

Sookmyung Women's University MA TESOL

Teaching Pronunciation, Spring 2014 Final Exam

Pronunciation Tutor Project



Andrew Langendorfer

Student 1345588

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Preface

The image on the front cover¹ represents how I have felt about teaching pronunciation in the past. Although there are conventions such as a color palette and a coherent style, it is somewhat frantic. The artist may be talented but his work is not welcoming or relatable to all. There is an imbalance of power between the wide-mouthed monstrosities and the demure young character in the center, although whether its eyes are closed due to fear, shame, deep introspection or an attempt to recollect knowledge is unknown to the beasts – and nor do they care the source of her seeming unwillingness or inability to respond to them in kind.

Throughout this semester, I feel that I have learned a great deal about how to diagnose and assist my students. I have been seeking to end the ‘shotgun approach’ in my practice, in an effort to make pronunciation practice more meaningful and useful to students. This includes knowing what realistic goals might be, and an understanding of human sounds. I am gaining a better sense of organization in my approach to pronunciation, and how my and my students’ efforts might best be directed.

This portfolio represents the best of my current knowledge to date, as it applies to my tutees, referred to here as Kim and Chang. Working with such a small group has already given me insights into not only how to diagnose and prioritize issues of pronunciation, but into students’ perceptions as well. It has been wonderful to bring them into the decision-making fold, as it were, and negotiate what we can do together.

I am thankful that I can now refer to this portfolio, and look forward to appending new activities and reflections as my teaching practice continues.

¹ Image courtesy Alberto Cerriteño, under Creative Commons License. (www.flickr.com/photos/acerriteno)

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1. The Project

This Pronunciation Tutor Project was undertaken with two purposes in mind. The first purpose is personal; to apply concepts and tools gleaned from my current semester of studies, including Teaching Pronunciation. Many of the tools, such as detailed diagnostics, are new to me. Implementing them and getting feedback from my professor, peers, and the tutees themselves was valuable to my growth as a TESOL professional. The second purpose, of course, was to assist my tutees in reaching their goals of greater listening skills and more consistent North American English pronunciation.

The project started in late March, and continued until the first week of June. It consists of six stages, as listed in Table 1 below. To date, the initial meeting between tutor and tutees, the diagnostic, and two needs analyses have been completed. The participants' goals and plan for the remainder of the project is drafted in this paper, although this section must be considered flexible due to a) demonstrated progress or an observation of tutees' needs that differ from the initial diagnostic, and b) time restraints the tutees may encounter which hinder their ability to complete any of the independent practice described here.

Table 1 – Project Stages

Stage	Description	Dates
1	Find/Select subjects	2014.03.26
2	Perform needs analysis and diagnostic test	2014.04.10
3	Analyze test results and devise plan	Completed
4*	*Occurs over at least five weekly sessions Create and apply materials related to goals	2014.05.08- 2014.06.06
5	Perform Achievement Test	2014.06.11
6	Write up final report	2014.06.14

In this portfolio, I will first introduce the tutor and tutees. I will then share the diagnostic along with the reasons for having chosen certain elements and performing it in the way it was. I will also express some regrets I have had with my

decisions in the project thus far. I will then offer my analysis of the diagnostic, and finally I will lay out the goals and the five-week plan to accomplish them.

2. The Tutor

I am a native speaker of English from a small rural town in western Canada. I lived in the same town, near the city of Winnipeg, until I moved to Korea at the age of 23 – ten years ago. I speak some French and some Korean, but neither terribly well. I have not been formally tested in either. I did not have a lot of contact with speakers of other languages, including other Englishes except British (my neighbors growing up, from Reading), prior to my arrival in Korea. I have some training in acting, including accent mimicry and voice control and projection.

Aside from one year of kindergarten phonics classes, I have not spent much time teaching pronunciation in depth. The only exception is the TOEIC Speaking test-prep classes I taught intermittently for two years, where about one quarter of a two-month module (approximately 7.5/30 hours of class time) was devoted to syllable stress and sentence stress. Beyond that, and the typical fare of textbooks such as intonation for different types of questions, this project is the first chance I have to really focus on an area that many of my students value so highly.

3. The Tutees

The information in this section was collected in a semi-formal interview as part of the original diagnostic. Besides being asked some personal and study background information, the tutees were asked to report on any features of pronunciation that they felt they were either comfortable or struggling with.

Both tutees are economics majors at Sogang University, and both are enrolled in my English class, twice a week in the afternoons. They each take some economics-related courses where the lectures and main texts are in English, although the English lectures are mostly delivered by Korean L1 instructors, with both tutees have expressed is more easily-understandable than other speakers. Sogang is by many accounts a top university, and is renowned for its hard-working students; I would certainly classify both tutees as such given their coursework with me.

Our first meetings have gone well, especially given the test-like nature of the diagnostics. They are quite friendly with me and with each other; they understand the need for video recording and seem comfortable with that, too. I am therefore optimistic about our ability to maintain a positive, collaborative vibe to our sessions, as well as the amount of effort they will put into their at-home practice sessions.

3.1 - "Chang"

Chang, female, is 24 years old and in her fourth and final year of study at Sogang. She is also sociable, excitable, and positively effervescent. She has vague longer-term ambitions of working for an NGO in another country, where she would have to use English professionally.

However, her immediate concern is being able to comprehend and contribute more fully in her economics classes which are taught in English. She does not have difficulty understanding her Korean L1 professors, but many of her classmates have lived abroad for some time and are highly fluent and confident. When they ask questions or participate in group discussions, she finds it difficult to follow and feels ashamed of her own ability in English; she has not had the opportunity to live abroad. Regarding those classmates, she says she always thinks "'Her pronunciation is really better than [mine] because she [has] lived in America.'" (See Appendix 1 for more in her own words.)

Unlike many other current university students, she also did not attend English *hagwon* or receive private tutoring; her only experience prior to university has been in the public schools. Chang tells me that, in her public school classes, the focus was "almost all reading and vocabulary;" she could not recall having received any pronunciation-specific instruction. She approached our tasks enthusiastically, and completed her independent study activities diligently.

3.2 - "Kim"

Kim, male, is 26 and in his third semester of university. He is friendly without being overly gregarious, and tends to listen for long periods in group discussions before giving considered remarks. He does not have definite professional goals for

his English usage, but volunteered for this project because he feels strongly that pronunciation is his weakest skill.

He has studied abroad. He spent three months in the United States studying English full time; part of his curriculum was a 4-week accent reduction class. It was in this class that he came to realize the importance of the suprasegmental features of language. In his words, many of the other students in the mixed-L1 class had “really bad” pronunciation, but “my teacher understood their English more than me because I’m Korean ... in Korean there’s no intonation.” (See Appendix 1 for more in his own words.)

He studied English with a private tutor in Korea, but quickly pointed out that the focus was on reading and grammar in preparation for the national college entrance exam. Kim has a high meta-awareness of many aspects of pronunciation, and in our tasks was curious about the rationale for using some things or asking certain questions, such as in the initial diagnostic. He did not complete several of the independent study activities, citing either a heavy workload in other courses or simple forgetfulness.

4. The Diagnostic & Rationale

This section describes the tools used in the initial diagnostic of the two tutees, the reasons for having chosen them, and a brief critique for each, to be considered for future use. The initial diagnostic consisted of two short read-aloud tasks, a picture description task, and a casual but focused needs analysis in the form of a Q&A. The tutees performed the tasks consecutively and one at a time; only the tutor and one tutee were present in the room during each diagnostic. It took approximately 15 minutes for each tutee to complete all tasks.

4.1 – Readings

The first read-aloud task was a list of words which, in total, feature every sound present in North American English (NAE). These are featured in Fig. 1, below. The list was minimally adapted from van Vlack (2014), in anticipation of two common pronunciation errors. Because of its spelling, many of my students pronounce *salmon* (/sæm ən/) as /sæl mən/, and so I added *Hammond*. Possibly

because of a popular ice cream brand called Natuur (close to /næ tʊər/), many students pronounce the /tʃ/ in *nature* or *natural* as /t/. I therefore added *unfortunate* in an attempt to elicit /tʃ/.

Fig. 1: Single-word read-aloud task

aunt, roof, route, wash, oil, theater, iron, salmon, Hammond, sad, caramel, fire, water, sure, data, ruin, crayon, New Orleans, pecan, both, again, probably, spitting image, Alabama, lawyer, coupon, mayonnaise, syrup, pajamas, caught, naturally, aluminum, envelope, unfortunate, uncomfortable

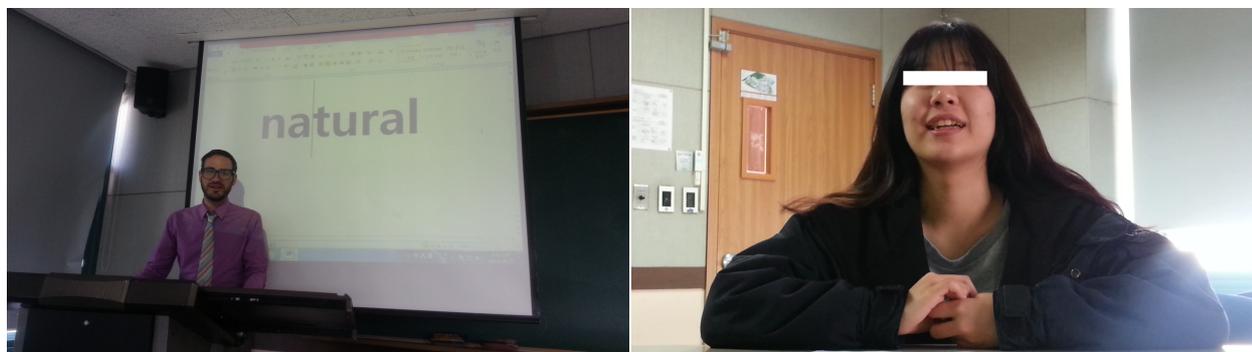
The text for the paragraph-length read-aloud task was taken from Levine & Adelman (1982; as cited in Gerhiser & Wrenn, 2007); I chose it because the topic has to do with inter-cultural communication, which is something that we cover in the regular class I teach with my tutees. It also features the full range of NAE vowel and consonant sounds and combinations. It reads:

Have you observed the ways people from different cultures use silence? Have you noticed that some people interrupt conversations more than other people? All cultures do not have the same rules governing these areas of communication. Many Americans interpret silence in conversations to mean disapproval, disagreement, or unsuccessful communication. They often try to fill silence by saying something even if they have nothing to say! On the other hand, Americans don't appreciate a person who dominates a conversation. Knowing when to take turns in a conversation in another language can sometimes cause difficulty. Should you wait until someone has finished a sentence before contributing to a discussion, or can you break into the middle of someone's sentence? Interrupting someone who is speaking is considered rude in the United States. Even children are taught explicitly not to interrupt.

Both tasks were completed by reading from a screen, as shown from the student's perspective in Figure 2 below. This was done in order to enable video recording from a more straight-on angle, as shown in Figure 3, for later review. It also enabled the words in the word list to be displayed only one at a time by

scrolling through a digital file, the hope being to maximize focus and minimize distraction.

