

International Conference on English Pronunciation: Issues & Practices June 3-5 2009

Local Organizing Committee

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the LLS Research Group, the Université de Savoie and the Conseil Régional for their generous support.



Practical Information

Conference Information Desk

The desk will be staffed throughout the conference by members of the organizing committee and/or Master's students from the Université de Savoie.

PowerPoint Presentations

If you are giving a PowerPoint presentation and you have not already sent it to us by e-mail, please get in touch with the organizers as soon as possible. We would like to upload your file well in advance of your presentation slot, in order to avoid last minute problems.

Wireless Internet Access

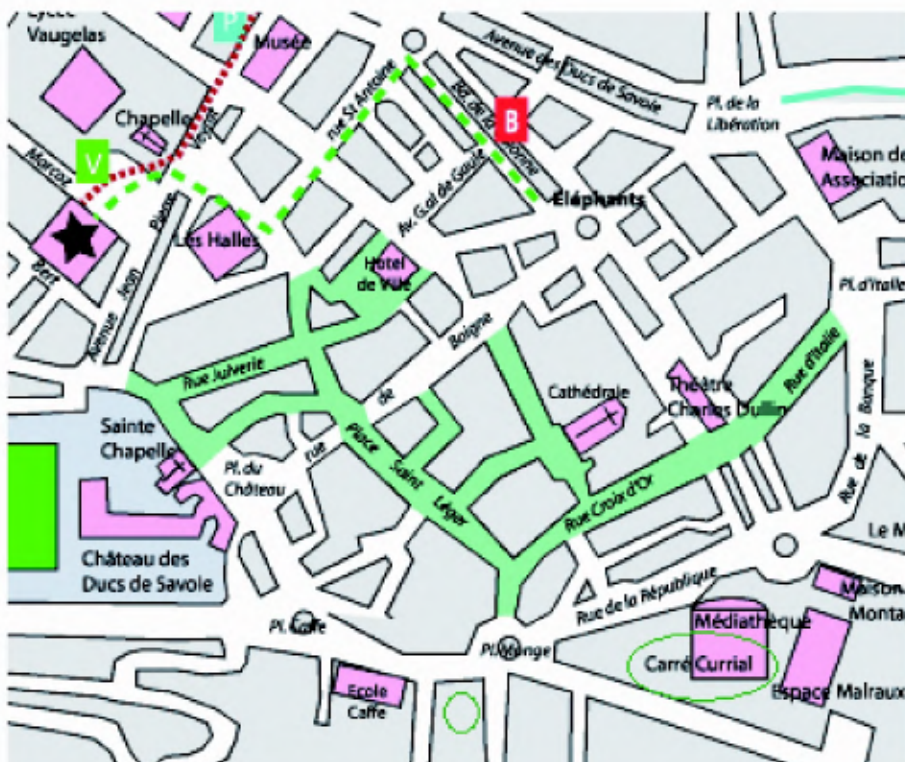
Access is available in the entire Présidence building. Logins and passwords are available at the registration desk.

Food

Coffee breaks are in either room 3 (to the right as you enter the building) or room 5 (at the end of the hallway on the right). Thursday lunch is in room 5.

Wednesday Welcoming *Apéritif*: This will take place at the *Hypoténuse* restaurant in the Carré Curial (see town map). All participants are welcome. Please come for 7:30 pm.

Thursday Conference Dinner: This will take place at the Savoyard restaurant near the Carré Curial (see town map). Please come for 7:30 pm.



Photocopies

If you need extra photocopies, please contact the registration desk. If you would like to do your own, they can also explain to you how to find the copy shop around the corner.

Internet Cafés

You didn't bring your own computer but you'd still like to check your e-mail or go on-line? There are a few Internet cafés in Chambéry. If you ask at the registration desk, they can show you where they are located on the town map.

Restaurants & Shops

There is a wide variety of restaurants in Chambéry to suit all tastes, although it can be difficult for vegetarians to have a truly meat-free meal other than salads and omelettes in restaurants serving French dishes. Most restaurants serve lunch between noon and 2 pm and open again at 7 or 7:30 in the evening for dinner. Some shops may close at lunchtime.

Banks

Banks close at lunchtime and at 4 or 4:30 in the afternoon. There are several cashpoints close to the Présidence and throughout the Old Town. If you ask at the registration desk, they can show you where they are located on the town map.

What's Going On In & Around Chambéry

Friday June 5 is the annual bike festival Fête du Vélo, to promote environmentally-friendly modes of transport. Bikes can be rented at the train station (3 euros per half day, 5 euros per whole day).

Les Charmettes: Jean-Jacques Rousseau's home from 1736-1742 and has been a national historic monument since 1905. Open every day from 10-12 and 2-6pm. Free to visit the house and grounds. Quaint botanical garden. This is a pleasant (though slightly uphill) 30-45 minute walk from the centre of town.

Lac du Bourget: France's largest natural lake is only 12 km away ... at the end of the bike path or a 15 minute bus ride. Ask at the registration desk for more information.

Musée Savoisien: Located near the Elephants fountain. Open every day from 10-12 and 2-6pm. 3 euros. *Free the first Sunday of every month = June 7.

Galérie Euréka: Located in the basement of the Médiathèque (public library). Special exhibit on seismic activity in Savoie. Open Thursday 2-6 pm, Friday 2-7 pm and Saturday 10-12 and 2-6pm. Free.

Wireless Access

Technical requirements:

Your PC must have a wireless access card and the VPN client from Cisco wireless access kit must be installed on your PC.

How to get the VPN Client from a wireless access point?

Check that the wireless card is turned on.

Check that your PC is in a wireless access zone.

Select the "UDS Campus" network.

Open the Internet navigator.

Enter the following URL: <https://nomadisme.grenet.fr>

Accept the certificate.

Follow the instructions provided on the site in order to download the connection kit. When identification is requested, enter your login & password (as provided by the conference organizers). There are two files to download:

- 1) the VPN Client, to install
- 2) the profile "UdS.pcf" to import into the VPN Client

In case of problems, please consult the FAQs at <https://nomadisme.grenet.fr>

How to get on-line?

Check that the wireless card is turned on.

Check that your PC is in a wireless access zone.

Select the "UDS Campus" network.

Start up the VPN Client (little icon in the shape of a lock)

Choose "Entrée de connexion": uds

Then choose "Connecter"

Enter your login & password as provided by the conference organizers.

Programme

REGISTRATION	
1:00	Lecture Hall: Opening , including Welcome Speech by Luc Frappat, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research
1:30-2:30	Lecture Hall, Opening Plenary by John Wells: the polling carried out for the new edition of the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary
2:30-3:05	Lecture Hall: A corpus-based study of phonological free variation in English, José Mompéan, University of Murcia, Spain
3:05-3:40	Lecture Hall: The parametric phonetics of allophonic variation in English //l/, Mitsuhiro Nakamura, Nihon University, Tokyo, Japan
3:40-4:10	COFFEE BREAK (Room 3)
4:10-4:45	Lecture Hall: Pronunciation and oral exercises in ten Finnish EFL textbooks, Elina Tergujeff, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
4:45-5:20	Lecture Hall: English pronunciation teaching in the Irish EFL classroom: Challenges and opportunities, Deirdre Murphy, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
5:20-5:55	Lecture Hall: The acquisition of onset clusters in L2 English: Research and pedagogical implications, Walcir Cardoso, Concordia University, Montréal, Canada & Paul John, Université du Québec, Montréal, Canada
WEDNESDAY	
7:30 APERITIF , <i>Hypoténuse Restaurant</i> , located in the Carré Curial	

THURSDAY	
9:00-9:35	<p>Lecture Hall: The pedagogical implications of variability in transcription : The Case of /i/ and /u/, Sophie Herment, Université de Provence, Aix-en-Provence, France</p> <p>Salle des Conseils: The vowels of Malaysian English: Issues and implications for teaching pronunciation, Stefanie Pillai, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia</p>
9:35-10:10	<p>Lecture Hall: High variability phonetic training as L2 pedagogy: Findings, prospects, and challenges, Tom Sawallis, University of Alabama, USA</p> <p>Salle des Conseils: Learning English in an L1 context: A study of the production and perception of English stops as realized by Malay speakers, A.H. Shahidi, Universiti Kebangsaan, Selangor, Malaysia</p>
10:10-11:20	<p>Lecture Hall, Plenary by Helen Fraser: Speaking of speaking - metalanguage for effective communication about pronunciation between English language teachers and learners</p>
11:20-11:40	COFFEE BREAK (Room 5)
11:40-12:15	<p>Lecture Hall: Incorporating research findings into L2 pronunciation materials: A computer-mediated approach, Ron Thomson, Brock University, Ontario, Canada</p> <p>Salle des Conseils: The history of South African English, Ian Bekker, Rhodes University, South Africa</p>
12:15-12:50	<p>Lecture Hall: Phonology and Moodle : Enhancing pronunciation through learning platform-based training? Angela Hahn, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich, Germany</p> <p>Salle des Conseils: How could English really become a new Latin? Sylwia Scheuer, Université de Paris 3, France</p>
12:50-2:30	LUNCH (Room 5)
2:30-3:05	<p>Salle des Conseils: Does rhythm matter? Selected observations on the effect of rhythm on spoken proficiency in non-native English, Ewa Waniek-Klimczak, University of Lodz, Poland</p> <p>Room 3: What makes native-like speakers special? An study of factors influencing L2 pronunciation, Tanja Angelovska, Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich, Germany</p>
3:05-3:40	<p>Salle des Conseils: Pre-tonic vs. post-tonic syncope in English: what do spoken English corpora tell us? Gabor Turcsan, Lisa-Marie Carloti and Stéphane Mortreux (LPL), Université de Provence Aix-Marseille 1, Aix-en-Provence, France</p> <p>Room 3: Conference papers: How far can an 18-hour preparation course help? Jean-Paul Narcy-Combes, Université de Paris 3, France</p>
3:40-4:15	<p>Salle des Conseils: Using English intonation to highlight your message, John Wells, University College London, England</p>

