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BETWEEN THE NEWSLETTERS

Dear all,

You have just opened a Newsletter that was supposed to reach you last year. Many things have changed and we do not have a permanent editor working for the Association any more. Therefore it took us much longer to put together this volume. We apologise for the delay and ask you at the same time if there is a volunteer who would be willing to work for the ATECR as its Newsletter editor, please contact us.

The year of 2010 was quite busy for the Association – we organised our conference – the team of the Faculty of Education, UJEP in Ústí nad Labem did a wonderful job. Those who attended know what I am writing about. We all enjoyed a conference full of interesting sessions, presenters and book exhibitions. Our board was lucky to co-operate with a professional team led by Natalia ORLOVA and our thanks go to them for the smooth running of the conference and for their hospitality. Our board members attended partner conferences, we signed a partner agreement with Austrian teacher association, and we extended our TESOL affiliate and IATEFL associate statuses at conferences in Boston and Harrogate. We brought to the Czech Republic *Franklin Global SpellEvent* the local event of which is organised in the region of Hradec Králové in 2011. Next year the event has to move to some other region. If you think you have colleagues willing to prepare their children (up to the age of 15) for the national contest the winner of which travels with one adult (parent or teacher – expenses covered by Franklin) to New York City for the Global SpellEvent fighting for the scholarship of \$ 10,000, feel free to contact us for more information.

At AGM in Ústí nad Labem we agreed on the fact that Newsletters for 2010 are the last ones published in paper. Following volumes will be published only electronically to follow the global “be green” trend and contribution to the preservation of our planet. The way through which you will receive your volumes will be published on our website. In the meantime please make yourselves sure that our membership secretary has your valid e-mail addresses for the beginning.

I sincerely hope that the year of 2011 will be a good one for all of you and I wish you all strong mental and physical health, energy and enthusiasm for the job that we all have been doing with love and devotion.

Olga Vraštilová
ATE CR President
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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

TESOL



IATEFL

**45th Annual Conference and Exhibition, Brighton Centre, Brighton, UK
15th – 19th April 2011-02-11**

With plenary speakers Thomas Farrell, Peter Grundy, Brian Patten, Sue Palmer and Catherine Walter

MSSUA/MSATE

Brno 9th – 11th September 2011, Pedagogical Faculty, Masaryk University

HUPE

19th Annual HUPE Conference in Grand Hotel Adriatic, Opatija, 7th – 10th April 2011
Plenary speakers: Mirna Radišić, Gary Anderson, Anne O'Keefe and Judy Copage

IATEFL Poland

20th International IATEFL Poland Conference
Warszawa, 9th – 11th September 2011-02-11
Stadium Języków Obcych Politechniki Warszawskiej
Pl. Politechniki 1

ELTA Serbia

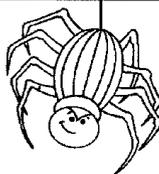
9th ELTA Conference
Teaching - Learning – Assessing: Strengthening the Links
Faculty of Philosophy, Novi Sad, 8th – 9th April 2011
Plenary speakers: Eric Baber, Christine Coombe, Tony Green, Jeremy Harmer, Jim Scrivener

IATEFL Slovenia

18th Annual IATEFL Slovenia Conference
Topolšica, 10th – 13th March 2011
Plenary speakers: Leni Dam, Lindsay Clandfield, Judy Copage, Marie Delaney, Eamonn Shanahan, Tim Herdon

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OUR
ATECR WEBSITE**

<http://www.atecr.cz>



REPORTS ON COURSES, CONFERENCES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

44th TESOL Convention and Exhibit March 24 – 27, 2010 Boston, Massachusetts, USA

In order to keep the TESOL affiliate status of the Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic, between March 24 and 27, 2010, I attended the 44th TESOL Convention and Exhibit in Boston. It was my first TESOL Convention. Never before had I attended anything as big for so many participants. The program for affiliate leaders was well organized but quite packed. I attended everything that was assigned for affiliate leaders. Leadership Luncheon on Wednesday March 24 was a great social occasion where I met many new people from other TESOL affiliate associations. At the Affiliate Leaders' Workshop I could meet even more people from literally all around the world, e.g. from UAE, Egypt, Argentina, California, Belgium, etc. Affiliate Colloquium introduced interesting speakers dealing with TESOL topical issues. The Affiliate Assembly was held on Friday March 26 in the morning. There important topics were dealt with in on-the-spot-established working groups and results of the discussions have already been published on the TESOL *ning* social network. I have become a member of this network for ATECR since I understand that it is the way of how to be in touch with TESOLers from all around the world, share our problems with them and learn about latest and hottest issues from other places.

On Thursday March 25 I took a chance to promote ATECR in the Convention Booth where to my surprise quite a few people stopped by and shared with me their knowledge and feelings about our country, its capital, its people or their teaching experience in the Czech Republic.



On Saturday March 27 I participated at a session organized by the Franklin Electronic Publishers to learn about the Global Spell Event Championship. Later in 2010 ATECR as the Czech Republic representative was invited to join the spellEvent together with the TESOL

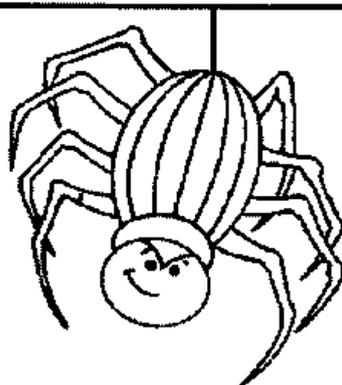
affiliates from Spain and Brazil. The first national event is organized in the region of Hradec Králové in 2011. Having joined the group of participating countries we are supposed to continue in the event in future – the national event is to be shifted to any other region where teachers are willing to challenge their pupils as well as themselves.

44th TESOL Convention and Exhibit in Boston was great experience and only now do I understand what people told me there – that they love to attend TESOL conventions as they recharge their batteries there, meet different people from different countries with their problems and may find inspiration and further drive for their own work to carry on. This exactly meant this Convention to me.

Besides the Affiliate Leaders' program I also had a chance to attend interesting sessions with distinguished and experienced speakers but my priority was to stand for and promote the Czech TESOL affiliate – ATECR.

Boston is a charming city where everything was literally within a walking distance. It left a deep trace in my mind and in my heart.

Olga Vraštilová
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44th International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, Harrogate, April 2010

The IATEFL conference in 2010 was huge. There is not another word that would describe it better. The number of participants was announced by the IATEFL president Herbert Puchta in his opening speech – more than 1 600. Huge was also the number of presentations, seminars, workshops, accompanying events, etc. Already the day before the conference when the teacher associations' representatives from the countries around the world usually meet (there were almost 100 people!) suggested the dimensions the whole conference. Naturally, the great variety of topics from last years was preserved as well, although, rather typically in recent time, there were many presentations dealing with modern technology: a lot of web pages were introduced, some databases, interactive whiteboard software, etc. However, a lot of sessions concentrated on professional development done by means of action research, on professional development of in-service teachers and their professional life cycles. The best example is Tessa Woodward's plenary On the Professional Life Cycles of Teachers. She prepared a speech with videoed examples from her research – in-service teachers shared their views on teaching and their professional development. They also spoke about their feelings, joys and doubts. I strongly recommend you to have a look at Tessa's videoed presentation at <http://iatefl.britishcouncil.org/2010/> (plenty other sessions to see!). She used Huberman's model of life cycles describing the periods of years of teaching and prevailing experience typical for a particular period. Teachers from 1 to 3 years of experience can be labelled as "Survival and Discovery", from 4 to 6 years Stabilization, from 7 to 18 years it seems that the group splits into two categories, either Experimentation/Activism or Reassessment/Doubts. The next group (Tessa says, according to the literature she read, teachers with more than 24 years of experience are called veteran teachers!), from 19 to 30 years of experience, may adopt either Serenity/Relational distance (be more relaxed) or, on the other hand, Conservatism (be rather mechanical). The last category, between 31 and 40 years of experience, is labelled as Disengagement: Serene (more reflective, the teacher feels there is nothing to lose) or Bitter (the teacher thinks of years of wasted effort). For the mid years, seemingly most important for shaping and influencing the feelings and values in later life cycles, Tessa chose Huberman's inspiring statement on decisions or steps we may take: "Teachers who steered clear of reforms or other multiple-classroom innovations but who invested consistently in classroom-level experiments ... what they called 'tinkering' with new material, different pupil groupings, small changes in grading systems... were more likely to be satisfied later on in their careers than most others and far more likely than peers who had been heavily involved in schoolwide or districtwide projects ... Tending one's own private garden, pedagogically speaking, seems to have more pay-off in the long haul than land reform, although the latter is perceived as stimulating and enriching while it's happening."

There is a website called after Huberman's book *The Lives of Teachers*, worth looking at <http://www.livesofteachers.com/2010/05/16/the-importance-of-the-expectation-of-failure-in-the-life-of-a-teacher/> Do not forget that there will also be IATEFL Brighton online!!

