

Teaching English Pronunciation to Japanese University Students : A Modern Approach (Part Two)

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Abstract

The first part of this paper put forward some desiderata for the teaching of pronunciation, which are now briefly recapitulated. There follows a discussion of techniques used by this teacher in three contexts : regular *eikaiwa* lessons ; pronunciation lessons forming part of a week-long summer intensive course for university students and including material to improve their comprehension of non-standard types of spoken English ; and a speech clinic specially designed as a half-year course in pronunciation skills for first-year *tandai* students. In conclusion, there is a brief summary of the main points, theoretical and practical, raised in the two parts of this paper.

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF DESIDERATA

The first part of this paper offered the following criteria for the teaching of English pronunciation to Japanese university students :

1) it should include stress and intonation as well as phonemes, and aim to give students eventual competence in all these elements in the context of con-

nected speech.

2) the aim of pronunciation teaching should be, in the long term, to secure *minimum general intelligibility* and, in the case of students preparing for a career where precision in speech is essential, *high acceptability*, these terms being as defined by Gimson (1980 : 303).

3) pronunciation teaching should not neglect training in recognition, and this may include, in appropriate cases, exposure to material using non-standard (dialect or non-native) types of spoken English likely to be met by students in their dealings with foreigners (travelling abroad, work situations in Japan).

4) short-term objectives should correspond to the teaching situation : regular *eikaiwa* courses might include, in the first year, a review of all the main problems in segmental phonemes (e. g. /l/ and /r/, /s/ and /ʃ/, /ɔ:/ and /əʊ/), stress and intonation patterns, with refinements and attention to details (e. g. homorganic lateral release in *bottle*, *medal*) as opportunity occurs in successive academic years. Drills and topics for pronunciation lessons can be drawn from the regular textbook material as it comes up. The pronunciation component of an intensive course, such as a one-week summer camp, could use specially written texts concentrating on typical problems in conversational material, e. g. the intonation of questions, or the frequency of *schwa*. A similar approach could guide the selection and presentation of material in a speech clinic, account being taken of any special facilities (language laboratory, speech analyser, etc.) which may be available.

Here are some examples of ways in which the present writer implements pronunciation teaching. They are drawn from practical experience and have in most cases been used a number of times, but with differences depending on such variables as the time available, the level of the students, the speed with which the teaching points were grasped — even the time of day and season of the year. The techniques one uses may not be the same at nine o'clock on a crisp winter morning with a class of young women, when brisk drills and mechanical exercises are

useful to liven up the students, as at eight thirty on a hot evening in summer with a mixed group of thirty students in a non-air-conditioned room, when exhaustion and flagging interest require much ingenuity, including a slower pace and much use of amusing (but always relevant) gestures and blackboard sketches to induce learning at almost any cost.

REGULAR EIKAIWA COURSES

Example 1: Third-year university night-school class, with textbook *Streamline English Destinations* (Oxford University Press) Unit 14 'Money'. **Teaching Point:** the main focus of the lesson is on comprehension of a dialogue about money, but the incidental pronunciation-directed work is on stress difference between compound nouns with form . . . ing + . . . , e. g. filling station, sleeping pill, moving van, and sequences of participle + noun, each having strong stress ' ' e. g. dancing girl (a girl who is dancing), sleeping man, moving van (a van which is moving).

Procedure: First, the exercise is done in class by drawing Ss attention to the example ('A place where you can fill your petrol tank is a filling station') and by getting them to finish the exercise by working together in pairs. The correct answers (waiting room, sleeping pill, driving licence, etc.) are elicited from the Ss. T then writes on the board:

filling station waiting room sleeping pill

and repeats them.

T: Listen to how I say them (repeats 'filling station etc. emphasising stress-pattern)

T makes Ss repeat after T: filling station, waiting room . . .

T: which word is stronger – *filling* or *station*?

Ss: Filling

T repeats question about the other compound words and writes the stress marks on the board :

ˈfilling station ˈwaiting room ˈsleeping pill

Ss repeat the compound words again after T.

T gets Ss to face one another in pairs and say the complete sentences to one another :

S 1 : A place where you can fill your petrol tank is a ˈfilling station.

