Materials for teaching the pronunciation of English in Finnish upper secondary schools

Master's thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Englantia toisena tai vieraana kielenä puhuvia on nykyään enemmän kuin äidinkielisiä puhujia ja englanninkielinen vuorovaikutus tapahtuu yhä enemmän ei-äidinkielisten puhujien välillä, eli englantia käytetään useissa tilanteissa lingua francana. Siksi englannin ääntämisopetuksen perustuminen natiivimalleille ja etenkin standardisoidulle britti- tai amerikanenglannille on entistä vaikeammin perusteltavissa. Ymmärrettävyyden periaate (intelligibility principle) sen sijaan korostaa sitä, että kieltenoppijoiden ei tarvitse tavoitella natiivitasoista ääntämistä, kunhan puhe on ymmärrettävää. Suullisen osuuden puuttuessa ylioppilaskirjoituksista suomalaisissa lukioissa voi olla vaikeaa priorisoida mitä ääntämisestä pitäisi opettaa. Monet kieltenopettajat myös kokevat, että ääntämisen opettaminen on haastavaa sekä kaipaavat tukea ja vinkkejä ääntämisopetukseen.

Tämän maisterintutkielman tavoitteena on selvittää, miten englannin kielen ääntämistä voi opettaa ymmärrettävyyden lähtökohdasta suomalaisten lukioiden pitkän oppimäärän pakollisilla kursseilla (ENA1-6). Tähän tarkoitukseen luotu opetusmateriaalipaketti noudattaa uusinta lukion opetussuunnitelmaa (LOPS 2015) ja se on suunnattu lukion englanninopettajille sekä heidän opiskelijoilleen. Siihen on koottu tehtäviä ja opetusideoita, jotka hyödyttävät erityisesti suomea äidinkielenään puhuvia oppijoita: yleisesti suomenkielisille hankaluuksia tuottavat ääntämisen osa-alueet on huomioitu ja englannin kielen ilmiöitä verrataan suomen kieleen. Perinteisesti ääntämisopetuksessa aloitetaan yksittäisillä äänteillä ja siirrytään prosodiaan, jos aikaa jää. Tutkimusten mukaan prosodian opetus kuitenkin edistää enemmän sekä ymmärrettävyyttä että itse äänteiden oppimista, joten tässä materiaalipaketissa järjestys on toisin päin. Opetusmateriaaliin sisältyy myös tarveanalyysi ja tavoitteiden asetus sekä aksentteihin ja kirjain-äänne -vastaavuuteen liittyviä aktiviteetteja, joita harvemmin näkyy oppikirjoissa. Sisältö onkin koostettu niin, että opetusmateriaalipakettia voi käyttää mahdollisen oppikirjan ohella.

Asiasanat – Keywords

teaching material package, pronunciation, intelligibility, upper secondary school, EFL

Säilytyspaikka – Depository

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Muita tietoja – Additional information

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1 INTRODUCTION

Currently, English is indisputably the most widespread language in the world. It is an international language and regularly used as a lingua franca, a common language shared by speakers of different languages. In fact, there are more second or foreign language speakers of English than those who speak it as their first language (Jenkins 2000: 1). It has been estimated that the English language has over 400 million native speakers and from 500 million to one billion non-native speakers, and the number is continuously rising (Crystal 2002: 2-3). The trend can be seen in Finland as well: English is the main language for international communication and the most common foreign language taught in schools (Huhta et al. 2008: 185; Tergujeff 2013: 11).

Derwing and Munro (2015: 2-3) define pronunciation as how speakers use their speech organs in order to speak. They continue that pronunciation consists of single sounds, or segmentals, as well as prosodic features, or suprasegmentals, such as stress, rhythm and intonation of a given language. In oral communication, pronunciation plays a major role as it is one of the first facets that are exposed to the listener. The first impression of the speaker's language skills is given by their pronunciation, based on which the listener can evaluate the speaker's entire language proficiency (Iivonen 2002, cited in Lintunen 2004: 1). One's otherwise adequate linguistic competence can, nonetheless, be jeopardised by a weak phonetic performance in oral interaction (Iivonen 2005: 46). Therefore, it is crucial that pronunciation is included in language teaching.

The teaching of pronunciation, nevertheless, has been neglected in the past. The audio-lingual method with its drills, in the earlier part of the 20th century, highlighted the importance of pronunciation (Derwing and Munro 2015), but in a way that perhaps gave a negative reputation for pronunciation teaching. The method was partly replaced by generative phonology, which unfortunately did not have any visible influence on pronunciation teaching or teaching materials (Derwing and Munro 2015: 23). The advent of communicative language teaching (CLT) reduced the prominence of pronunciation teaching even more, due to the implication that pronunciation could not be taught explicitly and mere exposure to the target language would suffice for students to learn the necessary skills. Jenkins (2000: 3) states that, in fact, the problems in integrating pronunciation teaching to CLT has been one of the reasons why

pronunciation has been minimised in language teaching. However, every cloud has a silver lining; CLT has had a positive impact on pronunciation teaching, too. While the focus in pronunciation previously was on correct individual sounds, communicative approaches have inspired to create and look for more applicable ways of teaching pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996: 10).

In the past, teachers had to depend on their own instincts and impressions of their students' productions, which in some cases encouraged teachers to develop their teaching but left others to feel incompetent and, consequently, to avoid teaching pronunciation (Derwing and Munro 2015: 7). One of the greatest issues in developing the pronunciation teaching of English has indeed been the lack of competent teachers (Jenkins 2000: 199). Derwing and Munro (2015: 25) remind that even though experienced teachers have developed intuitions about learners' successes and failures through observing their learners, more advice with reference to evidence of effective instruction techniques would be needed by most of the teachers (see also Tergujeff 2016). They add that not only teachers but also students are hampered if the wheel of effective pronunciation teaching must be re-invented time and time again by each instructor. There is a shortage of pronunciation reference books for teachers, in particular the ones based on research, compared to other fields of second language learning (Derwing 2008: 358). Furthermore, audio-visual and printed materials designed specifically for pronunciation teaching have only recently become common (Derwing and Munro 2015: 21).

Fortunately, due to the emergence of more developed digital technologies, the opportunities for pronunciation teaching have significantly increased (Derwing and Munro 2015: 24). Encouragingly, the recent emphasis on oral language skills has led to a growth of interest in pronunciation as well (Iivonen 2005: 46; Derwing and Munro 2015: 108). The salience of teaching oral skills and pronunciation is also growing in Finnish upper secondary schools (Iivonen and Tella 2009: 269-270), and it shows in the latest national core curriculum (National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2015). It has been proposed that the matriculation examination, usually taken at the end of upper secondary school, should include an oral part in language exams (Ministry of Education and Culture 2017). This is needed because of the inadequacy of Finns' oral skills conveyed not only by Finnish upper secondary school students and workers of various fields themselves, but also by foreigners engaging with Finns (Paananen-Porkka 2007: 109).

The present study provides means about how the pronunciation of English could be taught in Finnish upper secondary schools. Moreover, the main objective is to create a teaching material package based on those findings. Chapters 2 and 3 review relevant literature and previous research in regard to the topic of this study. Chapter 2 focuses on the main differences between English and Finnish that commonly cause pronunciation problems for Finnish-speaking learners of English. Chapter 3 discusses issues related to the learning and teaching of English pronunciation: intelligibility and comprehensibility, pronunciation teaching priorities, accent and identity, first language (L1) transfer and pronunciation models. Chapter 4 presents the aims of the material package and chapter 5 reflects how it succeeded. The material package itself can be found at the end of this study.

2 CHALLENGES IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION FOR FINNISH-SPEAKERS

This chapter summarises the main differences between English and Finnish phonology and spelling that often cause challenges for Finnish-speaking learners of English. The intention is not to give an exhaustive explanation of the differences, but to briefly present the main causes of learning problems for Finnish-speakers. Section 2.1 concerns suprasegmentals, including connected speech, intonation and rhythm and stress, section 2.2 is about the sound-letter correspondence and section 2.3 discusses segmentals, comprising consonants and vowels.

2.1 Suprasegmentals

Terms suprasegmentals and prosody are often, and also in this study, used interchangeably. Sometimes intonation is employed to refer to suprasegmentals and prosody (Chun 2002: 3). Here, nonetheless, it is defined as a part of suprasegmentals (see 2.1.2). Generally, suprasegmentals cover longer sections of speech than single sounds: mainly syllables, words or phrases (Chun 2002: 2). According to Iivonen and Tella (2009: 277-278), prosodic features may have semantic and grammatical functions and they also express the speaker's feelings and attitudes; that is why they do not only serve a cosmetic purpose in speech. Prosodic features, they add, are used to restrict and organise entities, highlight important words, express turns of speech as well as making statements, asking, replying, declining, thanking and shouting. Gilbert (2012: ix) describes suprasegmentals as "spoken punctuation" which one can use to distinguish thought groups and which is as necessary to learn as written punctuation. Suprasegmental features are important, as Odisho (2003: 110) maintains that pronunciation teaching without them is inadequate and unsuccessful. The following chapters will focus on connected speech, intonation and stress and rhythm.

2.1.1 Connected speech

In connected speech, words connect to each other without pauses, and pauses occur only when they have a structural or rhythmic function (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 151). However, in a study with six Finnish adolescent learners of English conducted by Paananen-Porkka (2007: 344),

she found that the learners' speech included misplaced and excessive amounts of pauses and hesitations which partly hampered their intelligibility (see 3.1). That is why Paananen-Porkka (2007: 354) proposes that more pedagogic attention ought to be paid to pauses and ways of indicating hesitation. In addition, producing connected speech in English may be overall problematic for Finnish-speakers. For example, the linking 'r' is salient for the English rhythm and flow and omitting it or replacing it with a break makes the rhythm choppy (Morris-Wilson 2004: 118). However, since Finnish generally does not make use of word-final sounds linking to word-initial vowels, Finns feel strange using the linking 'r' and final consonant linking in general, even though the linking sounds themselves do not cause learning problems (Morris-Wilson 2004: 208). Problems with connected speech might occur because Finnish-speaking learners think that applying connected speech phenomena would leave out some information or make their speech sound sloppy and uneducated (Gilbert 2012: 27). Moreover, learning to speak imprecisely after attempts to produce individual sounds correctly makes students feel confused and frustrated; it is a psychological challenge for students to overcome the situation of unlearning something (Morris-Wilson 2004: 208-209). Therefore, it might be better to begin pronunciation teaching with connected speech and other suprasegmentals.

2.1.2 Intonation

Intonation is defined as the changes in pitch that occur in speech (Derwing and Munro 2015: 178). There is no clear consensus of the main functions of intonation, although the views do not differ remarkably from each other. Lane (2010: 85) defines intonation's purpose in three areas. Firstly, in discourse, it distinguishes central information, indicates engagement between the interlocutors and controls speech turns. Secondly, intonation is used in grammar for differentiating questions from statements and direct object nouns from direct address nouns. Finally, intonation can convey attitudinal and emotional messages in its affective purpose. According to Hirvonen (1970: 8), intonation is mostly used for separating phrases and expressing attitudes. For Gilbert (2014: 124), intonation emphasises new information, which she speculates to be the most important function for intelligibility, and divides thought groups to aid the listener process the utterance.

Intonation was excluded from pronunciation teaching for a long time because of its complicatedness. For example, Hirvonen (1970: 85) asserts that since intonation does not

usually make a great difference in a foreign accent, it should not be highlighted in teaching if the goal is the capability of solely making oneself understood. In addition, Laroy (1995: 39) notes that rhythm and intonation are aspects of pronunciation that are most likely to be refrained from, perhaps because in the first language they are closely related to one's identity. He reminds that, nonetheless, intonation and rhythm can be learnt, even if they could be difficult to teach. Teaching intonation may also be ignored because intonation has usually been left to be learnt out of class or it is prone to be presented in a very theoretical way, without a more applied approach to language acquisition, even though the value of intonation has been recognised (Chun 2002: 135). For teachers, intonation might also seem too abstract to teach (Lane 2010: 90). Luckily, the situation is changing: due to intonation's positive effects on language fluency, competence and proficiency, its role in teaching is gradually becoming more and more recognised and it is included in present-day teaching materials (Chun 2002: xiii, 135).

According to Hirvonen (1970: 86), first language intonation is the most persistent feature in the second language learner's pronunciation. Typical Finnish intonation contours are falling or level, so the rising intonations patterns of English can be challenging for Finnish-speakers both to recognise and produce (Hirvonen 1970: 28, 53; Iivonen 2009: 73). On the other hand, nowadays a number of Finns seem to use English-like rising intonation, or uptalk, in Finnish as well, perhaps due to the increased exposure to and transfer of spoken English (cf. Ogden and Routarinne 2005). However, in Finnish, intonation does not have such linguistic significance as it does in English (Hirvonen 1970: 53). In English, intonation functions more in distinguishing between different kinds of utterances, which may cause learning problems for Finnish speakers; for example, English imperatives have a certain rising intonation pattern which does not exist in Finnish (Hirvonen 1970: 76). Finnish-English interlanguage has a prosodic structure of its own that is independent of both Finnish and English (Toivanen 1999: 48). It possesses a paucity of rising, particularly falling-rising intonation patterns, while falling and level patterns are typical (Toivanen 1999: 75).

The teaching of English intonation, Hirvonen (1967: 56) suggests, should focus on three basic patterns: the low fall, the low rise and the high rise. He emphasises the importance of prioritising the high rise, which is the hardest to learn and the most likely to hinder comprehensibility if produced incorrectly. Since Finnish does not originally have any rising pitch patterns, Finnish speakers may find it hard to identify the extent of pitch rise, that is whether it is slight or great (Hirvonen 1970: 84). Finns tend to speak English with a lower pitch and a narrower voice range

than native English speakers, although they are able to use adequate pitch and voice range (Toivanen 1999: 47). Thus, reading out loud and acting dialogues may prove useful in the classroom so that learners could vary their pitch and voice range according to the situation (ibid.). Chun (2002: 144) demands the teaching of intonation contrasts to be consistent and based on authentic discourse situations, in regard to both production and perception activities.

Lane (2010: 14) speculates that low self-confidence or first language intonation patterns, or both, might be the reason behind a flat, monotonic expression some students have when speaking English. She goes on to say that this way of speaking may make them sound indifferent or bored, so it is necessary to remind the students about it and tell them to use a wider range of their voice and pitch. Hirvonen (1970: 78) points out, too, that the students' problem is not so the production of a high pitch but their belief of sounding silly when using it.

2.1.3 Stress and rhythm

Stress is a way of labelling syllables and words that are more salient compared to other syllables and words (Chun 2002: 148). In English, stress is realised by added length and loudness (Lane 2010: 46). Rhythm of a language is based on its stress patterns which are described as laying a strong beat on certain syllables or words with a number of unstressed syllables between them depending on the language (Chun 2002: 149). In English, rhythm consists of stress groups, in other words units in which one syllable has primary stress, which are roughly the same length (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 61). That is to say, stressed syllables recur in fixed intervals (Taylor 1981: 236). Consequently, stress groups with few syllables are lengthened, and the ones having more syllables are articulated more quickly, with unstressed sounds being reduced (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 61). Therefore, stress has a major impact on the length of vowel sounds, for example (Taylor 1981: 236).

According to Chun (2002: 147), stress and rhythm have two functions. Firstly, they help speakers to mark word stress and sentence stress. Secondly, the speakers' interlocutors can recognise each word and the most salient parts of an utterance. Rhythm also connects words and helps forming thought groups, i.e. meaningful units of words (Lane 2010: 46). Chun (2002: 147) asserts that teachers ought to do listening practice themselves in order to identify stressed

syllables and words, after which they can guide their students to recognise stress patterns of the target language and both perceive and produce “more native-like rhythmic patterns”.

English makes use of stress-based timing, which means that the time between stressed syllables is usually the same (Paananen-Porkka 2007: 14). Finnish, on the other hand, has syllable-based timing, in which all syllables, not only stressed ones, occur at regular distances (Paananen-Porkka 2007: 62). Low (2015: 134) moots that using syllable-based timing may cause misunderstandings in communication with native speakers of English. She adds that learners of English should be told the difference between the two features. However, Walker and Zoghbor (2009: 441) observe that there is no evidence of syllable timing hindering intelligibility in lingua franca contexts. On the contrary, syllable-based timing is used so frequently in non-native communication of English that it often increases intelligibility (Deterding 2010: 10, cited in Walker and Zoghbor 2009: 441). Nevertheless, categorising languages by stress-based and syllable-based timing has received criticism; for instance, English has been observed to sometimes deviate from stress-timing (Paananen-Porkka 2007: 32-43).

The lexical differences between English and Finnish bring up stress and rhythm related difficulties as well. According to Lehtonen et al. (1977: 39), over two thirds of words in average English text are one-syllable words, whereas in Finnish the figure is less than one fifth. Besides, almost two fifths of Finnish words have three syllables or more, while in English these kinds of words represent less than a tenth of all words. Consequently, longer words in Finnish have an impact on Finnish speakers’ stress and rhythm, which may cause issues of timing when speaking English. The word order in English is highly inflexible and it cannot be used for highlighting important words, so unrestricted placement of stress is permitted for compensation (Jenkins 2000: 46). English stress placement is difficult to predict, and the word’s grammatical category, syllabic structure and function influence it a good deal (Odisho 2003: 102). In Finnish, the stress of the word is mainly on the first syllable, whereas in English the placement of stress varies to a great extent. In other words, Finnish has fixed word stress, and in English it is non-fixed (Odisho 2003: 102). In addition, the differences between stressed and unstressed syllables are far greater in English than in Finnish, which may lead to challenges in learning to vary one’s pitch in connected speech (Hirvonen 1970: 77).

Rhythm and stress can pose major learning problems. In fact, rhythm might be the greatest difficulty foreign learners of English encounter (Taylor 1981: 235), and producing non-native

rhythm can make the speech unintelligible for the listener (Derwing and Munro 2015: 61). Also, if a word is stressed wrong, the listener may not be able to recognise it (Lane 2010: 8). However, Lehtonen et al. (1977: 60) reveal that incorrectly stressed words do not bother native speakers of English as much as is often thought. They even believe (p. 63) that the rhythm of English is acquired automatically through overall progress in fluency, so it is not necessary to teach the rhythm of English in isolation.

In contexts longer than individual words, the length and loudness of syllables depend on their location in the utterance, as they are in relation to other words (Chun 2002: 169). Sometimes certain monosyllabic words, for example articles and pronouns, become unstressed. These counterparts of the stressed varieties are called weak forms. According to Morris-Wilson (2004: 211), Finnish speakers can produce weak forms of English with ease, but struggle with using them in real-life communication. He speculates that this phenomenon exists firstly because students are mostly taught the strong forms of the words, as new vocabulary is learnt one word at a time, and secondly because students might never hear their teacher using the weak forms as the teacher's output is slow and clearly articulated. For these reasons, he suggests that teachers should ignore teaching the strong forms since they are less frequent compared to the weak forms. Another reason is that using weak forms is not encouraged by the spelling system of English, since it does not mark reduced forms in any way (Taylor 1981: 240).

