

# L'apprentissage des codes de l'oral en LVE: Comment s'y prendre

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## What I now know and/or am convinced of:

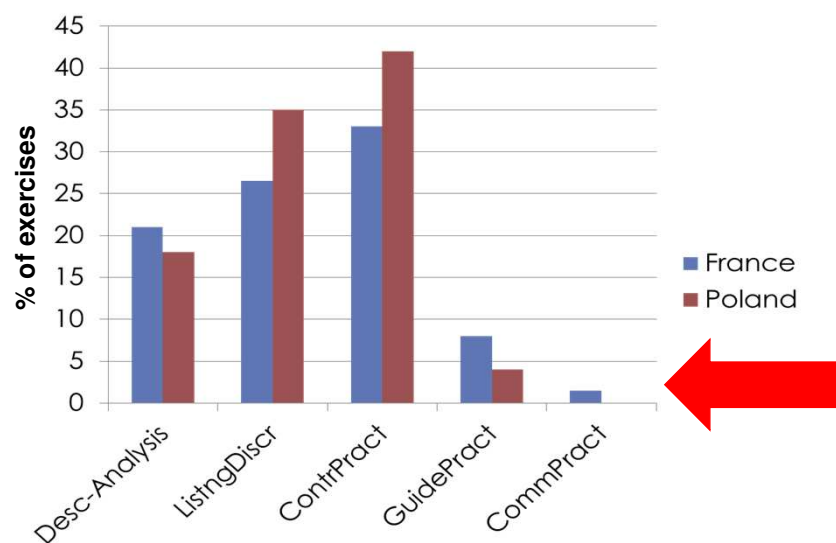
- 1) Speaking exercises are not (usually? necessarily?) pronunciation work.
  - Henderson & Jarosz
- 2) The bias toward written language is a huge disservice to learners of English.
  - Fraser
- 3) English learners need to learn 2 sets of vocabulary: spoken & written.
  - Terrier
- 4) It is impossible & irresponsible to avoid pronunciation work.
  - Henderson et al.; Celce-Murcia
- 5) Learners need to change their breathing and articulatory setting to really « get it ».
  - Messum & Young; Honikman

## Workbooks, materials, etc.

Speaking exercises are not (usually? necessarily?) pronunciation work.  
Henderson & Jarosz

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## Textbooks: Exercise Types



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## Textbooks: Exercises, Features

	% of occurrences	
	France	Poland
<b>Segmental features</b>	25.5%	44.5%
<b>Prosodic features</b>	74.5%	55.5%

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## Summary of main results

- Communicative approach in relation to pron
  - Frequently lacking, often implicit
- Prosodic features
  - Predominate overall
  - Intonation N°1
- Segmentals
  - Varied & repeated: eg. -ED endings, diphthongs

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## Cognition, Error & Feedback

The bias toward written language is a huge disservice to learners of English.

Fraser

Learners need to learn 2 sets of vocabulary: spoken & written.

Terrier

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## Cognition: Known v Unknown Language

- Listen once
- Repeat it to yourself
- How much can you remember?

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## Cognition: Known v Unknown Language

- How many words?
- Was the 4<sup>th</sup> syllable stressed?
- Did the consonant “p” occur in this utterance?
- If you add an “s” before the very first sound of the utterance, what does the 1<sup>st</sup> syllable become?

Unknown:



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## Cognition: Known v Unknown Language

- Which one sounds “clearer”?
- Which one is easier to repeat?
- For which one is it easier to identify features?
- Which one is easier to remember a few minutes later? (Predict)

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Food for thought ....