S 2 : A special room where you can wait is a ˈwaiting room.

S 1 : A pill which helps you to sleep is a ˈsleeping pill etc.

T : Now look at this picture (T makes a sketch of a man sleeping in bed :



T : What's he doing?

S 1 : He's sleeping.

T : Yes, he's a ˈsleeping ˈman (emphasising stress) — a man who is sleeping. What about this?



S 2 : It's a cat. It's sleeping.

T : So it's a ? (Ss : A ˈsleeping ˈcat)

T : Yes, a ˈsleeping ˈcat. A cat that is sleeping.

Now what about this? What kind of pill is it?



S 3 : A 'sleeping pill.

T : Yes, it' s a 'sleeping pill. A pill we use for sleeping, a pill to help us to sleep. Notice how we say it – a 'sleeping pill. We don't say 'sleeping 'pill. That would mean 'A pill that is sleeping', which is nonsense, isn't it?

T now uses sketches to give other contrasts, for instance, between 'moving 'van and 'moving van, or 'singing 'bird and 'singing bird. T then lists on the board various items at random, e. g. cooking oil, running water, shaving soap, walking stick, boxing glove, sailing boat, sinking boat, and gets the students to say them, individually and then in chorus, making sure the right stress-pattern is used for each item. Any mistakes must be corrected immediately ; humour can be used to point out the incongruity of wrong stress-patterns :

(T points to item *walking stick* on board)

S 1 : 'walking 'stick.

T : Really? (T makes drawing)



T : 'That's what you said – a stick that is walking.

What should it be?

S 1 : 'walking stick

T : Right! Everybody . . .

Ss : 'walking stick

In concluding work on this point of stress, the teacher might point out to the class that sometimes compounds like filling-station, singing-bird, etc., where the function or use of the noun is being described, are written in hyphenated form, but this does not happen when the *-ing*-word describes what the noun is doing, as in moving car, sleeping cat, etc.

Example 2: First-year *tandai* class, with textbook *Fast Forward 1* (Oxford U. P.) Unit 3 'Saying what you want'. *Teaching Point* : typical intonation patterns of an invitation-acceptance sequence based on a conversation in a pub, recorded on the tape accompanying the textbook.

Procedure : First of all, the taped conversation is played to the students, perhaps twice, while they listen. T asks questions to establish comprehension of the conversation : What time of year is it? (Winter) How do you know? (It's cold outside) What does John want to drink? (a half of bitter) And Sue? (A glass of red wine) T checks new vocabulary and makes any necessary clarifications, e. g. *a half of best bitter* = half a pint of best bitter beer (perhaps introducing the names of other types of beer such as *mild, light ale, lager, stout*. T then draws Ss' attention to the extracts from the conversation which have been printed in the textbook (Would you like a drink, John? /Thank you, a half of bitter, please/ What would you like, Sue? etc.). Ss close books, listen to the bits as recorded on tape and repeat, with T using hand gestures to indicate the intonation. Special points for attention might include (i) rise on names (John, Sue, Rod) when they are used as a short way of eliciting requests e. g. And ↗ Sue? = What do you want to drink, Sue? and (ii) the fall on ↘ Thank you (=please) in response to an offer. Tell Ss to note that although in this conversation *please* has a rising intonation, ↗ Thank you, used for routine responses, to a shop assistant after change has been given, etc., would be felt to be rude in the present context. After Ss have mastered the intonation patterns, a short situational dialogue could be built up on the board, with the aid of a simple 'tariff' showing the prices of some drinks in a bar, including perhaps bitter, stout, lager, Coke and orange-juice, and the price of each item. T then acts as host, with dialogue like this :

T : 'Would you 'like a ↘ drink, ↗ Mariko?

S 1 : ↘ Thank you, a 'half of ↘ lager, ↗ please.

T : And 'what's ↘ yours, ↗ Tomomi?

S 2 : An 'orange-juice, please.

When this has been mastered, all the parts are taken over by Ss, who make their own choices of drinks. In the next stage, the class is divided into groups of three or four, with Ss having conversations in which one is the host buying a round of drinks for the others. Finally, if the Ss are good enough, the conversation could be further extended to include a barman (or barmaid) who takes the order and quotes the price :

S 3 : 'Two 'halves of ,lager and an 'orange-juice, ,please.

