# Insights about Equitable Pronunciation Instruction through Principles of Pedagogical Translanguaging

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**Abstract**

Insights about Equitable Pronunciation Instruction

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The prevalence of English monolingualism in the Global North means that there is a notion of an ideological “Standard English” in educational, institutional, and workplace contexts (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Lippi-Green, 2012; Ramjattan, 2025a, 2025b). Communicative Language Teaching promotes a strict "English-only" classroom and monolingual, native-speaker standards (Cook, 2001). As a result, accents of speakers of English as an additional language may be considered non-standard and may therefore subject individuals to accent discrimination, or accentism (Ramjattan, 2025a). Due to this phenomenon, students may seek out pronunciation classes designed to change or reduce a speaker’s accent. To argue against native-speakerist and racist ideologies and adapt to global multilingual communication, teachers are in need of more equitable pronunciation-specific materials.

Responding to a call for anti-racist pronunciation pedagogy by Ramjattan (2024), I have designed and piloted lesson plans which value and integrate students' diverse language backgrounds and pronunciation needs. My three lesson plans were grounded in four principles of pedagogical translanguaging (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter, 2021): the integral use of students’ full linguistic repertoire, the development of students’ metalinguistic awareness, the fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness, and the centering of students’ multilingual identities.

Five learners of diverse backgrounds who had previously sought out “accent reduction” classes participated in my lesson plan piloting process. While piloting these lessons, I gathered observations on student engagement and my own reflections. Through review of my observations and reflections, I developed refined lesson plans and insights into possibilities for more equitable instruction. The recommendations chapter of this thesis offers suggestions and activities

for other teachers who are looking to engage in more equitable pronunciation instruction, especially through pedagogical translanguaging, coming from a teacher who was originally trained in Communicative Language Teaching.

Keywords: *pronunciation instruction, pedagogical translanguaging, accent discrimination*

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## Glossary

Accentism: Accentism is defined as “accent-based discrimination” (Ramjattan, 2025b, p. 2)

Accentedness: Accentedness can be viewed as a measure of how much a speaker’s pronunciation resembles or differs from that of a native speaker of North American English.

Comprehensibility: Comprehensibility is “the listener’s perception of how easy or difficult it is to understand a given speech sample” (Derwing & Munro, 2009, p. 478).

Intelligibility: Intelligibility may be broadly defined as the extent to which a speaker’s message is actually understood by a listener (Munro & Derwing, 1999).

Intelligibility principle: The Intelligibility principle is defined by four tenets: a reflection of global multilingualism, more realistic goals for pronunciation teaching, a perspective that variations in accent are normal and are not necessarily a barrier to communication, and that successful communication and intelligibility require more than just an “acceptable” accent (Levis, 2005, 2020).

Nativeness principle: The nativeness principle is the idea that native-like pronunciation should be the ultimate goal for speakers learning English pronunciation. (Levis, 2005, 2020).

Native-speakerism: Native-speakerism is defined as a “pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a ‘Western culture’ from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology” (Holliday, 2006, p. 385).

Pedagogical translanguaging: Pedagogical translanguaging is “concerned with the planning, application and extension of multilingual pedagogical strategies and practices based on the student’s whole linguistic repertoire. It can be designed at the phonetic, lexical, morphosyntactic, pragmatic and discourse levels and can be implemented in language classes and content classes including oral and written activities” (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021, p. 19).

sRaciolinguistic ideologies: Raciolinguistic ideologies “conflate certain racialized bodies with linguistic deficiency unrelated to any objective linguistic practices” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 150).

Segments: Segments are the smallest contrastive units of sound in a language.

Suprasegmentals: Suprasegmentals are phonetic elements that occur above the segmental level, such as tone or stress.

Thought grouping: Thought groups are phrases or clauses that have a distinct meaning within a larger phrase or sentence. Speakers pause briefly between thought groups. For example, the sentence “We met with the planner to decide on a date for the wedding” can be grouped into several thought groups: “(We met) with the planner) to decide) on a date) for the wedding)” with a pause between each phrase.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

In my year and a half of teaching with an accent reduction company based in the US, I worked with around fifty students. Of these fifty students, less than five used English pronunciation that was difficult to understand without repetition. In other words, I needed to do very little "work" on my part as the listener to understand the vast majority of my students. However, despite being easy to understand, my students were often very seriously concerned with problems they perceived were caused by their accents. Some felt their accent harmed their chances of receiving a promotion, created communication difficulties with their coworkers or peers, even that their accent caused a lack of trust from clients. We moved forward with accent reduction classes, but the discussions with my students brought up considerations about who or what defined an "acceptable accent." Working with these students sparked my interest in the intersection of accentism and pronunciation teaching, and raised questions for me about what could be done to create more equitable pronunciation instruction.

The prevalence of English monolingualism in the Global North means that there is a notion of an ideological "Standard English" in educational, institutional, and workplace contexts (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Lippi-Green, 2012, Ramjattan, 2025a, 2025b). "Standard English" (Flores & Rosa, 2015) can be defined as a raciolinguistically-derived norm that frames white, monolingual speakers as the ideal, and other varieties of English as deficit. Following Derwing & Munro (2009), accent can be defined as "the ways in which [speakers'] speech differs from that local variety of English and the impact of that difference on speakers and listeners" (p.477). Accents of North American individuals and of speakers of English as an additional language may be considered non-standard and may therefore subject individuals to accent discrimination, or accentism, defined as "accent-based discrimination" (Ramjattan, 2025b, p. 2).

Accentism in North America has impacts on pronunciation instruction. Communicative Language Teaching is common in English as a second language (ESL) teaching (Cook, 2001). This approach has

traditionally been defined by an English-only requirement in the classroom, and often a white, monolingual native-speaker standard (Cook, 2001; Flores & Rosa, 2015). The strict, English-only language teaching classroom settings which I am familiar with promote a problematic native-speaker ideology (Holliday, 2006; Ponzio & Deroo, 2024). Using a monolingual, native-speaker standard is an unrealistic standard for pronunciation, as the vast majority of adult additional language learners will never achieve a “native-speaker-like” accent (Levis, 2020; Levis & McCrocklin, 2018). Native-speakerism is the “pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a ‘Western culture’ from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology” (Holliday, 2006, p.385) Native-speakerism is upheld by raciolinguistic ideologies, whereby the ideal native speaker is also assumed to be a white, monolingual native-speaker (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Ramjattan, 2024). A native-like accent does not safeguard an individual from racism; in fact the centering of a white, native-speaker listener as the standard is a driving force behind accent discrimination (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Ramjattan, 2024). Accent discrimination, or accentism (e.g. Ramjattan, 2025b), particularly in institutional or work settings, may cause students to feel the need to change their accent and seek out "accent reduction" programs, which are often predatory (Derwing, 2003; Derwing et al., 2014; Derwing & Munro, 2009; Ramjattan, 2023; Ramjattan, 2024). Accent reduction programs often seek a market by preying on students’ perceived insecurities, such as the possibility of not being hired due to accented speech.

I have had experience teaching in full immersion contexts, Communicative Language Teaching contexts, and even at an "accent reduction" company. One invariable through-line has been the enforcement of strict English-only policies. Over the course of my teaching experience, I realized my privileged position as a white cis-woman and native speaker of North American English. My CELTA program job board consisted of pages of positions advertised to “native speaker teachers only,

preferably from the US or Canada," qualifying me for teaching roles without regard for my teaching abilities. The accent reduction company required teachers to have an American accent, another area in which I qualified without effort. My students were from a variety of backgrounds, but by arriving in the classroom with a general northeastern US accent similar to the "General American" accent which is often taught, I inadvertently set the standard for pronunciation as my own accent. While I speak French at an advanced proficiency level and have studied other languages, I have had the privilege of learning in relatively positive ways in school and among peers after moving to Montreal from outside Boston. I acknowledge that not every student is allowed to learn and use language the way I was, in such a relatively low-stakes environment, where mistakes are inevitable and seen as part of the learning process by interlocutors and teachers.

It was not until I began my studies at Concordia University that I learned about the harmful impact of native-speaker ideologies. I was also introduced to the concept of translanguaging (Burton & Rajendram, 2019; García et al., 2017; Williams, 1994). I not only want to create more just classrooms, where students' multilingual identities are truly valued, but also to speak directly to teachers who come from similar backgrounds to me. We can make a positive impact when we confront harmful ideologies which we ourselves are privileged enough to be largely unaffected by.

My recognition of the need for more equitable pronunciation instruction was bolstered by my reading of Ramjattan's work on the interrelationships of race and accent (e.g. Ramjattan, 2023, 2024, 2025). Ramjattan, a prominent applied linguistics scholar and one of the few who take a critical perspective on pronunciation and accent, describes his vision of anti-racist pronunciation pedagogy. Three necessities of anti-racist pronunciation pedagogy are featured in his work: the need to help students refuse a white, native-speaker standard of pronunciation; the need to reinforce the mutual responsibility of intelligibility between interlocutors and to acknowledge the role of race in listener

perceptions; and the need to raise awareness of manifestations of raciolinguistic ideologies (Ramjattan, 2024). Ramjattan's work recognizes that there has been a shift from a native-speaker standard to an intelligibility standard. He offers further critique of this shift and reports that the concept of native-speaker English is "not some purely linguistic category, but rather, a racialized product of colonialism" (p.319) in which the superior speaker is a white English speaker from a settler colonial nation (such as the US, the UK, Canada, or Australia).

Responding to Ramjattan's call for anti-racist pronunciation pedagogy, my thesis project consists of the design and piloting process of lesson plans teaching three different elements of pronunciation and the resulting insights about promising possibilities for more equitable pronunciation instruction. Four prominent principles synthesized from pedagogical translanguaging scholarship (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter, 2020b, 2022) constitute the foundation for my work, namely: the integral use of students' full linguistic repertoires, the development of students' metalinguistic awareness, the fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness, and the centering of students' multilingual identities (Celic & Seltzer, 2013; Cenoz & Gorter, 2020b, 2022; García et al., 2017). In this thesis I have drawn from two bodies of literature: translanguaging theory and pedagogy, and pronunciation instruction methods and materials. Using this background, I created, piloted, and refined more equitable materials for pronunciation teaching which attempt to actively disrupt a white, monolingual, native-speaker standard.

This thesis consists of five chapters. In the second chapter of this thesis, I begin with an overview of the field of pronunciation instruction and widely accepted materials. I examine how accent discrimination is perpetuated in pronunciation teaching and English language classrooms, then explore how translanguaging theory and pedagogy can help address these challenges. I also highlight the overlap between pedagogical translanguaging and pronunciation instruction. The third chapter describes the pedagogical design of the pronunciation lesson plans I created and the process by which I

piloted them. Informed by the process of piloting the lessons, the fourth chapter presents a reflective account of my experiences and outlines the need for more equitable pronunciation instruction. These reflections inform the fifth chapter, which contains recommendations intended for other educators who are interested in teaching more equitable pronunciation lessons grounded in pedagogical translanguaging. The end of the fifth chapter concludes this thesis with a short summary and final thoughts.

## Chapter 2 : Literature Review

In this literature review chapter, I examine work on accent discrimination, pronunciation instruction, and the ideologies of the English-only Communicative Language Teaching classroom. Accent discrimination derives from a harmful norm in pronunciation teaching. Pronunciation instruction historically upholds a monolingual native-speaker standard, at times overtly. Communicative Language Teaching classrooms teach pronunciation with a less explicit but still unexamined standard of the monolingual native speaker as well. While pedagogical translanguaging offers a critical perspective on language usage, and therefore accent, its focus on pronunciation has been limited. The following sections synthesize these bodies of literature to highlight their limitations and points of intersection, setting the groundwork for a translanguaging-oriented approach to pronunciation instruction.

### Overview of the Field of Pronunciation Instruction

Pronunciation instruction has always been a component of language teaching, though its emphasis has varied across different eras of methodology. Classical approaches (pre-1850s) consisted of intuitive-imitative practices. Such practices expected learners to develop their pronunciation skills through listening and mimicking native speakers, presumably the teacher, and did not require the teacher to have specific skills or training in phonetics or pronunciation (Baker, 2017). Activities used in this methodology include oral repetition, use of minimal pairs, imitated pronunciation, and reading aloud, all of which are still used today (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Derwing et al., 2012; Gilbert, 2005; Miller 2006). In fact, the training and materials provided to teachers employed at the accent reduction company where I worked consisted mainly of these approaches, with minor additions related to articulatory phonetics. The materials provided generally used classical approaches, but the inclusion of articulatory phonetics meant that the teacher also provided a description and demonstration of the anatomical structures used in the mouth and vocal tract to produce different sounds. It is clear that

a native-speaker standard has been a recurrent and pervasive ideology in the language learning classroom, but it remains disheartening to find practices which are unchanged over nearly two hundred years.

