

**Interpersonal Skills**  
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**Lecture-13**  
**Pronunciation**

Hello friends, we are doing interpersonal skills and under interpersonal skills today we need to discuss pronunciation. People ask that why do we learn accurate pronunciation why there is a need for it but my point is that we should learn English pronunciation. So, that we may speak correctly, especially in India, it is true that throughout the world there are different types of English as Australian, Canadian, African, American and of course Britishers because we speak standard English.

In India we have number of dialects, so my point is that whenever we speak English at least we should try to neutralize the impact of dialect local dialect on English language. I never considered English language as a foreign language because it is an international mode of expression, a medium to connect, I mean yourself with the world because this is an age of globalization.

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- Understanding phonetic rules and tendencies are a must.
- Do not be discouraged because of accent.
- A strong basic foundation in correct pronunciation will equate more effective learning.
- Repeated practice can make access to fluency.

So, this is very important that why pronunciation is important and to improve your utterance especially in English. While it might not be the most important factor in language learning

pronouncing the sounds of a language well is important even early on in the learning process. There have been studies in which native speakers were asked to rate a speech by learners and why correct grammar and a structure appeared to be more significant in how high a speech is rated pronunciation is still affected, that is why it is very important.

Furthermore understanding phonetic rules and tendencies can help with the process of acquiring new vocabulary. Pronouncing words is often a part of memorizing them in second language-learning. So, getting a strong basic foundation in correct pronunciation early on will equate to more effective learning overall. Even if you have already studied English for some time you can always improve your speech and reduce your accent.

In any case research has shown for decades that second language learning is different from how one acquires ones native language. Pronunciation in a second language is especially resistant to improvement and it is rare that a second language speaker can lose an accent entirely. However they should not discourage language learners from a studying pronunciation and making an effort to improve their speech.

The difference with second language learning is that it requires explicit learning of vocabulary rules and structures with repeated practice to commit these 2 long term memory and to make access more automatic or fluent. Now communication is not enough that is why we are talking of pronunciation, a common mistake made by many international students studying English as a second language is not paying adequate attention to English pronunciation.

Pronunciation is vital to proper communication because the incorrect use of pronunciation inevitably leads to the messes being misunderstood by the recipient. That is why it is an integral part of interpersonal skill, a good example of this is the word present. If one way to say I am present with an emphasis on the first syllable of the word one is referring to once presents at a particular place or time.

On the other hand if one way to say I wish to present then one refers to a statement or article one wishes to announce. Another important aspect is the proper use of English pronunciation inclines to highlight an add value to an individual speaking English. Now consider this example in a situation where a student's grammar and vocabulary is exceptionally good, he or she may be able to write good English.

But if that same student lacks a fundamental knowledge of pronunciation despite having an excellent knowledge of grammar his or her communication in English will be severely important. He or she will be able to write in English but will not be able to construct a meaningful sentence when speaking and thus fails at communicating a message, this is a very important part. At the very list students studying English as a second language should give all that aspects of English and equal importance at best.

However those who wish to excel at the English language will always have to give the knowledge of pronunciation a higher priority. They should also endeavor to learn this aspect of English language more thoroughly if they wish to be recognized as effective communicators. Learning pronunciation first and this should be done at a school level only, that is a step that is often overlooked by many people and learning methods.

We believe that acquiring some knowledge of the proper pronunciation is essential before you dive in the depths of the language. You need to know how each letter and combination of letters are pronounced, if there are accented letters you should learn them as well. The goal is not to master pronunciation right from the start but to at least understand how the language works. If you are learning German for example the letter V generically sound like the English F.

It is not difficult to say fuhh instead of fuhh but you do need to know otherwise you could pronounce it incorrectly for years. Focus on being understood that is an important point, when

learning a new language it is important that you focus on being understood try to clearly enunciate rather than trying to speak exactly like native speakers who tend to mumble quite a bit at times.

If you do your best to clearly enunciated every syllable in your new language you will be understood by others in no time. That is the main goal of most people after all having an accent is not really a problem in most situations, it is just your own way of speaking. You may not speak exactly the same way as everyone around you but that does not matter at all. There is a popular saying that goes something like this never make fun of someone with an accent, it means they know another language.

Sounding like a native speaker sometime is very difficult like we Indians we speak Hindi, we speak our mother language. Naturally the setting of the tongue is like this and the effect or impact of this is obviously there on English. But as I said initially that we have to neutralize that effect, many learners would love to sound like native speakers in their new language. But what does that mean exactly, English speakers from the UK and from the US have different accents.

But they are simply different ways of speaking, we tend to generalize the UK and US accent. But it is said that there are over 50 different accents in the British English alone that is why I used English. But if you really do want to sound exactly like the native speakers of a certain area you can simply spend lots of time immersing yourself in that particular accent. If you listen to a lot of material and constantly practice out loud you can get there, be warned though this will take a lot of work.

