

英語発音練習のためのウェブサイト作成

Creating a Self-study Website for Focused Pronunciation Practice

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Abstract: This article introduces the “Focused American English Pronunciation Practice” website located at www.manythings.org/pronunciation. How the site was developed and the steps involved in its creation are presented.

1. Introduction

This article explains the development of the “Focused American English Pronunciation Practice” website. This website was created to allow non-native English speakers to easily polish their English pronunciation autonomously using a listen-an-repeat technique. While students often have access to pronunciation materials such as textbooks and CDs, they do not usually have easy access to large lists of words arranged logically nor can they usually find a native English speaker who will patiently say these words for them. This project aims at filling this need.

2. Background (1982-2009)

This project is the result of many years of writing materials for pronunciation practice.

In 1982, our textbook “Things to Do” (Kelly & Kelly) included 271 word lists focusing on consonants and vowels.

Our 1983 textbook “Doing Things” (Kelly & Kelly) further developed this idea dividing the word lists into 19 vowel sounds, 52 initial consonants and consonant clusters, 75 final consonants and consonant clusters and 14 lists of words sorted by number of syllables and according to which syllable was accented. All of these words were chosen from a high-frequency word list.

In addition to this, there were 27 minimal pair lists that focused on problems that Japanese speakers have when speaking and listening to English.

Our 1986 textbook “Useful Things” developed these pronunciation lists into 22 vowel sounds, including diphthongs and r-colored vowels, 53 initial consonants and consonant clusters, 79 final consonants and consonant clusters. This textbook also included the 27 minimal pairs selected for the previous textbook. In addition to this, this textbook included approximately 1,600 selected, useful sentences sorted by syllable count. These sentences were used for intonation and rhythm practice while at the same time allowing students to learn sentences that were useful.

Our 1991 textbook “Practical Things” and our 2000 textbook “Many Things” also included pronunciation sections based on my research done for the previous textbooks.

In 2001, I created 24 online minimal pair practice quizzes for the “Interesting Things for ESL Students” website at www.manythings.org using Flash. At about the same time, I put some tongue twister practice online.

In 2007, I began to put sentences online for daily rhythm, intonation and pronunciation practice at www.manythings.org/lar. This project delivers a new set of sentences to visitors every day.

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In 2009, I started uploading pronunciation videos to www.youtube.com/InterestingThingsESL.

3. Steps Taken

Developing this website was a time-consuming task that involved the following steps.

1. The idea for developing such a project was based on my experience gained from writing the textbooks and developing things for the web that are listed in the “background” section above.

2., I developed the basic templates for the web pages, which included the main menu page for the site and the sub-page template for the lists of words. In addition to this, a simple-to-use navigation system for the website was created.

3. I then developed the audio player for playing the audio files. I wanted a player that would have a very small file size, so it would load quickly and I wanted a player that would display the English word along with a Japanese translation. I was able to create such a player using Flash.

4. The next step was to create the list of sounds to be covered by this project. I wanted this list to be as comprehensive as possible and to be arranged in a logical manner. See this list below.

5. Since I wanted the words presented in a useful sequence, I needed to create a list that had the words in a word frequency order. I developed this word frequency list by combining data from the British National Corpus and the American National Corpus.

6. Next, came the recoding of the audio files. Using a high quality microphone and a good recording environment, I was able to create high quality audio files.

7. These audio files were then converted to MP3 files and each file had meta data input into them. This meta data included the text for the English word and a Japanese definition of that word.

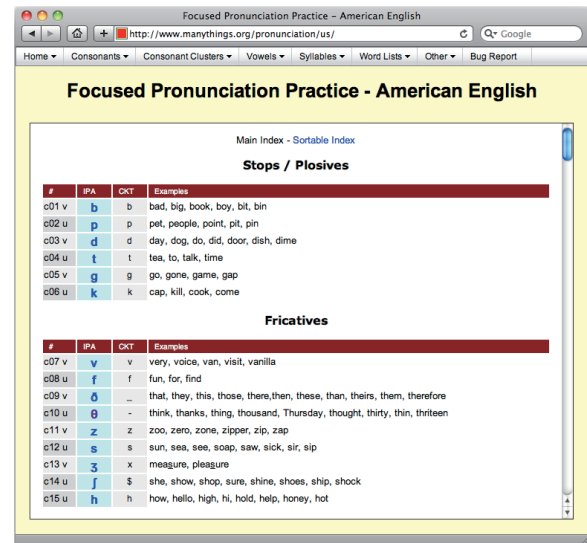
8. After creating the audio files, the next step was to create a web page for each of the chosen sounds. This

meant going through the master list of words and selecting words that included the given sound for each web page.

