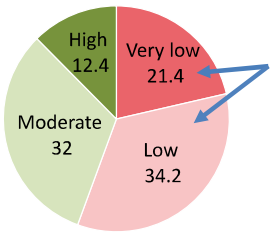
Intelligible English Pronunciation for Japanese Learners in Global Communication

Ehime University Senior High School

Introduction

Q. Are you confident in your English pronunciation?



Not confident: 55.6%

Japanese learners are not confident in pronunciation

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Question 1

Changes in target pronunciation for Japanese learners (Course of Study)

In 1947 American → In 1958 American, British → In 1998 No specific model

Native English Speakers **Various Englishes** ※2

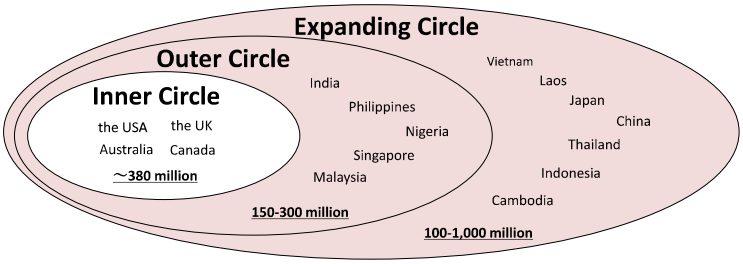
Changes in English audio in listening Test for University Admissions

American English: 80%
British English: 15%
Asian English: 5%

Non-native audio was added to the listening section

To become more familiar with various English pronunciations ※3

Changes in English-Speaking Populations



native < **non-native**

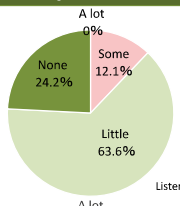
Kachru's Three Circle of English (adapted from Kachru) ※4

Most of communication occurs between non-native speakers

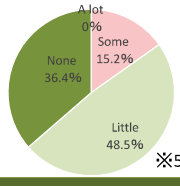
Question 2

Q. How much pronunciation instruction did you receive / give?

JHS



HS



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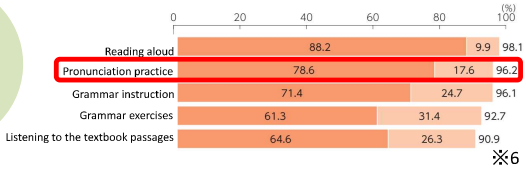
Teachers



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Students→ Not enough instruction
Teachers→ Sufficient instruction

Perception Gap: Students vs Teachers

Effective ways to improve pronunciation

Students' perspectives	Teachers' perspectives
Practice Individually -Listen & Repeat -Shadowing -Record for review -Use AI conversation tools	Student-centered activities -Pair/group work, interactive tasks Provide feedback Provide explicit pronunciation guidance

Research questions/Conclusion

Q1 What pronunciation should Japanese learners aim for?

Pronunciation Goal

Not native-like English, but Intelligible English
(Understandable by non-native speakers)

Q2 How can Japanese learners improve their pronunciation?

Improvement Methods

Students' perspectives: Individual practice
Teachers' perspectives: Student-centered activities
Individual feedback
Explicit pronunciation instruction

Q3 Which pronunciation should learners improve on?

Improvement Targets

/r/ and /l/ , /f/ and /v/ , /ð/ and /θ/
Clear pronunciation

Question 3

Too many pronunciation elements

-Textbooks target native-like English
-Learners don't know which elements to focus on (sounds, stress, intonation, linking)

Overwhelming!!

Twelve elements to focus for Intelligible English pronunciation

Category	Pronunciation Elements to Master
Consonants	Plosives: /p/,/t/,/k/,/b/,/d/,/g/
	Fricatives: /f/,/v/
	/r/
	Avoiding adding extra vowels
	/θi//ði/ (avoiding confusion with /si//zi/)
	/h/(avoiding confusion with [ɸ])
	Word-final /n/
Vowels	/ɜ:/ (as in NURSE)
	Length difference before fortis/ lenis consonants
Connected Speech	Stress in words with two or more syllables
	Rhythm(lengthen stressed syllables)
	Intonation(rising and falling Patterns)

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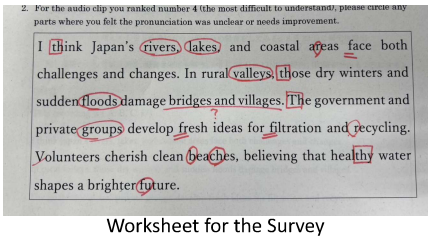

Worksheet for the Survey

with Asian students at Asia Youth Leaders

Finding : Key pronunciation elements

Consonants
/r/ and /l/ , /f/ and /v/ , /ð/ and /θ/
Connected speech
Emphasize clear pronunciation rather than linking

Intelligible English Pronunciation

References
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※4 Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle
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