Pronunciation is as much  
a cognitive phenomenon  
as a physiological one

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Transcribing Unknown L



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## Transcribing Unknown L



Compare with a native speaker's transcription:

ab siso yaitotan nama si e so iamog

(Nama, spoken in southern part of Papua New Guinea's Western province)

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## Cognitive aspects of listening to language

- We think we're hearing phonemes, but we're really hearing words.
- Phonemes are categories imposed by us AFTER we know what the words are
- The way we impose categories depends massively on our knowledge of a language

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## Trubetzkoy & le crible phonologique

L'homme s'approprié le système de sa langue maternelle. Mais s'il entend parler une autre langue, il emploie involontairement pour l'analyse de ce qu'il entend le "crible phonologique" de sa langue maternelle qui lui est familier. Et comme ce crible ne convient pas pour la langue étrangère entendue, il se produit de nombreuses erreurs et incompréhensions. Les sons de la langue étrangère reçoivent une interprétation phonologiquement inexacte, puisqu'on les fait passer par le "crible phonologique" de sa propre langue.

(Trubetzkoy, 1939, p.54)

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## Cognition: Known v Unknown Language

- Recognising sounds is like recognising people ...
- You have to get to know them.
- So, how do you get to know them?

**\*\*Errors as windows on the learning process**

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## Cognitive definition of error

- learner categorizes sounds or other features in a way that is not appropriate to English
- then unconsciously reconstructs those inappropriate categories when imitating

*Sport* (*Piz Badile*)

(For Japanese = “seporutu” 4 units)

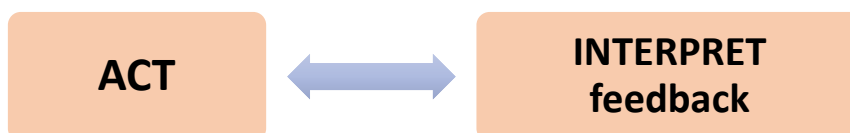
*“But that’s what I said!!!”*

(= learner thinks they’ve got it)

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## Pronunciation & Cognition: Learners

- You CAN exert some control
- You CAN change what you do



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## Pronunciation & Cognition: Teachers

- Choice of metalinguistic terms

“this word has 4 syllables”

“that sound is made by lightly tapping the alveolar ridge with the tip of the tongue”

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## Implications for feedback

THEY think they've got it.  
WE hear an error & we say:

“leave the vowel off”, “move the stress”

technical, linguistic knowledge & terminology



“Please transfer the sodium chloride.”

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## Definition of feedback

“In academic settings, specific targets, criteria, standards and other external reference points (e.g. exemplars) help define goals. Feedback is **information about how the student’s present state** (of learning and performance) **relates to these goals and standards.**”

(Nicol & Macfarlane, 2005, 2)

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## Why is it important in pronunciation work?

*‘knowing the right way’* does not immediately translate into *‘doing it the right way’*. ... your brain and your muscles have to get used to new movements

*Declarative knowledge* = knowing *that*

*Procedural knowledge* = knowing *how*

**pronunciation = the ONLY physical aspect of language learning**

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## Why is it important in pronunciation work?

“just 'doing' is not always enough to enable learners to achieve the proficiency they desire. At certain points, a pronunciation teacher, like a coach of any skill (Morley, 1991), needs to provide explicit feedback and guidance on learners' performance. *The question is, what kind of feedback and guidance is appropriate in coaching the skill of pronunciation?*” (Fraser, 2008)

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## Focus on the *speaker-listener* interaction

encourage intelligibility via benevolent constructive feedback

Your pace, pausing and intonation are wonderful. Don't change anything about these features!

In 1-2 places your sentence stress is in the wrong place: *context of war* sounded like OFF war, and *necessary for me* sounded like FOUR to me.

The biggest problem that you need to focus on in the next 5 days is one vowel sound: SKY, HIGH, GUY, I, EYE.

This sound is essential for the stressed vowel in several key words: MIgrants, MIInors, adVICE and the unstressed vowel in Exile.

The next most important thing to improve (**so that your audience finds it easy to listen to you & understands your ideas**) is word stress. Please practice the following words 1-2 each day: exPERience, parTicular, conDUCTed, unaCCOMpanied, eVENTS, aFFECted, MEASURE, aCCOUNT.

