**An Introduction to Phonetics**

**To prepare for this lesson:**

* Read Manual pages for Day 1

**Optional Reading** (to learn more about today’s topics):

* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonetics
* Search in YouTube for “accents Amy Walker” and view a few of her videos.
* See the thumb-drive for resources on Phonetics
* <http://www.slideshare.net/richardbinkney/phonology-the-sound-patterns-of-language-made-easy>
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVIEahYPGjU>

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**Objectives**

* Be able to explain lesson terms
* Learn the purpose of focusing on phonetics
* Learn about apps and tools for phonetics
* Install a computer keyboard layout for each one’s new language.
* Gain confidence in your ability to learn how to produce unique sounds of another language.
* Practice affecting a British accent. (Time permitting)

**Terms and Definitions**

*Ego Permeability:* how easy it is for the learner to take on another role or sound different from what he or she sounds like in the native language. *Phonetics:* a study of distinct sounds employed in a particular language or dialect.

*Pronunciation:* a way of speaking a word especially a way that is accepted or generally understood by native speakers.

*Phonetics Tutor:*an individual who coaches you in resolving pronunciation challenges.

**Class Notes:** This sheet is designed for taking notes in class. Here are some of the issues we will be discussing during our session.

1. Why should learners spend time mastering the sounds of their target language?
2. How will good pronunciation lead to effective communication in your new language?

1. How does “ego permeability” determine my ability to create sounds in another language?

1. How do language speakers feel about those who pronounce their language in unexpected ways?

1. How important is self-forgiveness and humor?
2. What are some realistic pronunciation goals for an adult learner of a new language?
3. When should I start mastering the sounds of my new language?
4. How can I use apps and tools to help me learn to make new sounds?

* Your new language makes sounds that do not occur in your own language.  
  E.g., Wolof *Baax na*, Good! [x] sounds like an hissing cat.
* Your new language makes sounds that seem similar but are not identical.  
  E.g., French *Bon jour*, Good day! ‘Jour’ may sound like ‘jurr’ to an American.
* Same sounds may occur in two languages, but one language considers them to be the same, whilst another language makes them significantly different.  
  E.g., ‘l’ and ‘r’ for some Asian languages.
* Two languages may have a nearly identical sound that occurs in different parts of each language’s words. E.g., English ‘sing’ and Wolof /ŋas/, measles.

***WORKSHEET 1 –* Useful apps for learning new sounds**

*Introduction:* Besides learning from a human language helper or coach, there may

be some electronic tools that you’ll find helpful in mastering the sounds of your target language.

1. Download and install in your electronic devices, several free phonetics tools.

Apple® free apps

* Sounds — tap on symbol for sound, listen to words written in IPA, IPA writing exercises.
* IPA Phonetics — tap on symbol to see inside a real mouth saying sounds.
* IPAQR — displays symbols sequentially with sample English words & IPA spelling.
* AV Phonetics — provides charts of kinds of sounds with written, audio and visual representations. Highly recommended.

Android® free apps

* Phonetic Chart — tap on symbol for sound, then on sample English words using sound
* Phonetic IPA — see sound symbol with description, then tap on sample English word using sound
* AV Phonetics — provides charts of kinds of sounds with written, audio and visual representations. Highly recommended.

Software for Windows computers

* IPA Help from
* Speech Analyzer
* Wave Surfer
* Temporarily downloadable from www.paul-timothy.net/pages/software/sil

1. Install and try out in your personal computer a keyboard for your new language, that types its alphabet. Apple®, Linux® and Windows® operating systems provide keyboard layouts for Khmer, Thai, Turkish, Swahili and many other language alphabets.

Windows 10: Control Panel > Language > Add a language > Group languages by: Language name > Click on a language > Add. Available keyboards will now appear by abbreviation in the Windows task bar.

***SUPPLEMENT 1 –***First steps in affecting a British accent

*Introduction:* While there remain hundreds of differences between standard American and British English and their many regional dialects, there are a few pronunciation “hints” that Americans can adopt easily, in order to sound British.

Why would an American want to sound British?

Read the following texts repeatedly, incorporating each time another of the seven hints below:

(1) Better us a little dog than all the cats in France.

(2) Do not mettle with my metal medal.

(3) Easier to defend a good cause, than to deny a wrong deed done half-heartedly.

(4) InternationalPhoneticAlphabet(dot)com.

1. Distinguish [t] from [d] in most words (e.g., “butter” and “buddr” or “buar”).
2. Pronounce medial and final “r” as a vowel lengthener, rather than as a consonant (e.g., “butta” and “buddr”).
3. Pronounce most [o] with slightly rounded lips (e.g., “dot com” and “daht cahm”)
4. Speak a little slower, in order to pronounce every word completely   
   (e.g., “Pass the butta, please” and “Plz pasa buar”).
5. Pronounce common words ending in “all” with very rounded lips   
   (e.g., “wall” and “wahl”).
6. Exaggerate your lip and facial movements. Watch your face in a mirror.
7. For French loan words, borrow the French a and o vowels (e..g., cause and cuz).

During this exercise, how did you sound to yourself? How did you feel about yourself? Silly? Funny? Embarrassed? As a phony? As a Brit?