Other approaches helped pronunciation teaching progress, but teaching students to imitate native speakers has been a consistent goal throughout. The first wave (1850s -1880s), in addition to intuitive-imitative practice, featured the development of a vowel numbering system which helped to mark similarities in the vowel sounds across words. The second wave (1880s-1980s) consisted of many approaches regarded as "naturalistic," meaning they attempted to emulate initial language acquisition (Baker, 2017). The Direct Method fell in line with intuitive-imitative practices and also continued to uphold speaking "the foreign language in the manner of natives" (Baker, 2017, p.545). The analytic-linguistic approaches which followed heralded the introduction to more modern pronunciation instruction (Baker, 2017).

Teachers became more knowledgeable about the linguistic science regarding phonology and pronunciation and then shared that knowledge with students. Articulatory descriptions, diagrams, and a focus on listening/perception became more commonly used teaching approaches. Audiolingualism and Situational Language Teaching emphasized oral communication for the first time (Baker, 2017; Levis & Sonsaat, 2017). The nativeness principle—the paradigm which supported a native speaker standard—was most prominent in pronunciation teaching before the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (Levis, 2005). Despite a continued focus on segments only and a native-speaker standard in classrooms, there had also been researcher support during the classical, first, and second wave eras for an intelligibility standard. Communicative Language Teaching was the first pedagogy to reject a native-speaker standard in favor of intelligibility, at least in theory.

### *The Intelligibility Principle and the Communicative Language Teaching Classroom*

The Intelligibility principle is defined by four tenets: a reflection of global multilingualism, more realistic goals for pronunciation teaching, a perspective that variations in accent are normal and are not necessarily a barrier to communication, and that successful communication and intelligibility require more than just an "acceptable" accent (Levis, 2005, 2020). Derwing and Munro (2009) defined intelligibility as "the degree of a listener's actual comprehension of an utterance" (p. 479). They state that intelligibility, comprehensibility (the ease with which a first-language English speaker comprehends an utterance) and accentedness (a measure defined by first-language English speaker judgements of other English users' speech) are all separate constructs. Levis (2005, 2020) combines Derwing and Munro's definitions for intelligibility and comprehensibility. The intelligibility principle challenges the nativeness principle directly (Jeong & Lindemann, 2025). The Intelligibility principle marks a significant shift, at least in theory, from a native-speaker standard to a more equitable standard of assessment. While CLT purports to maintain "intelligibility" (Levis, 2005, 2020; Levis & Sonsaat, 2017) as the goal, versus a native-like accent, the reality in the classroom is not as clear.

Teachers trained in modern teaching methods, including Communicative Language Teaching or immersion contexts, continue to promote a strict "English-only" setting and use a monolingual, native-speaker standard for setting assessment goals (Cook, 2001, 2022; Cummins, 2007). In fact, English-only classrooms typically do not acknowledge the other languages of speakers, aligning with deficit perspectives on students. Learners' language abilities are only viewed in light of their ability to communicate in English, without regard for the assets their diverse language backgrounds might hold. Growing global multilingualism provides a direct contrast to the adherence to an English-only classroom; many individuals across the globe speak English as an additional language (Cook, 2022; Gatbonton &

Trofimovich, 2008). Reflecting the phenomenon of global multilingualism, accent differences and varying mutual intelligibility exist among native speakers as well as in English as an additional language populations (Cook, 2022; Gatbonton & Trofimovich, 2008). When students, teachers, and administrators measure students' learning progress and the "acceptability" of their accent against a monolingual, native English speaker model (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021; Cummins, 2009; Piller, 2002) this does not accurately reflect students' languaging abilities. Learners in a language classroom are inherently multilingual, not monolingual.

Not only is the monolingual standard not an accurate image of growing global multilingual realities; the monolingual, native-speaker standard results in a very narrow definition of a "correct" way to speak. Holliday (2006) defines "native-speakerism" as a "pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the belief that 'native-speaker' teachers represent a 'Western culture' from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology" (p.385). The native speaker, in this case especially the native speaker teacher, is seen as superior to speakers of English as an additional language. For those monolingual individuals who are purported to be native speakers, the term has "real currency" and can result in the othering and stereotyping of "non-native" multilinguals. Reaching native-like fluency or native-like pronunciation is an unrealistic goal for students learning additional languages (Derwing & Munro, 2005). Holding this standard as a goal in the classroom sets students up for failure and dissatisfaction with their own learning and use of English (Derwing & Munro, 2005).

Students become readily aware of the effects of the ideal-accent belief when trying to communicate with biased monolingual English speakers. Accent bias defines a prejudice where speakers of English as an additional language are discriminated against because their accents may be deemed foreign and unacceptable by native English speakers. It is a documented phenomenon,

especially in ESL environments (Derwing, 2003; Derwing, et al., 2014; Derwing & Munro, 2009; Ramjattan, 2025b). Native-speakerism clearly centers not only the native English speaker, but the white native English speaker (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Holliday, 2006). Ramjattan (2023) markedly highlights the underlying racism which upholds the native-speaker myth and the belief that "unaccented" speech makes one more employable. Many objectively competent multilingual learners are deemed to have inferior language skills and knowledge due to the gatekeeping role that the white listener plays in determining what is and is not "appropriate" speech (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Returning to the idea of "intelligibility" as a guiding principle, it can help to meet students' needs by challenging native-speakerist and raciolinguistic ideologies of how a speaker "should" sound as determined by a white, monolingual, native English speaker. However, it is vital to note that intelligibility alone cannot counter the effects of racism (Ramjattan, 2023), a sentiment mirrored by Flores and Rosa's emphasis on the role of the white listener in interactions. The white listener decides who is deemed to have an acceptable accent or acceptable languaging abilities.

Experiences related to accent bias, including students' insecurities about economic and social opportunities, may prompt them to attend predatory "accent reduction" courses (Derwing, 2003; Derwing et al., 2014; Derwing & Munro, 2009; Ramjattan, 2023) where they are expected to conform to a native-speaker like standard. This was my experience while working for the accent reduction company; the overwhelming majority of my students had accents which were quite intelligible. There was very little miscommunication because of supposed accentedness. While there were new pronunciation elements to learn and practice, and certain goals that required a more target-like accent, the fundamental idea that these students "needed" accent reduction in order to be understood was, in my opinion, false. Students' communication was clear, with relatively few misunderstandings related to pronunciation, though their speech varied in accentedness.

Isaacs' (2008) findings suggest that intelligibility is a recognizable, empirical construct, at least at word-level, but that further research into other speech factors (including suprasegmentals at a phrase- or sentence-level) is required. Intelligibility has no universally accepted definition and is not sufficient to cover all elements which may interfere with comprehension and communication (Isaacs, 2008). Without a universally accepted definition, the standard for what is intelligibility is still subjective; based on the teacher or community of interlocutors of the speaker, which can be biased by racism and/or native-speakerism.

***Changing Pronunciation Instruction Methods and Materials***

The advent of Communicative Language Teaching led to a reconsideration of the role of pronunciation teaching in language classrooms. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) centered communicative competence and meaning over accuracy or "correctness." However, this meant that the focus on pronunciation present in previous methodologies was no longer emphasized in CLT classrooms (Pennington, 2021). This point was echoed by Levis and Sonsaat (2017) who argue that the paradigm shift to communicative competence and meaning put the focus on fluency, rather than accuracy. Since the focus was no longer on accuracy, pronunciation materials failed to evolve to meet the needs of students, and were "relatively basic, and only scratche[d] the surface of the meaningful contribution which pronunciation makes to spoken language and communication more generally" (Pennington, 2021, p.13). This quote acknowledges that pronunciation instruction lacked a critical component which would have enabled teachers and students to consider the perceptions and expectations of accent by the interlocutors they wanted to communicate with.

The uncertainty regarding the new pedagogy (Communicative Language Teaching) left teachers "entering uncharted waters" (Celce-Murcia, 1983, 1987, in Levis & Sonsaat, 2017) and unsure of how to integrate pronunciation material into the structure of a communicative lesson. Therefore, teachers

continued to teach pronunciation as additional or specialized content outside of the main class content (Pennington, 2021). However, since the introduction and development of Communicative Language Teaching, new materials specifically for this teaching methodology have been created, namely the widely used guide by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010). While this text has its shortcomings, most noticeable in its adherence to an English-only environment, it is much more nuanced than other materials which seem to still use many first and second wave approaches (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 2006; Latham-Koenig & Oxenden, 2014). Celce-Murcia and colleagues created a framework for teaching pronunciation within the communicative approach; they also acknowledged some critical aspects of pronunciation and accent. These aspects include accent discrimination and identity negotiation based on students' decisions surrounding accent use. Celce-Murcia et al. also explicitly acknowledged variable pronunciation, meaning the natural variation speakers have in their accents. The authors also uphold a standard of intelligibility, rather than nativeness, as the goal for student pronunciation.

The most important features of pronunciation and accommodation strategies that promote better communication were outlined in Jenkins' Lingua Franca core framework (2000). Jenkins' Lingua Franca core emphasizes the importance of consonants and consonant clusters. Jenkins (2000) and Walker and Zoghbor (2015) also insist that segments pose more difficulty for intelligibility than suprasegmentals, despite evidence that suprasegmentals such as syllable stress and sentence stress impact intelligibility the most (Anderson-Hsieh et al., 1992; Hahn, 2004; Levis & McCrocklin, 2018). None of the current scholars cited here in the intelligibility debate mention using critical reflection strategies to determine how intelligibility may be defined by students or how intelligibility is defined in their communities of interlocutors. Jenkins (2000) and Walker and Zoghbor (2015) both advocate for intelligibility that does not center native speakers, citing growing global multilingualism which

creates numerous English lingua franca contexts, where multilingual speakers use their overlapping repertoires of English to communicate. Student agency, meaning that students themselves may decide what elements of pronunciation they want to incorporate into their repertoire, is often not acknowledged in the research.

Even in materials designed for pronunciation instruction specifically, multilingual identity in terms of accent is barely, if at all, acknowledged (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 2006). The work of Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) is an exception. These researchers acknowledge the role which accent plays in identity and group affiliation, though this section is meant to be read by the teacher only. Gatbonton and Trofimovich's (2008) work on students' group affiliation and the effect their affiliation has on their proficiency in L2—terminology used by the authors1—corroborates the idea that identity and group affiliation are powerful motivators in the learning of another language and its strategic deployment. The authors of commonly used pronunciation resources often do not include critical discussion around the restrictive English-only classroom or how identity can be an asset in the classroom. In fact, the majority of the materials find students' other language(s) to be a major problem in learning English pronunciation, usually referred to as "negative transfer" or "interference" (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 2006).

Widely used pronunciation materials often see interference or negative transfer from other languages as a deficit and a challenge to improving pronunciation in students' additional languages (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 2006). Common pronunciation instruction materials often include statements that certain language backgrounds will make it difficult for a student to acquire certain English segments or suprasegmentals. The accent reduction program I worked for took a similar stance, informing teachers what students of various language backgrounds will struggle with. While the materials by the accent reduction program may have been originally designed with teacher preparation in mind, neither the

program nor traditional materials (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 2006) showed the potential advantage of transfer.

Researchers have demonstrated the benefit of providing instruction and explicit knowledge in both the student's home language and additional target languages (McManus & Marsden, 2018). The authors studied students who were given explicit instruction and practice in their home language (English) and an additional language (French). In their findings, the students who had experienced explicit instruction and practice in both languages had significantly better outcomes than students who only received explicit instruction and practice in French. Developing students' metalinguistic awareness, instead of rejecting students' knowledge of other languages, can bring them success in learning.

Often pronunciation teaching materials are not intended to meet goals outside of a standard based on monolingual native-speaker pronunciation of English. The history of pronunciation teaching and a review of currently available materials show some limited progress in methods, including the introduction of an intelligibility standard. However, few if any materials or approaches incorporate critical perspectives on the native speaker standard, student identity, or language transfer. Similarly, CLT classrooms are still characterized by a deficit perspective on language learners' knowledge and skills. To counter the ideologies in CLT classrooms that continue to uphold accent discrimination, I turned to other pedagogies for inspiration.

Translanguaging theory challenges accepted norms in language teaching, such as the monolingual standard by which inherently multilingual students are assessed, the idea of bounded languages, deficit views of learners' abilities, and the efficacy of a target-language-only environment. Pedagogical translanguaging provides a basis for arguments against accent discrimination in pronunciation instruction.

