Pronunciation instruction beyond “listen and repeat” through the body and the mind

Arizio Sweeting
The “Sleeping Beauty” of ELT

the way we teach pronunciation does not reflect its ubiquitous nature, and in our hands it easily becomes dis-integrated from the rest of language, not for lack of teacher will, but because our methods do not permit integration

Underhill, *Speak Out*, 2010
very many of the exercises teachers use for pronunciation come down, in one form or another, to 'listen and repeat'

Messum & Young, *Speak Out*, 2011
It’s a widespread assumption!

These proposals have not been contradicted by any ‘expert’ … but nor have they been positively endorsed by one.

Messum, P. Slide from IATEFL Conference, Exeter, April 2008
some tools are lamentably retrograde in their assumptions about what pronunciation is and why students are learning

Hancock, *Speak Out*, 2014
So, learning is using, and using is learning. That much we know. But what are the implications of a more ‘embodied’ view of learning? Is there a case for incorporating more kinaesthetic practices? For reviving Total Physical Response, even? And to what extent, as teachers, are we conscious of the way that ‘body language’ helps in the co-construction of learning?

Thornbury, www.scottthornbury.wordpress.com
Response questions

I was born in 1980.

I wasn’t born here.

My sister was born in Holland.

I grew up in Ireland.

Where were you born?

question

opposite

person

action

hancockmacdonald.com
Adrian Underhill - “Sound Foundations”

- Pronunciation - ‘you can’t do it without the body’
- Teachers - aware of what happens in their own mouths, voice and throat
- “Listen & Repeat” - replace it with ‘muscle buttons’ or ‘proprioception’
- “Inner Workbench” - teachers should encourage the use of the inner ear and the inner voice
- Feedback - demand high, be spontaneous, raise awareness
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- **Lips**
- **Tongue**
- **Jaw**
- **Voice**
You can use a match to light a candle.
1. Reconnecting with your articulatory apparatus

2. Appropriate teacher feedback

PronSci http://www.pronunciationscience.com/
It’s all about KNOW-HOW & AWARENESS!

Its theoretical base lies in

• articulatory phonetics

• an understanding of how motor skills are learned, and

• an understanding of how children learn to pronounce their mother tongue.

From PronSci http://www.pronunciationscience.com/
Piers Messum & Rosalyn Young - “The Silent Way”

• Pronunciation - motor sensory, thus it is important to create ‘muscular memory’

• Teachers - need to know articulatory phonetics or articulation, focusing on “post-peration” not preparation

• Repetition ≠ practice: meaningless vs meaningful

• Feedback - essential and present
Look at the 3D tongue models and decide if the statements below are True or False:

T / F The English tongue is in loose contact with the front teeth.
T / F The French tongue is spread at the back.
T / F The sides of the English tongue are in loose contact with the upper back teeth.
T / F In the French tongue, the tip of the tongue is underneath the alveolar ridge.
T / F In the English tongue, the blade of the tongue is underneath the alveolar ridge.

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Main tenets of the L1POR

1. Develop the learner’s awareness of their L1 phonology as a point of reference

2. Speech production activities precede perception training

3. Non-nativist approach (modelling is limited)

4. Learner-centred; supported by teachers with knowledge of the student’s L1 phonology.

5. Techniques should provide multi-sensory input. V.A.K

6. Priorities based on specific L1 and idiosyncratic needs of students
...pronunciation is acquired not only ‘through the ears’, but also through other senses.

Spyra, 2015, p. 218
Indicate whether statements given below are true or false:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True or false?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lamb</td>
<td>/b/ is not pronounced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steak</td>
<td>pronounced with /iː/</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thames</td>
<td>pronounced with /θ/</td>
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<tr>
<td>waiting</td>
<td>no /k/ or /g/ at the end</td>
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<tr>
<td>vegetable</td>
<td>pronounced with /eɪ/</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A:  boy! tour door bay in?
B:  tour door bay in. see volley say?
A:  tour door bay in.
A: Oi! Tudo bem?
B: Tudo bem. E você?
A: Tudo bem.
References


• Macmillan Education (2011, March 4) Introduction to Teaching Pronunciation Workshop – Adrian Underhill [Video File] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kAPHyHd7Lo


• An A – Z of ELT (2010, December 12) B is for Body Retrieved from https://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/2010/12/12/b-is-for-body/