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# Can acting in an unfamiliar accent help ELF learners understand that accent?

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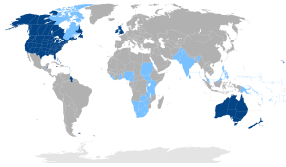
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# Can acting in an unfamiliar accent help ELF learners better understand that accent?



Major English-speaking countries  
Source : Wikipedia

## Why work on understanding unfamiliar accents?

- ▶ **English as a lingua franca** – Broad range of accents
- ▶ **L2(+) speakers' understanding can be impeded** by an unfamiliar accent
- ▶ **Student demand** – But teachers unsure how to address accents
- ▶ **Lack of classroom research** – Lab research exists, but usually with L1 listeners

## Related work

- ▶ **Unfamiliarity** – L2 listeners typically find it difficult to understand speakers with an unfamiliar, often non-standard accent (Ockey et al. 2016, inter alia)
- ▶ **Accent intelligibility training** – Intelligibility can be improved through training for L1 listeners
  - ESL teachers acquire this skill naturally (Gass & Veronis 1984)
  - L1 listeners can be trained in a lab setting (Floccia et al. 2009, inter alia)
  - **Prosody**: Sentence-level training showed better results for L1 listeners of an unfamiliar accent than word-level or segmental training (Kasperek 2008)
- ▶ Working with full sentences seems to help improve intelligibility for ELF students in classroom setting (Johansen 2018)
- ▶ There seem to be strong links between action and perception in L2 comprehension (Vukovic & Shtyrov 2014).

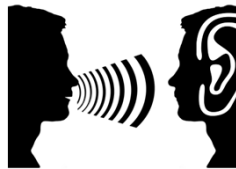


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## Experimental methodology

- ▶ Watching film (*The Angel's Share* – Glaswegian accent) – Student engagement
- ▶ Preparing and acting out short scenes from *The Angel's Share*
  - Groups of 2 to 5 students
  - Working individually with headsets, repeating lines while listening to the scene (~40 minutes)
  - Practicing together (~20 minutes)
  - Performing (with scripts) in front of the other groups
- ▶ **Pre- and post-tests:**
  - Formerly: Transcription of a short monologue (natural speech) – Used for L1 studies, less ideal for ELF
  - Future work: TOEFL listening sections, recreated by Glaswegian speakers (Text unchanged)



### Selected references

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