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ENGLISH

Consonants

PRONUNCIATION



"IMPROVE YOUR SPOKEN
ENGLISH THE SMART WAY"

HILARY PLATT

LISTEN AND LEARN ADEPT ENGLISH CONSONANTS PRONUNCIATION COURSE

First Edition

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adept **english**

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Credits

The Listen and Learn Adept English Consonants
Pronunciation Course

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Preface

LISTEN AND LEARN ADEPT ENGLISH CONSONANTS PRONUNCIATION COURSE



Welcome to the Adept English Consonant Pronunciation Course. In this course, I'm going to be looking at pronunciation problems mainly associated with consonants.

So the reason for writing this course? Well, as you probably know, we've been running the Adept English website and producing podcasts for years now. So we get quite a lot of feedback on our podcasts and on our courses and the material that we produce. And our listeners find it really helpful. But one of the most frequent questions that we get is 'How do I improve my English pronunciation?'. Our listeners are often quite advanced in their understanding of spoken English – and if you're listening to and understanding what I'm saying right now, you have indeed already got a good level of comprehension. And of course, listening to Adept English really helps with this – and with

speaking, as we've discussed many times before. But pronunciation is often what English language learners are worried about, what they believe really holds them back, causes them to lack confidence when they speak. So I've addressed certain pronunciation challenges, areas that are difficult, from time to time in the podcasts. But we decided that it would be good to offer a whole pronunciation course, a more in-depth, longer offering, which really gets inside English pronunciation, which really spends some time on it. So here it is.

As I started to write this course, I began to realise just what a difficult topic English pronunciation is! For me, as a native speaker, English pronunciation has never really been a problem – it's my native language of course. But doing a 'deep dive' into all the different problems which English language learners face gave me much more perspective on why it's difficult. English is an incredibly inconsistent language, in all kinds of ways, in its grammar, its spelling and its pronunciation is no exception. I apologise for this at times in the course, just for the sheer illogicality of my language! I'm sorry! It happens at points where I feel embarrassed that you are having to deal with such silliness! But there it is. Neither you nor I have the power to change English pronunciation. And in fact, English pronunciation - it's rather like a peculiar old auntie, with funny ways. When you get used to all of its foibles, its inconsistencies and its weirdness, you may actually get to love it! I say that because I'm a peculiar old auntie, I'm sure, to my nieces and nephews!

So why is English pronunciation such a difficult thing? Well, it derives from the fact that English is of course, a hotchpotch, a mix of so many different influences, so many different languages. We've been conquered by invading forces so many times – the Romans, the Vikings, the

Normans. And we've also been the ones invading others around the world too, we've been the invading force. So along the way, as English has developed, it's absorbed words and phrases and bits of language from all over the world. It's a hybrid, it's a melange of a language. So although this can be very interesting to the connoisseur of words, it can make life difficult when your goal is to speak English well. And just to illustrate my point, there are a couple of lovely French words for you – 'melange' and 'connoisseur' in that sentence!

I did quite a lot of research before starting to write this pronunciation course. I needed to find out what the particular problem areas are for English language learners. And as I researched, consistent themes emerged. Particular letters or letter combinations began to show themselves as the ones that are troublesome. And it began to be clear that the course had a lot of areas to cover – so as I developed it, it seemed logical to divide it into two parts – a Consonant Pronunciation Course to address 'largely consonant pronunciation problems' and a Vowel Pronunciation Course to address the challenges with vowel pronunciation.

And let me be clear, before we begin. In making an English pronunciation course, and in referring to 'native speakers of English', meaning those who, like me, were born in an English speaking country, my purpose is not to have every language learner sounding the same. If you have an accent, ACCENT – meaning that when you speak English, people can hear which country you're from – don't see your accent as a problem. My purpose here is not to help you eliminate your accent! This isn't the goal. For me, the fact that there are so many people with different accents speaking English is a delight. Your accent is part of you, part of your own personal history – be proud of it! So, we're not aiming to eliminate accent. What we're aiming to do here is aid

communication. For you to be able to pronounce words with a level of accuracy such that most people will understand you. Most people who are communicating in English in the world - it's their second language! So good pronunciation will help your communication with all sorts of people from all sorts of places. The goal is to build your confidence, because your knowledge of the pronunciation of English is good.

So on both parts of the course, sit back and enjoy listening to the odd numbered chapters, where I do some teaching, where I try to pull out what patterns and themes are worth learning – and where I give you lots of examples. And on the even numbered chapters, you can get more active. I and others will be giving you plenty opportunity to speak, to practise your English pronunciation. In the course, you'll learn all sorts of things, not just English pronunciation. You'll certainly learn a lot of vocabulary – and I guarantee that if you complete the course, your English pronunciation will be improved as a result!

So let's not spend any more time talking about why you're here - you know why you want to improve your pronunciation! Let's get to it! Let's answer that question 'How do I improve my English pronunciation?'