COFFEE BREAK (Room 5)	
4:15-4:35	
4:35-5:10	Salle des Conseils: British English pronunciation preferences: Research by « indirect » questionnaire, Mohamed Benrabah, Université Stendhal-Grenoble III, France
5:10-5:45	Salle des Conseils: The accents of European English: An on-line experiment, Rias van den Doel, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
5:45-6:20	Salle des Conseils: Online-conducted phonetic experiment for foreign accent ratings, Anastazija Kirkova, Ss Cyril and Methodius University - Skopje, Macedonia
7:30 CONFERENCE DINNER at the Savoyard Restaurant, 35 place Monge (near the Carré Curial)	
THURSDAY	

9:30-10:40	Lecture Hall, Plenary by Yvan Rose: Phon software and PhonBank database and how they can benefit from research on the phonology of second language acquisition.
10:40-11	COFFEE BREAK (Room 3)
11-11:35	Prefix sub- and stress placement : sub- Rules? Véronique Abasq, Université François Rabelais de Tours, France
11:35-12:10	The perception of word stress in English and French: Which cues for native English and French speakers? Dan Frost, IUT 2, Grenoble, France
12:10-12:45	English syllable division and performance errors by French speakers, Nicolas Ballier, Université Paris 13, France
12:45	Lecture Hall, Closing

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Helen Fraser

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**Speaking of speaking: Meta-language for effective communication about pronunciation
between English language teachers and learners**

The idea of the pronunciation teacher acting, not merely as a giver of information, but as a coach (Morley 1991) is welcomed by many teachers, who are confident in taking on most of the 'teacher-as-coach responsibilities' itemised by Morley, such as creating a supportive environment, providing opportunities for realistic practice, and others. Difficulty may be experienced, however, with one of the responsibilities: that of offering 'cues, suggestions and constructive feedback about performance'. It can be frustrating for both parties when learners benefit less than expected from teachers' suggestions on how to improve their pronunciation. This presentation explores a possible factor in this frustration - lack of an appropriate shared metalanguage by means of which teachers and students can communicate effectively about pronunciation.

Often, the term 'metalanguage' is used to refer to technical terminology used to describe language, including pronunciation. Indeed, a rich vocabulary for the accurate description of speech sounds has been developed in the disciplines of phonetics and phonology. However, it takes considerable effort for teachers to master this technical metalanguage, while also learning the many other skills involved in becoming a successful teacher. Worse still, it can happen that the effort does not pay the desired dividends, since such technical metalanguage can prove even more difficult for learners than for teachers.

This presentation suggests a broader use of the term 'metalanguage' to refer to any way of speaking about speech and pronunciation, and advocates paying explicit attention to the development of a communicative metalanguage.

Making use of insights from Cognitive Grammar, it sets existing knowledge of phonetics and phonology within a broader semiotic framework. It then shows how understanding this framework can enable teachers to extend their coaching skills with general skills of intercultural communication - usually highly developed in language teachers - to provide cues, suggestions and constructive feedback that learners can easily understand and act upon.

Yvan Rose

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The use of *Phon* and *PhonBank* in L2 phonological acquisition research

In this presentation, I will first introduce the PhonBank initiative within the CHILDES project, with an emphasis on the important value of data sharing for research. I will then present a brief demonstration of the Phon software program, and show how the functionality offered within the Phon application can provide unprecedented support for second language acquisition research. Phon is a free, open-source software program with a user-friendly graphical interface that facilitates a number of tasks required for the analysis of phonological development. Phon supports multimedia data linkage, unit segmentation, multiple-blind transcription, automatic labeling of data, and systematic comparisons between target (model) and actual (produced) phonological forms. All of these functions are accessible through a user-friendly graphical interface. Databases managed within Phon can also be queried using a powerful search interface. This software program works on both Mac OS X and Windows platforms. Together, these features facilitate easy data exchange among researchers and the construction of the PhonBank database.

John Wells
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Pronunciation preferences

Which do you prefer: conTROVersy or CONtroversy? And what about “contribute”? What’s the first vowel in “dissect”: like “die” or like “dis”? And the last vowel in “hurricane”? Part of the research carried out in connection with the author’s pronunciation dictionary involved a further opinion poll of people’s pronunciation preferences. In this talk he presents some of the findings. Some of them surprised him, and may surprise you, too.

Véronique Abasq

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Prefix *sub-* and stress placement : *sub*-Rules?

Based on the study of the prefix *sub-*, the aim of this paper is to question established stress rules for prefixed words. Our corpus will be made of the 162 entries in *sub-* from LPD (*Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*) and the 173 entries from CEPD (*Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary*).

According to CEPD (p. 425):

"In general, prefixes do not alter the original pronunciation of the word stem on to which they are affixed, though they may attract secondary stress. [...] a prefix may be stressed to avoid a clash of two stressed syllables in stress-shift situations [...], in homographic noun/verb pairs containing prefixes, the prefix is usually stressed in the nominal form and unstressed in the verbal form."

LPD's note on *sub-* reads as follows:

"sub- sʌb, ʃsʌb —As a productive prefix, ʃsʌb ('subcom.mittee, (, ·' · ·); as a fossilized prefix, usually sʌb, ʃsʌb if the following syllable is stressed (sub'stantial), ʃsʌb if not ('substance)"

J.-M. Fournier argues that separable prefixed words (where "the meaning of the combination Pref.+Stem derives transparently from the meaning of its constituents: *rewrite* = write again." L. Guierre 1984: 38) are late stressed with a secondary stress on the prefix. i.e. the same pattern as an attributive adjective followed by a noun in connected speech. These assumptions bring up several questions:

What is a prefix?

Is *sub-* a prefix? If it is, in which cases is it a productive prefix? When it is, is it actually separable or not?

When primary stress is on the prefix, is it a lexical fact or only the consequence of stress shift?

What is the precise role of word classes, when the prefix is 'productive' and when it is 'fossilized'?

Is *sub-* unstressed because it is followed by a stressed syllable or is the syllable following *sub-* stressed because of the prefix?

And finally, but maybe more crucially, can such phenomena be completely analyzed based on dictionary data when they question, as H. J. Giegerich 2005 puts it, the lexicon-syntax interface?

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What makes native-like speakers special? An Empirical study of factors influencing L2 pronunciation.

A number of linguistic and psychological factors shape the speaker's L2 (second language) pronunciation, accessed through his/her oral performance.

If we want to explain why some L2 learners manage to attain a higher L2 spoken proficiency than others, we need to explain differences and commonalities in the factors playing a role in their attainment of the L2 pronunciation. In this presentation I put forward findings from one part of a research study carried out at the University of Munich among 24 very advanced adult foreign language learners of English (with L1 German or Macedonian). The following variables, reported in a questionnaire, will be discussed: 1. learners' pronunciation goals, 2. types of motivation and personal effort, 3. strategies sought to improve their pronunciation, 4. personality type, 5. specific musical abilities and 6. self-assessments of pronunciation. Although there is a great variety in effects of specific factors, some seem to be decisive for the overall level of oral performance.

The results of this small group study indicate that differences and commonalities exist in terms of the variables that characterize native-like speakers. As a result, the establishment of relations between specific learner variables appears to be more crucial than an analysis of the existing variables in isolation. This study concludes that learners' individual paths must be taken into account in order to explain the learner's profile of successful oral performance.

Rika Aoki

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The effect of task on the pronunciation of English high front vowels by Japanese learners

The aim of the present study is to observe the pattern of pronunciation of English /i/ and /ɪ/ by Japanese-speaking learners of English, and how it changes according to the task they work on. Although the previous studies indicate that both native speakers and learners change their pronunciation according to task types, their results on the pronunciation pattern and the factors of it vary and therefore have not been clarified systematically. Moreover, the studies on Japanese learners are scarce, and also those on non-Japanese are also limited to the descriptive ones and not analyzed acoustically. Thus, the present study analyzed the pronunciation of /i/ and /ɪ/ by nine Japanese-speaking learners of English and two native speakers of English in four different kinds of tasks (monosyllable wordlist, real word list, story reading, story retelling) acoustically, and examined how they were pronounced in each task. The vowels were analyzed by measuring F0, F1 and F2, and calculated the Euclidean distance of the two vowels after their formant values were converted into Bark.

First of all, as for the general tendency including all of the four tasks, it was confirmed that the majority of the Japanese learners of English did not pronounce/distinguish English /i/ and /ɪ/ in the same way as the native speakers did. While all the native speakers pronounced them with a significant quality difference, Japanese learners' way of pronunciation depended on the individuals. This result is in accordance with well-known perceptual models.

With regard to the task type the participants worked on, it can be concluded the more a task required semantic/syntactic interpretation, the less the distinction of the two vowels was made, because less attention can be paid to articulatory control in those tasks. However, the degree of the distinction of the two vowels did not change according to the different tasks for learners who could not make a distinction in wordlists. Among the four tasks used in the present study, the real word list was the best elicitor of the sufficient quality difference of the two English high front vowels, while the worst was story retelling.

Considering the predictor of the native-like pronunciation of English vowels, it might be possible to conclude that rather than residency, academic major, experience of English phonetic class, and amount of L2 (English) use, aptitude for oral mimicry was the most reliable one. These results may have useful applications in the field of pronunciation teaching and of teaching materials.

Nicolas Ballier

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English syllable division and performance errors by French speakers

This paper argues that syllabification is a crucial factor underestimated in the analysis of English as pronounced by French speakers and that, somehow, for French and English, the syllable-timed vs. stress-timed opposition can be reinterpreted as a CV syllable structure vs. CVC canonical structure opposition.