Regarding the teaching of stress, Celce-Murcia et al. (1996: 143) have devised a list of priorities. Firstly, the way in which native speakers use variation in length, volume and pitch to emphasise stressed syllables. Secondly, the manner of producing unstressed syllables, such as the use of vowel reduction. Finally, the degrees of stress (strong stress, light stress and unstress) and recognising the place of stress in words. Moreover, Chun (2002: 195) has two principles concerning stress and rhythm teaching: first, the context ought to expand from word level to sentence and discourse level in materials and tasks. Second, students should be taught so that they realise the stress patterns of the target language, perceive them in speech and finally learn to produce them themselves. In fact, identification and production of rhythm sequences appears to improve with learners who are more aware of them (Gilbert 2012: 1).

2.2 Sound-letter correspondence and phonemic transcription

The lack of correspondence between some sounds and letters in English may cause problems for Finnish speakers, even though English spelling is not as inconsistent and irregular as is often believed (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 50). For instance, the idea of a spelling bee contest for native speakers of Finnish would be absurd. Finnish has almost fully correspondent phonemes (abstractions of physical sounds that are phones) and graphemes (written letters), so a Finn may try to apply this rule to English as well (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 45). Thus, Finnish and English are almost as far apart as possible in regard to spelling, which can be difficult to understand (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 41). The spelling may even misguide learners of English to pronounce a word wrong, though they could repeat it correctly after hearing a spoken model (Derwing 2008: 352). Nevertheless, teaching phonemic transcription to students could provide a remedy for this problem.

Lintunen (2004: 10, 14) considers transcription systems as forms between speech and writing. He continues that phonemic transcription, which is based on phonology, makes use of phonemes and allophones (possible variations of phones), whereas phonetic transcription is used for more concrete and detailed description. Both transcription systems aim to represent speech with written symbols, but phonemic transcription resembles more writing than speech, for it is not as specific as phonetic transcription. Nevertheless, as Abercrombie (1967: 127, cited in Lintunen 2004: 13) notes, “transcription records not an utterance but an analysis of an utterance”. Thus, transcriptions are mere attempts to describe the original utterance, which may not perfectly correspond to the source (Lintunen 2004: 13).

One of the goals for devising the International Phonemic Alphabet (IPA) was to create a way of teaching pronunciation (Lintunen 2004: 34). Generally phonemic transcriptions that bear resemblance to IPA are used in dictionaries and English textbooks, though they can vary to an extent depending on the authors (Lintunen 2004: 20). Lintunen (2004: 187-188) found out in his study that only a little over one fifth of the participants had been taught transcription symbols before coming to study at the university. He adds that these symbols are often left uncovered, although they are included in all course books used in upper secondary schools. Thus, even though a great deal of material related to phonetic training and phonemic script can be found in Finnish textbooks of English, they have been very scarcely presented in teaching (Tergujeff 2010).

Students have often expressed having difficulties with learning transcription, yet some of them have felt that it is helpful in learning pronunciation (Lintunen 2004: 183). Harmer (2001: 186) suggests that students are less strained if transcription symbols are solely used for perception rather than production tasks, that is, learners would be taught to identify and read the symbols instead of writing them. Rogerson-Revell (2011: 243) lists some of the most prominent advantages of using phonemic script; for instance, it demonstrates the sound-letter correspondence, or lack of it, and different phonemes in English. It also shows the pronunciation differences between connected speech and words produced in isolation, and makes it possible to refer to certain sounds, such as the schwa /ə/, the unstressed vowel in English. By writing dictated utterances down in transcription symbols, students become more attuned to find slight differences between sounds (Rivers and Temperley 1978: 178). Lintunen (2004: 186) found that in most cases phonemic transcription improved learners' pronunciation, and transcription symbols were easily understood. Therefore, it can be said that, even though learning transcription can be challenging and time-consuming, most students feel that it is needed and worthwhile. Moreover, using phonemic script is thought to be beneficial for Finnish-speakers, due to the differences in sound-letter correspondences in Finnish and English. Tergujeff (2013: 88) proposes, however, that whether using phonemic script suits a learner or not might depend more on personal preferences and learning styles.

2.3 Segmentals

Segmentals are individual phonemes that are strung together to create an utterance (Chun 2002: 2). English has 44 phonemes for 26 letters, from which 22 are "efficient" letters, whereas Finnish has 21 phonemes for 20 letters (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 49). Thus, the phoneme-grapheme correspondence also seems to show in the amount of sound elements in each language. Segmentals divide into consonant and vowel sounds, which will be described in more detail in the following sections.

2.3.1 Consonants

Consonants are made by obstructing the outgoing breath in some manner, for instance bringing the lips together (Ladefoged 2005: 26). The distinction between voiced and voiceless consonants is not as significant and frequent in Finnish as it is in English; in fact, Finnish

consonant sounds are somewhere in between the equivalent English sounds (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 128). The voiced-voiceless opposition is challenging to both identify and produce for Finnish-speakers (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 135). In particular, the production of aspirated and voiced word-initial plosives can be difficult, since aspiration does not exist in Finnish and voicing produced by a Finnish-speaker might sound exaggerated (Iivonen 2005: 55).

Finnish language has only one sibilant, /s/, while English has six: /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ (Peacock 2005: 14). This setting already predicts learning problems that a majority of Finnish students encounter (Peacock 2005: 16). For /tʃ/ and /dʒ/, according to Morris-Wilson (2004: 102), the issue is the place of articulation of the sounds: Finns tend to use post-alveolar, the highest part of the roof of the mouth, instead of palate-alveolar, which is a little farther back in the mouth. He adds that, rarely nonetheless, Finnish-speakers may extend the friction noise in /tʃ/ and /dʒ/, making it too long while they ought to be short, rapid sounds.

Morris-Wilson (2004: 61-62) notes that besides exaggerating the friction noise, Finnish speakers may also disregard it completely. He observes that as regards the voiced dental fricative /ð/, Finns tend to articulate it in the wrong manner and place: a plosive instead of a fricative and alveolar in lieu of dental, thus too far from the teeth; for the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ the place is correct, but the manner is often a plosive instead of a fricative. Peacock (2005: 87) points out that Finns usually learn to use the dynamic articulation of /θ/ and /ð/ with the tongue showing between the teeth, which is used in stressed syllables, at the beginning of a syllable or in the end of an utterance. However, he continues, /θ/ and /ð/ occur most frequently in words that are unstressed, such as ‘the’, ‘that’, ‘this’, ‘then’ and ‘with’; here the energetic articulation should be avoided to preserve the right rhythm.

The friction or hissing noise is also essential to pronouncing the English /v/ sound, which is often omitted by Finnish-speakers, especially word-initially, according to Morris-Wilson (2004: 57-58). He suggests that learners could try biting their lips when producing the /v/ sound and not to use lip rounding. Peacock (2005: 79) proposes that an efficient way to distinct English /v/ and /w/ from each other is to tell students to imagine that the English /w/ is the Finnish /u/, which is in fact closer to the English /w/ than the Finnish /v/ is.

2.3.2 Vowels

Ladefoged (2005: 26) defines a vowel as a sound that occurs in the middle of a syllable and is produced by nothing restricting the exhalation. When teaching English vowels to Finns, Morris-Wilson (2004: 139) suggests that the focus should be on three aspects: tongue position, lip form and contrast with the closest Finnish vowel(s). The difference between tongue heights (closeness or openness) is the key reason for problems in vowel production for a Finnish-speaker, since Finnish has three degrees of tongue height, while English has four of them (Wiik 1965: 146).

Another factor is the length of the vowels; for example, Received Pronunciation (RP, Standard English in the UK) has three degrees of vowel duration (Peacock 2005: 93; see Table 1). Since many Finns do not modify the vowel duration, they tend to produce too long vowels in front of final voiceless consonants and too short vowels before voiced ones (Peacock 2005: 65). Whether the following consonant is voiced or voiceless has a drastic impact on the vowel duration (Iivonen 2005: 55). Particularly with word-final voiceless plosives /p/, /t/ and /k/, the preceding vowel is significantly shorter as can be seen from Table 1 below (Peacock 2005: 65).

Table 1. Durations of [i] and [ɪ] in RP from shortest to longest on scale 1-3 (adapted from Peacock 2005: 93).

bit (1)	bid (2)
beat (2)	bead (3)

A feature that links lip and tongue position and vowel duration together is the tense-lax opposition in English, which Finnish vowel system lacks (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 100). Short vowels in English are simultaneously lax, while long vowels are tense (Iivonen 2005: 55). Transfer of the Finnish short and long (or single- and double-) vowel contrast into English hinders both identification and production of the English tense-lax opposition (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 100). For example, students may learn to pronounce /ɪ/ as a short version of /i/; instead, they should be taught the different tongue positions for the two vowels, which make up the difference in vowel quality (Lane 2010: 170).

Without instruction on vowel quality, it can be difficult for Finnish-speakers to differentiate the lax /ɪ/ from the English /i:/ and /e/, as it overlaps the latter sounds in the Finnish vowel system (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 110-111; Peacock 2005: 92). According to Lane (2010: 169-170), the

tongue is further front and higher for the English tense /i/, whereas for the lax /ɪ/ it is more central and lower. Moreover, for /i/ the lips are spread, due to muscular tension, and relaxed for /ɪ/. Nevertheless, the tongue position is a primary difference, so the lip position opposition is not as necessary. The /i/ and /ɪ/ distinction is important because the sounds have many minimal pairs (pairs of words that have different meanings and only one distinctive sound) and both sounds are highly frequent in English (Lane 2010: 169). Furthermore, /i/ and /ɪ/ minimal pair words are recurrent and generally belong to the same lexical classes, for example nouns 'beat' and 'bit' (Derwing and Munro 2009: 381).

Other vowel sounds of English are less problematic for Finnish-speakers. The English central vowel /ɜ:/ is physically new for Finns, yet they use a similar sound in hesitation pauses, but failing to produce /ɜ:/ does not usually lead to misunderstandings (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 116). The schwa /ə/ causes few problems in perception or production, but considerable ones in distributing the sound; Finnish-speakers tend to use "marked" vowels instead of the schwa in unstressed syllables (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 117-118). Thus, the difficulty lies more in learning to distinguish stressed and unstressed syllables than the sound itself. With the English /u:/, the only difference is that it is less "rounded and carefully pronounced" as the Finnish long /u:/ (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 113).

Finnish makes use of diphthongs (two adjacent vowels in the same syllable) as well, so they are not new for Finnish-speakers. Nonetheless, difficulties occur if either sound of the diphthong is physically new (in /əʊ/, /ɪə/, /ʊə/ and /ɛə/) or if the diphthong is against the Finnish vowel harmony (a word cannot have both front and back vowels), which leads to pronouncing /əʊ/ and /ʊə/ as [öy] and [uo] (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 119). In addition, diphthongs should be shortened when followed by a final consonant, but Finnish-speakers rarely vary the length of their diphthongs (ibid.).

3 LEARNING AND TEACHING THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH

This chapter presents some of the aspects that ought to be taken into consideration as regards learning and teaching the pronunciation of English. Section 3.1 defines intelligibility and differentiates it from comprehensibility, section 3.2 discusses how to prioritise pronunciation

teaching, section 3.3 looks at L1 transfer, section 3.4 examines accent and identity, and finally, section 3.5 touches upon pronunciation models.

3.1 Intelligibility and comprehensibility

Intelligibility of speech is sometimes confused with comprehensibility, though there is a difference in meaning between the two terms. Comprehensibility is about how much effort a listener must put in to understanding the speaker's utterances (Derwing and Munro 2015: 2). The listener may, nevertheless, misevaluate the extent to which they have comprehended (Derwing and Munro 2009: 379). Therefore, comprehensibility is about the listener's subjective experience of how easy or difficult the speaker's output is to understand. Derwing and Munro (2015: 1) describe that a speaker is intelligible when their intended message can be understood by listeners. Thus, intelligibility means the extent to which the speaker is actually, as objectively as possible, understood. Furthermore, intelligibility and comprehensibility are investigated by using different methodologies: intelligibility with dictation, for example, and comprehensibility through scalar ratings (Derwing and Munro 2009: 378, 382). It seems, however, that there is no clear consensus of what is meant by the term intelligibility and how it should be measured (Derwing and Munro 2009: 377; Jenkins 2000: 71).

Intelligibility is the most crucial element in successful oral communication, and without it there will be communication breakdowns; the utterance can be misinterpreted to mean something that was not meant by the speaker or it may not be understood at all in case the speech is very unclear or masked by noise (Derwing and Munro 2015: 1; Cunningham 2009: 126). On the other hand, Derwing and Munro (2015: 156) state that a distinctive feature of highly intelligible speech is its inexactness. Thus, a speaker who articulates every sound clearly and does not use features of connected speech might sound rather unintelligible. Therefore, issues in pronunciation that hinder overall intelligibility in communication must be addressed (McKay 2002: 127). All in all, intelligibility is a spectrum rather than a binary: speech can be fully or not at all intelligible, or any amount in between the two ends (Derwing and Munro 2009: 379).

The intelligibility principle means that through the progress in the speakers' speech patterns they are able to communicate with no difficulty, although some L1 features would remain in their accent (Derwing and Munro 2015: 7). Derwing and Munro (2009: 380) advocate that

intelligibility and comprehensibility have more value to communication skills than accentedness, but affiliate that no hierarchy exists between them. They add that intelligibility is hardly dependent of accentedness and comprehensibility, so a person can be intelligible but there may be problems with comprehensibility; that is, some listeners might have difficulties understanding the speaker. On the other hand, speech can be heavily accented, but completely understandable and intelligible (Derwing and Munro 2015: 5; Munro 2008: 210). These kinds of aspects should be considered when teaching pronunciation (Derwing and Munro 2015: 5). Many studies indicate that a diverging style of speaking does not automatically mean that it would cause difficulties in understanding it (Munro 2008: 210). Consequently, speaking more native-like does not simply mean that it would become more comprehensible. As Cunningham (2009: 126) points out, "unintelligible pronunciation that contains many features of native accents of English is less than useless". In teaching, it would be more worthwhile to concentrate on the features of the target language that are generally harder to understand for the students. In fact, research findings show that increased intelligibility in the target language can follow from pronunciation teaching that centres around specific issues in second language speech (Munro 2008: 210).

Intelligibility is observed to be affected by many aspects of pronunciation, such as speech tendencies, quality of voice, features of intonation, primary stress, segmentals, predictability of syntax, word choice and discourse markers (Derwing 2008: 353). It is also influenced by the amount of background noise and the transmission, whether it is a telephone, the Internet, the air or water (Derwing and Munro 2009: 379). Intelligibility is not, however, only about the speakers trying to make themselves understood: responsibility lies in the listeners as well (Nation and Newton 2009: 96; Walker and Zoghbor 2009: 436). Intelligibility is created in communication, and both the speaker and the listener play a part in intelligible interaction (Derwing and Munro 2009: 379).

3.2 Pronunciation teaching priorities

Many teachers want precise guidance about English pronunciation features that should take priority for reaching successful communication, also because the time used for instruction is limited (Munro 2008: 197). If intelligibility is increased more by some feature than the other, the former should be given more immediate attention (ibid.). Gilbert (2012: xi) notes that

improving one's pronunciation is prone to take time and be sporadic, and learning becomes yet more difficult if the learner is strained. Thus, she suggests that features having the greatest impact on intelligibility and listening comprehension ought to be prioritised in language learning.

Pronunciation ought to be taught to all learners who have problems with intelligibility, distracting pronunciation and lack of confidence (Lane 2010: 7). Nevertheless, pronunciation is usually downgraded as a "side lesson" or completely excluded from the syllabus, which leads to shortcomings in learners' oral communication (Darcy and Sicola 2009: 471). Besides, pronunciation teaching often lacks conscious teaching of phonetics as attention is mostly given to teaching the new sounds of the target language (Iivonen 2005: 46). Pronunciation teaching should be integrated to language teaching in a way that preserves the students' motivation (Iivonen and Tella 2009: 270). Moreover, it should be automatically, but not excessively, included in the language acquisition throughout the studies (Moilanen 2002: 75).

According to Levis and Grant (2003: 14-15), two kinds of issues in the ways of teaching pronunciation and oral communication persist: in pronunciation classes, controlled practice tends to override communicative tasks, and in speaking-focused classes pronunciation teaching ends up being unarranged or totally ignored. Students in these kinds of classes are lacking either pronunciation or oral skills, as teachers are unable to combine the two areas together. Levis and Grant (2003) suggest three principles for balancing this setting and integrating pronunciation into classrooms: (1) "to aim for a primary though not an exclusive focus on suprasegmentals", (2) "to maintain a central focus on speaking in the class" and (3) "pronunciation instruction should fit the constraints of the speaking task".

Couper (2009: 421) points out that when acquiring a new language, a new way of conceptualising and thinking about the categories of the language must be established, since phonological concepts vary between languages. He continues that the contrast between phonology (what is thought to be said) and physical sounds (what is said in reality) must be realised first; after that teachers can guide their students to change their way of categorising the sounds in their mother tongue towards the manner in which English speakers regard them. In order to talk about pronunciation, it is necessary for teachers and students to create common ground, or a metalanguage (Couper 2009: 424). It includes learners interpreting sounds and

differentiating between them, as well as realising how other speakers of English interpret the students' production of sounds (ibid.).

What students require and strive for ought to be visible in selecting how to teach pronunciation, but pronunciation teaching should also reflect the themes that the teacher feels convenient to teach (Lane 2010: 8-9). Pronunciation errors at the intermediate or advanced levels can be "somewhat fixed or systematic", and that is why the curriculum and methods used have to be adjusted to fit the pronunciation issues that have been noticed (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010: 19). The decision-making of which features of pronunciation to take in or leave out is generally left for the teachers themselves, apart from the learners' own perceptions, so a needs analysis of the students' skills could prove to be helpful (Derwing and Munro 2015: 101).

Phonetic production involves more physical functions than other, more abstract linguistic aspects; thus, speaking is not only actions of the mind but also motoric and sensory action (Iivonen 2005: 46). That is why it is important to encourage learners, especially beginners, to practise pronunciation physically by repeating, experimenting and searching for the right sound instead of only envisioning how a sound is pronounced (Moilanen 2002: 72). Digital recording and playback applications make it easier to practise pronunciation in class (Derwing and Munro 2015: 126). Furthermore, relaxation activities are helpful in improving articulation and voice quality (Laroy 1995: 10). Breathing exercises decrease the jerkiness of speech and increase voice volume, which in turn lowers inhibitions and enhances intelligibility, confidence, rhythm and the quality of segmentals (Pennington 1996: 33). The natural pronunciation of spoken language is presented in authentic auditory or audio-visual media of which in songs pronunciation patterns are the most memorisable (Mishan 2005: 203). In addition, YouTube videos that do not concern pronunciation itself, for instance, may be used for demonstrating natural spoken language in class (Derwing and Munro 2015: 104).

Tongue twisters, however, as Derwing and Munro (2015: 106) assert, should be avoided in pronunciation teaching, although they are often present in textbooks. They argue that tongue twisters may cause "extreme frustration for struggling learners", as they are hard to pronounce even for native speakers, and that there is no proof that tongue twisters would have any advantages for learning pronunciation. Nation and Newton (2009: 82) also strongly oppose tongue twisters, for they see them as "a cruel and unusual punishment" for language learners.

Therefore, it would be wise not to use tongue twisters unless students themselves insist on using them.

