



# Pronunciation

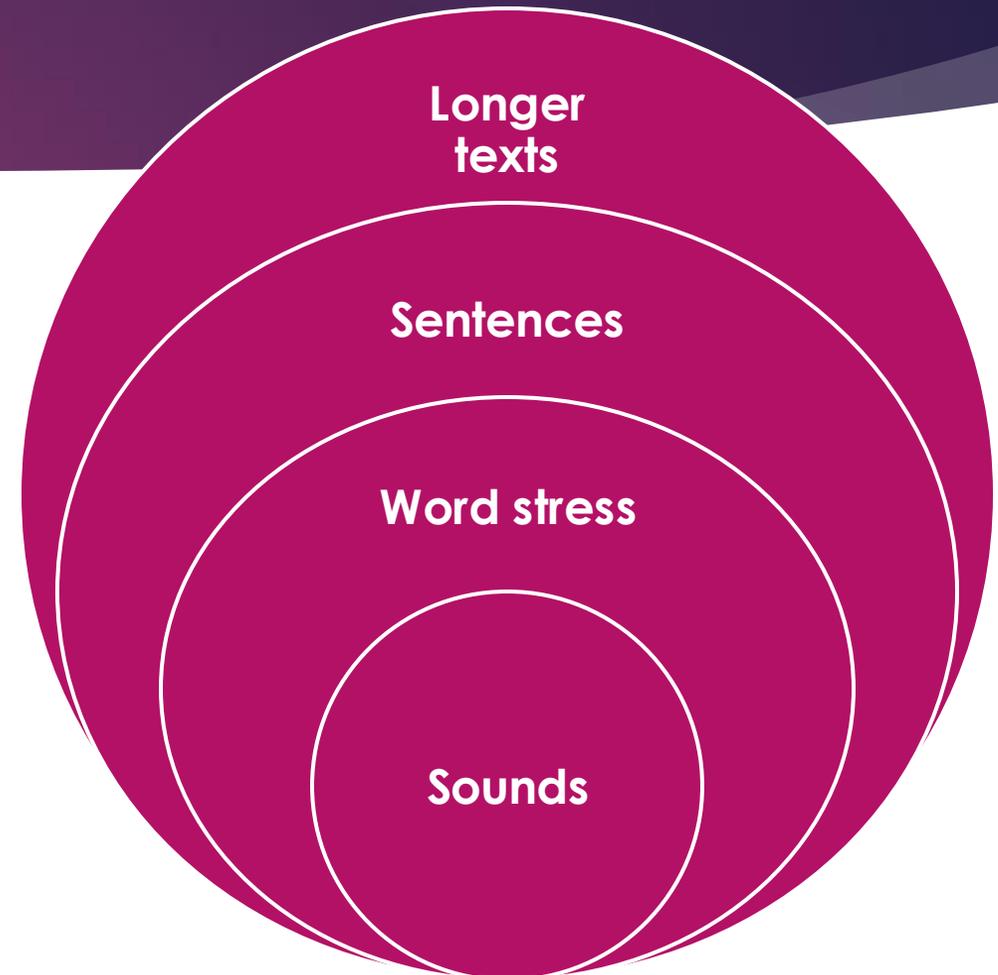
## From Accuracy to Impact

**MULTILINGUAL STUDENT SUPPORT (MSS)**

**CAMOSUN COLLEGE**

# Introduction

- ▶ Don't aim to reduce ACCENT but to increase LISTENERS' UNDERSTANDING
- ▶ Listening & speaking are two sides of the same coin
- ▶ English speech is different from how it seems on a page
- ▶ 1. Awareness → 2. Using
  - ▶ Words: sounds/stress
  - ▶ Sentences: stress, intonation, linking, reductions
- ▶ Be brave: practice → confidence



# Goals: 6 Essential Features

## *You will better understand...*

- ▶ **Vowels:** ...how each speaker has different sounds that are difficult, but all speakers need to focus on VOWELS
- ▶ **Word Stress:** ...how word stress works and some 'rules' for nouns/adjectives and verbs
- ▶ **Intonation:** ...how it is necessary for grammar, emotion, and organizing longer talks
- ▶ **Reductions:** ...how you need to listen for common reductions
- ▶ **Linking:** ...how linking between words helps fluency
- ▶ **Sentence Stress:** ...how key words get stressed in longer talks

# Vocabulary - Matching

1. Word Stress
  2. Linking
  3. Intonation
  4. Vowels
  5. Consonants
  6. Schwa
  7. Sentence Stress
  8. Reductions
  9. Syllable
- A. Most common sound in English – sounds like ‘uh’
  - B. ‘Music’ of speech – voice goes up and down
  - C. Words and phrases get crushed together (going to → ‘gonna’)
  - D. How one word links to the next
  - E. Key ‘information words’ in a sentence are emphasized
  - F. One syllable in a word is emphasized
  - G. The ‘sound parts’ of a word (Ca-na-da)
  - H. Sounds like ‘a,’ ‘e,’ ‘o’
  - I. Sounds like ‘t,’ ‘s,’ ‘th,’ ‘ch’

Answers: 1F 2D 3B 4H 5I 6A 7E 8C 9G

# Think about...

- ▶ What do you know about English pronunciation?
- ▶ What is difficult about English pronunciation for you?
- ▶ What are some good strategies for speaking clearly?



