

These were some of the most frequently asked questions throughout our webinar, last Friday, 7 August 2020. Please, find my answers below. It is worth bearing in mind that these are my opinions and points of view.

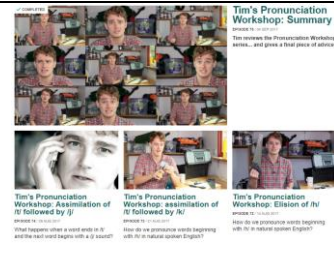

Thank you,

Viktor Carrasquero

1) I would like to learn strategies for teaching pronunciation in my lessons.

Well, thank you for attending the webinar! I think that shows your commitment to gaining and enhancing your pronunciation teaching skills! Now, there is a wide range of resources available online, which you can check at any given time.

- a. Check out this article by Mark Hancock, published on the British Council website. I think it is a good start: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/teaching-pronunciation-more-just-listen-and-repeat>;
- b. Have a look at the materials and resources available on the British Council *Teaching English* website, as it has a wealth of lesson plans you can draw inspiration from: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/?_ga=2.56304107.1945388808.1596941785-1784576189.1583129916;
- c. Discover the *hot topics* in pronunciation teaching that Adrian Underhill addresses on his *Pronunciation Blog*: <https://www.adrianunderhill.com/the-pronunciation-blog/>;
- d. You can also read Mark Hancock's entries on his *Pronunciation Blog*: <http://hancockmcdonald.com/blog/topic/marks-pronunciation-blog>;
- e. It might also be a good time to revisit seminars and webinars the British Council has organised in the past: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/news-events/seminars>;
- f. I personally **love** the BBC Learning English website! Visit their Pronunciation section (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/features/pronunciation>), where you'll find...

 <p>Tim's Pronunciation Workshop: Summary</p> <p>With many suggestions on how to approach different pronunciation phenomena.</p>	<p>With many suggestions on how to approach different pronunciation phenomena.</p>	 <p>The Sounds of English: Long Vowels - 1, 2, 3</p> <p>The Sounds of English: Short Vowels - 1, 2, 3</p>	<p>With articulatory descriptions to pronounce every sound of the English sound inventory.</p>
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2) What app did you use to make the poll?

- I used *Microsoft Forms*, but you can also use *Google Forms*, where you can create online surveys and quizzes -for free.
- Socrative* is really nice, as it allows you to create and launch quizzes, which you can share with your students 'live': <https://b.socrative.com/login/teacher/>;
- Many people also use *Survey Monkey* (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/>), but the number of tools that you can use for free might be limited.

♥ If you teach on *Zoom*, just use the *Poll* tool. It is powerfully user-friendly.

3) I'd like to know the bibliography or the phoneticians you'll be dealing with in this talk.

I have got many of the ideas for the webinar from many different sources. I will share some of the fundamental books you should check out, at some point. Click on the pictures for details.



4) Is there a single kind of pronunciation for English teaching?

The pronunciation of people coming from different speech communities is, simply put, very diverse. Pronunciation varies due to many factors, which can be of a linguistic or of a socially driven nature. One of such 'socially-driven' factors is geography: people coming from different places in the world tend to have different pronunciations. Even people from within a country have slightly diverging pronunciation patterns. Think of how much your own dialect differs from that of people in other parts of your country. Variation can also be individual (idiolect).

Bearing in mind that we live in an increasingly connected world, and that our need to interact with people from many different backgrounds will keep growing, it is important to embrace two notions: **a) language variation, including pronunciation variability, is a fact of natural languages, and it reflects who are as human beings living in communities. As such, and linguistically speaking, every language variety is valid and equally meaningful; b) as a teacher, you are the greatest resource learners have available: your own 'kind of pronunciation', your accent, is a good model for your learners. Ideally, you would also expose your learners to different types of pronunciation (as in accents, formality modes, emotions, etc.)**

5) What's the technical name for *musicality* in sentences?

The overall **rhythm** of a language, its voice 'ups and downs', produced by the combination of **word** and **sentence stress** and **intonation**, make up the '**music of language**'.

6) Do you distinguish between teaching for fluency and teaching for accuracy?

I do. I think it all depends on the goals and aims of your teaching, as well as on the learners' needs and institutional constraints. In general, I try to get learners to focus on accuracy, but I also try to get them to develop their speaking fluency, as this will give them chances to put accurate 'pron' patterns into meaningful and purposeful use.

7) Consonants and vowels. Do you think it is good start teaching them from beginners?

I am convinced you can embed pronunciation into the very first lesson of a beginner-level class. I think you should! Introduce articulatory instruction. Make contrastive analysis between L1 and L2, if you can! Show model videos! Some of those lesson 1 sentences can be rather challenging, pron-wise!

8) What is more important, using the IPA or the American Phonetic System in South America?

Linguistic sound transcription systems are attempts to standardise language sound representation. As long as learners are exposed to a consistent system, one they grow to understand and recognise in materials, assignments and publications, I do not see one particular system as being 'more important' than others.

That being said, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is the most-widely used sound representation system in publications, such as dictionaries and reference books. By using the IPA, you could be making your learners' life much easier!

9) How to introduce phonetics characters (IPA) of vowel and consonant sounds for teaching teenagers in high school?

As a rule of thumb:

- a) **Make sound instruction physical** – get learners to practise organic placements and get them to associate these with broader body motions (stretch a rubber band to show vowel lengthening; put vowel flashcards on the floor for learners to jump from high vowels to low vowels, get learners to move their hands to show you different intonation patterns, etc.);
- b) **Make it fun** – and contextualise pronunciation points within a topic, a task, an activity, etc.;
- c) **Let learners practise independently** – sometimes. Instead of getting your class to drill out sentences as a 'whole class', they could work in smaller groups, or in pairs, and practise drilling words and sentences to each other, as part of purposeful tasks;
- d) **Use apps** – such as the British Council *Sounds Right* app, for learners to use technology as they focus on sound (<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/apps/learnenglish-sounds-right>);
- e) **Use the IPA constantly and consistently** – with lower-level classes, you could even have a *Sound of the day*: highlight the IPA symbol to learners, get them to listen to it, as well as to words and sentences containing it, and do sound discrimination activities.

10) How do you teach pronunciation to kids?

Focus on developing your learners' *phonological and phonemic awareness*. Check out this extremely useful resource pack by the UK's Department for Children, Schools and Families:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf;

11) What do you do when you run out of patience?

All learning takes time. Learning pronunciation phenomena is not an exception. It is important to always remember that learners need to encounter pronunciation points repeatedly, and that they need to be given many chances to put these points into use. It might be the case that your learners master a pronunciation point within one lesson, but it is also very likely for them to need an extended focus on said point, sometimes over the span of several lessons, courses, levels, etc.

If you run out of patience because your learners do not seem to be 'getting it right', move on, take your time, work on something else, revisit your activity, revise it, think of possible changes you can make, talk to colleagues, and definitely give your learners more chances to listen to and produce that pronunciation point. Recycle language points as much as you can!

12) I have an excellent pronunciation. How can I take advantage of that?

Well, you're the best pronunciation model your learners can get!!! 😊😊😊

13) Viktor, we can hear the popping explosion of your plosives onto your mic. Maybe placing it a bit further from the mouth might help to better sound quality? THANKS!!

Oops! Sorry! 😞 Maybe it's time to get a 'pop shield' for my mic...

Other links

https://quizlet.com	https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/pronunciation	https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/learning-english/activities-for-learners
https://dictation.io/speech	https://vocaroo.com/	