

Lesson 1

Title: Teaching native-like speech features

Time frame: 45 – 60 minutes

Number of participants: 15 to 20 delegate teachers

Learning outcomes:

1. To understand the main features of native-like speech features
2. To raise awareness of the role of pronunciation and intelligibility
3. To develop an awareness of the features of language in fluent speech

Lesson structure:

Introduction



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EASE



An Emotionally-intelligent Approach to
teaching Speaking in a forEign Language

Continuing
Professional
Development
Sessions

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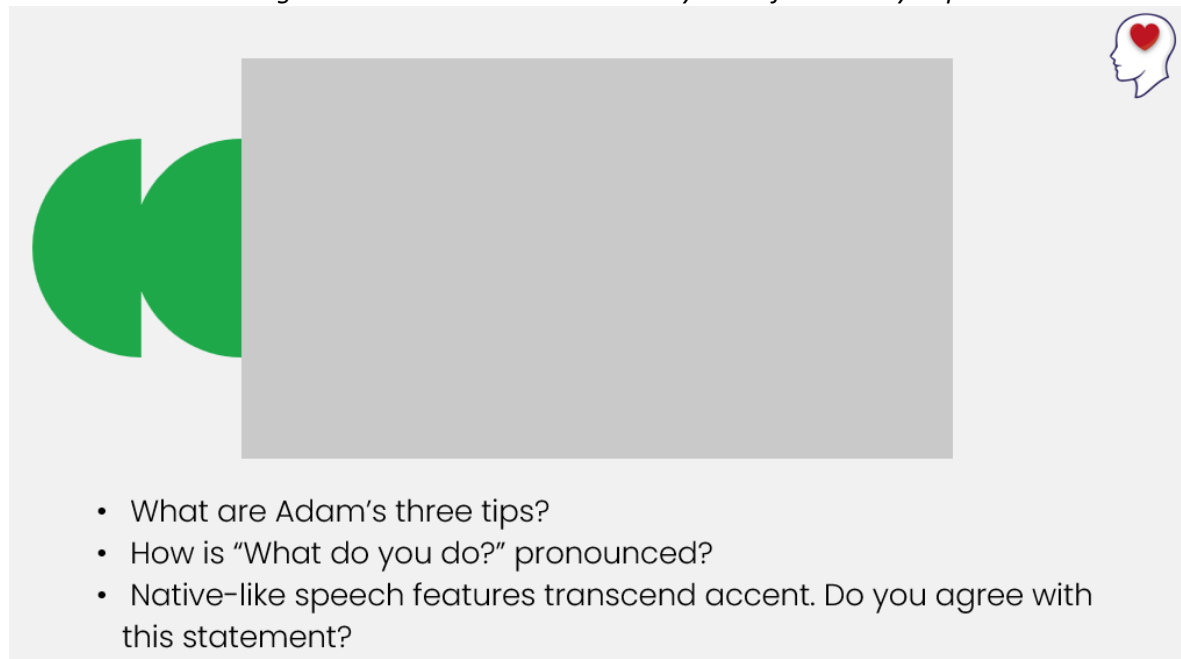
Before starting the session, consider the following advice regarding the teaching of native-like speech features:

- *It is not necessary to encourage learners to adopt the accent of a native speaker of a language.*
- *Learners should be able to identify native-like speech features and make themselves understood by speakers of that language be they 'native' speakers or users of the language as second speaker.*
- *All languages present challenges for a language learner. When teaching 'native-like' speech features, it is important to focus on connected speech.*
- *Connected speech is often challenging for the learner as sounds and words blend at word and sentence level and there are no clear borders between sounds and words.*
- *Advanced linguistic features (assimilation, elision, juncture, vowel reduction, strong and weak forms, liaison, consonant clusters and the introduction of additional linking sounds,*

dropping syllables, and the use of the glottal stop) are challenging for speakers to employ and comprehend in listening exercises.