It would also be very helpful if you could pronounce the H in the words *heavy* and *healthy*. (And remember: in both words, the stressed vowels rhymes with BED and HEAD :-).

Remember that the stressed vowel in STUdy rhymes with CUP and BUS. (Remember: the letter U doesn't always have the *blue moon* sound.)

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## Can't waste time on pron ...

It is impossible & irresponsible to avoid pronunciation work.

Henderson et al.; Celce-Murcia

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## Teachers' Attitudes (EPTiES survey)

- Pronunciation believed to be fairly important
- Teaching pron. is believed to be rather easy
- **Sufficient time?**
  - *There are so many other things to teach*
  - *Sufficient, because we have bigger fish to fry*
  - *The question is nonsense: whenever we talk we teach pron*
- **Yes, but ...**
  - *It's more important to get them speaking & communicating*
  - *Building students' self-confidence & fluency is more important*

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## Nativelike or Intelligible?



- *It's enough to pronounce words the **correct** way*
- *It is vital to teach a **correct** pronunciation at any level*
- *A **basically correct** pron is required, not a refined standard*
- *More emphasis should be put on pron for understanding, on **clearer** non-native pron*
- *There are other more relevant issues than pron in the acquisition of English*

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## Where can change happen?

- 1) The Teacher/Instructor/Coach
- 2) The Speaker/Learner
- 3) The Exercise/Activity/Task: *\*\*speaking ≠ pron work*

How can pron be integrated into pedagogical sequences?  
 How can we facilitate mastery of the sound signal & sound system?

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## English Prosody Pyramid Gilbert (208)

**peak vowel**

**stressed syllable**

**focus word**

**thought/breath group**

(pausing, linking, intonation)

*slow children let's eat grandma*

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***Top 15 my name is bond***

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## Ex. 2 BOND // JAMES bond

- Feature:
  - Phrasal prominence/focus/emphasis

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## Similar phenomenon expressed in Spanish

That's his car.	Ese es su coche.
That's not his car.	Ese no es su coche.
That's not <u>his</u> car.	No es el coche de él.
I'm going to NY tomorrow.	Voy a Nueva York mañana.
I <u>am</u> going to NY tomorrow.	Sí voy a Nueva York mañana.

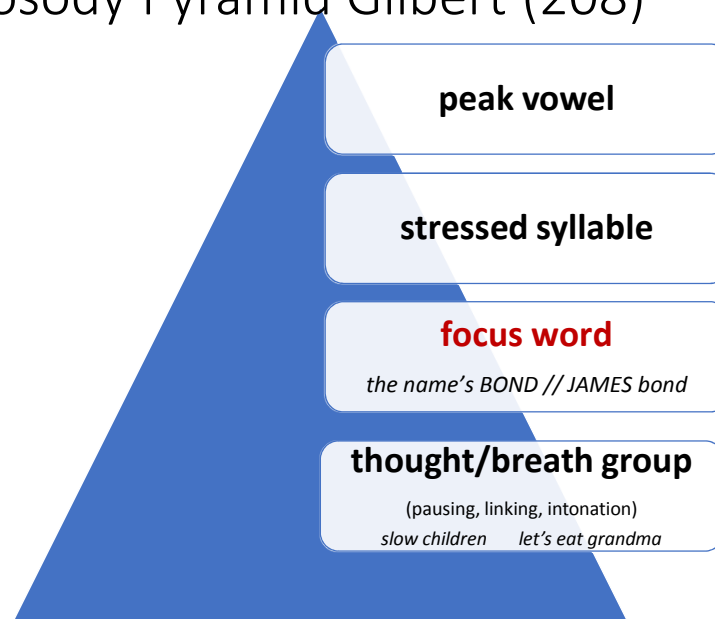
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## Ex. 2 BOND // JAMES bond

