

PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION: BRITISH-BASED PRONUNCIATION

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Abstract:

The principles of English pronunciation are essential for effective communication and understanding in the English language. In this guide, we will focus on the British-based pronunciation, which is widely used across the United Kingdom and many other English-speaking countries. Understanding and mastering British-based pronunciation can help improve your accent, clarity, and overall fluency when speaking English. By learning the rules and principles of British pronunciation, you can enhance your communication skills and sound more natural when conversing with native speakers. Let's explore the key principles of English pronunciation in a British context to help you refine your speaking abilities.

Key words: British English, Received Pronunciation (RP), phonetics, consonants, vowels, stress patterns, intonation, syllable structure, diphthongs, pronunciation rules.

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Every language has a broad variety of pronunciations, including English. There are peculiar characteristics in practically every locality's pronunciation in the British Isles that set it apart from other dialects of English. Furthermore, pronunciation is socially impacted, meaning that education and upbringing have an impact on it. All of these types have a lot more characteristics than what makes them unique at the same time. They are all dialects of the same language, which is English. Dialects are variants that are solely spoken by a small social group of Pronunciation generally tends to be more comfortable to a given standard with more educated people. Pronunciation generally tends to be more comfortable to a given standard with more educated people. There are fewer, more or less generic, regional types of local speech dialects in contemporary English. Each regional pronunciation type is distinguished by characteristics that are present in all regional dialects. The dialects, in turn, are distinguished from one another by a variety of features that are unique to each of them.

The pronunciation of any language is made up of the four elements of its phonetic structure: phonemic, syllabic, accentual, and intonational. Languages have various accents, which is one thing that everyone is aware of. People from different geographical locations, different socioeconomic classes, different ages, and diverse educational backgrounds enunciate languages in different ways. individuals in a particular area.

British-based pronunciation follows a set of principles that govern the correct way to pronounce English words in the British accent. Here are some key principles of British English pronunciation:

1. Vowel sounds: English has a variety of vowel sounds that can be difficult for non-native speakers to distinguish and produce accurately. It is important to practice and familiarize oneself with the various vowel sounds in English. British English has 20 vowel

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sounds, which can be short or long. For example, the short "a" sound in "cat" is different from the long "a" sound in "mate."

2. Consonant sounds: British English pronounces certain consonants differently from American English. For example, the letter "r" is usually silent at the end of words in British English.

3. Stress and rhythm: British English often places stress on different syllables compared to American English. Additionally, British English has a more rhythmic and musical quality to its speech.

4. Diphthongs: British English uses diphthongs, which are combinations of two vowel sounds within the same syllable. For example, the word "face" has a diphthong with the sounds /eɪ/.

5. Received Pronunciation (RP): RP is considered to be the standard accent of British English and is often associated with formal settings such as news broadcasting or public speaking.

6. Pronunciation variations: There are regional variations in British English pronunciation, with different accents and dialects across various parts of the UK.

The regular pronunciation adopted by native speakers as the appropriate and correct way to speak is known as the orthoepic norm of a language. It consists of the different pronunciations that capture the major linguistic trends in that area. It is the pronunciation that is listed as the best in pronunciation dictionaries and is utilized by the educated segment of the community. Although many academics assert that it is not the sole orthoepic norm now in use in modern-day Britain, "Received Pronunciation" (RP) is commonly regarded as the orthoepic norm of the English language.

About a century ago, received pronunciation (RP) first appeared. It is primarily based on Southern English Pronunciation, but it has evolved its own characteristics, giving it a non-regional character, meaning it is not native to any particular area of Britain.

"RP is an accent, not a dialect, since all RP speakers speak Standard English. In other words, they avoid non-standard grammatical constructions and localized vocabulary characteristic of regional dialects. RP is also regionally non-specific, that is it does not contain any clues about a speaker's geographic background. "

The following are the main changes:

1. The diphthongization of the RP /i:/ and /u:/, which are frequently spoken with a glide in terminal position (for example, 'see' and 'who').

2. The centering of the previous /ou/ to /u/ is one of the main changes in RP. This alteration is evident from the fact that D. Jones had three options for pronouncing the vowel in the first weak syllable of terms like "November": the suggested /ou/ (/nou'vemb/), the shorter monophthongal form /o/ (/no'vemb/), or, in rapid speech, / (/n'vemb/). Currently, there is a tendency to pronounce /u/ carefully (/nu'vemb) and / quickly (/n'vemb).

3. Greater weakening of vowels in weakly stressed syllables causes the neutral / to be used in place of the more traditional form's strong /I/, as in the cases of / b'li:v / for / b'l'i:v / and / IntrstI / for / IntrIstI /.

4. The integration of the sounds /sj/, /zj/, /tj/, and /dj/, for example, "problem," "crozier," "situation," and "education."

5. There is now some devoicing on the final /b, d, g/. However, the differences between /p, t, k' and /b, d, g' are equally as different since the former are energetic sounds (fortis), while the latter are feeble (lenis). (cab cap, had hat, and bag back)

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6. The use of the intrusive /r/, which RP speakers deliberately avoided 20–30 years ago. The intrusive /r/ is now accepted in terms like "the idea of it," "Asia and Africa," "theater and music," etc.

Only 3% of people worldwide, especially in England, are said to have an RP accent.

The RP accent has evolved over time, much like any other accent. For example, most people now find the voices we associate with early BBC broadcasts to sound quite dated. Our opinions of the accent are shifting, just as RP is always evolving. RP served as the voice of knowledge, authority, social prestige, and economic power throughout a significant portion of the 20th century.

The principles of English pronunciation based on British English emphasize the importance of clear articulation, proper stress and intonation patterns, and accurate vowel and consonant sounds. By understanding and applying these principles, learners can improve their speaking skills and communicate effectively in a British-based accent. Consistent practice and exposure to authentic English materials are essential for mastering these pronunciation rules. Overall, adherence to the principles of English pronunciation can enhance language fluency and comprehension for speakers aiming to adopt a British accent.

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