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The Vienna ConneXion 2010 – Biennial TEA Conference 23 – 25 April 2010 Teaching English in the Twenty-First Century

The conference was held in Vienna at Volkshochschule Favoriten from April 23rd to April 25th 2010 and its theme was “Teaching English in the Twenty-First Century”. That was clearly reflected in the scope of presentations which stretched from evergreen topics such as grammar teaching, teaching English to young learners and effective improvement of speaking skills to the topics dealing with more modern approaches of English teaching. Therefore those interested could attend talks and seminars about e.g. texthelp software, networking, task based teaching, webquests, intercultural competence or multiple intelligences. In the breaks between individual sessions participants were able to browse through and buy materials from 20 exhibitors.

Since such conferences usually last only 3 days with the majority of presentations in just two days, the organizers came up with a very packed Saturday and Sunday programme offering 8 concurrent sessions. Unfortunately, some of the presentations suffered from the lack of audience because coincidentally the weather on Saturday and especially on Sunday was so tempting and sunny that many chose to explore the beautiful city of Vienna with its rich history over sitting inside. Nonetheless, the conference was very successful offering everything you could imagine. Apart from the talks and seminars participants saw also a theatre performance of "Blithe Spirit" by Noel Coward, presented by The English Drama Club Fichtnergasse, and directed by Elisabeth Mayer; could set out on “Mark Twain Walk” through Vienna or buy a ticket to the raffle. Social bonds among the participants were further strengthened during Gala Dinner in Augustinerkeller just opposite the famous Sacher hotel.



The conference started with the plenary speech by Dr. Henry Widdowson, editor of Oxford Introductions to Language Study. The topic of his talk was “On the subject of English”. In it Widdowson stated that there are two ways of using English: as a language in use and as a subject we teach. These two languages, however, are not the same because the natural language and the language of learners are also significantly different. Further he promoted the notion of the importance of translation in the classroom. The plenary was followed by the welcome reception.

It was difficult for me to choose which sessions to attend because most of them were of some interest to me. However, from the beginning I knew I would like to hear what Hugh Dellar had to say in his talk “Teaching Grammar Better”. It was quite evident from the very beginning that he had some strong opinions about grammar teaching. In his words many teachers live under the tyranny of PPP. He argued that the traditional pattern of Presentation-Practice-Production makes us feel in control, seems tightly structured but has no space for the students to be creative and creates grammar fear and grammar dependency. As a result of

focusing on structures in isolation the reality of usage is distorted and therefore the students are able to speak ABOUT English but they do not talk IN English. They speak L1 in English.

What should we do to change this? Here are some of Dellar's suggestions:

- Keep it real! Teach grammar in real world situations
- Keep things true to what you say and hear
- Don't teach single words, teach words with the grammar they typically go with
- Think about the examples you provide
- There's more to life than tenses!

Let me tell you about at least one more presentation I found more than interesting. Liz Plampton, English actress and teacher, in her wonderful seminar proved that teaching did not have to be a tedious job. The name of her session was intriguing enough to peak my curiosity – “Drink, Drugs and Knives – How they help me teach English”. Through a series of dramatic dialogues, she showed us ways in which teachers can engage students by giving them valuable insight into social and cultural issues affecting Britain today. The source of the activities was “One Million Tiny Plays About Britain” by Craig Taylor which I highly recommend to anyone interested in using drama for their teaching.

During the conference representatives of ATECR and TEA signed new partnership agreement securing future co-operation between our associations.

The whole conference was perfectly organized and obviously thoroughly thought out thus allowing the participants enjoy all it had to offer. The only drawback I could think of is that it was over so soon.



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The Hungarian Sun Likes Its English Teachers or the 20th Annual IATEFL Hungary Conference

The biggest EFL teachers' event in Hungary took place at the Children and Youth Centre at Zánka, on Lake Balaton, over the weekend of October 8th to 10th this year. About 250 English teaching professionals from all over Hungary, representatives of partner teachers' associations from Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and, of course, people from the UK, along with major EFL literature publishing houses, spent these three very busy days *exploring new normalities in the classroom*, as invited by the by-line of this year's conference motto, "*Standing out or being Outstanding*".

The opening plenary talk was delivered by a guru of English teachers, and not only Hungarian ones, Professor Peter Medgyes, a man of many professions; apart from the obvious teaching and teacher training one, he is a successful writer of EFL books, but also deputy state secretary and a diplomat. He was talking about classroom discipline, or rather the lack of it, in Hungarian schools and reminded many of us of Ed McBain's (alias Evan Hunter) *Blackboard Jungle*, which has arrived in our part of the world with a delay of more than some fifty years. (Peter Medgyes's books are *The Non-Native Teacher*, Hueber Macmillan Prentice Hall, 1998 and *Laughing Matters: Humour in the Language Classroom*, CUP, 2002).

The rest of the Friday afternoon was reserved for the SIG programme and covered Culture and Literature, ICT, Young Learners Technologies and Special Needs Education. At 8 p.m. everybody was more than ready for a glass of nice Hungarian wine at the buffet reception and a friendly talk. Those who were still full of beans enjoyed the *Jazzy Night* with Chaz Pugliese, which was not jazzy but bluesy actually, but nobody minded ☺.

The other two conference days offered three more plenary speakers. Sally Farley (Pilgrims, Canterbury, UK) dealt with specific learning difficulties and inclusive education in EFL, Nik Peachey, (freelance educational specialist, UK, now Morocco) whose main area of interest lies in the new web-based learning technologies and online and blended learning courses and, last but not least, David A. Hill (free-lance ELT consultant, UK, living in Budapest), whose thought-provoking talk addressed the issue of creativity in both learning and teaching a foreign language. In his talk he guided the audience through 12 techniques and approaches, originally aimed at academia and at industry, and demonstrated how easily they can be applied to foreign language learning while preserving their validity. The very first of them is the need to *establish purpose and intention*. When stretched to EFL, we often have to admit that we teach and have been teaching what David calls ENPP – *English for No Particular Purpose*. The same applies for the learner – he/she learns the language without knowing what for or why; it is simply there on their timetable. What changes the situation is CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), which provides everybody with a very clear purpose and, according to David, the future of EFL lies in it. If you want to learn more about the strategies mentioned, go to R.J. Sternberg and his *Handbook of Creativity* (CUP, 1999). However, what you will not find there is David's way of presenting and commenting on them, which was very witty and interesting. On top of that, I somehow doubt that many plenary talks start with the presenter singing to their audience for well over 3 minutes. It is a

pity that nobody videoed it, so you will probably have to wait for another conference where David Hill will be presenting and maybe singing, too 😊 😊. (The nearest one you can try is TESOL France in Paris in late November).

Besides the SIGs and plenary talks, the conference provided space for as many as 58 more shorter talks and workshops, organized in sessions of approx. 8 at a time. The ones I went to were all very rewarding, offering new and practical ideas for how to refresh your lessons, and were all delivered in impressively nice English, no matter if the speaker was a native speaker or not.

There was no worry about ending up with an oxygen deficit or your muscles having stiffened from sitting only, as the sessions took place in several buildings strewn all over a 209-hectare park. Luckily, as the title suggests, the weather was fabulous; it was sunny and very warm for the time of year, and the walks between the buildings were most enjoyable (until the moment you literally bumped into a *wild boar*, like me, but that is another story and luckily the pig was only a teenager, not the full-size version, but it scared me anyway).

Even if you ended up spending the day in just one building, you could get moving and hopping and dancing at the *Scottish evening* on Saturday night or jumping with joy over a nice prize in the two raffles which, among many other goodies, included a one-week methodology course in the UK.

All in all, I was very glad, when offered the opportunity to be the official MSATE representative, that I decided to go, even if the journey to Balaton, if taken by public transport, is more of a crusade than a business or pleasure trip (12 hours on trains from Olomouc, each way, if everything is on time), as I was not disappointed.



The 20th IATEFL Hungary conference had everything you expect a good conference to have: interesting speakers, motivating and challenging topics, a friendly atmosphere, nice colleagues, and food for thought, and it was all perfectly organized.

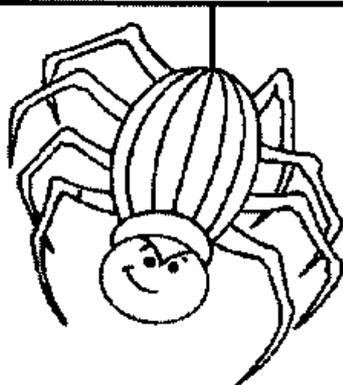
Besides, personally, I must admit that I would much rather go to an IATEFL conference anywhere than to one for academics only, as those tend to be extra-dry and theoretical and no Martini is served to make them more digestible...

Nora Gill

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Teaching, Not Learning

Like a lot of their EU colleagues, many Czech teachers have benefited from a Comenius-funded course run by NILE, the Norwich Institute for Language Education.

My experience has been rather different – last August I was invited to teach there. NILE is part of the University of East Anglia. Do you know what the following renowned writers such as Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro, Rose Tremain, Toby Litt, Andrea Levy and Angela Carter have in common? Yes, they all have studied creative writing at the UEA in Norwich.

NILE (www.nile-elt.com) offers a variety of courses, from Language and Methodology to CLIL and CELTA, as well as DELTA. The course I was invited to focused on British Studies and contemporary British Literature with practical activities teachers can use with their students.

