Pronunciation in the Scottish English classroom: meeting the needs of teachers and students.

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Workshop Overview

1. Data presentation: Scottish teachers and pronunciation teaching.

2. Needs of Scottish teachers and international students in Scotland.

3. Filling the pronunciation void in Scottish classrooms: practical solutions.

Aims: to provide food for thought and encourage you to fill the pronunciation void in your Scottish classroom!

The beginnings of my journey with pronunciation

Is it just me?

No!

» Pronunciation was once the 'pinnacle of importance' (Levis, 2005)

» Introduction of communicative methods of teaching 1960s and 70s led to decades of neglect: belief that students would learn 'naturally' through communicating.

» Despite the current pronunciation resurgence, many teachers still don't include it due to:

1. **Lack of training in phonology and teaching pronunciation** (MacDonald, 2002; Fraser, 2000; Yates, 2001; Bradford and Kenworthy, 1991; Murphy, 1997; Walker, 1999; Breikrutz, Derwing & Rossiter, 2001; Henderson, 2012).

2. **Lack of awareness of the importance and transferability of pronunciation into all skills.**

3. **(For many years) Lack of appropriate contextualised materials** (Derwing, Diepenbroek, & Foote, 2012) a lot of 'drill and kill'! (Fraser, 2000).

A fourth reason?

Could the mismatch of regional teachers' accents with that of RP dominant materials also contribute?

Archer (2017): Does accent mismatch dissuade teachers from teaching pronunciation?

Questionnaire: distributed via email, social media and various gatekeepers.

2017: Initial round of data collection	2018: Second round of data collection
➢ 114 responses ➢ 30 Scottish Standard English (21%)	➢ 205 responses ➢ 72 Scottish Standard English (35%)

17/18 combined total:
- 102 Scottish teachers

Typical Scottish Respondent

ESOL teacher, 10+ years experience,
Masters/CELTA qualified

- 53% received pronunciation training.
- 63% of those who received pronunciation training were taught using an RP model only.
- Yet 76% teach using their own voice, not RP/ other model.
- 83% struggle to find apt. pronunciation materials that suit their voice/ accent.
- 25% say their accent has prevented them from teaching using a prescribed coursebook or syllabus.
- 53% 'change their plans' when faced with pronunciation content.

67% satisfied/ very satisfied/ extremely satisfied

19% dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied

14% NA

» 'It was largely based around the RP model. I feel that this is outdated and perhaps even discriminatory against teachers with non-RP accents. There could perhaps have been some guidance on how to adapt the phonemic chart to better match regional accents.'

» 'Focus on RP when studying in Scotland seemed irrelevant, especially with a view to teaching in Scotland afterwards.'

» 'RP is the standard model for pronunciation in language teachers and in audio tracks accompanying language books we use for learners, e.g. New English File. However, that does not mirror the Scottish pronunciation learners hear in daily life.'

» 'Very few people have RP yet this was what was focused on in the limited pronunciation training I experienced.'

» 'Using IPA with ESOL students is a minefield…. Everything is focused on RP.'

» 'There is no one real or original English. In a class with Americans, Canadians, Chinese and British, I was taught to use RP when teaching pronunciation, yet expected to teach in my own accent. It was quite ridiculous.'

# Which features were you unable to teach?

Which features were you unable to teach? (Archer, 2018)

- Vowel sounds can be tricky and often have to give examples in both RP and my accent as ss can be very sceptical if you differ from the textbook/ audio.'
- 'When the textbook suggests that the following are the same: "four" and "for"; "paw" "pour" and "poor"; "pawn" and "porn"; "caught" and "court".'
- 'Long and short vowels can be tricky.'
- 'I feel a little silly teaching students RP pron. of words with /ɑ:/ that I would pronounce with /æ/. Equally, it can be hard to distinguish between /ʊ/ and /u:/ in my accent.'
- 'There are some sounds that I don't have, e.g. bIRd. It seems forced to teach it that way.'
- 'many vowel sounds'
- '/ʊ/ and /u:/ - I still don't get the difference!'
- 'RP features e.g. the long /a/ in car park.'

What are the most common pronunciation activities
you include in your lessons?

