

Creative Techniques for Teaching Conversational Rhythm

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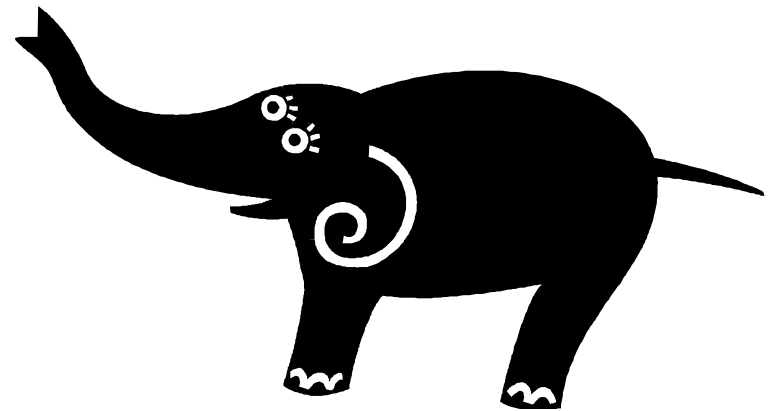
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Warm-you-up!

/a/



/o/



Video links to various haptic warm-ups done before speaking/pronunciation classes:

<http://bit.ly/1GY8s5d>

<http://bit.ly/1zR9oet>

Working on rhythm is key for helping L2 learners improve their pronunciation, yet rhythm tends to be challenging to teach:

“Our sense of self and community are bound up in the **speech-rhythms** of our first language (L1). These rhythms were learned in the first year of life and are **deeply rooted** in the minds of students” (Gilbert, 2008)

Rhythm

- Teaching/learning of English rhythm is problematic (Setter, 2006)
- Few resources/textbooks move beyond canonical rhythm with limited effect on learner intelligibility
- This workshop demonstrates 3 haptic techniques that L2 instructors can use in their classrooms to help L2 learners move from move canonical rhythm to conversational rhythm

Canonical Rhythm

- Set patterns, regular timing
- One stressed syllable per thought group
- Based on grammatical boundaries

Conversational Rhythm

- Irregular timing, pauses, hesitations, bursts
- Secondary stress often apparent
- Based on communicative intention

What is Haptic Pronunciation Teaching? (Essential Haptic-integrated English Pronunciation- EHIEP)

- Systematic use of gesture: using **movement plus touch**
- Integration pronunciation with other skills
- In class, spontaneous correction and feedback
- Persistent homework practice

For more information on haptic pronunciation teaching:

- <http://hipoeces.blogspot.ca>
- www.actonhaptic.com

Why Haptic?

- Exploratory (and temporary) sense
 - Integrates sight, sound, movement, with touch
 - Captures attention (3-seconds!) of learners
 - Examples: haptics, surgery, gaming, prosthetics, haptic cinema, iPhones
- **Touch is exploratory – like picking up a sweater to feel what is like. Once that happens, sight and tactile memory takes over. Likewise, in haptic-based teaching, touch functions to set up the learning process and unite/bond the other senses. In other words, haptic at the beginning often facilitates learning and then fades out or recedes to a large extent**

The Process



CANONICAL RHYTHM



CONVERSATIONAL RHYTHM

Syllable Butterfly

Demo video available at:

<http://www.actonhaptic.com/#!/demos/c1yws>



Syllable Butterfly groups usually:

- Are maximum 5-7 syllables in length
- Are more frequent if there is more excitement or emotion

There is one (main/anchored/focal) syllable in each focus group which is:

- More prominent than the other syllables in the group
- Related to the information structure of the discourse

The Stressed Syllable in each Focus Group is Usually Located:

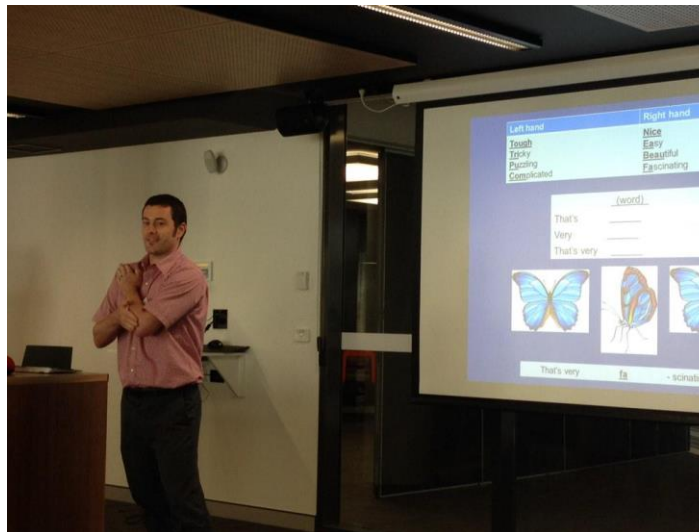
- On new or key information
- On content words
- To the right, near the end of a sentence, clause or focal group

Some useful guidelines can be also found in Gilbert (2008) at

http://www.cambridge.org/other_files/downloads/esl/booklets/Gilbert-Teaching-Pronunciation.pdf

Butterfly Positions

- Ball in left hand and on the right shoulder deltoid muscle
- Fingers of right hand on the outside of the forearm muscle



Note: Photo used with the permission of Lesley Cioccarelli who took it at the 2nd Pronunciation Symposium at the University of New South Wales Canberra (December, 5, 2014)

Key Words

Tough (or Nice)	(1 tap)
That's tough (or nice)	(2 taps)
Really tough (or nice)	(3 taps)
That's really tough (or nice)	(4 taps)

1. Two-syllable word “**tricky**” (or easy)
2. Three-syllable word “**puzzling**” (or beautiful)
3. Four-syllable word “**complicated**” (or fascinating)

Once students have been trained in the Butterfly, they can proceed to dialogue work:

1A: I **think** / we've **got** it / figured **out**.