# VOWELS

- **14 NORTH AMERICAN  
ENGLISH VOWELS**

# Vowels

For English SOUNDS, vowels often make the most trouble for comprehension. North American English has 14 vowels and 4 double vowels

	Front	Centre	Back
High	i ( <u>see</u> ) ɪ ( <u>sit</u> )	ʌ ( <u>up</u> )	u ( <u>shoe</u> )*
Mid	ɛ ( <u>pet</u> )	ʊ ( <u>book</u> )* ə ( <u>a</u> bout)	o ( <u>no</u> )*
Low	æ ( <u>hat</u> )		ɔ ( <u>hot</u> ) ɑ ( <u>fat</u> her)

The four DOUBLE VOWELS are:

/eɪ/ = play

/ɔɪ/ = boy

/aɪ/ = hi

/aʊ/ = how



# WORD STRESS

- HOW IT WORKS IN ENGLISH
- HOW TO GUESS WHICH SYLLABLE TO STRESS

# Word Stress

## WHAT ARE SYLLABLES?

- ▶ The sound parts of a word
- ▶ Must have a vowel sound
- ▶ Ca-mo-sun = 3 syllables

## WHAT IS WORD STRESS?

- ▶ Emphasizing one syllable in a word AND de-emphasizing the other syllables

## WHAT IS STRESS?

- ▶ In English = Up, Loud, Long
- ▶ Both STRESS and UNSTRESS are important (e.g., ca**MO**sun)

# Word Stress Guidelines

Listen to the examples and guess the answers:

- ▶ (1) With 2-syllable **NOUNS & ADJECTIVES**, the stress is usually on the which syllable?
  - (a) First
  - (b) Second
- ▶ (2) With 2-syllable **VERBS**, the stress is usually on which syllable?
  - (a) First
  - (b) Second
- ▶ (3) When a word ends with one of these suffixes: - *ic*, -*ical*, -*ity*, -*tion* (or -*sion* or -*ion*), -*ial*, -*sial*, -*cial*, -*ious*, - *cious*, -*eous*, put the stress on which syllable?
  - (a) First
  - (b) The syllable just before the suffix
  - (c) The suffix

# INTONATION

- FOR GRAMMAR
- FOR EMOTION
- FOR ORGANIZING LONGER TEXTS

# Intonation

## Grammar

- ▶ Falling = statement / certainty
- ▶ Rising = yes/no question / uncertainty

Example: “There is a test today”

## Emotion

- ▶ Same words but different intonation = happy, surprised, sad, etc.

Example: “You’re getting married”

## Longer texts

- ▶ Punctuation = breath (~1 second)
- ▶ Rising/stretched intonation = not finished
- ▶ Falling intonation = finished

Example: “They sipped their coffees, looked at the view, and talked about their lives.”

# REDUCTIONS

- **COMMONLY REDUCED WORDS AND PHRASES**

# Reductions

## **Common phrases get REDUCED = squeezed together**

Reductions sound different from how they look in writing

- Function words ('a' 'can' 'or' 'for' 'your')
- 'To' Words ('want to = wanna' going to = 'gonna' used to = 'useda')
- 'Of' Words (sort of = 'sorta' kind of = 'kinda')
- 'Wh-' questions with do/did (What do you = 'waddya')
- 'Do/did' questions (Did you = 'didja')
- 'You' negatives (Don't you = 'doncha' Can't you = 'cancha')
- No 'h' with he/him/her (Get him = 'getim' Tell her = 'teller')
- No 'g' (Going = 'goin' Giving = 'givin')
- Because' ('cuz')

# Reductions

Listen: how will you write these questions and sentences?

1. How's it going?
2. Where did you buy your textbook?
3. Can you meet on Friday?
4. Are you used to the rain?
5. Do you want to do our homework?
6. Why did you move to Victoria?
7. It's because he's your friend.

\*You don't need to speak this way but you DO need to understand reductions when you hear them.

# LINKING

## HOW WE LINK WORDS TOGETHER:

- CONSONANT-VOWEL
- CONSONANT-  
CONSONANT
- VOWEL-VOWEL

# Linking between Words

## Consonant → Vowel

The consonant at the end of the first word MOVES to the beginning of the next word.