What are the most common pronunciation activities you include in your lessons? (Archer, 2018)

Scottish teachers
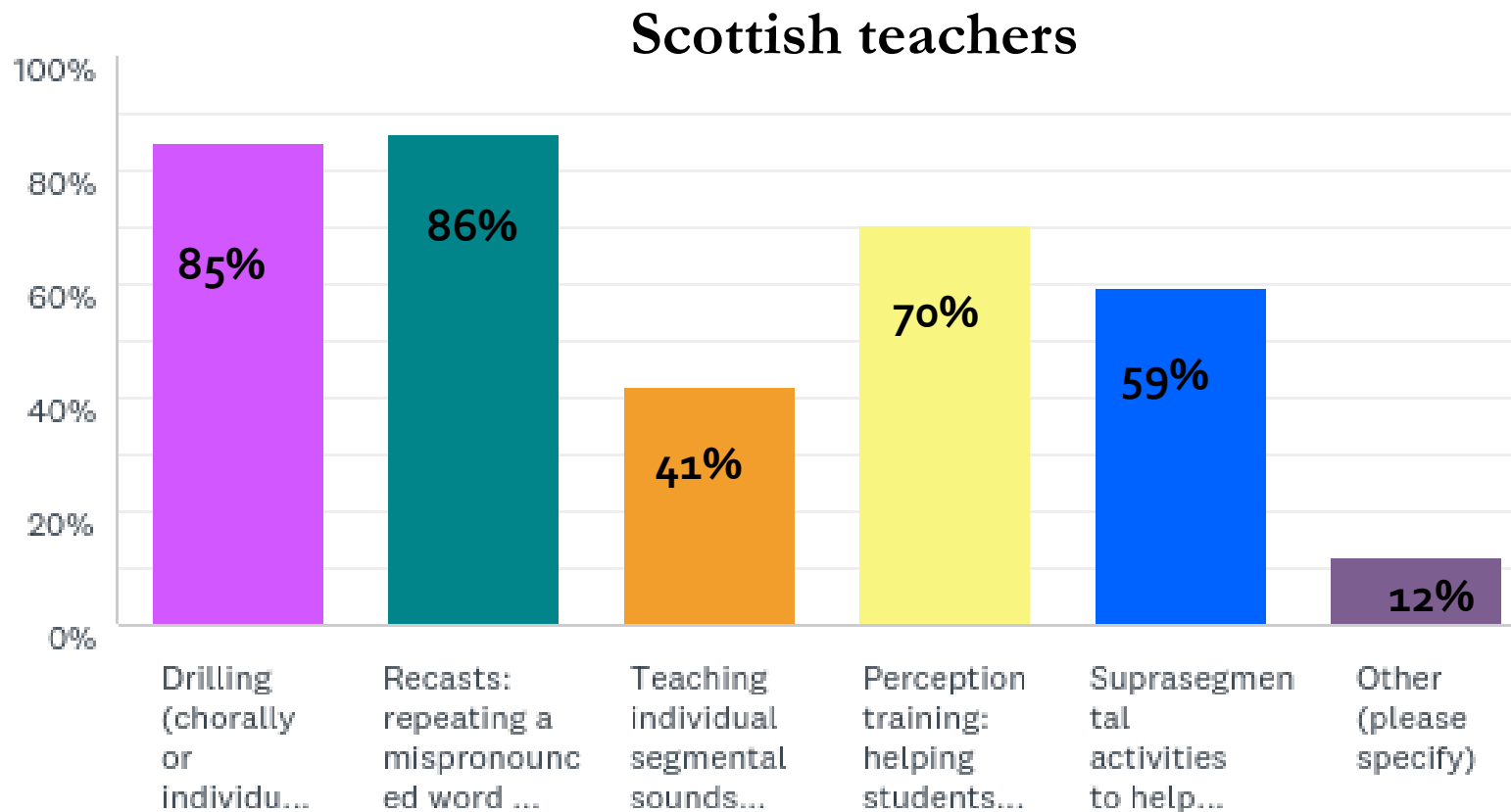
Planned integrated pronunciation instruction is less frequent than pronunciation for error correction/drilling. This is in keeping with Foote, Trofimovich, Collins, & Urzúa, 2013; Baker & Murphy, 2011.