Jenkins (2000) devised the lingua franca core (LFC) to pinpoint the most central aspects of pronunciation for mutual intelligibility between non-native speakers. The LFC comprises consonant sounds (aside from /θ/, /ð/ and dark l /ɬ/), vowel duration contrasts, restrictions on consonant deletion, nuclear (or tonic) stress production and placement as well as initial consonant clusters (Jenkins 2000; Jenkins 2009: 12). Facets that are unnecessary for English as a lingua franca (ELF) intelligibility and do not constitute the LFC are vowel quality (except for the RP /ɜ/); features of connected speech such as elision, assimilation and weak forms; word stress placement and pitch direction (Jenkins 2009: 13). Nation and Newton (2009: 77-78) consider Jenkins' core a highly practical way to establish pronunciation objectives and a functional tool for teaching basic and intermediate level learners. Nonetheless, the LFC and the research it is based on have received some criticism. For example, Derwing (2008: 352) comments on Jenkins' proposal by saying that more research needs to be done on it before adapting the core to English classes.

Peacock's (2005: 7) suggestion for the six most salient features of pronunciation for Finnish-speaking learners of English is somewhat similar yet partly contradicting to Jenkins' LFC. It includes sibilant contrasts (/s/ vs /ʃ/ and /z/ vs /ʒ/), word initial /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/ and /g/, word-final contrasts between voiced and voiceless fricatives and plosives with vowel quality, /v/ and /w/, dental fricatives (/θ/ and /ð/) and /ɪ/ vs /i/. Jenkin's LFC does not contain vowel quality or dental fricatives at all, yet they can be found on Peacock's list. Thus, it is difficult to say whether to teach those aspects of pronunciation for Finnish-speakers or not when the starting point is intelligibility. Dental fricatives, for example, are rather insignificant to intelligibility and comprehensibility, although they are a salient feature of accent (Derwing 2008: 10). Since dental fricatives are generally difficult sounds for learners, Jenkins (2000) proposes that for learners who use English mainly with other non-native speakers, they could be taught only receptively. Nevertheless, teachers cannot foresee with whom their students will speak English in the future (Lane 2010: 126). Moreover, dental fricatives can be taught and learnt, and many students want to learn them (Lane 2010: 126-127).

For a long time, there was a strong dichotomy between two pronunciation instruction priorities: segmentals versus suprasegmentals. In various studies and other publications, the salience of suprasegmentals has been reasoned by their effect on intelligibility and comprehensibility as well as more correct production of segmentals (Derwing 2008: 351; Lane 2010: 2; Paananen-Porkka 2007: 108-109; Rivers and Temperley 1978: 160; Zielinski 2009: 397). Furthermore, Laroy (1995: 39) implies that teaching pronunciation to beginners should start with prosodic features, to follow a "natural as well as logical and pedagogical order". It has even been claimed that teaching the phoneme is redundant and misleading (see e.g. Standwell 1978).

As Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994: 73) note, "segmentals are relatively easy to teach, but also relatively less important to communication". Hence, pronunciation teaching ought to include segmentals which are recurrent or, in other words, have a high functional load (Lane 2010: 8). Rivers and Temperley (1978: 174) claim that starting pronunciation activities with the individual sounds is useful solely when the focus is on the articulation of the sounds. However, research evidence shows that second language learners benefit from listening activities in which students distinguish between difficult contrasting sounds (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010: 18). More necessary than pronouncing each phoneme correctly, nonetheless, would be communicativeness, which can be easily ignored by the teacher when teaching 'pronunciation' (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 4). Ideally, the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching is most probably improved with a combination of a communicative goal and automatic phonological processing (Darcy and Sicola 2009: 484).)

Nowadays, pronunciation teaching has been moving away from the bipartition towards a view in which both segmentals and suprasegmentals are recognised important and included in syllabi (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996: 10). This is more beneficial for learners and teachers, both for native and non-native speakers (Lane 2010: 10). Zielinski (2009: 409) notes that both features are crucial to intelligibility and comprehensibility, so categorising them as either segmentals or suprasegmentals would not note the relationship between them or view them "as part of an integrated system" where they have an influence on each other. For example, the production of segmental features is outstandingly enhanced by appropriate use of the stress and pitch patterns common in English (Rivers and Temperley 1978: 160).

3.3 L1 transfer

Both research findings and instructors' observations provide evidence that learning the phonology of the target language is influenced by the mother tongue (Nation and Newton 2009: 79). The impact of the first language on the second language (L2) is most evidently proven by the existence of non-native accents (Munro 2008: 193). The learner's language contains parts of the target language, positive or negative transfer (also called interference) of the native language and possibly features that exist in neither of the languages (Iivonen 2005: 50). Suomi (1980) defines this form of language as interlanguage.

L1 transfer is linked to the contrastive analysis hypothesis by Lado (1957): acquisition of the target language is filtered through the mother tongue, which either eases or interferes with the learning process. Because of its incapability of predicting the difficulty learners perceive when learning certain features, the theory has been contested (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010: 22). Nonetheless, nowadays most linguists accord with the validity of negative transfer in learning foreign language pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010: 23). Celce-Murcia et al. (2010: 34) point out, however, that learner characteristics and the phonetic item being learnt affect to which extent negative transfer plays a role in the acquisition process.

Plenty of research shows that the more different the sounds between native and target language are, the less challenging they are to learn (see e.g. Best and Tyler 2007; Flege 1995). Greater phonetic differences are usually easier to recognise, providing more opportunities for learning, whereas smaller differences tend to be ignored, leading to transfer remaining (Major 2008: 72). Learners rarely learn new sounds, no matter how much time is spent on teaching them, if the transfer does not risk them sounding unintelligible (Jenkins 2000: 120). Of course, when negative transfer changes the meaning of an utterance, it should be pointed out (Hirvonen 1967: 3). Sounds of the new language, Rivers and Temperley (1978: 162) report, are prone to be initially perceived as varieties of the sounds in the learner's L1, and if this phenomenon goes on, it will influence the learner's comprehension as well as impede the progress of achieving "near-native pronunciation". Some learners are able to produce correct L2 differences although they cannot hear them, but usually learners' perception is better than their pronunciation (Major 2008: 75).

Transfer, for example L1 intonation contours, can cause misunderstandings because they bear different meanings depending on the language, and they can make the speaker seem

uninterested, smug or aggressive (Derwing and Munro 2015: 60). For example, highly accented English produced by a Finnish-speaker correlates with the Finn being regarded as unambitious, lazy, uneducated, stupid, insecure, unsuccessful and poor (Morris-Wilson 2004: 14). In other words, the more Finnish-accented the speech, the lower status and competence are linked to the speaker. However, Finnish accent does not influence "friendliness, honesty, kindness, reliability or trustworthiness" (ibid.). Jenkins (2000: 43-44) criticises the emphasis on acquiring acceptable English pronunciation and avoidance of L1 transfer reasoned by the threat of not following the politeness norms of the target language and offending native speakers.

3.4 Accent and identity

According to Walker and Zoghbor (2009: 436), "accents are a natural and inevitable outcome of language variation". In broad terms, all language users, even native speakers (NSs), have an accent. However, the term 'accent' is usually used with non-native language learners and it bears a pejorative undertone (Odisho 2003: 110). Some teachers support the view that, in order to guarantee intelligible pronunciation, learners ought to obtain NS accents to some extent (McKay 2002: 71). The view can be reasoned by the higher status of NSs compared to non-native speakers (NNSs), which leads to disadvantaging the students if they are not offered a native-like accent as a goal (Cunningham 2009: 120). Nevertheless, McKay (2002: 71) points out that "several definitions of Standard English suggest that a standard dialect can be spoken with any accent", which is supported by the observation that NSs use a variety of accents that are accepted as standards. A number of linguists support the view that non-native accents should also be accepted: for example, Lane (2010: 1-2) states that for learners of English, it should not be a requirement to sound like a NS. Moreover, Pennington (1996: 6) observes that there is no infallible definition of a foreign accent, even though the perceived ability to categorise accents as foreign or non-foreign persists.

An accent-free output in the second language is regarded as not only rare but also inessential; L2 students and teachers do not need to aim at a native-like pronunciation, as millions of English speakers with an accent succeed to get understood worldwide (Munro 2008: 194). Pronunciation is one of the areas of proficiency in which many multilingual speakers of English do not even aspire to sound like NSs because of attitudinal factors (McKay 2002: 126). Speaking from personal experience, it seems that many people prefer to speak with a foreign

accent so that they are not seen as merely slow-witted NSs of a given language. Many research findings advocate the view of accentedness and comprehensibility being partially independent features of second language speech productions (Munro 2008: 204). Thus, oral comprehension is not threatened by a non-native accent. Besides, since many NNSs of English are more capable of modifying their output for culturally or linguistically different audiences, they can be better understood than NSs (Phillipson 2003: 167, cited in Jenkins 2009: 33).

Students ought to be made aware of accent variation in order to prepare them for real life language situations; in the modern, globalised world, people need to make swift changes between languages without preparation and be able to understand any speaker of English worldwide (Cunningham 2009: 114; Przedlacka 2005: 32). Cunningham (2009: 113) notes that since NSs of English are in a minority, the conventional NS goal of pronunciation is no longer applicable. On the contrary, she suggests that "maximal international intelligibility" functions as a more practical goal, which is made possible to reach by providing students with a range of different NS and NNS models. Modiano (2009: 59) claims that a way of improving as a communicator is to have an understanding of the multiplicity of English, including both speaking and listening. He criticises that for such an approach, not many techniques and syllabi have hitherto been developed.

In a monolingual classroom, a class where people share the same L1, students are not exposed to as many foreign accents as they would in a multilingual classroom, which means they do not have to learn how to cope with a variety of accents or to adjust their spoken productions to the same extent (Walker and Zoghbor 2009: 445). The input in homogenous classrooms might lead to reinforced L1 patterns in the L2 and a distorted perception of one's own intelligibility and clarity of speech (Derwing 2008: 356). Baxter (1980: 67) suggests familiarising learners with and developing tolerance towards different varieties of English by using teaching materials originating from all communities where English is being used, and not only from native sources. McKay (2002: 71) believes that the extent to which language learners is relating to a certain group of speakers probably affects their use of local pronunciation patterns. She goes on to say that the learners' accents hardly ever differ remarkably from their own speech community if the learners speak English mostly in their own country or among other NNSs. Thus, the degree of the accent's localness correlates with the challenges in understanding it, with both native and non-native accents (Gupta 2006: 97).

The teaching of pronunciation demands more sensitivity than other language areas, as it is linked with identity and attitudes through alterations in students' accents (Rogerson-Revell 2011: 240). An individual's pronunciation may reveal their L1 and their social background (Dalton and Seidlhofer 1994: 9; Rogerson-Revell 2011: 4-5). Therefore, an accent has a strong effect on one's identity and social status. In fact, Gilbert (2012: xi) even proposes that learners of a second language need to develop another identity to achieve appropriate pronunciation. Baxter (1980: 58-60) asserts that by having a native-like target learners and teachers are told that they do not own the English language and that they are compelled not to act themselves. Furthermore, Modiano (2009: 65) claims that by imitating a NS one loses a part of their personal identity. Derwing and Munro (2015: 153) counter the view by maintaining that expressing one's individual identity is a lot more at risk if one cannot be understood by one's listeners. They also report (2015: 154) on Derwing's study (2003), in which nearly all the participants wished to speak like NSs and the respondents' identities were more influenced by their competence in their native language than in their second language.

Although plenty of second language learners can successfully communicate with an accent, speaking in an L2 can be frustrating and agonising for a NNS if they cannot be comprehended (Derwing and Munro 2015: 2). Pronunciation teaching aims at relieving this stress and apprehension so that learners could use the target language nearly as effortlessly as their L1 (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 38). Students are often lowly motivated to alter the phonetic models of their L1, due to seeing the process as awkward, embarrassing and disturbing, and that is why the teacher might neither be motivated enough to point out the phonetic differences (Iivonen 2005: 46). Pronouncing unfamiliar sounds can make teenagers, in particular, feel ridiculous or scared of looking terrible, which restricts them from speaking and achieving their best performance (Laroy 1995: 8).

Pronouncing English well does not mean that learners are forsaking their peers, culture, homeland, progenitors or their identities (Laroy 1995: 9). Gilbert (2012: xi) points out that acquiring the sounds and melody of the target language may pose the learners a threat of sounding alien to themselves. Thus, she adds that helping learners to create additional pronunciation patterns is more convenient than focusing on accent reduction. Laroy (1995: 8) believes that teachers do not need to implicitly tell their students about the learning objectives;

consequently, the students may be more amenable and less aware of themselves. In fact, learners' own stances towards their speaking and hearing abilities appears to have a great impact on how their pronunciation will progress (Harmer 2001: 184).

3.5 Pronunciation models

In Europe, teaching English as a foreign language has been conventionally based on Standard British English and RP (Gupta 2006: 96; Lehtonen et al. 1977: 29). Modiano (2009: 60) affirms NS models and a traditional prescriptivism to continue dominating the teaching of English in EU countries, though rivalling paradigms exist as well. He exemplifies this with "linguistic Americanization", which is challenging British English's unambiguous status as a European lingua franca. Abercrombie (1956: 95) admits that the vowel sounds of RP are hard to learn, that most of the learners of English language are not planning to use it solely in England and that RP is not even spoken by all Brits. In fact, the number of RP speakers is continuously plummeting, particularly among young Brits (Jenkins 2009: 10). Fortunately, English is seen more and more as an international language; for instance, national curriculums in several European countries emphasise multiculturalism and learning languages for communicating with people around the world (Modiano 2009: 66). Still, RP is used in many settings, also when the interlocutors are all NNSs (Jenkins 2009: 11).

For NNSs, RP and GA (General American, Standard English in the US) have found to be even less intelligible than other non-native accents (Jenkins 2009: 12). Moreover, nowadays standard pronunciation models are less important since suprasegmentals, which are more universal within English varieties, have become more prominent in pronunciation teaching and materials than segmentals, which vary more from one dialect to another (Wrembel 2005: 430). Li (2009: 82) states that English must be taken out of its nationalised context and adapted to local needs as millions of people are learning it for global contacts. He strongly opposes the view that NNSs' correctness of pronunciation ought to be compared with NS norms of speaking. An international language such as English is owned by all of its users and not solely by NSs, which consequently leads to the natural changing of the language (McKay 2002: 127).

Learners' pronunciation models do not have to be strict and dictated from above. For instance, Hewings (2004: 13) makes a difference between pronunciation model as a target, meaning some

standard of pronunciation selected as a goal, versus as a point of reference, that is a guide from which variation is accepted. Teachers should not aim at creating patterns for imitation as much as providing "models of guidance" (Dalton and Seidlhofer 1994: 6). Students' pronunciation goals range from a course-passing level to reaching one's full potential, and teachers must serve both extremes and everyone in between (Wells 2005: 102). Lane (2010: 3), nonetheless, demands higher goals for the students' pronunciation than what would suffice for a teacher who shares the students' L1, as students probably will not use English only within their own community. According to Derwing and Munro (2015: 9-10), teachers should consider what their students require and want, though the main focus ought to be on intelligibility and comprehensibility.

Though not many studies have been conducted about students' views, some indicate that learners prefer NS pronunciation (Li 2009: 82). Przedlacka (2005: 30-32) argues that an EFL learner wants to speak modern and authentic-sounding English that is also spoken by people of the learner's age. In addition, Harmer (2001: 184) claims that students want to speak English as an international language (EIL). Nonetheless, students should be given the opportunity to choose their pronunciation models and needs for pronunciation (Jenkins 2009: 14; Laroy 1995: 9; Low 2015: 133). This way students are given more power and they feel more motivated to learn the language (Derwing and Munro 2015: 103). Derwing and Munro (2009: 389) state that accent reduction is a redundant and inappropriate goal with limited time in class, yet students who aspire to alter their pronunciation to pursue a native-like goal are free to do so.

The less learners have chances to get exposure of English spoken by NSs, the more responsibility will fall on their teacher to serve as an appropriate pronunciation model and to motivate them to speak English outside the classroom (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010: 18). Providing a pronunciation model to some extent is, of course, expected of language teachers (Lintunen 2004: 36). Nevertheless, Darcy and Sicola (2009: 472) speculate that many non-native English teachers are insecure about modelling English pronunciation, possibly because their own pronunciation might differ from the ideal image of a target pronunciation. Perhaps for this reason, they continue, those teachers tend to teach "about English" in the L1, which gives their students even less exposure of English. Teachers had slightly contradictory statements about accent in Jenkins' study (2009: 31): teachers were assured that their accent was a way of expressing their identity, although they also wished, to an extent, to sound like NSs.

Non-native teachers comprise most of the ESL and EFL teaching force around the world (Canagarajah 1999, cited in Andrews 2007: 149). Still, NNS teachers are generally perceived negatively and defined by their deficits rather than their advantages, one of them being their plurilingualism (Andrews 2007: 145). What is generally required of language teachers is knowing the most common problems learners face and what causes them, especially regarding the differences of the native and the target language (Lehtonen et al. 1977: 8). That is one of the non-native teachers' specialties, in addition to having personal experience of the language learning process. Overall, native and non-native teachers simply possess different strengths and weaknesses (Andrews 2007: 145).

4 THE PRESENT STUDY

This study depicts the process of devising a teaching material package of English pronunciation for Finnish upper secondary school teachers and their students. In this chapter, I will discuss the aims of the material: 4.1 tells what the material package is based on, 4.2 defines the target group, 4.3 describes the structure and contents of the material and 4.4 presents how it follows the national core curriculum for upper secondary schools.

4.1 The bases of the material

The starting points of the present study and the teaching material package are Finnish-speakers studying English in Finnish upper secondary schools and the intelligibility principle of pronunciation teaching. Thus, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What items of English pronunciation should be in focus when teaching Finnish-speakers?
2. What techniques could be used in teaching the pronunciation of English in Finnish upper secondary schools?
3. What kind of a material package would support the learning of intelligible English pronunciation?

The first and the second goals are somewhat intertwined since the target audience for these materials is Finnish-speaking students in Finnish upper secondary schools. These goals bring up the need to specify and prioritise teaching materials due to a rather homogenous target group (see 4.2), specific learning objectives and skill level requirements in upper secondary schools (see 4.4) as well as limited time in the classroom. The first language, age group, educational institution, skill level and courses are chosen so that the teaching material package would be as useful and effective as possible for this particular audience. English is chosen as the target language because of its solid position as the most common foreign language taught in Finland, although the material can be adapted to other languages as well.

The third goal is to examine how the intelligibility principle could show in pronunciation teaching materials, as not many pronunciation guides or textbooks are based upon it.

Intelligibility is the objective measurement of how comprehensible a speaker is. It does not require a native-like accent and, in fact, intelligibility does not depend on the accentedness or the comprehensibility of the speech. Intelligibility also shows in the choice of materials and pronunciation models, as the objective is to provide diverse input in order to improve learners' listening comprehension and awareness of different accents. The purpose of the intelligibility principle, however, is not to prohibit students from choosing a native-like pronunciation goal or model. Learners are free to pursue a standard accent if they want to, but the difference to traditional pronunciation teaching is that they are not pressured to do so. Any accent, native or non-native, is allowed as long as it does not cause constant misunderstandings or communication breakdowns.