Fig. 2 – Diagnostic from tutees' perspective Fig. 3 – Camera angle during diagnostic



In any future diagnostics, the major adjustment from this experience would be to allow more time for participants to review the read-aloud task. I gave my tutees just a few minutes to read it silently before reading aloud. I had chosen not to send it to them a day or two in advance because I feared they would devote time to practice and researching the pronunciation of less-familiar words, while I wanted fairly spontaneous reactions to the text in the diagnostic. However, this may have skewed their performance negatively – there is nothing “spontaneous” about reading aloud, aside from perhaps making an incorrect judgment due to the often-confounding orthography of English. Allowing practice would have allowed insight into which features were actually troublesome for the tutees, as opposed to which were a result of the method used here.

4.2 – Picture Descriptions

Each tutee was shown a picture on the projector screen, as reproduced in Figs. 4 and 5 below. They were instructed to spend ‘a couple of minutes’ looking at the picture before describing it aloud. They were then asked a few questions to attempt to relate their own experiences to the picture, e.g. ‘Have you ever been to a (market/concert) like this?’

Prior to the first meeting, I had not had the chance to speak much with Kim regarding his hobbies and interests. Therefore, I selected the market picture, reasoning that he would be able to describe much of the scene without struggling with vocabulary. I knew that Chang liked to sing in her free time, and therefore

selected the concert scene. Again, I guessed that she would be able to comment on a number of the features with the vocabulary she already possessed.

Fig. 4 – “At the Small Market”



Fig. 5 – “Coachella Skyline 2008”



I was satisfied with the results of this task; providing images of things with which tutees likely had some personal experience allowed for a natural follow-up questions to their descriptions and a smooth transition to the interview-style needs analysis which followed.

4.3 – Further Needs Analyses

For this final, open discussion task, I moved from the computer station to sit down across from the tutees and asked them directly if there were any segmental or supra-segmental features they had difficulty in producing or receiving. ‘Segmentals’ were described to students as “individual sounds” and ‘supra-segmentals’ as “things like intonation or other, bigger speech patterns.” For production/reception, I reminded students of an example given earlier in class: my own inability to aurally distinguish between the Korean letters ‘ㅏ’ and ‘ㅑ,’ and according inability to consistently verbalize them correctly in words like *방* (room) and *빵* (bread). (For a transcribed sample of this conversation, see Appendix 1. For the questions, refer to Table 2 below.)

Both tutees gave valuable information in this task, and I attribute it to the fact that we had briefly discussed this in our initial meeting. In future diagnostics, participants might be given these questions to think about in advance in order to elicit similar amounts and qualities of information. If working with a larger group of participants, or participants of lower overall proficiencies, this information might best be gleaned through written responses either in English or Korean.

Table 2: Initial Interview Questions

1	Are there any individual sounds you find difficult to pronounce? For example, two weeks ago we practiced “ship” and “sheep” in class.
2	Are there any things like intonation, or other speech patterns that you find difficult?
3	How about your lectures in English? Can you usually understand them?
4	What kind of English is easiest for you to understand? For example, American English, Australian, Chinese?
5	What do you hope to improve in our tutoring sessions?

5. The Results

Videorecordings of the diagnostics were reviewed several times, and analyzed according to a slightly adapted version of Gerheiser & Wrenn (2007)’s rubric. I selected this rubric because it is basic enough for my tutees to understand it and for me to give them feedback using some meta-language; I feel this is important for them, especially since they do not have any major issues with basic intelligibility. I intend to use the rubric as a locus for ongoing feedback, in addition to my own initial diagnosis.

Below is a narrative description of each tutee’s performance in the diagnostic tasks, followed by a table outlining specific features that seem either problematic or well-controlled. It is noteworthy that I originally recorded “up-talking” as a feature of both tutees’ speech. While this is something that has been studied since at least the 1970s as a gender-based phenomenon (e.g. Edelsky, 1979; Shokeir, 2008), and it is still irritating to some listeners, I should clarify that I do not view it as inherently negative. As Hoffman (2013) points out, it is done by both men and women and in many areas far removed from the San Fernando Valley where the derogatory “Valley Girl” moniker got its name. However, if a speaker combines halting speech with constantly rising intonation, as both Chang and Kim are prone to doing, it may increase listener effort (or irritation) and as such may be worth further exploration in this project.

5.1 – Chang’s Results & Analysis

Chang has some difficulties at the phonemic level, although she is confident with “just sounds” and her expressed interest is also in improving suprasegmental features (in her case, linking, especially in order to aid her aural comprehension). She displays quite a wide variety of intonations.

Her rhythm is very halting at times, more when answering the open questions than when reading the paragraph. This may be due to her searching for vocabulary, although when reviewing the recording the pauses were coming before some words and phrases that I know she should have some automaticity in using, such as “I’d like to go there.” This rhythm also has an effect on her ability to link sounds. Essentially, thought, if I were to take her audio and edit out all of the pauses, her word stress and intonation would be close to the top of what we might expect of a student in her situation; these are her biggest strengths. Detailed results are laid out in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Diagnostic Results for Chang

Elements of Speech	Difficulties	Examples
Consonants	- over-enunciation on final /t/ - over-enunciation, or failure to blend, /r/ - /s/ as /sh/ in initial position	<i>aunt</i> <i>iron</i> <i>syrup</i>
Vowels	- good glide towards /r/ - /a/ pronounced /ɔ/ - /ɒ/ pronounced /o/	<i>fire</i> as /faɪər/ <i>Alabama, pajamas</i> <i>concert, famous</i>
Syllables and/or grammatical endings	- slight tendency to add vowel sounds to -ed endings (also affects voicing of final -d)	<i>finished</i> as /fɪn ɪʃ ɪd/
Word stress	No consistent errors; actually quite good, if disregarding gaps between words (rhythm) below.	throughout
Rhythm in sentences	Generally halting while searching for vocabulary – actually performed the paragraph reading more rhythmically than the open questions	<i>Yeah, I’d like to go there</i> <i>Just sound is OK but speech like intonation or speed is notOK.</i>
Focus and special emphasis (Prominence)	Seems able to combine stress and intonation for appropriate prominence; nothing really stood out here.	throughout
Intonation/Pitch	strong tendency to “up-talk”	throughout
Thought groups and linking	- Good use of intonation in common thought group phrases	<i>on the other hand</i>
Delivery (rate of	- low volume & resonance; “speaks from chest” rather than diaphragm	throughout, even when laughing

speech, loudness)		
Linking within words	<i>probably</i>	
Linking between words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>spitting image</i> (though maybe due to the nature of this task) - seldom done in paragraph reading 	
Strengths:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - naturally employs varied intonation – no worries about monotony, but rather where to place and make more contoured different tones - strong willingness to experiment and attempt without much visible anxiety 	
Suggestions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-reported weakness in listening to connected speech - seems to pronounce a lot of things from the back of the mouth 	

5.2 – Kim’s Results & Analysis

Kim is highly aware of some suprasegmental features, especially intonation. This is what he expressed to me in our initial meeting, and it is clear in his speech. He makes a clear effort to follow what I assume are patterns he has been explicitly taught, since intonation was a large focus of the course he took in the U.S. However, this might be taking the bulk of his attention, as other suprasegmental features such as rhythm and linking are noticeably underdeveloped. In addition, his intonation is generally in almost a staccatoed fashion, rather than the contoured models we read about in Chapter 6 this week.

He has few difficulties with consonant sounds apart from some particularly bothersome clusters as in /prɒb ə bli/, for which he seems to be over-compensating. I am curious as to whether it is good practice for learners to exaggerate articulations when they are learning particular sounds, or if it is ultimately detrimental.

There are some other words, such as /nætʃ ə r ə l/ where his face contorts in a definite attempt to achieve a specific pronunciation, while otherwise his mouth appears not to move very much.

Detailed results are laid out in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Diagnostic Results for Kim

Elements of Speech	Difficulties	Examples
Consonants	over-enunciates final /t/ in single-word /l/ with tongue out between teeth	<i>list</i> <i>aluminum, probably</i>
Vowels	/ə/ pronounced /ɔ/ glides (wɪ) – no /w/	<i>Al<u>a</u>bama, pa<u>j</u>amas</i> <i>language</i> as /læŋ ɡɪdʒ/
Syllables and/or grammatical endings	No consistent difficulties noticed with this. Can be model for other tutee.	
Word stress	- generally follows natural-sounding patterns, although some stresses are relatively extreme	throughout
Rhythm in sentences	halting; most words are pronounced as fairly independent units	throughout
Focus and special emphasis (Prominence)	sometimes over-stresses function words (“can”)	throughout, and linked to stress, rhythm, and linking
Intonation/Pitch	Clearly attempts to follow patterns for basic declarative sentences and questions	
Thought groups and linking	- Tendency to rise sharply at ends of many thought groups; “up-talking” - prominence affects how thought groups are received	<i>Sure. There is a market like that picture in Korea. It’s almost same. Yeah.</i>
Delivery (rate of speech, loudness)	Fair loudness; rate of speech affected by rhythm	throughout
Linking within words	doesn’t link /ə/ with preceding consonants → <i>dis<u>a</u>pproval, dis<u>a</u>ppointment, dominates <u>a</u>, in <u>a</u>nother, finished <u>a</u></i>	
Linking between words		
Strengths:	- seems highly aware of intonation patterns, though unable to produce in a contoured fashion; possibly linked to rhythm and linking - word endings are clear (though not linked well) - difficulties with consonant sounds do not affect intelligibility	
Suggestions:	- self-reported weakness in distinguishing and producing /ð/ and /d/ (although I already pointed out to him that it doesn’t matter much to meaning, unlike the <i>shit/sheet</i> minimal pairs we have discussed in class previously)	

6. The Plan

The in-person sessions will consist primarily of focused practice, but also some meta-level instruction. At first, this will be necessary for the tutees to fully understand their diagnostic and to have a common vocabulary when discussing these things in later sessions. However, both tutees have shown they are very aware of some issues though they can not put a proper name to them. For these particular tutees, having and using the metalanguage may be empowering, and at the least will assist independent study/practice after this small project is finished.

The literature I have read on the relative importance of one to the other is somewhat conflicting as regards Kim and Chang. Neither tutee is a beginner, and in some in-class listenings which have been scaffolded, they appear to be using more top-down processing. This fits with Jenkins' (2000; as cited in Walker, 2010) assertion for how native speakers (NSs) and high-proficiency non-natives speakers (NNSs) access meaning. However, Jenkins (*ibid*) also posits that the bulk of breakdowns among NNSs is due to pronunciation, including segmental features influenced by L1 transfer.

Many, such as Crystal (2003) have identified that the number of NNSs outnumbered that of native speakers NSs from Kachru's (1985; revisited by Kachru & Nelson, 2006) so-called Inner Circle countries. Therefore, I do not think it prudent to focus on vowel features specific to NAE. Walker (2010), in a description of the Lingua Franca Core (LFC), counts as non-core features with no or negative impact on LFC intelligibility some items that would seemingly benefit top-down processing. LFC teachers are dissuaded from addressing tone, word stress, stress-timing, vowel reduction, and features of connected speech in class. However, Walker does not address the reception of these features. At least in the short-term, it is important for Kim and Chang to better comprehend rapid, native-like speech in order to be able to participate fully in their classes.

Additionally, simply because something like intonation is not part of the LFC does not mean it is worthless to encourage. According to Celce-Murcia et. al (2010), as well as being obvious to any listener, intonation alone affects whether we perceive a speaker as "stating facts, eliciting information, expressing nonfinality, showing

uncertainty, getting attention, and expressing emotions” (p. 221). We will not ignore it in this project.

