Fact sheet – Teaching pronunciation: Approaches and activities

In this fact sheet some approaches to the teaching of pronunciation and some useful techniques and activities are outlined.

Approaching pronunciation

Where to start

As noted in *AMEP Fact sheet – Pronunciation 2*, learners generally need attention on all aspects of pronunciation, although individual learners may need more help in some areas than in others. It is important, however, to focus attention on pronunciation as early as possible, and to integrate it as much as possible with other areas of language learning, so that the gains are felt in spontaneous speech and not just in pronunciation exercises. There is certainly a place for the separate language clinic in which specific problems are addressed, but to rely only on remedial strategies is to leave it far too late: learners need proactive attention on how to speak the language intelligibly *from the very beginning*.

Pronunciation teaching should not be seen as 'fixing problems' but rather as 'teaching how to speak'. Learners who start with a focus on pronunciation at the beginner level also find they acquire a useful metalanguage – for example, terms such as 'stress' and 'unstress', 'weak form', 'rhythm', 'schwa' and so on. This helps them tackle pronunciation issues throughout their learning. In addition, an early acquaintance with the phonemic structure of English, however basic, can help learners realise that English is not a phonetic language, and this can help with writing and grammar development, too!

Expecting acceptable pronunciation

The overt expectation that learners can, and will, produce intelligible speech is one of the most useful things a teacher can bring to pronunciation teaching and learning. If the teacher does not pay attention to whether or not a learner makes an effort to improve their pronunciation, then nobody else will! Finding ways to illustrate, practise and provide feedback on pronunciation in an ongoing way is more useful than a truckload of pronunciation materials.

Top-down and bottom-up approaches

Pronunciation can be approached from the *top-down* (that is, starting with attention to larger chunks of language) or from the *bottom-up* (that is, with a focus on the smaller elements, such as phonemes first). If pronunciation teaching is to be strongly integrated with the rest of language teaching, then a *top-down* approach is often useful, because teachers can start with whole chunks of language and work with these. However, a *bottom-up* approach is also helpful, particularly where a certain sound or sound combinations need dedicated practice.

Techniques for teaching pronunciation

A summary of some techniques that can be helpful in encouraging and monitoring the learning of spoken language can be seen in Figure 1.

Drills

Drills went out of fashion with audiolingualism because they became associated with mindless and repetitive approaches to teaching. However, drills definitely do not have to be mindless, and they offer a welcome opportunity for learners to get their tongues around new language without the extra strain of trying to communicate. Most learners love them, as long as they are done confidently and do not dominate teaching. Choral drills, in which the whole class repeats a clear model from the teacher, are useful for anonymous practice. Individual drills, in which the teacher selects a student to repeat the item individually after it has been practised in unison,

Figure 1: Some techniques

To help:	Techniques
practise sounds	Choral drilling, individual drills
highlight stress	Clapping, clicking, tapping, gesture, elastic bands, dada language, punches in the air, dots, underlining
correct and give feedback	A repertoire of gestures, empathy, sense of humour
teach articulation, linking etc.	Imitation, mirrors, finger models of the mouth
correct articulation, linking etc.	Sense of humour, facial expression, empathy, fingers in mouth, mirrors
pinpoint areas to correct	Finger drilling, gestures
manage multilingual classes	Teacher checklist
encourage practice outside the classroom	Pronunciation homework

Figure 2: Some signals

Signal	What is being signalled
Punch in the air	A stress difficulty
Fingers closing together (hand open, fingers spread and then brought together)	Final consonant absent
Hand and arm waved up or down	Intonation
'Thoth' – a small frill-necked lizard squeezy toy with a tongue that pokes out when pressed	A reminder to put the tongue between the teeth to say /θ/
A big 'S' or 'Z' on the board	A reminder to say word-final plurals or verb + 's'

allows the teacher to assess individual progress. *Remember that new learners need the opportunity to say items of vocabulary!*

Marking stress

Unlike other languages, the word stress patterns of English are relatively unpredictable, and so stress must be marked when dealing with new vocabulary. Some teachers use big dots for stressed syllables and small dots for unstressed syllables in a single word. One set of dots is plenty for the teaching of word stress, although the smaller dots are useful for marking unstressed syllables within a sentence, as we shall see in the activities described below. For marking stress when speaking, claps, clicks, stamps or punching gestures can be used. If learners are having trouble with the concept of stress, try getting them to stretch an elastic band around their fingers. Get them to pull their fingers apart on stressed syllables, and release the pressure on unstressed syllables, so that they can 'feel' the stress physically as the elastic band stretches and relaxes on their fingers.

