Joint NUST MISIS - IATEFL PronSIG event

23-25 November, 2017

Moscow, Russia

As part of an international conference hosted by the Russian university MISIS, PronSIG is collaborating with a whole strand on pronunciation featuring pre-conference events by Robin Walker and Mark Hancock, a symposium on teaching English in a lingua franca context and eight talks and workshops all dedicated to pronunciation teaching.

For more information and registration contact the conference website http://eapconference.misis.ru/

23 November, 2017

Pre-conference events

Robin Walker

English as a Medium of Instruction – Yes! But whose English?

English is now increasingly used as a medium of instruction in tertiary and vocational education institutions around the world. In the majority of cases non-native speaker teachers give their classes in English to non-native speaker audiences. This raises the question as to whose English the teaching staff should be using. Should they approximate as best as possible to an appropriate native-speaker model, the choice being made in terms of geo-political affinities? Or is it possible that in a world where the number of nonnative speakers of English far outstrips that of native speakers, EMI requires teaching staff to look elsewhere for the best English for teaching purposes?

In this paper I will begin by defining ELF (English as a lingua franca) and comparing this recent development of the language with other better-known roles, particularly EFL or ESL. The main section of the paper then looks at the implications that the globalisation of English has for teaching staff working in an EMI environment, where communicative efficiency is more important than proximity to any particular native-speaker standard.

In particular, I will look at how teaching staff can optimise intelligibility in spoken discourse, paying special attention to two key aspects of this discourse, idiomaticity and pronunciation. Both areas strongly define the 'native-speakerness' of a subject, and until now proximity to native speaker norms in both areas has been seen as a sign of success. But empirical studies now show how nonnative speakers generate non-standard idioms and non-standard

pronunciation without any negative impact on intelligibility, whilst other data suggests that in ELF environments such as EMI, native-speaker interlocutors may not be the best understood.

Mark Hancock conducts a workshop **"Teaching Tonicity"**

Tonicity is a speaker's use of stress to focus a listener's attention. It's an aspect of pronunciation which is often neglected, but is crucial in getting meaning across. In this session we will look at ways of presenting and practicing this important skill in the language class.

24 November, 2017

Symposium "Pronunciation Teaching in a Lingua Franca Context"

Moderator: IATEFL Pron SIG Co-ordinator Wayne Rimmer

The globalisation of English has multiple implications for the teaching of the language, especially to those learners whose main use of English will be for international communication, often in the absence of native speakers. Nowhere are these implications more far-reaching than in the teaching of pronunciation. This symposium looks at the goals of pronunciation teaching in this new era, and at learner attitudes to new goals, and at classroom practices suited to achieving the new goals.

What is a symposium?

…three presentations totalling a maximum of 60 minutes,

followed by an open discussion of at least 30 minutes moderated by a chairperson,

a coherent theme, but addressing a topic from different angles.

Robin Walker

"Goals for a global English: accent and intelligibility".

The ever-increasing use of English as a means of international communication has, inevitably, resulted in an equally ever-increasing number of accents of English appearing on the global stage, particularly in the domains of business and education. But do we run the risk of building a 21st-century Tower of Babel by permitting such diversity? Would it not be best to lead learners to a recognised standard accent in order to guarantee a speaker's intelligibility? More importantly, what exactly is the relationship between accent and intelligibility?

Mark Hancock

Towards a Pedagogic Phonology

Many teachers avoid pronunciation teaching because the theory is daunting and the target is unrealistic. I will suggest that, just as we have pedagogical grammar, we need a pedagogical

phonology. This must balance considerations of what we teach, how we teach it and last but not least, why our learners are learning it.

Heather Hansen

Do global leaders need native accents?

It is commonly accepted in English language classrooms that a learner's pronunciation model should be one of two native accents: Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American (GA). With only two options available, and a large majority of our teaching materials supporting these two options, teachers naturally narrow their teaching to fit this paradigm. When learners ask to sound like a 'native speaker', teachers rarely question why a native accent is important. It is assumed that a native accent is the 'right' model to adopt.

However, when we look at English language use globally, it is estimated that non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers five to one, and that only a very small minority actually speaks RP or GA.

This begs the question of whether global leaders actually need native accents. Is this goal worth the effort needed to obtain it? This talk examines these questions and shares a number of conversation starters that can be used with learners to uncover their wants vs. needs, address their concerns about their accents (and yours), and build their confidence in their speech by setting obtainable pronunciation goals.

Workshops

Louise Guyett, Director of Studies, The English Studio, Dublin, Ireland

Designing personalised pronunciation worksheets in a specific context

In this workshop, Louise will outline a four step formula for preparing pronunciation worksheets to supplement other course material. She will discuss the how she has used this formula to prepare worksheet for a General English context and demonstrate how they can be applied to other contexts, such as EAP and ESP. The attendees will also have the opportunity to participate and draw up an outline of a worksheet that is relevant to their own context.

Beata Walesiak, lecturer, University of Warsaw, Poland

Digitize your pronunciation teaching!