In my course the twelve teachers came not only from Europe (Rosa, Miguel, Nuria and Isabel from Spain, Eve from Estonia, Carla and Dora from Portugal and Volker from Germany) but there was also Hamed from Egypt, Binh and Chi from Vietnam and Kriesye from Indonesia. In such an international group English was used as the natural means of communication outside the class, too.

How did the course differ from similar ones I frequently teach in the Czech Republic? In a nutshell, in its international character: I have never come closer to somebody from Vietnam, which is a paradox as the Vietnamese community is the largest ethnic minority in the CR. Not to mention all the other highly interesting people in the group. We did not only spend classroom time together but also most of the evenings in pubs or walking and talking endlessly about Norwich. They were an excellent and inspiring group.



Alan Pulverness, the main course tutor, is the co-author of the Norwich Discovery Trail, a clever idea for getting to know the place. It works as an ideal game-like activity when small groups of newly arrived course participants are given specific instructions that include tasks and routes about the place. Groups are supposed to walk, identify the places from their instructions and talk to the locals in order to find answers to the questions. Later they get together to share and make the picture of the place complete. It is fun and the long walks lead

to places you would not have discovered otherwise. Now and then you get lost and have to ask the way, which makes you learn even more about the place.

Norwich is a medium-sized medieval town with crooked lanes, a famous cathedral and a Norman castle built only two years after the Conquest. It is a friendly place, walkable and safe. For a town of its size, it has a remarkable choice of cultural events.



The NILE social programme included a guided tour by a Norwich-born enthusiast, a visit to the local cinema to see *SUS*, a film on the law that until 1981 made it possible for anybody suspect to be stopped and searched by the police. The film, based on a powerful play by Barrie Keefe, was often reminiscent of similar interrogation techniques used by the Czech police force against dissidents before 1989.

Several guest speakers were invited to enrich the course programme: in Adrian Underhill's *Our Teaching as Story*, we tried out, among other activities, a new approach to storytelling. You work in pairs. One of you tells the story of the journey from home to Norwich. The other person keeps interrupting with words that have nothing to do with the story (weird words such as *fairies*, *lightning*, *dragon* or *pink elephant*). The storyteller has to go on and incorporate these words into the new storyline. Then the roles are swapped. Lots of fun, creative and fast.

Antoinette Moses's topic was creative writing: I liked her comment that "All writing is rewriting" and that we should ask our students to do creative writing BEFORE they are shown the original poem (in this case the famous William Carlos Williams' "This Is Just to Say").

I must not forget the weekend trips: it was Cambridge and the Norfolk Broads, an area famous for its rivers, lakes and special water fowl and flora.

The time at NILE ran fast, faster than I would have wished. Time flies when one enjoys oneself.

Miša Čaňková

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LANGUAGE & METHODOLOGY

Good English Pronunciation (5)

/gʊd 'ɪŋɡlɪʃ prəˌnʌnsi'eɪf(ə)n/

I first heard about “Tom Rider” from the undergraduate students of phonetics and phonology. “Who?”, I queried, raking vainly through my mental catalogue of names. “Angelina Jolie”, ventured one student by way of explanation. The class smiled condescendingly. Their uncool teacher stared back in blank incomprehension. “Angelina plays Tom?” Mumbles between students in Czech followed. “No, Lara Croft!”, piped up the outspoken student.

At an impasse, I handed him the board pen and beckoned him to the front. “TOMB RAIDER” he scrawled confidently on the whiteboard, presented me with the pen and strode back to his seat, beaming. The entire class grinned. The teacher smiled back. Not only had the identity of this mysterious figure been revealed, but an unsolicited opportunity to explain the importance of pronouncing English words correctly had just presented itself.



“Okay, class”, I said with a flourish of the arm, “how do you pronounce *that*?” I tapped the two words demonstratively with my pen. “Tom Rider”, they chanted in unison.

“Not in English, I’m afraid.” It was their turn to look puzzled. Next to the words *Tomb Raider* I wrote /tu:m reɪdə/. I asked the students to read the transcription aloud. We chanted it a few more times. There then followed a short explanation of the importance of not confusing Tom /tɒm/ and tomb /tu:m/, a short and long vowel respectively, and /raɪdə/ (rider - jezdec) and reɪdə/ (raider - lupič), words which contain two different **diphthongs**.

In the last ATE newsletter Vol. 21 No.2 the five long vowel phonemes of English /i:/ /ɑ:/ /ɔ:/ /ɜ:/ /u:/ were examined. In this issue we turn to these diphthongs of English.

What is a diphthong?

Monophthongs (*jednoduché samohlásky*) have one vowel part. **Diphthong** /dɪfθɒŋ/ or /dɪpθɒŋ/, comes from the Greek *diphthongos*, *di-* + *phthongos* voice, sound. They have two vowel parts (*dvojhlásky*) within the same syllable.

Contemporary Czech has three diphthongs: **au** (*autorita, automat*) **ou** (*mouka, sloup*), and **eu** (*eukaliptus, neutralita*). English has eight diphthongs. The symbols for these sounds are: /eɪ/ /aɪ/ /ɔɪ/ /aʊ/ /əʊ/ /ɪə/ /eə/ /ʊə/

Although both Czech and English have diphthongs, there are several differences in the way in which the two elements of the diphthong are realised.

Characteristics of the Czech diphthong

1. The two elements are of roughly similar length.
2. The second element is quieter, but not markedly so.
3. There is what can best be described as a “step” from the one sound to the next.

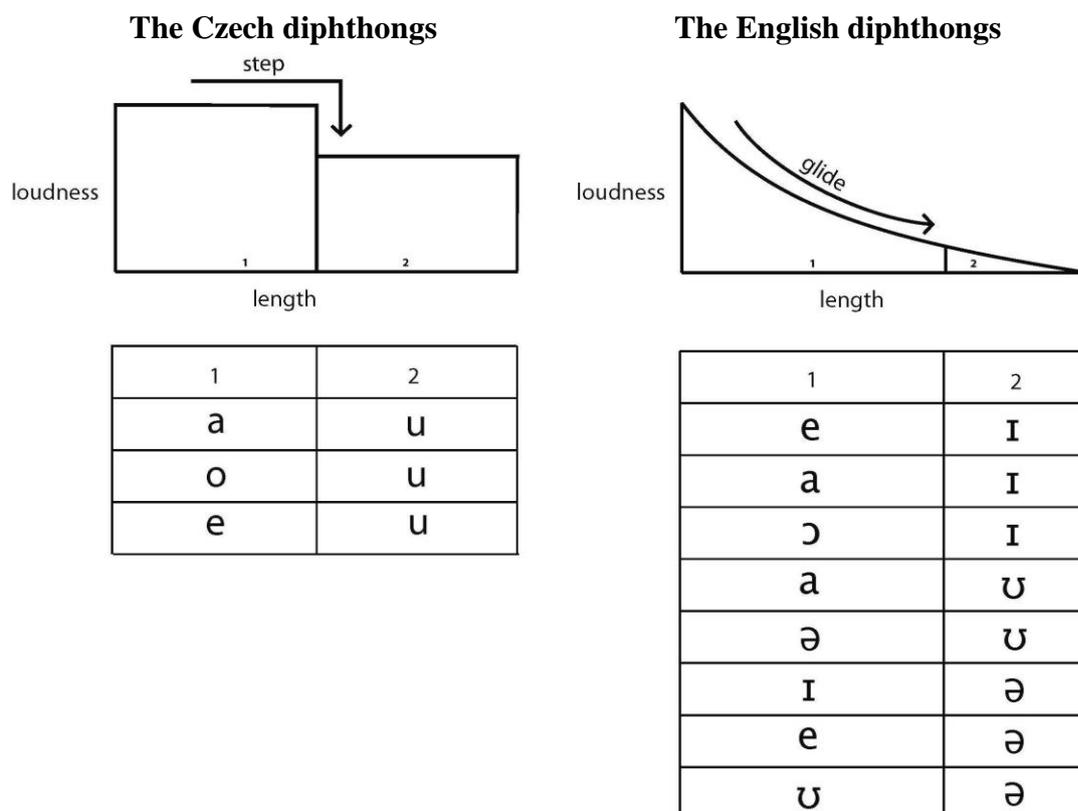
Characteristics of the English diphthong

1. The first element is approximately twice as long as the second.
2. There is a marked decrease in loudness in the second element.
3. There is a glide (a smooth movement) from the first element to the second.

Such diphthongs are said to be **falling**. Other languages such as Italian have rising diphthongs where the second element is more prominent eg *uomo* (*man*) and *uovo* (*egg*).

These differences between the Czech and English diphthongs are shown below. Note the three different features of length, loudness and glide.

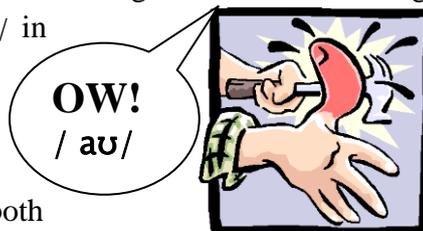
The numbers 1 and 2 represent the first and second elements of the diphthong.



