

WORKING WITH PRONUNCIATION
A BRIEF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Elizabeth Ann Elmer
Language Institute
University of the Americas
Cholula, Pue.

Introduction

The ability to communicate orally in English ranks high in priority for almost all E. F. L. students here in Mexico. This strong motivation to be understood when speaking and to understand others while listening undoubtedly stems from the numerous possibilities for face-to-face contact with the many Americans and other native-English speakers in this country,

Other students, however, have primarily a reading goal. It would seem that for them that the time spent on auditory discrimination (distinguishing sounds aurally) and pronunciation (producing sounds) would be wasted. However, because reading involves the association of written symbols with speech sounds rather than directly with meanings, some control of the spoken form of English would probably be useful for these students as well.

Therefore, virtually, all E. F. L. students should have some pronunciation training. The teacher, then, has the responsibility of understanding the problems students face in their aural-oral language development and to give specific help to meet those problems.

Problems of Pronunciation and Comprehension

First, phonological differences between Spanish and English can cause serious misunderstandings or, at least, confusion. Imagine the problems with:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| a. She watched the car. | b. He went to Yale |
| She washed the car | He went to jail |

Certainly, instruction must be provided in both hearing the differences and in producing those differences. One must remember that it is possible to hear the differences yet still not be able to produce them correctly.

A second difficulty involves the supersegmentals-stress (loudness) and intonation (pitch)- as well as language conventions, such as pauses and interruptions. The incorrect transfer of Spanish patterns to English, for

instance could make the speaker appear pushy or rude to the native-English speaker.

Good pronunciation has been defined as "one which will not draw the attention of the native speaker of that language away from what we are saying to the way in which we are saying it." (Hockett, in Croft, 1972, 62) Teachers should help their students to minimize the problems with phonetic and supersegmental differences in order to help their listeners to concentrate on the content rather than the form of their messages.

The Teacher's Role and Expectations

Although tapes and records are useful for listening and speaking practice, a live model is very important. The teacher is vital in selecting which specific sounds to teach in demonstrating mouth positions and other techniques to simplify learning, and finally in diagnosing and dealing with errors after this initial presentation and practice.

Both classroom teachers and students should set realistic goals-

- 1) Reasonably accurate recognition and discrimination of those sounds which cause communication conflicts for the Spanish-speaker, and
- 2) Reasonably clear pronunciation with proper stress and intonation to communicate ideas without great difficulty.

The instructor's own expectations should be similarly limited regarding professional preparation. He need not be a native speaker, nor does he need to be a linguist, familiar with the technical jargon and other aspects of phonology. Learning more specific information as he teaches is a more realistic approach.

Format of the Annotated Bibliography

The following selected bibliography is intended as a guide to useful references dealing with pronunciation and auditory discrimination. These include both teacher references as well as student practice/drill books. They were selected for their non-technical and easy-to-read nature. For this reason, books on phonology or phonetics are not listed here. Furthermore, these books have been especially selected, because they are relatively recent publications or for some other reason are mostly unknown.

These books can be found at the following locations in Mexico City. (The number in each entry refers to the order that the books appear in here.)

1. The American Bookstore-Madero 25
#3,
2. The Benjamin Franklin Library-Londres 16
#5,6,7,18,19

3. Cia. Internacional de Publicaciones-Serapio Rendon 125
Libreria Anglo Americana
#2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18
4. Instituto Mexicano Norteamericano de Relaciones Culturales
Hamburgo 115
(for the IMNRC staff and other authorized persons)

Library- #8, 18, 19
Office- #6, 7, 14, 15, 20
5. Sistemas Educativos-SA (SUSA) - Culiacan 83
6. Libreria Britanica- Rio Ganges 64

#9, 10, 13, 15, 19, 20

They can also be divided into the following groups:

Teacher References- #1, 4, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
Student Practice Books
Supersegmentals- #2, 7
Consonants/Vowels-#6, 20
Both -#3, 5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 19

The Bibliography

1. Bowen, J. Donald. Patterns of English Pronunciation. Rowley
Mass.: Newbury House, 1975

This brand new book is not a textbook, but, rather, a supplementary manual to be used best in moderate quantity over a period of time. Beginning through advanced students can benefit from the discussion of segmentals (consonants and vowels) and supersegmentals, given in a rather non-technical way. Best, though, would be for the teacher to use this as a reference to gain knowledge of these sound features of English and to take drills from this book when appropriate. The manual is in three cycles repeating in increasing difficulty first the supersegmentals and then vowels, lastly consonants.

2. Cook, V.J. Active Intonation. London: Longmans, 1968.

A certain pattern of intonation is introduced in each of the twenty lessons. The most interesting aspect is the handling of attitudes reflected in intonation. This book shows intermediate and advanced students how to show such attitudes as agreement, coldness, and impression through intonation.

3. Crowell, Thomas Lee, Jr. Modern Spoken English. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.

The treatment of intonation and, especially, stress is well-done in this student explanation and drill book. The relation to grammar is especially useful, as lessons show the pronunciation with such aspects as the past tense, possessive adjectives, auxiliaries, contractions, and others. This book also includes sentence drills, mouth positions, short dialogs, proverbs and quotations containing certain sounds to practice and other devices. Recommended.

