

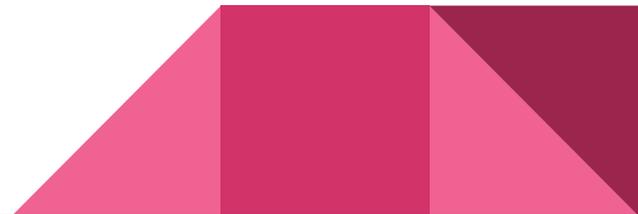
Pronunciation

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The Presenter

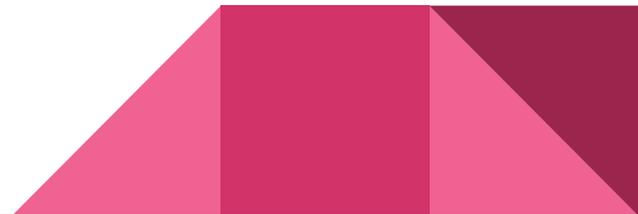
Currently teach the ESL Level 1 morning class

- MA-TESOL from Michigan State University
- Taught English for Academic Purposes to international university students
- I am NOT a retired speech therapist



Overview

1. What is pronunciation?
2. What should you prioritize when you teach pronunciation?
3. When should you teach pronunciation?



What is pronunciation?

You want to say your name. You breathe in. Then what?

1. The air goes out of your lungs and into the voice box.
2. The air vibrates the vocal cords to make sound.
3. The sound goes into the throat and mouth.
4. The tongue, lips, and teeth shape the air to make speech sounds.



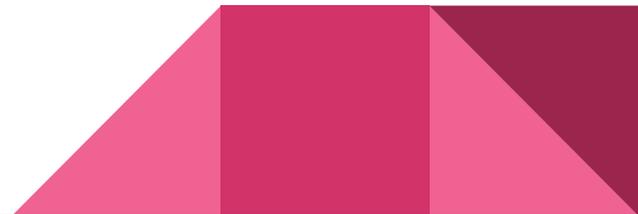
Two Kinds of speech sounds

- Consonant sounds
- Vowel sounds



Teaching consonant sounds

1. Describe the position or place of the lips, tongue, and teeth.
 - a. Put lips together to make “p” sound
 - b. Put tongue tip between teeth to make “th” sound
2. Describe the manner in which the sound is made.
 - a. The “p” sound is made quickly.
 - b. The “th” sound is made continuously.
 - c. The “m” sound is made through the nose.
3. Describe voicing (whether or not the vocal cords vibrate).
 - a. The “b” sound is voiced.
 - b. The “p” sound is not voiced.

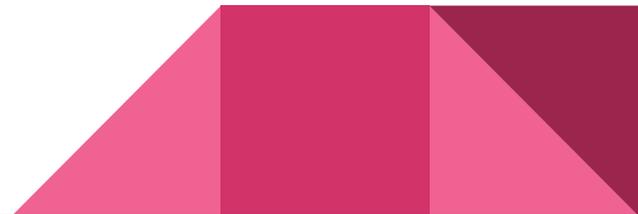


Place, manner, and voice of English consonants

		PLACE							
MANNER	VOICE	Lips together	Upper teeth to lower lip	Tongue between teeth	Tongue on bony ridge behind upper teeth	Tongue just behind bony ridge	Tongue to hard palate	Tongue to soft palate	Throat
Quick	No	p			t			k	
	Yes	b			d			g	
Continuous	No		f	th	s	sh			h
	Yes		v	th	z	zh			
Quick then continuous	Yes					ch			
	No					j			
Nasals	Yes	m			n			ng	
Glides	Yes	w					y		
Liquids	Yes				l	r			

Teaching English vowel sounds

1. Describe the place and movement of the lips and tongue.
 - a. The lips can be rounded, spread, or neutral.
 - b. The tongue can be high (long “e”), mid (long “a”), or low (short “a”).
 - c. The tongue can be front (long “e”), center (“er”), or back (long “u”).



Tongue and lip place and movement

Diagram 5

This diagram shows the pronunciation areas—front, central, back.

