

Effective techniques for teaching English pronunciation

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A.K., Ibragimova

Zh. Mussin Kokshetau Higher Kazakh pedagogical college,
Kokshetau, Kazakhstan

Abstract. The given article describes the purpose and methods of teaching pronunciation. There are offered traditional and interactive ways of teaching English pronunciation effectively. The aim of the article is to suggest effective traditional and interactive methods and platforms for teaching and learning English pronunciation. Effective pronunciation instruction involves a holistic approach that encompasses phonetic mastery, cultural awareness, and practical application across language skills.

Key words: pronunciation, interactive learning, approach, techniques, online educational platforms

Pronunciation is a crucial aspect of language learning, contributing significantly to effective communication. While the goal isn't necessarily to mimic native speakers, clear pronunciation is essential for comprehension and successful interaction in English. Developing phonetic skills, understanding word stress, recognizing phonemes, and grasping intonation are key objectives in teaching pronunciation. In this comprehensive article, we will explore various effective techniques for both teachers and learners to master English pronunciation.

Pronunciation is the way how a definite word is pronounced. In order to provide the correct pronunciation and avoid misunderstandings we should know how to properly pronounce words

in English. The correct pronunciation makes the effective communication be possible. Pronunciation is a skill that should be developed and perfected throughout the whole course of learning the language. Understanding the fundamental components of correct pronunciation is crucial. Learners should focus on mastering English phonemes, encompassing both vowels and consonants. Additionally, recognizing the peculiarities of English in comparison to one's native language, such as vowel length and palatalization, is essential. Stress patterns in words and sentences, as well as the melody of speech involving rises and falls, are integral aspects that learners need to assimilate.

The main purpose of teaching pronunciation is not to make the learners sound like native speakers of English, but to enable them to pronounce the language clearly and comprehend others. Teaching pronunciation aims at developing learners' phonetic skills and abilities which include word stress, phonemes, syllables, intonation.

Correct pronunciation

Spelling

Intonation

Stress

Syllables

Picture 1. Integral parts of correct pronunciation.

Taking into consideration aims and objectives of teaching pronunciation pupils must assimilate the following:

- The phonemes and sounds of the English language, its vowels and consonants. They should be able to articulate these sounds both separately and in different phonetic contexts.
- Some peculiarities of the English language in comparison with those of the Kazakh language (length of vowels, palatalization).
- Stress in a word and in a sentence, and melody (fall and rise). Pupils must be able to divide a sentence into groups and intone it properly.

Learners assimilate the English pronunciation through:

- the acquisition of new sounds, stress, tone-patterns;
- drill in recognition and reproduction new material to acquire pronunciation habits;
- making use of the pronunciation habits in language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Effective pronunciation instruction involves a multifaceted approach aimed at developing a learner's ability to articulate sounds, understand language nuances, and apply acquired skills across various language skills. Here are the key objectives:

- **Phonetic Mastery:**

Objective: To familiarize pupils with the phonemes and sounds of the English language, encompassing vowels and consonants.

Implementation: Activities should include focused exercises on individual sounds and their variations in different phonetic contexts.

- **Cultural and Linguistic Awareness:**

Objective: Understanding and recognizing the differences between English and the learners'

native language, such as vowel length and palatalization.

Implementation: Comparative analysis and targeted exercises to address language-specific challenges in pronunciation.

- Stress and Melody Recognition:

Objective: Mastery of word and sentence stress, as well as the ability to use appropriate melody (intonation) in speech.

Implementation: Engaging activities to practice stress placement, sentence grouping, and intonation patterns.

- Methods of Assimilating English Pronunciation:

Acquisition of New Sounds, Stress, and Tone-Patterns:

Approach: Systematic introduction and practice of new sounds, stressing the importance of proper stress placement and intonation patterns.

Implementation: Interactive exercises, listening drills, and guided practice sessions focusing on acquiring new sounds and patterns.

- Drill in Recognition and Reproduction:

Approach: Repetitive exercises to reinforce recognition and reproduction of correct pronunciation.

Implementation: Various drill activities, including repetition exercises, tongue twisters, and targeted word practice to develop pronunciation habits.

- Integration into Language Skills:

Approach: Connecting pronunciation habits with broader language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Implementation: Incorporating pronunciation exercises into all language skills, such as listening comprehension activities, oral presentations, reading aloud, and written exercises.