In their book entitled Pronunciation Fundamentals, Derwing and Munro reinforce the need for teachers to monitor, assess, direct and design, i.e. to individualize lessons and display sensitivity to learners' needs, be non-invasive with one's observations of students' pronunciation difficulties and 'direct learners to appropriate technological resources and content for self-study, in addition to designing classroom activities to address problems shared by the majority of students' (2015: 123). This leaves plenty of room for teachers to experiment with different kinds of technology and devise their own strategies.

One of the ways to facilitate the process of overcoming learners' personal uneasiness and articulatory constraints is to resort to free digital tools and applications available online, which help create a stimulating classroom environment and improve the quality and effectiveness of pronunciation learning and teaching. Knowing what apps there are is definitely an advantage to one's unique teaching approach, as such tools offer plenty of opportunities for practice and reinforce the phonological stimulus. For teachers, this means also exploring their properties and designing appropriately contextualised tasks that meet their teaching objectives.

The aim of this workshop is to encourage teachers to resort to free online game-based tools for pronunciation training and demonstrate how to run interactive tasks in groups of 25-30 learners, obtaining instant feedback. The session will also centre upon methods of creating engaging collaborative home assignments and automatized assessment to reduce the teacher's workload, help learners overcome their speech anxiety and improve their listening comprehension. Incorporating such tools into classroom practices helps transfer phonological content more effectively, automates the work of the educator and motivates students to extend their pronunciation learning beyond the classroom environment.

25 November, 2017

Conference Concurrent Session "Going global: Oral fluency, presentation skills, pronunciation"

Chair: Tatiana Skopintseva

Presenters

Gemma Archer, University of Strathclyde, UK

"Do pronunciation models matter? Reflections on a classroom based study"

With the number of English language users growing year upon year, the majority of whom being L2 speakers not residing in a native English speaking country, the question 'Which type of accent (or model) should we teach?' is more relevant than ever. For decades, prestige model, Received Pronunciation (RP), and more recently, General American (GA) were our only real options, but now, for cultural, historical and practical reasons, they are not always appropriate. This talk will share some recent classroom based research on student perception and production when taught with and without a prestige accent, concluding with recommendations teachers can consider when preparing pronunciation content for their own classrooms.

Louise Guyett, Director of Studies, The English Studio, Dublin, Ireland

"Learner attitudes towards NNEST and pronunciation teaching in a NES environment"

In this talk, Louise is going to discuss the results of a survey on English language learner attitudes towards Non-Native Speaker teachers and pronunciation. The survey was undertaken in a private English language institution in Dublin, Ireland where English is the first language and was aimed at discovering the attitudes and expectations of learners coming to a native English speaking country, specifically focusing on pronunciation.

Tatiana Skopintseva,

Humanities and Languages Department, New Economic School, Moscow, Russia

Teaching public speaking skills to Russian learners

Global communication scenarios where English is used as a lingua franca have called on ELT scholars to intensively revise the long established EFL curriculum and emphasize the need for the development of ELF pedagogy. In the talk, we will consider English segmental and suprasegmental elements of pronunciation in view of their importance for mastering public speaking skills by Russian learners. The assumptions are drawn on theoretical and practical data gained at the Department of English Phonetics at Moscow State Linguistic University and the seven-year classroom experience of teaching a Public Speaking course to Russian ESP/EAP learners in an EMI environment.

Wayne Rimmer, teacher trainer, author, UK

Pronunciation, prose and poetry (workshop)

A natural context for natural pronunciation is the written and spoken word and all the genres they include, whether metric verse or free-flowing prose. This session will demonstrate the potential of literature, interpreted very widely, to highlight pronunciation features and motivate learners to produce them.

Workshop by Heather Hansen

Teaching Presentation Skills for the Real World

In our fast-paced world, it's rare that your students will be asked to prepare a formal, textbook presentation. The days of hiding behind a podium to read a lecture are long gone. Researchers and academics can no longer stay in their ivory towers, but are expected to bring their research to the masses in a clear, confident, and convincing way. Even classroom lectures at international universities are expected to be interactive, discussion-based learning experiences.

Students today, whether they go into academia or business, will be faced with difficult conversations, last-minute meetings, video conferences and conference calls. They'll be

asked to share their thoughts with their bosses or department heads without any preparation, and they'll need to impress and persuade people to secure funding for their next bright idea.

Yes, traditional presentation skills are still important. Good presenters need to be able to overcome speaking anxiety and build confidence, analyze their audience and be persuasive, structure their thoughts clearly and quickly, deliver their ideas with greater flow, and answer questions on the spot.

In this workshop we'll look at how we can teach our learners to apply the basic presentation skills they learn in academic English courses to real-world challenges. You'll discover how you can best prepare your learners so they can present themselves clearly and confidently in every situation.

Workshop by Gemma Archer, University of Strathclyde, UK

Making something from nothing: exploiting EAP resources for pronunciation purposes

An increasing amount of research is stressing the need to integrate pronunciation into our lessons wherever possible, but in the academic classroom finding opportunities to do this can be more of a challenge. Based on my own experiences, this workshop will present a range of techniques in which even the driest of EAP materials can be exploited for extra pronunciation practice. Subsequently, participants will be invited to collaborate with one another, brainstorming ways in which they could extract additional pronunciation practice from some pre-prepared EAP materials.