S 4 : 'Yes, ,madam, ,that'll be 'two 'pounds ,fifty.

S 3 : 'Two 'pounds ,fifty — 'here you ,are.

S 4 : ,Thank you.

This final dialogue reinforces what has been taught about the intonation of *thank you* in different contexts.

It will be noted that in these two sample lessons the pronunciation teaching is integral with, but subordinate to, the main purpose, in the first case a vocabulary session on compound nouns and in the second a situational dialogue providing training in the appropriate conversational forms for offering and ordering drinks at a pub. The amount of time spent on actual pronunciation practice will therefore be quite short and pure drill will be at a minimum. In the first lesson the differences in stress-patterns between compound nouns and *-ing* + noun groups are not very hard to teach or even particularly important and the above sequence need only take five minutes of class-time ; the pub situation in the second lesson has inherent interest for the students by helping them to generate correct language for a pleasurable social situation and this helps to reinforce the intonation patterns quickly.

In the next groups of lessons we shall analyse — from a summer camp pronunciation course and a half-year once-a-week speech clinic — the emphasis is squarely on pronunciation itself. There is a danger that prolonged drilling activi-

ties will bore the students, so wherever possible dialogues need to be introduced and drill material must be chosen and handled in such a way as to sustain interest. In short, elements of a game-like atmosphere are useful for these types of course, as long as they do not get out of hand and the lesson degenerates into mere entertainment. It is this teacher's experience that pronunciation courses are the hardest to balance between transmission of information, practice of the information imparted, integration of teaching goals with real-life situations and light touches to relieve tension and make the important points of the lesson memorable – all of which are necessary for successful learning.

INTENSIVE COURSE IN PRONUNCIATION SKILLS

This was a course designed for use with five mixed groups of 13–14 students from several universities, using original material. The occasion was a one-week summer camp in which seven teachers took part – two Japanese, with responsibility for classes in Newspaper English and English by Radio, and live native speakers who conducted workshops, i. e. highly interactive, practical sessions, involving extensive group- and pairwork. In intercultural studies, discussion, reading comprehension and other topics, this writer's assignment being a Speech Workshop. The entire enrolment of 66 students (56 women, 10 men) was divided into five groups of 13 or 14 with a timetable designed so that each group had three one-hour periods during the course with each of the foreign instructors. There is a sense in which this course can hardly be described as 'intensive', given the small number of contact hours on any given topic, but the pressure on the students, who had all their classes, including those from the Japanese teachers, in English and also had to attend English-only activities outside the classroom in the evenings, produced a good attitude for concentrated studies.

The Speech Workshop was built around eight handouts :

1) a set of notes on pronunciation – summarising the main problems of Japanese students with English pronunciation and pointing out that intonation and stress were important areas of speech study : these notes were intended for use as background material by the students ;

2) a list of signs and symbols, phonetic and stress/intonation related, which would be used on the course : for reference while the course was in progress ;

3) a handout containing notes on three major types of falling intonation (see below), some phoneme and stress problems and a Dialogue exemplifying all of these : for use in the first and second lessons of the course ;

4) a handout of a tapescript from a recording of six different types of spoken English, including some regional dialects and foreign accents, with a total of thirty words deleted, representing a cloze-type test for use at the end of the first lesson ;

5) a handout of the complete tapescript of the above : for students' reference after the test ;

6) a handout containing notes on three major types of rising intonation (see below) ; more phoneme and stress problems and a Dialogue : for use in the latter part of the second lesson and most of the third lesson ;

7) a handout of a second tapescript of different accents for use in a second cloze-type test at the end of the third lesson ;

8) the completed version of the tapescript in 7) : for students' reference.