If to analyze traditional methods of teaching pronunciation teachers use the following ones:

1. Tongue Twisters. Tongue twisters are a great way to teach children the sounds of consonants, and at the same time, are a lot of fun, making sounds easier to remember. They may be chosen particularly by training this or that definite sound. For example, in order to practice the pronunciation of the sounds [θ] and [Z] given by the combination of the letters “th” the next tongue twisters may be learnt:

Three thin thieves thought a thousand thoughts.

Now if three thin thieves thought a thousand thoughts

How many thoughts did each thief think?

The thirty-three thankful thieves thought that they thanked the other thirty-three thankful thieves throughout Thursday.

*Thirty thousand thoughtless boys thought they would make a thundering noise.
So the thirty thousand thumbs thumbed on the thirty thousand drums.*

2. Songs (singing karaoke). Songs are highly preferred way of teaching English pronunciation because they are an effortless learning tool. Children are naturally drawn towards songs. Learners may be given the following types of exercises: fill the gaps in the lyrics of songs, listen and complete the song, learn by heart the song, give the right order of the lyrics in the song and so on.

Task. Listen and fill the gaps in the following song.

DANCE MONKEY.

They _____ oh my god I _____ the way you _____
_____ your hand, my dear, and place them both in mine
You _____ - you stopped me dead when I _____ passing by
And now I beg to _____ you dance just one more time

Ooh I _____ you, _____ you, _____ you every time
And oh my I, I like your style
You, you _____ me, _____ me, _____ me wanna cry
And now I beg to _____ - you dance just one more time

So I _____: dance for me, dance for me, dance for me oh oh oh
I've never _____ - anybody _____ the things you _____ before
They _____ move for me, move for me, move for me
And when you're _____ I'll _____ you _____ it all again

I _____ oh my god I _____ you walking by
_____ my hands, my dear, and look.

(an extract taken from the song "Dance monkey")

3. One of the simple and traditional ways of making remember the pronunciation of words is Repetition. It is considered to be a great method to reinforce learning. Repeating will help the learners to commit the correct pronunciation to memory.

4. Record and Replay. The teacher encourages children to record and replay their sentences to review their own speech and identify the problem in pronunciation.
5. The method called “Looking in the Mirror”. When learners look in the mirror while pronouncing new words, they can observe the lip and tongue movement, which helps the nature of sounds in understanding. This technique helps the learners to keep the track of right movements in the utterance and be able to correct themselves.
6. Chants are a great method of teaching English pronunciation with intonation. This technique helps in understanding the difference between the sounds of a question, statement, and exclamation. For example, take a group of sentences, such as:

It is our house. (A falling tone)

Is it their house? (A rising tone)

It's their house? (A fall-rise tone that shows uncertainty)

Nowadays the world has become more technologically based, so has the classroom. Digital learning resources are accessed by means of a connection to the internet. Technology in classrooms has become increasingly prevalent. Smart boards are becoming more common in many classrooms, which allows the teacher to interact with digital learning resources during holding the lesson effectively. This has created an immense impact on how students learn new information and knowledge.

Interactive learning is a more hands-on, real-world process of relaying information in classrooms. Passive learning relies on listening to teacher’s lecture or rote memorization of information, figures, or equations. But with interactive learning, students are invited to participate in the conversation, through technology or through role-playing group exercises in class.

We may offer the following teaching strategies:

- Interactive Exercises:

Strategy: Engage learners in interactive exercises that involve listening and responding to native speakers, mimicking correct pronunciation.

Implementation: Utilize multimedia resources, audio clips, and interactive platforms to expose learners to authentic pronunciation models.

- Real-World Application:

Strategy: Emphasize the practical application of pronunciation skills in real-life scenarios.

Implementation: Role-playing activities, scenario-based exercises, and simulations to encourage learners to apply pronunciation skills in authentic situations.

- Feedback and Self-Assessment:

Strategy: Provide constructive feedback and encourage self-assessment.

Implementation: Incorporate peer evaluation, self-recording, and reflection activities to help learners identify areas for improvement and track their progress.

In today's technologically driven world, integrating digital resources into pronunciation lessons can be highly effective. Nowadays, there are offered various effective online educational platforms for teaching and learning the correct pronunciation. One of them is:

1. Elsa speak.

ELSA, who is for English Language Speech Assistant, is an application that helps students improve their speaking and listening skills through speech recognition. Besides evaluating students' speaking performance, the app also gives feedback on articulating words and offers helps tips for how to speak more naturally.