Correcting adults

Some people feel reluctant to correct the speech of adults, especially those who have had little previous classroom experience. However, the learners themselves are usually grateful that they are finally getting some feedback and guidance in their pronunciation. Of course, correction of any kind needs to be targeted, sensitive and constructive. It is helpful to have a repertoire of different signals that indicate the nature of the problems. Some of these are listed in Figure 2, but your class will soon get used to whichever signals you use.

Demonstrating how sounds are made

Although by far the best way of learning to say something is to listen carefully and to imitate, some learners find it helpful to be able to analyse how a sound is made, or to see how it may be different from a similar sound in their own language. A good example of where such illustrations can be useful is the practising of the difference between /l/ and /r/. After learners have listened to these sounds in context and in isolation, they may find it helpful to be shown that a crucial difference between these two in English is that the tongue curls back and does not actually touch the roof of the mouth for /r/, but does touch it for /l/. You can demonstrate this by curling one hand to repre-

Figure 3: Some activities

To help practise:	Dedicated	Integrated
1 word stress	Names/suburbs Stepping stones Matching games	Stepping stones Matching games
2 rhythm	Telegrams/mobile phones Matching games The squeeze Jazz chants	Stepping out Rap chants Everyday chants
3 sense groups	Train to Melbourne	Good weekend?
4 contrastive stress	Salt or table?	Oranges at the supermarket
5 stress and unstress	I went shopping and I bought …	Weak form cloze Fast dictation
6 intonation	Friends?	The listener
7 attitude and voice quality	Attitude game Dice game	Role plays
8 sounds	Sounds of the week	Pronunciation bingo Past tense game
9 final sounds	Rhyming pairs	The dream
10 liaison	Linking maze	Shock dictations

sent the roof of the mouth, and using the other to demonstrate the action of the tongue in each case.

Managing multilingual classes

Since a learner's first language strongly influences their pronunciation in English, it is useful to give each learner their own, individualised practice to help with particular issues. One way of keeping tabs on this is to assign practice utterances to individual students and keep a running record of what you have assigned to whom. For example, perhaps a student 'Minh' in your class has a particular difficulty with word-final consonants and liaison. One day, you notice in class that she has problems with the phrase 'Can I pick it up?', and so you assign this utterance to her for extra practice, and then ask her to say it to you later in the week. Trigger questions or statements that lead on to the target utterance are useful devices to monitor progress in a light-hearted way. For example, you could say to Minh, 'Oh, I dropped it!', and this would be her cue to say her practice utterance. By keeping a record of the triggers and practice utterances for each member of the class, you can target particular issues with individuals in a way that sounds like natural speech.

Pronunciation homework

You can have your learners practise their utterances for homework, and use your trigger questions to check up on whether they have made progress. Far from feeling hounded, most learners really appreciate this personal attention from the teacher.

Activities for focusing on pronunciation

Dedicated or integrated activities

Specialised activities dedicated to the practice of a particular feature of pronunciation offer a useful 'off-the-peg' way of introducing and practising pronunciation. If the right material can be found, these specialised activities are usually easy to organise and fun to do. However, since our aim is for learners to acquire good pronunciation along with other aspects of language, activities that can be thoroughly integrated into the usual program are also essential. A combination of both is likely to offer the most successful mix, and a range of activities designed to practise the different features of pronunciation is given in Figure 3.

1   Practising stress in words and short phrases

Names/suburbs

This activity works well in conjunction with a speaking activity in which the teacher and learners throw a cushion around the circle. The person holding the cushion must tell the class their name and where they live. (I'm _____ . I live in _____.)

