

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING ENGLISH PHONETICS IN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES

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«Без произношения нет языка» - говорил М. В. Ломоносов. Язык есть средство общения, а речь есть процесс общения посредством языка. Многолетняя практика преподавания английского языка в неязыковых вузах свидетельствует, что большинство студентов не могут за срок обучения овладеть английским произношением, особенно такими компонентами, как ритмичность, шкала падения и мелодические завершения. Поэтому существует такой термин, как «спад произношения».

Pronunciation and speech are taught students who have almost no proficiency in spoken English. Students are usually encountering for the first time English spoken by native speakers. They do not always hear the sounds of English. They have difficulty in producing the sounds that vary from the sounds in their own language and with the stress and rhythm of English when it varies from the stress and rhythm they are familiar with. There are exercises which aid inexperienced students of pronunciation and speech. These exercises contain traditional spelling as well as phonemic spelling.

In pronunciation we are trying to help students to work within the sound system and the stress and rhythm patterns of English. It is the rare student who will develop near native ability. Most students, however, can learn to modify their patterns so that native speakers will usually understand them. The learning process in the text is one of the recognition followed by production. The organs of speech necessary to the production of sounds are taught as they are needed. The point of articulation for the sound is taught so that students are aware of how the sound is produced. Contractions and reduced forms are taught both for recognition and production. Most students new to the language insist that Americans talk too fast. What they really mean is that they do not hear the contractions and reduced forms that most Americans use. Rhythm drills help students to work within the rhythm of English. It is advised to teach pronunciation with another grammar book, the teacher can easily vary or add to the existing rhythm drills to practice the structure being taught in the different grammar book.

As for the teaching of pronunciation for students studying the English language, the classroom should be arranged so that the teacher can walk around during a drill to hear the production of each student. It will also provide easy access for individual work. A semicircle or horseshoe arrangement prevents the shy student from hiding behind a more verbal student.

Lesson One is an introduction of pronunciation for the students. It is intended as an interview. Students should get from it an idea, not the ability to do the work the book is intended to teach. Then the teacher begins the studying of the first sounds. You

will find that much the same system is used. The sounds in lessons are intended to be taught in the following way:

1. Pronounce English vowels several times by looking at the illustrations and observing the teacher produce the sounds being taught:

- a) monophthongs
- b) diphthongs and monophthongs
- c) only diphthongs

2. Pronounce English vowels observing the teacher and comparing them:

- a) [i: - i] [i - e] [e - ə:] [λ - a:] [i - iə] [e - ei]
- b) [i - e - a - λ]
- c) [i: - ə: - a:]

3. Compare Russian and English vowels:

- a) и – ы – [i: - i - iə]
- b) э – [e - eə - a - ə:]
- c) а – [λ - a: - ai]

The last item to be considered is the homework. The directions constantly include directions to read something out loud. This is very important. The value of homework is in getting the students to do some oral practice outside of class. If they have access to a language lab where they can record and listen to themselves, they might find it valuable to do the homework there. If they have cassette or tape recorders they can record and listen at home. The homework has more readings and dialogues, as the lessons progress. Students are urged to practice the dialogues together. The teacher may assign teams to work on the dialogues to be presented in class at the next meeting. The team should stand in front of the other students and engage in role playing. The readings may be read through by the teacher so students can hear a native speaker's pauses and stress. As part of the review at the beginning of a lesson, comprehension questions based on the reading and dialogue may be used to elicit free responses from students. The teacher should listen for stress and pronunciation errors during this period. The readings can also be done in class, time permitting.

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