• ○ • ○ • • • ○

B: **Oh.** / **Well.** / What is it?

○ ○ • ○ •

2A: Your **muffler** / has a small **hole** in it.

• ○ • • • • ○ • •

• B: Oh, **gosh.** / Does it **need** to be / **replaced** right now?

• ○ • • ○ • • • ○ • •

3A: **Yeah,** / pretty **soon.** / It **isn't** going to / last much **longer.**

○ • • ○ • ○ • • • • • ○ •

B: **Huh.** / What'll it **cost**?

○ • • • ○

Rhythm Fight Club

Demo video available at:

<http://www.actonhaptic.com/#!/demos/c1yws>



Symbols Explained

Ball in right hand

- P **Punch**, with arm extended out almost as far as possible
- < Short **jab** that goes **back toward** the body
- > Short jab that goes **out away** from the body

The Rhythmic “Feet” of English (1-2)

P

Cool

< P

That’s cool

> < P

Really cool

< > < P

That’s really cool

P <

Funky

< P <

That’s funky

> < P <

Really funky

< > < P <

That’s really funky

The Rhythmic “Feet” of English (3-4)

P < >	S uper cool
< P < >	That’s s uper cool
> < P < >	Really s uper cool
< > < P < >	That’s really s uper cool
P < > <	S uper funky
< P < > <	That’s s uper funky
> < P < > <	Really s uper funky
< > < P < > <	That’s really s uper funky

Rhythm Fight Club! 1-2

Training can, of course, also include a speaker's negative/bad attitude:

P **Bad!**
< **P** That's **bad!**
> < **P** Very **bad!**
< > < **P** That's very **bad!**

P < **Nasty!**
< **P** < That's **nasty!**
> < **P** < Very **nasty!**
< > < **P** < That's very **nasty!**

Rhythm Fight Club! 3-4

P < >	D angerous!
< P < >	That's d angerous!
> < P < >	Very d angerous!
< > < P < >	That's very d angerous!
P < > <	D evastating!
< P < > <	That's d evastating!
> < P < > <	Very d evastating!
< > < P < > <	That's very d evastating!

Flow

Individual syllables do not get attended to anymore. Just pull your right arm back, punch with arm extended out almost as far as possible on the stressed/strong syllable, and then move back again:

<<<< P << <

Oh that's very **d**evastating!

<<<<< P <<<

You know that's very **d**evastating!

<<<<<< P <<<

Oh you know that's very **d**evastating!

Disaster at the House!

After training is completed, proceed to dialogue work:

1A: **Hey!** Can I **help** you?

P >< P <

B: We got a **disaster** at the house!

><>< P <><>

2A: What'ya **got**?

>< P

B: **Water** coming out / of the **furnace**!

P <><> >< P <

3A: Any **idea** / where it is **coming** from?

<>< P < <>< P <>

B: **Ooooh!** I didn't' look **behind** it.

P <><>< P <

4A: What's right a**bove** it?

< > < P <

B: The ja**cu**zzi . . .

> < P <

5A: Go home and **call** me / if **shutting** off / the ja**cu**zzi doesn't help.

< > < P <

< P < >

> < P < > < >

B: I'll bet that's **it!!!**

< > < P

6A: You never **know**. / Good luck on **that** one!

< > < P

< > < > P <

B: **Thanks!** You're the **greatest!**

P

> < P <

Tai Chi Fluency

Demo video will be available soon at:

<http://www.actonhaptic.com/#!/demos/c1yws>



Tai Chi

- Driver of **fluency** and **flow**
- Creates natural **linking** and **reduction** of **vowel quality**
- Ball in right hand
- Catch on stressed syllable

Tai Chi PMP

- Movement goes from the **left to the right**
- Use same key words and phrases as in Butterfly and Flight Club

Potential Key Words:

Tough/Nice

Tricky/Easy

Dangerous/Beautiful

Complicated/Fascinating

Tai Chi Practice (Family History)

After training is completed, proceed to dialogue work:

1A: How about **your** family tree?

B: I'm basically **Greek** / and Swiss-**Irish**.

2A: That's quite a combination, / **isn't** it?

B: At **home** / we often had **great** food / and **dancing**!

3A: I believe that! / What about your grand parents?

B: Dad's parents / both came from Greece as children.

4A: Uh-huh. /And your mother's parents background?

B: I know her father was Irish / but I'm not as sure / about her mother. / Swiss, I think.

**Keep in touch & email me if you have
any questions!**



References

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Lessac, A. (1997). *The use and training of the human voice: A bio-dynamic approach to vocal life* (3rd ed.). New York: Drama Book Specialists.

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Appendix A - Short History of Haptic-Integrated Pronunciation Teaching

- Lessac (1997) “Train the body first!”
- Accent reduction (Acton, 1984)
- Tactile/kinesthetic techniques (2005)
- Classroom use - EHIEP v1.0 (2006)
- AHEPS v2.0 (2012) – (Video system)
- AHEPS v3.0 (2014) - (Multi-purpose)
- AHEPS v4.0 (2015) – (Cloud-based)

Appendix B - Acton Haptic-integrated English Pronunciation System (AHEPS, v3.0)

“Bees and Butterflies: Serious Fun!”

- Student Guide (11 modules)
- Student Practice videos (DVDs or streaming)
- Instructor Notes
- Instructor Teaching videos (DVDs or streaming)
- www.actonhaptic.com