- Feature:
  - Phrasal prominence/focus/emphasis
  - Intonation in questions
  - Body accompanies speech (eyebrows, head, torso; breathing)
- Grammmare: Interrogative structures
- Extension :
  - Lexical stress
  - Respiratory « push »

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## English Prosody Pyramid Gilbert (208)



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## English Prosody Pyramid Gilbert (208)

**peak vowel**

**stressed syllable**

*prosopagNOsia*

**focus word**

*the name's BOND // JAMES bond*

**thought/breath group**

(pausing, linking, intonation)

*slow children let's eat grandma*

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## Ex. 3 Contextualized word stress partner exercise

(L. Quesada, 2018, Tarragona)

### Student A: Which word is missing?

*Read the sentences to your partner until he/she guesses the missing word.*

1. The strong snowstorm caused a lack of **la la LA la la** due to power outages in the region.      ELECTRICITY
2. **la la LA la** was my favourite subject at high school.      MATHEMATICS

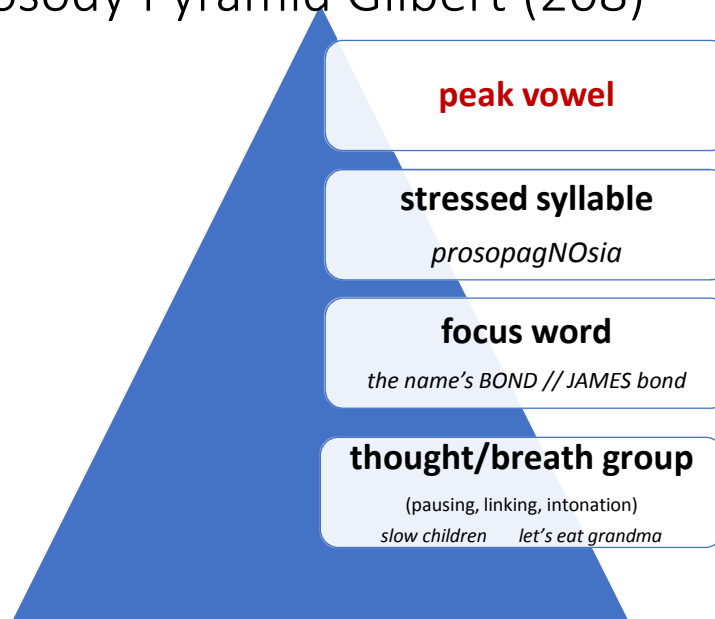
### Student B: Which word is missing?

*Read the sentences to your partner until he/she guesses the missing word.*

1. Kim attached several Post-It notes to the **la LA la** surface of her fridge.      MAGNETIC
2. Astronauts need to study **LA la** at university.      PHYSICS

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## English Prosody Pyramid Gilbert (208)



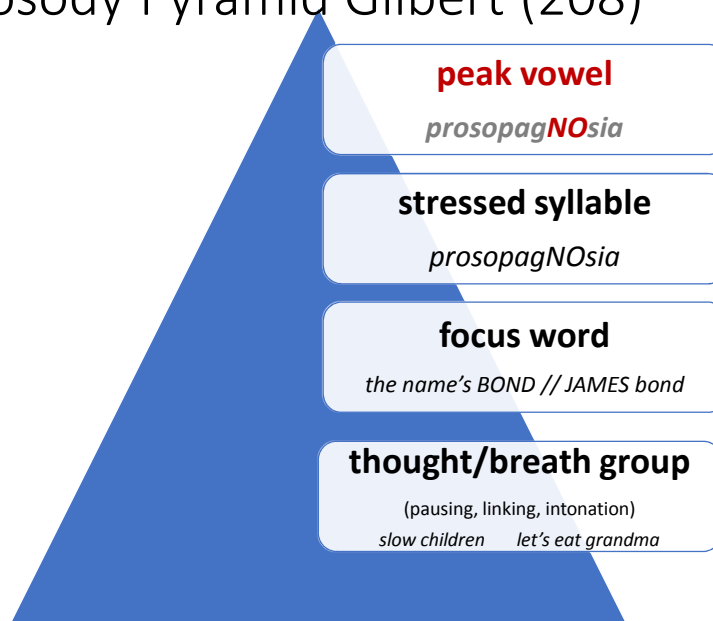
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## Ex. 4 Rhyming vowels & the alphabet

