

Sociolinguistics

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1.0 Introduction

Because of the increasing usage of the English language at the global level, its divergence has manifested an interest in many kinds of English language teaching and learning. With these new developments in English, come many difficulties associated with the multitude of accents present in Standard English. In particular, one of the problems is agreeing on which of these accents is acceptable as a universal norm for teachers and students to use. This paper on socio-linguistics aims to address the presence of these accents in Standard English and identify difficulties they pose for the teaching of English in non-English speaking countries. After the problems are identified, possible solutions will be suggested for the practical application to a classroom syllabus.

1.1 Background

To begin, Montgomery (1996:69) defines **accent** as a term 'exclusively reserved for the whole patterns of pronunciation typical of a particular region or social group'. **Dialect** covers a broader range of difference, including pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure as well. Very often, the way we speak is a good indicator of our social or personal attributes. Holmes (1992:133) provides this dialogue illustrating an accent:

Example 1: (*Telephone rings*)

Pat:	Hello?
Caller:	Hello, is Mark there?
Pat:	Yes. Just hold on a minute.
Pat (to Mark):	There's a rather well educated young lady from Scotland on the phone for you.

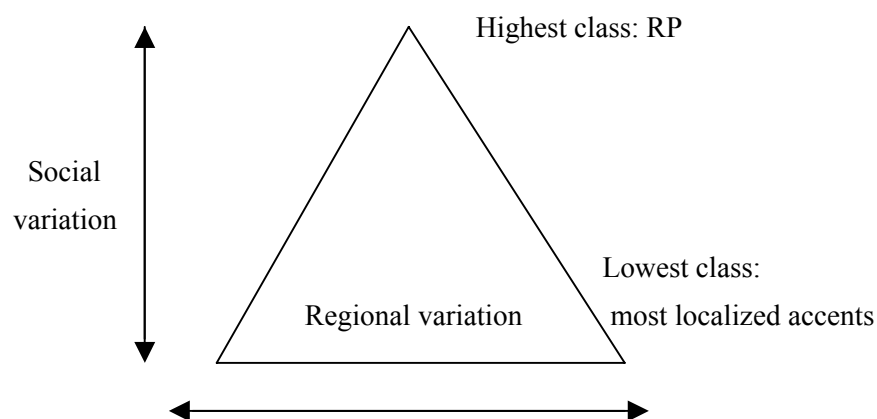
When the caller spoke, additional information was *assumed* from her accent. For example, the caller's educational background, approximate age, gender and nationality. This is quite a bit of information interpreted from such a short utterance. Did Pat get this information from previous experience or did he have a pre-conceived attitude about Scottish accents? This may be an easy task for native English speakers (NES) to assess. But for non-NES, variation in accent or pronunciation can make understanding English quite difficult because these accents may affect comprehension and/or intelligible re-production of English. Without fully understanding the social implications of various accents in English, we must examine if they are acceptable for all non-NES students.

2.0 A Look at Accents

2.1 Received Pronunciation

Before any potential problems caused by accents are addressed, we must acknowledge and identify the many accents present in Standard English. One of most well known varieties of accents is **Received Pronunciation** or **RP**. Montgomery (1996:71) describes RP as ‘the prestige accent’. The historical origins of RP are associated particularly with the region stretching from the midlands of England, down to the London area. Its status was greatly enhanced in the 14th century when it was further utilized by the government for official documents and has survived primarily because of its association with centers of power and influence. Since the 1900’s, RP has maintained its status in the public (private education) schools due to its distinctive patterns of pronunciation. Wakelin (1977:5) states, ‘this accent is usually associated with a higher social and educational background, with the BBC (British Broadcasting Company), and for the teaching of ESL or English as a second language.’ Because RP has lost most of its regional affiliations, it is now the most widely understood of all accents within the United Kingdom. However, Wardhaugh (1998) claims that even though RP has achieved this elite status, it may be spoken by a few as 3-5% of people living in England. In Trudgill’s (1983a: 42) **accent triangle** (figure 1), the range between regional and social accent variation can be seen with the greatest differences found at the lowest *socio*-economic level. These regional differences abound for the majority of localized accents present in the English of the British Isles. The higher class or RP can be found at the top of the pyramid where the presence of local accents is absent.