4.2 Target group

This teaching material package is aimed at English teachers and their students in Finnish upper secondary schools. The intent is that the teachers would be Finnish-speakers as well, but this is not obligatory as far as the teachers have some knowledge of Finnish if they are teaching mainly Finnish-speaking students. The material spans the six obligatory courses of A-level English (for more about course contents, see 4.4). One course lasts for approximately 38 hours during one study period, which is circa six weeks (Finnish National Agency for Education n.d.). The six courses are usually taken during the first and the second year of upper secondary school, when most students are 15 to 17 years old. Of course, the material can be also used with, for example, adult learners or advanced lower secondary school students. Since the material includes comparison between English and Finnish as well as English sounds that Finnish-speakers commonly find challenging, for example, these specific tasks need some tweaking if students do not speak Finnish. Nevertheless, the tasks are easily adaptable to suit heterogenous groups of students, some of whom may have immigrant backgrounds, for instance.

4.3 Structure and contents

To provide a new aspect on pronunciation teaching, the material moves from suprasegmentals to segmentals, and not vice versa. Hence, the organisation of the material package is top-down instead of the traditional bottom-up approach. This is due to the tendency in pronunciation teaching to begin with and focus on individual sounds, leaving little or no time for prosodic

features. Furthermore, learning suprasegmentals seems to benefit intelligibility and the production of segmentals, which has been paid attention to in the structure of the material package. Hence, the purpose of leaving sounds at the end of the material is to give more attention to prosody and to improve the learning process. Teachers are encouraged, nonetheless, to choose tasks from different sections and compile a set of activities that suits each course the best, rather than teaching the material package from cover to cover. The reason for devising the material to cover several courses instead of one speaking course, for instance, is the view that pronunciation teaching ought to be integrated in language teaching throughout the studies (Iivonen and Tella 2009: 270). Some tasks are suggested to be implemented in specific courses because of the related theme of the task or the way the activity is carried out. Most of them, however, can be freely adapted to any of the first six courses (or the optional courses) or combined with other tasks.

Before I began the work of compiling the material package, I studied some English textbooks that are used in upper secondary schools. That way I tried to ensure that I will not re-create similar activities but to make something different that could be used alongside textbook exercises. Of course, there is no point in leaving out efficient tasks simply because somebody else has already come up with them. Thus, the material is a mixture of commonly known, traditional ideas and recent or more original aspects of how to teach pronunciation. My aspiration was also to add a personal touch to the materials used, with even a somewhat unconventional perspective, as an inspiration for teachers and students. In my opinion, learning a language ought to be made more convenient, enjoyable and meaningful whenever suitable. Therefore, the material contains some humour and playful elements as well. Reasoning why certain tasks have been chosen and including students in the decision-making process increases the students' willingness to participate in them (Derwing and Munro 2015: 103). That is why I have included an explanation of the topic and its importance in each task and given alternatives to how to execute the activities when I have seen an opportunity to do so.

4.4 The national core curriculum

In Finland, all formal teaching must follow the national core curriculum (NCC), devised by the Finnish National Agency for Education, which makes it the most important document guiding the teaching of languages (Huhta et al. 2008: 54). There are separate core curriculums for each

level, for comprehensive and upper secondary schools, for instance. This material package is created to follow the latest NCC for upper secondary schools, which was published in 2015 and came into effect in August 2016. For every subject taught in upper secondary schools, it includes general objectives and values, for example active participation, individuality and dealing with current issues (NCC for upper secondary schools 2015: 13-14).

The language assessments in the NCCs are partly based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and include levels from A1.1 to C1.1 (NCC for upper secondary schools 2015: 240-249). Most pupils in Finnish schools study A-level English, which usually starts at the third or second grade of comprehensive school. At the end of the ninth grade, the last grade of compulsory basic education, a pupil with the mark 8 (‘good’) in A-level English should have reached the level B1.1, so they can “apply many common rules of pronunciation also in other than practice situations” (NCC for basic education 2014: 351-352). These are the starting points for the material, bearing in mind that not all pupils entering upper secondary school have reached level B1.1, and some pupils’ pronunciation is more advanced than the said level.

By the end of upper secondary school, one of the goals is that the students should be able to reach and to compare their learning with the level B2.1 as well as “assess the progress of their skills and develop them further” (NCC for upper secondary schools 2015: 108, 110). On the level B2.1 the student’s “pronunciation is clear, the main stress of the word is on the right syllable and the speech includes some intonation patterns typical of the target language” (NCC for upper secondary schools 2015: 247). This material aims to help developing students’ pronunciation skills to that level at minimum.

The NCC for upper secondary schools (2015: 110-111) has specific guidelines for course contents and goals that the teaching material package follows. The themes of the six mandatory courses could be translated as “English language and my world” (ENA1), “People in networks” (ENA2), “Cultural phenomena” (ENA3), “Society and the world around us” (ENA4), “Science and future” (ENA5) and “Studies, work and livelihood” (ENA6). In ENA1 and ENA2, the focus is on interacting in different situations, strengthening learning skills and developing proficiency both alone and together with others. From ENA3 onwards the focus is increasingly on various text types and the language they require. ENA4, ENA5 and ENA6 emphasise language as a tool

for searching for information, summarising the essential parts of it and sharing it. The course contents are summarised below (NCC for upper secondary schools 2015: 110-111):

English language and my world (ENA1):

- Mapping students' language proficiency and issues that could be improved in each skill.
- Students analyse and assess their language learning skills, set goals for their learning of English and find ways to develop their proficiency as individuals and as a group.
- Reflection of the diversity of languages worldwide, English language as a global phenomenon and language skills as a tool for increasing cultural proficiency.
- Topics and situations are related to studies, lifestyle of the young and needs for language usage.

People in networks (ENA2):

- Interacting in situations of varying levels of linguistic and cultural difficulty using different communication channels, also in the international context.
- Skills of being an active conversationalist and listener are deepened.
- Students' argumentation skills and ability to negotiate of meaning are practiced.
- Diversifying the repertoire of strategies needed in different interactions.
- The themes of the course regard relationships as well as mental, physical and social well-being. In addition, the impacts of technology and digitalization on interaction and well-being are reflected.

Cultural phenomena (ENA3):

- During the course, the students' multiliteracy is expanded and deepened.
- Students produce different kinds of texts, emphasising the characteristic specificity of language of the text types.
- Topics consist of various cultural phenomena, English-language media and creative activities.

Society and the world around us (ENA4):

- Information search and critical literacy skills are improved.
- Familiarization with discussions about societal phenomena, especially from the viewpoint of active citizenship.
- Reflection of individuals' and communities' responsibilities and opportunities to act, such as human rights issues and possibilities to make a difference in a civil society.

Science and future (ENA5):

- Deepening the skills of interpreting and producing texts and information search by finding information about sciences of students' interests.
- Students become competent in sharing their views based on knowledge or arguments.
- Reflection of different visions of future, particularly from the perspective of technology and digitalization, as well as the status of English as an international language of science and technology.
- Topics arise from different branches of science.

Studies, work and livelihood (ENA6):

- Deepening the notion of language skills as a working skill and social capital.
- Familiarising with text types that students encounter in their possible postgraduate studies or in working life.
- Reflection of postgraduate studies or career plans as well as working in an international context.
- Addressing of economic issues that relate to young students becoming independent and stepping into the working life as well as larger economic phenomena.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study embarked to find out how to teach the pronunciation of English in Finnish upper secondary schools. Its main aim was to create a teaching material package that would support the Finnish-speaking students in Finnish upper secondary schools to learn the pronunciation of English from the point of view of intelligibility. The best indicator for the success of the material package would have been to test it in teaching but since it was not a part of this study, evaluation must be based on self-assessment.

As there is some uncertainty of how intelligibility should be defined and assessed, it is challenging to create materials based on it. Due to the limited scope of the study, the material package does not comprise assessment, apart from the possibility of using the needs analyses for that purpose. Instead, the tasks emphasise providing input in English accents worldwide and encouraging to set an intelligible, rather than native-like, pronunciation as an objective. Moreover, the material supports creating a metalanguage about intelligible pronunciation and explaining the goals and reasons behind certain tasks or topics. It is difficult to evaluate whether this teaching material package will significantly help students acquire an intelligible pronunciation or not, yet it is at least a step in the right direction of basing pronunciation teaching on the intelligibility principle.

The material package focuses on suprasegmentals and connected speech phenomena, even though they are not included in Jenkins' (2000) LFC. This decision is reasoned by upper secondary school students' high proficiency in English and the need to sound natural and intelligible. Contrary to the LFC, segmental features such as dental fricatives and vowel quality comprise this material since they belong to Peacock's priorities for pronunciation teaching and they affect the overall comprehensibility. In addition, they often cause difficulties that many Finnish-speakers want to and are able to resolve. Phonemic transcription and IPA symbols are used in the material due to their usefulness in building bridges between the spelling and pronunciation of English. In spite of the controversial topic of dividing languages into stress-timed and syllable-timed, the material contains a task defining English as a stress-timed language in order to easily indicate the differences between stress in English and Finnish.

The decision of devising materials aimed at Finnish-speakers can be questioned as Finns have not been a linguistically homogenous people for a long time and there is an increasing number of students with immigrant backgrounds whose mother tongue is not Finnish. Still, a majority of Finns speak Finnish as their native language, so it was convenient to take their common challenges and needs into consideration. Most of the tasks, however, are suitable for all learners of English in upper-intermediate and advanced levels. Among Finnish-speakers, there surely are some individual differences as well. Some Finnish-speakers might have no problems with the items presented in this material package and struggle with aspects of pronunciation that are not included in it. That is why it would be crucial to carry out a needs analysis for each student at the beginning of term.

Although the national core curriculum for upper secondary schools (2015) includes more specified goals for pronunciation than its predecessor (cf. National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2003), the goals continue to be rather vague and unclear. As for the course contents of the core curriculum, they do not concern pronunciation per se, aside from the diversity of languages, English as an international language, goal setting and the mapping of proficiency and issues to be improved in ENA1 as well as argumentation skills in ENA2. Otherwise, pronunciation can virtually be related to the thematic course contents if the material used in the pronunciation task is linked to the course theme. The general objectives have influenced the chosen teaching techniques and instructions, such as taking current topics, activation and individual differences into account. As the matriculation examination, which is based on the national core curriculum, does not yet entail an oral part in English or other languages, there is little pressure to teach pronunciation in upper secondary schools. Since pronunciation is not tested nationally, it is difficult to say what kinds of skills are required from the students. Therefore, it can be a challenge, both for teachers and material designers, to decide on which features of pronunciation to teach.

The activities in the teaching material package are partly my own ideas or alterations to traditional tasks and partly adapted from previous literature that are acknowledged accordingly. Some of the techniques and ideas are common knowledge and frequently reoccur in the literature of the field, and in these cases the original source is unknown and hence not cited. In order to make use of authentic language and to enhance memorability, there are plenty of songs and YouTube videos, for example, in the material. Certain tasks require searching for and deciding on a material to be used, for example a text or a video. On the other hand, this can be

seen as a positive aspect, for more freedom of choice and alternative ways of implementation are given to teachers and their students. This way students are encouraged to take part in the activities and teachers are trusted to know best what suits their teaching style and the class they are teaching. It is recommended to choose materials that deal with current and thought-provoking topics, such as the video about plastic waste in the material package. Furthermore, particularly online sources can be short-lived, so referring to, not to mention basing a task on, a single resource that might become unavailable is risky and possibly redundant.

The material package follows a similar order as chapter 2 of the theoretical framework. The order is based on research made on the impact that a focus on teaching suprasegmentals has on intelligibility. In addition, there was a personal urge to try something new. Unit 6 Sounds follows Unit 3 Intonation and connected speech and Unit 4 Stress and rhythm because individual sounds are often given more attention than prosodic features in textbooks and pronunciation guides. Unit 5 Sound-letter correspondence builds a bridge between these two ends. Unit 1 Starters and Unit 2 Accents are in the beginning because they are linked to the course contents of ENA1 and they are most useful when covered as early on as possible.

The tasks chosen for the material package are reasoned by previous research and literature on intelligibility, prioritisation and problems met by Finnish-speaking learners of English. For example, tongue twister activities are not included in the material as there is no research evidence of their usefulness or effectiveness. All the activities are also in line with the latest national core curriculum for upper secondary schools. Admittedly, there surely is some influence of my personal preferences, which I do not see as a deficit. Personality plays a significant role in being a teacher, and it shows from the choice of materials to the way of teaching. I hope that teachers will find the teaching material package useful and be inspired to make it their own.

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ADVENTURES OF INTELLIGIBLE FINN

Materials for teaching the pronunciation of English in Finnish upper secondary schools

Elina Puskala 2018

Contents

Foreword

Pronunciation is often seen as too abstract and teaching it makes some teachers feel incompetent. The aim of this teaching material package is to facilitate the teaching of pronunciation and to provide a source for ideas and tools. It is not meant to be an all-encompassing guide solving every problem regarding the teaching of pronunciation, but more like a supplementing resource for teachers to resort to.

This material package is made for teachers of English and their students in Finnish upper secondary schools, as it is based on the National core curriculum for upper secondary schools (2015) and the common challenges faced by Finnish-speaking learners of English. Even though aimed at teachers, it is possible to use parts of this package in self-study materials. The material is designed for mandatory courses 1-6 of A-level English, but it can be used in other courses by all means. For instance, advanced pupils in lower secondary schools or students of adult or post-secondary education might also benefit from this material package, with or without some tweaking done to the tasks. The material was made keeping in mind the needs of native speakers of Finnish, for instance when choosing which sounds to practise or comparing English to Finnish, yet most of the tasks can also be used with speakers of any language.

The principle of intelligible pronunciation has been taken into account when devising the package. The aim of it is not to acquire a native-like accent, but an accent that is easy to understand both for native and non-native speakers of English, as intelligibility is at least partly independent of how accented or comprehensible the learner's speech is regarded by their listeners. Students are allowed to have an accent in a way that does not cause frequent communication breakdowns or misunderstandings. The teacher acting as a pronunciation model is also important, so when providing diverse accents of English, do not forget to model yourself, too!

The tasks and tips are a mixture of familiar, more traditional methods as well as new ideas and ways of improving the teaching of pronunciation. I have taken a look at some English textbooks used in Finnish upper secondary schools not to make identical materials but to create something new. Of course, the wheel cannot be reinvented, so there are some adapted or commonly known activities

as well. I have tried to add a personal touch to them, however, and you can do the same to adapt them to your and the students' needs. Learning a language is not all fun and games, but it ought to be made more convenient and meaningful whenever possible. That is why the material has humour and some playful elements in it.

The package is structured in a way that is rarely seen in guides of pronunciation teaching. Instead of a bottom-up approach, it goes top-down: from accents, connected speech and intonation to stress and rhythm, sound-letter correspondence and finally to individual sounds. Connected speech phenomena and prosody, not to mention accents, often tend to be left with little or no attention as they have been traditionally placed after sounds in textbooks and pronunciation guides. Since one of the bases of this material package is intelligibility, the positive effects of learning prosody on intelligible pronunciation are taken into account in the structure. My purpose is not to leave out the teaching of speech sounds, but to ensure that more attention is given to accent awareness and prosodic features. The *Sounds* unit serves rather as getting a finishing touch on students' pronunciation than something to devote a lot of energy and class time to. Obviously, the material package is not meant to be used in order from cover to cover, but to choose tasks and ideas when suitable for the courses. You can use your own judgement when picking which materials to use and when.

This material package consists of six units, which regard the following aspects:

1 Starters contains materials for autonomous pronunciation practice, needs analyses and goal setting meant for the beginning of the term or course.

2 Accents include tasks about English varieties around the world: from Finnish-accented English to so-called World Englishes. Accents are seen as diversifying input and analysed by their differences.

3 Intonation and connected speech consists of more detailed activities about intonation patterns as well as general fluency tasks that focus on sounding natural and intelligible.

4 Stress and rhythm begin with stress-timing phenomenon and rhythm, moving on to sentence stress and more specific word stress rules.

5 Sound-letter correspondence concentrates on the relationship between spelling and pronunciation in English and compares it with the Finnish systems.

6 Sounds provides ways of teaching vowels and consonants commonly problematic for Finnish-speakers, sound quality and differences between similar sounds.

The units, for their part, make use of certain symbols that are explained below:

 The information sign explains what the topic is about, why it is important and what students are expected to learn of it. There can also be a suggestion for which course the task is best suitable.

 The screen symbol presents what external material is needed for the activity, such as a video, a website or an extract of a text. The material found in Appendices is also indicated here. There can be either a specific material or some suggestions and examples of fitting material for you or your students to look for.

 The instruction sign tells you how to present the pronunciation feature, what preparations to make before the task and how to conduct it.

 The signpost tells you how to change the activity to suit your class or how to use it for teaching other aspects of pronunciation, for instance. It can also offer examples of alternative materials for or methods of teaching the topic.

 The stopwatch symbol is used in Quick tips, which are short exercises or ideas that need less preparations than tasks. Some of them can be integrated into the tasks or combined to make up a longer activity. Quick tips can be found at the end of units 3-6. Although they are placed after the tasks, they are in no way less valuable!

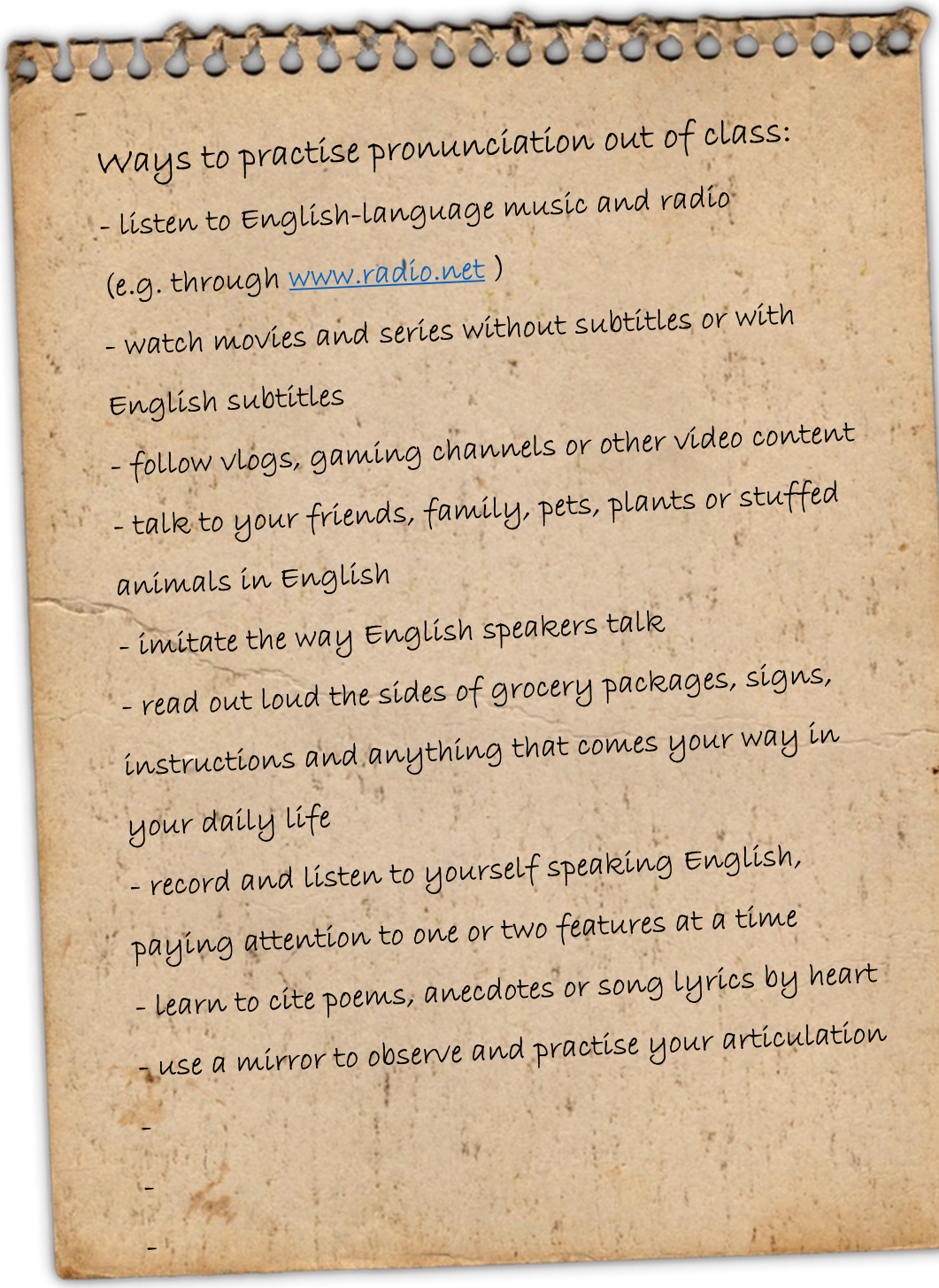
Finally, although pronunciation is closely connected to identity, pronouncing English intelligibly does not threaten or change one's identity. Nonetheless, as Ian Morris-Wilson (2004: 209) says, "you have to change gear when you move from one language to the other". I hope that with the aid of my teaching material package, you and your students will be able to change gear and go on an awesome adventure – this journey has been incredibly fun and fascinating for me, so hopefully you will enjoy the ride, too!