**Overview of Translanguaging Theory and Pedagogy**

Translanguaging theory argues against harmful ideologies of the English-only classroom. First named by Cen Williams in Welsh as "trawsieithu," in his 1994 dissertation, translanguaging emerged as a pedagogical strategy in bilingual education, specifically in Welsh-English elementary classrooms. This groundbreaking practice opposed the idea of a hierarchy between languages which placed English as superior and Welsh as inferior in schooling. By embracing fluid movement between the languages, Williams and colleagues assigned tasks where students received input in one language, then produced output in the other language, effectively creating equal status between both. It should be noted that this usage of translanguaging refers to a "language alternation" definition (Poza, 2017) wherein the two languages are considered bounded and students are tasked to switch between the two. More current and widely used definitions consider that languages are non-hierarchical, just as Williams originally proposed. As described by Otheguy et al. (2015), "translanguaging is the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (p. 281). An individual's repertoire is a unified whole containing all of their language knowledge and skills. Note that for brevity in this thesis, I will use the term "languages" generally to refer to "language viewed from the internal perspective of the individual" (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 289) when describing students' language backgrounds or use of language.

Since its inception, the concept of translanguaging has expanded in interest and scope. Translanguaging as a theory and a practice became popularized in the USA through the K-12 bilingual education system. It is worth noting that the work of García and colleagues (e.g., García et al., 2017; Otheguy et al., 2015) has been particularly influential in the additional language teaching field. García's work promotes translanguaging theory notably as inherently critical, a view shared

by many other scholars in the field (e.g. Wei, 2018; Otheguy et al., 2015). A dual-language classroom, such as those described in some examples of teacher guides by García et al. (2017) and Celic and Seltzer (2017), as well as in Cen Williams' earlier work, is generally described in those terms because the majority of students speak the same home language and are expanding their abilities across the same additional language(s), including incorporating English, in school. Translanguaging has been adopted in adult education as well (e.g. Beiler & Dewilde, 2023; Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Park & Valdez, 2018). Successful translanguaging is also possible in classrooms where the language backgrounds of students and teachers are much more diverse (Beiler & Dewilde, 2023; Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Chen et al., 2021). Students in translanguaging classrooms expand their knowledge and skills across all of their languages.

A new focus on, not just the existence of translanguaging as a multilingual practice, but also the possibilities of applying translanguaging theory in educational contexts, has led to the emergence of what is termed "pedagogical translanguaging" (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter, 2020a, 2021, 2022.) As defined by Cenoz and Gorter (2021),

> Pedagogical translanguaging is concerned with the planning, application and extension of multilingual pedagogical strategies and practices based on the student's whole linguistic repertoire. It can be designed at the phonetic, lexical, morphosyntactic, pragmatic and discourse levels and can be implemented in language classes and content classes including oral and written activities (p.19)

This attention to the pedagogical includes both critical and practical aspects, while prioritizing the needs and strategies of the language teaching classroom.

Translanguaging (both as theory and as pedagogy) is not without its critics. Sociolinguist Jaspers (e.g. Jaspers, 2018) argues that scholars and media overstate the transformative potential of translanguaging. Notably, Jaspers (2018) argues that translanguaging may positively affect classrooms and individual students, it has not affected greater social and ideological change. Another argument is

that the term “translanguaging” has undergone “discursive drift” and now encompasses too many different ideas. Jaspers (2018) argues that the polysemy of the term makes it more difficult to define what is being studied and evaluate its effectiveness now that it can refer to the natural languaging practices of multilinguals, a pedagogical approach, a theory of language and education, and a social justice initiative. Prominent plurilingual researcher Galante (e.g. Galante, 2020; Galante et al., 2022) notably defines translanguaging as a discourse practice among multilinguals and a pedagogical tool to make use of in the classroom. Her work supports the idea that translanguaging as a practice by multilinguals has value, but frames this kind of language use as an example of language alternation (Poza, 2017) wherein students move strictly between their home language and school language. The description of a phenomenon is not the same as valuing students’ multilingual repertoires, and does not include the criticality which in my view defines translanguaging theory.

Cook (e.g. Cook, 2001, 2022), whose work features prominently in earlier literature rejecting the norm of English-only classrooms, argues that translanguaging occurs only in the visible or audible realm, whereas multicompetence “suggests that both languages are always active in the system” (Cook, 2022, p. 56). He makes the argument that translanguaging does not happen in the minds of multilinguals, only in expression. García (2017) seems in opposition and describes translanguaging as “an approach to bilingualism that is centered not on languages […] but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable” (García 2009, p. 44, quoted in García, 2017). However, García distinguishes here between conceptualizing languages as bounded and separate entities existing outside of speakers, and conceptualizing language as a process enacted by speakers, controlling what language features they use. The choice of features is what is visible to interlocutors, but there is an implication of internal processing, aligned with Cook’s stance that active languaging is always happening. Translanguaging and

multicompetence share a core agreement that student language skills and knowledge from various socio-politically-named languages coexist in the student's mind and in their languaging practices.

Arguments and critiques regarding translanguaging's critical foundation versus its use as a practice among multilinguals are ongoing. However, there is agreement on aspects such as the development of metalinguistic strategies by students as a path to learning, or the reality of multilingual processing across languages. This strengthens the legitimacy of the critical theory and practical use of translanguaging. The definitions are not as important as how elements from plurilingualism, multicompetence, and translanguaging are included in the pursuit of better, more equitable, and effective teaching for multilingual language learners. Continuing in this pursuit, I outline four principles of pedagogical translanguaging which resist harmful ideologies, such as native-speakerism, that promote accent discrimination.

**Foundational Principles of Pedagogical Translanguaging**

For the purposes of my project, I designed lesson plans based on four foundational principles of pedagogical translanguaging: the integral use of students' full linguistic repertoire, the development of students' metalinguistic awareness, the fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness, and the centering of students' multilingual identities. These four principles have been synthesized from empirical research and in teaching guides in translanguaging literature in various forms, which will be explained below. I based my lesson plans on these four principles. In this way, I was able to keep key elements of this pedagogy at the forefront of my teaching. Translanguaging pedagogy was foreign to me before this project. These foundational principles disrupt the white monolingual native-speaker standard through the systematic incorporation of critical discourse, the valuing of students' language skill and knowledge, and a focus on student identity.

***The integral use of students' full linguistic repertoire as a valuable resource***

The first principle, the integral use of students' full linguistic repertoire, ensured an asset-based perspective in the classroom. I used this as a foundational principle of my lesson plans because it argues against native-speakerism and accentism by actively valuing students' language resources. It also helps them reject the perceived "superior" standard of a monolingual native speaker (Ramjattan, 2024). Translanguaging theory describes a person's linguistic knowledge as part of a unitary language system which is not divided into separate languages (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; García, 2017). Cenoz and Gorter (2020a, 2020b) describe the pedagogical translanguaging approach as having "soft boundaries" between languages, meaning that "elements from several languages can be used in the same session and that there is a dynamic process of using resources in the multilingual repertoire" (p.4). The dynamic, fluid process of languaging is inherent to multilinguals, and the repertoires they hold are valuable assets to the classroom and to learning.

In translanguaging classrooms, teachers and researchers commit to the use of the full linguistic repertoires of learners as an integral necessity for learning. Students need to make use of all their language knowledge in order to understand the course content (Beiler & Dewilde, 2023; Creese & Blackledge, 2010). In dual-language classrooms where the students alternated between two languages (Creese and Blackledge, 2010) and classrooms where students had more diverse language backgrounds (Beiler and Dewilde, 2023), students' access to their language knowledge created a deeper learning of the new language content. Creese and Blackledge (2010) describe a Mandarin and English learning classroom literacy activity. The teacher narrated the story in Mandarin but explained the story in Mandarin and English. Students also interacted with the narrative in both languages. Field notes about the activity showed that the researcher was unable to grasp the story while the students were able to understand. While the previous example highlights learners with repertoires including two named

languages, Beiler and Dewilde (2023) describe how English "functioned as a means of bridging understanding among speakers of less represented languages," in their adult, Norwegian language learning classroom (p.15). Students' home languages included Arabic, Thai, Kurdish, Somali, Pashto, German and others, but they used English to communicate, explain, or clarify the Norwegian language content among themselves and the teachers. Therefore, students' whole repertoires, including languages besides their home languages and the target language, were necessary to understand and complete activities within the class.

Translanguaging inherently refuses a hierarchy of knowledge of languages, evident even in the earliest example from Williams' (1994) work alternating input and output in different languages. A classroom in which all language knowledge is used and valued directly contrasts with traditional Communicative Language Teaching classroom policy, in which only the target language is valued. Just as valuing all language knowledge dismantles the idea of the superiority of one language over others, it also argues against the superiority of some accents over others. Teachers who use approaches with the goal to imitate the native speaker, rather than explore how students can expand their repertoire to include new pronunciation elements, can replicate harmful ideologies. Teachers' use of the word "correctness" or "errors" when the student's pronunciation is non-native-like contributes to the perspective that students are deficient speakers (Jeong & Lindemann, 2025). Accent discrimination in English-majority contexts fundamentally argues for the superiority of a (usually white) monolingual, native speaker accent. By considering all languages and accents as valuable knowledge, this first principle argues against accentism. The emphasis in learning pronunciation is then on the expanding of the students' linguistic repertoires, not on the "correctness" of accent based on a monolingual, native-speaker standard.

***Developing students' metalinguistic awareness***

The second foundational principle was a commitment to developing students' metalinguistic awareness. Metalinguistic awareness refers to "awareness about how languages work" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022 p.20), both in a reflective capacity and a capacity for action that supports learning and understanding. In the pedagogical translanguaging literature, students' full linguistic repertoires are a resource; "it is natural for multilingual speakers to try to use resources from other languages because they try to link their prior knowledge to new knowledge" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022, p. 345). Students make connections between their prior knowledge of languages to the newly introduced language elements in order to understand the new content and expand their repertoire. This conscious awareness of the connections between items of language knowledge is metalinguistic awareness. Backed by evidence from pedagogical translanguaging classrooms (Cenoz et al., 2021), I realized the possibilities for deepening understanding of the pronunciation elements I proposed in my lesson plans by developing students' metalinguistic awareness.

Developing metalinguistic awareness helps students access their existing knowledge and connect it to the new language knowledge they are exposed to. Understanding how words may be related across languages, such as between linguistic cognates, is a clear example (Celic & Seltzer, 2017; Cenoz et al., 2021). Cenoz and colleagues (2021) explored the relationship between metalinguistic awareness and teaching cognates with young learners in the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain. Students were taught mainly in Basque, with Basque and Spanish as home languages, while English was taught as a foreign language. The experimental group received instruction on using their prior knowledge to understand connections between words in Basque, Spanish, and English, expanding their knowledge about all three languages. This group showed greater metalinguistic awareness and were later more capable of using their skills to provide complex explanations of connections between cognates.

Metalinguistic awareness can also be raised spontaneously (Park and Valdes, 2018). One example in a study of Nepali-Bhutanese adults was related to pronunciation. A student meticulously transcribed Nepali words using the Roman alphabet. He made connections between oral and written language, increasing his literacy in both his home language and English as well as helping him practice English phonetics through his knowledge of Nepali words. Students' learning was greater for having developed metalinguistic awareness about their language knowledge (Cenoz et al., 2021; Park & Valdes, 2018).

Building metalinguistic awareness also resists a hierarchy of language and accent. The useful nature of connections between languages does not necessarily indicate that one language is "better," only that some language connections are more helpful in some instances. Students can make use of their linguistic resources and metalinguistic awareness to increase their pronunciation repertoire without some elements being deemed more prestigious than others. Developing metalinguistic awareness contrasts with the idea that transfer between languages is negative. Many of the language resources cited above (Gilbert 2005; Miller, 2006; Swan & Smith, 2001) convey that transfer is only in the negative sense; ways that previous language knowledge makes learning new elements difficult. An understanding of the similarities and differences between students' prior knowledge and new language information can be viewed as a further tool for students to learn with and extend their resources for pronunciation, rather than these similarities and differences being viewed as hindrances to their learning.

***Fostering critical metalinguistic awareness***

The third principle consists of the fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness. Critical metalinguistic awareness refers to knowledge about the relations of language and power. Criticality is inherent to translanguaging theory and pedagogy. Language does not exist in a vacuum. Instead, speakers constantly need to choose language appropriate to the situation and their interlocutors

(Otheguy et al., 2015). Understanding the power dynamics in conversations is part of this process. Teachers must bring criticality into their analysis of how some language practices are acceptable, while others are delegitimized by those in power (García, 2017). Translanguaging classrooms bring discussions of language and power into the teaching space.