What Walker (2010) does include in the LFC are consonants (and clusters thereof), vowels and nuclear stress placement. Some vowel sounds are challenging for both Kim and Chang, and as such will be the basis for one of the earliest sessions. Neither tutee demonstrated severe (unintelligible) difficulties with consonants or clusters, so these were not included in the plan.

In the end, I have determined to provide an even-handed mix of targets, and for each, supply my tutees with a large amount of resources they can explore independently if they choose or if/as need presents itself. It is important to note that, while the goals are described in separate sessions in the Project Timeline below, it was my intention to draw attention to other issues as they occur (hence the goal of building metalanguage and awareness in the first session), and again, to regard the Plan as flexible.

Finally, I wish to empower my tutees to assist themselves and their peers in the future. Therefore, each target has a corollary goal of being able to identify and comment on given features, hence the use of audio journals.

6.1 – Common Goals

As seen in the next section (Project Timeline), our goals include both segmental and suprasegmental features. I have, in this initial plan, placed fairly equal overt emphasis on the two. While both tutees have declared a higher need for productive and receptive skill in suprasegmental features such as linked sounds and de-emphasized speech, these are also aspects that we will be able to refer to and gain more practice in when we are targeting specific vowel sounds or the environmental impacts on consonants.

6.2 – Targets Specific to Chang

One of Chang’s greatest strengths is currently directly affected by her greatest area of difficulty. While her intonation follows native-like patterns, her choppy rhythm and flow disrupt it to the point that it might be quite unnatural-sounding to

the untrained ear. It is akin to constantly flicking the radio's volume up and down when a song is playing, or watching (and hearing) a film a few frames at a time.

Part of this may be due to her lack of physical control over airflow. Her Korean speech is smooth and deeper than her English. While she has a positive attitude, she seems to get tense easily if only for short periods. From my small amount of voice training in the theater, I can tell that her air is coming from her chest rather than deeper in her torso. Chang will need some practice with the sheer physicality of pushing air out, and perhaps some relaxation techniques to encourage what she does in Korean, in English.

6.3 – Targets Specific to Kim

While both Kim and Chang will benefit from practice linking sounds, only Kim consistently failed to link sounds within words in the diagnostic, for example by seemingly inserting a break between /s/ and /ə/ in /dɪs ə pɔɪn tɪd/ (space added for emphasis). Chang also tends to over-emphasize, or at least fail to de-emphasize, many content words. I am not sure if this has an impact on his listening, as he did not self-assess it as a weakness, but it is something that would benefit his speaking. As he also attempts to follow typical intonation patterns, I feel his speech overall would benefit greatly from this one adjustment.

7 – Project Timeline

Table 5 – Project Timeline. (“IP” = Independent Practice)

Date	Focus	Activities
May 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of diagnostics ▪ Intro to features and metalanguage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results are shared & discussed with tutees ▪ Tutees are given clear examples of each point of the rubric. (This may be given as a handout since, while much of the metalanguage may be new to tutees, they are already aware of most of the features themselves.) ▪ Show examples, and invite tutees to identify features of, speech samples with different-length thought groups, fast speech with large de-emphasized chunks, common phrases with significantly reduced speech.
IP	Tutees will be directed to find two video speech samples and transcripts, and to	

	watch the videos while marking up the transcripts for thought groups and de-emphasized portions. These will be compared briefly at the start of the next session.	
May 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical warmups ▪ Front vs. Central Vowels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutees are guided through a series of short activities designed to a) improve airflow, and b) draw attention to different points and manners of articulation ▪ Tutees are guided through focused practice involving each of the front and central vowels, using questions with minimal pairs
IP	Tutees will write and audio-record their own sentences featuring minimal pairs. They will send them to the tutor in advance; he will create a worksheet for the next session with the target words blanked out. Tutees will then listen to each others' recordings and try to fill in the blanks with the intended words. (Or, if tutees are willing/able, they can use a template to create the worksheet and exchange them with each other outside of the session.)	
May 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Linking words (productive) ▪ Linking words (receptive) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutees will practice linking the words in a set of phrases, and then use those phrases to play a "sentence-in-a-hat" style improv game. (Some basic features of linking, such as final-consonant to initial-vowel, will also be reviewed.) ▪ Tutees will listen to a variety of samples of speakers with different 'accents' and challenged to identify chunks that are smoothly linked together. NOTE: Tutees should be referred back to the May 7 session and IP dealing with de-emphasized speech, and these samples/activities must be selected/crafted in a way that accounts for the need to be able to ignore less-important parts of an utterance.
IP	Tutees will be given links to samples from different English speakers, such as through the IDEA project. They will listen to 1-2, and write and record an audio journal responding to how able they were to understand the recordings, chiefly in terms of how the speakers linked their sounds but also as regards reductions.	
May 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central & Back Vowels (productive) ▪ Syllable Stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutees will take part in some focused practice to review front vs. central vowels, and then use a set of simple game-like activities from Hancock (1995). ▪ Again using games from Hancock, students will gain focused practice with syllable stress in a variety of words.
IP	Tutees will use a template to create a miniature guidebook for other students who have the same challenges as them. They will be able to include any of the links that the tutee has sent them during this project, or any of their own. They must choose at least 2 aspects of pronunciation to help other students, and record audio	

	samples to supplement their writing.	
June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Syllable Stress ▪ Review of concepts ▪ Achievement Test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Again using games from Hancock, students will gain focused practice with syllable stress in a variety of words. ▪ Tutees will discuss what has been covered during the project, and receive ongoing pronunciation feedback as they talk. They will also have a short listening practice for reduced and connected speech just prior to the achievement test. ▪ Administer achievement test (see Appendix 2)
IP	Tutees will complete a short survey on the project, including how they think they have improved (or not), which activities seemed the most helpful, and what they now feel they need to work on the most.	

8 – Review of Tutorial Sessions

In this section, you will find detailed information on each tutorial session, including the lesson plan (including any differences from the Plan above), relevant materials or URLs used in that session, and a short reflection. Note: some of the reflections differ slightly from what was originally submitted, based on feedback suggesting more comments on how well the students performed the tasks, not just their apparent reaction to them.

8.1 – Session 1: Introduction

Item	Description	Time (min.)
▪ Diagnostics: Terminology	▪ Go through relevant terms featured in diagnostic: vowel, consonant, connected speech, rhythm, prominence. Give students an example of each, and have them give another example or two to check comprehension.	▪ 7*
▪ Diagnostics: Strengths	▪ Identify at least two strengths for each student. Have him/her model, if possible. Reaffirm that they should use these strengths to help each other.	▪ 3-5
▪ Diagnostics: Weaknesses	▪ Tell each student a maximum of 3 key areas that we will be working on. This should include problem vowel sounds (with examples), connected speech, prominence	▪ 3

	and/or reduced speech. Seek confirmation of whether or not this is something they agree they should work on.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples: Thought Groups 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce the idea of thought groups, as opposed to sentences as they appear in writing. Give students a transcript with no punctuation for them to mark up with where the speaker might pause. Compare answers. Reaffirm that there is not really one correct answer for this type of thing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples: Thought Groups 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watch 4-5 short (less than 2 minutes) video clips of various speakers. After each, have students comment on that speaker's thought group lengths, and any other suprasegmental features they notice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15-20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice: Thought Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have students write a short self-introduction, with NO punctuation. Run and make 4 copies of each. Have students exchange them and mark them up a couple of different ways, then pass them back for the writer to practice it using those guidelines for pauses (thought groups). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20*

*This did not go as planned. The explanation and examples of terms required more time, approximately 15 minutes, and the tutees could not stay long enough to complete the last planned activity. I instead assigned it as homework, but only Chang completed it.

Materials: Passage for marking up thought groups

(Adapted from: Levine & Adelman, 1982)

Have you observed the ways people from different cultures use silence have you noticed that some people interrupt conversations more than other people all cultures do not have the same rules governing these areas of communication many Americans interpret silence in conversations to mean disapproval disagreement or unsuccessful communication they often try to fill silence by saying something even if they have nothing to say on the other hand Americans don't appreciate a person who dominates a conversation knowing when to take turns in a conversation in another language can sometimes cause difficulty.

Materials: links to videos for different types of thought groups

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_9QSHioaj0 (Paris Hilton on David Letterman)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ih1RBaf1IU> (Macho Man Randy Savage on the Arsenio Hall Show)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vz6MX1iIU> (Jane Goodall interview on PBS)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZN5PoW7_kdA (The Annoying Orange, ep. 1)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xv2VIEY9-A8> (Matt Foley, satirical motivational speaker. We ended up watching the whole 6 minutes because the tutees were really enjoying it.)

Reflection 1:

I met with my tutees yesterday afternoon, after our regular English class. We met for a little over an hour, and covered all that I had intended to in the first session. Our meeting was held in high spirits, but I do have some regrets about the approach I took for the first tutorial.

The goals I had set for this meeting included reviewing the tutees' diagnostics with them, addressing their self-reported weaknesses (which were not necessarily the same as those I had observed), and listening to a range of speakers to comment on features of their speech. The first two goals necessitated, I thought, some teaching of pronunciation-specific metalanguage. I had thought that it would be useful for us to refer to specific features during our sessions, as well as give the tutees the ability to go further with self-assessment and material sourcing in future independent study.

Going through the metalanguage was a little heavy and teacher-centered. If it ends up being effective for references in future sessions, it will have been worth it. If not, I will have serious regrets. Reviewing the diagnostics was interesting – the tutees did not seem willing to accept the strengths I had listed for each of them, and were more concerned with the patterns of errors I had noted. I had simplified the wording of some of these, but now wish I had just deleted some. It was a lot of information to cover.

The listening went well, and the tutees had several comments about the speakers' styles, particularly length of thought groups and how they emphasized things (i.e. with volume, pitch, pauses, gestures, repetition). We watched short samples from: an interview between Jimmy Kimmel and Rob Ford; the *Annoying*

Orange web comedy; TED talks by Arianna Huffington and Hans Rosling; the same interview with Roberto Benigni that we watched in class. The tutees said that most of the speakers were hard to understand, but they were really referring to the de-emphasized parts of speech – they were able to tell me the key points from each speech sample. I had anticipated this, so we moved on to looking at de-emphasizing parts of sentences rather than just emphasizing certain words, which is how this aspect is often taught.

We looked at a simple sentence together, and then the students dictated short utterances to me while I transcribed and displayed them on the projector screen. We then identified things that could possibly be de-emphasized, and they had a few runs at saying those utterances with a focus on de-emphasis. Their independent practice this week is similar; I gave them transcripts and video links. They will mark up the transcripts with an eye on de-emphasis (rather than emphasis), practice saying them as the speakers do, and perform them when we next meet.

Next week our focus is on front and middle vowel sounds. The tutees know that the plan is flexible, and we might spend more time on them depending on how things go; also, that our next session will be very different in that we'll focus on physicality. It may get a bit silly, and I look forward to it.