4. Website Layout

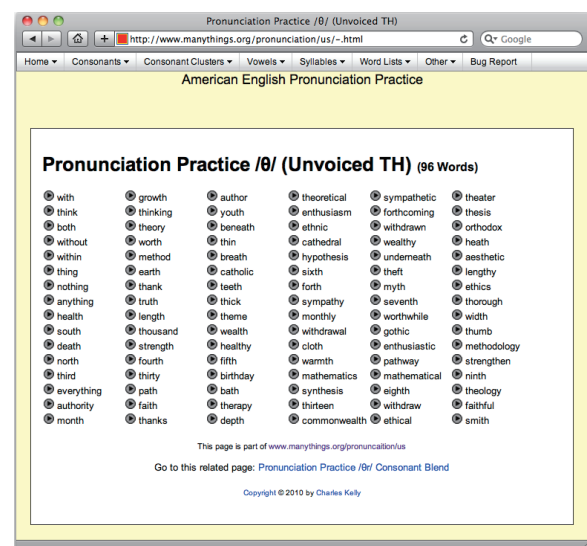
The Entry Page

The entry page of the website has a list of all the sounds that are covered, arranged in a logical order.



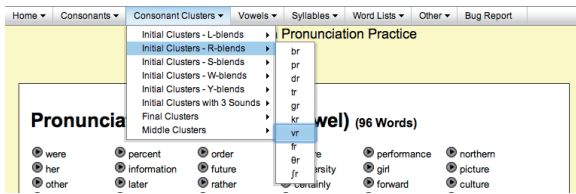
The Subpages

Each of the over 150 subpages has a list of words. Each word may be clicked to hear it and see a Japanese translation.



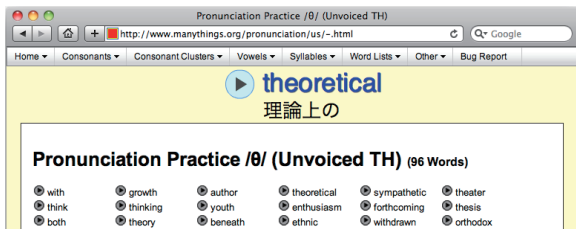
The Top Navigation Bar

The navigation bar at the top of each page allows the student to jump directly to any page on the website.



The Audio Player

When a word on the list is clicked, the student hears the word spoken and the player displays both the English word and a Japanese definition. The student can then click the play button as many times as he or she wants to practice the pronunciation of that word.



5. The Sounds Covered

Stops / Plosives

IPA	Examples
b	bad, big, book, boy, bit, bin
p	pet, people, point, pit, pin
d	day, dog, do, did, door, dish
t	tea, to, talk, time
g	go, gone, game, gap
k	cap, kill, cook, come

Fricatives

IPA	Examples
v	very, voice, van, visit, vanilla
f	fun, for, find
ð	that, they, this, those, there
θ	think, thanks, thing, thousand
z	zoo, zero, zone, zipper, zip
s	sun, sea, see, soap, saw, sick
ʒ	measure, pleasure
ʃ	she, show, shop, sure, shine
h	how, hello, high, hi, hold, help

Affricates

IPA	Examples
tʃ	check, church, Charles, cheers
dʒ	jump, just, gentle, jam, gin

Nasals

IPA	Examples
m	man, may, map, more, most
n	no, nose, never, now, nothing
ŋ	sing, song, long

Approximants - Liquids

IPA	Examples
l	love, low, life, little, look
r	run, red, rain

Approximants - Glides

IPA	Examples
w	with, win, winter, wet
j	yellow, young, you, your

Vowels

IPA	Examples
i	he, see, heat, she, be, we, ski
ɪ	it, hit, dish, kit, it, bit, skit, trip
ɛ	red, head, said, dress
æ	and, plaid, trap, bath, cat
ʌ	(Accented) up, some, come
ə	(Unaccented) about
əl	simple (Tongue is in position.)
ɜ	bird, learn, turn, nurse, heard
u	shoe, true, two room, who
ʊ	pull, foot, full, put, bush, good
ɔ	law, thought, all, fall, call
ɑ	lot, hot, shot, got, rock, clock

Diphthongs

IPA	Examples
eɪ	they, gray, aid, ate, eight
juɡ	See Y-blends clusters
oʊ	no, show, nose, goat, snow
ɔɪ	boy, toy, noise, choice, voice
aʊ	now, house, out, how, mouth
aɪ	eye, five, why, sky, time, high

R-colored Vowels

IPA	Examples
ɜ	See ɜ / ə / ɜr / ɜː / ər / ɪ
ɪ(ə)r	near, here, beer, fear, cheer
ɛ(ə)r	air, hair, bear, their, chair
ɔr	or, four, ore, more, store, floor
ɑr	car, bar, far, star, arm, heart
ʊ(ə)r	tour, cure, pure, tourist

Triphthong-like R-colored Vowels*IPA Examples*

ɑʊ(ə)r hour, flower, sour, how're
 aɪ(ə)r wire, tire, ire, mire, dire, choir
 uɛ(ə)r wear (NOTE: with the /w/
 influence, if sung slowly, you
 may hear a /u/. where, wear,
 square, swear Usually
 considered to be ɛ(ə)r.)