The conception of the syllable assumed in this paper will be consistent with the syllable divisions proposed in LPD2008, arguing for an empirical representation of the syllable consistent with phonotactic constraints observable in monosyllabic words and allophonic rules (Wells 1990). Other treatments of the syllables and structural claims (Hammond 1999, Hall 2006, among others) will not be taken into consideration.

First, it will be shown that French tends to favour CV syllabification, whereas English favours CVC syllables. Terms of endearment and truncations (*Papa* vs. *Dad*) will be good examples of this. A certain number of consequences from these tendencies will be drawn, showing that syllable division has some bearing on a wide variety of performance errors, ranging from epenthetic vowels, misperception and mispronunciation of syllabic consonants and vowels, stress assignment and assimilations.

- A contrastive analysis of phonotactics will prove that the rarity of complex coda in French (and the potentialities of the templates in English) lead to a re-segmentation of words. Cn and sC clusters will be cases in point. The difference in licit templates for the syllables in French and English also accounts for some errors.

- Some underlying distributional properties of French syllables surface as realisation errors for vowels. The realisation of diphthongs /eu/ as [c] in CVC words can also be seen as a regularization of the French structural opposition between half close and half open vowels, for in French most /e/ occur in CV and le/ in CVC syllables. Conversely for back vowels, CVC favours [3] and CV often corresponds to [o] in French realisations.

- Different syllable divisions explain why French has regressive assimilation in *absurde* and French speakers usually pronounce *absurd* with a voiceless cluster when English only has a voiced/voiceless variant for <s> in *absurd*.

Last but not least, I will show that in France the Guierre school of English phonology has played a role in this underestimation of syllabification. In spite of the undeniable success of their statistical computations of regularities in grapho-phonemics, they fail to capture these phenomena by insisting on an "abstract" representation of the syllable whose mismatch with the graphic syllable used in their analysis is never quite examined.

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The History of South African English

This article places South African English (SAE), including both L1 and L2 varieties, within the context of Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model of the evolution of Postcolonial Englishes. In the process of contextualising SAE in this manner, the core literature in the field is briefly overviewed. In addition, while the application of Schneider's (2007) framework helps to more readily conceptualize the sociolinguistic development of SAE, the particularities of the South African context suggest, at the same time, certain modifications to the model itself. Drawing on a proposal originally contained in Bekker (2009), it suggests, in particular, that while 'white' SAE has undergone a phase-4 process of endonormative stabilization (with hints of an incipient phase-5 process of differentiation), 'black' SAE has only begun to enter a phase-3 process of nativization. All in all this suggests, vis-à-vis Schneider's (2007) model, "a less rigid adherence to the temporal sequencing of the various phases as well as the adoption of an approach that allows for various sub-varieties ... to run their own 'course' ... an extension of a principle of flexibility and fluidity that already lies at the heart of the model" (Bekker 2009:86;432). The history and development of other SAE sub-varieties, including Afrikaans English, South African Indian English and 'Coloured' English are then also dealt with in terms of the above reconceptualisation of the model.

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British English pronunciation preferences: Research by « indirect » questionnaire

J.C. Wells' *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (LPD, 1990, 2000) contains between 200 and 300 words with competing pronunciations. Fluctuation concerns vowels, consonants and lexical stress. To collect « objective data » regarding these varying pronunciations, Wells used written questionnaires (opinion polls) to be answered by « speech conscious » informants (linguists, newsreaders, speech therapists, etc.). The results of opinion polls (percentages) served as evidence for Wells to select main pronunciation forms and their variants.

In our paper, we address the methodological approach adopted by Wells to answer two research questions:

- (1) Would an experimental design based on respondents listening to different options yield similar or different results from those presented by Wells?
- (2) What would be the results with informants who are educated but linguistically naive (i.e. speech « unconscious »)?

Among the 200-300 words with fluctuating pronunciations found in LPD, we have limited our work to those whose stress placement is debatable. There are 52 such items in LPD and we chose 21 words, each having two pronunciations. When LPD presents more than two possibilities we used the main pronunciation and the variant ranked highest among all secondary possibilities. The matched-guise technique was adapted for gathering data: each word was embedded into a carrier sentence repeated twice (each with one pronunciation). 21 pairs of sentences were then recorded by a native speaker of RP-style English and 453 native British subjects listened to these recordings and reported their preferences on an answer sheet. The responses in percentages will be compared with Wells' results and with initial answers given to both research questions.

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The Acquisition of sC onset clusters in L2 English: Research and pedagogical implications

This study provides a multidisciplinary analysis for the acquisition of /s/ + consonant onset clusters (sC) in second language (L2) phonology, adopting a variationist approach for data collection and analysis that includes insights from a variety of linguistic disciplines, including theoretical phonology, psycholinguistics, L2 acquisition, sociolinguistics, and L2 pedagogy. One of the goals of this study is to examine the effects of markedness, input frequency, and perception in the development of English homorganic /sl/, /sn/ and /st/ among Brazilian Portuguese (BP) native speakers learning English in a classroom environment. These clusters, which do not exist in BP, are of particular relevance to test the effects of markedness and input frequency because they make opposite predictions regarding their order of acquisition: While markedness (based on Clements' 1990 Sonority Cycle) predicts that the least marked /sl/ and /sn/ should be acquired before the most marked /st/, input frequency predicts the exact opposite, i.e. that the highly frequent /st/ (89% of all sC sequences in student-directed teacher talk) should be acquired before all other (less frequent) clusters (e.g. Bybee 2001). The results of an oral production study indicated that English learners acquire /sl/ and /sn/ clusters earlier than the most marked /st/, corroborating the hypothesis that *markedness* (sonority sequencing), and not input frequency, determines the order of acquisition of sC clusters in L2 production.

A second study was conducted in order to assess the effect of markedness, perceptual salience and input frequency in the development of sC sequences in perception. The hypothesis was based on the assumption that forms that are less salient and more marked (e.g. /st/) will be more difficult to acquire than those that are more salient and less marked (e.g., /sl/): Structures that are marked are more likely to trigger the perceptual illusion of the L1-based epenthetic [i] (e.g. Berent et al 2007). To explore this hypothesis, a *phone discrimination task* was designed, where participants listened to a set of audio stimuli containing English-like sC-initial and [i]sC-initial pseudowords. After hearing each word, participants decided on whether the word initiated with [s] or [i]. The results indicated that learners are more likely to perceive as sC-initial the most marked (and highly frequent) /st/ and the least marked (and considerably less frequent) /sn/ sequences, thus suggesting that the perceptual grammar of these learners mimics the *frequency* with which sC forms occur in the L2 input.

Based on these results (e.g. sC perception precedes its production), and along the lines of Zobl's (1983) projection model of markedness, we adopt a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the teaching of marked structures (e.g. /st/) in earlier stages of acquisition: The instructional effect will project to the acquisition of less marked types (e.g. /sl/). Following Celce-Murcia et al (1996) approach to teaching pronunciation, a number of traditional and computer-based activities will be proposed.

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Towards more effective pronunciation instruction: Maximizing accuracy and oral fluency

Most approaches to pronunciation teaching are conducted in a linear manner, based on the premise that learners acquire one phonetic aspect at a time and that mastery of that aspect should be demonstrated before moving on to the next. This seems to imply that a sound or phonological process is learned and done with after one exposure to it. Relevant research has shown, however, that instant improvement in a learner's L2 performance, as a result of a specific classroom exercise, is frequently followed by the disappearance of that improvement not long after the focus of classroom work has moved on (Yule & McDonald 1994). After applying a linear framework in the teaching of syllable length in English rhythm patterns, learners from a Teacher Training Program exhibited accuracy in the production of the mechanical drills and decontextualized dialogues elaborated for the instruction, but failed to transfer their speech improvement to actual communicative language use (Chela-Flores & Chela-Flores 2001). This seems to suggest that there is an abrupt transition from the controlled situation in which one exposes the learner to the new aspect of the L2 phonological language system to the open-ended tasks that one expects the learner to carry out in their spontaneous speech. This gap is usually better filled by course texts for other language skills, including speaking, where the instruction is integrated into speaking oriented activities.

This paper will address an integrated approach to pronunciation teaching based on the learning-psychological principle of *distributed practice* which implies that an item is more profitably repeated if it is distributed (i.e. over time) than a few times in close succession (Anderson 1990). The instruction focuses on immediate phonetic needs that arise naturally from aural-oral activities of the course text, especially those aspects that are more clearly connected to functions of spoken English. The same aspects are recycled in different units within a text and in different levels within a program, thus allowing the student to adjust to the new sound system. Classroom experience has shown that this approach (i) deals more directly and effectively with the communication needs of the students, (ii) makes instruction possible for beginners, (iii) facilitates error correction, (iv) gives a better understanding to both teachers and students of the connection between pronunciation and effective communication (Chela-Flores 2001). Tips will be given on ways to adapt methodologies and types of exercises of existing pronunciation-based texts to immediate phonetic needs in speaking activities of course texts. (Handouts will be available)

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French and British comprehension and identification of British regional varieties.