Phonemic transcription of the diphthong

Although the first element of the English diphthong is longer than the second, no length marks are used in the transcription. These /ɜ:/ are reserved solely for the five long vowels.

Students of English invariably realise that the first element is longer. When transcribing words like *beer* or *hair* some write /bi:ə/ and /he:ə/ in recognition of the longer initial vowel sound. Diphthong phonemes are, however, transcribed using the set of eight symbols without length marks, regardless of how long the vowel sound is actually pronounced. A long yell of pain and a short yell are both /aʊ/ without length marks. (Czech *au!* is spelled *ow!* in English.)



As with the other vowel sounds, diphthongs before voiced consonants are longer than before voiceless ones. Contrast *place- plays; spice-spies; lout-loud; dose - doze*.

Practising the diphthong sounds

Students need practice to achieve the balance between the first and second elements as well as create the glide from one to the other. The eight diphthong sounds can be practised using the table below. The columns show all eight as they occur in English words which begin with each of the consonant phonemes. The words are read across the rows and down the columns. The consonant + the diphthong alone is marked **bold**.

	/eɪ/	/aɪ/	/ɔɪ/	/aʊ/	/əʊ/	/ɪə/	/eə/	/ʊə/
/p/	pay, pale, pain, paste	pie, pile, pine	point, poise	pound, powder	poke, pope post	peer/ pier pierce	pear/pair, parent	pour
/b/	bay, babe, bake, base	buy/by/buy bike, bite	boy, boil	bow/bough bound	bow, boat bone	beer/ bier	bear/bare	boor
/t/	tail/tale tame, taste	tie/Thai tight, tile	toy, toil	town, tout	tow/toe toad, toast	tear/tie r	tear/tare	tour
/d/	day, dame, Dane, daze	die/dye	doiley	Dow,down doubt	doe/dough don't, dose	dear/ deer	dare	dour
/k/	K, cake cane, case	kind, kite	coy, coil	cow, count	co. code,coke		care	
/g/	gay, game, gape, gauge	guy, guide, guile, guise	goitre	gown	go, goat goad	gear	garish	
/f/	fay/fey, fail, fame	fight, file, fine, five	foil	fowl/foul found	foe, phone, folk	fear, fierce	fair/fare fairy	
/v/	vain/vane, vase (US)	vie, vile, vine, virus	voice void	vow, voucher	vote, vogue	veer	vary, various	
/θ/	Thales, thane	thigh		thousand				
/ð/	they	thy		thou	though, those		there their	
/s/	say, sake, sail, save	sigh, sign site/sight	soy, soil	sow, south	sew/sow soak, soap	seer/se ar		
/ʃ/	shake, shame shape, shave	shy, shine		shout, shower	show	sheer	share	sure
/tʃ/	chafe, chain chase,	chime, chive	choice	chow	choke, chose	cheer	chair	
/dʒ/	jay/J, Jake, James, jape	jive, giant	joy, join	jowl, joust	Joe, joke, Jones	jeer		jury
/j/	yea, Yale	yikes!		yowl	yodel, yolk/yoke	year	yeah	/p/or /k/+j/ cure, pure
/m/	may, make, main/mane	my, might mile, mine	moist	mouse, mouth	mow, moan, most	mere	mare/ mayor	
/n/	nay/neigh nail, nape	nigh, nice night/knight	noise	now, noun	no/know nose, note	near		
/w/	way/weigh, wake, wave	why/Y wine while wise		wow! wound p.p. of <i>wind</i>	woe, won't woke	we're/ wier weird	wear/ where	
/r/	ray, race rain/rein	rye/wry rice, rise	Roy	row, round	roe/row road/rode	rear, really	rare,rarely	
/l/	lay, lake, lame late,	lie, life, like lime, live	loiter	loud, louse lout	low, load lone. loath	leer	lair, laird	
/h/	hay/hey! hail,hate	hi/high height, hive	hoick, hoist	how, house	hoe, hope, home, hose	here/ hear	hair/hare	

Table of each diphthong as it follows each of the consonants of English*

*(except /ɜ/ and /ɪj/, which are not found in initial position)

Sounds and letters

Czechs should not be misled into thinking that two adjacent English **vowel letters** indicate a diphthong phoneme, as they do in Czech. The word *author*, for example,

looks similar to the Czech word *autor*. In English the letters **au** are commonly pronounced as the long vowel /ɔɪ/. *Author* is /ɔ:θə/, not /aʊθə/ or even /autə/. A native speaker would probably understand the latter to be *outer*, as in *outer space* or *Outer Hebrides*.

Although it may initially appear that English vowel sounds and letters correlate rather randomly, certain patterns do emerge. The most common sound/letter relationships are described as each diphthong is examined below. They can also be seen in the table above.

The Closing Diphthongs

English has five closing diphthongs, sounds in which there is a glide towards a relatively closer vowel. Three glide towards the sound /ɪ/.

1. The diphthong /eɪ/

Sound: This diphthong starts with the vowel in /e/ *mess* and *ten*. It sounds similar to the Czech *ej*, except that in the English diphthong the first element is longer and louder. Compare *dej* – *day*; *hej* – *hay*; *lej* – *lay*; *sej* – *say*.

Spelling: Words like *base*, *cane*, *date*, *fame*, *race*, *take* have the following pattern Consonant (C) + letter **a** + Consonant (C) + silent letter **e**. Here, the letter **a** is /eɪ/. Other common orthographic realisations of this diphthong are **ai** (*fail*, *pain*, *rain*, *tail*), as well as final **-ay** (*pray*, *tray*, *way*).

In the musical *My Fair Lady* it is this sound which the Cockney flowergirl, Eliza Doolittle, finds particularly difficult. Instead of saying *The rain in Spain says mainly in the plain* with an RP accent, she could only utter something which sounded like *The Rhine in spine stys minely in the pline*.

Her exchange with Henry Higgins can be found here:

<http://www.yougoggle.com/video/139693/My-Fair-Lady--The-rain-in-Spain-stays-mainly-in-the-plain> (The link functions at the time of writing this article).

2. The diphthong /aɪ/

Sound: This begins in a position similar to that of the Czech vowel **a** in *dav* and *kal*. It is pronounced as the word *eye*.

Compare these similar words *háj* – *high*; *máj* – *my*; *ráj* – *rye*.

Spelling: In C+i+C+silent e, the letter **i** is /aɪ/ *bite*, *kite*, *fine*, *mine*, *hike*, *like*, *rise*, *size*. It is also the final **-ie** in *die*, *lie*, *pie* as well as C+final **-y** *cry*, *dry*, *fry*, *rely* *spy*, *try*. It is in *height* /hɛɪt/. Contrast this with the first diphthong above /hɛɪt/ = hate.

3. The diphthong /ɔɪ/

Sound: The first part begins with a sound similar to the long vowel /ɔɪ/. It is similar to the Czech *-oj*. Compare *boj* – *boy*; *roj* – *Roy*.

Spelling: The sound is spelled **oi** and in final position **oy** *boil*, *boy*, *noise*, *oil*, *voice*.

In addition to the three closing diphthongs described above, there are two other closing diphthongs, which glide towards the position /ʊ/. In these, the tongue moves toward the top of the mouth and the lips become more rounded.

4. The diphthong /aʊ/

Sound: This begins with a vowel like /aɪ/. Since there is quite a distance between the initial and final elements of this diphthong, there is a move *towards* the final sound, but

it is seldom reached in connected speech. Notice that the short vowel /ʊ/ in *hood* is more close than the second element in /aʊ/ in *how*, for example. The lips are rounded slightly during the glide towards the /ʊ/.

Spelling: *ow* *cow, crowd, how, now, town*; *ou* *count, house, mouse, south*. However, these letters are not always /aʊ/, for example in *low* /ləʊ/, *southern* /sʌðən/ *youth* /ju:θ/.

5. The diphthong /əʊ/

Sound: The first element is the central vowel schwa. The lips become rounded as the glide towards the second element occurs.

Spelling: C+o+C+ silent e *coke, hope, hose, pope, smoke*.

Final –o(e) *go, no, so, doe, hoe, roe*; –oa: *boat, coat, cloak, soak*.

French words *gateau, bureau, plateau*.

Unusual spellings are *brooch* /brəʊtʃ/ and *mauve* /məʊv/.

When this diphthong occurs before /l/ as in *hole/whole mole, soul/sole, sold, told*, many native speakers use [ɒʊ] instead of /əʊ/ with the result that learners of English will hear two slightly different diphthongs in these pairs of words *hope-hole coat-coal boat-bowl*. This is particularly common in **Estuary English**, a form of English widely spoken in and around London and, more generally, in the southeast of England — along the river Thames and its estuary. David Beckham is one well-known speaker.

A humorous song which can be used to teach the change in pronunciation from a short vowel to a diphthong (or long vowel) when silent e is added is **Tom Lehrer's Silent E**

Who can turn a **can** into a **cane**?

Who can turn a **pan** into a **pane**?

It's not too hard to see

It's silent E

Who can turn a **cub** into a **cube**?

Who can turn a **tub** into a **tube**?