Teachers of racialized students can choose to engage with critical discourse in their classrooms (Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Burton, 2024). In translanguaging classrooms with adult students, critical perspectives on how language is viewed and used are necessary for understanding and learning. . Burgess and Rowsell (2020) used the framework of Green's 3D Model of Literacy as an assessment tool to emphasize three strands of understanding: the operational-technical dimension concerned with the technical language system, the cultural-discursive dimension concerned with meaning, and the critical-reflective concerned with the capacity to interpret and ask questions about the audience and power. The teacher/researchers engaged students in activities where the students also critically considered how their expression might be interpreted by interlocutors. This tool allowed the teachers/researchers and students to engage in critical discourse about power. A descriptive activity—analyzing and reinterpreting a photo—became a site of discussion and debate among the students. One student created a scene which showed her reconsideration of her former views on feminism; the reinterpretation and discussion among students became a way to express differing and changing perspectives on power dynamics they faced in the world. The student was able to express, through a visual tableau and her languaging, critical considerations of how her opinions and the way she conveyed them might be interpreted by others.

In another study in a university-level translanguaging classroom, Burton (2024) explored a challenging classroom conversation. Criticality in the classroom informs students and allows them to consider the impacts of harmful perspectives. Burton and her co-teacher Nancy were confronted with a situation in which a student expressed personal experience with racism, but in his work expressed his

own racist viewpoint. After discussing the possibility of further harm in the classroom, Burton opened a dialogue with the student, leading him to reconsider his discriminatory views in light of the potential impact of his words on others in the class. The student changed the work he presented. Ultimately, the discussion embraced the difficulty of students critically examining their beliefs. The discussion also emphasized the need to engage with students about relations of power, race, and language in the classroom.

Criticality in the classroom is necessary for disrupting the supposed norm underlying accent discrimination. One of the power dynamics specifically affecting the perception of accent is racism. As described by Flores and Rosa (2015) and reiterated by Ramjattan (2023, 2024, 2025) racialized speakers may be perceived as "speaking deficiently by the white listening subject regardless of the ways they attempt to model themselves after the white speaking subject" (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 155). A racialized speaker with an "acceptable" accent which emulates the white, monolingual native speaker may still be deemed unacceptable due to racism on the part of the listener. In class, critical perspectives on why a student may be facing accent discrimination are necessary to help them understand and define realistic goals for pronunciation. Dismantling the beliefs that students themselves may hold and may take into their own learning and languaging practices can also be achieved through critical activities and discussion.

***Centering students and their multilingual identities in lessons***

The fourth principle is the centering of students' multilingual identities. Pedagogical translanguaging centers the individual and their languaging abilities in the classroom (Celic & Seltzer, 2013; Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; García et al., 2017). This principle ensures that the content of lessons is relevant to students' lives, goals, careers, and interests. Students' multilingual identities are most clearly integrated into the translanguaging classroom through student agency. The teacher makes space for

students to choose the nature of their expression, often in various modalities, including language, media, or objects/artifacts (Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; Rajendram et al., 2022). Through pedagogical translanguaging practices, students become integral agents in their learning (Celic & Seltzer, 2013; García, 2017).

Burgess and Rowsell, in their 2020 work with adult immigrants who were emergent bilinguals learning English, described a multimodal collage activity where students created a visual representation of "their identity in Canada." Students created the visual collage and then described it using their language(s) and English. This type of activity validated students' identity as including their home language(s) and culture(s), as well as their emerging English skills. It is important for learner identity to be affirmed by majority English-speaking groups in this way (Miller, 1999). Miller's (1999) work was done with teens, but her findings can be seen as relevant for adult experiences of moving between communities. By having their English-speaking identity legitimized by speakers, immigrant teens were able to practice and rapidly improve their English. Their improved English then granted them access to in-groups among their peers. In both of the above studies, the affirmation of identity plays a strong role in the improvement of students' language skills and knowledge. Multilinguals/bilinguals make choices regarding which features of their repertoire to use in a given context (Otheguy et al., 2015). Students in language courses are, by definition, bilingual or multilingual. That multilingual identity deserves to be valued in the classroom.

Student identity drives students' motivations in class. Students' needs to integrate into their communities and to be accepted as speakers can bring them to language learning classes, specifically classes on pronunciation or accent change. The unexamined "solution" to being accepted, that students should simply adopt the accent and language practices of their desired community, promotes accent

discrimination. It is only when teachers validate student identity and listen to student needs, fears, and frustrations in the classroom that disruption of the harmful norm is possible.

The goal of pronunciation classes should be to help students expand their repertoire and choose which elements they need to master in order to be "heard" (Miller, 1999) by a community. When teachers incorporate students' materials and their perceptions of language into activities and dialogue in the classroom, instruction becomes individualized and centered on fulfilling student needs, rather than meeting a monolingual, native-speaker standard.

**The Incorporation of Pronunciation Instruction in the Translanguaging Classroom**

The translanguaging classroom is effective for improving students' language knowledge and skills, including in pronunciation. However, similarly to the Communicative Language Teaching classroom, pronunciation is typically incorporated, often spontaneously, into the larger class structure, rather than being the sole focus of a lesson. García et al. (2017) feature a striking example, as follows. In an elementary school, dual-language bilingual classroom, the students shared that in their homes, Spanish words were often used to help the students remember English sounds. For example, the Spanish word for flower ("flor") helped students remember the pronunciation of the English word "floor." This example highlights how students leveraged their metalinguistic knowledge of the similar phonology to produce target-like English pronunciation. Another example of the incorporation of pronunciation work in a translanguaging lesson is reported in Park and Valdez's (2018) work with Nepali-Bhutanese adult learners of English. The students expressed misunderstanding the English word "mouse" for the word "mouth," (evident in their use of Nepali to define the word). The misunderstanding allowed space in the lesson for the teacher to model the differences between the two English sounds "s" and "θ" (the voiceless th sound). In the examples from both García et al. and Park and Valdez, the lesson continued to flow after the incorporation of pronunciation instruction. There were no documented instances

where individuals, the class, or the teacher revisited the pronunciation. However, the students evidently grasped the concepts. In the case of García et al., students formed a sustainable system which they could use to maintain and practice sounds on their own.

Celic and Seltzer's (2013) guide for teachers shares an activity centered on vocabulary which exemplifies the metalinguistic awareness used by students to compare items of language knowledge. The activity does have a small, pre-planned focus on pronunciation. It focuses on discerning meaning from words which sound similar across languages; two key points relate to the efficacy of using pedagogical translanguaging in the pronunciation-focused activities that are featured. Firstly, the activity has a "word sounds" (p. 166-167) section which requires students to compare similarities and differences in the phonetics across their own languages. Secondly, these similarities and differences are highlighted and discussed among students and their teacher, allowing students space to create their own connections (as opposed to more widely accepted approaches which may simply define the sounds and ask students to identify and then pronounce them). The "word sounds" activity raises students' metalinguistic awareness by discussing similarities and differences while also relying on students' full linguistic repertoire for the comparison information. This activity is part of a larger vocabulary activity within the greater lesson plan, meaning it takes a very limited amount of time. This is an important example of focusing on pronunciation in a pre-planned fashion.

There are comparatively fewer instances where pronunciation is the sole focus of a lesson using translanguaging pedagogy. Chen et al. (2021) worked with undergraduate university students in Shanghai, China. The teacher-researchers created a lesson where students would improve their French pronunciation (French being an additional language they were introduced to, after English and the Mandarin and/or Shanghainese that they already knew). The research of Chen and colleagues focused specifically on spontaneous translanguaging in the classroom and how events observed in the classroom

can be incorporated into pedagogical translanguaging planning for future lessons. Not only did students' post-tests reveal a significant improvement in their pronunciation, but both the students and teachers reported positive affective results of the use of translanguaging multimodal pedagogies in the pronunciation class. One report from a teacher recalled how a student was able to identify a sound shared by both French and Shanghainese and to meet a more target-like standard of the sound in her home language of Shanghainese. The researchers also reported that teachers were able to incorporate examples of spontaneous translanguaging into subsequent lessons. Essentially, pronunciation can be the focus of a language class taught through pedagogical translanguaging, though there are as yet few examples in the literature.

In this literature review, I have outlined the history of pronunciation instruction. I have discussed relevant pronunciation instruction materials and shown how they uphold a monolingual native speaker norm. I have also reviewed the way translanguaging theory and pedagogy have evolved and how they intersect with pronunciation teaching. Finally, I have proposed ways that pedagogical translanguaging and the four principles on which I based my lessons plans can be used to help overcome accentism in pronunciation instruction. In the following chapters, I detail how I designed and piloted my lesson plans. I then document my reflections on student engagement.

## Chapter 3: Lesson Plan Design and Piloting Process

The purpose of my project was to pilot pronunciation lesson plans that explored more equitable ways of teaching pronunciation without sacrificing effectiveness. Using the criticality inherent in pedagogical translanguaging as a foundation, I designed and implemented lesson plans to teach three separate elements fundamental to intelligible English pronunciation: the schwa /ə/, syllable stress and timing, and sentence stress. During the process of piloting my lesson plans, I took copious notes on students' engagement and on the challenges I perceived, both in my teaching and in the progression of the activities of the lesson plans. I adapted the lesson plans continuously and, as I reviewed my self-reported observations, formulated insights into what could be useful for more equitable pronunciation lessons.

In the next section I describe my students, the chosen pronunciation elements, the process of lesson development, the note-taking, and the process of adapting and improving the lesson plans. I outline the above to give a context for the insights in the subsequent chapter.

### Students and their Language Backgrounds

Five learners participated in my lesson plan piloting. They were former students of mine that I had met at the accent reduction company. They had already worked with me for a minimum of 30 hours, with one student having done nearly 80. All of my students were adult users of English who had reached an advanced level of proficiency (CEFR Framework: C1). They were long-time users of English (10+ years) and were well-established in their careers, comfortable using English daily in work and life. Their language backgrounds varied; however each had considerable knowledge of at least two named languages, including varieties of English. These languages included Hungarian, Japanese, German, Russian, Yoruba, and French. A majority of my students also had exposure to or were in the process of

learning other languages, including Spanish, German, and varieties of Scottish, British, and US English. Some students had studied French or Spanish in high school, although they had only a limited knowledge of these languages.

Of the five individuals, four lived in the US and one lived in Europe. Of the four students situated in the US, only one used English with predominantly monolingual English speakers. The three others were part of diverse and multilingual working or studying communities. These communities were made up of individuals with varied language backgrounds, including English. This was also true of the student living in Europe. For all of my students, English was the language they most frequently communicated in, often in Lingua Franca situations where all or most speakers were multilingual and counted English as an additional language.

My students had similar pronunciation goals and needs, though their rationales for seeking out pronunciation courses varied. They all came to lessons with goals such as “get an American accent” or “reduce a foreign accent.” However, as will be illustrated further in the Insights chapter, learners also had more complex motivations. Each learner was required by their life circumstances to speak publicly, whether they were leading meetings, presenting reports, instructing others or some combination of the above. Not only did they wish to be understood, they also wished to be perceived as less “foreign.” They wanted to limit or to eliminate misunderstandings and to improve their public speaking for a better impact on their audience. Knowing my students in advance, I was able to choose pronunciation elements which would be applicable to all of their goals.

**Selecting Elements of Pronunciation for the Lesson Plans**

I created three full lesson plans, each to teach one of three separate pronunciation elements (listed below). The pronunciation lessons were structured so that each built on the lesson before it, contributing piece by piece to intelligibility at the phonemic, word, and sentence level. In my time

teaching for the accent reduction company, I discovered that students who were advanced users of English could not perceive schwa and often had no idea it existed. Most students also had a very limited idea that syllable stress and timing or sentence stress could affect meaning, not just accent their speech. Due to these gaps in knowledge, I knew that all my students could benefit from learning these elements. The lessons centered prosody and suprasegmentals as a foundation for intelligibility. As has already been stated in the literature review chapter, there is strong evidence that prosody and suprasegmentals have a greater impact on intelligibility than segments alone (Anderson-Hsieh et al., 1992; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Hahn, 2004; Gilbert, 2005; Levis & McCrocklin, 2018; Pennington, 2021).

Each lesson plan covered a different pronunciation element. The lessons were as follows:

Lesson 1: A critical discussion of students' pronunciation needs and accent + Phoneme level: Schwa (see Appendix A, p. 76);

Lesson 2: Word level: syllable stress and timing (see Appendix B, p. 84);

Lesson 3: Phrase & sentence level: sentence stress, contrastive focus, thought groups (see Appendix C, p. 90).

