to import *ropes* or have them brought up to their room by housekeeping but that's what they could end up with instead of the requested *robes*.

For correcting, write the mispronounced word with its partner, but condense the vowel before the voiceless consonant and stretch out the one before the voiced consonant. Then drill the words in phrases and sentences, adding a little role play if desirable. There's no need to use the phonemes, they're not much help here; wherever normal orthography carries the message don't be tempted to show off with them. The examples below include a little drawing. Remember to involve Ss as you draw or write: let them guess what you are drawing; let them finish the sentence you are writing or fill in a gap or two.



Malala got the Nobel Priiiiize...

Figure 20: Condensed and expanded vowel letter, demonstrating the influence of the final voiceless and voiced consonant. Also, an example sentence with another way of 'stretching' the vowel. Example sentences are best when meaningful.

6.9 Role play script: voiceless/voiced final consonant

With practice, you and your students will be able to write good role-play scripts. This is not a practice book but we make an exception with role play because we believe that for enjoyable pronunciation practice there's nothing to beat it. Students should learn scripts off by heart and take turns performing to the class but only as much as classmates wish. Award prices, sorry, prizes.

TV Producer (*on the phone*): Hello, is that the Supply Department?

Props Manager: Yes, how may I help you?

TVP: I need a mop for the next scene in a drama I'm doing.

PM: A mop?

TVP: Yes, a mop. Not too big, it's a group of strikers, a bit violent.

PM: Oh, are they cleaners?

TVP: What?

PM: Are they cleaners? You know, with the mop?

TVP: That doesn't matter.

PM: I think it *does* matter; I know I'm not a producer but...

TVP: For goodness sake, just organise the mop! Tomorrow, studio 7 at 2pm.

PM: Whatever you say. Goodbye. (*To herself*) He's very rude. I'll take that mop to him personally tomorrow and I'll tell him what to do with it!

Admittedly, the role play above doesn't have any sounding of *mob*, but this is not necessarily a negative; indeed, students will highlight the difference when explaining the joke to each other. Here's one with voiced and voiceless examples:

(*Set the scene: backstage in a theatre or function room. Props: large receipt; handbag if the assistant is female.*)

Prize giver: Have you got the prize?

Assistant: Yes, it's in my pocket (/handbag/purse).

P: Oh, I thought it would be bigger, but anyway, let's go. We're on next.

(*They walk to a wing of the stage.*)

P: Ok, here we are. We walk to the centre, ok, go (*they walk*)... and ...

“Congratulations, Ms Jones, and here is your prize.” (*Gestures to A.*)

(*Audience (classmates) applaud. Miss Jones beams at them, holds out her hands to A, gets nothing.*)

A: But boss...

P: Just take it out of your pocket (/handbag/purse); the cameras are rolling.

A: But boss...

P: (*Smiling awkwardly at the audience*) Take out the prize and give it to her.

A: Ok (*takes out a receipt*). Here's the price: sixty euro. (*Ms Jones is aghast*).

P: The prize, the prize.

A: Yes, the price is very good, isn't it? But why didn't you want the trophy?

7.6 Stress in words

There are some rules about where the stress falls in words, but apart from noun-verb distinction, e.g. *cónduct* vs *condúct*, *pérmít* vs *per mít*, *óbject* vs *objéct*, I've rarely had to mention them because students seem to prefer learning word pronunciation in the normal run of lessons. But of course exercises with patterns like *vérsatile* ~ *vérsatility*, *pérsónal* ~ *pérsónality* (primary stress movement to the pre-suffix syllable) can be found in suitable vocabulary practice media and fulfil a certain need. During reading aloud, after you've corrected a student's pronunciation of an important word (showing the correct form on the board) ask them to mark the stressed syllable in their book/handout. Yes, reading aloud, properly done, is an excellent way to check pronunciation (Penston 2011).

7.7 Phrasal verbs

The idiomaticity of phrasal verbs presents a challenge in their learning, but there is also an important aspect about their pronunciation: the majority of phrasal verbs have secondary stress on the verb and primary stress on the particle. I usually mark the stress solely on the particle, thus: *Move ón!* This is very different from the *on* in *Móve on the dance floor* (preposition phrase underlined), but of course the particle looks exactly the same as that common preposition, and the learner is forgiven for thinking that verbs are more important than the little words that may follow them.

7.8 Compounds

Compounds may need some care. After teaching that *státion* has primary stress on the first syllable you might be surprised to find that this is not so in *pólíce stàtion* (noun + noun type), where it has secondary stress. There is also a compound that has two primary stresses, e.g. *páper tíger* (material + noun type).

Compounds are not to be confused with descriptive adjective + noun pairings, like *a bìg stàtion*. However, with these it is still necessary to ensure that the adjective gets its proper stress, as some Ss leave it quite weak, due perhaps to L1 interference.

Answers to quiz on page 39:

1 Lufthansa, 2 Air France, 3 Emirates, 4 Singapore Airlines, 5 British Airways. 6 Qantas.

8 Intonation

8.1 Tone movements and meanings

The pitch/tone of our voice generally falls at the end of a statement and wh- question. It generally rises at the end of a yes/no question. It also rises at the end of a statement to turn it into a question or register surprise, at the end of a (repeated) wh- question to check the received information, and at the end of a tag question when it is really a question and not a conversational remark. Other tone movements are rise-fall, fall-rise and level pitch, and of course these can all vary in degree. Much of these movements and their meanings would seem to be universal, but learners coming from tonal languages (e.g. Chinese, where a word can have one of a possible four phonemic tones) may take a little time getting used to the L2 system; German L1 students may use a fall-rise at the end of an answer instead of the (rise-) fall, unwittingly sounding dismissive; learners whose L1's syntax has the 'topic' words in very different places from those in English will also need time to get 'in tune' with the new patterns.

8.2 The tonic syllable

Utterances are broken into *tone groups*. A tone group may consist of one word, but is usually a phrase. In a tone group one syllable will have a noticeable change in pitch/tone; this is called the *tonic syllable*. The tonic syllable is usually towards the end of the tone group. The part before the tonic may also contain stressed syllables but they won't be tonic.

Whén are you cóming HOME?
I'm cóming hóme toMORrow.

In both of the above sentences there is a (rise-) fall on the tonic syllable (in capital letters). In the second, the fall continues through *-row*.

Of course, although there is general agreement on tone pattern there are degrees of personal and regional variance; for me, a final falling tone is really a high rise-fall, and many GA and AuE speakers use high rises throughout narratives as a 'are you with me' check. The rise, especially in the case of adolescents, can also apply to the final tonic in statements, but its purpose there is not quite discernible (Lieberman