

PROTOTYPING INSTRUCTIONS WHERE
PROSODY AND PRAGMATICS ARE COMBINED
IN ORDER TO IMPROVE EFL ADVANCED
LEARNERS' LANGUAGE PRODUCTION

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Pronunciation & Pragmatics

A speaker's need to be understood and accepted



Linguistic Transfer:

“Whatever can transfer will” (MacWhinney, 2005)

Segmentals and Suprasegmentals

Pragmatics

- 
- Very little pronunciation teaching
 - Pronunciation practice is decontextualized
 - Teachers training

Research question

What characteristics should be emphasized in instructions for improving oral production of EFL learners in Estonia?



DESIGN-BASED RESEARCH



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Transfer	Learner	Comments
Pitch	K, L, I, M	Pitch of the voice is too low, hard to hear.
Stress	J, K, I, M	Stress is not intense enough.
Duration	all	Lengthy words are pronounced by syllables, no idea about the polysyllabic shortening.
Intonation	all	Strong transfer especially K and I.
Tempo	J, K, I	Speech tempo is constant all the time.

Rewiring Articulatory Control

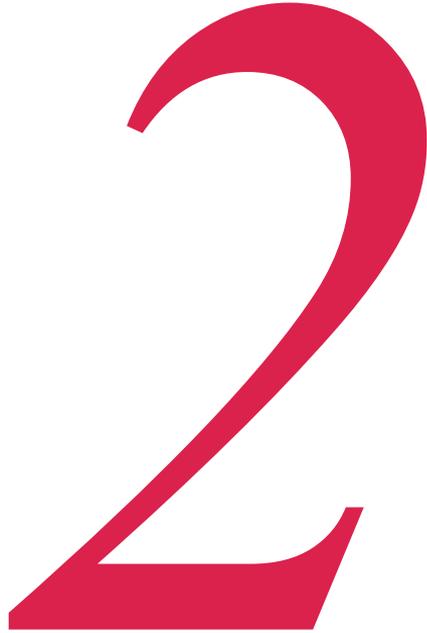
- Pitch
- Stress
- Duration
- Intonation
- Tempo



Improving segmentals

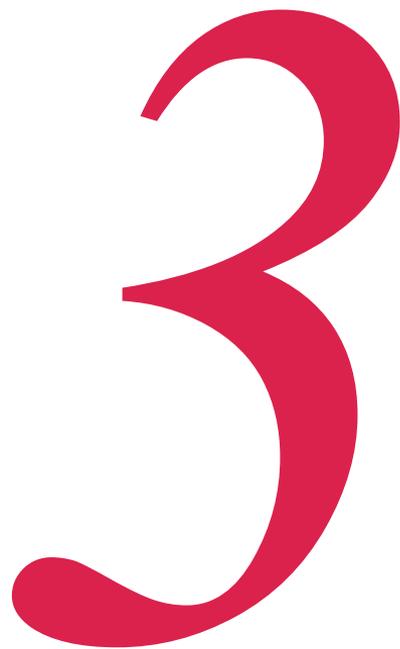
- Requires learners self-awareness and self-control
- Contrast with L1

English stress involves more vocal effort than stress in Estonian/Russian. An English speaker wastes more breath on one word and articulates the stressed syllable of a word with a stronger exhalation which makes other syllables of a word sound significantly quieter.



Native speakers exhale on the sounds [k], [p] and [t]. Using a comparison with L1, encourage the learners to exhale when they pronounce the syllables with these sounds.

- Repetition



Improving suprasegmentals

- The habit of lengthening words should be stopped
- Words in English have their own duration
- Introduce polysyllabic shortening
- Practice: *Sleep - sleepy - sleepiness*

Info - inform - informative - information

Note - noted - notable - notability

Improving prosodic pragmatics

Fast speech

- Negativity within the message
- Irritation of the speaker
- Negative particle in its reduced form -n't

I didn't like that lunch!

Slow speech

You look lovely today!

Evaluation

- Walkthrough
- Expert appraisal
- Screening

Discussion

- Self-awareness
- Self-control and practice to refashion the production of familiar sounds
- Generalisation
- Colour highlighting to guide both intonation and speed
- Teacher's ability to demonstrate contrasts

CONTRIBUTIONS

- Developed specially for the EFL learners in Estonia to stop their L1 transfer
- The solutions interconnect and can be personalised as well as adapted to any level
- Self-control empowers learners
- Generalisation - simplifying metalanguage, making pronunciation achievable
- Encourage Creativity

What characteristics should be emphasized in instructions for improving oral production of EFL learners in Estonia?

- engage learners' metacognition
- teach segmentals and suprasegmentals, use texts containing both negative and positive messages
- demonstrate prosodic differences between L1 and English
- emphasize and practise stronger stress in English
- emphasize and practise a higher pitch of the voice in vowels
- teach about the duration in words as well as the tempo in sentences
- guide the intonation and tempo with colour highlighting
- encourage learners to create their own texts

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

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