Key points taken from the data

» Disconnect between what we are trained with (mainly RP) and what we go on to use in the classroom (mainly our own voices)

» RP materials can cause difficulty for teachers, particularly its vowel sounds and non-rhotic /r/

» SSE speaking teachers sometimes struggle to find apt. materials/ **<u>Consequences?</u>** Teachers *may* only teach a limited range of features, or even avoid pronunciation altogether.

» Teachers may think they are doing more pronunciation work that they actually are.

What do Scottish teachers need to confidently teach pronunciation?

1. **Phonological knowledge of their own accent**

-How it differs to other models

-Challenges it can pose to students

2. **Pedagogical Knowledge**:

-What to teach

-When to teach

-How to teach it

1.Phonological knowledge: Awareness of the Scots Linguistic Continuum

Professor Jennifer Smith, University of Glasgow '*North East Scots part 2: the present*'
The Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGRm4DlDy7k

Jennifer Smith, University of Glasgow
Accentricity: episode 2 'More than one voice'.
https://www.accentricity-podcast.com/episodes-1

The Scots Linguistic continuum: Examples

Scottish Standard English (SSE)

Scots

Phonetic Drifters

The art of the 'right' chart

Plus
- ✓ /o/
- ✓ /ɛ/
- ✓ /x/

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Scottish Standard English	RP/ Standard British English
12 vowel sounds (9 monophthongs, 3 diphthongs)	20 vowel sounds (12 monophthongs, 8 diphthongs)
Vowel length Scottish Vowel Length Rule (SVLR) Vowels are generally short, but long before • voiced fricatives /v ð z ʒ / • /r/ • at morpheme boundaries e.g. agree/agre**ed** **Diphthongs:** /ʌʉ/(mouth), /ɒɪ/ (choice), /aɪ/ (price) **Schwa** <u>or</u> /ɪ/ /ɪr/ /ɛr/ /ʌr/	**Vowel length** Vowels longer before voiced consonants, shorter before voiceless consonants. **Diphthongs:** /ɪə/ /eɪ/ /ʊə/ /ɔɪ/ /əʊ/ /eə/ /aɪ/ /aʊ/ **Schwa** <u>or</u> /ɪ/

What to do with vowels….?
Options

1. Create your own audio recordings, grab a friend/ partner/ colleague and record them using your phone or small hand held recorder.

2. Use the model provided in materials, but elicit and highlight the differences between it and students new local linguistic environment in post task discussion. (*Least amount of preparation)

3. Record or read class audio aloud yourself, allowing students to compare and contrast. What did they hear that was different?

4. Prioritise high functional load vowels e.g. /ɪ/and /i:/, /a/and /e/

5. Consider the Lingua Franca Core: consonant sounds more important than vowels(Jenkins, 2000).

The Colour Vowel Chart -adapted for Scottish classrooms.
(Taylor & Thompson, 2009).

white tie /aɪ/	green tea /i/	purple shirt /ɜr/	blue moon /u/	turquoise toy /ɔɪ/
silver pin /ɪ/			
gray day /eɪ/	a cup of mustard /ʌ/	rose coat /o/	
red dress /ɛ/	olive sock /ɒ/	brown cow /au/	
black cat /æ/		auburn autumn /ɔ/	

2. Pedagogical knowledge

What to teach:

- start with a diagnostic test/ needs analysis
- prioritise what students need based on upcoming academic goals/ social interactions
- if you are unsure what to teach, use the LFC/ Functional Load theory to guide you

When to teach: Every lesson can include pronunciation, not just speaking!

Grammar/ language focus: highlighting contractions, tense endings, pausing, chunking and stress in different clauses
Vocabulary: highlighting consonant endings and clusters, plurals, syllable stress
Listening: working on decoding skills, highlighting stress/unstress, listening to chunks to identify connected speech
Reading/ writing: L2-2 dictations, phonics, homophones

How to teach:

- spontaneously – error correction, developing muscle memory through drilling, highlighting important features.
- pre planned – based around students' needs, following the Celce Murcia et al 5-step communicative framework for pronunciation.