The teacher writes his/her name on a card and marks in the stress pattern, for example:

Jacky ● •

Then the students each take a card and write their names, work out the stress pattern and mark the pattern on their card, for example:

| **Ashenge** |
| • ● • |

When completed, the students find others with the same pattern and stand in a group with them. Then blue-tac the cards on a whiteboard under headings of stress patterns, eg ● • / • ● • and so on. Repeat the activity with the names of suburbs.

Stepping stones

This activity is based on the stepping stones activity in Hancock (1995: 22–23), which shows a river that we have to cross, but to do so we may only step on certain stones. In the published version, the stones the students can 'step' on are those bearing words with the stress on the first syllable. However, the real strength of this activity is that it can be adapted to revise *any* vocabulary encountered in a particular week or topic. You can make your own river with stepping stones based on the published version by putting your own words on the stones and making up your own rules for crossing the river – for example, 'You can only step on stones which have words with the stress on the second syllable/middle syllable'. You can therefore revise vocabulary and practise stress at the same time. The activity can be extended in a number of ways – for example, by asking students to tell a story using the words they have 'stepped on', and so on.

Matching games

Once your class is familiar with how you mark stress (eg with a series of dots, or with a series of small and big claps), there are a number of activities and games that you can organise to help them practise the stress patterns of words or short phrases. Some good examples can be found in Hancock (1995). A simple activity involves having students match the stress pattern they hear (or see) to the corresponding phrase or word with that pattern. For example, below is a brief list of useful phrases and their stress patterns:

I've finished **I'd love to**	• ● •
Don't worry **Keep quiet**	● ● •
See you later **Come and see us**	● • ● •
Don't forget! **Yes, of course!**	● • ●
It's possible	• ● • •
It's not allowed	• • • ●

Learners can match the phrase to the pattern clapped out by the teacher, or they can do this in groups, with one student doing the clapping and the others matching the pattern to the words. In pairs, they can sort a series of words/phrases into the right pattern, and then 'test' their answers by trying to say the words/phrases with the correct stress pattern while other groups check their answers. It is useful to have the phrases and stress patterns on separate cards, as these can be used as the basis of a variety of matching games, including the old favourite 'Snap'. Vocabulary-building activities (for example, matching goods to the shops where they can be bought) can also have an added 'match the stress pattern' activity added to them.

2 Practising sentence stress

Telegrams/mobile phones

Learners will usually need some specific focus on sentence stress, particularly if they come from a language background with very different L1 sentence stress patterns. The basic concept they need to grasp is that some words are more important than others in an utterance, and that these will be stressed, while relatively unimportant words will be unstressed. In the past, we could use the concept of a telegram to illustrate this. Perhaps the modern-day equivalent is the mobile phone: if reception on your mobile phone is bad, which words would you choose to shout? These are likely to be the words you would stress in ordinary speech.

The squeeze

Once learners have been introduced to word stress and sentence stress, and have grasped the concepts of *stress* and *unstress* (or *weak* and *strong*, if you prefer) and how unstressed words get squeezed together, they can try the following activity. Get four students to stand in front of the class and hand each a card with one of the following words: **Kim cooked fried rice**. The four students have to arrange themselves so that the sentence has meaning. Elicit the stress pattern of the utterance, ie:

LA LA LA LA/0 0 0 0

Practise the utterance with the right pattern, and then get four more students to come out to the front and give them four more cards with one of the following words: **me a lot of**. The students must work out where they can insert themselves in the line so that the utterance still makes sense, ie:

Kim cooked me a lot of fried rice.

Elicit which words are stressed and which are unstressed, ie:

LA LA LA la la la LA LA

Demonstrate physically the 'squeezing' together of

the three people holding '**a lot of**', and how quickly we would say these words. Practise the utterance with correct rhythm.

Repeat the activity with another group of learners and another set of cards with the words:

Tea or coffee? (LA la LA la?)

Then add **Do you want a**, ie:

Do you want a tea or coffee? (la la LA la LA la LA la?)

Then add **a cup of**, so that you end up with the line of learners holding cards in order of:

Do you want a cup of tea or coffee?

Do further examples with:

sugar?/some sugar?/would you like some sugar?

