

ACTA Conference, Cairns 2012

Meeting ESL teachers' pronunciation needs

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[UTS]

How do we learn to teach pron?

- pre-service
- on the job
 - materials
 - colleagues
- professional development
- post-grad study

post-grad study – one example

UTS: MA TESOL

8 subjects [trained]

12 subjects [untrained]

Phonology and Pronunciation

[13 wks of 2 hours]

Evaluation of subject

- student feedback: very high
- the most popular choice

Who are the teachers?

Semester 1, 2012

120 teachers

$\frac{3}{4}$ local $\frac{1}{4}$ international

$\frac{3}{4}$ novice $\frac{1}{4}$ experienced

Aims and outcomes

Assessment tasks

1. Language profile

2. Prosody test

word stress, rhythm, intonation

3. Pronunciation teaching

What's in it?

10% - **Learners; Varieties of English**

60% - **Prosody** [suprasegmentals]

Word Stress

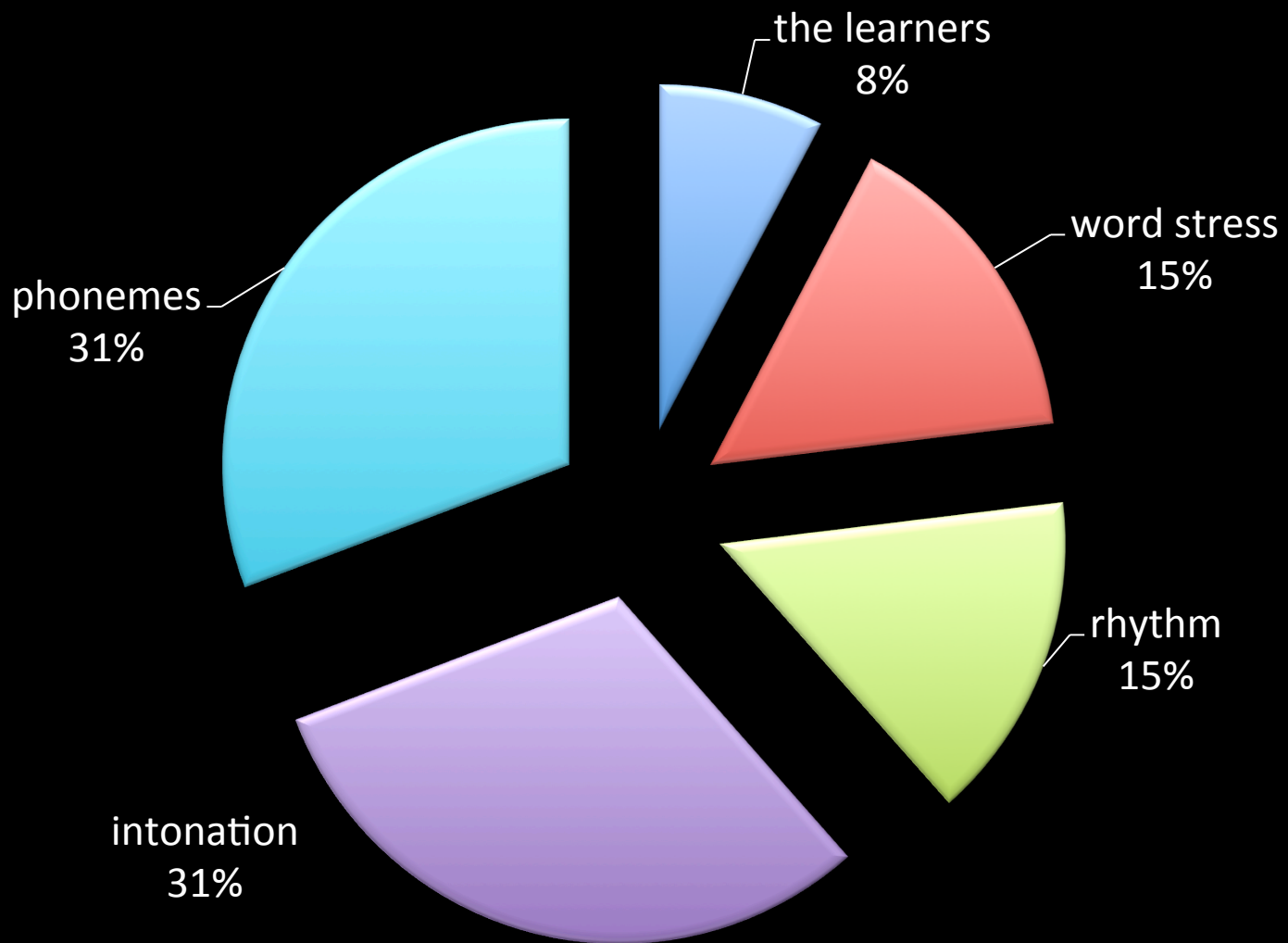
Rhythm

Intonation

30% - **Phonemes** [segmentals]

Sounds

Linking



10% - Learners; Varieties of English

Learners:

Age, Personality, Identity, Social context

L1

Varieties

‘standard’ or ‘Lingua Franca Core’?

- LFC reduces ‘meaning potential’
- in many contexts – NNS with NNS and with NS

[students say: ‘... as good as possible’]

60% - **Prosody** [Halliday]

- Word Stress compare L1 and L2
- Rhythm compare L1 and L2
- Intonation compare L1 and L2

Rhythm: English is **stress-timed** [isochronous]

Rhythm: illustration

English, Arabic, Russian: **stress-timed**

- syllables form *waves*

French, Vietnamese, Cantonese: **syllable-timed**

- syllables form *a patter*

English: compare with French [rhythm only – not phonemes]

	with stress-timing
1. The children were happy to see her. = English rhythm [correct]	✓

English: compare with French [rhythm only – not phonemes]

	with stress-timing
1. The children were happy to see her. = English rhythm [correct]	YES
2. Les enfants étaient contents de la voir. = English rhythm [INcorrect]	YES