Fig. 1 – Social and regional accent variation

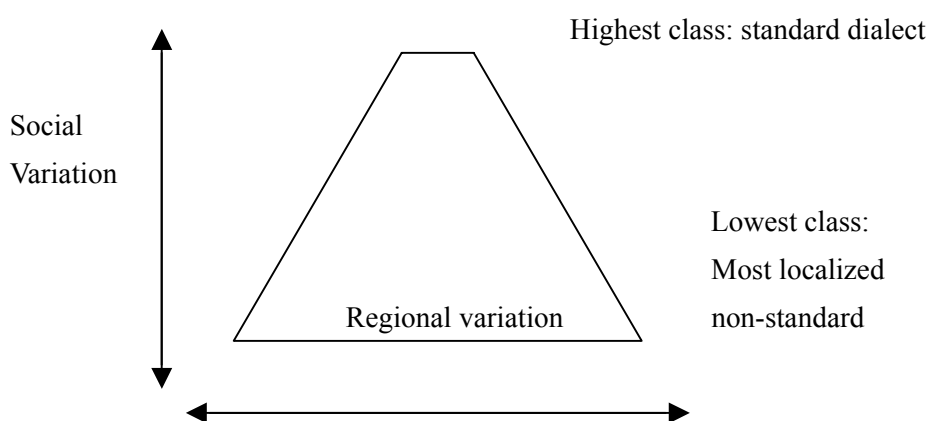


Because RP is spoken by such a small percentage of people, should it be considered as a global standard for the teaching of English in foreign countries? If RP is chosen to be a standard of teaching English in non-NES countries, then should it be considered a model for students to understand in the classroom **or** a goal to produce eventually for the sake of being understood universally? If the latter is true, is it because we choose to perceive a prestige accent such as RP, as a global standard to *aim for* or a model to *refer to* in the ever-changing scheme of language teaching? Do not forget RP is one accent.

2.2 Varieties of Accents

There are many other accents present in Standard English. The most generalized accent in North America is sometimes referred to as **Network** English. Other languages have no equivalent to RP. For example, Wardhaugh (1998:43) states that, 'German is spoken in a variety of accents, none of which is deemed inherently better than another'. Educated regional varieties are preferred rather than some exclusive upper-class accent that has no clear relationship to personal achievement. He (ibid: 43) also argues, 'it is impossible to speak without an accent and that there is no such thing as unaccented English.' With this variety of English *standards* comes a broader span of non-standard accents spoken by more people. Jenkins (1998) believes this may be the direct result of an increasing effort to make English an International Language (EIL) to teach to non-native users, rather than adhering to a more limited ES/FL guideline. To note this change in recent times, the accent triangle below (figure 2) may present a more accurate distribution of accents present in Standard English. This diagram suggests that accents other than RP can be heard amongst speakers who belong to high social classes as well.

Fig. 2 – Social and regional dialect variation (Trudgill 1983a: 41)



In other speech communities, it is possible to hear more than one accent associated with a high social group. Most well educated Scots, Irish, and Welsh speakers do not use RP, and there is more than one socially prestigious accent in these countries. In other countries such as Australia, Canada and the US, other accents have replaced RP from its former position as the most admired or broadly spoken accent of English. In fact, it is widely argued that even though RP is known as an accent associated with prestige, it tends to be perceived as somewhat *dated*. By comparing the two triangles, it can be seen that English pronunciation has indeed changed over time and has created many new challenges for teachers and students in the field of English learning. In particular, which of these accents described above is the best or most comprehensible to students? Are they all equal? Even more difficult is answering the question, which pronunciation norms are most appropriate or acceptable for students to produce when trying to communicate effectively? These and other problems will be addressed in section 3.0.