8.2 – Session 2: Front & Central Vowels

Item	Description	Time (min.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical Warmups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guide students through some basic physical warmups, including breathing from the diaphragm, stretching neck/shoulders, and loosening the tongue, jaw, and lips. See if Chang is able to give us any additional advice based on her knowledge of singing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vowel Sounds: Overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a vowel chart (Celce-Murcia et al. Table 4.2) and sagittal section diagrams (Celce-Murcia et al. Figures 4.1, 4.2) to draw attention to different ways that vowel sounds can be formed. Take special care to point out the 'schwa' resting position and how it differs from Korean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vowel Sounds: Front Vowels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Go through the front vowels and ask students to note how, physically, the sounds differ in their formation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vowel Sounds: Central Vowels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Go through the central vowels and ask students to note how, physically, the sounds differ in their formation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice: Pronunciation Journey with /I/ and /i/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the differences in production of /I/, and /i/. ▪ Demonstrate, then play, 3-4 rounds of Pronunciation Journey. Point out the greater ease with which it can be done when the mouth is visible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15

Materials:

The “Pronunciation Journey” game is adapted from Hancock (1995). I used the word list and route map on the following pages. Basically, the students take turns selecting a destination and saying single words from a minimal pairs word list, which will dictate how the other player should “travel.” If they hear one sound, such as /I/, they move to the left. If they hear the other, such as /i/, they move to the right.

The vowel table, descriptions, and diagrams are from Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and were reproduced only for in-class practice. These are included here, following the Pronunciation Journey materials.

Pronunciation Journey:

sheep vs. ship**List of minimal pairs for /i/ (sheep) and /ɪ/ (ship)**

Use this word list for your Pronunciation Journey. Person A: Say a word to your partner. Person B: If you hear /i/ ("long e," *sheep*), go left. If you hear /ɪ/ ("short e," *ship*), go right.

/i/	/ɪ/
sheep	ship
seal	sill
cheek	chick
peak	pick
bean	bin
green	grin
feet	fit
heel	hill
meal	mill
meat	mitt
eat	it
peel	pill
sleep	slip
week	wick
team	Tim
eel	ill

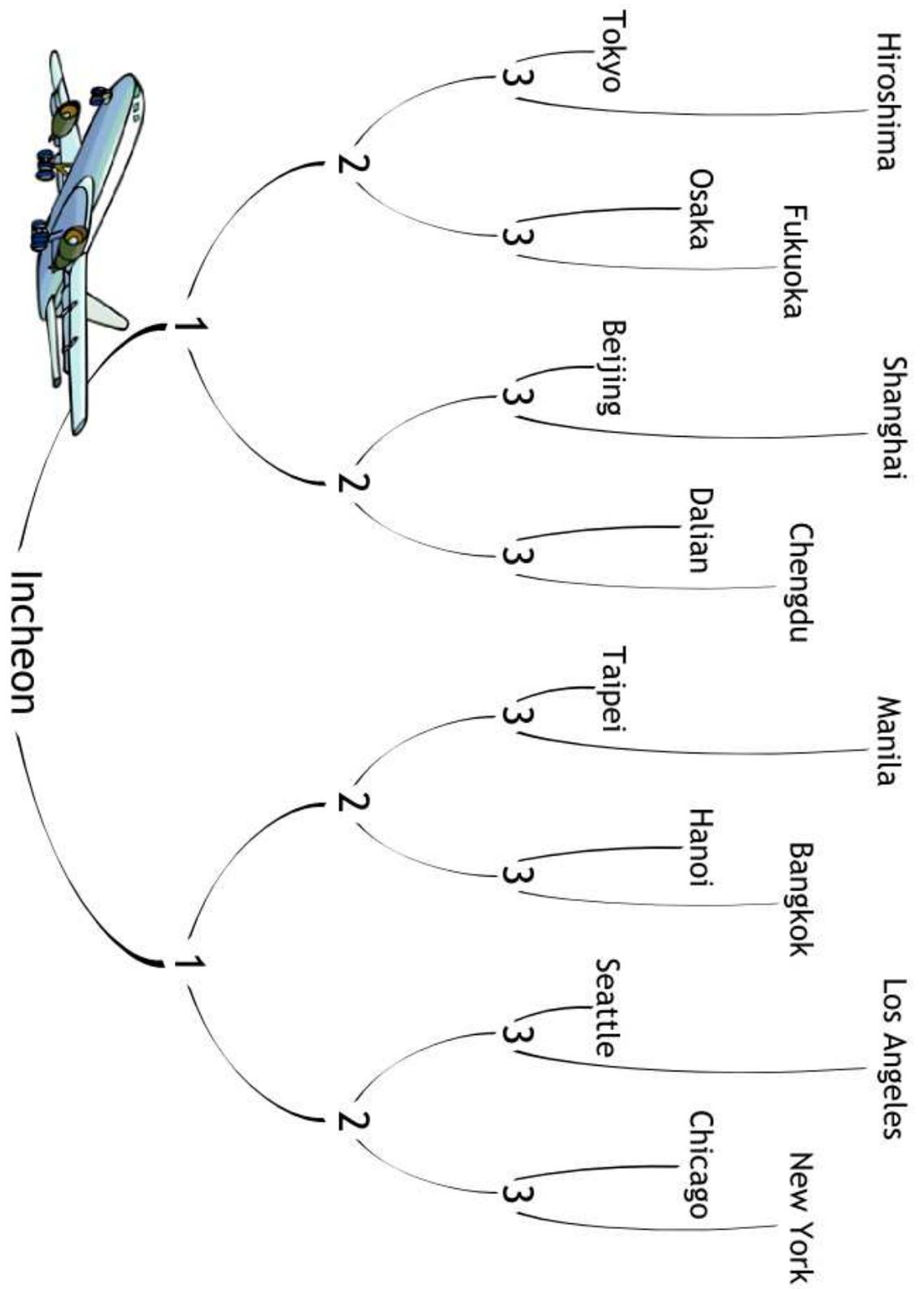


TABLE 4.2 CLASSIFICATION OF VOWELS

Phoneme	Tense or lax	Tongue position	Jaw position	Lip position
pea feet	Tense	Highest front near top of mouth	High closed	Widely spread, smiling
pin fit	Lax	High front, but lower and more centered than /iy/	Slightly lower than /iy/	Relaxed, slightly parted and spread
paint fate	Tense	Mid-front, gliding up toward /iy/	Begins lower than /h/ but rises during glide	Spread more during glide to /iy/
pen fed	Lax	Mid-front centered	Open wider than /ey/	Slightly spread
pan fad	Lax	Lower front than /e/, centered	Slightly more open than /e/, may drop a bit lower during articulation	Spread
pa fob	Tense	Lowest, central, lying flat on bottom	Open widest	Yawn
Paul fought	Tense	Low back	Closed slightly	Oval
pole foe	Tense	Mid-back, gliding up toward /uw/	Begins higher than /s/, rises more during glide	Very rounded, closing like a camera shutter
put foot	Lax	High back and more centered than /ow/	Slightly higher	Relaxed, slightly parted, weakly rounded
pool fool	Tense	Highest, back of tongue pushed up	High, closed	Closed and rounded, as for whistling
pun fun	Lax	Relaxed mid-level	Relaxed	Relaxed, slightly parted
pine fight	Diphthong	Moves low central to high front	Rises with tongue, closes	Moves from open to slightly parted and spread
pound foul	Diphthong	Moves low central to high back	Rises with tongue, closes	Moves from open to slightly parted and round
poise foil	Diphthong	Moves low back to high front	Rises with tongue, closes	Moves from oval to slightly parted and spread