- *When learners use their new language, they are often not aware of these technical features and tend to be less fluent trying to pronounce, or enunciate, every word individually making their speech sound unnatural.*
- *An additional consideration is the physical challenges of learning to pronounce foreign words correctly in a foreign language is tricky. The use of muscles and breathing, for example.*
- *Teachers should attempt to make pronunciation fun, productive and emotionally safe, especially for students who find speaking the target language embarrassing or 'confrontational' when speaking in front of peers or native users.*

The presentation Teaching Native Like Speech features: Approaching connected speech in native-like communication begins on Slide 4 with an introductory video followed by 3 questions.



- What are Adam's three tips?
- How is "What do you do?" pronounced?
- Native-like speech features transcend accent. Do you agree with this statement?

SLIDE 4

The video provides advice on sounding like a native speaker. The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChZJ1Q3GSuI>, and then ask the following three questions encouraging respondents to give extended answers and examples.

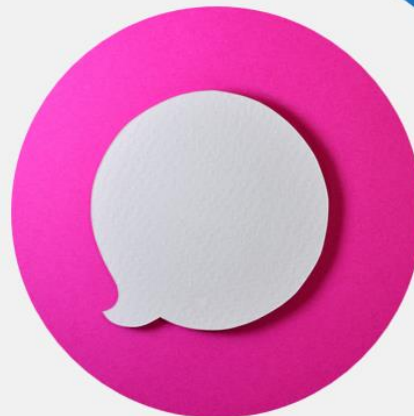
- **Question 1** *What are Adam's three tips?*
- **Question 2** *How is "What do you do?" pronounced?*
- **Question 3** *Native-like speech features transcend accent. Do you agree with this statement?*

On Slide 5, there is a short introductory activity – for example, it can be reflection on a quotation, discussion of a question, or reaction to a thought-provoking statement.

Introduction

Discussion:

- What do you think native-like speech features are?
- Do you think you need to learn and speak using native-like speech features?
- Is intelligibility more important than using native-like usage?

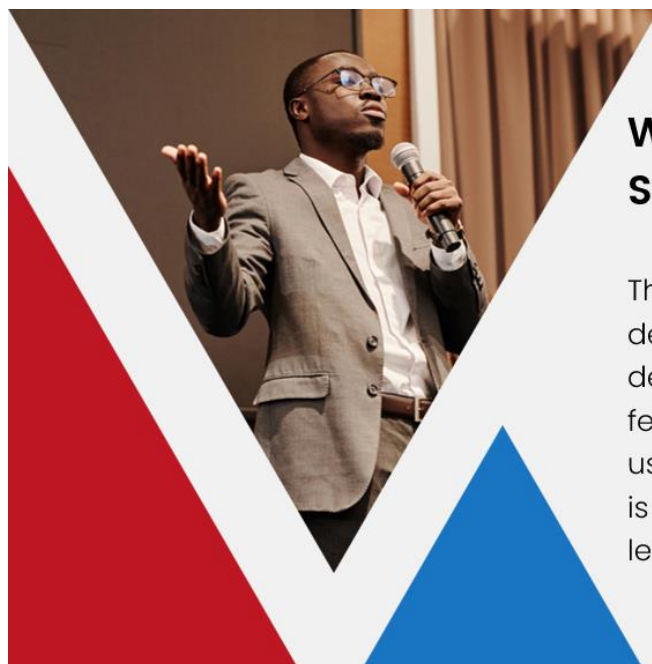


SLIDE 5

Content

The content section begins on Slide 5 with 3 discussion questions aimed at eliciting opinions regarding the topic from the participants.

Slide 6 asks a rhetorical question before Slide 7 provides metalanguage showing the features of 'native-like' speaking features addressing the technical component of teaching connected speech and pronunciation in general both for the teacher and student; the later slides discuss the theoretical aspects and metalanguage of connected speech.



What are Native-like Speech Features?