2.3 Attitudes towards Accents

When someone speaks with an accent, what attitudes are held about that pronunciation? Does it affect the comprehension or production of the same language? Because language is such a powerful communication tool, people tend to have very strong attitudes about the way languages are spoken and words are pronounced. These feelings ultimately reflect attitudes toward the users of those languages. In some communities, accents can be viewed either positively or negatively. These attitudes can affect the choice of accent which teachers may choose to instruct students in the classroom versus accents to use during non-classroom situations. Holmes (1992:345) suggests that *intelligibility* is also affected by attitudes. Some people find it easier to understand languages and dialects spoken by people they admire. For majority group members, people are more highly motivated, and consequently more successful in acquiring a second language when they feel positive towards the people who use it. As a result, attitudes toward language do have serious implications for people in the field of language teaching, where speaking skills are essential. Holmes (ibid: 346) also goes on to suggest, 'when people listen to accents or languages they have never heard before, their assessments are made totally at random'. This may be true to an extent, but some students may have pre-determined attitudes about accents which may be influenced heavily by other social factors. In similar research (based on NES results), Montgomery (1996) suggests RP speakers are rated more highly than regionally accented speakers in terms of general competence (e.g. ambition, intelligence, self-confidence, determination,

industriousness, etc.). But, they emerge less favorably in terms of personal integrity and social attractiveness (e.g. interest, talkativeness, sense of humor, etc.). If this is true, an instructor using a more prestigious accent may be viewed by his/her students as being well spoken or more competent in regards to the attributes listed above. However, if a teacher were to instruct his/her students in a more local or *socially* attractive accent, they might be viewed as being less intelligent, confident, determined, etc. These attitudes may in turn, affect the relationship between successful comprehension and clear production. However, it should be noted that there is nothing *linguistically* inferior about non-standard forms of English. They are simply different forms used by various speakers of English. This argument will be examined later in detail in section 3.2.

1.0 Potential Problems for English Teaching

3.1 Intelligibility

There are many problems encountered by both teachers and students with regard to accents. Language learners need good models to learn from in order to achieve a clear goal of being understood at a universally accepted level, so there needs to be a global **standard of intelligibility**. There are so many standards of English, which is best to use when teaching? Standard American English is very different from Standard Australian English, and both are quite different from the RP explained earlier in section 2.1. With such a broad variety of *Standard* English affecting even communication between native speakers, it is easy to imagine the difficulties which non-native speakers face in learning English as a second, foreign or international language. As Jenkins (1998:120) states, 'the difficulty is resolving the conflict between the practical need to harmonize pronunciation among L2 varieties of English to sufficiently preserve international intelligibility'. The key to this problem would then to recognize *which* standardized form of English is globally acceptable for non-native English speakers to be used as model, in order to achieve this goal of international intelligibility. Standardization is usually based on what is written, and which has undergone some degree of regularization or codification (e.g. grammar or *dictionary* language). For example, in Kenkyusha's (1983:451) Japanese learners dictionary, the following definition is found:

The variety of Japanese of greatest practical importance for foreign learners is called **Standard Japanese**. This is understood throughout Japan. The pronunciation of standard Japanese is based on that of educated people who were born and brought up in Tokyo, or its vicinity.

In this comparison between the standard forms of English and Japanese, language teachers must decide on what is acceptable for instructing non-native speakers and reach a *measure of agreement*. Without such an agreement for TESOL teachers, the variety of standards mentioned above, may impair the path to successful comprehension and/or effective pronunciation of spoken English. Unfortunately, many countries are not so unanimous in agreeing on the standardized form of their country, without showing preference for one dialect over the other. Herein lies another discrepancy for the selection of which English is the best for non-native speakers in regards to comprehension and intelligibility. The minority of a population (illustrated earlier in the accent triangle: *see figure 1*) may not be speakers of their own standardized language. This creates an even greater problem for setting the criteria for who is really qualified to be teaching these students. It is these social consequences that Honey (1983,1989) believes schools are doing a disservice to students, if a universally accepted standard of English is not taught. Because all varieties of English (e.g. RP, US, Australian) are not the same, they are not *viewed* the same by students or teachers. He (1989:174) states:

There is a simplistic argument, which says, rather than requiring the child to adapt to society, we should change society to accommodate the characteristics of the child. Those who use this argument to deny children, access to any awareness of the implications of speaking with one accent rather than another, are doing them an obvious disservice, if they cannot also guarantee that society's attitudes will have changed in time for that generation of children to benefit.

