

# Expanding a view of pronunciation of additional language speakers

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# Additional language speakers

- Speakers of ESL / EFL - EAL
- Adults
- 'Late learners'
- began learning after puberty

How does one account for the fact that **learners** seem to **vary so much**? Some learner seem to have few pronunciation problems, others have a great many; some individuals **progress well**, others seem **stranded** on the proverbial plateau. And why is an individual's performance so **variable**? Sometimes a learner can make a sound **perfectly** and then, in the next instant, their performance seems to **deteriorate**. Why all this **instability**?

Kenworthy, 1987, p. vii

# Pronunciation dilemmas

- Difficult to teach
- Not all learners have same needs.
- Which elements to focus on?
- How to integrate with other skills?
- Pron' influenced by other elements of speaking.

How do we view pronunciation?

What about the speaker?

# The speaker's...

- awareness of how she/he sounds (Kenworthy, 1987)
- ways of conceptualising sounds (Fraser, 2001)
- identities in relation to their pronunciation

“Individuals differ in how well they can pick up on the sounds and patterns of a language as an adult. Some will enjoy the challenge of learning a new pronunciation, while others will find this threatening”.

Yates & Zielinski, 2009, p. 77

- By requiring someone to utter strange sounds, etc. we are making them go against deeply rooted conceptions of what is desirable, correct, acceptable, dignified, etc. The teaching of pronunciation will therefore go against the grain, and may even constitute a humiliation...

(Porter & Garvin, as cited in Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 7)



- ... A person's pronunciation is one expression of that person's self-image. To seek to change someone's pronunciation – whether of the L1 or of an L2 – is to tamper with their self-image, and is thus unethical – morally wrong.

(Porter & Garvin, as cited in Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 7)

# Pron' and identity

- Pronunciation is a domain within which one's identity is expressed  
(Beebe, 1983; Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982; Pennington, 1998; Pennington & Richards, 1986; Stevick, 1982; Zuengler, 1998).

# Pron' and identity

- Develop learners' understanding of, and ability to experiment with, various identity roles and positions
- Stances linked to intonation patterns.
- Method for teaching intonation that:
  - contextualises
  - puts context well ahead of form
  - avoids prescribing overly rigid patterns of intonation for learners to emulate

(Morgan, 1997)<sup>11</sup>.

# Pron' and identity

- Derwing and Munro argue against the dichotomization of “changing the L2 speaker’s pronunciation and preserving identity” (2008, p. 9).
- These two things are not incompatible.
- Can provide speakers with choices.

