How should we teach pronunciation?

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Aspects of teaching pronunciation 1

Accent

Diagram:
- Sound
- Flow
- Accent
- Rhythm
- Melody

Flow → Accent → Rhythm → Melody → Sound
Aspects of teaching pronunciation 2

Features

• SEGMENTAL
  - SOUNDS
  - VOWELS: short, long, diphthongs
  - CONSONANTS: voiced, unvoiced; clusters; silent letters

• SUPRASEGMENTAL
  - STRESS: word & sentence level
  - INTONATION: pitch, tone function; rising, falling
Introduction

Discuss these questions.

1. What is the role of teaching pronunciation in the EFL curriculum? How important do you think it is?
2. Which aspects of pronunciation do coursebooks emphasize?
3. Which aspects of pronunciation cause problems for your learners?
4. What do you do if you don’t know how to pronounce a word in class? Is it a problem for you?
5. How often should pronunciation mistakes be corrected? Can somebody be a successful learner/speaker despite having bad P in English?
Challenges

- Age (critical period hypothesis)
- Motivation (integrative & instrumental)
- Aptitude (personality)
- Methods of teaching (designated class time vs. as it comes up?)
- Exposure to the target language (which accents?)
- Influence of L1
- Fluency vs. accuracy
- Fossilization

Aims: effective understanding & communication comprehensibility raising awareness
Teaching pronunciation

Why?
• Fluency
• Self-confidence
• Motivation
• Recycling (reinforcing other types of knowledge)

How?
• Separated from other skills?
• IPA or not?
• Correct or not?
• Receptive or productive?
Both native and non-native levels are important for listening and speaking practice. To boost "understanding is intelligible" (Kenworthy, 1987).
1 ACCENTS

Links:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UgpfSp2t6k (21 accents)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYmrg3owTRE&t=3s (Ellen Degeneres)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgNdC5zcSk8 (Australian)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kHyByse4xg (South African)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om9EhbBo1Yc (Gloria)
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=wired+autocomplete+ (Autocomplete interviews)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LY8FjXN14ew (Estuary English)
https://www languagetrainers.com/games/english-accent-game.php (Accent game)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOb1qVur0kM (Guess the accent)
“No, no, no, my wife said she’ll have a QUICHE!”

is-land  sal-mon
Feb-ru-ary  lib-ra-ry
yach-t  sciss-ors
sw-ord
2 ENGLISH SOUNDS

How?
• Reading out loud
• Students recording themselves
• Online practice and games
• Flashcards (quizlet)

What?
• Individual sounds, diphthongs and consonant clusters
• Tongue twisters
• Minimal pairs
  kiche – kiss, row, wind
• Silent letters
• Voiced and unvoiced
  walked, lived
2 ENGLISH SOUNDS

/v/ If I leave that lovely vase of violets over there, we can view them whenever we have evenings in the living room.

/w/ We went away to the west to view wild whales on the wonderful old ship the Queen of Whales.

/θ/ Through the death of my ruthless, wealthy fourth wife, I will thankfully marry a faithful thoughtful fifth wife.

/ð/ Within and without my brother is rather smooth with his leather clothes and that with-it sense of rhythm.

Links: [http://www.esltower.com/pronunciation.html](http://www.esltower.com/pronunciation.html)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeZGwxZexfg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeZGwxZexfg)  
3 WORD STRESS

Basic rules, 2 syllables (√ O Vs O √)
VILLAGE    AFTER    REPEAT    BELOW

Changing stress: word families
REAL    REALITY    REALIZE    REALIZATION

Accent reduction
I did not object to the object.

Prominence
DISAPPOINTING OUTCOME – DISAPPOINTING
A ROUTINE JOB – ROUTINE
3 WORD STRESS

1. A soldier decided to **desert** in the **desert**, but first he ate his **dessert**.

2. It’s an **insult** and you’d be **insulted** by that.

3. The singer **recorded** his first **record**.

4. We’ve made such good **progress** that we’re ready to **progress** to level 2.

“I can never remember if it’s ‘dessert’ or ‘desert.’
At least this way, we’re covered.”
4 INTONATION

falling, rising
function, grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Tone names</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Neutral, uninterested ‘Yes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Positive response ‘I agree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low-rise</td>
<td>Question, elicit response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>High-rise</td>
<td>Disappointment: ‘Are you saying Yes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fall-rise</td>
<td>‘Carry on, I’m listening’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rise-fall</td>
<td>Reserved, indicating doubt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 INTONATION

Prominent words

- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- I said she might consider a new haircut.
- Not just any haircut.
- It's a possibility.
- It was my idea.
- Not something else.
- Don't you understand me?
- Not another person.
- She should think about it.
- It's a good idea.
4 INTONATION

EXPRESSIONS FOR BEING SURPRISED
I don’t believe it! You must be joking!
You are kidding! Why on earth ...?
Wow, that’s fantastic/shocking/exciting/amazing!

EXPRESSIONS FOR BEING NOT SURPRISED
I’m not surprised, to be honest. I bet you were/did.
Well, no wonder you... Well, s/he would say/do that, wouldn’t ....?
Yes, I can imagine.

Remember the time when you...
Choose one of the following topics and prepare to tell a brief story to your partner(s). The story can be true or false, but don’t tell them in advance – let them guess first. While one of you is talking, the other should constantly interrupt, using expressions of being (not) surprised.

• met someone famous
• got into a very embarrassing situation
• lost something important
• had an exciting trip
4 INTONATION

Ellipsis
1. Car’s running badly.
2. Keeping well, hope?
3. Careful what you say.
4. Haven’t seen him.
5. Have seen him.

• Questions and question tags
• Prominent words (TED talks)
• Telling a story (using sentence adverbs, like Fortunately, In my view, In a nutshell)
• Giving a talk (using linking words to structure the presentation: First of all, Then I will move on…)
4 INTONATION

Sentence adverbs

AT FIRST SIGHT  FUNNILY ENOUGH
TO MY SURPRISE  PARTICULARLY
UP TO A POINT  BROADLY SPEAKING
AS A RESULT  AFTER THAT
IN REALITY  FOR FEAR THAT
UNFORTUNATELY  LUCKILY
IN A NUTSHELL  MOREOVER
IN OTHER WORDS
THAT IS TO SAY  PRESUMABLY  APPARENTLY
ACTUALLY  ANYWAY
Conclusion

When it comes to accents, sounds, stress & intonation

• adapt your methods to the needs of your students
• raise awareness
• boost learners’ confidence (by reusing some tasks)
• keep tasks practical and enjoyable
• use both authentic and coursebook materials
• have them read out loud and record themselves (sometimes)
• help learners become more autonomous
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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More links & references

https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-teach-pronunciation-1210483
https://www.tesol.org/docs/default-source/books/14038_sam.pdf
https://www.academia.edu/14120652/Why_is_pronunciation_important_The_elements_of_pronunciation
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/imports/fileManager/UNIT_8_Pronunciation.pdf