Celce-Murcia et al communicative framework for pronunciation (2010):

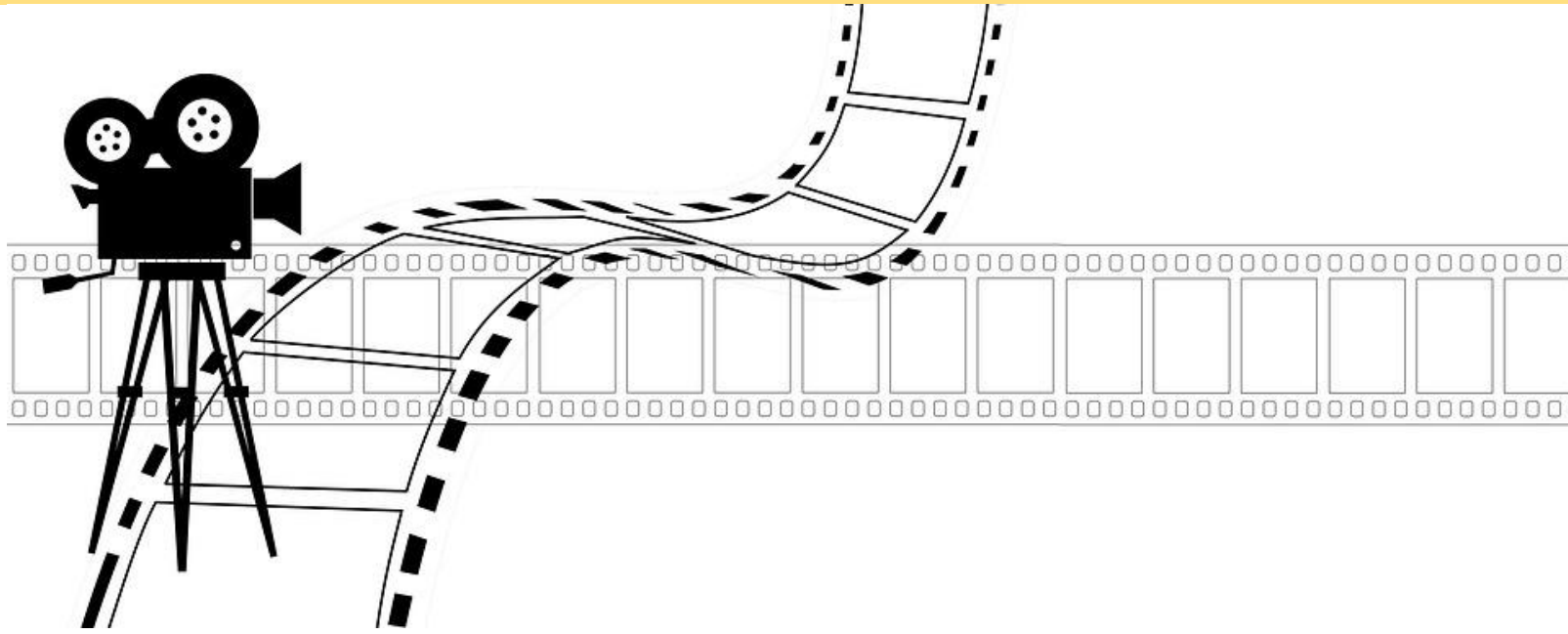| Step 1	**Description and Analysis:** oral and physical demonstration of how the feature is produced and when it occurs within spoken discourse.
Step 2	**Listening discrimination:** focused listening practice (ear training) with feedback on learners' ability to correctly discriminate between features.
Step 3	**Controlled practice:** oral readings of minimal pair sentences, short dialogues, etc. with special attention paid to the highlighted feature in order to raise learner consciousness.
Step 4	**Guided practice:** structured communication exercises, such as information-gap activities or cued dialogues that enable the learner to monitor for the specified feature.
Step 5	**Communicative practice:** less structured, fluency building activities (e.g. role play, problem solving) that require the learner to attend to both form and content of utterances.