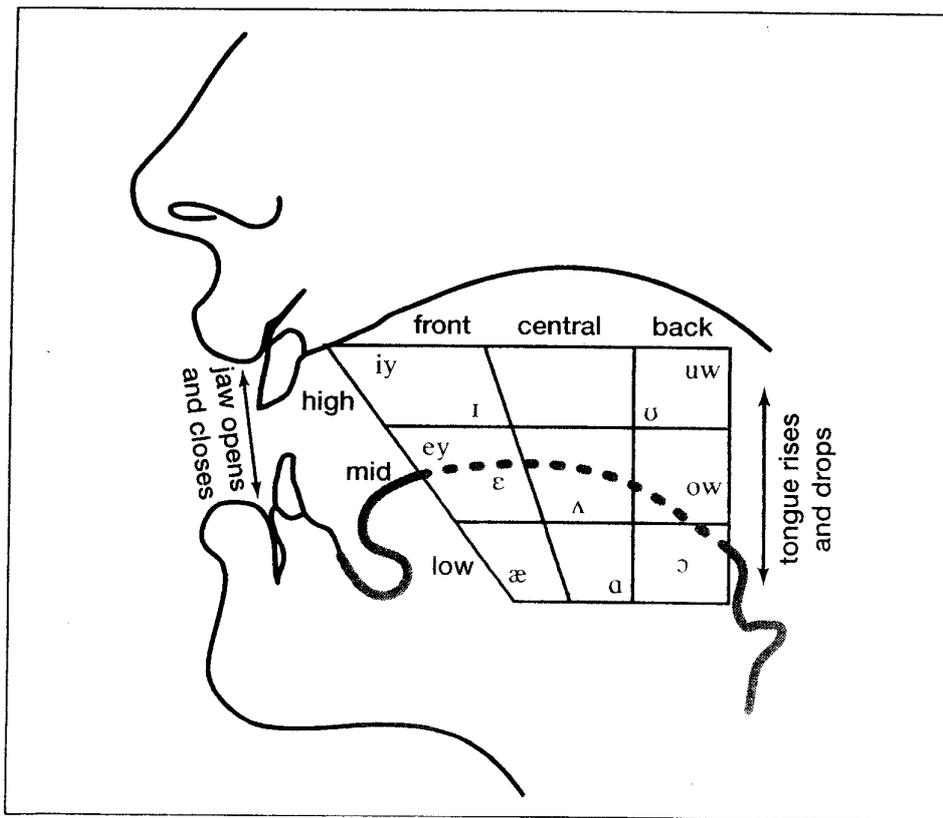


Figure 4.1 The NAE vowel quadrant and sagittal section of the mouth

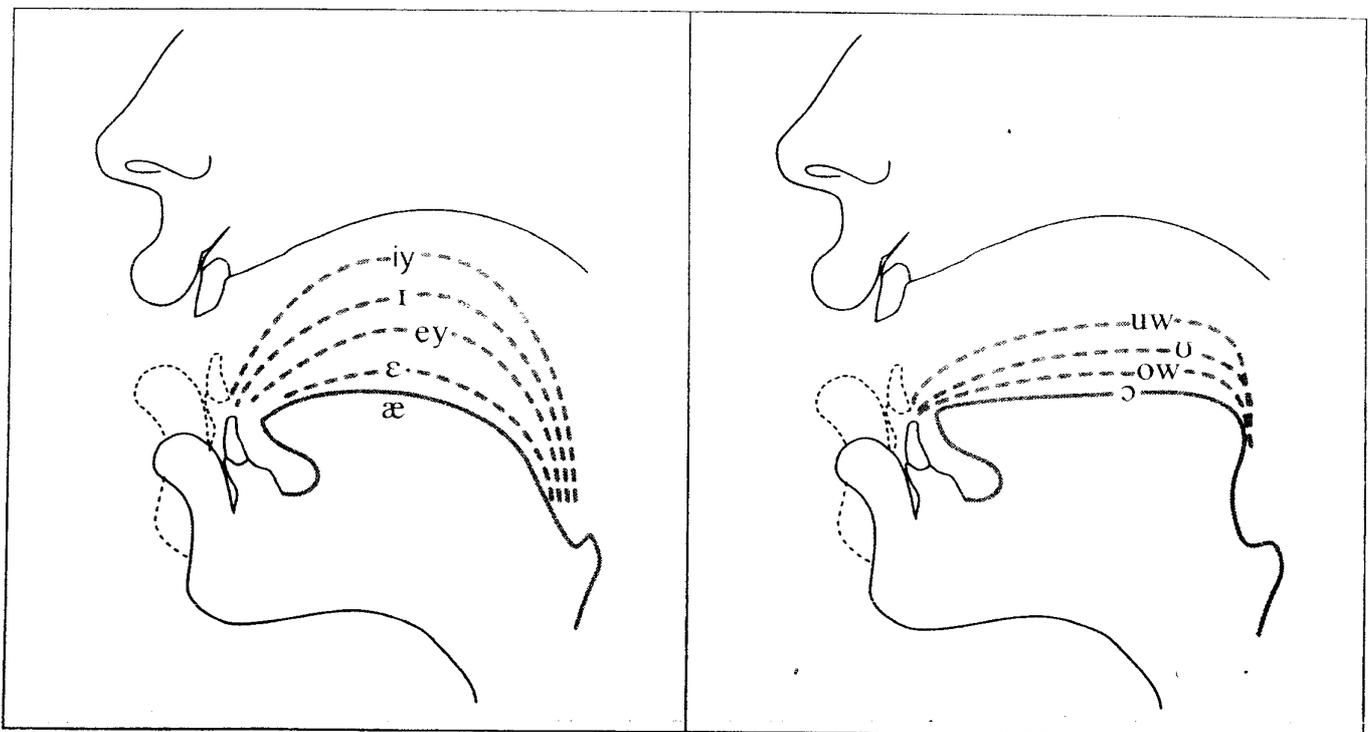


Figure 4.2 A comparison of tongue and jaw positions for front and back vowels

Reflection 2:

I met with my students on Friday afternoon after our regular class. We spent about an hour and half on vowel sounds, and then – since it was a sunny Friday – went for a beer and snack on a patio near the university. After our previous session, I had been worried about the didactic nature of the interaction and whether or not my focus on some metalanguage would pay off. I feel that it did to at least some extent, as we were able to refer to various features (e.g. prominence, vowels/consonants, voicing) fairly smoothly. Everyone was in good spirits and we had fun making meaningless sounds as opposed to the listening we had done before.

I had tutee Chang lead the physical warmup, since she has some formal voice training as a singer. I asked her to guide us through one or two breathing exercises, and she also recommended some things to help us loosen our jaws and tongues. I was glad to see her take the reins for this, as my corollary goal for these sessions is to give my tutees a sense of empowerment over their future development.

I had intended to focus on a smaller set of vowels, but things seemed to be going well, so we explored all vowel sounds in focused practice. We first practiced the vowel sounds on their own and tried to describe differences in tongue placement and lip shape as they were made. This was interesting for the students, much more than I had thought it would be – and, they were better at explaining their observations of physical placement/movement than I was when we discussed this in our Teaching Pronunciation class. Looking at sounds in comparison to each other seemed to be useful, and I learned that these tutees are very in touch with how they produce sounds. This is one area that clearly shows the benefits that a non-native English speaker, having learned an English sound system themselves.

I gave students a copy of the chart in Table 4.2 of Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 125) and we numbered the vowel sounds for ease of reference. This allowed for what I felt to be fairly unobtrusive on-the-spot correction when we had a short discussion about final exams, including a worksheet with a vocabulary bank featuring a variety of vowel sounds. I was quite surprised that, at least with these learners, referring them back to the vowel chart and being able to direct their tongue placement seemed effective. This was the first time I've been equipped to comment on vowel sound

production in this way, and I look forward to gaining more confidence and automaticity in this.

8.3 – Session 3: Linking Words

Item	Description	Time (min.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Linking Words in Common Phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have students come up with a list of common greetings and farewells. Have them identify which words readily link together, and if necessary, point out that the convention of linking a final consonant to the initial vowel of the next word is similar in both English and Korean. ▪ Have students practice the phrases with special attention paid to linking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sentence-In-A-Hat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have students write down 5 occupations, 5 interesting hobbies, and 5 reasons to call someone on the phone (as opposed to texting). Be sure to use different colored paper for each category so that you can identify them. ▪ Place each student's sentences, organized by category, in piles in front of the other student. ▪ Have students think up a scenario where two people would be sitting and talking (e.g. on a date, in a hospital waiting room). ▪ Let the students know that they will improvise a conversation scene, and that periodically you will instruct them to pick up a piece of paper, and the next thing they say has to include the word on the paper. ▪ (The scene will pause for 15 seconds, during which they have to think of a sentence which includes that word. Special attention should be paid to linking sounds in that sentence.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening for Connected Speech in "Accented" English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have students listen to about two short segments of a single speaker (such as a TED Talk). The speaker should not be a native speaker of English, and her/his speech should be marked with a recognizable degree of foreignness (e.g. Arianna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15-20

	<p>Huffington, Hans Rosling).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite students to comment on the manner in which the speaker links words. Students can also tie this in to thought groups, as explored in a previous session. ▪ (If this proves challenging, provide students with transcripts. If it is not challenging, transcripts for a 2nd or 3rd listening may also allow them to give a more detailed analysis.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open Conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite students to discuss the content of the lecture(s) they have just seen. Ask them to pay special attention to linking words. Have students repeat phrases as necessary, providing a model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15

Materials:

The improvised scene activity is something I learned as a semi-professional improv actor in university. It does not require any materials beyond a few strips of paper and some imagination. The teacher should be prepared to give ideas if the students have trouble coming up with their own.

Links to TED Talks used in this lesson are below. Transcripts are also available on those pages. These were selected because they have proven interesting for many groups of my students in the past, the speakers are highly proficient but have definite foreignness in their English, and a high amount of specialized vocabulary is not required to discuss the topics they present.

http://www.ted.com/talks/arianna_huffington_how_to_succeed_get_more_sl_eep (Arianna Huffington at TEDWomen 2010)

http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_the_good_news_of_the_decade (Hans Rosling at TEDxChange 2010)

Reflection 3:

I met with my students on Wednesday afternoon, after our regular English class. Our goals today were to work on linking words, both in production and reception. The productive part was fun and seemed to go well, but the receptive part felt a little clinical. We used some of the sample script-readings from Walker (2010)

tracks 21-30 (Japanese, Spanish, Arabic, Polish and Malay, per the tutees' requests). I think it would have been better to listen together to one of the samples that the students had listened to for independent practice, since these were self-selected according to interest.

We used a drama technique for the productive aspect; a 'sentence-in-a-hat'-style improvised scene. This was a lot of fun, although the tutees did much better in linking the words in the read-aloud sentences than the spontaneously-produced speech surrounding it. This differing degree of success in the target productions is not dissimilar to what I observed in our focused/open practice of vowel sounds in the previous session.

We acted out three scenes together, and in the third round I tried to add an extra dimension by adding some draw cards with emotions – the idea being that the speakers had to say their next few lines in the fashion of an angry, sad, etc. person. This did not work well at all, and I don't know why I thought it might – it never has in the past for me. Whenever the students started to attempt an angry or sad tone they started laughing. Still, I suppose it made the activity more enjoyable. It would be interesting to use emotion as a basis for some focused practice, with students invited to notice changes in sound production in different mental states. I would obviously need to research this more, but it seems to me that anger results in sharper enunciation, surprise in longer (temporally) vowels, etc.

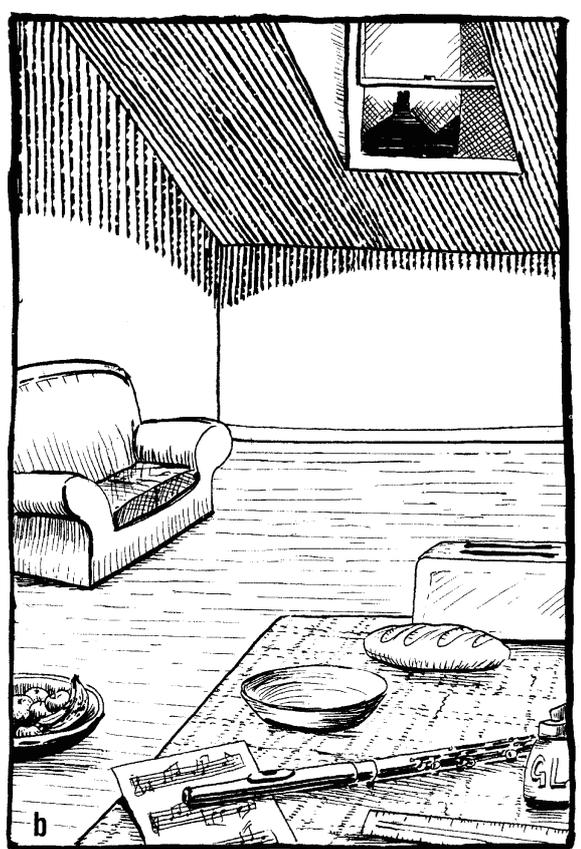
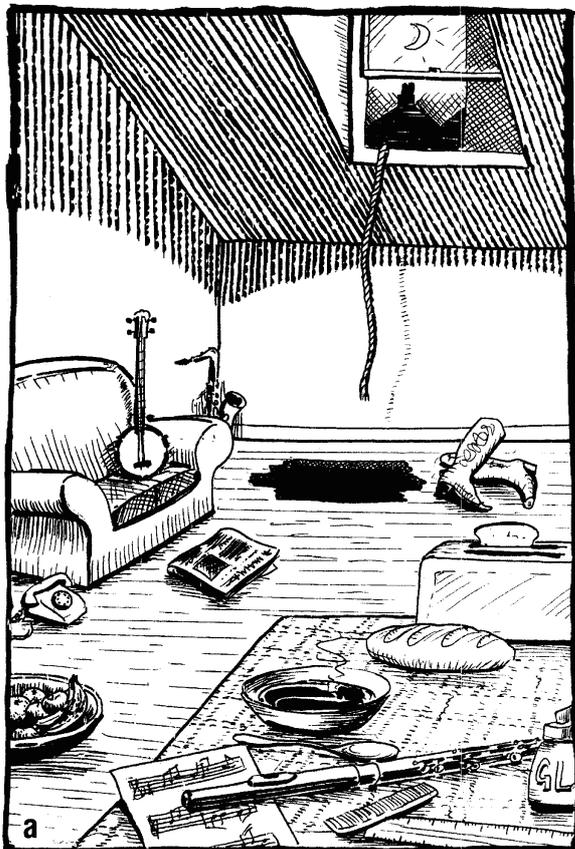
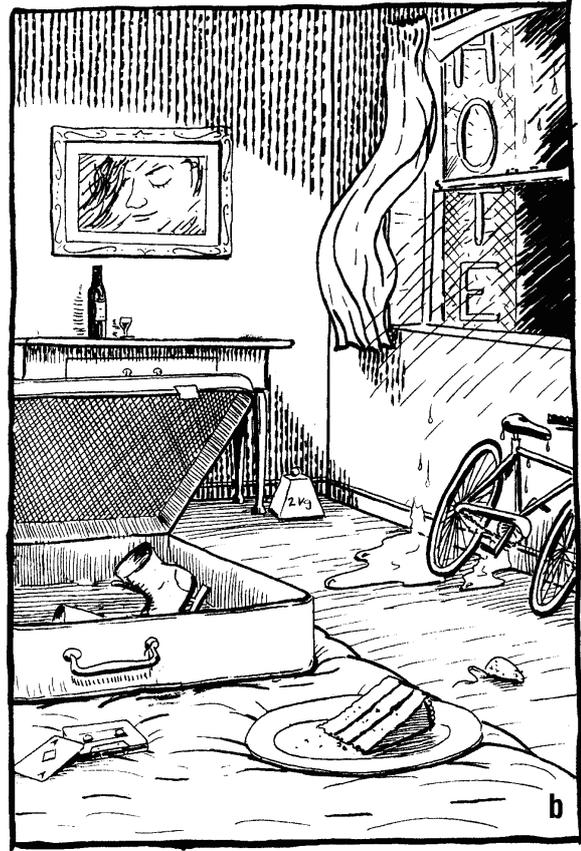
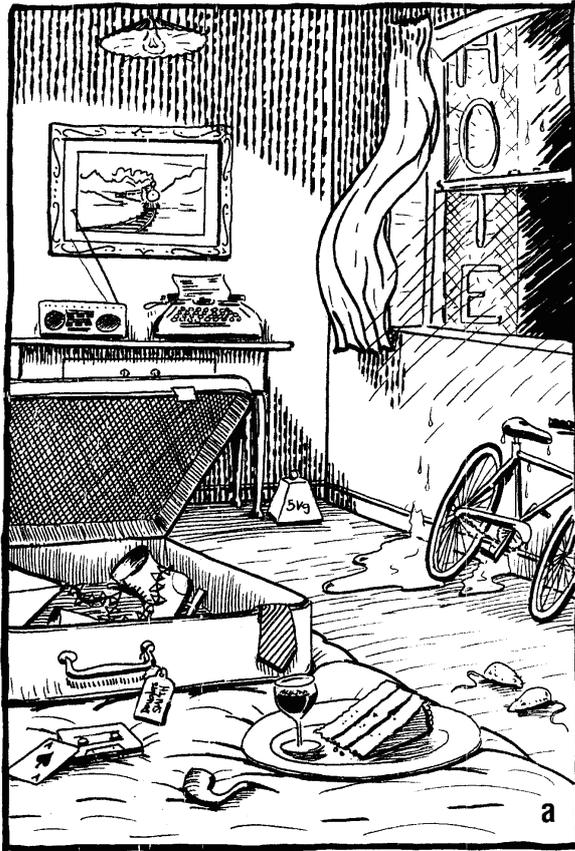
This session ended with a weird feeling to it, and I think it is because we have been jumping around from one focus to another. Despite having gone over the plan with my tutees, it may have helped generate a sense of routine by limiting our goals. I am going to revisit my plan over the weekend, play back the audio from our tutorial sessions to date, and see if I can devise something more focused for our remaining sessions.