It's elementary

For Silent E

He took a **pin** and turned it into **pine**

He took a **twin** and turned him into

twine

Who can turn a **cap** into a **cape**?

Who can turn a **tap** into a **tape**?

A little **glob** becomes a **globe** instantly

If you just add silent E

He turned a **dam** - alikazam! - into a **dame**

But my friend **Sam** stayed just the **same**

Who can turn a **man** into a **mane**?

Who can turn a **van** into a **vane**?

A little **hug** becomes **huge** instantly

Don't add w, don't add x, and don't add y or z,

Just add silent E

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVC9TayQIh8> (The link functions at the time of writing this article).

In addition to the five closing diphthongs described above, English has three **centring diphthongs** which finish close to schwa, /ə/. Since this is a weak (untressed) vowel anyway, the shorter, quieter second element may hardly be heard. Words like *bear* may sound like *bé* with a slight glide towards /ə/. The letter **r** commonly follows the vowel *letters*. Czechs should avoid articulating a consonant sound /r/. There is no /r/ sound in *peer, pear, pour, beer, bear, boor, tear, tare, tour, dear, dare, dour*. There are just two phonemes: the initial consonant + centring diphthong.

6. The diphthong /ɪə/

Sound: This sound begins in a position closer to the long vowel /i:/ than the short vowel /ɪ/. The diphthong is the word *ear*.

Spelling: **ea** *dear, hear, year* (but not in *bear, heart, heard*); **ie** *bier, pier, fierce*; **eer/ere** *beer, cheer, deer, seer, here, mere*.

7. The diphthong /eə/

Sound: This begins with the sound /e/. The diphthong is pronounced as *air/heir*. **Spelling:** -*air/-are*: *chair, fair, hair, pair, dare, rare, share*.

8. The diphthong /ʊə/

Sound: This is a rare diphthong, as the table above shows. Modern day speakers, accustomed to economising in speech, are increasingly replacing it with the long vowel /ɔ:/ . This is why some dictionaries transcribe *sure* as /ʃʊə/, while many speakers would make this word homophonous with *shore* /ʃɔ:/ . Where it does still occur, is when /j/ precedes the diphthong /ʊə/ as in *cure, pure mural, neurotic, durable, furious*.

Spelling: There are only few words which are pronounced with this diphthong. See the table above.

Triphthongs

This examination of the English vowel sounds cannot be properly concluded without mentioning the five English triphthongs (*trojhlásky*). As the name indicates, these sounds have three parts. They consist of the **five closing diphthongs** + /ə/ (schwa) . The most common words which contain triphthongs are listed below.

/erə/	/aɪə/	ɔɪə/	/aʊə/	/əʊə/
layer player sprayer	drier/dryer fire hire/higher mire shire spire tire	loyal royal soya Goya	flour/flower hour/our power shower tower towel	grower mower lower slower thrower

Summary

The 20 English vowel phonemes are:

Seven short vowels: /ɪ/ /æ/ /e/ /ɒ/ /ʌ/ /ʊ/ /ə/ (see ATE newsletter Vol. 21 No.1)

Five long vowels: /i:/ /a:/ /ɔ:/ /ɜ:/ /u:/ (see ATE newsletter Vol. 21 No.2)

Eight diphthongs: /eɪ/ /aɪ/ /ɔɪ/ /aʊ/ /əʊ/ /ɪə/ /eə/ /ʊə/ (this issue)

The 24 English consonant phonemes will be examined in the next newsletter.

I would like to thank Veronika Vršovska for turning my rough sketches into neat graphics.

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Teaching Speaking to Adults at A1-A2 Levels

The paper deals with some problems that we may encounter in teaching speaking to A1-A2 adult learners of English in the Czech Republic. It presents results of a 2006 survey done at the Czech Technical University in Prague. A communicative mill drill is suggested as an effective tool for teaching speaking in this particular context. Its benefits are discussed below.

Key words: *A1-A2 levels of proficiency, speaking skills, lexis, accuracy, fluency, Communicative Language Teaching, pre-communicative vs. communicative activities, accuracy-based vs. fluency-based activities, mill drills.*

Introduction

Speaking is a very difficult skill to teach at A1-A2 levels of proficiency (*the Common European Framework for Languages / CEFR*) and developing speaking is, unfortunately, often neglected. When we teach adult students at these levels, we tend to ask ourselves questions such as:

What do my students need to develop most? Why so many adult learners attend these courses repeatedly? Is it at all appropriate to talk about fluency at this particular level? What type of activity is efficient in developing speaking in this context? At which level will my students become more independent in their speaking?

JAROPP Project

In order to answer at least some of the above-mentioned questions, we carried out a survey at Jaspex, the Czech Technical University in Prague, in 2006. In the survey, one hundred participants of the JAROPP¹ project were studied. The students were primary and secondary school teachers in Prague who taught subjects other than English. In the project, they attended four English lessons per week for one and half years. The participants included in the survey had A1-A2 levels of proficiency (prevailing levels in the whole project), even though 55% had studied English for more than four years some time before, with 25% stating that the total time of their previous study exceeded ten years.

The participants included 85% females and 15% males. The majority of participants were between 30-60 years of age (37% were 41-50 years old; 27% were 31-40 years old; 24% were 51-60 years old). 67% attended courses at A2 level and 33% at A1 level, using course books *REWARD Pre-intermediate* and *Elementary* respectively.

The students' main purpose for learning English was speaking; 83% participants stated that they consider *speaking* the main language skill they want to improve. As for language knowledge, 61% identified *lexis* as the most important area for their language development.

Fluency versus accuracy

Speaking is often associated with *fluency*; however, at the early stages of learning (A1-A2) fluency is a difficult concept. In ELT literature, we find methodological approaches and methods which either postpone teaching speaking completely, for example in the *Silent Way* (Richards – Rodgers, 1992: 99), or drill new sentence patterns by a simple method of imitation and repetition,

¹ JAROPP Project: “Jazykový rozvoj pedagogických pracovníků“ (“Language Development of Prague School Teachers”), organised by the Prague magistrate in winter 2005 - summer 2006

for example in the *'mim-mem' method* (mimicry and memorization) or the *Audiolingual Method* (Howatt - Widdowson, 2004: 304).

Even though drills were considered inappropriate at the beginning of *Communicative Language Teaching*, the focus on accuracy at A1-A2 stages of instruction has not disappeared completely. Most writers find it useful to develop accuracy at the early stages of learning and fluency only later on – as the course progresses. This view can be found even in the works by advocates of *Communicative Language Teaching*, like Littlewood (1990: 14), Brumfit (1990: 118-19), or Byrne (1996: 10).

According to Littlewood, we should enable learners “to acquire linguistic forms and relate them to communicative function, non-linguistic reality and social context”. Thus learners, even at this level, will gradually move towards the ability to participate in meaningful interaction. Littlewood distinguishes:

- *pre-communicative activities* (focus on form);
- *communicative activities* (focus on meaning to be communicated).

However, he points out that we are dealing with differences of emphasis – there is no clear-cut distinction (Littlewood 1990: 14-16).

Brumfit's distinction between *accuracy-based* and *fluency-based activities* is also useful. He defines accuracy work as language work focused predominantly on language forms, whereas fluency work is “language work which entails using the target language as if it is a mother tongue”, the accuracy or inaccuracy of the language produced being irrelevant (Brumfit 1990: 52-3). He draws the conclusion that accuracy is more related to the syllabus and more teacher-dominated, whereas fluency is student-dominated, meaning-based, and relatively unpredictable towards the syllabus (Brumfit 1990: 131).

What is a mill-drill?

Bearing in mind the above points, we searched for a communicative activity which would provide our A1-A2 learners with opportunities to practise language in natural interaction. The requirements were very well fulfilled by so called *mill-drill activities* from the *Reward Resource Pack Elementary and Pre-intermediate* (Kay 1997).

A *mill drill* as defined by Sue Kay (1997) is a question-and-answer activity based on a classroom situation or visuals where every student changes partners and speaks to other students in class. For example, when talking about hobbies and practising the Present Simple questions every student takes a card with a picture of a leisure activity, e.g. swimming. The teacher selects a sample dialogue and writes it on the board, preferably eliciting the language from the students, for example:

- *Do you like swimming?*
- *Yes, I do. / No, I don't.*

Students' dialogues will change according to the prompts on their cards. Note that natural interaction is realised when the student being asked has to supply a true answer on the spot. This way, students are able to do a survey in class, each investigating a different issue. It is even more efficient if we let students suggest their own questions they would like to ask the other people in class.

As mill-drill activities proved to be popular with both teachers and students in the JAROPP project, we included some questions on this activity type in the 2006 survey to get our first

feedback. It turned out that students loved these activities. They found them effective for the development of their speaking skills and mainly appreciated the following characteristics:

- meaningful interaction;
- drilling of language structures;
- group work and cooperative learning.

The least popular feature of the activity was movement around the classroom.

The benefits of a communicative mill drill for A1-A2 learners

If we evaluate the communicative mill drill from the teacher's point of view, we find the following benefits.