What do international students living in Scotland need?
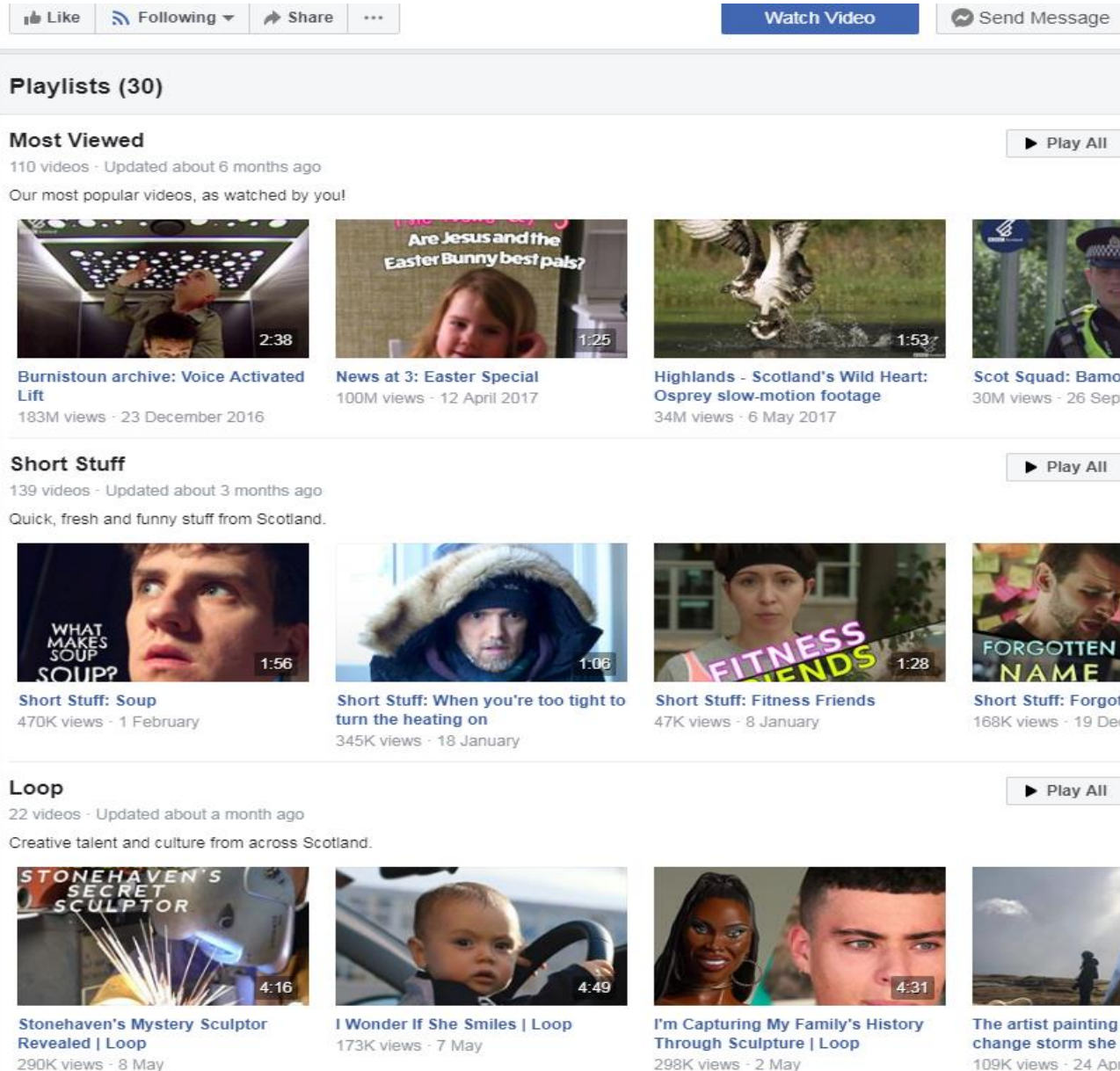
A coffee shop conversation

1. Explicit instruction and frequent revision on

    - how their new local linguistic environment differs to prestige models they
     have been exposed to in prior learning/ encounter in materials.

    -decoding skills: how messy, spontaneous English sounds.