Jazz chants

Jazz chants, a kind of rhythmic spoken chant that can be done with the class in unison, are popular with learners, giving them a sense of the rhythm of a certain kind of English (see books by Graham in annotated bibliography). The basis idea of a jazz chant can be extended to more everyday language with chants constructed using more routine language as follows:

I've got a new watch	• ● • • ●
So have I	● • ●
And I've got a new house	• • ● • • ●
So have I	● • ●
But I've lost all my money	• • ● • • ● •
What a pity!	● • ● •

For younger adults, rap music, carefully selected to avoid offence (for example the DMX track 'I miss you'), can be a motivating way to help learners develop a sense of rhythm in English.

Stepping out

Stepping out is a useful fun activity that can be used with any utterance to give learners a physical sense of rhythm in English. Take any utterance, or get learners to choose one (the longer the utterance, the more challenging the activity). In small groups of three to five, get them to work out where the major stresses would be, for example:

I'd love to come to the party but I'm working

• ● • • • • • ● • • • • ● •

on Sunday

• ● •

Learners then hold hands in their groups and 'step out' the utterance – that is, they walk forward as they say it. However, they are only allowed to take a step on a stressed syllable – that is, as they say 'love', 'part', 'work' and 'Sun' in the above example.

3   Practising sense groups

Train to Melbourne

Dialogues and role plays can be built up from skeleton dialogues constructed using only the stressed words. Simply pick the major stressed word in any interaction, and use these as a kind of 'shorthand' for what is said, as in the dialogue shown below that takes place between strangers on a 'Train to Melbourne'.

A: Melbourne?

B: Yes. You?

A: Yep. Interview. Student?

B: Nurse. You?

A: Unemployed.

B: Job interview? Nervous?

A: Yep.

In groups, learners can work out what the 'full version' would be, mark what groups of words go together and how they are said. This involves making a number of grammatical as well as stress-related decisions. In pairs, the learners can then practise the dialogue, which should look something like that shown below (the number of sense groups that will be said with a different intonation contour is given in brackets).

A: Are you going to Melbourne? (1)

B: Yes./Are you going there, too? (2)

A: Yep./I'm going to an interview./Are you a student? (3)

B: No./I'm a nurse./What about you? (3)

A: I'm unemployed. (1)

B: Oh!/Is it a job interview?/Are you nervous? (3)

A: Yep./Very nervous! (2)

A similar kind of treatment can be given to everyday routines – for example, 'Did you have a good weekend?' – so that an exchange such as shown below:

A: weekend?

B: movies.

A: see?

B: Red Dragon. Scary.

becomes:

A: Did you have a good weekend?

   • • ● • • • ● ?

B: Yes/I went to the movies.

   ● • • • • ● •

A: What did you see?

   ● • • ●?

B: Red Dragon/It was very scary.

   ● • ● • • • ● • • ● •

4 Practising contrastive stress

Salt or table?

Contrastive stress (see *AMEP Fact sheet – Pronunciation 1*) can be illustrated and practised using dialogues, such as the one below. Learners must decide which of the two bolded words should be stressed most, ie bear the contrastive stress.

A: There isn't any salt.

B: Yes there is. I bought some yesterday.

A: I know, but there isn't any **salt** on the **table**.

Speaking clearly by Rogerson and Gilbert (1990) is still a good source of ideas on dialogues to practise contrastive stress.

Oranges at the supermarket

Once learners are familiar with the use and function of contrastive stress, it can be practised using a game that I call 'Oranges at the supermarket', which can be played with any language on any topic. The class is given the first part of an utterance with 'but …', for example:

You can buy oranges at the supermarket, but …

If your class enjoys a competition, the groups can take it in turns to say the first part of the sentence with a particular contrastive stress of their choice. Another group is nominated to listen carefully and finish the sentence appropriately. The class can judge if the first group has said the first part of the utterance well, and if the second group has correctly understood the implication and supplied an appropriate completion. Points can be awarded.

5 Practising stress and unstress

I went shopping and I bought …

Learners often have more difficulty with unstressed syllables than with the stressed ones, since unstressed syllables can be rather tricky to focus on as they are not salient in the discourse, and when you start to focus on them you tend to stress them!