The teaching of English in France has always been based on a standard model, usually Received Pronunciation (RP), even though this pronunciation is used by approximately two percent of the population in the United Kingdom. Abercrombie (1956) suggests that RP is not necessarily the easiest accent to understand, particularly for foreigners. It is only recently that the notion and differences between regional varieties have started to be introduced into some French universities. The goal of this study is to contribute to the understanding of native and non native listener's perceptual comprehension and identification of British regional accents. The read passage of the IVE corpus (Intonational Variation in English) was used for these experiments with a total of nine samples from Cambridge, London (Jamaican), Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford (Punjabi), Cardiff, Newcastle, Belfast and Malahide. The subjects included ten British people, and two more experienced British phoneticians and twenty second year French students majoring in English. The objective of the identification experiment was to test the subject's ability to place the accents in the British Isles. The subjects heard sentences from each variety and had a forced choice of South England, North England, Ireland, Wales and Not UK with a limited time to reply. The second experiment aimed to measure the subjects comprehension of the regional varieties. The subjects were asked to write down orthographically what they heard and could listen to each sentence a maximum of four times. For both tests there were three types of sentences, short (4-9 syllables), medium (10-14 syllables) and long (15-24 syllables). Previous studies have shown that the length of the utterance is a key factor in perception tasks. The longer sentences help subjects to adapt and store information for future reference. Other studies have suggested that the length of the sentence does not influence the subjects ability to adapt. But does our adaptation mechanism only work for our own native language ? Are French people able to adapt to these regional accents and understand them ? The results show that the identification tasks is a difficult one even for the British subjects and although it was expected for the French subjects to have lower scores, non natives have never been tested before. The results of the comprehension task and the impact of the length of the utterances are currently being examined and will be discussed during the conference.

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**The Perception of word stress in English and French:
Which cues for native English and French speakers?**

English prosodic features, in particular word stress, have long proven a source of debate and controversy (Crystal 1969; Lehiste 1970; Cooper-Kuhlen 1985; Chun 2002). Word stress plays an essential role in the segmentation of the spoken word, a crucial process in language comprehension. Skills in word stress are thus essential for language acquisition or learning. It has also been shown that incorrect use of English word stress by non-native speakers can lead to problems in comprehensibility (Odlin 1989 ; Anderson-Hsieh *et al.* 1992 ; McQueen et Cutler 1997 ; Murphy 2004 ; Murphy et Kandil 2004 ; Rasier et Hiligsmann 2007).

The English and French phonological systems are vastly different, and nowhere are these differences more evident than in the domain of stress (Delattre 1939; Wenk et Wioland 1982; Bertinetto 1989 ; Dahan et Bernard 1996; Hirst, Daniel et Di Cristo, Albert (1998); Dupoux et Peperkamp 1999).

The author will present a small study which focuses on the four acoustic cues to word stress (F0, duration, amplitude and phoneme quality) and their perceptual correlates (pitch, length, loudness and timbre). The experimental subjects were ten French and ten English native speakers. In the tradition of the perceptual stress experiments carried out in the post-war period (Pike 1945; Fry 1954, 1958, 1965; Lieberman 1960; Jenkins 1961). The stimuli were generated from two word pairs, one English and one French, where the position of the word stress alters the meaning of the word. It was hypothesised that the subjects would listen differently for word stress depending on whether or not the stimuli were in their native tongue. The results support the hypothesis regarding the importance attributed to certain acoustic cues. Many authors put forward convincing arguments for teaching the phonology of a language, especially prosodic features such as word stress (Kenworthy 1987; Cooke 1993; Pennington 1996; Coniam 2003). This is especially true for French learners of English (Faure 1948; Greven 1972; Duchet 1981; Guierre 1984; Ginésy 1989, 1995; Cooke 1993; Christophe *et al.* 1997; Stenton *et al.* 2005). The implications of this study are useful primarily in the domain of language teaching, where knowledge of how listeners perceive stress can help in task design.

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**Phonology and Moodle:
Enhancing pronunciation through learning platform-based training?**

The use of a virtual learning platform such as *Moodle* (a free open-source web application designed to help educators create effective online learning sites, www.moodle.org) is advertised and promised as a new chance for language learning offering a number of input features as well as interactive features said to increase language output. For the area of phonology and pronunciation the use of a *Moodle* environment cannot only be considered a new teaching tool but also a new research device. For example, it is possible to display digital course materials, such as audio-files and video-files to enhance language input. Moodle offers various communication features such as a forum, a wiki (product-oriented), a chat (communication in real-time) and *voice messaging* where learners can record themselves, listen to themselves and others. This offers the possibility of giving individual feedback to learners and analysing spoken language of different learner types.

Using Moodle in this way as a research device enables us to investigate to what extent technology-based features can improve phonological processes and pronunciation skills of second language learners.

My presentation is based on empirical research which has been conducted at the University of Munich Language Centre. The research focus is on how second language learners of English with different mother tongue backgrounds use a *Moodle*-based phonology-pronunciation platform and how this influences their phonological development.

The following questions will be addressed:

- Which acquisitional processes in the field of pronunciation can be controlled/influenced/directed by *Moodle*?
- What is the relation between input and output, i.e. is there a relationship between perception and production?
- What do good perception skills mean for phonetic production?
- To what extent do different L1 language backgrounds and different learner types influence pronunciation skills and hence the acquisitional process?

The pedagogical implications of variability in transcription: The Case of [i] and [u]

When teaching transcription or pronunciation to learners of English, the teacher sometimes has to answer difficult questions and needs the help of the pronunciation dictionaries. The problem this paper aims at resolving is that of the distribution of the sounds [i] and [u], which is a tough subject for students.

First a theoretical reminder is given concerning those two sounds: Roach (2000 ; EPD : 2006) or Wells (LPD : 2008) describe quite precisely the contexts in which those vowels occur.

But when checking the entries in the dictionaries, it suddenly appears much less clear: in EPD for instance, [u] appears in certain positions which are not clearly explained by the author. In LPD, many variants are found for the pronunciation of certain unstressed syllables and the variants are not always the same.

The two reference dictionaries EPD and LPD transcribe unstressed syllables differently.

It is then very difficult for the teacher to answer such questions as : « if [i] neutralizes the contrast between /i:/ and /V then why do we find the two pronunciations /ik'ju:monizm/ and /i:k'ju:monizm/ for *ecumenism* in LPD ? », or « why do some words display three variants [i], /o/ and /e/ in *effeminate* but not in *edition* which can only begin with [i] or /o/ according to EPD ? », or « why is *acidulate* pronounced /a 'sidjuleit/ or /a 'sidj oleit/ while *acidulous* /o'sidjulos/ is pronounced with /u/ and has no alternative pronunciation in LPD ? », and many other questions like these.

This paper shows that even if EPD and LPD chose different notation conventions, rules can be drawn from the study of the distribution of [i] and [u] and the variants that are given in those two dictionaries. I'll show that as Wells mentions in LPD (2008: 892), there are « implications for syllabification [...] and for rhythm ». Indeed [u] tends to be heard when it precedes a strong syllable while /u/ is preferred before a weak syllable. [i] does not seem to follow the same rule since it is never found in medial unstressed syllables where /i/ remains predominant.

The derivation has its importance as well, as far as variability is concerned : the first syllable in *Tunisia* /tju'nizio/ is pronounced [u] with no variant in LPD probably because it derives from *Tunis* in which -u- is stressed and pronounced /u:/. Indeed *tuberculosis* which is not derived from a word with stressed /u:/ in the first syllable has two variants : [u] or /o/.

Morphology will also be dealt with since the question of prefixes for example is determinant in the pronunciation of initial unstressed syllables.

These are the considerations I will deal with in this paper, hoping to shed light on many obscure details and bring a contribution to the pedagogical field of teaching English pronunciation because I'll give rules enabling the teacher and the student to understand the distribution of [i] and [u] and the different variants associated to them.

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Cultural and emotional factors in learning (and teaching) pronunciation

The presentation draws attention to specific *cultural, psychological*, that is, *non-IQ factors* that a fair number of students face in learning foreign language pronunciation in higher education. Straightforward as it seems, it is rarely made explicit that beyond an intellectual readiness to acquire the sound pattern of English and the physiological–anatomical endowment to do so in post-puberty phonological acquisition, there are certain cultural and psychological factors that can impede a successful learning process by many of our students. The paper presents how these factors interfere with learning pronunciation and what can be done to make them serve the acquisition process rather than block it.

The obstacles include: (i) orthographic fallacy and misperception of transcription; (ii) lack of introspection (self-awareness); (iii) reluctance to change pronunciation habits; (iv) lack of (self-)motivation; (v) lack of perseverance. These can all be subsumed under *emotional intelligence (as applied to pronunciation acquisition)*. The factors themselves are no different to those influencing *any* learning process. But how is it manifest in acquiring pronunciation specifically? *Why* do they not learn that can be learnt?

The position is defended that it is simplistic to ascribe these “negligence mistakes” to ignorance or carelessness: distinction must be drawn between *performance errors* (due to oversight or a “slip of the mind”) and *persistent errors*. It is our task as teachers to identify the latter and to do our best to help our students overcome them.

It is argued that teaching transcription does not fully meet the *practical* goal we intend it to achieve: it does not make students aware of their (mis)pronunciation. To mend this, it is suggested that students should learn to *read* transcription first. Also, grammatical structures like multiply contracted forms and phonotactic structures like obstruent+/l n/ final clusters (eg *bottle*) pose non-IQ problems: one has to abstract away completely from *writing* (spelling or transcription). Finally, the paper shows some effective (and affective) ways to transform these psychological factors into procedures to ease learning, such as diverting the attention of students from the problem itself, with the help of target-oriented exercises.

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Francophone h-epenthesis: Conditioning factors and pedagogical strategies

English [h] is highly problematic for Francophone ESL learners. Not only is the [h] absent from their L1, but no native phoneme employs glottal place. Consequently, [h] does not assimilate to a native category, and no native segment is ever substituted for it (Paradis & LaCharité, 2001). Instead, Francophones frequently delete [h], resulting in utterances such as “I (h)ate eels”. Francophone speech is also subject to h-epenthesis, involving the variable insertion of [h] in vowel-initial words, as in “I hate [h]eels”. Francophones thus resemble speakers of h-dropping varieties of L1 English, who produce hypercorrect [h] when attempting to emulate h-preserving varieties of English (Milroy, 1983; Wells, 1982). Using sociolinguistic methodology, the study presented here investigates the linguistic and extralinguistic factors that trigger a higher frequency of h-epenthesis in Francophone speech. In light of these conditioning factors, strategies are proposed to help learners overcome their pronunciation difficulties.