2. Exposure to a variety of language models: local, national, international.

3. Encouragement to:

    -look to near-peer role models and intelligibility as goal rather than
    worry about achieving a prestige model.

    -be tolerant of other models, and think critically about prestige
    attached to them.

    -use strategies such as prediction, summarising if unsure.

Filling the pronunciation void DIY audio and video:
Pros, cons and software.

Sources

BBC Scotland:
- wide variety of topical subjects
- all videos subtitled
- ss can re-watch videos at home as they are freely available on their iphones through social media, or through iplayer.

Copyright?
- 'Is it fair' rule.

Features to highlight in Scottish speech

Important features to highlight in general

- Different forms of /r/ - trill, tap, retroflex
- Vowel length differences + their effects e.g. perception of speed
- Phoneme differences
- Instances of speakers drifting along the Scots Linguistic Continuum and mixing Scots vocab with SSE.

Receptive skills/ decoding
- Glottal stops
- Connected speech
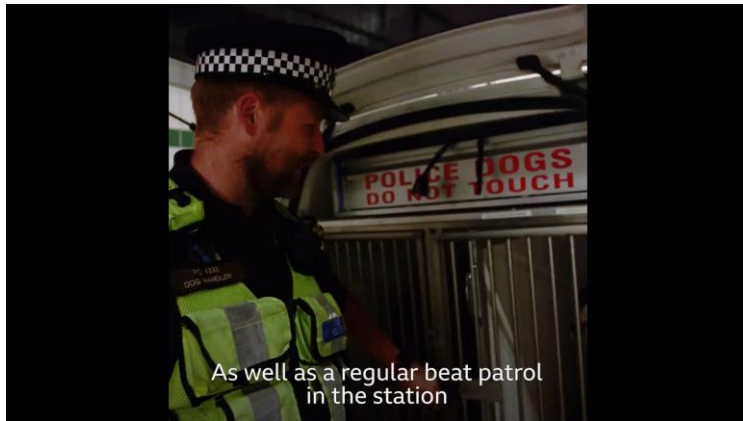
- Consonant sounds/ endings and clusters
- 3rd person 's'
- Plural endings
- Nuclear stress
- Chunking and pausing

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Theme: The world of work

Video 1: British Transport Police

Video 2: Station Historian

Video 3: Blue Lagoon staff
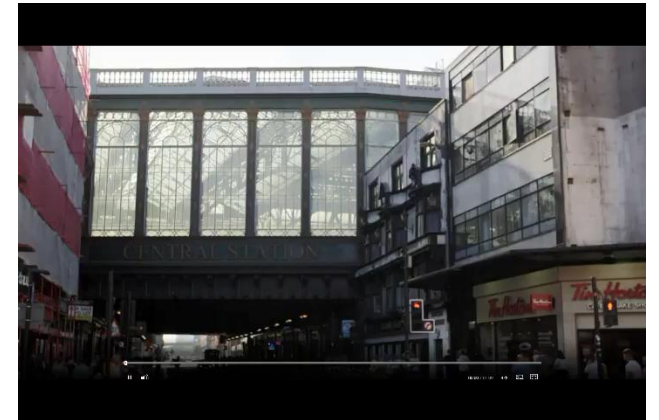
Video 1

Potential phonological features:

- **Speakers on the Scots Linguistic Continuum:** narrator (SSE), police officer and veteran speak in SSE to one another, veterans together speak a mixture of SSE/Scots.

- **Consonant clusters**: **Tr**ansp**ort, sp**eciali**st,** e**xpl**osi**ves**

- **Examples of reduced vowel sounds**: 'time **to** time' 'there's **a** case', 'left behind by **somebody**' 'gave it **a sniff**' 'is **that** yours?' 'keep **it** with you', 'say hello **for** me'

- **Examples of connected speech**: 'ju**st t**urned' 'ga**ve it a** sniff' 'kee**p it** with you' '**was i**n (the army') 'foreve**r and e**ver'