However, they can be illustrated in everyday language using a model like the one shown in Figure 4. In the second half of the utterance, an increasing number of unstressed syllables are added to the list of things bought. These should always be said with only two main beats to show how these extra unstressed syllables get fitted in. Once they are proficient, learners can add their own items to fit in.

Figure 4

	I	II
'I went shopping and I bought …' • • ● • • • ●	a book • ●	and a pen • • ●
	some CDs • • ●	and some pencils • • • ● •
	a computer • • ● •	and a can-opener • • ● • •

In groups of no more than six, the learners decide what difference it makes to the meaning of the first part of the utterance when different words are stressed. Thus, if the word *you* is stressed, the implication is that while you can buy oranges, someone else (known to us) cannot. Similarly, if the word *oranges* is stressed, the implication is that while *oranges* can be bought there, other things (eg apples) cannot. Each group has to decide how to finish the sentence appropriately in each case. So, if the word *you* is stressed, they might complete the sentence as follows:

**You can buy oranges at the supermarket, but …
my mother can't.**

And if *oranges* is stressed, they might finish it in the following way:

**You can buy oranges at the supermarket, but …
there aren't any apples.**

Weak form cloze and fast dictation

Another way of focusing on unstressed words, particularly those with a grammatical function, is the 'weak form cloze'. Using any spoken text that the class has worked with, simply remove the unstressed grammatical words from the written transcript of the text. Then get learners to fill in the gaps as they listen. Pair work during this activity can produce some interesting discussions. Dictations done at fast speed can also help learners understand how weak forms are used in spoken language.

6 Practising intonation

As with other aspects of pronunciation, particularly suprasegmental aspects, it is important to practise intonation in context. This means that there should be some sort of focus on intonation in any dialogue work. Two specific dialogue activities are outlined below.

Friends?

You can draw learners' attention to the importance of intonation by playing them two versions of the same dialogue, both with exactly the same words but with differences in intonation. In the first version, speaker B is interested in starting a conversation and uses a wider pitch range to communicate this. In the second version, speaker B is not at all interested, and communicates this lack of enthusiasm through a flat intonation which is low in pitch.

A: Are you going to Melbourne?

B: Yes, I am.

A: Oh! I'm going there, too!

B: Are you?

A: Do you come from there?

B: Yes.

A: So do I. I live in Richmond.

B: Really.

The listener

It is also useful to practise the use of intonation in specific situations. The dialogue below is an example of how a particular function can be practised, in this case the use of a *fall-rise* for encouraging continuation of a story, and the use of a *rise-fall* for strong feelings (see *AMEP Fact sheet – Pronunciation 1*). The word 'Yes' is said by speaker B with a *fall-rise* tone throughout to encourage speaker A to keep going all the way through the dialogue until the story is finished. B's final turn, however, is said with a *rise-fall* tone to show strong interest.

A: You know the new student in our class?

B: Yes.

A: Well, you know she's got a sister?

B: Yes.

A: And the sister was on *Neighbours* last week?

B: Yes.

A: Well, she's going to marry my brother!

B: Wow!

7   Practising attitude and voice quality

Any role play or dialogue that you practise with the class can be used to focus attention on both the quality of learners' voices and how we use voice quality, expression, gesture and so on to signal attitude. Video dialogues viewed without the sound can be an effective way of focusing attention on non-verbal aspects of the way we signal attitude. Two specific activities are outlined below.

The attitude game

The teacher can illustrate the way we use our voices to show emotion relatively simply in the following way. Write an utterance such as 'We study English for four days a week' on the whiteboard, and say it in a neutral tone, and then again in a 'happy tone'. Ask learners 'How do I feel about this?', and elicit their responses on the emotion 'happy'. Say it again, changing tones (eg sad, surprised, excited, angry, scared). Elicit each of these emotions. Discuss some of the things we do to show this emotion (eg pitch and pitch change, stress, expressions and so on). Hand out slips of paper with an emotion written on each (eg happy, sad, angry). The learners move around the room saying the sentence 'We study English for four days a week' in the tone corresponding to their slip, and then find their partner, who also has that emotion on their slip of paper, by identifying the emotion in their speech.