In retrospect it is easy to see that the course had many flaws. There was not enough time to cover all the material adequately, and the work on different kinds of spoken English was too sketchy and the cloze-type test too full of variables to admit of any but tentative conclusions. However, the students seemed to find the material from handouts 3 and 6 interesting and in particular the treatment of intonation, which many of them perceived to be a very difficult aspect of English not amenable to convenient 'rules' of the kind so popular with Japanese students. The parts of the lessons where these handouts were used went briskly and the students

were responsive and lively, suggesting that this approach was on the right track. The work on accents was less popular, partly because students had the philosophy that only 'good accents' should be studied – though some of them admitted that they had found practical difficulty in understanding people abroad when they used non standard pronunciations. This suggests that students need to be educated into acceptance of a broader spectrum of regional and non-native accents for recognition ability.

The following examples are from the classwork using Handout 6 and one of the cloze-type tests on accents.

Example 1 : Teaching Points : / əʊ , ɔ:/, /f, h/, speeding up on weak syllables between strong ones, rising intonation patterns.

Procedure : This course includes practice of the basic intonation patterns of English, presented in a simplified form as three falling and three rising tunes, based on O'Connor and Arnold (1973) and O'Connor (1980); the falling tunes (Low Fall, High Fall, Rise-Fall) have already been dealt with earlier in the course and some of their uses outlined (LF for statements, descriptions, most tag-questions and plain wh-questions; HF for surprise, RF for extreme surprise, horror, etc.). A previous dialogue has incorporated practice of all these intonation patterns and also of some phonemic points of importance, notably the weak vowel / ə /. In this lesson, T presents three rising intonations (Low Rise, High Rise and Fall-Rise), showing how LR is used in Yes/No questions, for certain responses on the telephone ('Hel,lo? , Yes?), for wh-questions showing interest or cordiality ('What did you 'do , yesterday?) HR for echoing and disbelief, often from the start of the utterance (, Who did you 'say was 'coming?) and FR for doubt and hesitation ('Well . . . I 'might be , able to . . .) and reassurance ('Don't , worry. 'You'll be all , right). When Ss have done some practice on these, T passes on to the phoneme problems.

A) T writes up on board :

/əʊ /	/ɔ:/
sown	sawn
known	gnawn
shown	Sean

Drilling is done in stages :

i) T makes sounds, asks Ss to listen for difference : T also points out that for /əʊ/ there is lipmovement, but not for /ɔ:/

ii) T gets Ss to repeat the words for /əʊ/ ; first T, then S 1, S 2, S 3 . . . then all Ss.

iii) process repeated with words for /ɔ:/.

iv) T invites S 1 to say a word, other Ss guess which column the word came from. If the words are incorrectly chosen, more repetition drill is done. T has to judge whether the mistakes come from S 1 saying the word incorrectly, or from other Ss mishearing it.

v) T practises sentences with frequent incidence of target sounds : *Oh no, don't go/ Paul and Sean are on the lawn with a ball/ Paul bowls the ball to Joan.*

B) Practice of /f/ and /h/ followed by /u : / and /ju : /. This can be done effectively with a story about a man named Hugh who is reading a book with a reading lamp when the fuse breaks. This gives rise to a four-line dialogue, presented by T, then repeated in chorus, then done in pairs S ↔ S :

A : Hugh's fuse is broken.

B : Whose fuse?

A : Hugh's fuse!

B : How confusing!

After phonemes, there is short practice of a rhythm drill with a growing number of weak syllables between two strong ones. It can be put on the board :

O o O
 HUGH 's in ROME
 O o o O
 HUGH was in ROME
 O o o o O
 HUGH must be in ROME
 O o o o o O
 HUGHie must be in ROME

Practice is by T getting Ss to repeat each line after T, who claps hands to keep up the rhythm and ensure that speeding up takes place on weak syllables.

Finally, all the elements of the lesson are put into context by means of a dialogue :

PETER AND JONATHAN

Peter : Is Hugh Mayhew still around? I haven't seen him for a few weeks.

Jonathan : Didn't you know? Hugh's in Rome.

Peter : What did you say? Rome? Hugh's in Rome? Hughie's in Rome? Really? I can't believe it! I'll phone him!

Jonathan : Do you know his number? It was in that fawn phonebook that got lost.

Peter : It's in my diary. I think it's in my diary. I think it must be in my diary.

Yes! Here it is.

(He dials the number. No answer)

Jonathan : Well?