Honey (ibid. 176-7) adds that schools must instruct students with the objective of being *well spoken* because 'it demonstrates a better ability to control the world around oneself'. The ability to recognize, understand and reproduce a universally acceptable accent may in turn, facilitate a broader freedom to communicate freely. In a not-so hypothetical situation, imagine the implications of non-NES airline pilots having difficulty communicating with an NES air-traffic controller because their accents were unintelligible. A mistake in pronunciation could lead to an error, which might cost people their lives. This *pronunciation harmony* is similar to Jenkins' (1998) views about going beyond the limitations of the ES/EF world into EIL for L2 speakers to be able to communicate with each other as well as with native speakers. I agree with these arguments and add, as a language teacher, we have a similar professional obligation to our students as doctors do in remedying patients. Treating an illness quickly or temporarily with an improper cure may have bad effects later in life. The same may be said for language teaching. Therefore, instructing students in an accent that is either

universally unrecognized (in comprehension *and/or* production) might lead to later disappointment or even failure. So, there is a necessity for a universally accepted accent or standard for teaching. Possible solutions to this problem will be suggested in 4.1.

3.2 Attitudes towards Accents

Another problem, in regard to the many accents present in Standard English, is varying **attitudes**. When a person speaks with an accent, many things can be revealed. Features such as regional, educational, and social background become linguistic trademarks for the speaker. Unfortunately, problems exist within these identifying features. If students reproduce English in a non-standard accent, their speech may be misunderstood or even viewed negatively. As native speakers, we need to respect the social and psychological aspects of non-NES speakers and to avoid using deviant accents because they can cause a form of *lingual* discrimination. In their research, Milroy and Milroy (1985:3) argue:

Although public discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, and social class is not publicly acceptable, it appears that discrimination on linguistic grounds is publicly acceptable, even though linguistic differences may be associated with ethnic, religious and class differences.

To test this argument, a survey was made based on Montgomery's (1996) research on how various English accents affect students' attitudes. In his work, the study of attitudes was focused on findings made by NES ranking other native English speakers. For this study, the theory is the same, but the focus is on attitudes of non-NES students. First, five different native English speaking English teachers were selected (one Briton, two Americans, one Canadian and one Australian). Next, each NES was asked to record a weather report and instructed to avoid using an accent. The hypothesis was, even though they were instructed to do so, it is impossible to speak without some *form* of accent. These accents might have an effect on students' attitudes when they heard them. To avoid any age or gender bias, the 5 participants selected were all 28-35 year old males. The passage recording speed was approximately 30 seconds. Then, identifying the speaker only as A or B, the recordings were played 3 times each to four different Japanese high school classes, consisting of an average of 20 boys and 20 girls. To make the research more objective, the purpose of the survey was not indicated and a sample using my accent (US West coast) was **not** used. The accents paired were: Class #1 heard RP & North American Network, class #2 heard RP & US Southern, class #3 heard RP & US East coast and class #4 heard RP & Australian. The text recorded was as follows:

Now the weather across the nation. The forecast is going to be snowy in the north, cloudy in the east, sunny in the west and rainy in the south. The temperatures are expected to be the same as last week and will continue into the following week. However, there will be a change in wind direction as a storm passes across the middle region. Overall, it looks like an average week in weather.

The students were then given an anonymous survey with the following 6 questions.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1) Which accent sounds easier to understand? | A - B - Both - Neither |
| 2) Which accent sounds more interesting? | A - B - Both - Neither |
| 3) Which accent sounds more believable | A - B - Both - Neither |
| 4) Which accent do you like better? | A - B - Both - Neither |
| 5) Which accent sounds more prestigious? | A - B - Both - Neither |
| 6) Which accent sounds less familiar? | A - B - Both - Neither |

Table 1: Accent Comparison Survey Results: RP = Received Pronunciation, NAN = North American Network, USE = US Eastern, AUS = Australian (Sydney), USS = US Southern