English: compare with French [rhythm only – not phonemes]

	with stress-timing
1. The children were happy to see her. = English rhythm [correct]	YES
2. Les enfants étaient contents de la voir. = English rhythm [INcorrect]	YES
3. Les enfants étaient contents de la voir. = French rhythm [correct]	NO

English: compare with French [rhythm only – not phonemes]

	with stress-timing
1. The children were happy to see her. = English rhythm [correct]	YES
2. Les enfants étaient contents de la voir. = English rhythm [INcorrect]	YES
3. Les enfants étaient contents de la voir. = French rhythm [correct]	NO
4. The children were happy to see her. = French rhythm [INcorrect]	NO

Intonation

- **Tones** [intonation patterns]

Tone 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

- **Tonic syllable** [sentence stress; contrastive stress]
- **Tone units** [chunking; thought groups]

30% segmentals

- Still vital, but...

 - lower proportion & comes last

- Why?

 - it's prosody that's harder & takes longer

 - good resources for segmentals
are published/ on the web

Theory... practice...

Part 1	Word Stress	<i>Theory</i>	➔	<i>Practice</i>
Part 2	Rhythm	<i>Theory</i>	➔	<i>Practice</i>
Part 3	Intonation	<i>Theory</i>	➔	<i>Practice</i>
Part 4	Phonemes	<i>Theory</i>	➔	<i>Practice</i>

Current issues [comments later?]

- 10% cannot 'hear' intonation and rhythm

strategies...

- change of teacher profile:

- from experienced to novice

strategies...

To teach pron well....

Language awareness

What is it?

- being able to step outside L1... [for tt and ss]
- both *linguistically* and *affectively*

Why so important for Pron?

- Pron means new ways of listening
- L1 influence is strongest here
- the way we sound/look... identity.

So, what do teachers need?

The **theory**:

- sounds, word stress, rhythm, intonation

The **practice**

- how to understand students' L1
- means of teaching

And **prosody** is the way in....