Briefly, a GoldVarb 2001 statistical analysis of formal and informal speech from 15 Quebec Francophones reveals a higher probability of h-epenthesis: (1) in more formal speech; (2) with a pause or vowel preceding the vowel-initial word; (3) in stressed syllables; and (4) with other h’s in proximity. Additionally, rates of h-epenthesis rise and then fall as a function of greater proficiency, a finding which concords with Major’s (2001) Ontogeny Phylogeny Model.

In terms of pedagogical implications, the findings suggest that the process stems not from inattention or carelessness, but rather from a concerted effort to emulate native-speaker h-ful speech and thus to overcome the (somewhat stigmatized) tendency to delete. The degree of effort correlates typically with greater formality, as well as with increased proficiency. Since h-epenthesis is more frequent with a preceding pause or vowel, Francophones must at times resyllabify word-final consonants into the onset of an ensuing vowel-initial word, thus blocking the site for h-epenthesis. This technique of linking final consonants should be actively promoted and developed. To further reduce the rate of h-epenthesis, after vowels, learners should be taught to produce linking glides; after a pause, learners could adopt the native-speaker strategy of epenthesizing a glottal stop, particularly in stressed syllables. Since French lacks glottal consonants, explicit instruction on glottal articulation is required. Perception activities can help learners detect [h] in the speech signal and enter the segment into lexical representations. Without accurate representations, learners will never consistently distinguish between “eels” and “heels”.

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Phonological interferences of Urdu in Pakistani English

This paper examines the role of Urdu in the formation of a new emerging variety of English: Pakistani English (PE), and transference of elements of Urdu to English at a phonological level such as segmental features, stress and intonation.

English is accepted as an institutionalized language in Pakistan and is learnt as a second, and in some cases, as a third language. Yet this variety of English, being an integral part of the Pakistani linguistic mosaic, has undergone significant changes, locally, to carry much of the communicative burden of Pakistani society, thus giving birth to a new non native variety of English (Kachru 1986): Pakistani English. Pakistani English speakers' pronunciation and accent are quite different from SBE (Standard British English) and GAE (General American English) speakers (Rehman 1990). The reason is believed to be the interference of Urdu (L1) which has a distinct phonological system (see Bhatia 2001, Masica 1991). PE is different from BE and GAE in the sense that it is the result of the new "un-English" linguistic and cultural setting in which it is used; it is the outcome of a productive process which marks the typical variety-specific features; and that is systematic within a variety, and not idiosyncratic.

The features of PE cannot be assumed to be mistakes or errors. They are "innovations" enriching English in terms of creating its global appeal. Though educated people in Pakistan are developing a socially unmarked kind of English, yet, there are certain phonological features (replacement of certain English phonemes by Urdu phonemes, exhibition of syllable timed structure of Urdu instead of stress timed structure of English etc), that identify them as Pakistani speakers of English and codify their English as Pakistani English. These features especially affect their rhythm and constitute a major obstacle to understanding the message for the co-speaker, especially for speakers of native varieties of English.

To explore the role (interference) of Urdu in the emergence of Pakistani English, this paper analyzes the English speech of four Pakistani natives, with Urdu as their first language, and concentrates on a contrastive analysis of the phonological system of the two languages in contact, Urdu and English. The distinctive phonological features of Pakistani English as a Non-Native variety of English are established, with a comparison with the lexical sets (Wells 1982) for vowels, a correlation of aspiration for plosives, and some suprasegmental features such as a syllable-timing pronunciation of English.

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Online-conducted phonetic experiment for foreign accent ratings

This presentation addresses methodological issues related to second language phonological research and the use of computer technology.

First, a brief overview of the current approaches to investigating cross-language speech perception and production will be presented. Attention will be given to subject, task and stimulus variables as well as ways of analyzing speech sample recordings.

We then turn to describing a computer-assisted on-line method for eliciting native speaker judgments of foreign-accented speech. This experiment is part of a study which concentrates on Macedonian-English learner language and aims to describe the phonological phenomena that are most striking in the Macedonian-English accented speech as perceived by native speakers of English. The on-line application with audio files and a set of questions was developed as a necessity due to lack of financial support and no phonetically trained experts in Macedonia but also having in mind the benefits of the approach such as wider audience and fast results.

Three aspects of the development and application of the experiment are further elaborated. First, the stimuli preparation including specific subject choice criteria, tasks for eliciting authentic speech and the speech recordings are discussed. Second, the actual on-line application consisting of recordings of three tasks (a word list, a reading passage and free speech) is illustrated. Comments regarding instructions, informant choice and web design are also made. Finally, an overview of the findings and the encountered challenges are briefly discussed.

As the method is still under development (the pilot version being currently tested; the final version is expected to be ready in January 2009), our main goal is to describe the context and the expectations from the study, to discuss the benefits as well as certain limitations and decisions that required compromise during the designing process, and to invite the audience to give its comments and suggestions for improvement.

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Intrusive /r/ in English: Evidence from intensity curves

Many non-rhotic varieties of English exhibit /r/ sandhi phenomena. In isolation, words such as 'sore' lack /r/ but a 'linking /r/' occurs prevocally in 'sore again'. Likewise, 'saw' in isolation lacks /r/ but 'intrusive' (i.e. non-historical) /r/ occurs prevocally in 'saw again'. The existence of /r/ sandhi has caused debate among phoneticians and phonologists about whether or not the sandhi consonant occurs in a word's underlying representation, how the appearance of /r/, rather than some other consonant, can be accounted for, and what formalisms can best describe the phenomenon.

Another issue is the syllabic position of the sandhi /r/. Heselwood (2006:85-6) describes the various positions represented in the literature. In non-quantitative accounts, both Wells (1990) and Cruttenden (1994:264) suggest that intrusive /r/ is in coda position as it has a lesser degree of lip-rounding (Wells) or is shorter (Cruttenden) than onset /r/. Harris (1994:251) and Giegerich (1999) suggest that the /r/ is the onset of the second syllable, whilst Gick (1999:48) argues (from the EMMA data of two rhotic speakers) that intrusive /r/ is ambisyllabic, as it is produced with a degree of constriction between that found for /r/s in onset and coda position.

The current study addresses this issue with data from three speakers of non-rhotic varieties of British English who produced onset /r/ ('whisper rate'), intrusive /r/ ('whisper eight') and word-medial intervocalic /r/ ('say berate'). They produced each item five times as part of a larger carrier phrase. Measurements of intensity were made. Acoustic data from intrusive /r/ is therefore compared with word-onset and word-medial intervocalic (ambisyllabic) cases. As the speakers are non-rhotic no direct comparison can be made with /r/ in indisputably coda position.

Results indicate that the intrusive /r/ is neither like the onset /r/ in 'rate' nor like the ambisyllabic /r/ in 'berate'. Combined with the results of Tuinnman et al. (2007) who find similar patterns for one speaker, it seems likely that intrusive /r/ occurs in coda position, as suggested by Wells (1990) and Cruttenden (1994). Findings are related to recent discussions of hiatus resolution systems (Britain and Fox, 2008) and implications for phonological theory are discussed.

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A Corpus-based study of phonological free variation in English

Phonological free variation is a well-known phenomenon that occurs when two or more phonemes (or the presence/absence of one) are found in the same position in a word without any change in meaning (e.g. *again* /ə'geɪn/–/ə'geɪn/, *often* /'ɒftn/–/'ɒfn/. The phenomenon also applies to words that exhibit different stress patterns (e.g. *controversy* /kən'trɒvəsi/–/'kɒntrəvɜːsi/) with no change in meaning or grammatical category.

Phonological free variation has received little empirical attention in English. The most wellknown exceptions are the surveys of pronunciation preferences carried out by written questionnaire to discover speakers' preferences for the variants of specific words. These studies include surveys of British English (see e.g. Wells 1999, 2008) and American English (e.g. Shitara, 1993). However, corpus-based analyses of spoken speech focusing specifically on phonological free variation are rare. An exception is Gimson's 1969 corpus-based analyses of spoken speech, which aimed at uncovering whether free variation was more common in polysyllables than in monosyllables. Gimson's analysis did not look though at rates of usage of the variants for a given set of lexical items.

Given the few studies on phonological free variation in English, a corpus-based study of spoken English was conducted. The aim of the study was to uncover rates of usage of the different free variants of specific lexical items. Newscasts from the website BBC | Learning English | Words in the News were used (see URL 1). The archives newscasts comprise the years 1999 to 2008 (inclusive). The corpus analysed amounts to ca. 200,000 words produced by over 300 professional newsreaders with an RP or BBC accent. The items analysed are words produced by at least ten speakers and found at least ten times in the corpus. This criterion is arbitrary but somehow guarantees that the item is not too underrepresented in the corpus. The items analysed for this study involve variation in their phonemic structure (*either, economic, financial, February, Tuesday, situation, sure, poor, idea, etc.*) and variation in stress placement pattern (*controversy, kilometre, contribute, cigarette, complex, etc.*). Apart from the rates of production of the items studied (per speaker and variant), the factors that may explain the variation are discussed. These include ongoing sound changes, phonetic and/or phonological processes such as dissimilation, epenthesis or liaison, socio-cultural aspects such as speakers' awareness and knowledge or beliefs about the relationship between spelling and pronunciation, position of the lexical item in the phrase/tone unit, etc. Variables that can be related to the existence of free variants (e.g. social/professional group, speaker's accent, age, etc.) are also briefly discussed.