The first element was the segmental schwa (/ə/). The schwa is one of the most frequently occurring sounds in English, especially in North American English (Poesová, 2015). The schwa is commonly referred to as a "reduced" sound because the vowel becomes very lax and quick, so is no longer heard as a clearly identifiable vowel. While schwa is a segmental feature, it is also a building block for understanding suprasegmentals like syllable stress and timing, which was the focus of the second lesson. Syllable stress refers to the strength of the stress, whereas timing refers to the length of the vowel. In English, vowels fall into three categories: reduced, which are unstressed and short and most often contain schwa; secondary or neutral, which are full and recognizable vowels; and primary, which are considerably stressed and longer. For example, the word "accommodation" written in the

International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), /ə.ˌkɑ.mə.ˈdeɪ.ʃən/, indicates three reduced syllables (the first, third and fifth or final) with schwa /ə/, secondary stress on /ɑ/ marked by the secondary stress marker, a subscript vertical line left of the "k," and the primary stress marked by the superscript vertical primary stress marker just before the "d." Reduced and unstressed functional grammar words contribute to the overall stress of sentences and factor into contrastive stress and thought grouping, the focus of the third lesson. For example, words like "a" and "for" are often reduced within a sentence, while key words are stressed to emphasize the meaning. Contrastive focus refers to stressing the key word in order to draw a strict contrast between different topics. For example, the sentence "I didn't fail the history test," where "history" is stressed, implies the speaker failed a test in a different subject but not the history test.

While I had experience teaching the three elements which became the topics of my lesson plans, I also used several teaching resources to guide my choices. I consulted two key resources on which pronunciation elements might best serve my students' needs. Celce-Mucia et al. (2010) is an authority on using Communicative Language Teaching approaches for pronunciation instruction. This resource stresses suprasegmentals as vital for intelligibility. It focuses on North American English and is therefore more applicable for students expanding their repertoires to include pronunciation elements commonly used in majority English-language contexts of the US and Canada. In contrast, Jenkins (2000) is known for her development of the Lingua Franca Core, describing elements of pronunciation required for intelligibility among users of English in Lingua Franca environments. English Lingua Franca environments are characterized by speakers of diverse language backgrounds using English as the primary language of communication. Jenkins notably emphasizes segments over suprasegmentals.

My experience working with one student was an excellent demonstration of why using both of these resources was necessary to inform which pronunciation elements should be chosen. The student's main interlocutors consisted of Midwest American English speakers and international student peers

from Indian backgrounds. The student is in the US, implying that his goals for pronunciation should revolve around communicating with monolingual English native speakers. Therefore Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) accommodation for North American English pronunciation elements should have been sufficient. However, many of his interactions see him communicating with individuals for whom English, as for him, is an additional language. In this case, perhaps the Lingua Franca Core (Jenkins, 2000; Walker and Zoghbor, 2015) would be a better option to improve his intelligibility, especially considering that some segments which posed a significant challenge to his pronunciation were necessary for him to practice due to their prevalence in his work. Judging by both major resources and my own experience, the choice I made to teach schwa, syllable stress and timing, and sentence stress was well-informed.

**The Development of Lesson Plans**

My overall lesson plan design was clearly influenced by my time as a Communicative Language Teaching-trained teacher. The stages of the lesson follow a structure similar to that of Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) communicative framework, which can be seen in Figure 1, below. However, one deviation from their framework is evident in that I chose to combine the perception and production practice phases. Celce-Murcia et al.'s Guided Practice phase (Figure 1, number 4) focuses on practicing production or perception separately, whereas my lesson plan phase focuses on moving fluidly between production of the element and perception of the element. I chose to create activities which integrated both skills in the same phase of practice, due to my experience that students may grasp the initial perception or production stages of a pronunciation element quickly, but may require many examples and activities for it to become more well-maintained and automatic. The perception of a pronunciation element is often accompanied by production practice initiated by the student. The production practice is helped significantly by perception practice, during which the pronunciation element is heard in many environments.

Figure 1

*A Communicative Framework for Teaching English Pronunciation by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p.45)*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | **DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS** – *oral and written illustrations of how the feature is produced and when it occurs within spoken discourse* |
| 2 | **LISTENING DISCRIMINATION** – *focused listening practice with feedback on learners' ability to correctly discriminate the feature* |
| 3 | **CONTROLLED PRACTICE** – *oral reading of minimal-pair sentences, short dialogues, etc., with special attention paid to the highlighted feature in order to raise learner consciousness* |
| 4 | **GUIDED PRACTICE** – *structured communication exercises, such as information-gap activities or cued dialogues, that enable the learner to monitor for the specified feature* |
| 5 | **COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICE** – *less structured, fluency-building activities (e.g., role play, problem solving) that require the learner to attend to both form and content of utterances* |

The pronunciation patterns of learners' home languages become automatic over time and are resistant to change (Derwing & Munro, 2009; Levis & McCrocklin, 2018). Practice over time is required to adjust and build new muscle memory for familiar and unfamiliar sounds alike. The progression of pronunciation improvement towards a goal is incremental but predictable (Cardoso, 2008). Both Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and Jenkins (2000) focused on the mechanics of pronunciation teaching. In their work, the requirements for effective pronunciation teaching are featured. However, neither discusses components of pronunciation instruction which would allow students to critically examine the pronunciation demands they face. Philosophically, my own lessons were greatly influenced by Ramjattan (2025) and García (2017). García's and Ramjattan's theoretical work challenges native-speakerist, racist, colonial perspectives which have guided the education of multilingual learners. Their work is both the inspiration for and the validation of the kind of teaching practices I have attempted to create.

In his theoretical exploration, Ramjattan (2024) recommends creating formal space and the inclusion of material that is critical of the system which positions the white native English speaker as the standard. While Ramjattan conceptualizes ideal scenarios, I attempted as a teacher to follow through and put his ideas into practice. The elements of anti-racist pronunciation pedagogy that Ramjattan proposes are reflected in the lesson activities I created. This was done through the inclusion of discussion prompts and discussion spaces which allow the students agency in determining the goals of their pronunciation journey.

Each activity of the lesson plans includes some prompts for discussion. The first activity of the first lesson (the Co-Construction of Goals and Addressing Accent Myths, see Appendix A, p.76) focuses on student language usage, knowledge, and goals as related to their communities of interlocutors. Through addressing the accent myths, students gain more information about their own perceptions of language, as well as a better understanding of the unjust power structures that underpin these myths. This activity can show students they can "refuse the full emulation of native English" (Ramjattan, 2024, p.320) in favor of expanding their repertoire to suit their specific goals of communicating with various communities of speakers. Variability in pronunciation in different contexts, such as formal vs informal situations, is an established phenomenon (Cardoso, 2008), so it is important to incorporate information and practice. The Introduction of the element: Analysis, Impact, and Necessity activity, as well as the Structured Perception and Production Practice sections, call for experimenting with the use or omission of pronunciation elements in order for the student to build their sense of ownership of the element.

When the students and I discuss the idea that intelligible communication is the responsibility of both interlocutors, rather than being solely the responsibility of the speaker who is perceived to have an accent (Ramjattan, 2024), the students are often surprised. They often bring up a past example where they felt the miscommunication could have been avoided if they had had "better" pronunciation. I

usually remind them that miscommunication happens frequently between native speakers, and that accentedness is not necessarily a barrier when both interlocutors feel accountable for communicating intelligibly. The idea that intelligibility is a mutual responsibility for interlocutors is a powerful realization for students. The onus is not on the student to speak with a native accent in order to be understood; rather, both interlocutors must put forth the effort to communicate. Ramjattan (2024) also outlines "the sharing of phonological resources whereby the speaker and listener learn about (and possibly use) each other's pronunciation practices" (p. 321) as a route to creating more equitable intelligibility practices between speaker and listener. My Compare and Contrast activity (see "Compare and Contrast activity" in Section 3 of all three lesson plans in Appendices A, p. 76, B, p. 84, and C, p. 90, as well as Appendix E, 98) responds to this suggestion by engaging teacher and student in a flow of speaking, imitating, and analyzing each other's pronunciation of elements across languages. As Ramjattan remarks, intelligibility is a "joint goal" (p.319) of interlocutors. He also problematizes the idea that intelligibility is the sole solution to being perceived as a proficient speaker. Intelligibility alone, as illustrated in the literature review, cannot compensate for raciolinguistic ideologies held by the listener which conceptualize the racialized speaker as deficient. In my own notes and reflection, before starting lessons, I prepared myself to have difficult conversations with my students. In my lesson plans, I encourage the teacher to use the co-construction of goals and addressing accent myths prompts to give the student space to relay their past, potentially negative, experiences around pronunciation and accent. It was crucial for me that the student guide the discussion, rather than the teacher making assumptions about a student's needs.

In my lesson plans, I attempted to create conditions which allowed students to exercise agency in their participation in the activities, as well as defining their goals and ultimately the progression of the lessons. García (2017) enthuses that translanguaging "gives agency to minoritized speakers, decolonizes linguistic knowledge, and engages all of us in the social transformations that the world so sorely needs

today" (p.24). As outlined above, co-constructing goals and addressing accent myths through the discussion activity done in the first lesson lets students meaningfully contribute to the goals we work towards in lessons. García also insists that the teacher "makes new linguistic features available which the speaker then integrates and appropriates into their own language repertoire" (p.17), in essence adding to a rich system of language where elements are non-hierarchical. Applied to my approach to pronunciation instruction, this means that one accent is not more acceptable than another in linguistic terms and I as the teacher acknowledge that in my lesson plans. Different pronunciation elements can be adopted and used in different social contexts which was important for me to include in both the discussions with the student and in the “teacher information” sections of the lesson plans. Accents are deemed “prestigious” socially, not linguistically. This is a philosophy recognized in my lessons, where I drew on this critical theory of non-hierarchical languaging to give students information and opportunities to practice so they could make their own informed decisions surrounding the ownership and use of their pronunciation features.

Using the pedagogical translanguaging principles I identified in the literature review as a foundation ensures that critical perspectives on pronunciation elements and on power dynamics are integral to the lessons, in a world which overvalues accents associated with white, monolingual, native English speakers.

The principles of pedagogical translanguaging which directly inform these lesson plans include:

1. The integral use of students’ full linguistic repertoire as a valuable resource
2. The development of students’ metalinguistic awareness
3. The fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness
4. The centering of students' multilingual identities

**Lesson Piloting Process, Lesson Plan Adaptations, and Observational Note-taking**

Each of my five students took three private one-hour classes. Each of the three classes covered a different pronunciation element. Lessons were conducted online, reflecting the structure with which students were already accustomed from our previous work together. In total, I taught fifteen classes. Generally, each student took one class per week. Throughout the lessons, I gathered notes based on students' engagement and my own, then made adjustments to all future lesson plans. Before teaching my first class, I also conducted a reflection on my own beliefs and biases around accent, guided by Levis & McCrocklin's (2018) work highlighting the need for teachers to analyze their own beliefs around accent and pronunciation. The cycle of lessons and note taking is illustrated below in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1
*Description of Class and Note Taking Cycle*

| Before class | During class | After classes | Repeat |
|---|---|---|---|
| Preparation of notes about my expectations for the class | Lesson plan 1 - Student 1<br>Notes on student engagement<br>Notes on activities and activity progression (changes, additions and/or omissions)<br>Notes on questions and discussion | Student 1 engagement<br>Changes to future lessons for Student 1<br>Changes to Lesson 1 for students 2-5<br>Changes to Lesson plan 2 for all students<br>My engagement and reflections | Repeat for Lesson 1 - Students 2-5<br><br>Then repeat for next |

A prominent influence regarding my lesson design and observations was drawn from translanguaging literature. García et al. (2017) describe the three "strands" of translanguaging pedagogy as "Stance," "Design," and "Shifts." These three strands had a great impact on the design of the lessons and the observational note taking I did. The first of these, "stance," "refers to the philosophical, ideological, or belief system that teachers draw from to develop their pedagogical framework" (p. 19). It is vital, in order to be a critical force for a more fair classroom, that teachers reflect on their own views, in this case their beliefs around accent and pronunciation. Students will need information and guidance regarding the realities of accent discrimination. Teachers need to be prepared to have potentially

difficult conversations. This supported the idea of the teacher reflection I created as the first activity, pre-lesson. However, stance is also incorporated into the notes taken during and after lessons. I created a teacher/researcher log that consisted of prompts which allowed me to address my stance and any changes in or reflection on it that occurred over the course of piloting my lessons. Levis and McCrocklin's (2018) work is also relevant as support for this log and for the post-lesson notes, as they discuss the importance of analyzing teacher views and beliefs around pronunciation and the practical effects on planning lessons. Levis and McCrocklin also add some fundamental points on adjusting the aims and goals of lessons, and on describing challenges that arose during the lesson. Both the examination of teacher beliefs and a reminder to adjust the mechanics of the lesson plans to better suit the individual student were helpful in guiding the teacher reflection prompts in the lesson plans.

