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AMERICAN PRONUNCIATION TRAINING FOR SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The American English pronunciation is in great demand, especially for International Business situations. Indians learnt to speak English as second language influenced by British colonization rule. Even then, such British English Pronunciation is filtered through their mother tongue language. Majority of Second Language English speakers use their native language speech rules and intonation pattern.

Keywords: American English, Pronunciation, lips, teeth, training, articulation, sound, second language, speakers

INTRODUCTION

This American English pronunciation training is designed to help the second language English speakers from India, Maldives, Singapore and Mauritius who find it difficult to speak American English. This training is for the purpose of Teaching and self –learning. Communicative skills improvement, International Business, Teaching, IELTS and TOEFL. In America, there are many regional Pronunciation variations but in this training program, the Standard American English as spoken and understood by majority of People in America is used.

OBJECTIVE

To design a training Program for Second Language English speakers in India, Maldives, Singapore and Mauritius to acquire American English pronunciation in a short period.

DATA ANALYSIS

For conducting this research, more continuous observations using American Business clients, American Tourists, American Christian missionaries, Hollywood Film stars and observed their pronunciation pattern, Accent, Voice and manner of articulation. This American English pronunciation Training was given to 120 Second language English speakers with different educational background like Engineering, Art and Management at Institution of Soft-skills and English Language Trainers of India at Hyderabad.

Linguistic Meaning of Speech Sound

The study of human speech sounds in any language is called as Phonetics or acoustics. Speech sound can be produced with or without the vibration of Vocal cords present in the throat. The Larynx located in the throat is called as Voice box. A Pair of tiny muscular lip like structures in the throat is vocal cord and the opening between them is glottis. Voice is a kind of Speech sound produced by the vibration of vocal cords. Speech sound produced without the vibration of vocal cords is called as unvoiced or voiceless sound. An alphabet may have more than one speech sound such as being voiced in some words and voiceless in other words. The study of speech sounds in a particular language is called as Phonology or Phonemics. Phoneme is the basic unit and Syllable is the next higher unit of English speech sound system. There are 44 Speech sounds in Standard English called phonemes; they are further divided into 24 consonant and 20 vowel sounds. Vowel sounds are further sub-divided into 8 Non-pure vowels and 12 pure vowels called as Monophthongs.

Articulation Explained

Articulation means Production of speech sounds. It has three different aspects such as Articulator, Point or Place of Articulation and manner of articulation. The teeth, lips, teeth ridge, tongue and palate are called as Articulators as they are used for production of speech sound. The articulators take different shapes to produce various speech sounds. Sub-articulations are nasalization, palatalazation, velarazation, aspiration, glottalization, labilazation, Uvularazation, dentalization, plosivization Lateralizaiton, labio-dentalization, Post-alvelarization, retroflexation. Pharynealization etc.

American English Consonant R sound pronunciation

This consonant **R** sound is made by opening the mouth pushing the lips to form an oval by gently biting edges; the teeth are slightly kept apart with more of the top than bottom front teeth shown. The tongue must be placed in the middle of the mouth before moving back in the mouth. Only the lips must come forward as if going to kiss but the tongue should move backward. The consonant R may come at the beginning, end, after a vowel, in blend at the middle, in blend at the beginning of the word. The R sound is similar to dog crying sound. In British English this sound is produced using trill or flap articulation in which the tongue is tapped only once against the surface of within the mouth, then flap sound is produced, when the tip of the tongue is tapped more than once, it results in trill articulation in British Pronunciation.

R in beginning of the word	R end of the word or vowel	R in the middle of the word
RICE	STAR	VERY
ROME	CAR	ZERO
REST	PAR	HURRY
ROMEO	AIR	ZERO
RAIN	TURN	EVERYWHERE
REVIEW	POOR	ARIZONA
ROCK	FOUR	VIRGINIA

American English R Blend sound pronunciation

This consonant **R** is the strongest of the blend among all, whenever **R Blend** comes at the beginning of the word, the mouth first prepares for **R** by moving forward even before uttering the sound.

R Blend at beginning of the word	R Blend in middle of the word
T R O PICAL	AU S T R ALIA
T R U ST	WA I T R ESS
P R I NT	CO M P R ESS
C R U ST	OP P R E SSION
G R O OM	SUB T R A CT
B R O WN	IN T R O DUCTION
O R G AN	NUT R ITION

American English Consonant S sound pronunciation

The consonant S sound is made by opening the mouth medium wide, the teeth shown clenched, the tongue touches all of the bottom teeth, air is blown slowly, this S sound is called a Sibilant sound, Sibilant entered English language in the 17th century from the Latin word sibilant-, meaning “**hissing**.” When listen to a foreign language that’s full of hissy “**es**” or “**sh**” or “**zzz**” sounds, those sounds are called sibilants. Sibilant sound is made by forcing air out toward the teeth.

If a word ends in vowel or voiced consonant sound, then add **S** to the corresponding plural word sounding voiced **ZZZZ**.

SINGULAR WORD PRONUNCIATION	PLURAL WORD PRONUNCIATION
<i>Day</i>	<i>Days (Dayszzzz)</i>
<i>Tree</i>	<i>Trees (Treezzzz)</i>
<i>Game</i>	<i>Games (Gamezzzz)</i>
<i>Song</i>	<i>Songs (Songzzzz)</i>
<i>Head</i>	<i>Heads (Headzzzz)</i>
<i>Fly</i>	<i>Flies (Fliezzz)</i>

If the word ends in **S, Z, Sh, Ch, dg, dj**, add **S** in the ending, then sound the plural word endings Voicing **IZZZZZZ**

SINGULAR WORD PRONUNCIATION	PLURAL WORD PRONUNCIATION
<i>One Page</i>	<i>Two Pages (Two Pagizzzzz)</i>
<i>One Raise</i>	<i>Two Raises (Two Raizzzzzz)</i>
<i>Two Push</i>	<i>Two Pushes (Two Pushizzz)</i>
<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunches (Lunchizzzz)</i>
<i>Bus</i>	<i>Buses (Busizzzz)</i>
<i>Raise</i>	<i>Raises (Raisizzz)</i>

If the word ends in a sound that is unvoiced such as **P, T, K, F**, then add an unvoiced /S/ the hissing sound at the end.