You can record your voice and compare it to the recording of our native speakers, you can listen for the little subtleties in the pronunciation and make the adjustments needed to sound more native. Do not let it keep you from speaking, reply it while you speak, one of the most important things is to never let pronunciation keep you from speaking. It is important to practice speaking

as much as possible, spoken practice will help you to improve your pronunciation and most importantly your ability to clearly communicate.

The importance of reading is also there when we talk our pronunciation. There is a big difference between not saying words correctly because some sounds are difficult for you to reproduce. I am not saying things correctly because you think that is how they are said, reading can fix a lot of these problems. Once you know how each letter is pronounced, knowing how the words are spelt should help your pronunciation, reading will help you in all parts of language learning.

Once you know how to read you can even practice your pronunciation by reading books out loud which is likely one of the best ways to practice your pronunciation. Listen and repeat, this is also the best way to improve your pronunciation. Whenever you listen to audio material try to repeat after the recording, you can do this with movies, you tube videos, songs or any audio you can get your hands on.

Listen attentively, pause the recording and repeat what you heard out loud, repeating out loud is another way you can greatly increase your pronunciation skills. All that being said remember what is truly important being understood, if you can do that remember that having an accent is no big deal. It can even give you a certain charm, it is a recognized scientific fact that a child born in any country of the world can learn to speak any language of our planet.

For example a child from Poland has come to live in the USA at any early age he or she will speak perfect English and have no polish accent. And of course such children will perfectly understand everything they hear and other English speakers understand them. Thus pronunciation training is a very important part of mastering any foreign language including English.

It does not mean that the purpose of such phonetic training is to get rid of a foreign accent

completely and forever. To be honest it is not always possible and not so necessary of course if you are not going to work for foreign intelligence or teach yourself the language professionally. The main objective of such training is to learn how to hear yourself and others, poor pronunciation creates additional barrier in understanding between you and a person you are talking to.

Pronunciation and clear understanding of English speech are 2 skills with complement each other. It means that if you know how to pronounce the words and phrases correctly with proper intonation your level of speech and a standing is also increased. Even if your accent is so thick, that you are not understood at first the other person will simply ask you to repeat. Once they understand they will likely to tell you the proper pronunciation and you will naturally get better, nothing should ever keep you from speaking.

Correcting your pronunciation from their start will ensure that you do not take in bad habits, it can be extremely difficult to correct your pronunciation after years of reinforcement. Pronunciation can be quite tricky when learning in new language especially for adults, that is why age is very important. Age and practice, you will have to replicate lots of new strange sounds that are completely unknown to you.

The language you are learning may have the sample alphabet, but some letters will have an entirely different pronunciation. This can be confusing in the beginning because it looks like words are not pronounced the way they should. But how important is pronunciation in language learning and what can you do to improve is a big question and need to ponder. Pronunciation of the letter sounds in word as well as syllable emphasis on parts of words will more often they not change the word meaning and context drastically thereby irreversibly altering the meaning of the sentence being communicated.

This unestimation of the importance of pronunciation is mainly because students tend to think

mistakenly that pronunciation is less important compared to other aspects of English language such as grammar, lexicology and vocabulary. Pronunciation is the most important and difficult problem that non-native English speakers have to face when studying English. Improper pronunciation can lead to negative impression, misunderstanding and ineffective communication.

When you talk to people in the real life your pronunciation is the first thing they notice during a conversation especially in a professional life. In everyday communication you usually do not have to use many complicated words. So your limited vocabulary is not a big issue since you can use more simple words to express the word that you do not know. In fact they will notice right away if your pronunciation is good or bad only the first few simple words.

If you have a poor pronunciation with various strong foreign accent they will think of you as a bad English speaker and your good vocabulary and grammar cannot help you. Knowing a lot of vocabularies is meaningless if you cannot pronounce those words correctly and no one can understand the words that you are trying to use. Even worse pronunciation mistakes can lead to some serious misunderstanding.

For example let us think of the misunderstanding about the signal sinking si nk ing in a video clip or on youtube call I am sinking. Many people believe that they can communicate in English because they can communicate with their teacher and other student, however it is not true. The teachers have been listening to bad English for years, so they can understand your poor pronunciation.

And your friends are from the same country with you and speak English with the same accent so they can understand your words easier. The best way is to talk to native English speakers and if they can understand what you are saying you have a good pronunciation. You are making it difficult sometimes for people who listen to you with your strong foreign accent, what I am trying to tell you that both the way it is bad.

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- Proper pronunciation is essential before learning depth of any language.
- Focus on being understood.
- Try your best to enunciate every syllable.
- Listening helps a lot in mastering pronunciation.
- Practice speaking as much as possible.

Like we are in India and if I speak in British accent sometime it is very difficult to access to other people, the common people. Now what to do in that way, it is irritated for other people if they have to keep asking you to repeat, but they still cannot figure out what you are saying. That is why I said the best way that you neutralize only the dialectical impact suppose one is from Tamilnadu, one is from Punjab, one is from West Bengal that effect should not be there on English language, so we we should be careful of that.