The dice game

Once learners have been introduced to the use of voice for expression, they can play the dice game. Prepare two oversized dice: one with verbs written on the faces (*is*, *are*, *was*, *have*, *has*, *had*) and one with emotions (*happy*, *sad*, *angry*, *bored*, *surprised*, *worried*). The learners sit in circle. One throws the 'verb' die and makes a sentence using the word that shows face upward. They then throw the 'emotion' die, and the group says that sentence in a voice to indicate that emotion (eg happy, worried and so on).

8   Practising sounds

Sounds of the week

While some teachers do not want to overburden their learners with an extra alphabet to learn, others find that introducing their learners to sounds using the phonemic chart gradually pays off. Although there may be some initial confusion, many learners find it useful to be able to separate the sound system of English from the way it is written down. This is particularly helpful in tackling sounds for which there is no or little one-to-one correspondence in writing – for example, *schwa* or the diphthong /eɪ/. You can introduce the concept of the whole chart early in the course, but only focus on a couple of sounds per week in detail. To focus on a particular sound, have the learners get into groups and brainstorm as many words as they can in two minutes with the sound(s) of the week (eg *schwa*). Groups get one point for each word and bonus points for words containing both sounds. Learners can then write them up on the whiteboard, and the class can go through and check for comprehension and pronunciation. As learners tackle each sound, they can colour it in on their chart.

Pronunciation bingo

Make up simple bingo cards to practise aspects of pronunciation – for example, numbers eighteen/ eighty

or minimal pairs (pin/pen) and so on. Play the first game with the teacher calling the bingo items. In subsequent games, a learner can be the caller (but check the accuracy of both the caller and the winner!).

Past tense game

Learners sit in a circle. The teacher hands out picture/word cards containing a verb (in the *to + stem* form) and an illustration. Learners put the verb into the past tense (orally) and then make a sentence starting with 'Yesterday/On the weekend …' and containing the verb in the past tense. After all the learners have made a sentence, elicit from them how the past tense is made on a number of their words (ie add 'ed'). Arrange your board as follows:

Regular verbs	Irregular verbs
/t/ /d/ /əd/	

Model the pronunciation of each past tense verb on the cards. The group decides which cards go in each list and then blue-tac them onto the board. Learners practise putting this word in an utterance.

9   Practising final sounds

Rhyming pairs

One way to get learners to focus on the final sounds of words is to get them to listen for rhymes. Simple rhymes and limericks can help here, but you can practise rhyming with everyday language by making rhyme cards. With these, learners can play a variety of matching games, such as 'Snap', either as a class or in groups. It is important that learners say any pairs that they match during these games, and that they only win the card if they say them appropriately and intelligibly.

The dream

This is a version of 'The house that Jack built'. One person thinks of something they dreamed about and starts 'Last night I dreamed I saw a hat'. The next person has to add to the list an item that starts with the final sound from the previous item, in this case /t/. They would therefore say something like 'Last night I dreamed I saw a hat and a tiger'. The third person would then add an item starting with *schwa*, and say 'Last night I dreamed I saw a hat, a tiger and an echidna', and so on. Each person must say all of the items correctly, and if you would like to turn this into a competition, teams can be organised and points awarded.

10 Practising liaison

Linking maze

This idea is taken from Hancock (1995). Like the stepping stone activity described above, it can be used directly from the book or adapted to suit the level and vocabulary of your learners. A worksheet should be prepared in which there is a maze and a set of rules for when you should turn right or left or go straight on to exit from each square in the maze. The example in the book (page 77) is designed to practise the intrusive glides /j/, /w/ and /r/. In each square there is a short utterance such as 'two or three' or 'she arrived'. Learners have to decide which of the three glides is used to link the words. If /j/ is used, then they should turn left, if /w/ is used, then they should go straight on, and if /r/ is used, then they turn right. In the case of the square containing the words 'two or three', a /w/ is used to link the word 'two' to the word 'or', so in this case the learner would exit the square by going straight on in the same direction. In the case of 'she arrived', a /j/ glide would be used to link the word 'she' to the word 'arrived', and so the learner would exit the square bearing these words by turning left – that is, they would progress to the square on the immediate left. By following this procedure, learners can eventually find their way out of the maze from the starting point in the centre. This activity is useful for increasing conscious awareness of this feature of connected speech, but is even more effective if the teacher ensures that learners have to say the phrases. To do this, I make sure the learners say the phrases aloud as I check back to see who has got it right.