<i>Accent Pairings</i>	1) Which accent sounds easier to understand?	2) Which accent sounds more interesting?	3) Which accent sounds more believable?	4) Which accent do you like better?	5) Which accent sounds more prestigious?	6) Which accent sounds less familiar?
----- RP & NAN	RP - 42% NAN - 50%	RP - 28% NAN - 36%	RP - 28% NAN - 50%	RP - 42% NAN - 53%	RP - 39% NAN - 35%	RP - 35% NAN - 30%
	Both - 4% Neither - 4%	Both - 17% Neither - 19%	Both - 22% Neither - 0%	Both - 5% Neither - 0%	Both - 5% Neither - 21%	Both - 0% Neither - 35%
	1) NAN	2) NAN	3) NAN	4) NAN	5) RP	6) RP/Neither
=====	RP - 48% USS - 39%	RP - 10% USS - 39%	RP - 42% USS - 31%	RP - 35% USS - 56%	RP - 39% USS - 31%	RP - 23% USS - 47%
	Both - 13% Neither - 0%	Both - 15% Neither - 36%	Both - 21% Neither - 6%	Both - 4% Neither - 5%	Both - 15% Neither - 15%	Both - 15% Neither - 15%
	1) RP	2) USS	3) RP	4) USS	5) RP	6) USS
=====	RP - 54% USE - 23%	RP - 19% USE - 43%	RP - 50% USE - 28%	RP - 30% USE - 35%	RP - 42% USE - 14%	RP - 14% USE - 42%
	Both - 0% Neither - 23%	Both - 6% Neither - 32%	Both - 0% Neither - 22%	Both - 5% Neither - 30%	Both - 11% Neither - 33%	Both - 14% Neither - 30%
	1) RP	2) USE	3) RP	4) USE	5) RP	6) USE
=====	RP - 53% AUS - 35%	RP - 32% AUS - 35%	RP - 57% AUS - 32%	RP - 25% AUS - 57%	RP - 60% AUS - 21%	RP - 35% AUS - 43%
	Both - 12% Neither - 0%	Both - 16% Neither - 17%	Both - 7% Neither - 4%	Both - 10% Neither - 8%	Both - 5% Neither - 14%	Both - 8% Neither - 14%
	1) RP	2) AUS	3) RP	4) AUS	5) RP	6) AUS

From the accent comparison survey results in Table 1, the following points were found:

- a) RP was the unanimous accent associated with *prestige* level.
- b) Accents that were easier to *understand* were *believed* and *liked better*.
- c) *Familiarity* between the accents also contributed to *believability*.

Depending on the material being presented (in this case weather) teachers may have better success in being more believable by using accents that are more standardized (e.g. RP or North American Network). For topics requiring less technical information, local accents (e.g. US East or Southern) may be just as acceptable. Of course, attitudes may cause basic conflicts between which accent is more interesting or liked better versus which is more intelligible. As a result, this may develop unnecessary negative attitudes by students learning from teachers using pronunciation inappropriate to the material being presented. But, students need this broad range of accent comprehension for effective preparation of language use for communication in the *real world*. It should also be noted from the survey, even though the students were divided in their opinions on which accent was easier to understand, the overall percentage of students who chose neither being understandable (0-25%) was very low. This may point to the conclusion, though localized accents may be more difficult for learners, a non-standard accent may be acceptable as long as it is understood. Therefore, a common ground to meet the needs of students must be reached to avoid both negative attitudes towards non-standard accents and increase comprehension for intelligible production. So, I would have to argue that there be a wider range of acceptable *model* accents (see flat-topped pyramid: fig. 2) for this intelligible production of pronunciation to occur at the universal level.