American Word Ending Sounds

For the words ending in unvoiced consonant having **ED** at the endings, then the American pronunciation is unvoiced **T**.

Example:

1. Jumped (Jump**T**)
2. Walked (walk**T**)
3. Talked (Talk**T**)

For the words ending in voiced consonant, add voiced D

Example:

1. Moved
2. Shared
3. Scrubbed
4. Trimmed
5. Rubbed

For the words ending in T or D sound, add a voiced ED.

Example:

1. Lifted
2. Heated
3. Gifted
4. Voted
5. Branded

SINGULAR WORD PRONUNCIATION	PLURAL WORD PRONUNCIATION
<i>Shape</i>	<i>Shapes (Shapesss)</i>
<i>Cup</i>	<i>Cups (Cupsss)</i>
<i>Stop</i>	<i>Stops (Stopsss)</i>
<i>Hat</i>	<i>Hats (Hatsss)</i>
<i>Cat</i>	<i>Cats (Catsss)</i>
<i>Stop</i>	<i>Stops (Stopsss)</i>

List of the words in which S is pronounced as Z

BECAUSE	<i>BECAUZE</i>
IS	<i>IZ</i>
THESE	<i>THEZE</i>
AS	<i>AZ</i>
HIS	<i>HIZ</i>
THOSE	<i>THOZE</i>
HOUSE	<i>HOUZE</i>

American English Consonant F Unvoiced Sound Pronunciation

This F sound is made by half-closing the mouth teeth shown biting the lower lip, the tongue placed in the middle of mouth, the air to be blown slowly; the manner of articulation is “as if biting lower lip”. Whereas in British pronunciation it called as labiodentals because it involves labio (lips) and teeth (dental) in which biting is absent. The following are some F sounds.

FATHER	FINLAND	FOR	FOREIGN
FUN	PHONE	PHARMACY	SYMPHONY
FINAL	FORD	FIRST	FOUR
FUTURE	PHILOSOPHY	CHAMPHOR	JENIFER

American English Consonant W Semi-vowel sound pronunciation

This W sound is produced by slightly opening by puckering the mouth to form small circle. The teeth kept separate but no shown. The tongue placed in middle of the mouth. To practice this sound, first utter “OO “and then, slowly shift to utter “OOOOOWAWAWA”. Note that W sound cannot be produced as V voiced consonant sound”. In British pronunciation W is produced by bilabial (upper lip and lower lip) manner of articulation. The following are some of the W sounds.

WE	WAS	WHAT	WHY
WASHINGTON	WHICH	WHERE	WATER
ALWAYS	HOLLYWOOD	REWIND	HOWEVER

American English Consonant L sound pronunciation

This sound is produced by lowering the lower jaw first and then raising the tongue tip touching the top front teeth. The L sound production is made by dropping and relaxing the tongue. To practice L sound, utter LA, LA, LA, LA by keeping lower jaw lowered and opening only while raising the tongue. The L sound is produced by tongue movement, than its placement. If the L sound comes at the end of the word, the tongue must be raised slowly upward, towards the upper teeth while keeping the lower jaw as open as possible

L in beginning of the word	L in middle of the word	L in end of the word
LIKE	BELIEVE	WILL
LAST	ELDER	PEOPLE
LOW	SOLVE	TALL
LAW	COLOR	BOWL

Contd....

L in beginning of the word	L in middle of the word	L in end of the word
LABOR	ELSALVADOR	CALL
LARGE	ALIVE	APPLE
LOOK	DEVELOPMENT	LITTLE

Phrase Reductions in American English

PHRASE	REDUCED PHRASE	EXAMPLE
Want to eat	<i>'Wanna eat,</i>	I wanna eat cake
Out of bed	<i>'Outa bed,</i>	He got outa bed
Won't you play?	<i>'Woncha play,</i>	Woncha play Guitar?
Going to try?	<i>'Gonna try,</i>	I am gonna try to get job?
Have to start	<i>'Hafta start,</i>	I hafta start thinking
Would he help	<i>'Woody help,</i>	Woody help in troubles
Did you go?	<i>'Didja go,</i>	Didja go to church?
Give it to me	<i>'GividaMe,</i>	Did you gividaMe
Ought to believe	<i>'Oughta believe,</i>	You Oughta believe in Jesus
What do you want?	<i>'Whadaya want,</i>	Whadaya wanna do?
Is he?	<i>'Izzy,</i>	Izzy gonna try for Australia?
Got to leave	<i>'Gotta leave,</i>	He gotta leave in two days
Has to try	<i>'Hasta try,</i>	He hasta try to get first rank
Didn't you know?	<i>'Didincha Know,</i>	Didincha know that word?

FINDINGS

It was found that the learners could sound more American while speaking English in business situations, telephonic conversations, daily communications, interviews, teachings. The awareness of speech rules of American English played a vital role in the success of this training. Second language English speakers filtration through mother tongue language was reduced.

CONCLUSION

Hence we conclude that, this kind of American pronunciation training for second language English speakers from India, Maldives, Singapore, and Mauritius can make learners to sound like Native Americans in a short time.

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