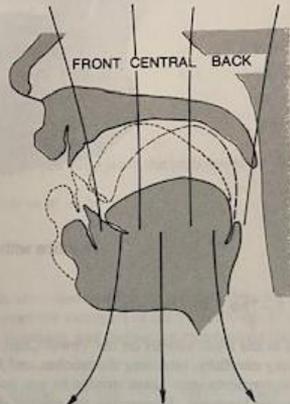
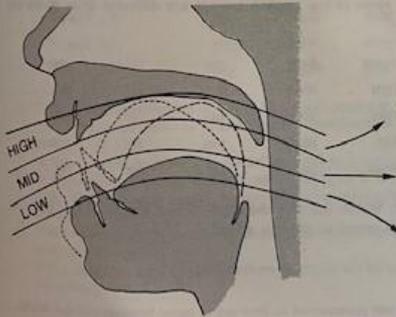


Diagram 6

This diagram shows the pronunciation areas—high, mid, low.



	FRONT	CENTRAL	BACK
HIGH	¹ see ² it	¹² bird	⁸ two ⁹ books
MID	³ say ⁴ yes	⁶ bys	¹⁰ no
LOW	⁵ fat	⁷ stop	¹¹ law

/ai/—my

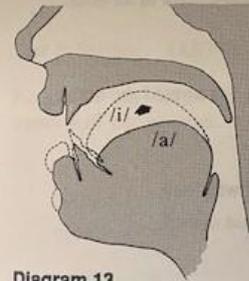


Diagram 13

/au/—cow

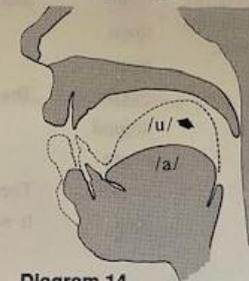


Diagram 14

/ɔi/—boy

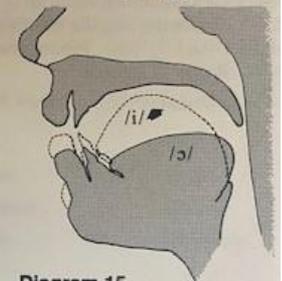


Diagram 15

Lips spread: see, it, say, yes
 Lips rounded: bird, two, books, no, law
 Lips neutral: fat, stop

What should you prioritize when you teach pronunciation?

1. The goal is to increase intelligibility, NOT to change the student's accent.
 2. Anticipate what sounds might cause difficulty for English learners and think about how you would describe how to make them.
 - a. Consonants: th, r, l, f, v, p, b, zh, ch, sh
 - b. Vowels: it, yes, fat, bird, book, law
 - c. Consonant clusters: st, sp, sk, sw, sl, br, pr, spr, str, nk, nt, nd etc.
 3. Emphasize clear pronunciation when teaching language for situations where intelligibility is crucial.
 - a. At the bank
 - b. At the doctor's office
 - c. Calling 911
- 

What should you prioritize when you teach pronunciation?

1. Teach students strategies to compensate for less than perfect pronunciation.
 - a. Slow down when they speak
 - b. Use gestures when they speak
 - c. Point to objects, pictures, or written words to clarify
 - d. Use spelling to make difficult words clear (their name, name of street where they live etc.)
 - e. Choose a quiet place to give important information (an empty classroom vs a noisy hallway)
 - f. Announce the topic
 - i. “I’d like to ask about the bus. When will the bus come?”
 - ii. “I’d like to explain my absence. I tested positive for covid.”



When should you teach pronunciation?

1. Teaching new words, especially ones you know they want to learn and/or will use often
 - a. syllables (im·por·tant)
 - b. which syllable is longest (im·POR·tant)
 - c. correct sounds in error (im·PO·tant) vs. (im·POR·tant)
 2. In pre-planned speech
 - a. Written or memorized scripts
 - b. Reading aloud
 - c. Giving planned presentations
 3. When communication breaks down because of faulty pronunciation
 - a. "Oh, are you saying?"
 - b. "I didn't understand you because ..."
- 

Group Work

In your group, come up with a way to teach an English language learner to make the “r” sound (as in the word *red*) or the “v” sound (as in the word *very*). Explain what they should do with their tongue, teeth, lips, and vocal cords to make the sound. Give an image to help them remember.

Example: Voiceless “th”

Explanation: Put the tip of your tongue between your teeth. Blow air over your tongue and through your teeth. Keep blowing until you run out of air.

Image: Pretend you ate some hot soup and burned the tip of your tongue. Stick your tongue tip out to cool it. Blow air until the burn is gone.”

Resources

- Sounds of Speech

Videos, animation, and text explanations of how to produce English speech sounds

<https://soundsofspeech.uiowa.edu/>

- Fun Names for Speech Sounds

Ideas for images to teach sounds

<http://www.playingwithwords365.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Speech-Sound-Names.pdf>

- About World Languages

Search for a description of different world languages

<https://www.mustgo.com/worldlanguages/world-languages/>