There is a lot of metalanguage to describe the technical aspects of describing native-like speech features that as teachers it is useful to be aware of; however, it is unlikely to be used with the learner.

SLIDE 6

What are Native-like Speech Features?



- Assimilation of consonant sounds (ex. in English, /t/, /d/ and /n/ at the end of a word and the beginning of the next)
- Elision (ex. in English, /t/ and /d/ are omitted from the end of a word)
- Vowel reduction
- Strong and weak forms
- Liaison
- Juncture
- Sociolects
- Accent
- Register

SLIDE 7

Slide 8 introduces formulaic language. It is recommended that formulaic language such as 'howyadoing?' '¿Cómo está?' is addressed. Formulaic language has fixed forms and expressions that perform a pragmatic-communicative function in a communicative exchange are used to instruct native-like speech functions. Formulaic language is composed of idiomatic expressions, collocations, multi-word verbs, confrontational, amiable and social expletives, proverbs, fillers, sarcastic and ironic retorts, and conversational speech, to name just a few.

Teaching Native-like Speech Features



- A good way to begin instructing learners in native-like speech features is to use formulaic language.
- Formulaic language offers the teacher the opportunity to instruct their learners in native-like speech features in small, easily manageable and memorable chunks of language.

SLIDE 8

Slide 9 discusses barriers for learners employing native-like speech features making 5 points inhibiting successful awareness, acquisition and use.

Barriers to Using Native-like Speech Features

- Unfamiliarity with connected speech and its features
- Lack of confidence in pronunciation
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of need to emulate native-like pronunciation features
- Embarrassment



SLIDE 9

Slide 10 deals with awareness raising offering 3 points.

Awareness raising

Before teaching native-like speech features, it is important to raise awareness of the features of a language which make it challenging for a learner.

When instructing learners in pronunciation, use various models of language not only the 'standard' models. Use models from regional and non-native sources

For example: English speakers from the English Midlands or Inner Mongolia;
Spanish speakers from the Basque country or Equatorial Guinea

More information about awareness-raising will be in the next session



SLIDE 10

Slides 11 to 14 (BELOW) suggest three sample activities including connected speech awareness training and elision practice.

Slide 15 offers the conclusion before Slide 16 provides the instructor and participants 4 reflective questions to consider, SEE SAMPLE ACTIVITIES BELOW.

Sample activities

Awareness raising Slides 11 – 15 (SEE ABOVE) contain awareness raising activities for the instructor to use with their students.

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For example: English speakers from the English Midlands or Inner Mongolia; Spanish speakers from the Basque country or Equatorial Guinea.

Slide 12, the first activity, is connected speech awareness-raising. This activity is for CEFR levels A1-B1. The instructor selects an appropriate listening exercise from a course book, video or teacher-prepared material together with a short transcript. The learner is then instructed to:

- Enunciate each word individually.
- Say the sentence in normal connected speech, and have the students indicate divergencies in written and spoken language.
- Students work in pairs and the audio content is played (or read aloud) at least twice.
- Discuss the connected speech features they have discovered or paid attention to.



Connected Speech Awareness-raising

This is an awareness raising activity for CEFR levels A1-B1. Select an appropriate listening exercise from a course book, video or teacher-prepared material. Provide a short transcript.

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- Students work in pairs and the audio content is played (or read aloud) at least twice
- Discuss the connected speech features they have discovered or paid attention to

SLIDE 12

Slide 13 suggests an activity that can be done with all CEFR level and size class. It requires choosing a list of phrases in advance.

- Students are provided with a list of phrases in the target language, preferably whose functionalities are related (ex. Phrases for making requests, apologies, transactions, etc.).
- They then practice saying these chunks of language word for word.
- The teacher then plays a recording or speaks their own interpretation of the target phrases in connected speech. The phrases can be played or spoken twice.
- The students pair up and practice saying the salutations and valediction together and responding appropriately.