Communicative mill drills:

- practise genuine **interaction in pairs** – the most frequent means of communication. E.g.: Students obtain information from each other to complete a survey.
- naturally **create an information gap** and thus stimulate simple patterns of communicative interaction.
- lend themselves to **personalisation**. Learners can form their own questions and learn facts about each other.
- force students to **exchange real meanings** in situations they will most probably encounter in real life. Students have a concrete purpose for communication.
- practise **newly-learnt language structures** in a controlled way. Learners appreciate the opportunity to drill the questions because it helps them to gain self-confidence in speaking.
- **maximise students' talking time**. Students get the greatest amount of individual practice they can have. It is very useful for shy and less confident students, who do not speak much in class.
- improve **motivation**. They activate learners and develop positive personal relationships in class.
- enable students to **develop independence**: The mini-dialogues are 'whole-task' practice (similar to Task-Based Learning). They often constitute learners' first attempts in speaking. Learners themselves are responsible for conducting the interaction to its conclusion.
- can be used for **cooperative learning**. Students help each other to complete a survey. Every student shares the results concerning his/her own survey with the whole class.

How to do a mill drill with your class

1. Pre-teach vocabulary / revise grammar structures.
2. Explain the task and give instructions: make sure that students understand what you want them to do.
3. Elicit the dialogue / questions from a few students. Write a model on the board.
4. Demonstrate a sample dialogue with a bright student. Then ask 1-2 pairs to demonstrate the dialogue.
5. Students do the mill-drill activity: they go round the class and repeat the dialogue with other partners. They can put down the answers. Monitor and help where necessary. If some students finish earlier, allow them to write their results on the board.
6. Feedback: Students report the results of their survey to the whole class.

Conclusion

The 2006 survey confirmed our expectation that most adult students took English courses in order to improve their speaking. Although more than half of them had studied English for at least four years some time before the JAROPP project, their level was still A1-A2. Most students stated that they also needed to work on lexis. The communicative mill drill seems to fulfil the students' requirements in the way that it ensures meaningful interaction, it enables students to drill the language structures, and at the same time it promotes group work and cooperative learning. A follow-up study will be carried out in 2010-2011.

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Do We Understand Each Other?

/du wi ʌndə'stænd i:tʃ 'ʌðə/

When it comes to real, everyday communication in a foreign language (and more specifically in English as an International Language: cf Jenkins, 2009), one basic issue always arises: do *we* understand each other? Do the *listeners* actually receive the message that *we* are seeking to pass to them? And if not, *what* causes misunderstandings and breakdown in communication?

Verbal communication involves a variety of different types of knowledge, skills, micro-skills and subskills that a foreign language learner needs to acquire: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and the skills of listening and speaking.

But which of these should be devoted most attention to in order to avoid misunderstanding and to sustain meaningful communication? Is it the lack of vocabulary or rather incorrect use of grammar? Or does pronunciation play the most crucial role in the processes of speaking and listening?

In the Czech Republic, the teaching and learning of English has long focused on grammar and vocabulary. Pronunciation played and still seems to play marginal and almost optional role in foreign language classes. As Poesová (2008) suggests, *pronunciation contains many subconscious aspects and therefore some teachers consider dealing with it as a waste of time*. However, many linguists and methodologists agree that **intelligibility** (i.e. *being understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation* (Kenworthy, 1987)) is the most important and sensible goal in teaching pronunciation.

The word intelligibility can be translated into Czech as *srozumitelnost*. *No one expects a non-native speaker of English to score a bull's-eye each time. That is, to sound like a native speaker every time he opens his mouth.* (Karásková, 2008)

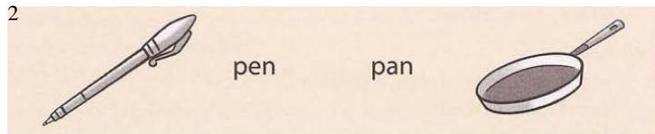
Should pronunciation therefore become a compulsory part of every English class? If so, what should be taught and how? Should we focus on the individual sounds (as represented in the International Phonetic Alphabet, or 'IPA'); or should we concentrate on stress, rhythm, intonation, and other aspects of connected speech (e.g. linking)?

This paper deals with several different aspects/problems of pronunciation that often prevent speakers of English (mostly Czech) from understanding each other:

- substitution
- relative vowel length and the devoicing (or not) of final consonants
- homophones
- intonation ("tonicity": i.e. location of main prominence)

A. One major problem is the substitution of an individual sound/individual sounds (either a vowel or a consonant). See the examples below.

1. If one wants to cook and asks a friend to pass him a *pan* /pæn/, but pronounces it as a *pen* /pen/, the person is not able to make any pancakes, just “pencakes”.



2.

A: Where is it?

B: It's in the west (<i>but pronounced as /vest/</i>).
--



3.

A: Are all the children playing in the garden?
--

B: No, just three (<i>but pronounced as /tri:/</i>)

Most of the Czech people do not know how to pronounce the dental fricatives. Here, as you could read, the problem, which is going to happen, is very big. Speaker A would start to worry and look for the children somewhere else, while, at the same time, they are playing in the garden (but we do not know how many of them).



² The picture is taken from BAKER, A., GOLDSTEIN, S. Pronunciation Pairs: an Introduction to the Sounds of English, 2nd edition, New York: CUP, 2008.

³ The picture is taken from <http://www.carbontax.org/wp-content/uploads/usmap-west.jpg>

⁴ The picture was taken from

http://chicago.timeout.com/chicago/resizeImage/htdocs/export_images/135/135.x600.check.wardrobe.vest3.jpg

⁵ The picture was taken from <http://www.childschapel.org/biblestories/graphics/kids3.gif>

⁶ The picture was taken from

http://api.ning.com/files/OE9BwfkGUnUarDp4zhS5vY7ndmJrGe8FK6SaSB7AMSBYe6XCoTBJfxB1a2Rdhzv gZV2m4-7dyqmtz*N2DyFMlxmpv1BKwaHt/orangetreegarden.jpg

B. The following examples indicate the major difference between Czech and English concerning vowel length and the voicing of final consonants:

Cz En – “minimal pairs“

led	let	sít	seat
	led		seed
pod	pot	bít	beat
	pod		bead
lid	lit	byt	bit
	lid		bid

Whereas Czech expressions are pronounced with the same length of the short vowel and final consonants are always devoiced, whatever the spelling, English has both voiced and voiceless final consonants, and this causes shortening of the vowel before voiceless consonants (*fortis*) and lengthening of the vowel before voiced consonants (*lenis*), while retaining the same vowel quality.

C. Homophones (words which are pronounced in the same way, but which differ in meaning and spelling) in English can lead to another type of communication breakdown (see the dialogues below):

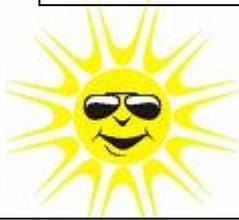
Dialogue 1:

L: Right! – <i>falling tone (Jakub is taking a piece of paper to write)</i>
J: What? – <i>falling tone</i>
L: What? – <i>rising tone</i>
J: What should I write? – <i>falling tone</i>
L: Well , I said right! – <i>fall/rising, falling tones</i>
J: What? – <i>rising tone</i> What to write? – <i>falling tone</i>
L: Nothing! – <i>falling tone</i>
J: So why did you say write? – <i>falling tone</i>
L: Just to say “ All RIGHT ” – Let’s start! – <i>falling tones</i>
J: Right! – I hope we understand each other now! – <i>rising, falling</i>

Dialogue 2:

J: Where’s the sun ?
L: Whose son?
J: I mean the sun.
L: Let’s make it SUNNY here.

7



⁷ The picture was taken from <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/hnx/newslet/spring03/sun062clipart.jpg>

Note: the dialogues were presented at a conference. The letter L stands for Libuše and the letter J for Jakub.

See the list of some English homophones written by using IPA symbols:

<u>/mi:t/</u>	<u>/si:/</u>
<u>/sʌn/</u>	<u>/aʊəʔ/</u>
<u>/hiəʔ/</u>	<u>/baɪ/</u>
<u>/wi:tʃ/</u>	<u>/eɪt/</u>
<u>/red/</u>	<u>/raɪt/</u>
<u>/wʌn/</u>	<u>/meɪl/</u>
<u>/sʌm/</u>	<u>/weɪ/</u>
<u>/hɪm/</u>	<u>/diəʔ/</u>
<u>/ɪts/</u>	<u>/naɪt/</u>
<u>/ɱju:/</u>	<u>/tu:/</u>
<u>/wi:k/</u>	<u>/aɪ/</u>

D. Intonation is another aspect of English pronunciation that deserves more attention and should become an inseparable part of English classes. The dialogues above provide evidence of how unpredictable intonation may be. At the same time, tonicity (i.e. placement of the “tonic syllable”, or main intonational prominence) suggests that the main focus in any utterance depends entirely on the speaker’s intention about which part of the message they consider the most important **at the moment of speaking**. If learners are given enough practice in listening to short real-life extracts followed by drilling (back-chaining, etc.) then communication will become an enjoyable and natural *activity in/part of* any English class.

This may be illustrated by varying the location of the tonic syllable in a sentence like:

“I haven’t seen John this morning.”