4. Decker, Donald. Mastering the International Phonetic Alphabet. New York: Regents, 1970.

This workbook provides instruction in the IPA system of transcription. (Transcription uses an invented writing system of symbols to represent sounds.) Many opportunities for transcription are given. Useful for teacher training classes or self-instruction.

5. Dixon, Robert J. and Elizabeth Clarey. Pronunciation Exercises in English. New York: Regents, 1963.

Each chapter covers a consonant or vowel. Word lists with that selected sound in initial, medial, and final positions are used along with minimal pairs and sentence drills. The latter should be chosen with care since difficult vocabulary and varying sentence lengths are used. Intonation is also included in each chapter briefly. IPA used. Doesn't look too interesting.

6. English Language Services. Drills and Exercises in English Pronunciation Consonants and Vowels. New York: Collier MacMillan, 1966.

Drills work on individual consonants and vowels as well as diphthongs and consonant clusters. A spelling section is provided. Tapes available. Common vocabulary. Intended for older students and adults at all language levels.

7. English Language Services. Drills and Exercises in English Pronunciation Stress and Intonation, Parts I and II. New York: Collier Macmillan, 1967.

An easy-to-use, worthwhile drill book which introduces word and phrase stress and stress markings. Intonation in ordinary patterns as well as for contrast and emphasis is shown and practiced. Most interesting are marked dialogs, reading, anecdotes, speeches, and poems.

8. Fries, C.C. Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1945.

A classic in the field which includes a most extensive list of consonant clusters in the initial and final positions. Also of interest are suggested lessons in pronunciation in teaching English to Spanish speakers.

9. Fries, C.C. and Robert Lado. English Pronunciation: Exercises in Sound Segments, Intonation, and Rhythm. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1954.

Another well-known book from Michigan. Many drills and short dialogs. Based on contrastive analysis of English and Spanish. Very boring presentation.

10. Haycraft, Brita. The Teaching of Pronunciation: A Classroom Guide. London: Longmans, 1971.

A very good teacher's reference book. Many suggestions for teachers. Cartoons, pictures. Very practical in showing possible problems and then techniques for the classroom.

11. Mackenzie, M.D. Munro. Modern English Pronunciation Practice. London: Longman, 1967.

A drill book for students using the IPA. Word lists of one or more syllables containing a sound are used along with minimal pairs and reading passages. Perhaps good for a reference in preparing quick drills but has little motivating factors in its presentation.

12. Marelli, Leonard R. American English: Pronunciation and Dictation. Philadelphia: Didier, 1971.

Many dictation exercises. Work on spelling. Tapes and tapescripts available, as well as a teacher's manual.

13. Mortimer, Colin. Sound Right: Selected Sounds in Conversation. London: Longmans, 1975.

Very good and useful book. Recommended. Contains heavily "seeded" dialogs for given consonants and vowels. (Each dialog has many words which contain the selected sound being considered.) Well-written, humorous.

14. Nagore, M.L. New Sounds of English Consonants. Tucson, Arizona: Published by author. 1970. (P.O. Box 3354. Zip 85722)

A non-technical explanation and idea book which deals with teaching English consonants to Spanish speakers. The entire book is written in Spanish and English and includes many words in Spanish suggested as helps in pronouncing

an English word with the same sound. This useful book contains tongue-twisters, cartoons, tongue position charts, and dialogs, too. Recommended.

15. Nielsen, Don L.F. and Aileen Pace Nielsen. Pronunciation Contrasts in English. New York: Regents, 1973.

An exhaustive list of minimal pairs and minimal pair sentences. Very good as a teacher reference in preparing drills. Many helpful charts, the most helpful of which is the "Language Index" which lists language pronunciation problems for fifty language groups.

16. O'Connor, J.D. Better English Pronunciation. London: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

An explanation for intermediate and advanced students of the problems of pronunciation of English as a Foreign Language. Many practices are included. The Appendix lists the difficulties for five major language groups: Arabic, Cantonese, French, German, Hindi, and at last, Spanish.

17. Olguin, Leonard. Shuck Loves Chirley: A Non-Technical Teaching Aid For Bilingual Children. California: Golden West College, 1968.

A most useful guide for EFL teachers in Mexico, especially those working with children. Is adaptable for older students as well. A very good diagnostic test, a contrastive analysis of Spanish-English sounds, and error predictability are included. Suggested lessons for the individual sounds with poems, rhymes, drills, and games is well-done. Recommended.

18. Prator, Clifford H., Jr. and Betty Wallace Robinett. Manual of American English Pronunciation. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972.

An analytical, complete explanation, best for teachers. Exercises and sentences to analyze are included in each chapter. A good "Accent Inventory" is part of this book as well. Good for teacher training.

19. Trager, Edith Crowell and Sara Cook Henderson. Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English (The P.D.'s). Portland, Oregon: English Language Services, 1956.

The Trager-Smith phonetic alphabet is used in this drill book. Besides consonant and vowel sounds, a short section on the super-segmentals is given. Also a spelling section and a list of pronunciation problems according to eighteen languages. Tapes.

20. Trim, John. English Pronunciation Illustrated. London: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Cartoons for sounds. Could be used for minimal pair cards. Sometimes too much like tongue twisters.