

発音事例研究：日本人学生による英語スピーチコンテストの準備を通して

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Background and context

Pronunciation is a critical element of English language learning. According to Jenkins 'pronunciation already has a greater potential to compromise mutual international intelligibility than do the other linguistic elements' (Jenkins, 2002, p82). However, despite its importance in communication very little research has been published on the teaching of pronunciation, and classroom practices and materials 'are often based on intuition rather than empirical evidence' (Jordan, 2011, p82).

This presentation describes a case study that focused on the preparation of a Japanese student for an English recitation contest. The case study was guided by two questions: Firstly, what pronunciation factors hinder the fluency and intelligibility of the recital? Secondly, what can be done to ameliorate these issues and how effective are these interventions?

Methodology

First of all, a contrastive analysis was made of the student's language. It is generally accepted that it is interference from the learner's first language that influences phonetic acquisition. Specifically, 'the acquisition of more general segmental features such as aspiration and of suprasegmental features such as intonation and rhythm' (Celce-Murcia et al 1996, p20)

Findings from the analysis were prioritized to make a curriculum for the student. The curriculum was made

up of consonants, consonant clusters, vowel quality, vowel length, stress, rhythm, adjustments in connected speech, tone groups, prominence and intonation contours.

Intervention strategies

For intervention a communicative framework for teaching pronunciation was used. This was adapted from Celce-Murcia et al (1996, p25) and consisted of the following stages:

- 1) Instruction
- 2) Listening practice.
- 3) Controlled practice.
- 4) Authentic practice.

For the segmental phonemes instruction involved a sagittal section diagram that was used to show the various points of aspiration for each sound.

Listening and practice stages concentrated on differentiating between minimal pairs and also involved comparing English words with their Japanese loan word equivalent. The authentic practice section consisted of practicing the recitation piece.

Coaching strategies borrowed techniques taken from interventions used in language therapy with native speaker children. These methods, taken from Bowen (2012) included such techniques as shadowing, listen and repeat, chaining, and front and back building.

Elements such as stress, rhythm, prominence and

intonation were taught with the help of kinesthetic reinforcement. This is where actions and movement are used to reinforce teaching (Chen 1988, cited in Celce-Murcia et al) 1996).

Observations and outcomes

Various observations were made during the study. It was noted that segmental characteristics appeared to be more crucial to clarity and intelligibility. On the other hand segmental characteristics were more closely related to the appearance of fluency (Hasbrouk, 2006)

It became apparent that while elements of prosody, such as stress, rhythm and intonation responded fairly quickly to coaching, segmental phonemes were more resistant to intervention. Additionally it was noted that consonants and vowel aspiration was strongly influenced by context. For example, while target sounds could be produced in isolation they became unintelligible in certain phonetic environments and difficult to modify. Similarly vowel length was found to be influenced by context.

It was discovered that vowel quality was often difficult to realize; with the students finding certain vowel sound difficult to both recognise and produce. However, it was observed that improvement to the quality of diphthongs could be achieved through concentrating on mouth shape and movement. On the other hand, however, vowel length was fairly easy to rectify. This went a long way to improving clarity and intelligibility.

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