Peter : No reply. So Hughie must still be in Rome.

It will be noted that the dialogue contains many instances of rising intonations, e. g. L R (Is [↑]Hugh [↓]Mayhew still a [↓]round?) HR ([↓]what [↑]did [↑]you [↑]say?) and FR (I [↑]think it's in my [↓]diary) ; also /əʊ/, ɔ:/ (Rome, phonebook, fawn),

/hju : / (Hugh Mayhew), growing groups for rhythm practice (Hugh's in Rome, Hughie's in Rome, Hughie must be in Rome ; I think it's in my diary, I think it must be in my diary). Care must be taken in presenting this kind of dialogue to ensure that the desired patterns are properly incorporated and that individual Ss and Ss in chorus give adequate performance before pair practice is allowed.

Example 2 : Activity on Non-standard Forms of Spoken English

As explained in the first part of this paper, there is a case for introducing students to non-standard forms of English so as to facilitate basic comprehension of them, or at least some familiarity with what they sound like, as part of a general programme of listening comprehension ability. Non-standard forms include those which are used by native speakers of different social or regional backgrounds, and realizations of the spoken language by non-natives. Both these types of language may include variations in grammar, idiom and lexis as well as purely phonological differences (strictly the term *accent* is appropriate for phonological varieties and *dialect* for those with other linguistic differences as well (see Crystal 1987 : 24) but in the description of this activity the term *accent* is used for convenience to apply to both, as phonological considerations were uppermost).

Obviously a flexible ear, able to listen to unfamiliar accents and quickly establish mental links between non-standard and standard ones already known to the student, is a valuable increment to L 2 capacity and one which will add to competence and self-confidence in an international situation. The present activity was designed to find out whether there was a marked difference between Japanese students' ability to comprehend unfamiliar English accents and those they are more likely to be acquainted with, such as General American or RP, and also whether they would find it easier to understand a range of accents after some days on this course, where the teachers themselves represented a wide range of accents, including RP, American and Indian. To this end, two cloze-type tests were used (not

strict cloze, as the gaps were not spaced with perfect regularity), each containing passages in six different accents. Each test began with an extract in Received Pronunciation, followed in the first test by a piece of General American and in the second by some Canadian English, these being generally approved and well-recognised types for Japanese students. The remaining pieces in each test included some regional accents and passages spoken by natives of countries where English is a first language, and also pieces by speakers of English as a second or foreign language. The first test was administered at the end of the first lesson, after students had had time to adjust to the course and to the experience of listening to native speakers, and the students had to listen to the tape just once, writing what they thought to be the missing words in the numbered spaces in their papers. They were not told in advance what accents they would be hearing, to avoid subconscious prejudices or 'halo effect' (they were RP, General American, London (Cockney), Liverpool (Scouse), Hong Kong Chinese and Nigerian). Later the students were given reference copies of the script with all the words printed in. The second test was administered at the end of the third (and final) lesson, following the same procedures. The extracts on the tape this time were by RP (again), Canadian, Australian, Glaswegian, Indonesian and Dutch speakers. Following is a sample of one of the extracts (with correct answers written in); the accent used was Advanced R. P. and the source was a radio broadcast:

Eighteen and three-quarter billion pounds represent about one- (1)**eighth** of all public spending, very similar to the amounts (2)**devoted** to defence and education. Indeed, it's difficult to grasp the (3)**sheer** size of the NHS. It's said to be Europe's (4)**largest** employer after the Red Army, with a (5)**workforce** of about one million people.

The results of the two tests cannot be regarded as conclusive, given the many variables involved; cloze tests in particular have the weakness that there are