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English pronunciation teaching in the Irish EFL classroom: Challenges and opportunities

While the issue of pronunciation has gained a higher profile in L2 research in recent years – as evidenced by the proliferation of studies, journal special issues and conferences addressing the matter – there has, as yet, been no investigation of the subject in a uniquely Irish context. I contend that the issue of English pronunciation teaching in Ireland necessarily differs from that in most other European countries, for two main reasons. Firstly, Ireland is a native English-speaking country, and as a result the population of learners (and as a consequence their English pronunciation goals) may vary greatly from those in most other European countries where English is not spoken locally as a first language. Secondly, the majority of EFL instruction in Ireland takes place either in primary schools, provided by teachers of mainstream education, or in private language schools, rather than in universities where linguistic research is taking place. This means that in order for research into pronunciation instruction to be carried out, some level of liaison is required between the schools and universities in question, creating an additional barrier between research and practice.

In this paper I aim to present a description of the state of the art of English pronunciation teaching in Ireland, with particular reference to the challenges posed by a uniquely Irish EFL learning situation. It will include the results of a short survey carried out amongst a number of EFL teachers in Ireland, to investigate – among other things – the types of educational institutions in which EFL is currently taught; the preferred standard of English pronunciation used; teachers' attitudes towards and prioritisation of pronunciation; and those factors, both internal and external, that they find particularly challenging when teaching English pronunciation in an Irish context. It is hoped that such a descriptive study will help to determine the current norms of English pronunciation teaching in Ireland, and will contribute to its future development.

The Parametric phonetics of allophonic variation in English /ɪ/

This study reports on the continuing investigation into the articulatory realisation of the English /ɪ/. It has been recognised that many varieties of English exhibit an allophonic variation in /ɪ/ (e.g. Wells 1982). The 'clear' variant occurs syllable-initially and the 'dark' variant occurs syllable-finally. In addition to the clear/dark allophony, the 'dark' allophone of /ɪ/ loses its consonantal nature, becoming a vowel of the [o] or [u] type: the phenomenon is called L-vocalisation (e.g. Horvath & Horvath 2001, Johnson & Britain 2007). When these clear, dark, and vocalised dark variants are considered, it can be asked how they are distinguished from, or related to, each other in terms of spatiotemporal properties of articulatory gestures.

Previous articulatory studies (e.g. Sproat & Fujimura 1993) have shown that the English /ɪ/ can have more than one lingual constriction; that the dark allophone exhibits greater tongue dorsum retraction and lowering than the clear allophone; and that maximum dorsal movement precedes maximum apical movement for the dark variant, while the opposite temporal relationship occurs for the clear variant. For the vocalised dark allophone, Wrench & Scobbie (2003) found that word-final /ɪ/ can show wide inter-speaker variation in vocalisation rate, and in the movement amplitude of the tongue tip/blade gesture. Previous studies focus particularly on the lingual gestures but fail to examine the roles of other articulators, such as the lips and the jaw, which are often mentioned in cornillon phonetic descriptions.

The aim of this study is to further investigate the differential roles of the articulatory parameters for the clear, dark, and vocalised dark allophones in English /ɪ/, based on EMA, EPG and acoustic data from the multichannel articulatory (MOCHA) database (Wrench 1999). Various measures of the tongue tip/blade, the dorsum, the lips, and the jaw, were used for identifying the spatiotemporal characteristics: peak displacement, tangential velocity, duration of opening and closing movements. The preliminary results reveal that the timing patterns of the lingual gestures vary systematically as a function of syllable position (this supports the results reported by Sproat & Fujimura (1993)); that the lip narrowing gesture, together with the tongue dorsum retraction, plays a crucial role in the dark and vocalised /ɪ/ production; and that the jaw movement for the dark variants was slower, which is similar to the vowel articulation.

This study will show that parametric analysis is an important complement to segmental specification, in providing insights into the relationship between the clear, dark, and vocalised dark allophone in English /ɪ/. The implications for phonological aspects of the relative timing and articulatory-acoustic constraints on phonological change will be discussed. This study contributes to an understanding of the relationship between prosodic structure and articulatory organisation.

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Conference papers: How far can an 18-hour preparation course help?

French master and doctoral studies now offer courses in English to help students to cope with the demands of presenting conference papers. However, the limitations can seem de-motivating. Previous research has shown that preparing an oral presentation from almost exclusively written sources increased phonological nativization phenomena. The study of student performance over several years has also shown that reliance on a fully-written text made the speaker's intonation and rhythm barely accessible to the listener. Lexical and sentence stress, as well as individual phonemes, could not be handled adequately either. Lexical and grammatical problems had to be taken care of as well, but will not be studied in this paper.

We were asked to organize an 18-hour course over a 4-month semester to train the students. As usual for our team, the solution was to turn to a blended learning system. Students meet their tutors six times per term. The first two meetings are devoted to learner training, the remaining four to the presentations themselves.

A five-step approach is followed: (1) select an article, submit it to tutor, (2) turn it into a very detailed plan (no fully written sentences), submit it to tutor, (3) prepare a PowerPoint presentation, submit it to tutor, (4) send an initial recording of presentation to tutor, (5) give final presentation to the group.

Having a more detailed PowerPoint presentation with no fully written sentences does lead to a more appropriate intonation pattern. However, though some students do send the initial recording of their presentations and are given advice on how to improve their performance (virtual resource centre, text to speech, etc.), the presentations, though perfectly understandable, still carry clear traces of phonological nativization and confirm the results of Grosbois' research.

Given the limited number of students who chose this course (most preferred a reading course...), only a few case studies are available and will be presented. The results can help us to improve the course by making access to the practice resources more readily available.

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Increasing English pronunciation knowledge/ability with Learner-Designed Pronunciation Stations

Learner Designed Pronunciation Stations (LDPS) is a classroom activity designed to engage students at several levels of the English pronunciation learning process. The goal of this presentation is to underscore the theoretical explanation for this experiential pronunciation learning option for university intensive English program intermediate students. Requiring students to design and implement their own English pronunciation learning materials with technology fosters student responsibility for learning and utilizes learning opportunities they create. This influences learner autonomy by allowing students to work independently of the teacher. LDPS also engages students at multiple levels of the language learning process reinforcing the integration of skills with pronunciation learning. Students are first introduced to the concept and development of Pronunciation Stations as well as being provided with opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of Pronunciation Stations. Students are then evaluated through oral and written performance in the final phase of Pronunciation Stations. The outcome of each workstation is unique because students choose the skill area, content, and level of difficulty. By using LDPS, teachers are able to share classroom decisions with classes of varying abilities and motivational levels.

The presenter will first acquaint attendees with the implementation of Learner Designed Pronunciation Stations and highlight supporting literature from classroom negotiation and the process syllabus in English language teaching. Both contributions are viewed as components of strategic pedagogy for integration of LDPS. After that, the classroom activity "Learner-Designed Pronunciation Stations" is presented in reference to how students are engaged at several phases of the activity (introduction, planning and preparation, participation, and evaluation) and data exploring student responses to the activity. The presenter will lead participants in a preview of target materials used in a specific classroom to the development and orchestration of Learner Designed materials. Video segments will be used to explore the application of this technique in an American university classroom. The presentation concludes with cautionary considerations when incorporating LDPSs and a discussion of applying Learner Designed Pronunciation Stations to additional EFL/ESL contexts.

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The Vowels of Malaysian English: Issues and implications for teaching pronunciation

English in Malaysia is spoken in a multitude of accents characterizing the ethnic various groups, and different socio-economic, education, language and geographical backgrounds in the country. However, there are particular pronunciation features, which appear to be common among Malaysians. For example, there is generally a lack of contrast between vowel pairs and a tendency to produce diphthongs as monophthongs (e.g. Baskaran, 2005; Platt & Weber, 1980; Zuraidah, 1997). The existence of a localized accent of English typically gives rise to issues about whether such accents are *correct* or *good* or *acceptable* (Pillai, 2008) and the extent to which a native model of pronunciation should be used as an appropriate target. In an attempt to address these issues, instrumental analysis is currently being carried out as part of the Corpus of Malaysian English (COMEL) project. This paper presents findings based on an instrumental analysis of Malaysian English monophthongs and diphthongs in order to examine the extent to which Malaysian English vowels are produced differently from neighbouring and native varieties. Further, assuming that there are distinct differences in the way that vowels are produced in Malaysian English, this paper looks at the implications for the teaching of English pronunciation in Malaysia and to the whole notion of whether there can be a standard for English pronunciation. The data comprised target vowels produced by 47 female subjects, comprising undergraduates, all of whom are fluent speakers of English. The target vowels were embedded in a CVC context and placed in a carrier sentence: *Please say CVC again*. PRAAT (Boersmal & Weenink, 2005) was used to transcribe the data and measure the formants and the length of the selected vowels. Although this paper focuses on Malaysian English, the findings will be relevant to other ESL contexts where English is widely used in everyday contexts.

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Acoustic correlates of rhoticity strength in varieties of English

The division in English accent studies between rhotic and non-rhotic varieties is wellknown (Wells, 1982). Sociolinguistic research has shown that 'rhoticity' is a highly salient accent feature with a range of social values in different parts of the English-speaking world: for example, it is prestigious in New York City (Labov, 1966), but associated with low social status in the southern United States (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 1998) and England (Watson, 2006). While rhoticity has been described as 'the most important feature for defining the relationships between varieties of English' (Maguire *et al*, 2008), its phonetic details are poorly understood. It remains to be established which acoustic features contribute crucially to listeners' percept of rhoticity strength. Previous work on rhoticity has mostly relied on auditory judgements as to whether the data under consideration is non-rhotic, weakly rhotic or strongly rhotic. An interesting question is whether we can replicate listeners' judgements through acoustic measurements, thus explaining the auditory basis of these judgements. This paper presents findings of research motivated by this question.

The paper has two sets of tradings to report. The first set is from an auditoryperceptual tank performed by a group of phonetically-trained listeners. The listeners were asked to rate strength of rhoticity in tokens of NORTH and SQUARE words spoken by various speakers on a 6-point scale. The speakers are from Arizona (USA), Glasgow, Belfast, Plymouth, Oldham (Lancashire) and Accrington (Lancashire). Inter-rater agreement was quantified using the Inter-Class Correlation Coefficient. Our tradings confirm that auditory judgements of rhoticity strength are highly consistent across individuals: when instructed appropriately, listeners generally agree as to whether a given form is non-rhotic, weakly rhotic or strongly rhotic.

