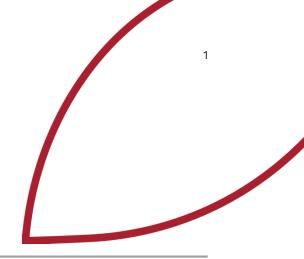


Mastering Pronunciation: Tips for Educators

Alberta Routes Tip Sheet 21



1. Focus on Intelligibility, Not Perfection

- **Intelligibility** is how well a listener (especially a non-sympathetic one) can understand the speaker's message.
- Start with the pronunciation issues that most interfere with being understood (e.g. consonants /l/ vs. /r/ or syllable stress).

2. Break Pronunciation into Manageable Pieces

- a. Segmentals: Teach consonant and vowel sounds clearly.
 - Use mirrors or diagrams to show tongue and lip placement.
 - Practice minimal pairs (e.g., "rice" vs. "lice").
- b. **Suprasegmentals:** Focus on rhythm, stress, and intonation.
 - Clap or tap out syllables to practice word stress.
 - Highlight stressed words in sentences (e.g., "I live in CA-na-da").

3. Prioritize Goals Together

- Work with learners to set achievable goals.
- Start with sounds or patterns that are most important for their needs (e.g., professional settings).
- Avoid overwhelming learners by correcting every mistake. Focus on one or two areas at a time.

4. Engage Multiple Senses

- **Listening:** Use audio recordings to compare correct and incorrect sounds.
- **Speaking:** Have learners record themselves and compare with models.
- **Movement:** Use physical activities like clapping or gesturing to reinforce stress and intonation.

5. Make Practice Fun and Relevant

- Use real-life scenarios, like ordering food or asking for directions.
- Incorporate storytelling, where learners create and share stories using target sounds.

6. Encourage Practice Beyond the Classroom

- Suggest online tools like <u>English Accent Coach</u> or apps for additional practice.
- Encourage learners to listen to English music, podcasts, or videos to hear natural pronunciation.

Key Reminders

- This is not about "fixing" an accent; it's about improving communication.
- Celebrate progress, no matter how small!
- Always be patient and supportive—learning pronunciation takes time.

A Predictable Teaching-Learning Framework

1. Demonstrate & Describe

 Show and explain how sounds are produced in the mouth and throat. Use visuals, tools, and clear examples.

2. Listen

 Encourage learners to listen to the target sounds often, in many different ways. Help them recognize the difference between their own sounds and the correct ones.

3. Controlled Practice

 Focus on specific sounds with activities like repeating words and using tools (e.g. mirrors or elastic bands) to ensure learners practice accurately. Correct mistakes in this stage.

4. Guided Practice

 Have learners practice in pairs or small groups using structured activities, such as fill-in-the-blank sentences or matching sounds to words, with guidance from you.

5. Communicative Practice

 Encourage real-life practice through role-playing or conversations. This helps learners use their pronunciation skills in everyday situations.

Helpful Pronunciation Teaching Resources

Resources	Description
Minimal pairs worksheets	The page offers ESL worksheets on
	minimal pairs to help learners
	practice distinguishing and
	pronouncing similar-sounding words.
<u>Pronunciation Practice Activities</u>	The document is a sample
	worksheet from Cambridge English
	Pronunciation in Use, offering
	exercises to help ESL learners
	improve their pronunciation by
	practicing specific sounds, stress
[VouTube]	patterns, and minimal pairs. Macmillan Education. Pronunciation
[YouTube]	
	Skills: Consonants part 8 /p/ /b/ /t/ /d/.
ESL Lab	Known for its free listening activities,
	ESL Lab has a wide variety of
	exercises that also focus on
	pronunciation, helping learners to
	improve their speaking skills in
	context.
<u>BBC Pronunciation</u>	The BBC offers excellent videos and
	audio clips focusing on English
	pronunciation. They cover everything
	from individual sounds to intonation
F • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	and stress.
<u>Forvo</u>	Forvo is a website where you can
	listen to native speakers pronounce
	words in English and other
	languages. It's excellent for learning the correct pronunciation of
	individual words.
	marriadat words.

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