Consequently if it takes a lot of efforts to understand your English people will avoid communicating with you as much as they can. In contrast they will enjoy talking to you when you have a pleasant accent, that is easy for them hear and to understand you. Now there are certain tips for proper pronunciation because we all know that we speak a standard English. A standard English which is also known as British English, international phonetic alphabet, it is C pronunciation, BBC English, kings and queens English.

And there are 44 sounds, 24 consonant while 20 vowel and even in 20 vowel 12 are pure vowels, that is one of monophthong while 8 are diphthong glided vowels. If a student tries to understand these sounds correctly I am sure that he or she will be able to improve his or her accent or pronunciation. What is a word, a word is a meaningful utterance, how a word is made of it is through syllable, what is a syllable, syllable is a unit.



Suppose I say examination examination there are 5 syllable and it is nee that will carry the emphasis. So, whenever you utter a word always some syllables are there that carries prominent you know emphasis and that makes your sound perfect. Now here are some tips for you to improve your pronunciation with every new word you should look it up in the dictionary to find the correct pronunciation.

I always request my student to carry the latest edition of dictionary, go through the dictionary utter a word and that is why you need to know the IPA international phonetic alphabet, so that you can get the exact utterance.

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- Reading can fix a lot of problems.
- Better pronunciation help in imparting a clear message.
- Correct your pronunciation from the start to avoid bad habits.
- Pronouncing with proper intention increases the level of understanding speech.

Listen to native speakers to get used to their accent instead of boring listening lessons you can listen to English songs, watch movies or listen to your native English speaking friends and relatives. Practice in front of a mirror and make sure you move your mouth in the correct way, do a lot of practices, I mean this practice sing in the mirror you know call articulation also whenever you speak do not open your mouth too much.

So, that is why it is important to look into the mirror and go for practice, remember that practice makes perfect. Be patient and determined, the journey may be tough but the result will be worth,

do not ignore some important elements of pronunciation that is word stresses. When used in the context of linguistics word stress essentially refers to the syllable in a word that is emphasized the most.

Some languages like a Spanish use accents to show a stress but English offers no such easy trick. A stress is very important when speaking English because a word can entirely change meaning depending on where you put their stress. For the purpose of the example here I am trying to divide syllables with dashes and show a stress with bold text. Now consider the word contest which has 2 syllables con test, con test you can either put a stress on the first syllable or the second which would be as follows coon test, con test.

The word with a stress on the first syllable is a noun that means a competition, the word with stress on the second syllable is a verb that means to oppose. Note that in this case the word stress not only changes the meaning of the word but also the part of a speech, noun versus verb. You can hear both words compared side by side by speaking aloud. Let us take another example the word present has 2 syllable that can be broken up and stress differently depending on what you wish to say.

Prezent present hear the pronunciation, present first is prezent prezent. The first example is a noun meaning a gift, the second is a verb that means to introduce. As you can tell by it is name word stress is a great resource to practice, pronunciation with correct word stress. They break words down into syllables and have users click to reveal which ones are stressed, they helpfully track the number of words you get correct.

So, you can see your progress as you practice plus you can click to reveal a words part of a speech definition a stress and it is international phonetic alphabet symbol. Now s o c i e t y generally we Indian say society but this is wrong if we try to transcribe the word it is sir psy a t. Now this is the second syllable because in society there are 4 syllables it is the second syllable

that carries a stress sir ciety sir ciety.

Similarly exami nation 5 syllable exa mi nation exami nation and it is ni that will carry their stress. Further intonation is also very important, that is why English is not very easy language. Because even with a reference to context that we put you know a stress and accent an intonation that is also a meaning if you do not raise or lower your voice at certain parts of each sentence you would sound like a robot.

Language is alive it is a kind of lifeline if you see the vibration it will go up down up down up down, so you cannot speak like robot, yes come in, you have to show some rhythm. That is intonation and that show the meaning sometime your attitude, your intention too, sometime grammar also. Intonation involves the rise and fall of your voice when speaking in full sentences, incorrect intonation can change the meaning of a sentence or just sound very strange to native speakers.

It is especially important for conveying feelings or adding nouns to sentences, for example think about the sentence why are you home so late, please pay your attention, why are you home so late. Imagine asking your student child this simple question, genuinely wondering why he or she is home late, practice the question aloud with a tone of curiosity. Perhaps you would use a light falling intonation at the end of your sentence.

Now practice saying it while imagining that you are angry, believing that your spouse has been out doing something you are not happy about. When using an accusatory tone your pitch might rapidly rise and fall, it is important to master English intonation if you want to sound natural and keep listeners focused on the content of your sentences.

That is why it is important that before you start to improve in terms of pronunciation you try to make yourself well acquainted with all the science or the sounds of phonetic alphabet, that is IPA

which is also known as received pronunciation. And as I said that we always speak British English that is official English language that is a standard English. So, we should be well aware of the sounds that is there in IPA.

So, dear friends I am sure that you must have got some idea of how to improve your pronunciation. Let us discuss something more about pronunciation general mistakes we do while improving our pronunciation in the next session, thank you very much.