Elina Puskala

Unit 1

Self service

Here's a list of ways to practise pronunciation in the free time. Feel free to expand and edit the list. Encourage your class to try out which tips work for them and to add their own advice.



http://jenniferfehrdesigns.blogspot.fi/2011/03/vintage-note-paper-freebie-enjoy.html

Needs analyses

 Although a group of students might seem very homogenous, each learner's needs are still different. Students themselves might not know their skills, paucities, strengths and weaknesses. For these reasons, it is beneficial to reflect one's own proficiency and/or have it evaluated by the teacher. The needs analyses also follow the requirements of the newest national core curriculum for upper secondary schools. These activities are suggested at least for the beginning of ENA1, even though they can be used at the start of any course onwards.

 Appendix 1 includes a diagnostic needs analysis as well as a self-assessment for learners. Print out one sheet for each student.

 For the diagnostic task, ask your students to record themselves in a language lab or at home while reading aloud the passage (or another text that features pronunciation aspects challenging for Finnish-speakers). It can be used as diagnostic assessment or for self-assessment made by students themselves, marking the features of pronunciation that need improvement.

As for the self-assessment needs analysis, let students reflect on their own skills. Tell them to fill in their name so that you can provide more personalised instruction. Thus, the self-assessment isn't used for grading, but to increase both the student's and your awareness of their skill level.

Setting goals


Letting learners choose their own pronunciation goals and models is important for self-reflection, motivation and self-direction. In addition, it is helpful for the teachers to know what kind of goals their students pursue and what models they wish to resemble. Goal setting is also a part of ENA1 course contents – yet it is advisable to renew it every school year, for example.


A sample sheet for goal setting can be found in Appendix 2. Print one sheet for each student or provide them electronically.


Tell your students to fill in the setting goals document. Emphasise that this task is not for you but for your students, so they ought to pay attention to reflecting their goals. If they struggle to think of pronunciation models, you can provide examples of native and non-native speakers of English, abroad and in Finland. Writing down their names is not necessary since the goals aren't used for tailored tuition, but you can still collect the papers to take a look at the diversity of goals and models that can be found in your class. Most importantly, the goal setting is meant for the students themselves, so remember to give them back!

Unit 2

The Finnish accent

The following task does not concentrate on the features of Finnish-accented English but rather the content of the stand-up performance. The reason for choosing a material with the Finnish accent is to provide more input in the accent that most of the Finnish students possess. To encourage students to speak with a Finnish accent (as long as it is comprehensible), you can tell about Ismo Leikola's successful career in the US. Having an accent tells that a person knows more than one language, which is something not everyone can say! This task is suggested for the course ENA1.

A video of a Finnish person speaking English, for example "Ismo Leikola Laugh Factory finals 2014" on YouTube: https://youtu.be/hE38Bq3WArg

Prepare questions that the students need to answer in small groups after watching the video, for example:

1. Why did Ismo mention Africa?
2. What happened after Ismo bought a Pilates DVD?
3. What did Ismo say about eating animals?
4. What points did he make about water? (2)
5. What's a 'silent letter'?
6. What does Ismo tell about the banks?
7. How do insults differ between Finland and the USA?

Finally go through the answers together.

If you want to, you can also discuss Ismo's accent by asking the students' opinions about his English and how comprehensible he is, as well as what tells them that Ismo is not a native speaker of English.

Differences between English and Finnish

 These exercises bring up the phonetic differences of Finnish and English in both sound and prosodic level. The idea is to point out that speaking English is not simply about producing English words with Finnish sounds, rhythm and intonation. In order to speak intelligible English, one has to have a different mindset and to make physical changes to the way they speak.

 You can start with a warm-up video or audio clip where Finnish is spoken by a (native) speaker of English, for example this video by YouTubers Jake and Emma (until 1:10): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exF5oy9r2Bc

 Ask students to imagine or impersonate a native speaker of English (with any accent) speaking Finnish and to concentrate on the features of pronunciation. If this is difficult, provide a text in Finnish that the students can read silently or out loud with the accent. The questions below can be of help:

What does the person sound like?

How does the pitch (high/low) change?

What is the melody of the language like?

How does the intonation differ from Finnish intonation?

Which syllables does the person stress and unstress?

Which sounds are different or difficult to pronounce?

Discuss the findings together.

Then tell the students to think about the people who speak “bad” Finnish in general:

- What do they feel towards them (pity, encouragement, frustration, etc.)?
- How would they want to relate to them?
- Do they think people feel the same about Finns speaking English with an accent?

Reflect together and compare with the thoughts evoked by non-native Finnish speakers.

Dialectal variation with IPA

In this task, students use phonetic transcription in order to identify sound-level differences in varieties of English. This is suggested as a pre-task for “English accents on the word level”. It is also suitable for ENA3 or ENA4.

”Let’s call the whole thing off” sung by Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in an excerpt of the film Shall We Dance (1937): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOILZ_D3aRg. The song starts at 1:05, but you might want to play the introduction as well. Lyrics sheets with blanks, a list of IPA symbols used and suggested answers are in Appendix 3.

Start off with revising the phonetic alphabet, and particularly the symbols that are used in this exercise. Provide the lyrics sheets to the class and give instructions. Each blanked word is sung twice in the song and marked with a number. Students write the blanked words in phonetic transcription in the numbered slots below the lyrics. You can tell them either to mark word stress or to leave it out. Play the video from the beginning and point out where the song starts. Pause after the blanks and play them again, if needed. Note that especially the last one can be difficult, as the pronunciation is regionally very specific and not often heard of. When the song ends, go through the answers by asking students to write the transcriptions on the board.

The different pronunciations in this task are not simply regional, but more specifically, serve to identify class differences. You can point out that at that time, the typical American pronunciations were considered less sophisticated by the upper class. Therefore, this task can be used as a good priming for discussing class society.

Although these varieties were both in the US, they resemble the differences between British and American English pronunciations. As an extension, ask your class to think of more examples of words that are spelled the same but pronounced differently in BrE and AmE. After that, go on to consider other English varieties, for example Canadian, Caribbean, Irish, South African, Australian, New Zealand, Indian, Hong Kong and Philippine English. Is the pronunciation more like American or British English, or something completely different?

English accents on the word level

 This activity concentrates on the accentual differences of pronouncing words, and not only between British and American English, but also including other varieties of English. Through this task, students may become more aware of the variation of pronunciation in the so-called standard dialects. Perhaps they might choose one of them to be their pronunciation goal or model, too.

 Sound comparisons website: www.soundcomparisons.com

 Students go to the website on their own devices or by using computers in a computer lab, if possible. You can also show the page through a data projector and play the sounds for the whole class at the same time. Untick the box "Historical" in the column on the left to hide the historical accents. Ask students to carefully listen to at least **ten** words in each accent in the "Map" or "Word" view. Then they should decide and write down which **three** accents were

a) the easiest to understand or most familiar

b) the most difficult to understand or the strangest

c) their favourites, reasoning why they liked them the most

Then they will form groups of three or four and discuss their choices and reasons together. Finally, you can make a round of asking the groups their answers to sections a-c to see if some accents were more familiar, strange or likeable than others.

 This can also be done as a homework. If you want to present phonological variation focused on Britain, try out the British Library's "Sounds Familiar?" webpage: http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/regional-voices/phonological-variation/

If you or your students have specific words or phrases in mind, there are at least two good options for learning to pronounce them in a context: PlayPhrase.me (www.playphrase.me) plays sequences of movie and TV series scenes and YouGlish (www.youglish.com) shows YouTube clips in British, American and Australian English.

English varieties around the world

The following materials include both native and non-native accents, which can be used in different ways to draw attention to World Englishes and English's status as a lingua franca.

"The English language in 67 accents and random voices" https://youtu.be/riwKuKSbFDs by Jake Wardle or another video about English accents worldwide.

The International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA) http://www.dialectsarchive.com/ has spoken samples of English around the world. Participants are native, ESL or EFL speakers. Speech samples include a person reading aloud one of the two texts which can be found through a separate link below each recording, followed by an unscripted speech. Transcription of the unscripted speech is included with the speaker's biographical information.

As a warm-up task, show a part of the video (e.g. until 4:07 or 6:45). Ask your students if there were some new accents they had never heard of or if they can decide on a favourite. You can ask some volunteers to imitate an accent of their choice and let the others guess which accent it is.

For showing students different examples of dialects and accents, choose variants under Dialects & Accents dropdown menu or, all the better, have your students pick the ones that interest them. Play the recording as you show the corresponding text on another tab or print the two text extracts beforehand and hand them out to students. After each sample you can discuss its characteristics with the class. You can even link this task to a group work project about specific English accents and/or English-speaking countries.

For listening comprehension tasks focusing on the content, play either the scripted or unscripted part of the speech and provide questions about the excerpt or ask your students to summarise it. Play the excerpt at least twice and pause if needed. For ready-picked samples, use Test Your Ear for accent identification and Test Your Comprehension for listening comprehension (both under Special Collections header), for instance.

An alternative website for this task is the Speech Accent Archive (http://accent.gmu.edu), where speakers read aloud the same script. You can also teach aspects of grammar, vocabulary, rhythm or intonation with speech corpora. The IViE corpus - English Intonation in the British Isles http://www.phon.ox.ac.uk/files/apps/IViE//, as its name would suggest, is specialised in intonation.

Unit 3

Dividing speech into thought groups

(Inspired by Hewings 2004: 151-152)

Thought groups (or tone units) consist of words that have a stressed syllable and that go together naturally. A short pause or a rising or falling intonation indicates a thought group boundary, whereas the sounds in thought groups run together without breaks. This activity focuses on the receptive skills of identifying thought group boundaries. It facilitates listening to natural speech and raises students' awareness of the phenomenon. To quote Ian Morris-Wilson (2004: 209), "one way to try and adopt a more natural rhythm of English is to stop thinking of words as individual words and to start thinking of the meaning of the word group". With continued productive practise, students can use it in their own speech as well.

Use short audio or video extracts, such as textbook chapters, radio/TV news or vlogs, that have written scripts already available or that you can easily make yourself. In addition, write another version of the script where the speech is divided into thought groups, for example by using forward slashes. Scripts with and without thought group boundaries for "What really happens to the plastic you throw away – Emma Bryce" by TED-Ed (https://youtu.be/_6xlNyWPpB8) can be found in Appendix 4.

First explain the concept of a thought group to students if they are unfamiliar with it. As a pre-task, students practise dividing their speech into thought groups by repeating after a model with a part of a text that has already been divided with markings. Have your students repeat one thought group at a time until they can say the whole sentence with ease and sounding natural.

Next use a script that isn't divided and doesn't include any capital letters or punctuation marks that could indicate thought group boundaries. Provide students with the script and tell them to divide it into thought groups by listening to the speaker on the extract. If they struggle, tell them to think about the boundaries as spoken punctuation. Play the extract at least twice (the first time, students can just listen), check the answers and then have your students read the text, or a part of it, aloud.

If you wish your students to continue working with thought groups at home, tell them to record a short part of a radio or TV news (or a show where only one person is talking) and write the script with thought group divisions as homework. On the next lesson, choose a couple of scripts that you take a look at together and revise how thought groups are made distinct in speech.

Speech karaoke

Speech karaoke works like a normal karaoke, but instead of singing songs people give speeches. It was created by The Speech Karaoke Action Group in 2010 in Finland, and since then the Speech Karaoke Club events have become fairly popular. Here's an introductory video that you can show to your students as well: https://youtu.be/cpeesCkxDs8. By giving karaoke speeches, students can practise public speaking in a convenient way, relying on set materials and imitation. Students can focus on prosody without the stress of devising their own speeches. With a data projector, you can create a speech karaoke in class, suitable for the course ENA2.

Any audio or video clip of a speech, preferably with closed captions or subtitles on screen. For instance, it can be a political speech, like Martin Luther King's "I have a dream", Mahatma Gandhi's "Spiritual message (On God)" or John F. Kennedy's "We choose to go to the Moon", or an acceptance speech, such as Meryl Streep's speech at the Golden Globes 2017 or Leonardo DiCaprio's speech at the Academy Awards 2016. It can even be a speech from a movie, for example William Wallace's "Freedom" speech in Braveheart or given by a fictional character, like Leslie Knope from the Parks and Recreation TV series.

Let each student pick any content- and language-appropriate speech they want, making sure that the subtitles on the clip are correct or that the speech is available in written form as well. The speech, or an extract of it, should be a couple of minutes long. You can carry out the speech karaoke at school as a (voluntary) class activity or as a (graded) homework where students record their speech and send it to you. Tell them to listen to the clip and rehearse it multiple times before giving the speech in front of the class or recording it. As a post-task, you can have the students analyse either their learning experience or the prosody of the speech, for example. After the task you may want to continue by discussing together which factors make a good speech or a good public speaker.

3-2-1 fluency task

(Inspired by Maurice 1983)


The focus of this task is on fluency, meaning and repetition. It gives the speakers a chance to repeat and tweak their message as the audience changes. However, the time limit creates pressure to make it concise. Instead of Maurice's original 4-3-2 pattern, this version uses a 3-2-1 pattern to better meet the time limitations in upper secondary schools. The task is suggested for the course ENA4 or other course during which written summaries are introduced to the students.


Give your students topics or tell them to choose one that they can easily talk about for several minutes. You can either have them write down some central points or improvise the speech. Form two circles, one inside the other, with the chairs and put them facing each other. Divide the class into two groups: the speakers and the listeners. Listeners sit on the outer circle and speakers on the inner circle. If the class is odd-numbered, you can act as a listener yourself or have a pair of listeners act as one.

Speakers speak about their topic for three rounds. First, they talk for three minutes, then for two minutes and finally for one minute. Listeners are allowed and encouraged to react to the speech with facial expressions and interjections, but not to interrupt the speaker. You can recap natural reactions to speech beforehand, as well. After each round the listeners move one chair clockwise while speakers stay in place. Use a timer and if possible, show it via a data projector or announce every minute how much time there's left. After the three rounds the speakers and listeners change roles and make another three rounds.

When everyone's finished, discuss what it felt like to listen and to speak and how the speeches changed as the time grew shorter.


If there are plenty of students in your class, you might not have enough time to do this task as it is. There are a few options: firstly, you can have students act as either listeners or speakers, not both. Secondly, you can have only two rounds instead of three per each speaker. Thirdly, you can execute this task as a homework: students record themselves speaking in the 3-2-1 (or 4-3-2) pattern and send you the files. This way you're able to grade the task, too, if you wish.

Falling and falling-rising intonation patterns

(Adapted from Hewings 2004: 160-161)

This activity is for practising the falling intonation pattern of yes/no answers and the falling-rising intonation of answers with some reservation.

Ask the class to come up with general yes/no questions about you, for example “Can you speak Spanish?” or “Are you going to give us homework today?”. Alternatively, you can make up a set of questions yourself, write them down on pieces of paper and hand them to students.

Ask your students to pay attention to the **way** you answer more than the content. Answer their questions using a falling intonation with simple “Yes” and “No” answers and a fall-rise pattern when you go on to give longer answers (“Yes, …” and “No, …”), which often have to do with some limitation or reservation. After a few questions, ask the students if they have noticed a reoccurring pattern in the way you say “yes” or “no”. Write the following on the board:

Explain the class what falling and falling-rising intonation patterns are used for in answers and prompt a few more students to ask you their questions in order to demonstrate the differences. Tell students to think of a couple of questions more. Then they should work with a partner asking each other questions and using all four responses for answering, as well as checking that the intonation patterns are distinct. Monitor the students’ responses and correct only their intonation.

So many questions

This task concentrates on training intonation patterns in wh-questions, question tags and correcting (i.e. telling something new and something already known). It lets students to form their own questions as well as practise asking and answering in a meaningful way. Nonetheless, there are plenty of rules and theory to take in, so it is suggested that the aforementioned features would have already been presented to and practised with the students beforehand and/or that this task would be divided into more than one lesson.

Tell students to pick a partner and to ask each other 10-15 wh-questions, for example what their partner's favourite school subject is or what their hobbies are. Tell the class to focus on creating a clearly lower pitch at the end of their questions and practise it together before the task, if needed. You can remind them that when an answer is not expected, however, the pattern in wh-questions is rising. They can write down the questions before really asking them in case it helps them to pay more attention to the intonation pattern. They should at least write their partner's answers down, as they are crucial in the next phase of this task.

Now tell the class to add a wrong answer next to their partner's answer. What they have to do next is to clarify with question tags whether they understood their partner (which they obviously didn't do). They should make a new question using the wrong answer and a question tag. Revise the idea and intonation pattern rules of question tags: students can use either (rising-)falling or rising patterns with them. Their partner should correct the clarification by stating the new information (correction) with a falling-rising or rising intonation pattern and the information that is already known (the wrong answer) with a falling intonation.

A sample exchange might look like this (alternatives in brackets):

Student A:	Student B:
- How many siblings do you have?	- I'm an only child.
- You have one sister, don't you?	
(- You have one sister, don't you?)	- I don't have a sister, I'm an only child.
	(- I'm an only child, I don't have a sister.)

For more challenge, students can leave some of their partner's answers unchanged and simply confirm what they know with a sure (rising-)falling pattern. In this case their partner would respond with an affirmative "Yes, I do", for example. With the wrong answers, the intonation pattern in the question tags should be unsure and therefore rising.

Coffee or tea?

(Examples adapted from https://pronuncian.com/podcasts/episode199)

Different intonations in questions create different meanings. The following task raises awareness of the two different meanings with choice questions of two or multiple options.

Start by writing the sentence "Could I get you a cup of coffee or tea?" twice and marking two kinds of intonation patterns, as in the examples below, on the board. Pick a volunteer to ask you the first question with rising and falling intonation. Answer by taking either coffee or tea. Then choose a second student to ask you the same question using the second intonation patterns (neutral and rising). This time choose some other drink than coffee or tea, for example hot chocolate.