many different reasons for students' mistakes and in the present case they may have been caused not just by inability to discriminate aurally because of the accent used but also by unfamiliarity with the vocabulary, unfamiliarity with this kind of test, the order of appearance of the accents in the test, and possibly the sex of the speakers. It was to try and reduce the effect of some of these variables that the distance between the gaps was not kept strictly equal where unusually hard or easy vocabulary might be involved and that equal numbers of men and women speakers were chosen for the taped passages. Still, some of the results were suggestive and even surprising. The average number of correct answers from among the students participating, out of 60 who took the two tests, was very low : 18. 379, suggesting that listening to English is still very hard for average Japanese students. The highest score was 38, but only three students scored 30 or more. Taking men and women students together, higher average scores were made on the second test, only nine students getting poorer scores the second time. Interestingly, five of these were men, half the total number of men taking part, but the other five men made up for this by greatly improving their results, in two cases doubling their initial score to bring the total average for men from 8.0 on the first test to 9.4 in the second. The women's average was higher both times and the improvement was proportionately higher than for men : from 8.017 to 10.536. The sample, especially for men, is really too small but might appear to lend support to the idea that women do better at languages than men. It also suggested that, for whatever reason, the students were more at home in the second test, when they had had several days' intensive exposure to various kinds of spoken English during the course. The most surprising result from the tests was that the highest number of correct answers came for the passage spoken by a Dutchman (253) with Canadian English a long way behind at 186. American English (104) ranked higher than RP (a mere 53, averaged from 23 on the passage in the first test and 83 for that in the other test). In fact, the RP passages proved harder for the stu-

dents than Cockney (64) and both British and American English seemed harder than Nigerian English (170). In retrospect, these results may have been due to a number of factors ; the first RP passage, in Advanced RP from a radio broadcast, was the first passage in the first test and the quality of the recording was perhaps not quite so good as that of some other passages, also the rate of delivery was rather fast. The second RP passage, also at the beginning of the test, was of a woman speaking Conservative RP, rather more slowly delivered than the other RP passage but quicker than either the Dutch or Nigerian extracts, which came at the end of their respective tests, when the students may have got more used to the activity. The hardest accent for everyone was Glaswegian, only 15, not far behind Liverpool (Scouse), 20. It was interesting to note that a number of students were able to identify the missing word *six* in the latter passage ; the Scouse rendering [ʃɪks] also shows the palatalisation common in many Japanese speakers' rendering of this word.

A provisional conclusion on this activity is that Japanese students remain poor at listening skills but that even a short period of intensive exposure to English improves their attainments ; also that on average they find North American types of pronunciation easier to follow than British types, perhaps because the former are more familiar to them, and that some non-native types of spoken English, when spoken slowly, may be easier for them to understand than standard accents. Refinements of this activity, and larger samples of students, with a better balance between men and women, may yield more positive results. One project might be two cloze-type tests at the start and end of a course using the same accents, but different material, in each test to see whether students changed in their ability to understand the same accents over a period of time.

A HALF-YEAR SPEECH CLINIC FOR FIRST-YEAR TANDAI STUDENTS

This course, operated at Konan Women's University's English Language Department, in the Junior College Division, offered the prospect of a pronunciation-specific programme stretching over a full semester in which there would be an opportunity for the teacher to set out with a general idea of what to aim at and then, having begun the course, use the time between the weekly sessions to prepare material which would focus progressively on the needs of the students as they presented themselves in the classroom.

The information distributed to prospective participants in the course described two aims for the course: to help students find out the weak points in their pronunciation of English and to give suitable exercises to help with these problems. It was explained that after students' difficulties had been analysed early in the course, there would be practice of individual sounds, rhythm patterns and intonation, using lively situational dialogues and it was pointed out that the emphasis would be on practical steps for improvement in real-life use of English.

It was known that the enrolment would be large, so a language laboratory with 56 places was reserved and preliminary 'broad-spectrum' materials made. These included some dialogue and drill material containing problems known to be usual for Japanese students (l/r, etc.) and a pronunciation awareness test for diagnostic purposes to be administered in the second week.