We then investigated the tokens using a range of acoustic measurements in an attempt to identify an acoustic characteristic, or a set of acoustic characteristics, that can explain the auditory judgements. Measurements focussed on the temporal and spectral characteristics of relevant vocalic portions, following previous studies such as Plug & Ogden (2003) and Carter & Local (2007). We also conducted a gating experiment to locate the onset of the percept of rhoticity in vocalic portions judged as 'rhotic'. Our findings suggest, firstly, that the contribution of spectral characteristics, such as formant values, to the percept of rhoticity is best understood when frequencies are plotted on a perceptually realistic Bark scale rather than on a linear Hertz scale; and secondly, that the crucial acoustic features may be different between front-vowel and back-vowel contexts. Implications for future work on rhoticity strength, and our understanding of the articulatory gestures associated with rhoticity are discussed.

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Pronunciation matters: Using English for international business communication

Research into English as an International Language (EIL), has demonstrated not only the critical part played by pronunciation in maintaining successful communication between speakers of English with different first languages, but also the ways in which the pronunciation priorities involved in EIL may be evolving. It has also been argued that this recent shift in the use of English for international communication, such that non native speakers now outnumber native speakers (Crystal 2000; Graddol 1997), has serious implications for English Language Teaching (ELT) policy and pedagogy. Key among these is a reconsideration of pronunciation models and targets and the proposal that pronunciation priorities in lingua franca contexts should be limited to what Jenkins (2000) refers to as the 'lingua franca core'

However, despite recent calls at a theoretical level to reconsider goals, targets and approaches to teaching pronunciation in light of the expanding use of EIL (eg McKay 2002, Jenkins 2000), little research has been done to date into end users' perceptions and attitudes. This is particularly true of the international business community which typically takes a pragmatic approach towards the use of English and where a considerable amount of international communication is between both native and non-native speakers of English.

This paper draws on ongoing research investigating perceptions and attitudes to pronunciation in contexts where English is used for International Business (EIB). The paper summarises some findings from a survey and from video recordings of a series of meetings exploring the use of EIB by a particular European business organisation.

The research has both a theoretical and practical goal, on the one hand aiming to build on earlier studies in this field (Rogerson-Revell 2007, McKay 2002, Jenkins 2000, Berns 1995) and on a practical level, to relay the findings back to the European organization involved, in order to help it improve communications in future international events. An important third goal is to relate the findings to the teaching of pronunciation, particularly in EIB contexts.

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The role of temporal parameters in the implementation of the voicing contrast in English and Polish

The paper provides a direct comparison of three temporal parameters – the Voice Onset Time, vowel duration, and closure duration – in signalling the voicing contrast in English and Polish. The Voice Onset Time (VOT), originally defined as the time interval between the release of a stop occlusion and the onset of vocal cord vibration, makes a relatively reliable tool for classification of languages. With a few exceptions, languages fall into three broad categories: voicing-lead, short-lag, long-lag. Whereas English exploits short-lag and long-lag categories, Polish contrasts voicing-lead and short-lag. It is best demonstrated by the fact that English initial voiceless stops are strongly aspirated while Polish initial voiced stops are characterised by voicing in the occlusion, even before the release.

Vowel duration has been repeatedly reported to signal the voicing contrast in English. Longer vowels precede voiced obstruents while shorter vowels are followed by voiceless obstruents. This temporal parameter has been found functional both in production and perception. English listeners not only produce shorter vowels before voiceless consonants but also report hearing a voiceless consonant when vowel duration is reduced in perception experiments. Unlike English, Polish is recognised for devoicing final obstruents. As a result, vowel duration is exempted from its contrastive function. Despite some speech-production reports that vowel duration in Polish may differ depending on whether followed by phonologically voiced or voiceless obstruents, perception experiments have failed to demonstrate its influence on the voicing contrast perception.

English is characterised by shorter closure duration in voiced stops and longer closure duration in voiceless stops. Perception experiments have demonstrated that longer closure duration will yield perceptual judgements of voicelessness and shorter ones of voicing. The most robust effects have been obtained in intervocalic positions. Polish, unlike English, is a word-final devoicing language. Although some researchers claim that Poles may produce differences in closure duration, these differences have not been confirmed in perception experiments.

All this evidence taken together points to a serious cross-linguistic contrast in the implementation of the voicing contrast in the two languages. At the same time, it is a learning task for Poles in order to understand and be understood by native speakers of English. We conclude the presentation by demonstrating how these differences affect pronunciation of English by Poles.

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High Variability Phonetic Training as L2 pedagogy: Findings, prospects, and challenges

Language learners make progress with the sound system of target languages through two-alternative forced choice (2AFC) training on a large corpus of naturally recorded minimal pairs. This technique, which is becoming known as High Variability Phonetic Training (HVPT), was developed by many, but refined most notably by Pisoni and colleagues. Generally, the perceptual learning transfers successfully to new tokens, words, and talkers, but not new contexts. Perceptual training has also been shown to result in production improvements. Both perception and production improvements last several months, at least.

Despite such positive findings in lab research, the literature shows HVPT has been little used in actual pedagogy, possibly because the lab regimens used are poorly adapted to such use. Our investigations show a “typical” regimen might demand three 60-90 minute sessions per week for three weeks, which is too onerous for most students, and too time-consuming for most teachers. We have developed a program distributing a similar amount of training over the course of a (US) university semester. Our pilot implementation – training Asian ESL students in English /l~r/ – has shown encouraging results and allowed us to overcome several practical obstacles. We are starting a full semester training this spring, and expect to present results this summer.

By recording a comprehensive minimal pair list, the HVPT framework can be extended easily to any target language contrasts considered difficult for any learner population. For ESL at US universities, corpora will need to be recorded for /b~p/ for Arabic, interdental fricatives for French and others, and tense vs. lax vowels for Spanish and many others. With carefully planned corpora, it should be possible to use the same structure for training in syllable structures, word stress, and even sentence intonation.

Challenges exist for the HVPT framework as ESL pedagogy. Its classroom use may be restricted to EFL situations, because of the varied backgrounds of ESL students. For currency in sound changes or other language trends, the corpora will need updating. The main problem may be sociolinguistic tension between perception and production: Local needs will dictate that learners be trained to perceive lower class, ethnic, and pertinent non-native speech. However, research shows that HVPT influences production, and indeed that fluent talkers imitate VOT in shadowed speech. Research must investigate whether students diverge from socially appropriate (i.e., academic) production targets because of pragmatically diverse perception corpora. HVPT’s pedagogical utility would then dictate sociolinguistic tailoring of training corpora.

How could English really become a new Latin?

The paper will look at how the increasingly popular, 'democratic' approaches to teaching English pronunciation – which downplay the role of native speakers as norm providers – may make the fate of English similar to the fortunes of Latin in yet another way. The so-called 'English-Latin analogy' has been a recurring motif in recent applied linguistics literature, with various scholars drawing parallels between the former and the latter viewed as:

- (1) a world lingua franca,
- (1) a dead language,
- (2) a language with divergent native and non-native varieties.

The present author would like to concentrate on aspect (3), which is probably the least prevalent, and admittedly the most speculative, of the three.

The notion of 'death' in point 2 above should be understood somewhat metaphorically, as eventual disintegration into mutually unintelligible accents and dialects. In the present context, the anxieties over the multiplicity of native/nativised varieties of English are best summed up by the following statement: *just as Latin, which once held sway over a great linguistic empire, split into French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian /.../ so may the future of English be not as a single language but as the parent of a family of languages* (Bragg 2004). Similar concerns have repeatedly been voiced at least since the advent of American English, with the majority of scholars taking a less radical stance on the subject nowadays.

However, even before the respective Romance languages took shape, Latin experienced a thorough rupture between its native and non-native varieties (point 3), at the time of the Carolingian Renaissance. This happened when its international incarnation became standardised and parted company with its native (i.e. Early Romance) mutations, in the wake of the spelling and pronunciation reforms instigated by Charlemagne at the end of the 8th century. Paradoxically, it was precisely the former – i.e. the learned, and to a large extent artificial, entity – that preserved the original name of the ancient Romans' mother tongue, thereby earning Latin its established reputation as a dead language, in spite of its Modern Romance continuations being very much alive and well (e.g. Wright 2004).

While the mechanisms underlying the operation of the two world languages are crucially different, native and non-native Englishes might also, in the future, take divergent routes of development. This may happen if the norms and reference accents presented to foreign learners deliberately ignore L1 usage, particularly if English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) becomes codified along non-native lines. Indeed, the need for such codification has been much emphasised in recent years, and intensive work on a fully-fledged ELF model, based solely on patterns of interaction among non-native speakers of English, is well under way (e.g. Jenkins 2000, 2005; Seidlhofer 2006). That the proponents of systematic ELF teaching may be speaking to a very receptive audience is evident, for example, in the recent debate over the prospective introduction of 'anglais de communication internationale' (also called 'le globish', e.g. by Nerrière 2006) as an obligatory subject at French high schools. If successful, such schemes may pave the way for a conceptual separation, and consequently a future split, between international and native English(es). A quotation from a report commissioned by the British Council in 2006 may serve as a succinct conclusion here: *The new language which is rapidly ousting the language of Shakespeare as the world's lingua franca is English itself – English in its new global form. /.../ It is a new phenomenon, and if it represents any kind of triumph it is probably not a cause of celebration by native speakers* Graddol (2006).