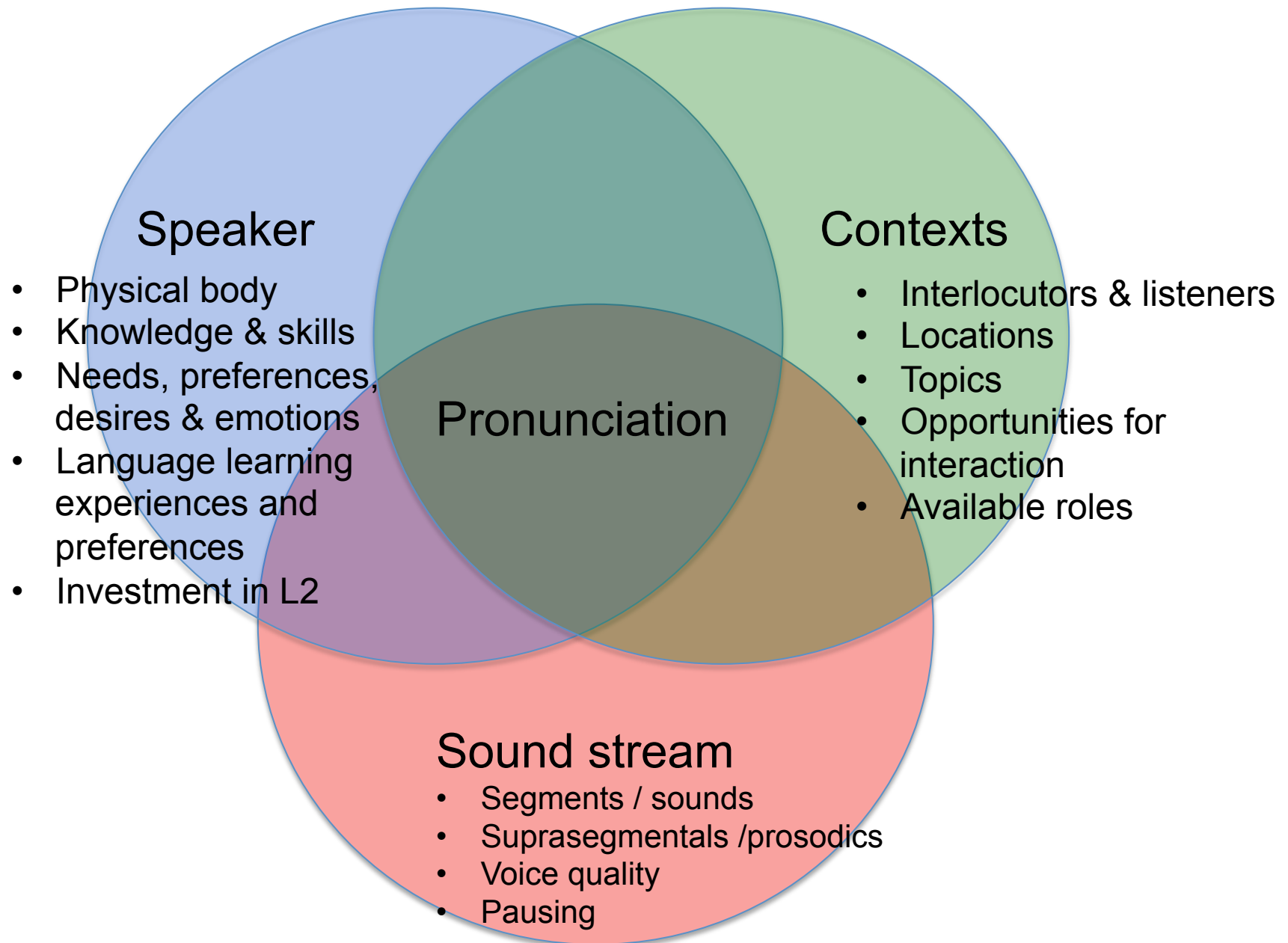
# Pron' and identity

How can we examine the links between pronunciation and identity?

# Multilingual speakers and identity

- Understanding of the multiplicity of identities
- Negotiation of identity in bi- or multi-lingual contexts

(Pavlenko, 2001, 2004; Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004).



# An expanded view of pronunciation

- Includes 'speaker', 'context' and 'sound stream'.
- Helps to examine the links with identity



# A theoretical framework

- From sociolinguistics
- Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall (2004, 2005)
- Identity formation
- Spoken interaction
- 5 principles

# Bucholtz & Hall's framework..

... consists of five principles that they view as “fundamental to the study of identity”

- 1) Emergence
- 2) Positionality
- 3) Indexicality
- 4) **Relationality**
- 5) Partialness

(Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, pp. 586-287)<sub>18</sub>

# Principle of relationality <sup>1</sup>

“Identities are intersubjectively constructed through several, often overlapping, complementary relations, including **similarity** / difference, **genuineness** / artifice, and **authority** / delegitimacy”

(Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 598).

# Principle of relationality <sup>2</sup>

Relations of:

similarity / difference, = adequation / distinction

genuineness / artifice = authentication /  
denaturalization

authority / delegitimacy = authorization /  
illegitimation

# The case study

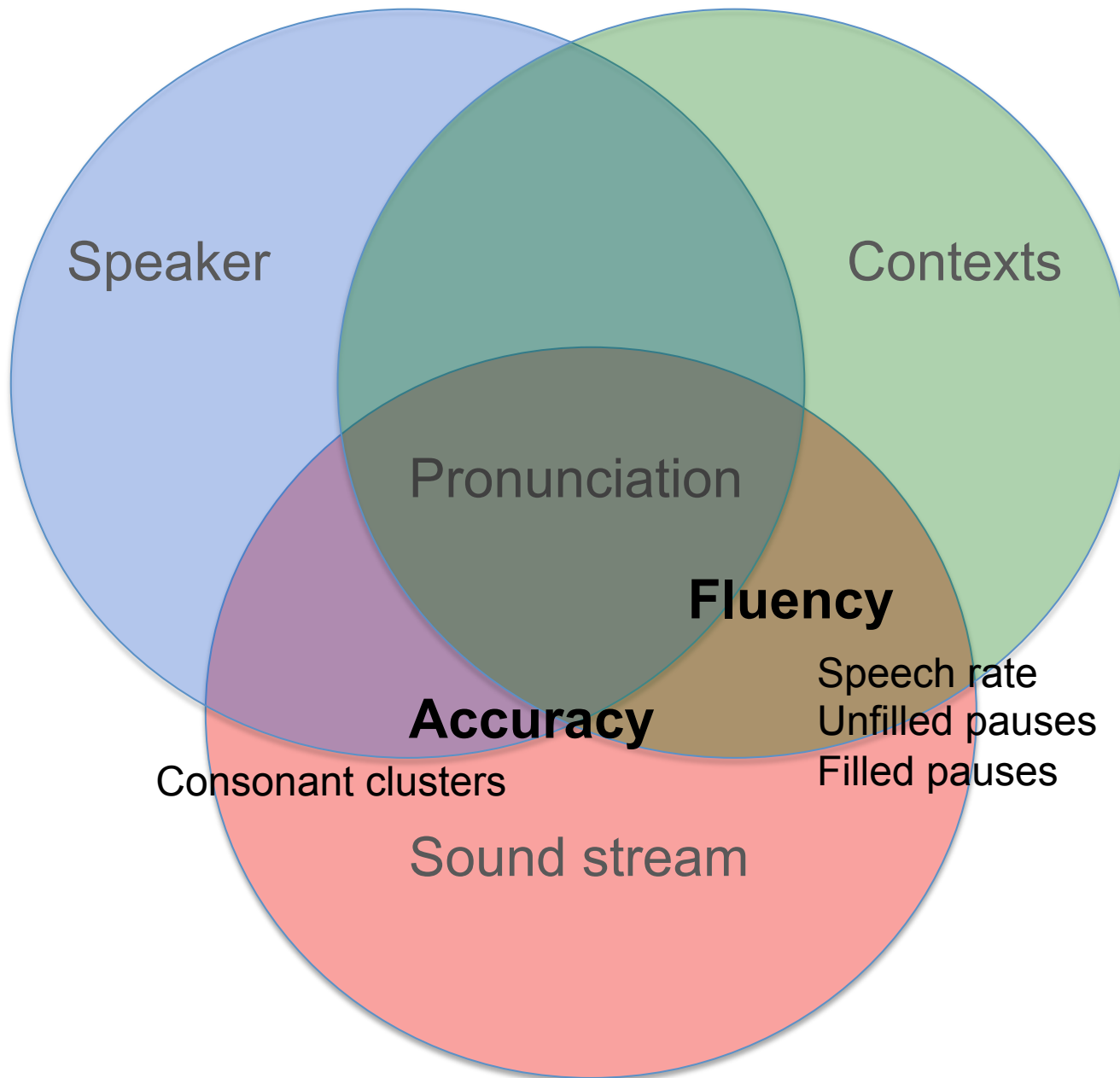
- Adult L2 speaker
- Woman
- In her 50's
- Migrated to Australia in the 80's
- Studying at university in Australia
- Family – husband and grown up 3 children
- Socially connected
- Strong investment in speaking English  
(c.f. Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton 2000).
- Pseudonym: Lin

## At the police station

- 366 L: and then >she said< (0.9) >doesn't matter  
you speak!< I said >no!< (0.6)
- 367 >I need a translat(h)or!< **heh**  
**[heh hhhh .hhhh heh heh]**
- 368 S: **[heh yeah heh .h yeah]**
- 369 L: ↓eh:::

# Features of the sound stream

- Timing
- Speed
- Emphasis (volume, stress)
- Intonation
- Lengthening
- Laughter (within)





# Narrative: Trip to Adelaide

<b>Consonant clusters</b>	<b>Version 1 Spontaneous</b>	<b>Version 2 Rehearsed</b>
Total produced	22.2%	48.3%
Total reduced	77.8%	51.7%
Syllable initial produced	37.5	41.7%
Syllable final produced	0%	52.94%

# Narrative: Trip to Adelaide

	Version 1 Spontaneous	Version 2 Rehearsed
No. of words	256	210
Total duration (sec)	135.41	109.24
No. of unfilled pauses >0.4 sec	42	38
Duration of unfilled pauses as a percentage of total duration	25.8%	26.3%
No. of filled pauses (non-lexical fillers)	16	1
Speech rate (Syll's per min)	135.6	139.8
Mean length of run	6	6.38

# Global impressions

Version 1: Spontaneous	Version 2: Rehearsed
Easier to listen to Laughter, more fluid, changes in speed, wider range of pitch chunking of information (thought groups)	Clearer Understood more* Harder to listen to / Had to work harder Lack of pauses Not joined up, more stilted Less animated

\* prob' because this was second listening

# Conclusion 1

- Expand our view of adult L2 pronunciation to include:
  - Sound stream
  - Speaker
  - Context
- Theorise the relationships between these using Bucholtz and Hall identity framework.

# Conclusion 2

- Make links between the features of the sound stream and management of identities.
- Start with these features when working with adult learners.

# Pronunciation dilemmas

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# References

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