I haven’t seen John this morning (but Mary has).

I **haven’t** seen John this morning (so don’t accuse me!)

I haven’t **seen** John this morning (but I think I heard him in the corridor).

I haven’t seen **John** this morning (but I saw his sister, so I expect he’s here).

I haven’t seen John this **morning** (but he was here yesterday).

English can achieve enormous differences in meaning without changing anything except location of the tonic syllable, while Czech has to manipulate grammar and word-order as well as aspects of pronunciation to achieve the same effect.

To sum up, when speaking English, the person should take into account all of the features mentioned above (skills such as listening and speaking and subskills such as vocabulary, grammar and PRONUNCIATION) because the communication breakdown or misunderstanding can occur. The pronunciation problems presented here should always be an integral part of ELT.

In this issue we mostly dealt with “/wɒt/”, we will try to look at “/haʊ/” in the next issue.

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INSPIRING IDEAS AND TIPS

Going Dutch

In English some countries have different words for the actual adjective, for a person from that country, and for the country's language. But can we trust adjectives that seemingly indicate nationality? Or are they all Greek to us? This multi-step exercise is suitable for advanced learners and requires bilingual and monolingual English dictionaries.

Step One

Write the following expressions on the blackboard:

Russian roulette

French fries

Turkish bath

German measles

Ask the learners if they know what the expressions mean. Next, ask them which of these expressions (if any) actually have anything to do with the country to which they refer. Finally, invite anyone who has similar examples to share them with you and their classmates.

Step Two

Hand out the worksheet to the learners (one copy each). Ask them to work in pairs and fill in the blanks in the ten sentences on the worksheet (all sentences have expressions that include the word 'Dutch'. Ten of the twenty words in the box are the correct ones. Invite the learners to use monolingual dictionaries to check their answers.

Step Three

When most of the learners have completed the task, ask them to form new pairs to share and compare their findings with

Step Four

Next, ask the learners to stay with their new partner and use bilingual dictionaries and try to find (and agree on) good translations or translational equivalents in their mother tongue for the 'Dutch' expressions.

Step Five

Again, when most pairs have completed the task, ask them to form new groups of three or four and share and compare their findings with each other.

Solution

The correct expressions are, in this order: 'Dutch door', 'Dutch uncle', 'double Dutch', 'Dutch auction', 'Dutch courage', 'Dutch cap', 'went Dutch', 'Dutch treat', 'Dutch concert', and 'Dutch comfort'.

Acknowledgement

This exercise first appeared in Rolf Palmberg: **Activities and Exercises for Logical-Mathematical Learners of English** [Palmssoft Publications 2009].

GOING DUTCH – WORKSHEET

TASK ONE. Fill the blanks in the ten sentences below using ten of the twenty words in the box. If needed, use a monolingual dictionary.

**auction, beer, brother, cap, coat, comfort, concert,
courage, door, double, fight, kissing, made, party,
pig, sale, table, treat, uncle, went**

1. A **Dutch** _____ is a door that is divided horizontally. You can shut the upper part and lower part separately.
 2. He was very angry and talked to me like a **Dutch** _____.
 3. I could not understand a word of what he was saying. He must have been talking _____ **Dutch**.
 4. I bought this car at a **Dutch** _____. They reduced the price little by little and soon I had enough money to buy it.
 5. Let's get drunk. I need a lot of **Dutch** _____ to be able to do this.
 6. They don't want to have any babies so she wears a **Dutch** _____.
 7. We _____ **Dutch** with each other the other day when we had lunch: we shared the expenses equally.
 8. Last week we had a **Dutch** _____ which was quite the opposite: everyone paid his or her own meal.
 9. There was a **Dutch** _____ outside our house last night. A lot of drunken men were screaming and quarrelling for over an hour.
 10. **Dutch** _____ means that things could have been worse.
-

TASK TWO. Use a bilingual dictionary to find out how to translate the 'Dutch' expressions into your mother tongue. Number the translations and write them down on the other side of this worksheet.

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Complex Approach to Present Tense Continuous and Simple

Teaching intermediate as well as advanced students (A 2 and above) grammar points such as the present tense forms, you may be facing the problem of mixed feelings in students. What does that mean? The “learnt” learners will find the topic boring and the “beginners” as well as false “beginners” will think the issue too difficult to conceive.

I would believe there is a way to attract attention of both (and of all), and the way is a complex and structured approach to teaching the present. It could offer new information to students who have “done the present a hundred times” along with those who find it a “new grammar point”.

To simplify the complex approach I have developed a structure to help students and other teachers. The present tense *network* includes extra bits of grammar units of immense importance- **the formation and use of the gerund, spelling rules with gerunds, state verbs** and others.

The procedure of teaching present tense in its complex has been divided in individual steps. They are as follows.

- I. The use of the present continuous and the present simple.
 - a) The present continuous (progressive) formation, stressing the spelling rules in forming gerunds.
 - b) The present simple formation, stressing the fact there are verbs only existing in present simple.
- II. Further usage of gerund and how it works in a sentence.
- III. Verb patterns – a student’s useful guide.

I. The use of the present continuous and the present simple

It is of great importance to repeat and revise the use of the continuous and simple present. If you expose the theory in English, using graphic examples, everyone in class should be involved. Make sure your choice of a language is adequate and simplified for the slower ones to follow the exposition. This is the moment to make your students feel they are “with you” even though they have great doubts about their language knowledge. Make it part of the motivation to be patient and therefore give a chance to everyone.

The present continuous

To give you tips, I think it is of use to say the following about the present continuous:

This tense is used in cases of

- actions happening “now”

(Jim is looking out of the window. My parents are away in Malta, staying in a luxurious hotel.)

- temporary activities which are not permanent

(We are saving money to buy an exotic holiday. I am not eating dinners this month, I am dieting. Sam’s brushing up his German before he goes on his business trip to Berlin.)

- planned activity for the future; intentions

(We’re travelling to Sudan at the weekend. I’m meeting Sam’s wife tonight.)

It is vital to make sure your students know how to form present continuous:

Subject - (be) - gerund*

*For practical reasons, we choose to unify the terminology of gerund and ing-forms as well as present participle under the phrase of gerund.

which reads:

Pronoun / Person / Thing - be in its correct form (am, are, is) - verb + ing.

Pat and Jim are reading in the garden.

My best friend's father is driving me to school.

My parents and I are planning a trip abroad.

The further attention is to be paid to the gerund, its formation and usage. This step is necessary to be taken to prepare students to understand the complexity of grammar and to be able to learn from self-study books.

Gerund

We need our students to understand that forming a gerund in the present continuous sentences is a way of using a gerund, but it is not its only use. Gerund will also serve us in continuous sentences in different tenses and also in other grammar points. We will look at these later on in the paper.

We now turn to forming a gerund. Simply said, we add “ing” to a verb, following some rules. Here I suggest letting your intermediate students be active and think of their answers to the following:

Gerund formation

Form gerunds (ing-forms) of the following verbs.

1. visit
2. live
3. read
4. understand
5. sit
6. sleep
7. play
8. write
9. travel
10. seem
11. lie
12. start
13. begin
14. panick

Your students will eventually reach the point of the following chart:

1. visiting
2. living
3. reading
4. understanding
5. sitting
6. sleeping
7. playing
8. writing
9. traveling / travelling

10. seeming
11. lying
12. starting
13. beginning
14. panicking

This procedure is to help you and students elicit the basic rules for the changes in spelling while forming gerunds. You may discuss the following points:

- a) there are verbs remaining unchanged after the addition of “ing”.

See examples in 1., 2., 4., 6., 7.;

- b) verbs ending in –e will add “ing” and the –e disappears.

See examples in 2. and 8.;

- c) there are letters which double in the gerund formation.
Make your students find out why it is, asking them

- why there is no change in *visiting* but there is a change in *sitting*.

This step is likely to produce the answer that sit is a one syllable word.

- why there is a change in *sitting*, but not in *seeming*, *reading* (leaving now live and write aside as they have been mentioned as extra groups earlier on).

This may lead your students to eliciting the fact it depends on the final consonant preceded by a double vowel (or two vowels) in one-syllable words which stay unchanged.

- why there is no change in *playing*, if the middle vowel is only one?

This step will possibly take your students to realize there is no consonant at the final position of the word.

- - why there is no change in *starting*?

This is to make students realize there is double consonant at the end of start.

- d) *Travelling* is a separate group where a verb ends in a single vowel and – l.

To show a language has its playful sides, mention the differences in British and American spelling of *travelling* – *traveling*.

- e) The theory behind *beginning* being the right answer is that it is a multi-syllable infinitive and the final syllable is stressed and it ends in a single vowel and single consonant combination.

- f) As bonus information, students should be aware of irregularities in the spelling rules. *Lying* and *dying* can serve our purpose.

Now it is important to sum up the rules the students have elicited.

We now have two words which deserve extra attention. They are 4. and 10. and they will be referred to as soon as we reach the present simple.