DAY	TEA	BED	WHY	OH NO!	BLUE	AHHHH(R)
A	B	F	I	O	Q	R
H	C	L	Y		U	
J	D	M			W	
K	E	N				
	G	S				
	P	X				
	T	Zed				
	V					
	Zee					

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## English Prosody Pyramid Gilbert (208)



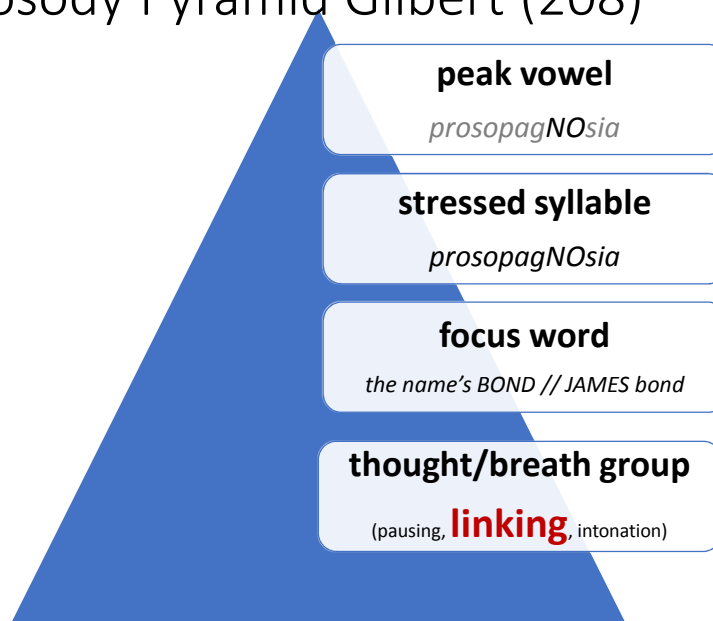
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## Ex. 4 bus/enough/other/study/ ...

- Feature:
  - pronunciation of vowels despite complex spelling-pronunciation relation
- Lexis: anything & everything 😊
  - get/head/many/sweater
  - closed/role/soul/shoulder
- Grammar & Extension :
  - different grouping of vowel changes in verb tenses: rose/spoke

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## English Prosody Pyramid Gilbert (208)



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## Ex. 5 uh-oh

- Feature : hard vocal attack with glottal closure
- Lexis:
  - Proper nouns: *Alice Henderson*
  - Abbreviations: *FBI, ABC, \*UN, ...*
  - L1 LLCER Anglais: *I am 18 years old.*
  - LPRO agro-alimentaire: *eat healthy*
- Extension :
  - Linking (familiar concept): C+V      V+V (**\*prevents intrusive H**)

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## Grounded pedagogical guidelines: *Must Reads*

Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) = The Bible

*Teaching Pronunciation: A course book and reference guide*, CUP

Grant (2014)

*Pronunciation Myths: Applying second language research to classroom teaching*, University of Michigan Press

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## The sheer physicality of it all ...

Learners need to change their breathing and articulatory setting to really « get » spoken English.

Messum & Young; Honikman; Kjellin

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## How to get into English gear?