Connected Speech Awareness- raising 2

This activity can be done with any CEFR level and any size class. It requires choosing a list of phrases in advance.

- Students are provided with a list of phrases in the target language, preferably whose functionalities are related (ex. Phrases for making requests, apologies, transactions, etc.)
- They then practice saying these chunks of language word for word.
- The teacher then plays a recording or speaks their own interpretation of the target phrases in connected speech. The phrases can be played or spoken twice.
- The students pair up and practice saying the salutations and valediction together and responding appropriately.

SLIDE 13

Slide 14 is an activity is suitable for CEFR A2-C1 students. The example provided is aimed at English language learners practicing the dropping of consonant sounds /t/ when using present perfect contractions. It can be adapted to any language to focus on places where elision naturally occurs.

- The teacher prepares seven sentences using the 'hasn't / haven't' contractions in the Present Perfect.
- The teacher has the students individually enunciate the words before modelling the pronunciation for the learners in connected speech.

The final activity is a reflective task offering four questions. These are:

- Imagine you were to instruct a class of A1 students in your language. Using formulaic salutations and valedictions, how would you teach the phrases highlighting the individual words and then their phonological form in connected speech. What activities could you use?
- Think about how you speak with friends, when giving instructions and speaking, and in formal situations, what changes occur in your speech?
- How does a native speaker pronounce the following words?
- Can you think of other examples in your language?



Elision Practice

- The teacher prepares seven sentences using the 'hasn't / haven't' contractions in the Present Perfect.
- The teacher has the students individually enunciate the words before modelling the pronunciation for the learners in connected speech.



This activity is suitable for CEFR A2-C1 students. This example is aimed at English language learners practicing the dropping of consonant sounds /t/ when using present perfect contractions. It can be adapted to any language to focus on places where elision naturally occurs.

SLIDE 14

Conclusion

The conclusion offers a summary of the points to keep in mind when teaching native-like speech features including encouraging participants to discuss the effect of these activities on learners and offering advice.

- *Raise awareness of the features of connected speech.*
- *Use formulaic language as a starting point when teaching native-like speech features.*
- *Students do not necessarily need to use all the features of native-like speech, but they need to recognize it for listening comprehension.*



Conclusion

- Raise awareness of the features of connected speech.
- Use formulaic language as a starting point when teaching native-like speech features.
- Students do not necessarily need to use all the features of native-like speech, but they need to recognise it for listening comprehension

SLIDE 15

The reflective activity is the final task where participants are asked to consider their teaching.

Reflection



- Imagine you were to instruct a class of A1 students in your language. Using formulaic salutations and valedictions, how would you teach the phrases highlighting the individual words and then their phonological form in connected speech. What activities could you use?
- Think about how you speak with friends, when giving instructions and speaking, and in formal situations, what changes occur in your speech?
- How does a native speaker pronounce the following words?
 - Comfortable /cumftabl/
 - Interesting /intrestin/
 - Cómo estás? /comosta/
 - después /despue/
- Can you think of other examples in your language?

**Depending on register and dialect, pronunciations will vary.*

SLIDE 16

Bibliography and resources for further learning

Here you should provide the sources where the information came from and, if applicable, resources for finding out more about the session's topic.

1. Underhill. A., (2005). Sound Foundations. MacMillan: London
2. Marks. J., (2007). English Pronunciation in Use: Elementary. Cambridge: Cambridge
3. Hewings. M., (2007). English Pronunciation in Use: Advanced. Cambridge: Cambridge
4. Swan. S., & Smith. B., (eds) (2011) Learner English. (2nd ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge
5. *Adam's English Lessons* (2013) 3 tips for sounding like a native speaker. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChZJ1Q3GSul> (Accessed 27 January 2023).
6. <https://www.engvid.com>

Notes for the facilitator:

These notes should address both online and face-to-face formats.

Printable materials:

For printable materials such as worksheets, please put them on a separate page after the facilitator notes so they are easily printable.