Example: Join in → “Joi nin”

Listen and repeat:

- ▶ stopp it → “stop it”
- ▶ come up → “co mup”
- ▶ pick on → “pi kon”
- ▶ big apple → “bi gapple”

# Linking between Words

## Consonant → Consonant

The important thing is to **HOLD** the first sound then **RELEASE** the second sound

Example: Take cars → “taKars”

Listen and repeat these examples:

▶ big game → “biGame”

▶ get to → “geIo”

▶ talklike → “talKLike”

▶ stop psaying → “stoPSaying”

# Linking between Words

## Vowel → Vowel

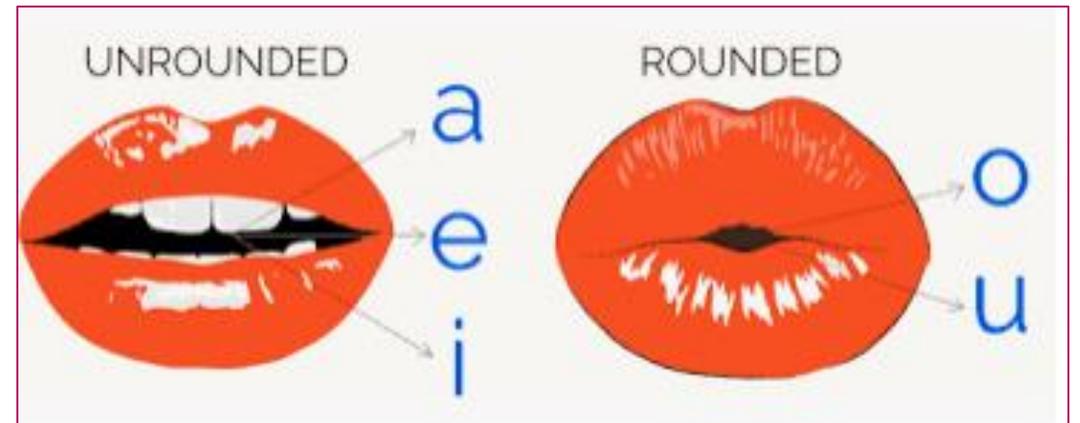
We connect two vowel sounds together  
With a linking 'y' or 'w' sound. Listen and  
Repeat:

Unrounded vowels: seee apple → “seee<sup>y</sup>apple”

- ▶ seee a → “seee<sup>y</sup>a”
- ▶ try out → “tryyout”

Rounded vowels: bluee ice cream → “bluee<sup>w</sup>ice cream”

- ▶ go out → “gowout”
- ▶ shoee is → “shoewis”



Blanco Quintero, n.d.

# SENTENCE STRESS

WHICH WORDS TO STRESS  
(AND UNSTRESS) IN LONGER  
TEXTS

# Sentence Stress

In sentences, we STRESS the words that carry **information**.

Example: “We’ll **meet** at the **theatre** at **5:30**.”

- ▶ Information words are usually nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.
- ▶ Function/grammar words are unstressed (e.g., a, the, in, to...)
- ▶ Remember: stress = up, loud, long    unstress = flat, quiet, short

Listen and repeat:

Example: Don’t forget the meeting at five o’clock.

- ▶ “**DON’T** for **GET** the **MEET**ing at **FIVE** o’**CLOCK**”

Example: No, not the green one. I asked for the red one.

- ▶ “**NO**, **NOT** the **GREEN** one. I asked for the **RED** one.”

# Free Online Resources

- **PHONE APP**
- **DICTIONARIES**
- **TEACHING VIDEOS**
- **SITES FOR PRACTICE**

# Free Online Resources

The best pronunciation practice is simple: LISTEN and REPEAT

## ▶ **Phone App**

- ▶ [ELSA Speak](#) (listen, repeat, score → can build word/phrase lists)

## ▶ **Dictionary**

- ▶ [Longman – listen to words](#)
- ▶ [YouGlish](#) – same word, many speakers

## ▶ **Learning Videos**

- ▶ [Rachel's English](#) (YouTube) - tutorials on linking, reductions, intonation, sounds...

## ▶ **Shadow Reading**

- ▶ Use transcripts to copy speakers ([YouTube](#), [TED Talks](#))

## **Practice**

- ▶ [CambridgeEnglish.org](#)
- ▶ [LDOCEonline.com](#)
- ▶ [EvaEaston.com](#)

# Conclusion

- ▶ No worries about accent: focus on **speaking clearly**
- ▶ Don't read to improve pronunciation: speech is very different from writing
  - ▶ Listen to how speakers use stress/unstress, intonation, reductions, linking
  - ▶ Then start trying those features in your speech
- ▶ All 6 features are important
  - ▶ Vowels, word stress, intonation, linking, reductions, sentence stress
  - ▶ No 'order' for learning pronunciation: **you need it all**
- ▶ Use free online tools to **listen and repeat**



For more help, book a one-on-one coaching appointment or Speaking/Listening workshop with your MSS: **[CamosunMSS.opened.ca](http://CamosunMSS.opened.ca)**

# References

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