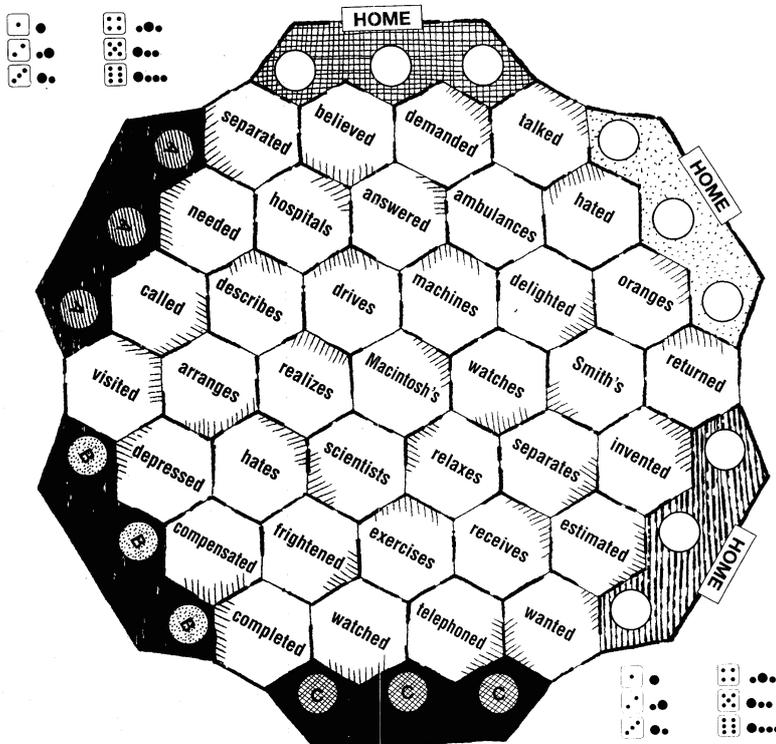
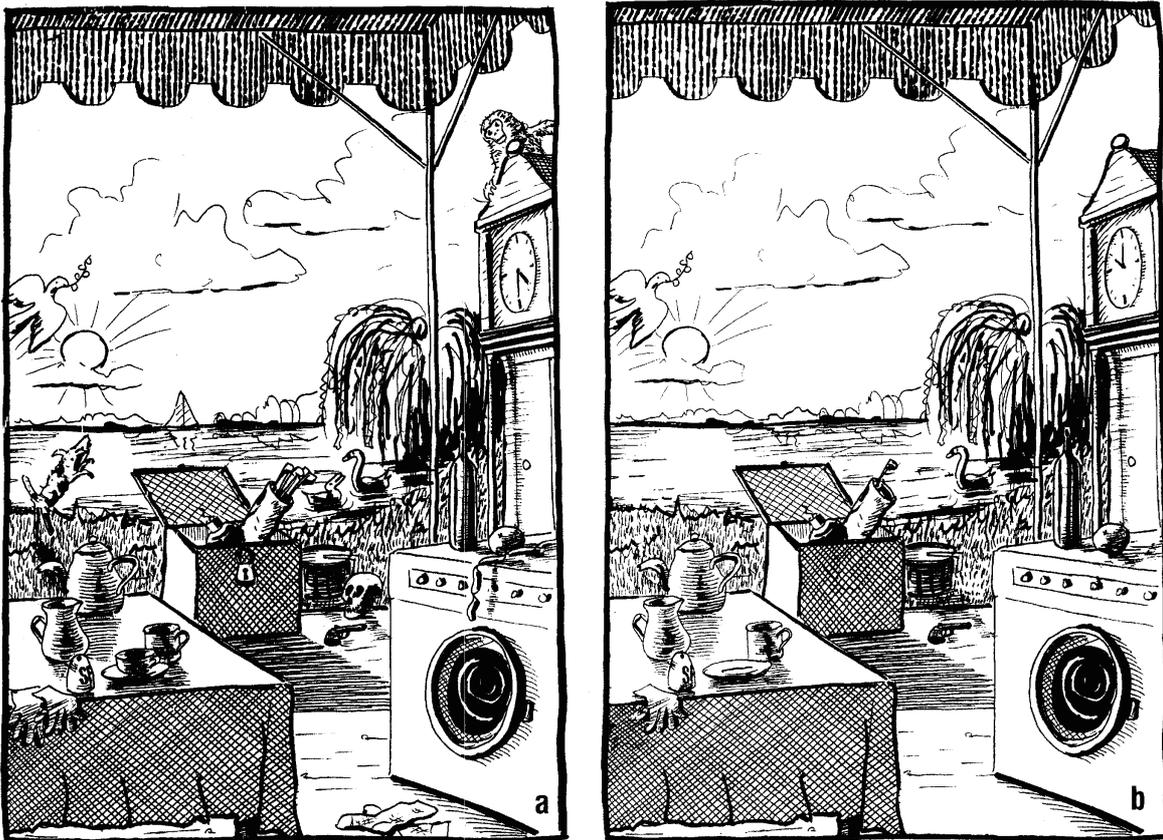
8.4 – Session 4: Central & Back Vowels; Syllable Stress

Item	Description	Time (min.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central & Back Vowels: Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the materials from Session 2, students have some focused practice to remind them of the different physical requirements to form the central and back vowels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different Pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students are given one of two similar pictures. There are some objects present in one, but not the other (see the Materials section for examples). All of the differing objects feature one of two vowel sounds, such as /ʌ/ or /ɔ/. ▪ Students are directed to ask each other about the objects in the other's picture, for example, "Is there a dog in your picture?" and a follow-up question, such as "You have a dog at home, don't you?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Syllable Stress Board Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Briefly explain the game. ▪ (Students choose a starting point, and must move towards the end point at the point on the exact opposite side of the board. They roll the dice, which dictates the stress pattern of the word on an adjacent square to which they can move. They do not have to move to a square if it is disadvantageous to their progress.) ▪ Have students spend some time playing the game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20

Materials:

The images on the following pages are activities featured in Hancock (1995), and did not require any modification to work for this activity. However, teachers of Intermediate and above speakers should consider at least minimally expanding them with some conversational follow-up questions, or by using the word(s) in a meaningful sentence.





Rules

- 1 Players each take a letter, A, B or C. They place their three counters on the three corresponding circles on the board at the bottom of the board.
- 2 The aim of the game is to move these three counters across the board to the three circles in the box opposite marked *home*. The first player to do this is the winner.
- 3 Players take turns to throw the dice and move. For each number on the dice there is a stress pattern indicated above and below the board. After throwing the dice, players can move one of their counters to a neighbouring hexagon if it contains the stress pattern indicated on the dice. If there isn't a neighbouring hexagon with the stress pattern indicated, players miss a turn.
- 4 Players may choose not to move if it is not to their advantage.
- 5 Only one counter can occupy a hexagon at a time.
- 6 Players can throw any number to enter the home box.
- 7 Players can jump straight across a hexagon occupied by another player's counter, like this:



Chinese checkers
A8

Reflection 4:

I met with my students on Friday afternoon, after our regular English class. Chang informed me that she had to leave by around 5:20, so we were only able to spend about an hour together for this session. I had originally planned to work on environmental impacts on consonants, but I came to think that my first plan was too broad. I had wanted to expose my tutees to a broader variety of things and give them some tools to be able to practice on their own, but they haven't been completing the independent study work as much as I had expected. I believe part of this is the fact that I tried to jam too much into our sessions. As I noted in my last reflection, I think we have been jumping around between focuses too much.

Therefore, what I prepared for today was a set of game-like activities related to front and back vowels, and a set based on syllable stress within words. Briefly, for vowels, we used focused practice with a spot-the-difference pictures activity: first with both pictures, and then with each tutee having a different picture and asking questions about the other's content. For syllable stress, we played a kind of board game and extended it a little. For each word the tutee landed on, they had to use it in a sentence and then the other tutee ask 3-4 follow-up questions for a mini-dialogue.

My time management was better today. We spent almost the planned full 5 minutes doing the physical warm-up. Maybe the breathing part went on too long as we all started giggling, but it seemed like Chang's voice was fuller at the start of this session. We spent exactly the planned time (7 min.) on reviewing the target vowel sounds using the chart we'd used before. The spot-the-difference activity started moving more quickly than anticipated, but I slowed it down by having the tutees use the target words (and vowel sounds) again by asking follow-up questions. This was a little contrived, as this type of focus practice often is (e.g. "Have you ever fed a duck? What kind of dog do you want?"). However, I am getting more comfortable with this, so long as it's not the only component of our tutorial sessions.