Initial Consonant Clusters - L-blends*IPA Examples*

bl black, blue
 pl please, play, place
 gl glad, glass, glue, gloves
 kl close, clean, clear, club, clever
 vl Vladimir, Vladivostok
 fl flag, flavor, flame, flash
 zl zloty = money of Poland
 sl slow, sleep, sleepy, slept
 fl schlep, schlepper, schlub

Initial Consonant Clusters - R-blends*IPA Examples*

br break, brand, bread
 pr price, pray, promise
 dr dream, dry, drive, drove, drip
 tr tree, try, true, trumpet
 gr green, great, grow
 kr cry, crazy
 vr vroom
 fr free, Friday, fry, France, frost
 θr three, through, throw, thread
 ʃr shrimp, shrink, shrine

Initial Consonant Clusters - S-blends*IPA Examples*

sp sport, speak, speech, speed
 st steak, stick, stood, still, stolen
 sk school, scoop, scope, skip
 sm small, smell, smile, smoke
 sn snow, snake, snack, sneeze
 sl (Listed above)
 sw swim, sweet, sweater, swing

Initial Consonant Clusters - W-blends*IPA Examples*

dw dwell, dwarf, dwelling, dweller
 tw twice, twelve, twenty, twins
 gw Gwynn, Gwendolyn
 kw quiet, quickly, quarter, queen
 θw thwart, thwack

sw (Listed above)
 ʃw schwa, Schwarzenegger
 hw For most Americans, these are
 the same: wine/whine,
 wet/whet, Wales/whales,
 wear/where

Initial Consonant Clusters - Y-blends*IPA Examples*

bj beauty, beautiful, beautifully
 pj pure, punitive, pew, puberty
 dj dew |d(j)u| (Most Americans
 don't use this pronunciation,
 but pronounce "dew" and "do"
 the same.)
 tj (Most Americans don't use this
 pronunciation. tune |t(j)un|)
 kj cute, curious, cube, cure, cue
 vj view
 fj few, future, funeral, fuel
 hj human (Some people drop the
 /h/. human | (h)jumən|, humor
 | (h)jumər|, huge |(h)judʒ|,
 hue |(h)ju|, humid
 | (h)juməd|)
 mj music, musician, museum
 nj (Most Americans don't use this
 pronunciation. news |n(j)uz|,
 Newton |n(j)utn|, Newtonian
 |n(j)u toʊniən|, duke, Tuesday,
 resumes)

Initial Consonant Clusters - Blends with 3 Sounds*IPA Examples*

spr spring, spray, sprinkle, spread
 str stream, struggle, straight
 skl sclerosis
 skr scream, screw
 skw square, squeeze, squeak, squid

Initial Consonant Clusters - Other Blends*IPA Examples*

ʃt = shtick |ʃtɪk|

Final Consonant Clusters*IPA Examples*

bs jobs, robs, tubes, clubs
 pt kept, slept, stopped, stepped
 ps maps, steps, tips, groups
 dθ width
 dz clouds, words, rides, roads
 ts hats, eats, cats, visits, nights
 gz eggs, legs, bugs, wags, flags
 kt act, walked, baked, fact, exact

kts	acts, facts, reacts, attracts
ks	six, books, likes, cakes, box
ksθ	sixth
kst	next, text, fixed, missed, waxed
vs.	gives, arrives, drives, leaves
ft	left, gift, soft, raft, coughed
fθ	fifth
fs	laughs, coughs, graphs
θs	baths, deaths, paths
sks	asks, desks, masks, disks
sts	tests, guests, rests, tourists
mp	jump, lamp, stamp, camp, amp
mad	seemed, climbed
mθ	warmth
mz	games, rooms, homes, teams
nt	want, can't, count, went, bent
nts	wants, students, cents, tents
nd	and, end, find, wind, friend
nds	hands, friends, stands, finds
nθ	month, tenth, seventh, ninth
no	pens, trains, coins, questions
ns	once, since, chance, dance
ndʒ	orange, orange, strange
ŋθ	length
ŋk	ink, bank, drink, pink, think
ŋks	thanks, banks, drinks, thinks
ŋz	things, songs, buildings, kings
lp	help, scalp, gulp, kelp, pulp
lps	helps
lt	salt, adult, belt, insult, built
lts	adults, belts, melts, waltz
ld	old, cold, told, child, build
lk	milk, silk, elk, bulk, hulk
lv	twelve, valve, solve, revolve
lf	golf, myself, herself, himself
lm	film, elm, helm, realm
lj	lunch, French, inch, bench

Middle Only Consonant Clusters

IPA	Examples
ktʃ	picture
ldr	children
sh	mishap
sʃ	misshapen
nn	unknown
ŋg	finger

6. Accenting Syllables

In addition to focusing on individual sounds, there are also lists of words divided by number of syllables and by which syllable is accented.

7. Additional Word Lists

Though not directly related to studying pronunciation, it was easy to add additional word lists that students could use for vocabulary study. The programming and the audio files needed for doing this was already done, so with a little additional work, I was able to add such lists as the VOA Special English Word List with 1,511 words, the 2,000 most frequently used words, all 5 levels of the JACET Word List, the Academic Word List and the General Service List.

8. Conclusion

In addition to focusing on individual sounds, there are also lists of words divided by number of syllables and which syllable is accented. A student is able to autonomously study pronunciation and focus on sounds that give him or her problems. Being online allows students to practice anywhere that has an internet connection. With each individual word available on demand, students have total control over their own practice and can maximize their study time.

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