Could I get you a cup of coffee or tea? - I'd take some tea, please.
Could I get you a cup of coffee or tea? - I'd take some hot chocolate, please.

Ask your students if they noticed the difference. If not, repeat the phases. Ask them why you answered differently to the same questions and how the intonation patterns affect what is being asked. Students should point out that the rising intonation on the first option and falling on the second implies that there are only two options. Neutral intonation on the first option and rising on the second, however, means that there are other options as well and those are mere examples of what one could get. In other words, the first question is a closed-choice question and the second one is an open-choice question. Then move on to a sentence with many options:

Could I get you some juice, water, coffee, tea, or maybe some hot chocolate?
Could I get you some juice, water, coffee, tea, or maybe some hot chocolate?

Repeat the earlier steps with these sentences. In the second one, choose again something out of the list, such as a fizzy drink. Revise the rules and if students consider them difficult, tell them to concentrate solely on the intonation pattern of the last word and whether it's rising or falling. Keep on practising with similar sentences that you or your students themselves come up with, either in pairs or with the whole class.

Quick tips

Reading aloud with expression

Tell students to read a text (or a dialogue with a partner) with certain emotions, for example acting interested, excited, impatient, surprised, annoyed, angry, sad or indifferent. Discuss which aspects the different expressions change and how. In addition, they can try out a monotone, robotic expression to see what kind of difference intonation and other prosodic features make in speech.

Kazoo or humming

Use a kazoo whistle, which transforms humming into a buzzing sound, or simply hum to demonstrate intonation patterns without using words. You can also use made-up words in order to make students focus more on the intonation.

Pitch conductor

Pair up the students with a partner they're comfortable working with. Provide them with a list of sentences or a paragraph of text. Tell them to take turns in acting as a "singer" and a "conductor". The conductor moves their hand up and down and the singer changes their pitch according to the conductor's hand movements. Ask the pairs to start with simple sounds, e.g. /ɑ:/ and /i:/ to test and play with the singer's pitch range. Then move on to the sentences, giving the singer enough time to read the sentence in advance to know what they're going to read aloud. Then change the roles and repeat. When the pairs are finished, you can gather the class together and act as a conductor yourself to make your students read aloud a text or sing a song.

Making a list

Form a circle with your students so everyone can see each other. List things that you'd need to take with you if you went trekking or for a vacation abroad, for example. Students must say the items that others have said before them and add a new item to the list. Emphasise that one should use a rising intonation when listing the items, apart from their own one which is the last item.

Provide an example of rising intonation and start the round. Try to make at least one round, so every student has a turn. If they are struggling, you or other students can help.

 Another version of this game is to list things that start with the same letter or sound and belong to the same category, for example animals starting with the letter ‘d’. Pick either a letter or a sound, as in English letters can be realised in various sounds and vice versa. Therefore, this version trains both the rising and falling intonation and awareness of the English sound-letter correspondence.

Linkin’ words

(Adapted from Hietanen 2012: p. 47 in Appendix)

 Draw your students’ attention to how words are linked in English and compare it with the Finnish ways by asking your students to list examples of both languages and see what kind of similarities (and differences) they can find. For instance, clipping, blending and linking sounds together are phenomena found in both languages. You might contrast blends like “dontcha” and “ain’t it” or “innit” with Finnish equivalents “etsä” or “ettekste” and “eikse” or “eiksoo”, for example. Realising that what Finnish-speakers do in their own speech being similar to how English-speakers talk can make students feel more comfortable about hearing those forms in speech and producing them themselves.

Short story long

(Adapted from Pennington 1996: 34)

 Demonstrate and practise with the class how sentences’ intonation patterns change when new phrases are added to them: the falling intonation at the end of the phrase becomes neutral or slightly rising, and the new end of the sentence has a falling intonation. Start with a short sentence, such as “Meet me tonight” and keep adding attributes, for example like this:

Meet me tonight | at 7 pm | under the oak tree | behind the house | across from the school | and don’t forget to bring the money.

Unit 4

Stress-timing

English is often categorised as a stress-timed language since stressed syllables tend to appear in regular intervals in speech. It is important to tell students to add length, volume and pitch on the stressed syllables and to reduce or “swallow” the sounds in unstressed syllables to distinct the way they speak in English from the syllable-timing used in Finnish.

Stress-timing nursery rhymes is in Appendix 5. Song versions of nursery rhymes can be easily found on the Internet.

In the pattern below, the rhythm stays the same even though words are added between the beats, or stressed words. Practise it with your students, emphasising the great difference between stressed and unstressed syllables, so they manage to say every word.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
1 and	**2** and	**3** and	**4**
1 and a	**2** and a	**3** and a	**4**
1 and then a	**2** and then a	**3** and then a	**4**

Then move on to saying phrases and sentences. Let students choose a partner and give each pair two extracts of texts, poems or lists of sentences; examples with nursery rhymes are in Appendix 5. You can also show sung versions of the nursery rhymes before or after conducting the activity. One student says their sentences while the other taps the rhythm (about one tap per second) with a pencil or a finger and makes sure that their partner stresses the right syllables. Then they change roles. After each pair is done, you can pick some of them to tap and read aloud a sentence or have the whole class read an excerpt out loud while you tap the rhythm.

Stress and rhythm in song lyrics

Song lyrics are a great way of not only learning stress and rhythm but also familiarising students with a different kind of text type. Therefore, the main focus should not be on getting every stress placement right, but rather becoming aware of the rhythm of English and recognising the main rules of sentence stress. This task is suggested for the ENA3 course.

"Hero" by Biniyam (https://youtu.be/NKeIvwly4z8). Both original lyrics and lyrics with stress placements in bold can be found in Appendix 6.

Start with a recap of which words are usually stressed in sentences (content words) and which are unstressed (function words). Point out that in songs, stress patterns might be different from the stress patterns in speech.

Print and hand out a lyrics sheet for each student. Listen to the song at least twice. First time students can follow the lyrics on the sheet and feel the rhythm of the song without necessarily making any notes. Second time they should underline every stressed word (or syllable, to add challenge). If needed, you can pause the song after each line, so your students have enough time to mark the stress. When they are done, go through the lyrics together and show the emboldened version of the lyrics through a data projector or document camera to make sure the answers are somewhat similar.

After the task you can continue by discussing the meaning of the lyrics or about music and lyrics in general, for instance. With this specific song you can also note the style of language and Biniyam's Ethiopian-German heritage showing in the lyrics.

This exercise can be conducted by using any song that has a strong and consistent rhythm, for instance a song from the 80's or a hiphop song. To train perceptive skills only, skip the original lyrics and give students the bolded version straight away as they listen to the song. You can also use a part of a song, limericks, nursery rhymes or poems instead. Alternatively, the lyrics can be turned into a cloze exercise by omitting either content or function words.

Sentence stress

Sentence stress is like word stress, but instead of syllables, entire words are stressed. It can be used for clarifying or bringing up new information. Through these tasks, students learn how the message can change depending on the placement of sentence stress.

If your students are unfamiliar with the concept of sentence stress, explain it and show them the example below. Otherwise, hide the right side and have them deduce the meaning themselves. Point out that in authentic speech, sentences can have multiple words stressed: e.g. “I never said **he** stole **my** money”.

I never said he stole my money.	→ It wasn’t me who said that.
I **never** said he stole my money.	→ I’ve never said that.
I never **said** he stole my money.	→ I only implied it.
I never said **he** stole my money.	→ Somebody else stole my money.
I never said he **stole** my money.	→ I consider he borrowed them.
I never said he stole **my** money.	→ He stole somebody else’s money.
I never said he stole my **money**.	→ He stole something else.

Then tell them to do the following exercise: pair up the sentence and its meaning.

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 a haircut.
- Don’t you understand me?
- It’s a possibility.
- It was my idea.
- Not something else.
- Not another person.
- She should think about it, it’s a good idea.

Answers:

I said she might consider a new haircut. → **It was my idea.**

I **said** she might consider a new haircut. → **Don't you understand me?**

I said **she** might consider a new haircut. → **Not another person.**

I said she **might** consider a new haircut. → **It's a possibility.**

I said she might **consider** a new haircut. → **She should think about it, it's a good idea.**

I said she might consider a **new** haircut. → **Not just a haircut.**

I said she might consider a new **haircut**. → **Not something else.**

Finally, ask your students to underline the word that should be stressed for the right meaning. The first one is done for them.

1. I don't think she should get that job. → "Somebody else thinks she should get the job"

2. I don't think she should get that job. → "She should get another job"

3. I don't think she should get that job. → "That's not really what I mean" OR "I'm not sure she'll get the job"

4. I don't think she should get that job. → "I think it's wrong she's going to get that job"

5. I don't think she should get that job. → "Somebody else should get that job"

6. I don't think she should get that job. → "It's not true that I think like that"

7. I don't think she should get that job. → "Maybe she should get something else instead"

8. I don't think she should get that job. → "She should earn (be worthy of, work hard for) that job"

Answer key: 2. that 3. think 4. should 5. she 6. don't 7. job 8. get

Exercises adapted from: https://www.thoughtco.com/pronunciation-changing-meaning-word-stress-1209026

Word stress rules

(Adapted from Hewings 2004: 122-128 and Gilbert 2012: 21)

Although English stress patterns are often irregular, there are some fairly consistent rules. These sub-sections concerning words with suffixes are meant to be taught on different lessons - and possibly on different courses as well. For example, 'words ending -ian' is recommended for the course ENA6 on a lesson where occupations are covered.

Suffixes

Copy the table below and print it on handouts. Explain the term suffix and illustrate with examples (e.g. athletic vs. fashionable) that some suffixes affect word stress while others don't. Dictate the words or tell your students to use dictionaries (online or printed, including stress markings).

consistency	solidify	managerial	punishment	rapidly
politeness	ability	presidency	bottomless	beautiful
acidify	investigation	uniformity	willingness	powerless
conservation	purposeful	government	substantial	immediately

Ask students to circle the root word (i.e. the word that it "comes from"), underline the suffix and mark which ones cause the syllable before the suffix to be stressed and which ones don't usually change the stress placement. Check the answers (words ending -ial, -ify, -ity or -ion generally change stress placement) and say the words aloud, students repeating after you.

Words ending -ian

Copy the wordlist below and print it on handouts. Working in pairs, students pronounce the words and mark how many syllables the words have and which syllable has the main stress. Finally, they ought to notice that the syllable right before the -ian is stressed. They might also note that the other words have stress on the first syllable, but as this is not a general rule, don't highlight it.

musician	politician	diet	magic	vegetarian
library	music	physician	dietician	historian

politics	grammar	electricity	pedestrian	vegetables
history	librarian	grammarian	electrician	magician

Note that library and history can be pronounced with either two or three syllables. If your students find it difficult to understand the stress change, you can point out that similar word pairs with differences in vowel duration exist in Finnish too, such as 'politiikka' vs. 'poliitikko', 'musiikki' vs. 'muusikko' and 'kritiikki' vs. 'kriitikko', even though the main stress stays on the first syllable.

After finishing the first part, the pairs play a "Who am I?" type of game with the words. Each pair takes turns, one of them choosing a role out of the -ian words and the other asking questions like "Do you work in a library?" or "Do you do magic tricks?" by using the other words on the handout. For words like pedestrian and physician, students must use other words. Demonstrate the game first with a student in front of the class before starting the pair work. While monitoring the pair work, concentrate only on stress placement of the words on the handout.

For homework, you can ask your class to collect more words with -ian ending and check if they follow the general rule.

Words ending -ic or -ical

Copy the table below and print it on handouts. Pronounce the words on it clearly, exaggerating the stressed syllable. Working in pairs, students mark how the words differ, i.e. which syllable receives primary stress. You can also have them mark how many syllables the words have. Finally, they should come up with a rule of how the -ic and -ical endings change stress placement in the words: stress is on the syllable immediately before the -ic or -ical.

catastrophe	Iceland	aroma	apology	athlete	microscope
catastrophic	Icelandic	aromatic	apologetic	athletic	microscopic
biology	analysis	grammar	alphabet	logic	philosophy
biological	analytical	grammatical	alphabetical	logical	philosophical

Stress in noun-verb pairs

 Some nouns (or adjectives) and verbs have the same form, but different pronunciations, more specifically a difference in stress placement. If the word is stressed wrong, the listener might get confused. This exercise presents the rule of the stress placement in most noun-verb pairs.

 Say aloud a couple of example sentences like the ones below, emphasising the difference in stress on the noun and verb of each target word. You can also find spoken samples easily online. Repeat the sentences at least twice and if necessary, tell what word the students should focus on listening to. They ought to notice the rule that with these words the noun has stress on the first syllable and the verb on the second syllable. After figuring out the rule, have the class repeat the sentences after you. Ask them if they can recall other examples of similar noun-verb pairs.

project: An episode of Project Runway was projected on to the wall.

object: She objected to the search. UFO stands for Unidentified Flying Object.

award: My favourite actress was awarded at the Academy Awards.

refund: Can I get a refund? No, I cannot refund your money.

increase: I want a salary increase, but they won't increase it.

Working in pairs or small groups, students should now form their own sentences - or a coherent story - by using the words below. Noun-verb pairs can be in one sentence or in separate sentences, as in the previous examples. Note that some of the words have slightly different meanings when used as nouns or verbs.

control, convict, convert, insult, process, protest, service, conduct, conflict, contrast, record, update, rebel, survey, escort, desert, contest, permit, combat, discount, present, suspect

Finally, students read aloud their sentences (one noun-verb pair per person, for instance). Concentrate on the stress placement in the noun-verb pairs when monitoring and correcting.

Quick tips

Visualisation of stress

Stressed syllables can be visualised in writing in a plethora of ways, yet some of them are more efficient than others. **Bold**ing or adding an áccent might not be visible enough in print, thus underlining or CApitalising may work better. It is also possible to use different sized shapes to mark syllable borders in addition to stress:

Strong and weak forms

Choose a short text, for example an extract of a textbook chapter or a piece of news. Print it out to the class so the students can make markings on the text. Tell students to underline content words, i.e. words that are **not** articles, pronouns, prepositions, auxiliaries, and so on. Provide a text with your markings for reference – note that it may be debatable whether some words are content words or not. After that the class practises reading the passage out loud, preferably a couple of times. Emphasise that the underlined words ought to be exaggerated and the ones that are not should be barely audible.

Tweet activity

In this exercise students choose the most important words from the text and create a shorter, simpler message as in Twitter tweets or news headlines. Decide on a suitable word (or character) limit before starting the work. When students are done, have them read their texts aloud and compare if there are differences between their choices for the most salient words.

Word stress mixer

(Adapted from www.soundsofenglish.org/lessonsactivities)

Compile a list of words of as many as your students. The words should have stress on different syllables, for instance words that have stress on the first, second or third syllable, and so on. Write the words on pieces of paper and give one for each student. Then tell your class to find a group with the same stress placement. When two students come across, they say out loud their word, stressing the right syllable, and see whether their words belong to the same group. If yes, they continue finding the other members of the group together. This goes on as long as everyone has found the right group. Then go through the words together, each student pronouncing their word at a time, and make sure they are in the group they should be.

This can also be played with words that have a different number of syllables, for example words varying from two to six syllables. Decide whether you add the aspect of correct stress placement to this kind of task or not, as it increases the difficulty of the task.

Chinese whispers

Play Chinese whispers (also known as Broken telephone) with sentences that have varying stress. Make up a sentence that you whisper into a student's ear, who whispers it to the next student, and so on. The last student says out loud what they had heard. Then compare the stress patterns to the original sentence. Did the rhythm and stress of the sentence stay the same?

Spot the difference

(Adapted from Celce-Murcia et al. 1996: 182-183)

A way of practising word stress communicatively is to have pairs find differences between two similar pictures. Partners sit back-to-back and tell each other what is in their picture. If you have access to a language lab, you can randomise the pairs so that partners talk to each other using headsets instead. Depending on the picture, students can either circle the differences or draw them

into their picture. Remind the students to check their pictures when they're finished. Sample speech turns could be the following:

A: I have a picture of a CITY.

B: My picture has a city TOO. There's a BUS on the left.

A: Mine doesn't have a bus, but a LIMOUSINE.

B: Next to the bus there's a MOVIE THEATRE.

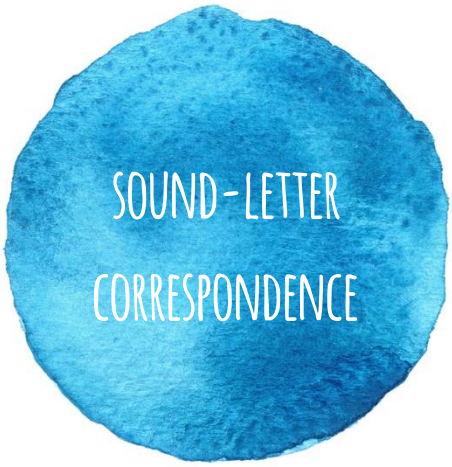
A: There's a movie theatre in my picture AS WELL. There's a HOT DOG STAND in front of it.

B: My picture has a POPCORN CART there.

Alternatively, you can print out two blank floor plans of a house or a room for each student, who decorate one of them as they like. In pairs, students tell their partner how their furniture is placed and fill the blank floor plan according to their partner's explanation.

https://me.me/i/ron-look-l-found-all-three-differences-receptionlst-those-19564088

Unit 5



English spelling in a poem

This classic poem is a simple and humorous way of showing the differences between spelling and pronunciation in English. As students recognise the English spelling rules - and exceptions to them - and discuss about them, they can reflect on the relation between spoken and written language in both English and Finnish as well as how it affects their language learning process. This task is recommended for the course ENA3.

”The Chaos” by Gerard Nolst Trenité

Full poem for example at: http://www.wordsmith.org/awad/english1.html

Pair up the students and divide the poem or an extract of it into smaller parts, for example four stanzas per each pair.

Tell the students that they should first read the stanzas through, check if their pronunciation was correct with a (web) dictionary and then record themselves reading aloud the passages in turns. Comfort your class that some of the words are very infrequent or rare exceptions to common pronunciation rules and that the task is meant to be a fun experiment and play with language in case they seem distressed. Finally, they will send their recordings to you. After the task, discuss which pronunciation rules they found out regards to spelling patterns, which words were difficult to pronounce and how English and Finnish differ when it comes to the relationship between spelling and pronunciation.

Alternatively, the class can go through the passage of the poem by reading aloud their parts in turns, so the whole class gets to hear the entire passage. After that you can also show a YouTube video of the poem being read out loud or read it aloud yourself.

Alternative poems: “Our Strange Lingo” by Lord Cromer or “Brush Up Your English” by T.S. Watt.

The poems can also be used as a “fill in the blanks” exercise, where a word on every second line is blanked out.

English spelling reform


The idea of this activity is to imagine what it could look like if English was written the way it is spoken. It might feel like an ideal situation for native Finnish speakers, who are used to close sound-letter correspondence in their first language, but would it be that in reality? This task is meant to be humorous but also elicit thoughts and discussion about the topic.


Let your students read the text with a partner, first silently and then aloud. Then ask them to come up with opinions about the imaginary spelling reform with the help of the questions below the extract. After that discuss the questions together. You can also add questions and even set up a debate with one team for the reform and another against it (suggested for the ENA2 course).