It was at this point that Chang let me know about her departure time, so I had to decide what the next activity would be so as to not rush through them. I opted for the syllable stress game as opposed to the topic discussion (exam study tips), figuring that it would be easier for them to do the latter as an audio journal and submit it for feedback. This was my first time playing this game, and I wish I had

played through it once by myself or with a colleague as opposed to just reading the instructions. It turns out that it is very easy to get “stuck” depending on the roll of the dice. We eventually agreed that if someone rolled an undesirable number, they could just roll again. This removed some of the challenge of the game, but allowed us to get more practice in.

Next week is the achievement test, and I hope to also create a kind of exit survey for my tutees to get some feedback from them for future use.

Note: I did give students a survey, below, but as of yet have not received responses from either. I will be sure to include this in my portfolio later, as I'm sure they are simply too busy with their final exams but would be happy to complete it shortly thereafter.

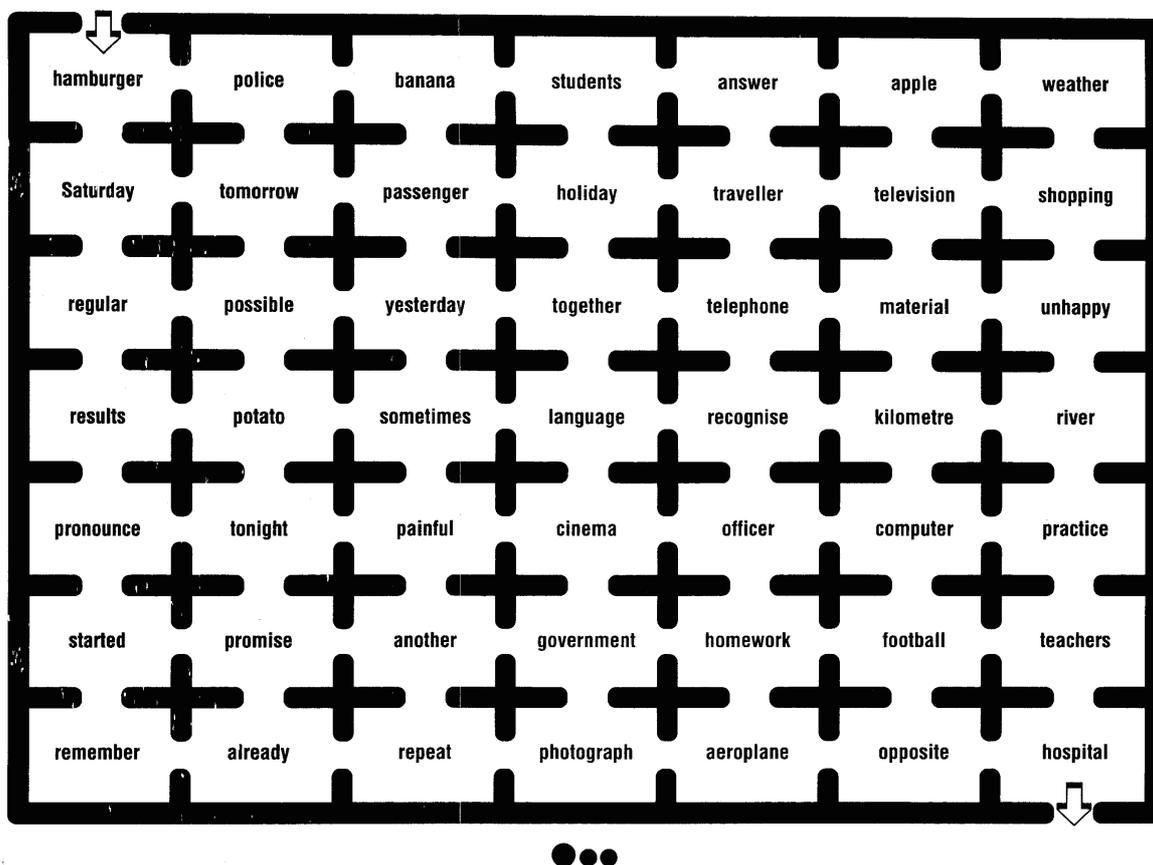
8.5 – Session 5: Review

Item	Description	Time (min.)
▪ Guidebook*	▪ Have students compare their guidebooks, which should include useful aspects of these tutoring sessions, and ways in which they can continue to practice and improve pronunciation and listening on their own.	▪ 15-20*
▪ Syllable Stress	▪ Use another game from Hancock (1995) for further exploration of syllable stress. Again, have the students ask each other questions using the target words along the way.	▪ 12
▪ Review: Vowels	▪ Go through the vowel chart once more. Have students add at least 2-3 words featuring each vowel sound.	▪ 15
▪ Review: Connected Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Browse the TED Talks page. Have students choose one or two short (less than 5 minute) talks to watch together. ▪ While doing this, point out the other features of the site, such as downloadable MP3s and videos, search options for time and topic, and the interactive transcripts so that students may use it easily on their own in future. ▪ Watch one or two videos (or short sections of them) and have students comment on anything they notice about the speaker's thought groups, manner of linking words, or vowel sounds. 	▪ X

*Neither tutee completed this.

Materials:

This game is from Hancock (1995). It is a much simpler version of the game played in the previous session, and more highly recommended for lower-level speakers, or just as a less complicated lead-in to work on syllable stress.

**Reflection 5:**

After hearing about all of the wonderful activities that my peers had been doing in their pronunciation tutor projects, I have to admit that I feel my work was inadequate. One of my stated goals was to enable my tutees to continue their studies after we parted ways, and I feel I helped move them in that direction. However, we spent a lot of time talking *about* pronunciation. The only thing I can say is that I think they improved a bit according to their achievement test, and as demonstrated in the final presentations they just gave in our regular English class. Maybe our time was spent well, but I regret not having done a wider variety of activities.

In our final session, they demonstrated good knowledge of the concepts we had covered and the sounds we had practiced – *when their attention was drawn to it*. It

will take significantly more time and practice for them to internalize things like reduced speech and connected speech, but I am hopeful that they will be able to draw on our lessons.

They were able to comment thoughtfully on the speakers we watched on TED, and if nothing else it seems they have greater awareness now than at the start of the project.

Some vowel sounds are still troublesome, but again, they seem aware, often repeating certain words multiple times with slightly different pronunciations. I hope that they will maintain this important practice tool in future.

It was disappointing that neither completed their guidebook, as this was to be the main focus of the lesson. I encouraged them to make one anyways, and let them know that they could always share them with each other or with me if they wanted more feedback. I don't think that they will.

9 – Achievement Test

9.1 – Components and Rationale

This section describes the achievement test's components, the rationale behind having selected them, and the methods of analysis. The achievement test consisted of six activities, focused on six components: focused production of a selection of vowel sounds, theoretical knowledge of reduced speech, recognizing reduced speech in listening, prominence, rhythm, and linking words in spoken English.

First, each tutee read a word list similar to that in the initial diagnostic, but altered so as to focus on five vowel sounds that we had spent time practicing in our sessions: /I/, /i/, /a/, /ʌ/ and /ə/. This was done because those sounds had presented as difficult in our sessions, and thus had been practiced the most. Especially for /I/ and /i/, they also carry high relative functional loads.

Second, the tutees were presented with the transcript of the introduction to a lecture about leadership (which was also a recent topic in our regular English class). They were given five minutes to read it, and then asked to underline any words that might be expected to be reduced in spoken English.

Then, using a different color of pen, they watched that lecture as it was paused at the end of each sentence. They marked the words that they observed the speaker had actually reduced. Although, of course, there are few concrete rules for which words in a longer speech act should be reduced, this task was selected as a final raising of awareness before the next activity.

The tutees were then given a transcript from a lecture by the same speaker, but on a different topic. Some words which the speaker reduced in his speech were blanked out, and the tutees were tasked with listening in order to fill in the blanks. They listened to it twice – once all the way through, and once more, using a different color pen and with the video paused periodically to allow more time to think and write. (Scans of the tutees' responses to this task can be found in Appendix 3.) This was done since both tutees, and especially Chang, had expressed difficulty in understanding highly proficient classmates. From their description and our first listening activity, I could tell that they were still engaging in a more bottom-up processing and were easily thrown by reduced, largely unimportant spoken words and phrases. Hence, we practiced this in our sessions and it was included in the final achievement test.

Next, the tutees were given a script with the start of a dialogue that they were to extend. After giving them approximately 2 minutes to read the script and think of what they might say next, they performed it and carried on the conversation for an additional four minutes. This was included as a more open form of practice to assess prominence, rhythm and linking words. The script was selected because it included questions which would elicit different types of word prominence, and because the topic (talking about a party) was basic enough that I could assume the tutees would not be overwhelmed or their rhythm affected by pauses to retrieve vocabulary.

Finally, the tutees were asked to discuss a familiar and relevant topic: what advice they would give to freshmen students approaching their first round of final exams at university. Again, this was to give me a sample to assess for connected speech, rhythm, and reduced speech on a topic which was not cognitively taxing.

9.2 – The Test

See Appendix 2 for the full version of the test, as presented to students.

9.3 – Score Sheet and Rubric

The sheet below (Table 6) was used to assess the tutees' performance, according to the rubrics which follow. The rubric has been adapted from that used in the initial diagnostic, which was itself adapted from Gerheiser & Wrenn (2007). Basically, it has been stripped down to focus only on what the tutees demonstrated as having difficulties with, and what we devoted time to in the tutorial sessions. Completed assessments for both Chang and Kim can be found in Section 9.3.

9.4 – Achievement Test Results

The sheet below (Table 6) was used to assess the tutees' performance, along with the rubrics on the following pages. Results for the tutees can be found following the rubrics.

Table 6: Achievement Test Score Sheet

Elements of Speech	Ratings (refer to rubric)	Examples
Vowels (esp. /I/, /i/, /a/, /ʌ/, /ə/)	Overall rating: /I/ - /i/ - /a/ - /ʌ/ - /ə/ -	
Connected Speech	Rehearsed Speech overall rating:	
	Spontaneous Speech overall rating:	
Rhythm	Rehearsed Speech overall rating:	
	Spontaneous Speech overall rating:	
Reduced Speech	Theoretical Knowledge:	
	Listening Task 1:	
	Listening Task 2:	
Focus and special emphasis (Prominence)	Rehearsed Speech overall rating:	
	Spontaneous Speech overall rating:	
Strengths:		
Suggestions:		

Rubric adapted from Gerheiser, A. & Wrenn, D. (2007). Second language pronunciation assessment. Retrieved from teachingpronunciation.pbworks.com/f/Pronunciation+assessment+packet+.pdf on April 1, 2014.

Connected Speech Between Words

- 1** The speaker does not link words together as appropriate. Word endings are over-enunciated. Final consonant sounds do not carry over to initial vowel sounds following most spoken North American English (NAE) conventions. The speaker rarely, if ever, uses contracted forms. As a result, speech is severely halting and uncomfortable to listen to.
- 2** The speaker links some commonly-occurring word pairs together, and uses some contracted forms with copular *be* verbs and negative modifiers. Words are generally not linked together as per most spoken NAE conventions. The speaker may come across as uncomfortable speaking and is somewhat uncomfortable to listen to.
- 3** The speaker makes attempts at connecting a variety of collocations, although not always smoothly. Some influence of L1 conventions or environmental effects on sound can be observed. The speaker regularly uses appropriate contracted forms, and speech is fairly comfortable to listen to.
- 4** The speaker generally connects words appropriately, and as appropriate to register and speech function. No influences of L1 conventions are evident to the extent that accent is marked as obviously foreign. Speech is generally smooth. The speaker is comfortable to listen to.
- 5** In terms of connected speech, the speaker is proficient enough to perform extended speech acts with a variety of audiences with little if any listener discomfort.