My **role** in Glasgow Central Station is as his**to**rian // I carry out/ **daily** tours / of the station // taking **pass**engers/ taking indi**vid**uals and **groups**/ to **diff**erent areas in the station that they've never **been** before// **Three** years ago now/ we organised / **tours** of the **Cen**tral/ and a**ma**zingly// the a**tten**tion and **in**terest in them has went **through** the **roof**// **cur**rently / and for the **past** three years /we've been **num**ber **one** on Trip Advisor for tours within the station **itself**/ and I think we've really **cap**tured the imagi**nat**ion **of the Glas**gow audience and be**yond**//

Video 3

Potential phonological features:

- **Vowel sounds:**

/u/ in bl<u>ue</u> lag<u>oo</u>n, t<u>oo</u>n

/ɛ/ in b<u>e</u>st, h<u>e</u>lp

/ɪ/ in ch<u>i</u>p, v<u>i</u>negar

/ɔ/ in sh<u>o</u>p, sm<u>a</u>ll, s<u>a</u>lt

/aɪ/ in h<u>i</u>gh f<u>i</u>ve

/i/ in pl<u>ea</u>se

- **Consonants:** sh and ch /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ <u>ch</u>ip <u>sh</u>op

- **Speakers on the Scots Linguistic Continuum:** narrator (SSE), shop assistants drifting up and down the continuum according to who they are speaking to, accommodation of Scottish shop assistant with her L2 colleague.

- **Question intonation:** *'Can I help you please? 'Would you like salt and vinegar?'*

- **Glasgow's 'rise-plateau'**

For editing your own video
(shortening, removing inappropriate or irrelevant content)

Software	Purpose	Cost	Pros/cons
Windows movie maker	Editing videos	Free	• Easy to learn/ use • You need Windows • Fewer edit. features
Filmora https://filmora.wondershare.com/	Editing videos and screencasts (mp4)	Free trial, then $39/ year or lifetime membership for $59	• More expensive • Lots of features • Takes time to become familiar with features • Many tutorials available

For recording video straight from your screen (e.g. from a TV program)

Software	Purpose	Cost	Pros/cons
Jing www.techsmith.com/jing-tool.html	Creating screencasts (mp4)	Free	• Screencasts free up to 5 min • Can't edit screencasts • Can't download screencast
Screencast-o-matic www.screencast-o-matic.com	Creating and editing screencasts (mp4)	Some parts free, others from $1.99	• With paid version you can edit screencasts too. • More flexibility – can record excerpts from TV, film etc.

For creating/ editing audio
(shortening/ editing coursebook audio/ your own audio recordings)

Software	Purpose	Cost	Pros/cons
Audio Trimmer https://audiotrimmer.com/	Trim audio (mp3) to desired length.	Free	• Extremely fast • Easy to use • No additional features
Audacity	Editing audio tracks (mp3)	Free	• Lots of features • Tutorials available on all features • May take time to familiarise

The road to 'pron-tegration': tips, tricks and techniques to expand your pronunciation practice.

Significant numbers of English language teachers feel that a gap exists in their knowledge of pronunciation. A lack of initial training has resulted in many believing that they don't have the expertise to provide pronunciation input.

To bridge this gap, IATEFL Pronunciation SIG are hosting a day of presentations and workshops all centred around the theme of expanding teachers' repertoires and increasing their confidence when dealing with pronunciation.

Come along and be inspired to include more pronunciation training in your own classroom!

October 26th 2019, University of Strathclyde,Glasgow.
Full details can be found on our website: https://pronsig.iatefl.org/

October 26th
University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

Info will be released on our website:
https://pronsig.iatefl.org

And on our social media pages

Pronsig
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1.3K like this
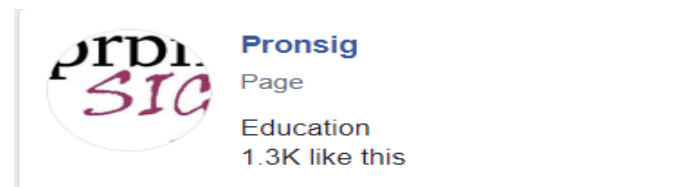
@PronSIG

PronSIG

Further reading on SSE in the ELT classroom:

Pronunciation models in regional environments: a comparison and assessment of RP and SSE (Archer, 2018).

http://theses.gla.ac.uk/30983/

Thank you!

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