- Speech Breathing
  - stress – unstress
- Articulatory Setting
  - vowels & consonants



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## 2 Components of speech sounds (Catford)

- **Initiation** = a bellows-like movement of an organ, that generates + or – air pressure adjacent to it in the vocal tract and thus initiates an egressive (outgoing) or ingressive (ingoing) flow of air
- **Articulation** = an organic posture or movement (usually in the mouth) that modulates the initiatory airflow in such a way as to generate a sound of some specific type

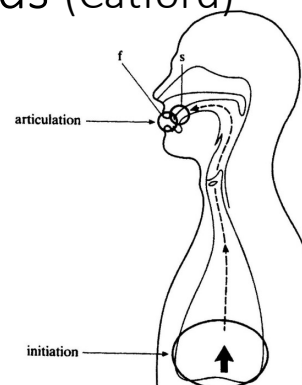


Fig. 2 Basic components of speech-sound production

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## 2 Components of speech sounds (Catford)

- **Initiation:** an activity which starts the flow of air, here the lungs
- **Articulation:** an activity which modulates or articulates the air-stream
  - /f/ lower lip & upper teeth
  - /s/ part of tongue just behind tip placed near the alveolar ridge

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## Speech breathing (Messum & Young)

- Lungs: the most common initiators in world's languages
- English = it's the **ONLY** type of initiation
- English speech breathing (SB) is pulsatile, not smooth as in other languages. **This is the basis for stress & reduction.**

**Q: How old were you  
when you could finally blow your own nose?**

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## Speech breathing (Messum & Young)

- Lungs: the most common initiators in world's languages
- English = it's the ONLY type of initiation
- English speech breathing (SB) is pulsatile, not smooth as in other languages. **This is the basis for stress & reduction.**
- Kids only master SB around age 5-6. They have to produce more pressure; adults no longer aware of it.
  - Until then, many kids use paradoxical breathing (compressing rib cage & pushing out the belly).
  - \*N.B.: The diaphragm normally moves downwards during inspiration and upwards during expiration.
- SB + relaxed lips = crucial to English articulatory setting

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## Stance, Posture

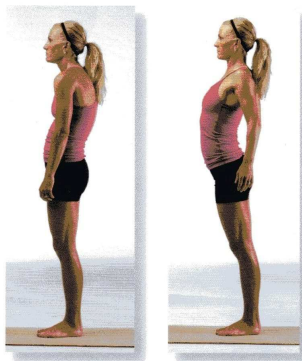


6.2 Mountain, side view

Yoga: mountain  
stance  
*good*

*bad*

to sit a pair of skis well



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*Nobody tries to surf with the posture of a ice skater.*



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## Articulatory Settings: French & English (Honikman)

	English	French
<b>Jaws</b>	Loosely closed (not clenched)	Slightly open
<b>Lips</b>	Neutral ; moderately active	Rounded; vigorously active in spreading & rounding
<b>State of oral cavity</b>	Relaxed	Cheeks contracted
<b>Main consonant articulation</b>	Tip-alveolar	Blade-dental
<b>Tongue :</b>		
<i>Anchorage</i>	To roof laterally	To floor centrally
<i>Tip</i>	Tapered	Untapered
<i>Body</i>	Slightly concave to roof	Convex to roof
<i>Underside</i>	Concave to roof	Neutral

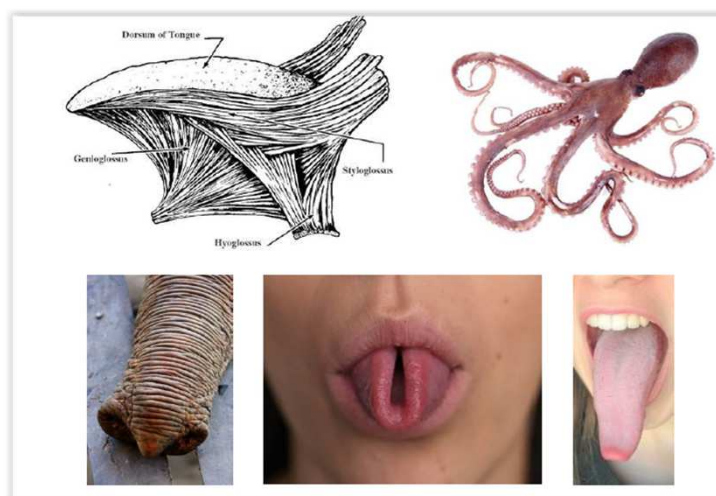
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## Articulators above the larynx