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**Learning English in an L1 context:
A Study of the production and perception of English stops as realized by Malay speakers**

This paper presents some key findings from a study of the production and perception of the initial and medial stops in the speech performance of learners of English whose first language is Malay (and who are resident in Malaysia). Since there is very little documentation of the phonetic properties of Malay itself, the paper begins by presenting the results of an acoustic study of the Malay stops with a focus on contextual variants and a range of acoustic measures such as VOT, vowel duration and closure duration. Results are then presented, first relating to the realization of the initial and medial stops in Malay-accented English and, second, evaluating Malaysian listeners' perceptual abilities with initial and medial voiced/voiceless stops in Malay and English. The results are discussed in light of models of the acquisition of L2 sound patterning focusing in particular on the situation presented by acquiring L2 within an L1 context.

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Pronunciation and oral exercises in ten Finnish EFL textbooks

Textbooks play a great role in language teaching, and therefore the analysis of them offers an important insight into teaching practices. Still, textbooks are not a major theme within educational research. The existing research concentrates mainly on analysis of bias in textbooks, and on content analysis focusing on gender and ethnic stereotyping. (Westbury 1989: 477–479.) As teaching pronunciation is seen difficult by many teachers, good and varied teaching materials are needed to support teachers. In my study, ten Finnish EFL textbooks are analysed. I investigate what kind of material they offer for teaching and learning of English pronunciation. The data is analysed in the light of various proposals for pronunciation teaching (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001: 62–64). The textbooks are chosen from the textbook series of two major publishers in Finland. The selection contains EFL textbooks and workbooks that are aimed at learners of varied language proficiency and different age groups. These textbooks are currently in use in elementary and secondary education in Finland.

The analysed textbooks are rich with exercises that develop pronunciation skills. These make use of both traditional methods, such as 'listen and repeat', and newer techniques, such as drama. Segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation are addressed, and the exercises suggest that pronunciation teaching is integrated into teaching of other language skills. Phonemic transcription is used in pronunciation instructions, and exercises in deciphering and producing transcriptions are included. The receptive side of pronunciation is considered to some extent. In addition, pronunciation is considered in self-evaluation tasks, and the textbooks raise awareness on learning strategies. This study clearly shows that lack of teaching material cannot be a reason for EFL teachers not to teach pronunciation.

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Incorporating research findings into L2 pronunciation materials: A computer-mediated approach

Adult L2 learners often have difficulty producing some L2 segments, even after substantial exposure (e.g., Munro & Derwing, 2008). Many believe that inaccuracies in L2 pronunciation are rooted in the inaccurate perception of the L2 speech sounds in question. While L1 speech categories are known to constrain the development of L2 speech perception, L2 experience can partially mitigate these constraints. Many studies have investigated the impact of the learner's L1. However, the exact role of L2 experience remains little understood. More importantly, what is known from L2 speech research is rarely incorporated into pronunciation training materials. For example, training with multiple voices appears to be superior to training with a single voice (e.g., Lively, Logan & Pisoni, 1993; Wang & Munro, 2004), yet most pronunciation teaching materials do not reflect this knowledge. We also know that because cognitive resources are finite, and because attention is often diverted to the comprehension of L2 meaning, details of L2 form may go unattended (Flege, 1995; Schmidt, 2001). This knowledge is also not generally reflected in L2 pronunciation materials. Finally, the efficacy of instructional materials that are used is rarely empirically demonstrated.

With the advent of computer assisted language learning, incorporation of current knowledge and the assessment of its effect are both possible. In this computer-mediated training study, 22 Mandarin speakers were trained to identify ten English vowels over a period of three weeks. Two experimental conditions were compared. In the first, learners were trained to identify target English vowel categories using stimuli produced by 20 native English speakers, in two consonantal contexts, /pV/ and /bV/. In the second condition, participants were trained to identify modified versions of the same set of productions in which, using phonetic software, vowel durations were doubled. This provided a longer duration during which learners could potentially detect relevant phonetic cues. Improvement in the learners' ability to identify English vowels was measured using a pretest, post-test and delayed post-test design. In addition, the extent to which improvement in the learners' perception transferred to new consonantal contexts and to productions by a new voice was also assessed. Finally, improvements in identification ability were contrasted with improvements in the learners' productions of the target categories. This paper will conclude with a discussion of implications for pronunciation instruction, and how this training paradigm can be further developed.

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Pre-tonic vs. Post-tonic syncope in English: What do spoken English corpora tell us?

This paper presents the first findings of a large-scale descriptive project on syncope in contemporary spoken English. Syncope (also called compression or schwa deletion in the literature) refers to a synchronic process of a loss of a vowel in unstressed syllables, either in post-tonic (*boundary*) or pre-tonic (*phonetic*) environments. Despite the high frequency of compression in spoken English, most standard textbooks ignore it or just mention it: its treatment vacillates between one of an unpredictable matter of performance or an optional process mostly found in casual or fast speech. The relative scarcity of papers is coupled with contradictory and rather intuitive data in standard pronouncing dictionaries as far as post-tonic syncope is concerned while the pre-tonic cases remain largely undocumented. The conditions that may trigger syncope vary from author to author (see Hooper (1978) & Zwicky (1972)) but they are characterised in terms of i. following consonant sonority ii. stress clash avoidance and iii. blocking by flanking clusters.

The data for our study come from two sources. The PAC project furnishes the bulk of our corpus: 15 hours of casual conversations representing some 30 speakers illustrating 3 varieties (California, Lancashire & Ayrshire) and a reading task comprising 40 trisyllabic words with potential syncope sites. Since the PAC project has not been designed for the study of fast speech processes we decided to complement the reading task with the recordings of 30 speakers duplicating the reading task with fast speech conditions. We have closely followed the methodology of Dalby (1986) adding a strict phonological control on the data set besides the phonetic measurements.

Our first findings indicate that the phenomenon of schwa-zero alternations in English is a more complex issue than intuitive and dictionary data might suggest. Contrary to what has been claimed, post-tonic syncope seems to be conditioned by the melodic quality of the resulting secondary cluster rather than just the sonority value of the consonant following the syncope site. These resulting secondary clusters follow universal well-formedness tendencies rather than phonotactic constraints specific to English. While there seem to be various phonological conditions favouring post-tonic syncope the pre-tonic cases look more like genuine fast-speech processes and lack phonological conditioning. This observation confirms the prediction of representational theories of phonology about the cross-linguistic impossibility of initial syncope at the lexical level. We reckon that a fine-grained analysis of syncope not only adds to our understanding of the phonology of English but also has got important pedagogical implications for the teaching of English pronunciation and transcription.

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The Accents of European English: An Online experiment

It has been claimed that Europe is beginning to see the emergence of a common European variety of English, termed “Euro-English”, arising from linguistic interaction and convergence between non-native users of English with different L1 backgrounds. This variety of English is not only expected to serve as an efficient medium of communication between Europeans, but also to allow non-native users to express elements of their identities in English (Berns 1995, Mollin 2006).

Whilst such linguistic appropriation is generally seen as empowering to non-native users by those who take the emergence of Euro-English for granted, others have expressed concern about the diversity of linguistic and educational backgrounds which would preclude the emergence of a common European variety (Görlach 1999, Prodromou 2006). Another issue is that the projected indigenisation of English could actually pose a threat to European linguistic and cultural diversity (Phillipson 2008).

Certain studies have attempted to investigate the potential lexico-grammatical inventory of Euro-English (Seidlhofer 2001, Mollin 2006), but very little work has been done on this supposed variety’s phonology – apart from the more general context of English as a Lingua Franca (e.g. Jenkins 2007). In particular, the question of how European non-native speakers of English view the acceptability and intelligibility of the pronunciation features of other Europeans speaking English has not been addressed in detail – even though the emergence of such attitudes may be expected to coincide with Europeans’ increasingly widespread adoption of English. The project discussed here is intended as a contribution to this discussion.

An Internet survey has been designed with the aim of allowing respondents to listen to different non-native speakers reading out a series of four sentences in English, and to evaluate any pronunciation errors they could detect. For each European L1 represented in the survey, a group of male and female speakers with similar levels of proficiency was employed. The speakers were chosen so as to provide a range of language backgrounds (Greek, Spanish, Finnish, Dutch and Polish), which might be expected to affect their L2 English in different ways.

The survey is primarily targeted at European respondents who are non-native speakers, but other groups are also invited to participate. The results (expected April/May 2009) should indicate which pronunciation features of European English are considered to be “non-core” or “deviant” by European judges, and may reveal the extent of agreement between respondents of different linguistic backgrounds.

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Does rhythm matter?

Selected observations on the effect of rhythm on spoken proficiency in non-native English.

Rhythmic organization of English, classified as a stress-timed language, presents a challenge for non-native speakers. From the perspective of second language acquisition, problems with stress-timed rhythm can be attributed to negative transfer and natural development of the interlanguage, with the former true for learners from non-stress-timed language background and the latter for all learners, who need time for the development of the rhythmic structure. In pronunciation teaching, however, the main question seems to be not about the source or the nature of the problem but the very motivation for including rhythm in pronunciation teaching priorities. A widespread tendency to use more syllable-timed than stress-timed rhythm in non-native English has led to a general acceptance of the difference as characteristic for native vs. non-native use of English, with stress-timing claimed to be potentially detrimental to communication in English in an international context. Asking 'Does rhythm matter?' this paper explores the relevance of rhythm in teaching and evaluating spoken proficiency in non-native English, claiming that while the lack of stress-timing rhythm may not be directly responsible for communication breakdown, its elements are crucial for reaching the aim of comfortable intelligibility.

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Using English intonation to highlight your message

The speaker of English expresses important elements of the message by means of intonation. Most importantly, we use intonation to signal which parts of our message are new, unpredictable, and important, as against what is old, already given, and treated as part of the background. Which words do we highlight, which do we not highlight? How does intonation signal the information structure?

To achieve an acceptable intonation pattern, the learner of English must also pay particular attention to the treatment of function words, compounds, and phrasal verbs.

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