Connected Speech Within Words

- 1** Speaker shows little awareness of linking conventions within words and/or environmental effects on consonant clusters or consonant-vowel combinations. Speech may be unintelligible at the word level to a degree requiring significant listener effort and awareness of context.
- 2** Speaker shows emerging ability to link sounds within words and form common consonant clusters. Some sounds appear problematic, though not necessarily consistently and often due to misleading orthography.
- 3** Speaker displays difficulty in producing a limited, consistent set of linked sounds and consonant clusters. A great deal of listener effort is not required, but accent is marked with a high degree of foreignness.
- 4** Speaker demonstrates ability to produce a range of consonant cluster sounds without apparent difficulty. Linking of adjacent vowel and consonant sounds within words is performed to a degree not requiring a significant amount of listener effort or awareness of context, although some words consistently give the impression of foreignness to NAE.
- 5** Speaker is able to produce the vast majority of lexical items with little to no impression of foreignness to NAE.

Rhythm

- 1 Speaker's rhythm is jarring and uneven. Speaker does not appear aware of basic word-grouping conventions. Pauses fall at unexpected times, leading to a high need for listener effort. Listeners to this speaker may be uncertain as to when one thought or utterance has come to an end.
- 2 Speaker shows an emerging control of small thought groups according to where pauses fall, although may still pause frequently and unexpectedly while attempting to recall lexical items. Speaker is able to produce common chunks of languages, such as greetings, farewells and short, formulaic questions according to practiced rhythms.
- 3 Speaker's rhythm is appropriate to social norms in common phrases and questions. Rhythm of speech referring to the speaker him/herself and on very familiar topics is generally free of unplanned pauses to recall lexical items, but may become more uneven when discussing less-familiar or emotionally-charged topics. Speaker shows an emerging mastery of rhythm within shorter thought groups of up to 5 lexical items.
- 4 Speaker's rhythm is appropriate to social norms for a variety of functions and registers. The frequency of unplanned pauses is not so severe as to increase listener effort or confusion as to the end of thoughts or utterances.
- 5 Speaker demonstrates masterful control of rhythm with a range of thought group lengths. Pauses are generally not unplanned; when they do fall, pauses are accompanied by appropriate and natural-sounding fillers.

Prominence

- 1 Speaker does not differentiate between words which receive prominence and those which do not. Prominence is given equally to all parts of an thought group, or randomly and inconsistently according to word type or intended meaning.
- 2 Speaker gives prominence to a smaller number of words within a thought group, although not always appropriately. Speaker shows emerging awareness of content words versus function words, and tends to give more prominence to the former but does not de-emphasize less important words or grammatically-mandated items, such as *be going to*.
- 3 Speaker generally gives prominence to word types as appropriate, although at times it may seem forced. Speaker does not give noticeably less prominence to less important words or grammatically-mandated items as appropriate to intended meaning.
- 4 Speaker give prominence to words as appropriate, in terms of word type, stress, and relative volume. Speaker shows emerging mastery of selection and vocalization of de-emphasized lexical and grammatically-mandated items as appropriate to intended meaning.
- 5 Speaker utilizes prominence and de-emphasis fully appropriately to intended meaning.

Rating of vowel sound production, where:

1 = represents a significantly different point and manner of articulation, or, the sound is omitted

2 = represents a nearby point and/or manner of articulation, but the listener may confuse the sound with another (for example /i/ and /I/)

3 = approximates NAE production of the sound as discussed/practiced in tutorial sessions, but not consistently

4 = generally produces the sound to NAE conventions as discussed/practiced in tutorial sessions, with some discernible effort

5 = consistently produces the sound to NAE conventions as discussed/practiced in tutorial sessions, with little to no discernible effort

Sound	Ex.	1	2	3	4	5
/i/	pea					
/I/	pin					
/a/	pa					
/ʌ/	pun					
/ə/	Paul					
/ /						
/ /						

Example words taken from:

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M., Goodwin, J. M. & Griner, B. (2010). *Teaching pronunciation: A course book and reference guide [2nd edition]*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, p. 125.

9.5 – Student Survey

This survey was given to the tutees via Google Forms. As of today, I have not yet received responses.

Please share your thoughts in this brief survey. For each statement, 1 = Definitely Not!, 2 = Not Really, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Yes, and 5 = Absolutely!

You can also write a brief comment to give me more details about your answer.

1. Do you think your pronunciation of vowel sounds has improved? ____
Which vowel sounds have or haven't improved?
2. Do you think your ability to link words smoothly has improved? ____
Why or why not?
3. Do you think your ability to identify which words can be reduced has improved? ____
Why or why not?
4. Do you think your ability to use reduced speech has improved? ____
Why or why not?
5. Do you think your listening ability has improved? ____
Why or why not?
In what ways?
6. What were the most helpful parts of these tutoring sessions for you? Why?
7. What were the least helpful parts of these tutoring sessions for you? Why?
8. Do you think you are better able to practice pronunciation on your own? ____

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Appendix 1 – Transcript Markups

Below are transcriptions of short sections of the interviews held at the end of the diagnostic section. Intonation is noted in green, stress in red, and short or long pauses by a single or double forward-slash (/).

Transcript 1 - Chang

transcript 1 - chang

Andrew: Are there any sounds that you find difficult to make, like individual sounds, or bigger speech patterns, like intonation and phrases, or anything that's difficult for you to hear a difference?

Chang: Actually, all of them, but... [laughter] Just sound, 'R,' /θ/ is okay but speech, my intonation or speed is not okay. Uh, in economic class in English, I can listen and understand professor's lecture. Of course, not hundred percent, but I can understand, but I can't understand other students' questions, so I can't understand the answer. I really sad.

Andrew: Yeah, you mentioned the first time we spoke, 'Oh, her English is better than mine, 'cuz she lived in America...'

Chang: So fast. And professor said, oh hey you guys, [referring to paper on desk] "College of Economics," like this, but they said "College of blahblahblah", so I can't understand.

Andrew: Okay. Anything else?

Chang: And, I can't understand uh English of other country person. I mean, not American. Because I haven't hear that pronunciation. In Korea, only listen carefully, like, slow and very clear.

Transcript 2 – Kim

Andrew: Are there any specific, either sounds or speaking patterns, of intonation or stress, that are challenging for you, you think?

Kim: Hm. 'Th' sound, there's a lot of th-sound, 'the' or very, umm, there are a lot of th-sound, 'the' or 'throw' or 'through' like that. Especially 'the,' the, the is, people use 'the' a lot of, uh/um, how can I say. Th-sound is difficult to me, 'the,' I have to say, for example, I going to the. Like that. There is the sound, 'the,' I have to pronounce that 'the,' but it's not familiar to me. The, the, throw.

Andrew: Any other things? Or, in your listening, are there any sounds that are difficult, I told you about my *bieup* and *ssang-bieup*, right? I can't hear the difference. Are there any sounds like that for you?

Kim: R or L is difficult, but I think I can understand the difference between R and L. And, um, I think the connecting sound is difficult to hear.

Andrew: Okay.

Kim: Connecting sound, like, I don't know exact example.

Andrew: Like from one word to another word, you mean?

Kim: Yes. And, um, Yeah, that's it, maybe.

Kim's intonation falling more here than in other samples - difficult topic lead to even choppy rhythm.

Appendix 2 – Achievement Test

1. Vowels – Word List

Read the words on the screen, one at a time. Don't think about them too much, but don't rush through them either.

(The following words, in this order, were shown to the tutees on an iPad screen.)

water, pajamas, upward, bean, fit, sheep, America, lawyer, ship, feet, fun, probably, bit, caught, caramel, awesome, syrup, natural, peach, Alabama

2. Reduced Speech, Part 1

Before you watch the video, use a **red pen** to underline the words or syllables you think will (or can) be reduced. For example, *I'm going to go to the beach.*

So, ladies and gentlemen, at TED we talk a lot about leadership and how to make a movement. So let's watch a movement happen, start to finish, in under three minutes and dissect some lessons from it. First, of course you know, a leader needs the guts to stand out and be ridiculed. But what he's doing is so easy to follow. So here's his first follower with a crucial role; he's going to show everyone else how to follow.

Now, notice that the leader embraces him as an equal. So, now it's not about the leader anymore; it's about them, plural. Now, there he is calling to his friends. Now, if you notice that the first follower is actually an underestimated form of leadership in itself. It takes guts to stand out like that. The first follower is what transforms a lone nut into a leader.

And here comes a second follower. Now it's not a lone nut, it's not two nuts -- three is a crowd, and a crowd is news. So a movement must be public. It's important to show not just to show the leader, but the followers, because you find that new followers emulate the followers, not the leader.

Now, here come two more people, and immediately after, three more people. Now we've got momentum. This is the tipping point. Now we've got a movement.

3. Reduced Speech, Part 2

Now, use a **blue pen** to underline the words or syllables that are reduced. Compare the two scripts. How similar or different are they?

4. Reduced Speech, Part 3

So, imagine you're standing _____ street anywhere _____ America and a Japanese man comes up to you and says,

"Excuse me, what is the name of this block?"

_____, "I'm sorry, well, _____ Oak Street, that's Elm Street. _____
26th street, _____ 27th."

_____, "OK, but what is the name of that block?"

_____ "_____, blocks don't have names. Streets have names; blocks are just the unnamed spaces in between streets."

He leaves, a little confused and disappointed.

_____ standing on a street, anywhere in Japan, you turn to a person next to you and say,

"Excuse me, what is the name of this street?"

_____ they say, "Oh, well that's Block 17 and _____ Block 16."

And you say, "OK, but what is the name of this street?"

And they say, "Well, streets don't have names. Blocks have names. Just look at Google Maps here. There's Block 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. All of these blocks have names, and the streets are just the unnamed spaces _____ the blocks.

_____ then how do you know your home address?"

"Easy, this is District Eight. There's Block 17, house number one."

You say, "OK, but walking around the neighborhood, I noticed that the house numbers don't go in order."

_____, "Of course they do. They go in the order in which they were built. The first house ever built on a block is house number one. The second house ever built is house number two. Third is house number three. It's easy. It's obvious."

So, I love that sometimes we need to go to the opposite side of the world to realize assumptions we didn't even know we had, and realize that the opposite of them

_____ true.

5. Discussion, Part 1

Read this dialogue with your partner. Then, continue the discussion for a few more minutes. You can practice a couple of times first. Think about *rhythm*, *reduced speech*, (and *prominence*) and *connected speech*.

Michelle

So, how was your weekend, Michel?

Oh, really?

Yeah, I bet.

Oh, I had a party Saturday. It was good.

A1: _____

A2: _____

A3: _____

Michel

Great. Gina and I went biking out in the country.

Yeah, it was fun, but there were lots of hills. I was exhausted by the end of the day.

So, anyway, what did you do?

Really? Nice.

Q1: _____

Q2: _____

Q3: _____

6. Discussion, Part 2

Final exams are almost here! Let's think about what advice you would give a freshman. Take 2-3 minutes to think, and then let's discuss it.