The European Commission has just announced an agreement that English will be the official language of the EU - rather than German (the other possibility). As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in of new rules which would apply to the language and reclassify it as Euro-English. The agreed plan is as follows:

In year 1, the soft 'c' would be replaced by 's'. Sertainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard 'c' will be replaced by 'k'. This should klear up konfusion and keyboards kan now have one less letter. There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year, when the troublesome 'ph' is replaced by 'f'. This will reduse 'fotograf' by 20%.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horible mes of the silent 'e's in the language is disgrasful and they should eliminat them.

By year 4, peopl wil be reseptiv to lingwistik korektions such as replasing 'th' with 'z' and 'w' with 'v' (saving mor keyboard spas).

During ze fifz year, ze unesesary 'o' kan be dropd from vords kontaining 'ou' and similar changes vud of kors be applid to ozer kombinations of leters. After zis tifz year, ve vil hav a reli sensibil riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubls or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi to understand ech ozer.

Ze drem vil finali kum tru!

"English reform by European Commission" by Unknown

What do you think about the reform?

Would it be good or bad to have a reform like that? Why?

What consequences would this kind of reform have?

Homograph memory game

By playing this game students not only train their memory but also improve their knowledge of English homographs (words that are written in the same way but have different pronunciations and meanings). They also learn more about the relationship of spelling and pronunciation in English.

An example set of homograph memory game cards (24 cards, 12 pairs) is in Appendix 7. You can find more homographs on the Internet but prefer words that are not dependent on the dialectal variation. Note that some homographs' vowel sounds change because of the stress placement, which is covered in Unit 4, whereas here the pronunciation changes depending on the meaning the words have. Consider concentrating on the latter type of words during this task.

First, explain the concept of a homograph to the students unless they are familiar with it already.

Divide the class into pairs or groups of three or four. Alternatively, the game can be played with the whole class by placing the cards on a document camera or the blackboard. One of the group members can also act as a judge and check that the picked card pairs are correct. If they aren't sure, they can ask you for help. As an extension to the task, have your students write the words in Latin alphabet and/or define the words in English. You can also omit the Finnish translations from the cards.

Hand out a set of cards for each pair or group, who lay the cards text side down. Students turn over two cards in their turn and pronounce the words on the cards. If the two words are homographs, they can keep the cards. The winner is the one who has most cards at the end of the game. After the game you can go through the most difficult words once more.

Homograph memory game can also be played as a "find a partner" game or it can be made into a homograph Tarsia (see Homophone Tarsia for instructions). Instead of homographs you can also use for example minimal pairs. They are easy to find online, and there's an example set of minimal pair cards in Appendix 10.

Homophone Tarsia

Homophones are words that have the same pronunciation but different spelling and meaning. Learning about homophones is important for improving listening comprehension and avoiding misunderstandings. Although Tarsia (http://www.mmlsoft.com/index.php/products/tarsia) is a software originally designed for teaching mathematics, it works well in language teaching, too. It can be used for creating jigsaws and domino games, for instance. Constructing a Tarsia is a fun and meaningful way of learning for students.

A Tarsia is made by choosing the number of words and the shape the cards will form. Word pairs are entered in the slots, one word for each slot. The software turns the words into the wanted shape that shows in "Preview" and can be saved as a PDF. A hexagon-shaped Tarsia (60 words, 30 homophone pairs) is in Appendix 8.

First, go through the meaning of a homophone together if it is unclear for the students.

Divide the class into pairs or groups of three or four. The game can also be played with the whole class and one set of cards by placing the cards on a document camera. Print as many copies as there are groups, cut out the triangles and give a set to each group.

Students lay the cards face down and turn over one card. Then they take turns picking up a card and seeing if they can connect it with another one. Others can help as it is a competition between groups, not individuals. If they are unsure, they can ask you or consult a dictionary. The winning team is the one who finishes the shape first. Remember to check that the cards are in correct order and the words match. To add some challenge, ask your students to write the words in phonetic script and/or translate the words into Finnish.

The words in the Homophone Tarsia have been turned into memory game cards in Appendix 9. See Homograph memory game for instructions.

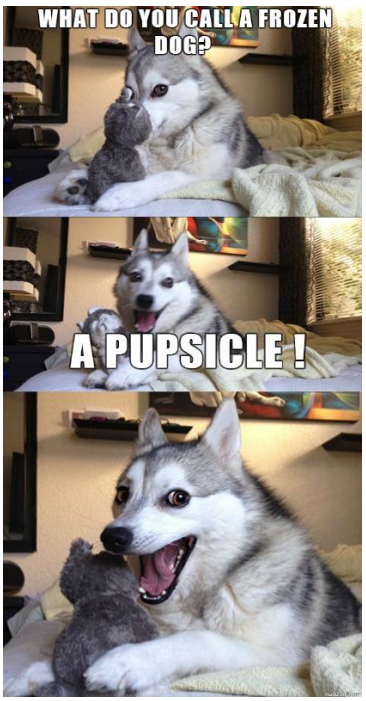
Puns

Puns are a form of word play that makes use of multiple meanings of a homograph or a homophone, for instance. The discrepancy between English spelling and pronunciation makes it a fruitful language for making puns which can be a fun way of learning about the phenomenon.

Puns can be easily found online, sometimes by searching “dad jokes” as well. However, pick only puns that deal with homographs or homophones. An example list of puns is in Appendix 11.

Ask students to choose a partner and hand out one piece of paper with a pun on it for each pair. The pairs should come up with the pun and write the sentence in its second meaning on the slip of paper. Then they show the original pun on a document camera, ask the rest of the class what its second meaning is and reveal the right answer.

Alternatively, you can show the puns one at a time via the document camera or a data projector to the whole class who try to find the pun. If your students want to continue with puns, you can provide them a list of homophones or homographs (see Appendices 7 and 9 for examples) and tell them to make their own puns in class or at home.



https://i.imgur.com/m5F4sCC.png

Quick tips

Pronunciation apps and games

 Most of pronunciation applications and games focus on practising individual sounds.

Some of the apps must be bought, like Sounds of speech by University of Iowa, but there are a few good quality free apps as well, such as SpeakItRight or MacMillan's Sounds – the pronunciation app. With DragonDictation students can dictate words or sentences and see whether the app understood what they said. Remember to check that the app supports the mobile operating system(s) you and your students are using.

Some games and tools can be found online on websites, such as English Accent Coach (https://www.englishaccentcoach.com/, also available as an app for iOS) and Phonetics Focus by Cambridge English Online (http://cambridgeenglishonline.com/Phonetics_Focus/). BBC's Phonics tool, a downloadable software, is primarily meant for people learning to read, but it can also be helpful for upper secondary school students in linking sounds together and seeing the correspondence of spelling and sounds in five different British accents.

Note that not all apps, tools and games use IPA symbols, so you might have to explain the equivalent symbols to the class.

Vocabulary dictation

 When learning new vocabulary, draw students' attention to the way the words are not only spelled but also pronounced. Ask students to choose a partner. Glancing through a list of words, one of them dictates 10-15 words of choice and the other writes them down. You can also tell them to add a short definition next to each word. Then they check that the words (and definitions) are correct, switch roles and do the same with another set of words.

Unit 6

Lip reading

(Adapted from Hewings 2004: 68-69 and www.tinyteflteacher.co.uk)

Lip reading (or silent dictation) is useful for recognising visible movements of the mouth during sound production to differentiate between sounds. This activity increases the awareness of both how to articulate sounds as a speaker and how to identify them as a listener.

Minimal pair lists for consonant sounds /θ/, /t/, /ʃ/, /s/ /w/, /v/, /ð/ and /d/ and vowel sounds /ɪ/, /i:/, /e/, /u/ and /ʊ/ can be found in Appendix 12.

Take copies of a list of minimal pairs and give one list for each student.

Demonstrate the first pair of the list by silently saying either “thin” or “tin” (by only moving your mouth). Ask students whether you said word a or word b. Repeat until they understand the idea. Tell them to work in pairs to finish the task, taking turns in one of them mouthing the words and the other reading the lips and saying which one of the words it was. If your students struggle, give pronunciation tips, such as pronouncing the /w/ sound as the Finnish /u/.

This activity can also be executed as a “shouting dictation”. In this case, pairs are on opposite sides of the classroom and shout the words and answers. You can add background music to make it even more challenging.

Sounds on the map

In this exercise students practise their pronunciation of the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ and consonant clusters, which are often problematic for Finnish-speakers. At the same time, they get to ask and give directions as well as acquire cultural knowledge by using an authentic map. This exercise with the accompanying material is suggested for the course ENA2 or any course that has a New York or USA theme.

Map of Manhattan in Appendix 13 or any (made up) map with street names that have the target sounds in them. You can either print a map for each student or show it to the whole class via a data projector or a document camera.

Either tell your students to devise a sightseeing tour for their partner or ask how to get to a certain place from a fixed starting point, e.g. the Times Square. The number of sites to be visited could be from five to ten. Before starting the pair work, show the class through a document camera how to read the map and what to do with it. If needed, go through the pronunciation of the chosen sounds as well and tell them to pay special attention to the target sounds.

Before or after the task, you can ask quickfire questions of specific locations on the map, to which the students should answer with the correct street name (or two if it's in a crossing). As a follow-up, move on to talk about a topic related to New York or continue with individual sounds, for example differences between /θ/ and /ð/.

Example list of sights on the map:

Times Square, Broadway & 42nd Street

Carnegie Hall, 7th Avenue & East 57th Street

St. Patrick's Cathedral, 5th Avenue & East 50th Street

American Museum of National History, 9th Avenue & West 77th Street

New York University, West Broadway & West 4th Street

Guggenheim Museum, 5th Avenue & East 86th Street

Madison Square Garden, 8th Avenue & West 31st Street

Washington Square, Avenue of the Americas & West 4th Street

Empire State Building, 5th Avenue & East 34th Street

Sound bingo

In the following exercise the students need to connect a sound that they hear with the equivalent IPA symbol, drawing their attention to the differences between spelling and pronunciation as well as learning to use the IPA symbols.

If needed, revise the phonetic alphabet before playing the game. Hand out empty bingo sheets for the students or tell each of them to draw a grid on paper. Then ask them to fill the grid with nine of the IPA symbols that you have chosen for the game, for example:

θ	d	ʒ
z	tʃ	dʒ
s	ʃ	ð

Then start reading out words one at a time, repeating each word at least twice. The students ought to circle the corresponding IPA symbol when they hear it in a word. For the sample bingo above, the word list could be the following:

thin din genre zoo

chew Jew sue shoe then

Ensure that a word contains only one target sound used in the game. In this list, the chosen sounds are all at the beginning of the words. To add challenge, choose words in which the sounds are in different places. Most of the words are minimal pair words, but they don't necessarily have to be if you want to make the game a little easier. When a student gets three IPA symbols in a row, they should shout 'bingo!'. Check that you have actually said the words including the symbols they have marked and that the symbols marked are right. Finally, write the words on the board and say them out loud together.

Vowel contrasts with limericks

Limericks are short poems that consist of five lines and usually 13 stressed syllables. Lines one, two and five have three stressed syllables, whereas lines three and four have two. These lines rhyme with each other so that the rhyme scheme is AA BB A. Limericks are great for practising rhythm, but sometimes they are used for distinguishing between vowel sounds as well, as in the following task. It is recommended for the course ENA3.

EFL Pronunciation Practice by use of Limericks (http://www.yek.me.uk/limricsefl.html) is a website by Jack Windsor Lewis that has a collection of limericks through which students can practise vowel differences. All 20 limericks have an audio clip of them being read aloud (in British pronunciation). In addition, each limerick has a version of it written in phonetic script. Limericks 1-13 are titled by the two vowel sounds that are contrasted in them and limericks 14-20 do not have any specific target sounds but rather focus on rhythm practice in general.

Choose some of the limericks from the website depending on the vowel sounds you want your students to train. For example, below is a list of limericks contrasting vowel sounds usually problematic for Finnish-speakers:

/ɪ/ vs. /i:/ - limericks one and nine

/ɪ/ vs. /e/ - limerick 11

/ʊ/ vs. /u:/ - limericks five and six

First explain the concept of a limerick if your students haven't heard about them. Play the limericks of your choice or read them out loud at least twice. Ask the class to repeat the limericks, starting from one line at a time. Ask your students if they notice the differences and tell them to concentrate on differentiating the vowel sounds more than on the correct rhythm. Finally, you can practise on limericks 14-20 to focus on the rhythm pattern.

Continue with the topic and have your class write their own limericks. Provide your students an introduction to writing a limerick, for example by showing the video "How to write a limerick (World Poetry Day)" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQ79VFgDr8Q by BBC Learning English. Writing the limericks can also be given as homework.

Quick tips

Aspiration

Provide each student with a piece of paper or a tissue for practising aspirated word-initial plosives /pʰ/, /tʰ/ and /kʰ/. Demonstrate single sounds and words first yourself and emphasise that the puff of air should be strong enough to make the paper or tissue move. Then have your students do the same. You can also have them pronounce words with non-aspirated plosives (/p/, /t/ and /k/) and/or their voiced counterparts (/b/, /d/ and /g/) to show the difference that correct aspiration makes. After this you can easily move on to voicing. Point out that voiceless plosives are only aspirated when followed by a stressed vowel.

Voicing

This task draws students' attention to the quality between voiced and unvoiced consonant sounds. You may start with vowels, e.g. /ɑ:/ and then pronounce voiced and unvoiced sounds, for example plosives or fricatives, as well as words that contain those sounds. Have your students repeat them after you in each phase. While pronouncing, hold your fingers gently on your throat and tell your students to do the same to feel the vibration of the vocal chords. If they can't feel it, they probably don't voice their consonant sounds enough.

Finding vowels

(Adapted from Pike 1947)

There are a couple of ways of physically finding the target vowel sound. **Slur** by slowly moving from one sound to another and stop in the middle, or **bracket** by producing each sound clearly and separately to find the right sound between them. For example, by moving the tongue and other parts of the mouth one can switch from /ɪ/ to /æ/ to create /e/ in the middle.

Building words

Construct words together one sound at a time, in particular if your students struggle with certain sounds or clusters.

Diagrams of speech organs

Use diagrams of the articulatory organs in order to show and explain how specific sounds are produced. Especially tongue positions and movements are easy to demonstrate through pictures. Moreover, by using a cut-out picture, your hand can act as a tongue.

Rubber band

Demonstrate the different lip positions for /i:/ and /ɪ/ or the length of vowels in minimal pairs (such as bit vs. bid and beat vs. bead) by stretching a rubber band. Provide students with rubber bands when they pronounce minimal pair words if it helps them with wide vs. relaxed lip positions.

Mirrors and front cameras

Ask students to bring small pocket mirrors or to use front cameras on their smartphones to practise tongue and lip positions when pronouncing individual speech sounds. In addition to knowing how the sounds should be produced, it is crucial for the students to notice how they are articulating the sounds themselves and whether there is room for improvement.

Total Physical Response

Decide on a set of sounds, for example fricatives, and a corresponding action for each sound, such as lifting a hand, crouching, bowing, drawing a circle with one's foot, turning one's head up and down, dabbing, and so on. If possible, let students decide on the actions that are paired with

the sounds. Tell students to stand up and dictate a list of words beginning with the chosen sounds. As soon as they hear the word, students should make the corresponding move. After this, students can continue the activity on their own in pairs or groups, one of them dictating and others moving.

Find the minimal pair

"Find a partner" is a simple game that can be played with consonant minimal pair cards (in Appendix 10). Give one card to each student, tell them to stand up and walk around the class saying the word in their card. Once they hear a student pronouncing a word that they think could be a pair to their word, they can stop and decide if their words form a minimal pair and come up with the sound that differentiates the two words. They must not show the card to others until they've found their partner. Instead of minimal pairs you can also use for example homophone memory game cards that can be found in Appendix 9.

Pronouncing grammar

Pronunciation can and should be integrated into teaching grammar items, such as compound words, phrasal verbs and related nouns, past participle -ed endings, -s endings (simple present tense, plurals and possessives), nationalities and (weak forms of) articles. In addition, when dealing with certain sounds, for example th-sounds, you can point out that verbs and common nouns starting with "th" are usually pronounced with /θ/ and articles, adverbials and pronouns with /ð/ (with exceptions, of course).

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Title page picture: http://freedesignfile.com/313107-watercolor-world-map-vector-03/

Unit page pictures: https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-illustration-blue-watercolor-circle-stain-paper-texture-design-element-isolated-white-background-hand-drawn-abstract-template-color-image82222852

Appendices

Appendix 1: Needs analyses

'There's more evidence to come yet, please your Majesty,' said the White Rabbit, jumping up in a great hurry: 'this paper has just been picked up.'

'What's in it?' said the Queen.

I haven't opened it yet,' said the White Rabbit, 'but it seems to be a letter, written by the prisoner to – to somebody.'

It must have been that,' said the King, 'unless it was written to nobody, which isn't usual, you know.'

'Who is it directed to?' said one of the jurymen.

*'It isn't directed at all,' said the White Rabbit; 'in fact, there's nothing written on the **outside**.'*

He unfolded the paper as he spoke, and added 'It isn't a letter, after all: it's a set of verses.'

'Are they in the prisoner's handwriting?' asked another of the jurymen.

No, they're not,' said the White Rabbit, 'and that's the queerest thing about it.' (The jury all looked puzzled.)

'He must have imitated somebody else's hand,' said the King. (The jury all brightened up again.)

'Please your Majesty,' said the Knave, 'I didn't write it, and they can't prove I did: there's no name signed at the end.'

*'If you didn't sign it,' said the King, 'that only makes the matter worse. You **must** have meant some mischief, or you'd have signed your name like an honest man.'*

There was a general clapping of hands at this: it was the first really clever thing the King had said that day.

*'That **proves** his guilt,' said the Queen.*

'It proves nothing of the sort!' said Alice. 'Why, you don't even know what they're about!'

"Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll

Name: _____

1 = totally disagree, 2 = slightly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor disagree, 4= slightly agree, 5 = totally agree

I don't know what my pronunciation issues are.

1 2 3 4 5

I use sounds of my mother tongue to replace sounds of English.

1 2 3 4 5

I can't hear the difference between some sounds of English.

1 2 3 4 5

I can't produce the difference between some sounds of English.

1 2 3 4 5

People understand me without trouble.

1 2 3 4 5

It takes too much effort or concentration to speak English.

1 2 3 4 5

I can't change the way I speak even if I wanted to.

1 2 3 4 5

I need to speak more in English.

1 2 3 4 5

I like to speak English.

1 2 3 4 5

Speaking English makes me feel embarrassed.

1 2 3 4 5

It's difficult to hear where a word ends and another one begins in normal spoken English.

1 2 3 4 5

I don't understand people who speak English differently from what I'm used to.

1 2 3 4 5

My pronunciation would improve if I listened to spoken English more.

1 2 3 4 5

I think that pronunciation is taught enough.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix 2: Setting goals

Where do you need speaking skills in English?

_____

_____

Is pronunciation important to you? Why/ why not?

_____

_____

What kind of English do you wish to speak?

_____

_____

Who do you want to sound like?

_____

_____

Who would you **not** wish to sound like?

_____

_____

What are you ready to do for your pronunciation?