"Design" is a core characteristic of translanguaging and refers to the careful planning and the flexibility required of the translanguaging classroom (García et al., 2017). The characteristic of "design" in translanguaging encouraged me to pay close attention to the factors which changed the original lesson plan. The notes I took before, during, and after class contributed to my reworking of the lesson for the next student. Before each lesson, I ensured that I had notes related to my expectations for the lesson, based on my knowledge of the student and their goals. During the lesson I took jot-notes on student engagement: times I perceived them to be enthusiastic or reluctant were especially informative. Importantly, I also noted how their goals and language(s) may affect their pronunciation learning. Notes related to the activities were more technical and centered on aspects such as changes to timing, or on which activities required further instructions. One distinct category of notes was related to questions asked by students and discussions we found necessary. I also transcribed questions they had and answers I was able to give, in addition to discussion prompts which I found helpful. Following the

lessons, I fleshed out the notes with further details of the context of student engagement. I then revised the subsequent lesson plans.

Perhaps most crucial to the notes I made is the idea of "shifts." Translanguaging shifts are defined as "the many moment-by-moment decisions that teachers make all the time" (García et al., 2017, p.20). Teacher flexibility is a necessity in any classroom; it was vital to the iterative process of reflection and revision I employed in the devising of these pronunciation classes. Translanguaging shifts "respond to content and language needs and interests that are not built directly into the translanguaging unit plan, but which students need to be successful in the classroom" (p.151)—for example, changing material spur of the moment to better suit the students' vocabulary building around their career. I was able to find more useful material for subsequent lessons after making a decision in the moment to include new material. My students made connections between the pronunciation element and their field, suggested new material, and I then incorporated it into the lesson, allowing the two of them to co-construct an activity that is more focused on their needs. For example, one student suggested a research article of his, however we found the sentence stress was sometimes difficult to find in the dense academic writing. Instead, we would read and rephrase the sentences into something he was more likely to lecture with and could use sentence stress more relevantly. I have found that when I work with adult students, their awareness of language use and their own language needs is often well-developed. They can tell me what they are looking for in class. Therefore, teacher flexibility in the moment and reflection and revision afterward to incorporate useful additions and revisions was necessary for me.

Chen et al.'s (2021) work in particular supports the above focus on teacher flexibility and pedagogical adjustments. These researchers' work focuses on documenting and investigating spontaneous translanguaging as a starting point for adjusting pedagogical translanguaging processes in

subsequent lessons. In my own experience, I have noticed a need to add or rearrange tasks and discussion prompts in class, in order to make use of the spontaneous connections some students make. Therefore, including Chen et al.'s premise about reflection is vital support for adjusting lesson plans. The prompts included in my post-lesson notes were created with the idea of reflecting on the lesson and on what spontaneous events prompted adjustments in the moment. Reflecting on these events allowed me, as the teacher, to do two things. First, I became more familiar with possible areas of the lessons which invited connections, such as cross-linguistic connections, or connections related to other knowledge (for example, career or interests). I could then work to incorporate material which supported students in making these connections. These connections helped to solidify and maintain the pronunciation instruction by providing references grounded in familiar contexts. Second, I became more familiar with the very phenomenon of shifts. Each instance of needing flexibility may not represent a change needed in the lesson plan; however, familiarizing oneself with the discomfiture that comes with embracing the unknown possibilities in the moment is valuable for building the confidence of the teacher. Along with providing ample reflection on adaptations to make to the lessons, to ensure both their effectiveness and their criticality, revisiting my notes and changes brought me insights into what may be necessary for a more equitable pronunciation lesson.

My jot-notes allowed me to reflect on what I learned through teaching my lesson plans. Using the teacher/research log, replete with prompts, I noted how students' multilingual identities may affect the content of the lesson. I looked for patterns in their engagement with activities to ensure that the activities were engaging and effective. Specifically, I noted if students were reluctant or needed more explanation before participating and what I provided in return. I also considered whether the activities contributed to rejecting the accent discrimination bias which can inform lessons by noting what topics (e.g. possible discrimination at work or in education, insecurity around being accepted as an expert) of

discussion we brought up in class. I continually added discussion prompts to the lesson plans based on these topics but also included instructions for the teacher to revisit past activities, such as student goals and accent myths. Through my extensive notes and writing about what I experienced in lessons, I was able to draw insights into what makes a more equitable pronunciation lesson. In the next chapter, I will detail the insights I gained from piloting my lesson plans.

## Chapter 4: Insights

Through the process of planning, piloting, note-taking, and adapting the lesson plans, I developed a series of promising insights into the possible requirements of equitable pronunciation teaching. Below, I reflect on the transformation I underwent as a teacher and how my reflections changed the engagement in my classes. I also outline reflections on two important factors: student identity and student language background.

First and foremost, I found insights related to my investment in using translanguaging methodology to be impactful. Reviewing my notes and reflections, I realized that the initial position I took in classes—as the authority on language, informed by my Communicative Language Teaching training—was problematic. This stance is a large part of why pronunciation instruction specifically upholds a standard of the white, monolingual, native English speaker. A translanguaging classroom is fundamentally a space where the student has agency (García, 2017). I found that it was only when I honored and utilized the student's language perceptions, knowledge, and skills, as equal to my own as the teacher, that I could devise a more equitable pronunciation lesson. The teacher is not an expert on the students' goals, experiences, and motivations, or even on the student's language knowledge and skills. Students need information and guidance to form their goals and reflect on their experiences and motivations, but ultimately, the use of language will be their own.

I began classes with the expectation that I would be the authority on the content and flow of the lesson. In my personal reflection, before conducting my lessons, I considered both my relationship to pronunciation instruction and how I had previously planned lessons. In the past, I planned lessons targeting gaps in knowledge I thought my students may have based on their knowledge of other language(s) besides English. For example, since I know that demonstratives (this, that, these, those) function differently French than they do in English, and that French lacks the "th" phoneme, I planned

more extensive activities and longer timing of lessons for French speakers learning English. But I realized I was planning with the same perspective as the pronunciation resources I critiqued: seeing transfer as a negative and students as deficit English users. I had been considering similarities between languages as something students would understand more readily in English than differences, rather than as strengths they could use to learn.

When I looked at my beliefs about pronunciation teaching, I realized that I struggled with how "correct" a sound should be. The idea that there was a single, "best" pronunciation was enforced by the accent reduction company I worked for. From my reflections, before and during teaching my own lesson plans, I realized that I weighed accentedness and intelligibility nearly equally in terms of pronunciation elements to focus on. For example, I believed students needed to "correct" segments which later in my reading I found carried little functional load, such as the "th" sound (Levis & McCrocklin, 2018). As my pronunciation-teaching journey progressed, I became more aware of the role that student identity, student group affiliation, and student autonomy played in what sounds they truly needed to learn in order to fulfill their goals. I discovered that a teacher should be an active participant in learning for pronunciation instruction to be more equitable; a guide, as opposed to an authority figure. I struggled with the change from authority figure to facilitator but ultimately found the change productive and rewarding.

In the planning phase of my lessons, I created extensive lists of prompts to guide conversation in developing students' metalinguistic skills and making critical reflections. I found that in fact the prompts acted better just as a catalyst for discussion, rather than a linear guide for discovery. The teacher, by acting as a facilitator, draws on their English language expertise as needed to guide the student to their own conclusions regarding which phonological features to adopt. However, the teacher is not the expert on the student's knowledge or perceptions of language. It was necessary for me, as the teacher, to

engage with the activity on the same level as the student. I took a collaborative perspective on my lessons. Students had significant input into the direction or the depth of the discussion. I engaged in each activity knowing I would learn from my students and could offer some of my own experience in order to facilitate their learning. A quote from Burgess and Rowsell (2020) struck me as particularly relevant:

> A sin fronteras/no borders approach to teaching creates a subtle but significant shift in a translanguaging classroom; the teacher shifts to the same side as the students, working in multiple languages, multiple modes, in alliance. There is also a change in the directionality of instruction; teaching happens with students (rather than to or at students), opening up pathways and possibilities for teaching, learning, and assessing in new, more equitable, and imaginative ways. (p.188-189)

The imaginative and flexible exchange that occurred as we engaged in the activities allowed for deeper learning. I observed students making new connections across languages. Their discoveries were effective for enhancing their understanding and perception of the pronunciation elements. For example, one student noticed that their home language did not have particularly long vowels, which affected their perception of long vowels in English. This student was later able to identify long vowels in another language of theirs, aiding them in learning the long vowel in English. In particular, the teacher-as-facilitator perspective allowed my students' identities and goals to become the locus for our pronunciation classes together. The importance of this shift in mindset cannot be overstated.

**Student Goals and Student Identity**

As I explored the ideas of student agency and identity while observing the way the lessons unfolded, several ideas became clear to me. The first is that student goals are often more complex than merely reaching a certain technical proficiency in pronunciation, though this may be the point they emphasize early on. Instead, learners may need to focus on being accepted as speakers in various contexts. Miller (2002), Gatbonton and Trofimovich (2008), and Levis (2022) all report an intersection

between accent, usage of an English variety, and group affiliation. This intersection brings up how language learners can take ownership over the elements of language they choose to incorporate into their repertoires (García, 2017). How can one be accepted by a group but also practice agency in how one uses language? Two particularly illustrative examples come to mind to show the insights I drew from changes I made to lesson plans based on student engagement.

One of the students who participated in my piloted lessons lives in Europe and does work involving giving presentations and moderating discourse between experts. Her interlocutors and audience are often individuals who count English as one of many languages in their repertoire. She initially sought out accent reduction courses in order to gain an American accent. My initial lesson plan yielded little additional information on her motivations to pursue this goal, beyond a desire for 'clarity' in her speaking engagements. However, by reflecting together through more prompts and a focus on incorporating the challenges and questions she could define for herself, we came to the joint conclusion that what she really needed was a better understanding of speech-giving skills, such as consciously modulating her stresses for emphasis. Given her audience, an American accent did not necessarily clarify her speech. Her main communicative need was to be clearly understood, but she also needed to establish herself and to be accepted as an expert in her own right. This required minor adaptations of my lessons on suprasegmentals, including more time spent on contrastive focus and sentence stress. Through questions, I allowed this student to guide the lessons and discussed how syllable stress and contrastive focus function in compound words, as well as how contrastive focus can affect the message in a speech. As a result, the student was able to engage more fully in learning the pronunciation elements she needed. She was able to connect the elements that fulfilled her communication and audibility needs. Ultimately, she made the decision about which pronunciation elements to add to her repertoire, and we devoted more class time to practicing with her own speech materials.

While this European student had a straightforward realization of her communication needs to be "heard," another student faced different challenges to being accepted by his community of interlocutors. Relying on his descriptions and perceptions of recent interactions in his workplace, we discussed the possibility that he was facing discrimination based on personal bias or racism, rather than accent intelligibility. This student is Japanese and speaks Japanese as a home language, but also has a significant amount of French language knowledge and skills from a decade spent working in francophone regions of northern Africa. Despite being a longtime learner and user of English, and having what I determined to be a very intelligible accent, he was strongly encouraged to take accent reduction courses by his supervisor. My student indicated that he was experiencing negative attitudes towards his speech from his colleagues and supervisor, mainly critiques on his phrasing, pausing, and pronunciation, which we analyzed together using a video recording of one of his presentations and verbal feedback from colleagues.

It is important to note that this student's workplace is extremely diverse, consisting of colleagues and supervisors from the US and from various countries in Africa. The majority, if not all, of his colleagues are multilingual and use English as one of many languages in their repertoire. Many accents are present among his colleagues, as demonstrated through recorded verbal feedback that I heard from his presentation and in his own recollection of colleagues speaking. The feedback that was captured on video gave us insights into other accents present in the workplace, and allowed us also to compare technical pronunciation elements that were similar to or different from his. This analysis led us to the conclusion that his colleagues should be experienced in interpreting meaning through a variety of accents, yet still had perceived difficultly understanding him.