The course being elective, the first week was assigned to a general introduction to the course with an explanation of a handout in simple English explaining the role of pronunciation studies and defining these studies as involving phonemes, stress and rhythm / intonation in the context of connected speech. There was also sample practice-work to get the students to understand how to use the

LL equipment and also let them have an idea of what the clinic would be like and decide whether this was what they wanted or not. In the second week, with the composition of the class established, a diagnostic test was given. This was divided into three parts : (A) fifteen questions on individual sounds (phonemes), (B) fifteen questions on stress and rhythm and (C) twenty questions on intonation. All the questions related to a pre-recorded tape in which the instructor asked the students to listen to various items of English and then mark their answer papers according to their perceptions. For the first ten questions of Section A, students heard some pairs of words read out. They had to circle 1 on their papers if they thought the two words of a pair were the same and 2 if they thought them different. Examples : *carry* – *carry* (correct answer : 1) ; *very* – *berry* (correct answer : 2). The other five questions on phonemes involved pairs of sentences. This time the students had to look at pairs of sentences in which there was a difference in respect of a single phoneme. Example : *I can see Hugh in the room/I can see few in the room*. They then listened to the tape, in which one sentence of the pair was read, and they had to indicate on their papers which one they heard.

The next part of the test involved word stress and rhythm patterns. There were three sections : in the first, the students listened to some sentences read and had to look at their papers and circle the accented syllable they had heard on one of the words which was printed on their paper. Example : *'Cameras are an im-'
'portant 'Japanese ↘export*. Student circles the number 1 printed under the first syllable of the word export on the answer sheet. For part two of this section, students were asked to look at some rhythm patterns printed out on their answer sheets : large and small circles representing strong and weak syllables respectively. They then listened to sentences and had to decide which rhythm pattern was employed. Example : *he 'came 'out ↘slowly*. Student marks :

○ O O ○ O .
○ O O O ○ ○

After the test, the rest of the second lesson was taken up with Handout 2,

minimal pair exercises and a dialogue for /l/ and /r/. As in all succeeding lessons, some time was allowed for students to practise by themselves, but monitored, using the LL equipment; they were able to record material for further self-practice at home. A feature of the dialogues was that they were recorded on the tape several times, once for the student to listen and repeat, then successively with each side of the conversation recorded and spaces left so the student could speak the other part.

The test was marked out of 50: the average mark was 31.63. While there were general weaknesses in all parts of the paper, the worst mistakes were in stress and intonation. Word stress (e. g. the difference between ^ˈexport and ex-^ˈport) posed little problem, but many students seemed unaware of rhythm patterns and were confused about the distinction between (intonation) pitch and (stress) loudness. Some students seemed quite unable to distinguish between a rising tone and a falling one, marking, for instance, isn't it? as a rising tone – perhaps misled by the orthographic question-mark. When the papers were returned to the students, they contained notes showing them individually where their worst phoneme problems lay, and told that their training during the course would help them with the other pronunciation elements.

During the successive weeks of the course, a number of further handouts were distributed, and these contained exercises and dialogues on a variety of problems, compiled in part on the instructor's perception of the students' general needs, and in part on the special weaknesses revealed by the test. They were as follows:

Handout 3: some work on word-stress, especially stress in word families like ^ˈnation, ^ˈnational, natio^ˈnal^ˈity, ^ˈnationali^ˈzation, ^ˈnationaliza^ˈbility, with comment on the associated changes in vowel quality (e. g. /nei-/ and /næ-/ above); the weak vowel /ə/ (schwa) and its relation to absence of stress, and a dialogue involving frequent use of /ə/.

Handout 4 : six basic types of intonation (Low Fall, High Fall, Rise-Fall, Low Rise, High Rise, Fall-Rise), based on the analysis by O'Connor and Arnold (1973) already referred to earlier in this paper. The dialogue in Handout 3 was again referred to and it was pointed out that all the utterances could be realized in terms of the three falling intonations : further practice was done with this. The rest of the work from the handout was done on minimal pairs for /əʊ/ and /ɔ:/, /f/ and /h/, growing groups (HUGH'S IN ROME) and another dialogue ; all this was a version of the work already described in connection with the Intensive Summer Course and techniques of presentation and practice were similar. The dialogue was practised with reference to rising intonation patterns.

Handout 5 : more practice of stress, both word-stress (ˈimport/imˈport, ˈperfect/perˈfect, etc.), attention being paid to vowel-quality changes, and stress shift (*Did Mary see Bill last Friday? – No, Mary saw TOM last Friday*) ; juncture and word boundaries (*I know the waiter cut it/ I know the way to cut it*) ; lengthening and assimilation (long /g/ in *big gate*, /n/ → /m/ in *one man*, similarity of *I saw ˈeight .men in the .garden* and *I saw ˈape-men in the .garden*) ; avoiding whispered vowels (e. g. in *a pitiful picture*) ; minimal pair drills for /s/, /ʃ/ and /θ/.