Shock dictations

Short shock dictations of phrases such as 'good on you', 'be a sport', 'go on', 'slow and steady' can be a useful way of raising awareness of how we link words in everyday speech. Getting learners to count syllables, mark stress and pick out the liaison on utterances such as 'I couldn't have', 'You shouldn't have' and 'What did you do that for?' can be quite illuminating!

Annotated bibliography

Teaching materials

Boyer, S 2001. *Understanding English pronunciation: An integrated practice course* (student book, teacher's book, 2 cassettes, 3 CDs). Sydney: Boyer Educational Resources

Unlike many other resources in the area, this useful Australian resource for learners at the intermediate level or above is organised around topics, allowing pronunciation to be practised in an appropriate context. It offers a wide variety of activities that are largely segmental in focus, but are extended by numerous suggestions for communicative activities such as card games. The layout is crowded, giving a rather busy appearance.

Brassil, J et al 2000. *NSW AMES English language handbook* (+ audio cassette). Sydney: Department of Education and Training

This handbook has been translated into Vietnamese, Chinese, Thai, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, Bosnian, Russian, Arabic and Persian (Farsi). Section 3, with the accompanying audio cassette, has various awareness activities on aspects of English pronunciation – the sounds of English, syllables and word stress, rhythm and sentence stress, linking and chunking. Section 5 has an answer key for all the sections. There is some useful advice on how learners can improve their English in general as well as focusing specifically on their pronunciation. Some of the handbooks – Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Spanish and Russian – have a very useful Section 6, which gives a contrastive analysis of that language with English. It's a pity not all the language handbooks have this section. Still a useful resource for learners working at home as well as teachers.

Brown, K and S Cornish 1997. *Beach street*. Sydney: NSW AMES

This course book has a pronunciation focus in each unit. It covers a range of useful areas such as syllables, syllable stress, giving addresses, spelling aloud, final sounds, word stress, pronouncing past tense verbs, expressing strong feelings through word stress, linking words in a sentence and expressing emotion through intonation.

Clemens, J and J Crawford 1994. *Words will travel* (student book, teacher's book, audiotapes and videotape). Sydney: ELS

This is a useful resource for introducing aspects of pronunciation at the word and sentence level in a structured way over the course of a teaching program. The activities are generally clear, short and have concise explanations, so they can be used for short 15- to 30-minute segments on each aspect of pronunciation. Because they are concise, students can easily review the exercises at home, although other sources will be needed for more in-depth treatment of pronunciation.

Graham, C 1978. *Jazz chants*. New York: Oxford University Press

Graham, C 2001. *Jazz chants: Old and new*. New York: Oxford University Press

Graham, C 1986. *Small talk: More jazz chants*. New York: Oxford University Press

This series of books has enjoyed enormous popularity. Although developed for use with American English, they provide a series of fun chants that learners of any age seem to love. The basic idea of the jazz chant is to get learners at different levels speaking in unison to a rhythm, so that they feel their way into the rhythms and intonation of spoken English. For example, the *Small Talk* volume offers chants arranged according to the different purposes of talk and designed for use with elementary to advanced learners. There is advice on how to use the chants, and answers to the various activities in the back.

Hancock, M 1995. *Pronunciation games*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

This immensely useful book offers a multitude of ideas for practising a wide variety of segmental and suprasegmental features. It provides a host of game-like activities with serious learning points through photocopiable game pages or game boards which can be distributed to the class. Instructions and answers are also provided, so that the teacher does not need to spend a long time in preparation. Although many activities are designed for more advanced learners, they can be easily adapted to reflect whatever the teacher is currently focusing on in class, and provide an ideal way of integrating focused pronunciation practice into a lesson.