II. Further use of gerund

A gerund form of a verb exists with most verbs, **even those which never form a continuous tense**. This is the critical point we are making. Students (secondary and tertiary school levels likewise) often confuse a gerund and a continuous form. If we now pay attention to exposing things clearly, we may have a good base for teaching the course with greater language theory awareness and therefore save time.

- a) We here mention for reasons of complexity the common use of gerund – in continuous tenses, stressing that a verb functions similarly if we use it in present continuous in other continuous tenses (which are to be the past, the present perfect etc.)

b) verb patterns (to be discussed below)

c) in subordinate clauses

The present simple

To give you tips, I think it is of use to say the following about the present simple:

- It is a tense used for
- regular activities
- scheduled activities
- repeated actions (often when we need to stress the frequency of an activity).

This category also covers the use of present simple in cases where there is the necessity to express the sheer existence of a feature or its irrevocability.

Your students ought to gain knowledge about verbs not transforming into a continuous tense even though “it is happening right now”. They are often called “state verbs”, but the group of verbs of such quality is a larger one. We offer a complex list of the verbs:

I. state verbs

- verbs of existence (be, exist)
- mental state (believe, doubt)
- wants and likes (prefer, need)
- possession (belong, own)
- appearance (look, seem, appear)

II. perception verbs (look, sound, smell, taste)

This point is important to be made for students to understand the differences in *ing forms* (which literally means they confuse gerunds and progressive verb forms no more).

III. Verb patterns

This particular grammar point may be a difficult one as it basically consists of a list of words (or phrases) and their verb combinations. However, and this is to be stressed not to demotivate your students before you start, they often know a lot of “verb patterns” and use them correctly from experience and language practice. I do meet students who match verbs perfectly without having ever heard of the theory of verb patterns. Once again, it only shows we need to use examples to support our theory.

The teacher can offer a group division of verbs to facilitate the process of a student’s learning.

- I. group of verbs expressing likes and dislikes (hate, love, admire, adore...) are followed by a **gerund**.
- II. group of verbs which express a follow-up to an activity (admit, deny...) are followed by a **gerund**.
- III. Group of verbs anticipating an activity (promise, hope, plan) are followed up by an **infinitive**.

Basic information on verb patterns ought to include modal verbs and the extra verbs *let* and *make* (and also optional *help* and *dare*) with their specific combination of an **infinitive without to**.

This grammar needs practice and motivation rather than theory. The lists of verb patterns are included either in course books of almost all levels as well as grammar hand books (e.g. Raymond Murphy: *English Grammar in Use* and many others).

grasp the exposed grammar, concentrate on it and therefore make a functional use of it, let alone ever so important factor of motivation.

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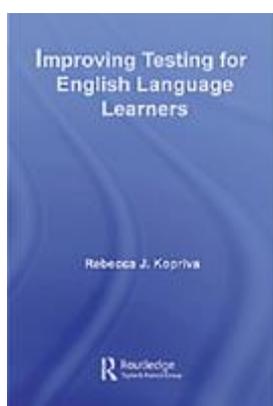
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BOOK REVIEWS

Improving Testing for English Language Learners by Rebecca J. Kopriva

Routledge, New York, 2008
368 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8058-6043-6



Testing effectively and fairly is one of the important tasks of our profession. It can be one of the more complex areas of our daily work that can either motivate or discourage English language learners. This text is useful for both improving the assessment of English proficiency and considering both procedural and empirical ideas while composing a test. The book is written clearly, is neatly structured and encompasses both the theory and practice of testing English. However, some chapters focus primarily on issues surrounding the testing of pupils in the United States. Particularly the testing policy and the particular needs of the U.S. population from kindergarten to twelfth grade figure prominently. The author, Rebecca J. Kopriva, is a research professor at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and

has published widely on issues surrounding the testing and evaluation of English Language Learners (ELL).

The book is divided into twelve chapters. Each chapter presents a concise background for the issue to be covered as well as the emerging trends on the specific subject. The first three chapters present 1. the purpose and overview; 2. the changing demographics in the testing culture in the US and why this issue matters; 3. the past as preparation: measurement, public policy, and implications for access. Kopriva describes how researchers in anthropology, psychology and sociology approach issues facing ELLs in the United States and the relevant links to testing. In chapter 3 Kopriva details large-scale achievement testing, reviews measurement theory models, and develops ideas for building assessment to be more accessible for ELLs. Also under review are fifty years of U.S. federal policy regarding equality and the use of achievement tests, including the current *No Child Left Behind* legislation which emphasizes standards-based teaching and assessment.

The following four chapters concern both theoretical and practical issues of language assessment. Chapter 4 shows how both experts' and students' participation in the development of testing specifications will conduce to a more suitable content. Kopriva then discusses the importance of aligning the test to match the standards of the curriculum. The construction of tests is the area covered in Chapter 5. Clearly defining the intended knowledge and skills of the test item targets is preponderate. In Chapter 6 Kopriva abundantly covers acquisition-based item development including contextual factors (culturally-broad experiences, clear and explicit expectations, prior learning expectations), structured factors (simple language structures, vocabulary, effective visuals, effective formatting, quantity of text, and the influence of the language spoken at home) and resources (text support and activities). Chapter 7 carefully considers tools, test forms and reviews (including fairness reviews). It is accordingly clear that there is so much to consider here – both theoretically and

practically – for teachers involved in the scrupulous preparation of tests. The issues worthy of consideration are thoroughly covered in these chapters.

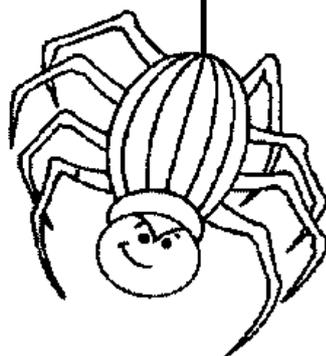
The final five chapters consider what ELLs should be tested on (Chapter 8), pretest activities and support (Chapter 9) and accommodating individual students (language proficiency, cultural proximity and the U.S. schooling experience of, for example, a immigrant pupil) (Chapter 10), scoring considerations (Chapter 11), and finally technical considerations (Chapter 12) which including a reflection of both quantitative and qualitative approaches for documenting the legitimacy of the test assessment.

Although many specifics pertaining to U.S. schools and pupils may be extraneous to Czech educators, most chapters of this book will be particularly helpful for those of us regularly involved in creating exams for our practical language classes, but also for the important school-leaving exams (at the secondary level) and entrance exams (at the tertiary level). Moreover, the book ultimately shows how our teaching and testing of English are directly interrelated.

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Learning One-to-One by Ingrid Wisniewska

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010
220 pp. ISBN: 978-0-521-13458-3

This handbook (with CD-ROM) is the first one available in our country to give a full overview, both theoretically and practically, of teaching (and learning, of course) individual students. Teaching English to individuals, such a frequent activity in our country in recent years, may offer exciting opportunities and challenges, and this handbook sets out to explore how to make the most of it, how to apply creative ways while meeting the challenges. The first thing to realize is the huge variability of settings of one-to-one (to be referred as 1to1) teaching (including the distance learning via the internet), the variability of the nature of relationships, aims and content of teaching, among other features. However, the book is written in a way so that it caters for this variety.

The book is divided into two parts: the first part presents the areas of methodology that are most relevant to 1to1 teaching. In five chapters the author discusses the teaching tools, offers suggestions for designing courses and planning lessons, and presents ideas for selecting and adapting published materials. I would like to mention briefly two chapters in more details. Chapter two deals with teacher roles. It starts (as all theoretical chapters do) with a reflective opening - there is a lot of space for readers to reflect on their own practices and approaches throughout the whole of the first part of the book. The author chooses and discusses just five key teacher roles most relevant for 1to1 teaching: conversation partner, observer and listener, feedback provider, mentor and guide, and learner. In 1to1 settings, we often exchange real opinions and information on topics both the parties are interested in, we facilitate learning in a relaxed and often informal environment, letting learners feel less inhibited and more receptive to language input. We may be more sensitive to our students' learning styles, abilities or weaknesses. Chapter 5 deals with feedback and reflection. It offers 8 different interesting short types of feedback, tables on learner self-evaluation and teacher reflection.

The second part of the book follows the division according to the above mentioned five teacher roles, altogether it forms a bank of easy-to-use 69 activities! There are plenty of ideas for using technology and online resources to develop language skills in a fun way.

All the visual elements of practical activities as well as the charts accompanying the theoretical part of the book are photocopyable (available as PDF files on the CD-ROM). The CD-ROM offers a wide variety of activities to be adapted to suit one's own practice.

If you do 1to1 teaching, this book full of practical ideas and innovative activities should be of great help.

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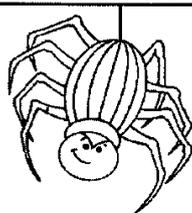
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The last bit of information concerns the contact between the executive committee and the members. As the Internet has become generally available both at schools and homes we ask ATE members to write their current email address on the Renewal Form. We believe that email contact is more flexible and economical than paper mail. Try to access ATE Web page as often as possible:

<http://www.atecr.cz>. If you encounter problems reaching our web page or want to suggest or improve something, do not hesitate to contact members of the executive committee.

Vladimír Přeč
ATE CR Membership Secretary
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