Given this vital contextual information, we critically approached the topic of audience prejudice. My student indicated that there was a history of negative interactions with his supervisor and a

colleague, which may have influenced their particularly disparaging view of his accent even though most members of his workplace were experienced in interpreting accented speech. This was a delicate and difficult topic of conversation. As I have not myself been the target of overt racism and did not have first-hand observation to discuss with him, I did not want to influence him unduly towards this conclusion, perhaps in error. Instead, I focused on allowing space in the class for him to express his feelings about his interactions with coworkers and their responses to his presentations. I pointed out patterns including recurring comments from particular individuals and he added insights about other negative interactions such as his work being delayed due to negligence by others. The essential insight I came to is that there is a necessity for opening the scope of pronunciation lessons to include critical conversations concerning racism or other possible prejudices, rather than assuming that “correct” pronunciation and an “acceptable” accent are all that is needed to overcome these biases.

In terms of the mechanics of pronunciation, rather than social acceptability, the student and I determined that he may be facing challenges due to his “unexpected” thought grouping. Typically a speaker pauses between thought groups (phrases with meaning inside a sentence, see Glossary p.11). Native speakers separate thought groups automatically and without conscious thought. For example, "We waited at the train station for an hour" would most likely be broken up into "We waited) at the train station) for an hour)" with pauses at the parentheses. However, this student would often break his sentences up with unexpected thought grouping such as "We waited at) the train station for) an hour." This kind of thought grouping can make the phrases within sentences feel incomplete to listeners. We had deliberately focused on a critical conversation about audience bias first. Then, together, we discussed the kinds of impacts his thought grouping—which listeners seemed to have interpreted as non-target-like and unexpected—can have on both intelligibility and comprehensibility in English in an ideal context where bias is not a factor.

One particularly important impact we discussed in this situation was listener fatigue. While it is possible to correctly interpret a sentence with "unexpected" thought grouping, the amount of subconscious processing necessary can take a toll on the listener's ability to pay attention over time. Comprehensibility is a factor of pronunciation, because it relates to how easily a speaker can be understood (Derwing & Munro, 2009). As the listener becomes fatigued, they can lose patience and any underlying prejudice may impact their attitude towards the speaker, a possibility which is particularly relevant to this student. As an example, we used the sentence, "We met with the planner to decide on a date for the wedding." This was then added to my slides to use in future lessons. Target-like thought grouping can be seen marked with parentheses: "We met with the planner (to decide (on a date (for the wedding.)" We examined the impacts of other, non-target-like thought grouping as seen here: "We met with the (planner to decide) on a date for the wedding." My observation was that without putting the object of the verb "met with" in the same thought group, the listener feels they are left waiting for the completion of the thought, which can be distracting and divert attention from the meaning. Following our time spent on this portion of the task, the student was able to more readily perceive his usage of thought grouping and begin making adjustments. While he was unable to simply ignore the negative feedback, the expanded scope of the class beyond technical proficiency in accent and pronunciation alone allowed him to feel less pressured to imitate a native speaker in all aspects, and more encouraged to pick and choose which element(s) suited his more specific goal of comprehensible thought grouping.

While I cannot determine an exact rationale as to why the student's colleagues treated him the way they did, the bigger takeaway for me was that I needed to expand the scope of my lessons to confront the possibility of bias or racism. We discussed not just the technical demands of comprehensibility, but also difficult conversations around the possibility that a native-like accent may not be enough to make one's message acceptable to certain interlocutors. Flores and Rosa (2015) and

Ramjattan (2025) speak to this concept in the realm of raciolinguistics, detailing cases in which racialized individuals are not recognized by a white listener despite using "acceptable" speech. Following these conversations, I expanded activities concerning implementing or not implementing certain elements of pronunciation, and the effect these choices can have on the interlocutor on a technical level. This activity is the Introduction: Analysis, Impact, and Necessity section of the lesson plans (see Appendices A, p. 76, B, p. 84, and C, p. 90). In this instance, we explored how an improved use of thought grouping could create a more acceptable "flow" of speech in the student's presentations. Additionally, I expanded my repertoire of discussion prompts to revisit the topic of accent myths, through a more focused lens incorporating bias and race. Revisiting the goals we set and the accent myths renewed our discussions about what factors may be impacting a student's intelligibility. In discussion with students, we reevaluated their moments of challenge or reasons for pursuing accent reduction or pronunciation classes. Often, students offered information such as possible racial bias or personal bias against them that may have affected their intelligibility that they had not been aware of prior to lessons. I had created the conditions and familiarity for us to have an open dialogue. The adaptations I made to lessons included reminders in the "teacher information" to revisit the Co-Construction of Goals and Addressing Accents myths activity with a focus on how racial or personal bias may affect intelligibility and "being heard" by their interlocutors.

In both examples, themes of being accepted by the community of interlocutors are prominent. According to Levis (2022), "accent both serves communicative needs and signals information about social affiliation" (p.61). The perception of accent can be as important as the actual intelligibility of speech, something that Levis also notes is underresearched in the field of pronunciation. In my lesson plan creation and piloting process, I explored how students' goals went beyond adjusting their accent. They needed to communicate with technical proficiency, but also to be "heard" by the community they

were interacting with through acceptable pronunciation. This need to "become audible" highlights how the speaker must use language and an accent which is recognized by the community as legitimate in order to be accepted (Miller, 2002). My students came to the accent reduction company initially to "get an American accent" or "reduce a foreign accent." In jointly investigating students' motivations further —through activities discussing their goals and addressing accent myths—I discovered the depth to which group affiliation and acceptance were guiding factors in their decisions to pursue "accent reduction." I also discovered that there is a balance that needs to be struck between students expressing themselves through their unique repertoire, and their need to be accepted into their community.

By practicing agency in deciding which elements to focus on in classes, my students were able to expand their repertoire after critically reflecting on how the pronunciation elements served their needs, rather than adopting them simply because of an outside authority (either myself as the teacher or other outside interlocutors or materials). García (2017) expresses a need for a translanguaging pedagogy, to "ensure that [learners] appropriate new features into an expanded repertoire that is their own, and not just that of a nation state or specific national group," (p.21). She indicates that students need to be given time to practice and understand information to gain ownership of a language feature. García is referencing the experiences of adult migrants in a new nation-state, but I find her concept to be applicable in smaller communities of interlocutors as well. I made a point with students to always use materials and examples from their own interests, experience, career, or other relevant factors. Students' accent and pronunciation are indicators of their identity. We discussed how and when to use the new element(s) of pronunciation. Their pronunciation and accent need to be their own, not just an imitation of others in their circles or of an imagined native speaker. That is the kind of standard often upheld by uncritical but well-meaning teachers.

Multilingual identities require materials which can adapt to the individual multilingual needs of learners. Regardless of the debate on segments and suprasegmentals, individuals may need a mix of native-like and Lingua Franca pronunciation elements to adapt to their specific needs, their context of recognition by a specific community, and their multilingual identity. While Jenkins' (2000) Lingua Franca core argues against native-speakerist norms, it still assigns a hierarchy of features deemed to most affect intelligibility. The Lingua Franca core applies to students in Lingua Franca situations. However, in my experience piloting these lessons, my students interact with and must be "heard" by mixed groups of native speakers and speakers of English as an additional language. In the translanguaging approach I used, the teacher is a guide who helps the student decide the "target-like" pronunciation. Goals are co-constructed by student and teacher, with the student negotiating their goals and needs based on their own pronunciation targets, not an external measure of "target-like."

In the European student's case, she adjusted her speech-giving to include a more nuanced use of stress in words and sentences. Her goals were to expand her repertoire to include the skill of incorporating stress for the purposes of being clearly understood and establishing herself as an expert among native speakers of English and among users of English as an additional language often simultaneously. In the Japanese student's case, we set a goal together to change his thought grouping to be more target-like, imitating native-like English speakers, in order to appeal to a more conventional expectation from his coworkers. We also set a goal to employ this skill mainly in presentations, rather than across the entirety of his English-speaking interactions. He made the ultimate decision to incorporate this element into his repertoire for the specific purpose of presentations with colleagues. In practice, we targeted thought grouping in his speeches and presentations and discussed the impact of thought grouping on his comprehensibility at a technical proficiency level; however, we also discussed the possibility of personal or racial discrimination critically.

In the example from my classes with my Japanese student, I touched on comprehensibility. According to Derwing and Munro (2009), intelligibility refers to if the speaker can be understood, while comprehensibility has to do with how easily the speaker can be understood. Initially, I had mistakenly deemed comprehensibility as less important to overall communication, and had done little planning to accommodate it. Following my classes and discussion with this student, I made an effort to include activities which integrated the technical and critical impacts of comprehensibility. I did this not only by including new slides and activities to describe thought grouping, but also including new prompts into our discussions. In the "teacher information" sections of each lesson plan, I purposefully incorporated comprehensibility as a factor for consideration. I included reminders about the impact of using or not using a feature may have on communication with interlocutors, as well as examples. One example was that listeners may interpret a word as a different part of speech if the syllable stress is not what the listener expects. I introduced how primary syllable stress on the first syllable often indicates a noun (e.g. "play a record," /ˈrɛ.kərd/), while primary syllable stress on the second syllable often indicates a verb (e.g. "record a song," /rəh.ˈkɔrd/). One student relayed an example, "Do you have a /rəh.ˈkɔrd/ of the meeting?" which caused misunderstanding. The listener interpreted this as the speaker asking for a "recording" (primary stress on the second syllable) of the meeting, which was not available, but the speaker needed only the transcript. The misunderstanding was soon repaired, indicating some effort was required but the task was not insurmountable. The student was able to use this experience to more deeply understand the impact comprehensibility might have on communication.

**Student Language and Metalinguistic Knowledge**

I described above how native-like pronunciation may not be the goal of students; in addition, texts such as Gilbert (2005), Miller (2006) and Swan and Smith (2001) make a point of stating which segments of other languages may cause interference with English phonemes. Negative transfer, or

interference, conceptualizes students' language repertoires beyond the target language as problematic for learning native-like pronunciation. A common example in these resources is to note that because Japanese lacks a defined difference between /l/ and /ɹ/ (American "r" sound), Japanese speakers will struggle to learn the /ɹ/ sound. The materials I found focused only on the negatives, viewing learners from a deficit perspective and rejecting their language knowledge as valuable. In my planning, using pedagogical translanguaging as a foundation, I chose to focus on what assets, rather than perceived deficiencies, my students' multilingual identities and repertoires brought to the classroom.

The Compare and Contrast activity I created (see Appendices A, p. 76, B, p. 84, and C, p. 90, for the activity with the lesson plans, or see Appendix E, p.98 for the activity alone) deepened students' metalinguistic awareness of pronunciation elements. This activity also leveraged their skills using metalinguistic awareness to identify similarities and differences across languages. To create a more profound understanding and more consistent uptake of a pronunciation element, I needed to rely on the student as the expert in language usage and knowledge. The Compare and Contrast activity involves the student translating a simple English sentence containing examples of the pronunciation element into their home language. Next, student and teacher take turns reciting the English and the translation and together make observations about similarities and differences between features, such as manner of articulation, place of articulation, voicedness, etc. In planning, I made the assumption that all languages would have some similarities which students could rely upon to create a "key reference" which they could practice. In practice, some individuals and some languages were more suited to creating a reliable and effective key reference. Below I give two examples.

One student who was a speaker of German as a home language had a particularly successful experience in the Compare and Contrast activity of the first lesson concerning schwa. We started the activity by looking at a sentence in English featuring several schwa examples. We took turns reading the

example sentence aloud and discussed the production of the feature. Then the student translated the sentence into his home language, German. We repeated the same turns reading aloud but this time I imitated his pronunciation of the German sentence as best I could. I repeated the words and the student corrected me while we made observations together on the mouth formation, tenseness, tongue height, and lip rounding of the sounds. Initially I perceived the "o" in the German word "Bahnhof" (train station) as more similar to schwa than it actually is; I relied on the student's language knowledge and skills to correct my pronunciation, leveraging his expertise to make connections and see differences between the German sounds and the English schwa. When I repeated the words "kamen," "ihren," and "Freunden," my student described that while I was pronouncing them correctly, I had actually copied his informal or casual pronunciation and in a more formal setting the "e" would be a fuller vowel sound, not as reduced as it seems. This distinction was important for him to make the connection that the more informal pronunciation had greater similarities to the schwa pronunciation. He came to this conclusion by leveraging my pronunciation and observations to make his own comparisons across languages, but without me giving him the explicit information on the German sounds. Together we found that the "en" ending in German has a similar quickness, lack of lip rounding, and low tongue placement to schwa; however, the English schwa has a slightly lower jaw height. Instead of just developing the skill, I relied on his metalinguistic comparisons to create a "key reference" which allowed the student to compare the two sounds on his own and reliably and sustainably practice both sounds.