Below you may see some features of this application:

- The application can determine your English-speaking proficiency level based on your pronunciation, fluency, intonation, accent and ability to recognize specific foreign sounds.
- Students can practice specific consonant and vowel sounds.
- ELSA's application dictionary lets you check the pronunciation and definition of necessary vocabulary.
- You can create your own study lists by choosing the words you would like to practice.
- Students can also practice with the lessons created by other users, some of which are created for various topics like food and business or specific purposes like TOEFL and IELTS tests preparation.

2. Say it.

Through the Say It mobile app, students can practice phonetic sounds and words through listening and repetition. A key feature of this app is a sound wave graph that shows intonation and which part of a word should be emphasized.

The best features of the given application are as follows:

- Say It online application includes a phonetic chart that reflects English vowel and consonant phonemes.
- Learners can challenge themselves by completing the pronunciation tests for different English levels.
- The application breaks down a word into syllables and shows the phonemes used.

- Learners can record their voices to imitate the pronunciation of the words. Afterwards, they can play the audio back to evaluate and rate their own pronunciation.
- Students can save their recordings to a list and even share them with their teachers or peers by email.

In the realm of language learning, Duolingo stands out as a pioneering app that seamlessly integrates education with gamification. With its user-friendly interface and diverse language offerings, Duolingo has become a popular choice for learners worldwide.

Duolingo's lessons are designed as engaging, interactive experiences rather than traditional classroom-style exercises. Users encounter a variety of activities, including word matching, reading comprehension, and sentence completion, creating a dynamic learning environment. Duolingo employs a leveling system that motivates learners to progress through lessons and challenges. Completing exercises within a lesson earns points and unlocks subsequent levels. This gamified approach encourages consistent participation and skill development. Duolingo provides learners with valuable tips on grammar and vocabulary to enhance understanding. Users can access explanations and tips before or during exercises, creating a supportive learning environment that reinforces concepts. Duolingo fosters a sense of community by allowing users to follow and compete with learners from around the world.

The social aspect encourages friendly competition, providing an additional layer of motivation as users track their progress against others globally. Duolingo incorporates a rewards system to acknowledge and celebrate learners' achievements. Users receive rewards for completing lessons, achieving language goals, and overcoming challenges. This positive reinforcement enhances the overall learning experience.

Duolingo's gamified approach to language learning has several noteworthy advantages:

- Duolingo's game-like structure captures learners' attention and keeps them motivated through the use of rewards and competition.
- The leveling system encourages users to consistently engage with the app, fostering regular language practice.
- Duolingo creates a less formal and more enjoyable learning atmosphere, making language acquisition feel like a game rather than a traditional educational task.
- The ability to connect with learners worldwide adds a social element, creating a sense of community and shared learning experiences.
- Duolingo's accessibility, being available on various devices, ensures that language learning is not confined to a specific location or time.

Duolingo's success lies in its ability to make language learning accessible, engaging, and

enjoyable. By merging education with gamification, the app transforms the often challenging task of language acquisition into a fun and rewarding experience. While not a comprehensive substitute for traditional language instruction, Duolingo serves as a valuable supplement, especially for learners seeking a flexible and interactive learning platform. Its global impact showcases the potential of combining technology and gamification to democratize language education.Начало формы

As classrooms evolve with technology, interactive learning becomes more prevalent. Smart boards, internet connectivity, and digital resources create a dynamic learning environment. Interactive learning engages students actively, moving away from passive methods like rote memorization.

In conclusion, mastering English pronunciation is an ongoing process that involves a combination of traditional techniques and modern tools. From tongue twisters to interactive apps, each method contributes to the development of phonetic skills. The integration of technology further enhances the learning experience, providing instant feedback and targeted practice. As we navigate the ever-changing landscape of language education, combining time-tested methods with innovative approaches ensures a comprehensive and effective approach to teaching and learning pronunciation. Effective pronunciation instruction involves a holistic approach that encompasses phonetic mastery, cultural awareness, and practical application across language skills. By integrating diverse teaching strategies and emphasizing real-world applications, educators can empower learners to assimilate English pronunciation with confidence and accuracy.

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