Kaufmann, H and V W Westwood 2002. *Connected Speech* (CD-ROM). Hurstbridge, Victoria: Protea Textware Pty Ltd

This interactive multimedia resource is designed for self-access, but could also be used in a computer lab or with groups. It is self-explanatory, and offers learners a long-overdue way of analysing natural recorded speech (shown in video clips) and the opportunity to try out similar features on their own. Using unique innovations in software, the CD 'listens' to the learner's language and assesses it for the feature being practised. Available at the moment in British and American versions, the Australian version will be available December 2002. This CD is also an informative and fun way for teachers to familiarise themselves with suprasegmental areas of speech such as pause groups, pitch change, sentence stress and linking.

Rogerson, P and J B Gilbert 1990. *Speaking clearly*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

This set includes a teacher's book and a student's book and two audio cassettes. The student's book offers a range of exercises suitable for intermediate to advanced learners that are actually very useful as awareness-raising exercises with teachers! Many of the activities can be easily adapted for use with different levels. It concentrates on those areas of pronunciation that often get forgotten, such as the link between stress patterns and whether information is 'new' information or 'given', as well as thought groups.

Soars, J and L Soars (series eds). *Headway pronunciation*

Bowler, B and S Parminter 1992. *Headway pronunciation: Pre-intermediate*. Oxford: University Press

Cunningham, S and P Moor 1996. H*eadway pronunciation: Elementary*. Oxford: University Press

This series is very useful. Although they tend to focus particularly on sounds, there is nevertheless quite a bit of useful attention on the suprasegmental level. For example, Unit 1 of the pre-intermediate book tackles: sounds, connected speech, intonation and sentence stress, word stress, as well as *schwa*. However, the models of English are British rather than Australian, and some of the helpful features, such as the summary of sounds which learners from particular backgrounds may find difficult, are oriented to learners in Europe rather than Australia.

Zawadzki, H 1994. *In Tempo: An English pronunciation course*. Sydney: NCELTR

This extremely useful book and cassette combination is designed as a self-paced course for intermediate and advanced levels, concentrating on the rhythm and stress of English, but it is equally useful as a classroom resource. It is thorough, graded and clearly laid out, and provides answers for teachers in a hurry. The real-world topics covered are relevant and illustrate points in a useful context. Many of the activities can be adapted for use with lower levels.

Activity ideas

Celce-Murcia, M, D M Brinton and J M Goodwin 1996. *Teaching pronunciation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

This text describes the sounds and prosody of American English for teachers and provides some good teaching activities. It is useful as it does not take a purely theoretical perspective, but may be more useful for prosodic features and connected speech than for individual sounds (particularly vowels), although there is an appendix that summarises the differences between American and British English. Chapter ten, in particular, has some good ideas.

Laroy, C 1995. *Pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

This innovative book tackles what Laroy sees as the underlying obstacles that learners experience in the learning of pronunciation. Unlike most texts in the area, this volume provides plenty of ideas for approaching pronunciation indirectly in a holistic and integrated way, which involves the mind and the whole body, rather than just the mouth. The volume starts with activities to help learners 'tune in' to English through relaxation, confidence building, experimenting with face positions and breathing, and then suggests a range of short activities to raise awareness and to practise some suprasegmental and segmental features of English.

Underhill, A 1994. *Sound foundations*. Oxford: Heinemann

As its name implies, this text focuses more on the sounds of English than on suprasegmentals. It is aimed at giving an awareness of the elements of pronunciation to native-speaking teachers who can speak the language but do not know about how sounds are made. As such, it is a good source of short activities to help native speakers become more aware of what is happening in their mouths so that they can help learners. It has a wealth of practical ideas, although some of these are more suitable for higher level classes, and many focus on the use of the phonemic chart in class, which Underhill argues is no bad thing.

Widin, J 1992. *Approaches to teaching English pronunciation*. Foundation Studies Training Division, Western Sydney Institute of TAFE

This collection of chapters on different approaches to pronunciation is informative and provides some useful background to the teaching of pronunciation as well as a variety of ideas for teaching.

Acknowledgment

Activity notes

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