_____

_____

Appendix 3: Dialectal variation with IPA

Things have come to a pretty pass
Our romance is growing flat,
For you like this and the other
While I go for this and that,

Goodness knows what the end will be
Oh I don't know where I'm at
It's plain to see we two will never make one
Something must be done:

You like __1__ and I like __2__,
You like __3__ and I like __4__
__1__, __2__, __3__, __4__
Let's call the whole thing off.

But oh, if we call the whole thing off
Then we must part
And oh, if we ever part, then that might break my heart

So if you like __5__ and I like __6__,
I'll wear __5__ and give up __6__
For we know we need each other so we
Better call the calling off off
Oh let's call the whole thing off.

You say __7__ and I say __8__
You say __9__ and I say __10__
__7__, __8__, __9__, __10__
Let's call the whole thing off.

You like __11__ and I like __12__
You eat __13__ and I eat __14__
__11__, __12__, __13__, __14__,
Let's call the whole thing off.

But oh, if we call the whole thing off then we must part
And oh, if we ever part, then that might break my heart

So, if you like __15__ and I like __16__
I'll take __15__ and give up __16__
For we know we need each other so we
Better call the calling off off,
Let's call the whole thing off.

Written by Ira and George Gershwin

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

List of IPA symbols used that differ from Latin alphabet

ə = mid central vowel (unstressed)

ɑ = open back vowel

ɑː = long open back vowel

ɔ = open-mid back rounded vowel

ʊ = near-close back rounded vowel

ɪ = near-close front vowel (lax)

ɜ = open-mid central vowel

æ = near-open front vowel

dʒ = voiced post-alveolar affricate

ˈ = primary stress on the following syllable

Answers

1. /pəˈteɪtoʊs/
2. /pəˈtɑːtoʊs /
3. / təˈmeɪtoʊs/
4. /təˈmɑːtoʊs/
5. /pəˈdʒæməz/
6. /pəˈdʒɑːməz/
7. /ˈlæftər/
8. /ˈlɑːftər/
9. /ˈæftər/
10. /ˈɑːftər/
11. /həˈvænə/
12. /həˈvɑːnə/
13. /bəˈnænə/
14. /bəˈnɑːnə/
15. /ˈɔɪstərs/
16. /ɜːrstərs

Appendix 4: Dividing speech into thought groups

Original script

this is the story of three plastic bottles empty and discarded their journeys are about to diverge with outcomes that impact nothing less than the fate of the planet but they weren't always this way to understand where these bottles end up we must first explore their origins the heroes of our story were conceived in this oil refinery the plastic in their bodies was formed by chemically bonding oil and gas molecules together to make monomers in turn those monomers were bonded into long polymer chains to make plastic in the form of millions of pellets those were melted at manufacturing plants and reformed in molds to create the resilient material that makes up the triplets' bodies machines filled the bottles with sweet bubbly liquid and they were then wrapped shipped bought opened consumed and unceremoniously discarded and now here they lie poised at the edge of the unknown bottle one like hundreds of millions of tons of his plastic brethren ends up in a landfill this huge dump expands each day as more trash comes in and continues to take up space as plastics sit there being compressed amongst layers of other junk rainwater flows through the waste and absorbs the water-soluble compounds it contains and some of those are highly toxic together they create a harmful stew called leachate which can move into groundwater soil and streams poisoning ecosystems and harming wildlife it can take bottle one an agonizing 1,000 years to decompose bottle two's journey is stranger but unfortunately no happier he floats on a trickle that reaches a stream a stream that flows into a river and a river that reaches the ocean after months lost at sea he's slowly drawn into a massive vortex where trash accumulates a place known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch here the ocean's currents have trapped millions of pieces of plastic debris this is one of five plastic-filled gyres in the world's seas places where the pollutants turn the water into a cloudy plastic soup some animals like seabirds get entangled in the mess they and others mistake the brightly coloured plastic bits for food plastic makes them feel full when they're not so they starve to death and pass the toxins from the plastic up the food chain for example it's eaten by lanternfish the lanternfish are eaten by squid the squid are eaten by tuna and the tuna are eaten by us and most plastics don't biodegrade which means they're destined to break down into smaller and smaller pieces called micro plastics which might rotate in the sea eternally but bottle three is spared the cruel purgatories of his brothers a truck brings him to a plant where he and his companions are squeezed flat and compressed into a block okay this sounds pretty bad too but hang in there it gets better the blocks are shredded into tiny pieces which are washed and melted so they become the raw materials that can be used again as if by magic bottle three is now ready to be reborn as something completely new for this bit of plastic with such humble origins suddenly the sky is the limit

Suggested answers

this is the story of three plastic bottles / empty and discarded / their journeys are about to diverge / with outcomes that impact nothing less than the fate of the planet / but they weren't always this way / to understand where these bottles end up / we must first explore their origins / the heroes of our story were conceived in this oil refinery / the plastic in their bodies was formed by chemically bonding oil and gas molecules together / to make monomers / in turn / these monomers were bonded into long polymer chains / to make plastic / in the form of millions of pellets / those were melted at manufacturing plants / and reformed in molds / to create the resilient material that makes up the triplets' bodies / machines filled the bottles with sweet bubbly liquid / and they were then wrapped / shipped / bought / opened / consumed / and unceremoniously / discarded / and now here they lie / poised at the edge of the unknown / bottle one / like hundreds of millions of tons of his plastic brethren / ends up in a landfill / this huge dump expands each day as more trash comes in / and continues to take up space / as plastics sit there / being compressed amongst layers of other junk / rainwater flows through the waste / and absorbs the water-soluble compounds it contains / and some of those are highly toxic / together / they create a harmful stew / called leachate / which can move into groundwater / soil / and streams / poisoning ecosystems and harming wildlife / it can take bottle one an agonizing 1,000 years / to decompose / bottle two's journey is stranger / but unfortunately / no happier / he floats on a trickle that reaches a stream / a stream that flows into a river / and a river that reaches the ocean / after months lost at sea / he's slowly drawn into a massive vortex / where trash accumulates / a place known as the great pacific garbage patch / here the ocean's currents have trapped millions of pieces of plastic debris / this is one of five plastic-filled gyres / in the world's seas / places where the pollutants / turn the water into a cloudy plastic soup / some animals / like seabirds / get entangled in the mess / they and others / mistake the brightly coloured plastic bits for food / plastic makes them feel full when they're not / so they starve to death / and pass the toxins from the plastic up the food chain / for example / it's eaten by lanternfish / the lanternfish are eaten by squid / the squid are eaten by tuna / and the tuna are eaten by us / and most plastics don't biodegrade / which means they're destined to break down into smaller and smaller pieces called micro plastics / which might rotate in the sea eternally / but bottle three is spared the cruel purgatories of his brothers / a truck brings him to a plant / where he and his companions are squeezed flat / and compressed into a block / okay this sounds pretty bad too / but hang in there / it gets better / the blocks are shredded into tiny pieces / which are washed and melted / so they become the raw materials / that can be used again / as if by magic / bottle three is now ready to be reborn / as something completely new / for this bit of plastic with such humble origins / suddenly / the sky is the limit

Appendix 5: Stress-timing nursery rhymes

1	2	3
Hickory,	dickory,	dock.
The mouse	ran up the	clock.
The clock	struck one,	
The mouse	ran down,	
Hickory,	dickory,	dock.

1	2	3	4
Eeny,	meeny,	miny,	moe,
Catch a	tiger	by the	toe.
If he	hollers,	let him	go,
Eeny,	meeny,	miny,	moe.

1	2	3	4
Humpty	Dumpty	sat on a	wall,
Humpty	Dumpty	had a great	fall.
All the king's	horses and	all the king's	men
Couldn't put	Humpty	together	again.

1	2	3	4
Row,	row,	row your	boat,
Gently	down the	stream	
Merrily,	merrily,	merrily,	merrily,
Life is	but a	dream.	

Appendix 6: Rhythm in song lyrics

Chorus: I'll **beat** up a **thou**sand **men**
Whatever **makes** me a **he**ro
I'll **fly,** keep us **safe**
Whatever **makes** me a **he**ro

Call me **out** from the **crowd**
Matter of **fact** it's a **wolfpack**
Cause a **riot** in your **town**
Pops told me to **fight back**
I'll fight **back**, what's a **word** to **wise men**
Let me **speak out**
This is my **soundtrack**
Theme song for a **leader**
Now who gon' **stand out**
Let me **have** a conver**sa**tion with **Cae**sar
Don't **take** your **swords out**
I'm **sca**red **ho**mie
I **mean** I'm **fear**less
Lord help me **now**
Can I get a **wit**ness

I'm **ready** to **go,** I'm a **figh**ter
Burn a pla**toon** with a **ligh**ter
Show you my **teeth** I'm a **t**iger
Got the **soul** of a **chief**
You, **tried** to **break** my **spi**rit
The **heart** of a **Zulu,** I'll be a **he**ro give me **five** **mi**nutes
Chorus

Wanna be a **he**ro
Man of the **hour**
In it for the **spotlight**
Wanna have the **pow**er
Better **watch** your**self**
'Cause you **know** they'll **foll**ow
I can **do** it to**day**
What about to**morr**ow
Can't do it, can't **do** it
Move on to **bett**er **things**
What does that **mean**
First book of **kings**
I'm **strong ho**mie
I'm **fear**less
Lord help me **now**
Can I get a **wit**ness

Good sense makes **slow** to **ang**er **like**
Or **should** I just **smash** the **place** on **sight**
Skip **rocks** when I'm **try**in' to **fight** for my **broth**ers
won't **stop** when **I'm** on the **road** for my **moth**er
My **pops told** me that a **man** never **lie**
I say that a **he**ro never **die**

:;I'm **just** a **man** (**man**);:
I'm **just** a
Chorus

Biniyam - Hero

Chorus: I'll beat up a thousand men

Whatever makes me a hero

I'll fly, keep us safe

Whatever makes me a hero

Call me out from the crowd

Matter of fact it's a wolfpack

Cause a riot in your town

Pops told me to fight back

I'll fight back, what's a word to wise men

Let me speak out

This is my soundtrack

Theme song for a leader

Now who gon' stand out

Let me have a conversation with Caesar

Don't take your swords out

I'm scared homie

I mean I'm fearless

Lord help me now

Can I get a witness

I'm ready to go, I'm a fighter

Burn a platoon with a lighter

Show you my teeth I'm a tiger

Got the soul of a chief

You, tried to break my spirit

The heart of a Zulu, I'll be a hero give me five minutes

Chorus

Wanna be a hero

Man of the hour

In it for the spotlight

Wanna have the power

Better watch yourself

'Cause you know they'll follow

I can do it today

What about tomorrow

Can't do it, can't do it

Move on to better things

What does that mean

First book of kings

I'm strong homie

I'm fearless

Lord help me now

Can I get a witness

Good sense makes slow to anger like

Or should I just smash the place on sight

Skip rocks when I'm tryin' to fight for my brothers

won't stop when I'm on the road for my mother

My pops told me that a man never lie

I say that a hero never die

:;I'm just a man (man);:

I'm just

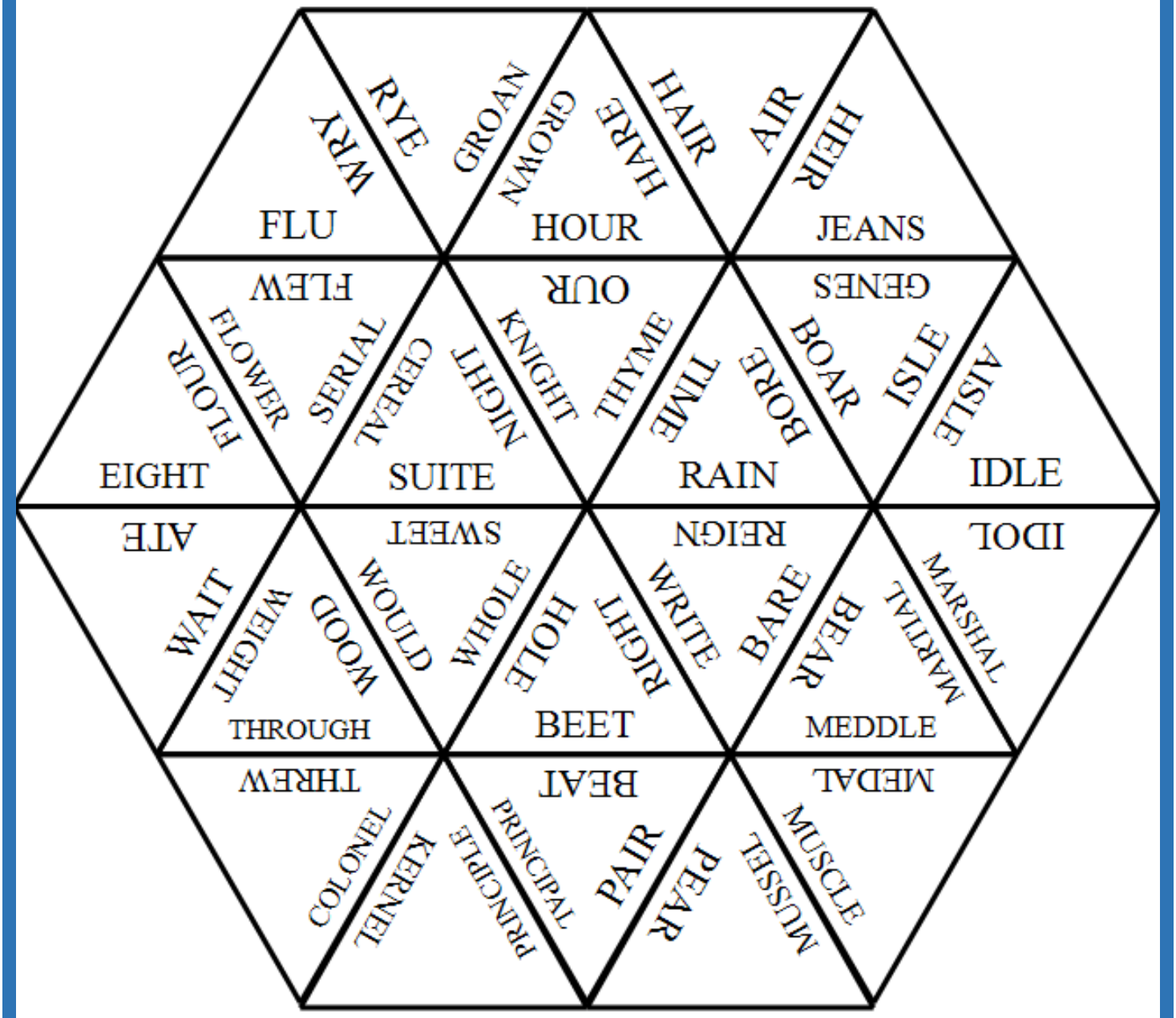
Chorus

Appendix 7: Homograph memory game

/li:d/ ohjata, vetää	/lɛd/ lyijy	/wɪnd/ tuuli	/wʌɪnd/ kääntää, kiertää
/tɛə(r)/ repeymä; repiä; repeytyä	/tɪə(r)/ kyynel; kyynelehtiä	/lɪv/ elää	/lʌɪv/ elävä
/rɛd/ luki; lukenut	/ri:d/ lukea	/boʊ/ rusetti; jousi	/baʊ/ kumartaa
/roʊ/ meloa; rivi	/raʊ/ riita; riidellä	/wu:nd/ vamma, haava	/waʊnd/ käänsi; käännetty
/soʊə(r)/ ompelija	/su:ə(r)/ viemäri	/beɪs/ basso	/bæs/ ahven

/nʌmbə(r)/ numero	/nʌmə(r)/ turtuneempi	/grædʒʊeɪt/ valmistua	/grædʒʊət/ valmistunut (adj)

Appendix 8: Homophone Tarsia



Appendix 9: Homophone memory game cards

EIGHT	ATE	FLOUR	FLOWER
FLU	FLEW	WRY	RYE
GROAN	GROWN	HAIR	HARE
HEIR	AIR	JEANS	GENES
AISLE	ISLE	IDLE	IDOL
MARSHAL	MARTIAL	MEDAL	MEDDLE

MUSSEL	MUSCLE	PEAR	PAIR
PRINCIPLE	PRINCIPAL	COLONEL	KERNEL
THREW	THROUGH	WEIGHT	WAIT
WOULD	WOOD	HOLE	WHOLE
WRITE	RIGHT	RAIN	REIGN
THYME	TIME	NIGHT	KNIGHT

SUITE	SWEET	SERIAL	CEREAL
HOUR	OUR	BOAR	BORE
BEAT	BEET	BARE	BEAR

Appendix 10: Minimal pair cards

PRESSED	BREAST	RIP	RIB
MESS	MESH	SHACK	SACK
GRIEVE	GRIEF	FENDER	VENDOR
DEBT	DEAD	SLIGHT	SLIDE
TECH	DECK	TIDE	DIED

CRANE	GRAIN	CLUE	GLUE
LEAK	LEAGUE	RACK	RAG
CHANGE	CHAINS	FRIDGE	FRIZZ

Appendix 11: Puns

1. When did the man go to the dentist? Tooth hurt-y

Pun:

2. Did you know the first French fries weren't actually cooked in France? They were cooked in Greece.

Pun:

3. Want to hear a joke about a piece of paper? Never mind, it's tearable.

Pun:

4. I just watched a documentary about beavers. It was the best dam show I ever saw!

Pun:

5. If you see a robbery at an Apple Store does that make you an iWitness?

Pun:

6. Why did the Clydesdale give the pony a glass of water? Because he was a little horse!

Pun:

7. Two peanuts were walking down the street. One was a salted.

Pun:

8. I'm only familiar with 25 letters in the English language. I don't know why.

Pun:

9. Why couldn't the bike stand up by itself? It was two tired.

Pun:

10. SERVER: "Sorry about your wait." DAD: "Are you saying I'm fat?"

Pun:

11. What do you call a deer with no eyes? No idea!

Pun:

12. Why can't you hear a pterodactyl go to the bathroom? Because the pee is silent.

Pun:

13. What did the buffalo say to his son when he dropped him off at school? Bison.

Pun:

14. What do you call someone with no body and no nose? Nobody knows.

Pun:

15. Why did the crab never share? Because he's shellfish.

Pun:

Source: https://www.buzzfeed.com/mikespohr/75-dad-jokes-that-are-so-bad-theyre-actually-good?utm_term=.hsv7EP7oe#.fbP8pg84X

Appendix 12: Lip reading

Sounds /θ/, /t/, /ʃ/, /s/ /w/, /v/, /ð/ and /d/:

	a	b		a	b		a	b		a	b
1	thin	tin	7	ship	sip	13	west	vest	19	than	Dan
2	three	tree	8	she	sea	14	wine	vine	20	they	day
3	through	true	9	sure	sore	15	wet	vet	21	their	dare
4	thank	tank	10	shoot	suit	16	worse	verse	22	then	den
5	thought	taught	11	shy	sigh	17	while	vile	23	those	doze
6	both	boat	12	mash	mass	18	wary	vary	24	though	dough

Sounds /ɪ/, /i:/, /e/, /u/ and /ʊ/:

	a	b		a	b		a	b
1	ship	sheep	6	bed	bid	11	Luke	look
2	it	eat	7	dead	did	12	pool	pull
3	hit	heat	8	peck	pick	13	cooed	could
4	bin	bean	9	bet	bit	14	fool	full
5	live	leave	10	ten	tin	15	stewed	stood

Appendix 13: Sounds on the map http://atlantislsc.com/