




### 1.3 Phonology – Trainer Notes

<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<i>By the end of this session participants will be able to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explain key concepts used in describing different elements of pronunciation</li> <li>transcribe text into phonemic script with the help of a pronunciation chart</li> </ul>		
<b>KEY CONCEPTS</b>	<b>Sound</b> phoneme phonemic symbol phonemic script minimal pair diphthong	<b>Stress</b> word stress stress patterns unstressed (weak) syllable schwa main (sentence) stress	<b>Connected speech</b> intonation contractions rhythm
<b>MATERIALS</b>	① Same sounds  ② Mind Map + Answer sheet ③ Stress pattern  ④ What is phonology + Answer sheet ⑤ Pronunciation and teaching ⑥ Phonemic chart		

 To read or print the phonemic symbols on the session plan and worksheets, a piece of free software needs to be installed. Jan Mulder's Phonmap v3.1 can be downloaded <http://phonmap.com/download.asp>. It is important to download and install version 3 because, unlike later versions, it does not require a licence...


## Procedure

### 1 Outcomes ▼

Explain learning outcomes for session to participants

### 2 Pronunciation ▼

- Elicit and write up all the words participants associate with pronunciation e.g. sounds, stress, intonation, rhythm, syllables, accent, etc.
- Ask what difficulties they/their learners have with English pronunciation.

 Accent, which is often due to variations in vowel production, is a less likely contributor to misunderstandings than other features of pronunciation. For example, misplacing word stress or using the wrong intonation patterns across a sentence can confuse listeners or convey the wrong message.

### 3 Introduction to phonemes



- Put following on the board:

\bjʊ:tɪfʊl\

and elicit from participants what it is (the word 'beautiful' in phonemic script) and where they might find it (a dictionary, a classroom, etc).

- Focus on the various components and check that participants are familiar with:

\ \ = backslash symbols to indicate something written in phonemic script

' = stress marker

ɪ = long vowel sound

b j = phonemic script or phonemic alphabet

- Check that participants know the meaning of **phoneme** and ask them to give examples. Demonstrate how a **minimal pair** consists of 2 words with a single phoneme different.
- Give participants a copy of the phonemic chart for reference. If they are not familiar with the chart briefly explain the sounds.




A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that can carry **meaning** (e.g. in plural forms: *book* – *books*) But more importantly, it distinguishes words from each other, e.g. minimal pairs: *fill* – *feel*, *bag* – *bad*, where the difference between pairs of words is a single phoneme.



**Tip** – There is a downloadable pronunciation chart on the teachingEnglish website at: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/try/resources/pronunciation/phonemic-chart>

### 4 Phoneme practice



- Cut up worksheet  *Same sounds* and distribute word cards to participants.
  - Ask participants to move around saying their words to each other until they find someone with the same sound underlined. Monitor to ensure they are able to pronounce the sounds correctly.
  - Feedback - check words and discuss differences between spelling and pronunciation. Emphasise the usefulness of phonemic script in understanding how a word is pronounced.
- ➔ As a follow up activity, give participants a short text (one or two sentences) and ask them to transcribe it into phonemic script. Stronger participants should be able to do this without referring to the phonemic chart.



One interesting sound spelling irregularity in English is the pronunciation of the combination of letters 'ough' in various words. For example: *though* (əʊ), *through* (uː), *bough* (aʊ), *cough* (ɒf), *thought* (ɔː), etc.

### 5 Aspects of pronunciation ②



- Remind participants of the brainstorming activity at the start of the session (words they associated with 'pronunciation'). Explain that they are going to look more specifically at terminology.
- Give each pair ② *Mind Map* and ask participants to complete the boxes using the words provided.

(A key concept here is that pronunciation is made up of **Sounds, Intonation** and **Word Stress**. These aspects are also used when forming **Connected Speech**).

- Feedback - see ② *Mind Map - Answer sheet*. Elicit/clarify meanings of the terminology with examples as necessary.

### 6 Word stress ③



- Give each participant a word card from ③ *Stress pattern*. The aim is to find someone whose word has the same stress pattern. This forms a new pair for the next activity.
- Feedback - whole class discussion on why stress is important. As mentioned above, wrongly placed stress is a barrier to effective communication.



Although there are some general patterns for word stress there are also many exceptions so it is difficult to rely on hard and fast rules. For example, in two syllable adjectives and nouns, stress tends to fall on the first syllable, eg, *apple, happy*, but in *hotel*, the stress is on the second. Two-syllable verbs on the other hand tend to stress the second syllable, e.g., *apply, object*. As the last example shows, stress also changes according to part of speech, e.g. **object** (noun), **object** (verb)

### 7 Phonology true or false ④



- Give out the worksheet ④ *Phonology true or false*. This can be done as a team quiz or as group-work.
- Feedback - see ④ *Phonology true or false - Answer sheet*. The aim of the activity is to consolidate the concepts and clarify anything participants are unsure about.

### 8 Pronunciation and teaching ⑤



- Put participants in small groups to discuss statements ⑤ *Pronunciation and teaching*.
- Elicit feedback from each group and summarise main points. See ⑤ *Pronunciation and teaching* - suggested answers for ideas