- Becoming aware of them
- Being able to distinguish their individual « actions » from one another
- Proprioception: (Am. Heritage Dictionary)  
*The unconscious perception of movement and spatial orientation arising from stimuli within the body itself.*
- Kinaesthetics: learning by doing 😊

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## Tongue Shape: Muscular hydrostat (Messum & Young)

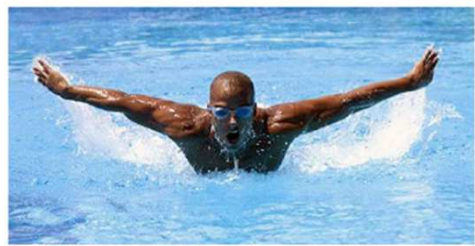


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## Tongue Shape (Messum & Young)

- cup of tea / tasse de thé
  - What part of your tongue is « working »?
  - Where is it « working »?
  - Is it the same for both languages?

Tongue Shape:  
English grooving ☺



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« It sounds crisp »: Tongue tip movement



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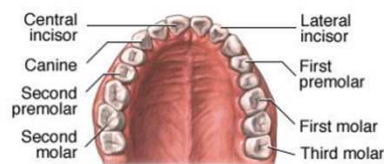
## « It sounds crisp »: Tongue tip movement

The tongue functions like a hinge, anchored laterally at the upper molars. This allows the tip & blade to move freely.



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## Tongue anchoring (Honikman)



Thus, the alveolar consonants of English—[t, d, n, r, s, z]<sup>2</sup> and generally [l]—require **lateral anchorage as far forward as the upper [second] pre-molars (but never beyond the [first] pre-molars)**. These teeth on either side of the roof of the mouth serve, as it were, as forward mooring-posts for the tongue, allowing the transverse part of the dorsum between them to operate as a **hinge** which enables the tip and blade to swing comfortably up and down, towards, to, and away from the alveolar ridge, but preventing the blade and tip from ranging much further forward without strain.<sup>3</sup> This anterior lateral contact is released for a following further back consonant or open or back vowel, and very slightly extended forward for dental sounds.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [r] is the American English flap.

<sup>3</sup> At this point, Honikman's footnote 12 reads, "Watching the tongue repeat quite naturally [t, d, n, l] a number of times in succession, without an intervening vowel, will show the action of the tongue."

<sup>4</sup> At this point, Honikman's footnote 13 reads, "Nearly all lingual sounds have a certain amount of lateral contact; the only ones that show none are open or far back vowels, far back consonants and, occasionally, clear [l]."

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## Exercise: Tongue anchoring

- Anchor your tongue further forward OR backward.
- Repeat this sentence with different anchoring:

*I'd like a cup of tea.*

- How easy/difficult is it to speak « normally »?

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## Exercise: Vowel lip rounding

- Say each one of these words alone and draw out the vowel as long as you can: *he, hay, ha, **hoe, who***
- Pay attention to the feeling in your lips when you make a **rounded vowel**. They will feel tighter, more clenched, as the vowel gets more rounded.
- Which ones make your lips feel tired? Notice that the rounded vowels are not all equally rounded.

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Vowel positioning diagram

Vowel lip rounding

Ashton & Shepherd

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## Exercise: French & English vowels

<b>French (tense)</b>	<b>English (lax)</b>
si	sea
qui	key
Emilie	Emily
parti	party
tout	too
tôt	tow
chaud	show

*French vowels are more tense – and consonants, too!*



## Crucial for English Pronunciation

- 1) pulsatile breathing + relaxed lips/jaw
- 2) tense-lax opposition is **systemic** in English = it runs through the entire language
  - vowel quality
  - aspiration
  - stress

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## Quality repetition (Kjellin)

- Choral repetition
- Phonological Loop
- Mirror neurons

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Thank you!

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