Handout 6 : A dialogue to practise some points from Handout 5

Handouts 7, 8 and 9 : under the heading *Using the Right Intonation (1) (2) and (3)*, these consisted of three more dialogues for intonation in different types of questions, in situations of sympathy or encouragement and in long utterances. As a final romp, the students were given a rhythm pattern drill using the old English nursery rhyme *This is the House that Jack Built*, which builds up longer and longer phrases.

Use of the handouts was spread over the thirteen weeks of the course and by the end of the programme all the students had made several hours of recordings of drills and dialogues which they could use in conjunction with the handouts for further practice in their own time if they so wished.

The final Progress Test was essentially the same as the test given on the second day of the course, except that some of the items in each exercise were changed, e. g. pairs which had previously been the same were made different, rhythm patterns were changed or the patterns shown in a different order on the answer sheet, etc. The results were encouraging: the average score of the 49 students who had attended both tests rose to 40.73 and only one student had a lower mark in the second test. This was in spite of many difficulties encountered during the course. It might be pointed out – as a warning to anyone planning a similar course – that for a speech clinic above any other kind of oral language class it is important to have a classroom which has the basic requirements of silence, good acoustics, good equipment and a layout suited to creating a good rapport between students and instructor. In the present case, the classroom conditions turned out to be far from ideal. Noise from a malfunctioning room cooler after the earthquake, frequent breakdowns of LL equipment from the same cause, the unfamiliarity of this instructor with the state-of-the-art console (machines are only as efficient as the people who use them!) and the layout of the room itself, long and narrow, hindering rapport in the non-LL parts of the lessons between the instructor and those sitting at the back of the room – all of these produced problems and hesitations and often forced the instructor to make sudden changes of plan and also of physical position in a manner that caused chronic post-lesson exhaustion. Plans for future speech clinics include ensuring location in more suitable surroundings and the preparation of more contingency plans in the event of equipment failure.

CONCLUSION

This paper has been in two contrasted parts – the first part rather theoretical, examining some of the criteria and desiderata for a modern approach to the teaching of pronunciation in Japanese universities. Having suggested that the term *pronun-*

ciation should be taken to include supra-segmental prosodic features as well as phonemes, and their conjunction in speech activity at the level of connected utterances and conversations, and having outlined three important teaching situations – regular *eikaiwa* lessons, intensive courses and speech clinics – where pronunciation can be taught to university students, I then examined the practical aims which might be considered suitable for pronunciation teaching. General intelligibility and, in appropriate situations, high acceptability, both as defined by Gimson (1980: 303), were proposed as long-range objectives, and it was suggested that students might be introduced to non-standard accents as a way of broadening their practical capacities in communicative English. The remainder of the first part traced, somewhat sketchily, some of the techniques which are useful in teaching pronunciation and their relevance to different areas of pronunciation such as minimal pair drills for phonemic contrasts, stress-shift exercises and rhythm drills for word and sentence stress, study of the ‘tunes’ of English for intonation, above all work with lively dialogue material specially prepared to throw key problems of speech activity into relief.

The second part of the paper has been more practical. In it I have tried to show some of the activities and approaches that can be brought into use for the three situations previously described – *eikaiwa* lessons, intensive courses and speech clinics – and outlined complete plans which have been used for the last two kinds of programme. Some of the results of tests used in these programmes raise almost as many questions as they answer but they do seem to show that pronunciation programmes are able to heighten the awareness of students to the detailed performance of speech activity; they also throw some surprising sidelights on the ease or difficulty with which Japanese students are able to understand different English accents. If one thing is certain, it is that more research – and far more actual teaching – is needed in this field as a way of helping Japanese students to a surer command of spoken English. It also goes without saying that the

teacher of pronunciation skills must continually reassess and redesign the approaches and techniques he or she uses and apply constant self-criticism — this is of course true of all teaching and indeed most worthwhile human activity.

References for Part Two

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