2.0 Looking for Solutions

4.1 Seeking Intelligibility

The issue of how to deal with the problems caused by accents is not so easily solved. However, there are many approaches to better handle difficulties these accents cause for non-NES students. Roach (1991) recommends that NES teachers compare their accent used in the classroom versus their accent used in less formal settings. These comparisons might reveal weaknesses in our accents. So, for the purpose of sounding more intelligible to students, we may be required to **modify our pronunciation**. As found in the accent survey (see Table 1) even though the 5 NES teachers were asked to

record the passage in a 'Standard' English, they all spoke (subconsciously?) with their respective regional accents. This had a direct impact on the results of which accents were perceived to be most believable, understandable, etc. Therefore, it may be necessary for teachers to modify their *local* accents into a more intelligible accent for the benefit of student comprehension and reproduction. However, Roach (ibid: 191) argues there to be no true implications that non-standard accents (such as RP and NAN) are inferior or less *pleasant* sounding. The reason is these accents are preferred by teachers to teach to foreign learners. I agree that RP and North American Network accents are good standards for schools or companies to consider as criteria for selecting teachers, because these are the accents that have been most fully described and used as the basis for textbooks and pronunciation dictionaries. But, it should be born in mind that it is *not* necessary to have an RP or NAN accent in order to speak *intelligible* English. These two accents are merely **models** chosen for learners with their eventual **goals** being to develop a pronunciation that will sufficiently allow effective communication with native speakers and hopefully between other L2 speakers as well. We do a great disservice to students by limiting them to hearing one accent, but we need a standard base to refer to as a model so that eventual production will be globally acceptable. Therefore, we should modify or adjust our pronunciation appropriate to student level and situation. Clear and articulate models can help produce better-spoken and intelligible speakers of English as a second, foreign and/or international language.

4.2 Changing Attitudes

How can we change students' attitudes towards unfamiliar accents? One way is through **meaningful exposure**. A practical suggestion to help expose learners in non-NES countries to a wider variety of accents would be supplementary materials and opportunities tailored to the needs of students. Examples of these might include English cassettes, videos, radio-programs, language-labs, traveling abroad, home-stays, school ESS clubs or even private English conversation schools where contact with a NES may be expensive, but more frequent. In Japan, English is taught primarily as a foreign language (EFL) with the intention of being able to communicate with native speakers. For this, the Japanese Department of Culture and Education or *Monbusho* started the JET (Japan Exchange Teaching) program in 1987. In this program, Japanese teachers of English are assigned to *team-teach* with an assistant language teacher or ALT. Last year there were over 6,000 ALTs from 39 participating countries (CLAIR 2000). The JET program was designed for cultural awareness as well as contact with native speakers of

English. It has provided junior and senior high school students a greater exposure to the various accents present in English. From this exposure, students have the opportunity to improve both pronunciation comprehension and production skills, by having a chance to speak with a NES on a frequent basis. Even though the JET program continues to grow every year, there are mixed reactions by educators as to its effectiveness. Main points of skepticism come from lack of ALT training or required teacher certification. However, I argue that the program, in spite of these weaknesses, does benefit students because it gives them authentic exposure to a greater range of English accents. This exposure to various pronunciations of English can help develop positive awareness towards accent variation. In some cases (as in my situation) junior and senior high students have the opportunity to hear NES pronunciation on a more consistent basis than the JET program because I am employed full-time. This gives students the opportunity of frequent exposure versus the rotating schedules of the majority of ALTs. Students receive regular and authentic opportunities to hear NES pronunciation, and in turn must display the ability to be communicatively understood. For private schools, having a full-time NES on staff may not be unique. But most Japanese students do not have the same frequency of contact with NES teachers at this level. It is therefore recommended for teachers in non-NES countries to incorporate the various materials and techniques mentioned above, to help students develop adequate pronunciation skills for effective communication.

4.3 Additional Alternatives - EIL

Even though many non-English speaking countries lack government programs that employ such large numbers of native English speakers (as does the JET program in Japan) there are alternative methods and similar techniques, which can be implemented as effectively. These strategies allow speakers the freedom to express themselves through their own norms of pronunciation, while at the same time remaining globally recognized and understood. Jenkins (1998) suggests the teaching of **English as an International Language** (EIL). She believes this approach can not only increase intelligibility between non-native speakers, but also promote receptive competence when interacting with native English speakers as well. The three elements incorporated into this approach, that may have the greatest amount of influence on intelligibility are:

- a) The teaching of *segmentals* (or core sounds present in sentences)
- b) Focusing on *nuclear stress* (or main word group stress)
- c) Using an *articulatory setting* (in direct relation to a & b)

For the teaching of *segmentals*, instructors can focus on the most familiar consonant sounds or long/short vowel sound distinctions that can be extended into a form of cluster simplification. For example, teachers can teach consonant deletions in the middle of three-consonant words such as the / t / in postman (pronounced *posman*). This would help students become better receivers and producers of a mutual and acceptable form of intelligible pronunciation. For the practical implementation of teaching nuclear stress, teachers can refocus students' awareness by shifting the stress on different phrases, creating new and contrastive meanings. An example might look like this:

- | | |
|---|---|
| The boy walked to the store by himself . | (With the stress on going <i>alone</i>) |
| The boy walked to the store by himself. | (With the stress on <i>where</i> he walked) |
| The boy walked to the store by himself. | (With the stress on <i>how</i> he got there) |
| The boy walked to the store by himself. | (With the stress on <i>who</i> went to the store) |

For teaching core sounds and the manipulation of nuclear stress for *articulatory setting*, Jenkins (ibid: 121) believes the latter to be reliant upon components A and B. While I agree the first two elements to be practical for classroom implications, I argue that articulation can be easily accomplished with **meaningful repetition drills**. Teachers can then focus exclusively on pronunciation, linking word sounds, intonation, stress and rhythm. McNally (2001) offers the following 9 suggestions for this practical approach:

- a) Offer a model sentence on the board then erase it before drilling.
- b) Face the class so everyone can see you clearly.
- c) Provide a clear and loud model.
- d) Use your hands and arms to illustrate word stress and rhythm.
- e) Repeat the drill several times.
- f) To listen for mistakes, do not speak while students are speaking.
- g) Use your fingers to represent linking words.
- h) Drill both chorally and individually.
- i) Carefully select which meaningful drills will be most effective.

Because these drills can be implemented in the classroom by either non-NES or NES teachers, this approach is very **practical**. However, instructors would have to abandon the more traditional models of *mechanical-style drilling* (where students' simply repeat after the teacher) into the more *progressive-style* of effective drilling. This would require teachers to first conquer their own fears of doing drills before implementation.

3.0 Conclusion

In conclusion to this report, several points were made about the complexity of dealing with the variety of accents of Standard English. Firstly, while RP and other standards of English (i.e. North American Network) tend to be used as *models* of English, they should not be confused as learner *goals* when teaching English in non-NES countries. This change in philosophy comes from modifying the previous objective of learning English to try and sound like a native speaker, to becoming more intelligible at the global level. It was also concluded that even though RP is associated with a level of prestige, it is less associated with mere social status, and has been replaced with being well educated and well spoken over the past few decades. This may point to the change in the way people hold certain attitudes towards accents because there are growing numbers of equally acceptable and intelligible non-standard accents

Also, modifying or adjusting English pronunciation appropriately to the audience and/or situation, can allow students to hear a variety of English accents in acceptable forms. It was suggested in this report that a practical way for non-native English speakers to learn how to handle the difficulties of English pronunciation, was through meaningful exposure to this accent variation. This could then facilitate a process which more effective communication would likely occur. It was also suggested that students who have direct contact with NES (as in Japan's JET program) could benefit directly by hearing various accents on a firsthand basis, to improve attitudes towards unfamiliar forms of pronunciation. However, it was argued, even though this contact may be exceptional, language teachers need to maintain a high standard of model pronunciation, in order for students to aim successfully at an acceptable level of global intelligibility.

To sum up the components of the difficulty of accent variation in Standard English, the essential elements of learning English are developing the comprehension skills first and then practicing them until they can be used effectively for communication. To become an proficient communicator of English requires the ability to process various *types* of English in order to produce intelligible output at the universal level. Therefore, students need opportunities to develop these skills through practice and experience. Because languages are constantly changing, local accents may be more resistant to erosion than the other features of languages. But, it is the duty and responsibility of all English language teachers, to maintain high levels of pronunciation intelligibility by using standards such as RP and NAN as models, or points of reference for student guidance.

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