In contrast, my Nigerian student and I struggled to find similarities between Yoruba and English concerning syllable stress and timing in the Compare and Contrast activity of the second lesson. We were confronted with the apparent fact that words in Yoruba frequently have only one or two syllables and do not present stress as strongly as in English. We needed to make several adaptations to the Compare and Contrast sentence examples in order to create a Yoruba sentence with a three-syllable

word, and it was a challenge for the student to relate to the stress patterns seen in English. English stress patterns include primary stressed, unstressed, and secondary or neutral syllables. In Yoruba, very few syllables are strongly stressed at all. To offer more information and add a new perspective, we used a third language: French. French is my second language and the stress pattern differs greatly from English. I hoped that the new information might spark a similarity. I gave a few example sentences in French, then briefly explained the syllable structure. With this priming, the student was able to relate our lesson on English syllable stress and timing to his school knowledge of French. With the addition of our combined French knowledge, he was better able to understand syllable stress across languages and to compare the less extensive syllable stresses in Yoruba and the target-like syllable stresses in English. In the end, we were able to develop more metalinguistic knowledge, but were less successful in creating a specific reference he could rely on to help guide his pronunciation of syllable stress in English.

Cenoz and Gorter (2022) state:

> Linguistic distance is an important factor to be considered when using activities to develop metalinguistic awareness. Languages that are close to each other can share more elements at the phonetic, lexical, morphological, syntactic, discourse or pragmatic levels. However, pedagogical translanguaging can also be implemented in educational contexts where the languages are not closely related. (pp.349-350)

Evidently, Yoruba and English are "farther apart" than I had realized. While I do believe this activity still had value for the student's perception, because of the lack of shared elements, more time was required to understand and practice the English pronunciation element. The example of my Nigerian student also touches on another concept relating to the full linguistic repertoire: some students do not know the extent of or the value of their repertoire.

For all the activities in my lesson plans, students were expected to use multiple language knowledge or skills. Despite this expectation, there was no guarantee that students would be aware of all of their language knowledge and be able to access it. While I was surprised by the lack of awareness I

observed, I gained an extremely valuable insight into adapting my lesson plans for future lessons. The insight I took away from the experience was that students needed to be explicitly aware, first, of what language knowledge could be used from their full repertoires, and second, that the value of even small amounts of language knowledge should be discussed between teacher and student(s).

At the beginning of classes we always discussed language knowledge and communities of speakers. However, in several cases students showed that they possessed more knowledge than they had previously stated later in the same class, or in subsequent classes. One example of this arose in the above example of the Compare and Contrast activity with my Nigerian student. While in his answers in our discussions he had implied that he knew only varieties of English and Yoruba, in fact he had knowledge of French from studying in school. I had given an example of how different languages often express syllable stress and timing differently, giving English and my additional language of French as examples. He immediately related to the French example, relaying that this knowledge was familiar to him from his time studying French in high school. These discoveries prompted me to change how I approached the Co-Construction of Goals and Addressing Accent Myths discussion. In the final rewritten prompts, I included instructions for teachers to discuss what may be seen as “lesser” knowledge by students.

Translanguaging theory recognizes all language knowledge as a valuable part of students' repertoires, yet students may overlook "lesser" language knowledge because they do not consider themselves "speakers" of the language. More discussion around what constitutes language knowledge, prompts related to school knowledge, or simply more casual exposure can all help students to reflect on their repertoires. This may allow the teacher to better comprehend what resources the student has available. In the future, I would also include a broader language and identity activity such as a “language portrait.” Originated by Busch (e.g. Busch, 2018), a “language portrait” can be used as a tool in

education for initiating student and teacher reflection on language. By creating a visual representation of where language sits in the body, students are able to self-reflect on their own language usage and knowledge beyond definitions of externally, socio-politically named languages. Park and Valdes' (2018) example was particularly enlightening. In their Norwegian learning classroom, the students of diverse backgrounds created drawings reflecting how they view their language abilities and gained awareness that all of their language knowledge is valuable, even if they do not have fluent command of it. For example, one student was conceptualized as a Thai speaker now learning Norwegian. However, the student illustrated that they were proficient in multiple languages, including some English, and also had receptive knowledge of Khmer. This student had practice in using multilingual communication strategies to connect and converse with peers, teachers, and other community members. The language portrait activity could help teachers and students better understand the language knowledge and skills they possess.

The above example of a resource also includes another insight regarding the use of multiple languages in the classroom. In Communicative Language Teaching, teachers are told to reduce "teacher talking time" in order to maximize the amount of communicative practice students have in the classroom. My training in Communicative Language Teaching carried over to my lesson planning. Initially I wanted to center on only my shared English knowledge and my students' language(s), to limit my speaking and ensure only necessary communication on my part. The example I gave here regarding my Nigerian student taught me in clear detail why my own language knowledge was a valuable inclusion, not only because it encouraged my student to tap into more of his repertoire than he realized he had available, but also because it enabled me to teach the pronunciation element more effectively.

In the next chapter, I discuss the possible recommendations for other teachers and pronunciation instruction based on my insights. Two main areas are discussed: the necessity of

improving teacher training and professional development concerning pronunciation and the potential of a pronunciation-focused activity in translanguaging classrooms.

## Chapter 5: Recommendations

The insights I developed through the piloting process of my lessons have left me with several suggestions for future pronunciation instruction. Reflecting on my experiences as a privileged white, native English speaker teacher informed much of my motivation to create more equitable lessons. I consider that the disruption of harmful ideologies in English teaching should be the responsibility of those, like myself, who are in a privileged position. Based on these reflections, I offer other English teachers the opportunity to take up the same responsibility for English language teaching classrooms in the Global North. I recognize that critical considerations of power dynamics related to accent, prestige and race would likely be valuable no matter what the language(s) in the classroom. Although the suggestions I offer here are intended for the North American English teaching context.

The first suggestion is a detailed Teacher Reflection activity (see Appendix D, p. 96) intended to help teachers recognize their unexamined biases and critically explore the ideologies which they take into the classroom. The purpose is to create an entry point to shift the Communicative Language Teaching classroom away from the strict, English-only environment to a translanguaging classroom. However, the Teacher Reflection I have created can be used by any teacher who wants to deepen their understanding of their own views on pronunciation instruction and accent. The second suggestion is an adapted version of my Compare and Contrast Activity (see Appendix E, p. 98). It is intended to be used in a translanguaging classroom where pre-planned materials may create deeper, replicable pronunciation instruction which helps students expand their existing pronunciation repertoire.

### Teacher Training and Professional Development

Teacher training in pronunciation instruction declined significantly from the early 1970s through the early 1990s with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (Levis & Sonsaat, 2017). The introduction and widespread adoption of Communicative Language Teaching gave teachers new

approaches to language teaching that offered a beneficial focus on fluency and communication but did not discuss how teachers could incorporate more accuracy-focused topics like pronunciation into the classroom. Intuitive-imitative practices, which rely on a teacher with a native-like accent, thereby sustaining the adherence to native-speaker standards, continue to be used to this day in the classroom. Baker (2017) notes, "With relatively few teachers of English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) receiving adequate training in pronunciation pedagogy today (Foote, Holtby & Derwing, 2011; Murphy, 2014), the frequent use of oral repetition in the modern classroom is not surprising" (p. 536-537). A lack of teacher training is a severe impediment to the implementation of more equitable pronunciation instruction. However, it is not just the lack of skills or resources that further the promotion of native-speaker standards and accent discrimination in pronunciation instruction, but also the teachers' unexamined beliefs and practices.

My insights have illustrated how necessary taking a critical perspective on accent and the harmful ideologies associated with “acceptable” accent is to the successful delivery of equitable lessons. Part of my lesson preparation was to do my own personal reflection on accent and pronunciation, inspired by Levis and McCrocklin’s (2018) Reflective and Effective Pronunciation Teaching. The personal reflection I undertook helped me to reconsider the role that the teacher holds in the classroom. I also reevaluated how I perceived my students’ language expertise and articulated my own problematic adherence to “correctness” and how it contributes to a deficit view of learners (Jeong & Lindemann, 2025). Upon further reading and consideration of teacher training in translanguaging, I discovered more support for reflective perspectives in language teaching.

Reflective activities for teachers are a way for them to better understand their own views, and, after coming to this understanding, to disrupt problematic ideologies. Reflection is necessary, as Burton et al. (2024) remark: “[T]o support and sustain linguistic justice in classrooms, TCs [teacher candidates]

need to reflect on their own beliefs and understanding of language practices that make up their translanguaging stance" (p. 211). Though this statement was intended for preservice teacher candidates, in-service teachers can benefit from the same advice. More equitable classrooms, and by extension more equitable pronunciation instruction in classrooms, require teachers to be aware of their unexamined beliefs that may promote raciolinguistic and native-speakerist ideologies. Translanguaging classrooms emphasize student agency (Burgess & Rowsell, 2020; García, 2017). A shift in teacher awareness of the ideologies they bring into the classroom may be an impactful step towards creating a space where students exercise agency, especially in their pronunciation learning journey.

I consider that it is important to start with teachers when confronting these ideologies. I have therefore created a refined Teacher Reflection (see Appendix D, p. 96), inspired by my personal reflection and insights from piloting lessons. The reflection incorporates three insights: on the teacher's role as a facilitator and collaborator, on the value of student language expertise, and an evolving view of what the end goal is for a student's pronunciation. The intention behind this reflection is not to shame teachers for how they have taught pronunciation in the past, but rather to offer them the same enlightening experience I had throughout the process of creating and piloting my lessons. The reflection focuses on pronunciation and accent. It covers teachers' experiences as language learners (Burton et al., 2024; Levis & McCrocklin, 2018), teachers' role in the classroom as an authority or facilitator, teachers' perspectives on students' language resources and expertise (Burton et al., 2024; Ponzia & Deroo, 2024), and the evaluation of student pronunciation.

Not only does the Teacher Reflection below include prompts for considering the teacher's influences, it also includes the three accent myths I discussed with students. These myths include:

Myth 1: There is an ideal accent my students should strive to attain.

Myth 2: A “native-speaker-like” accent is attainable and will help my students fix the issues that caused them to pursue “accent reduction” or pronunciation changes.

Myth 3: Miscommunication between my student(s) and others is due to a student’s accented English.

In my experience, being confronted with these prominent myths and conducting my own reflection was foundational to creating my lessons and deepening my understanding of the previously unexamined ideologies I held. Through the Teacher Reflection I have created, I hope other teachers can begin the process of shifting their classrooms from an English-only Communicative Language Teaching space, in which students are held to a white, monolingual, native-speaker standard, to a translanguaging space where students have agency to explore the expansion of their pronunciation repertoire.

**Pronunciation-Focused Lessons in Translanguaging Classrooms**

Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes a skill-specific focus in lessons. Either a skill (reading, writing, listening, or speaking) or a system (vocabulary, grammar, functions) are the focus of the class and then a relevant topic is chosen. Translanguaging classrooms tend to be holistic, focusing on many skills and more content-focused approaches (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022) Similarly to Communicative Language Teaching classrooms, the focus on communication means that the accuracy-based skill of pronunciation, when it is mentioned at all, is generally restricted to spontaneous interactions. Translanguaging classrooms are more equipped to utilize the many language skills and knowledges available to students, allowing for rich conversation and pronunciation learning, as seen in Park and Valdez’s (2018) example of students learning the pronunciation differences between mouTH and mouSE. However, centering pronunciation in a class may offer deeper learning within the pedagogical translanguaging framework. Student agency and the teacher-as-facilitator perspective are powerful assets to more equitable instruction. The need is not for a shift in pedagogy that would focus solely on

pronunciation, but rather for pronunciation instruction materials which are compatible with a translanguaging classroom.

Chen et al. (2021) report on lessons in which teaching French phonology was the sole focus of a translanguaging lesson, which was quite successful. The researchers reported effective learning and also positive affective responses to their pronunciation-focused lessons. Explicit instruction and the development of students' metalinguistic awareness were prominent in their study. This approach was also effective in my classes, judging by my perceptions of student engagement. I propose that pronunciation instruction may be effective as a main topic in translanguaging classrooms, especially when explored through materials prepared in advance, rather than incorporated only haphazardly. The creation of the key reference also allows students to be responsible for their own continued learning without being overly reliant on the teacher and the teacher's perceptions (van Lieshout & Cardoso, 2022). To this end, I have adapted one activity taken from my lesson plans, the Compare and Contrast activity (see Appendix E, p. 98).

Translanguaging classrooms have a flow to them. The possibility for fluid transition between languages and language knowledges is a great asset of the use of students' full linguistic repertoires. , The Compare and Contrast activity also offers a replicable and recognizable framework to deepen understanding and retention of the targeted element of pronunciation while engaging in the flow, rather than interrupting by imposing a strict pronunciation lesson plan. The Compare and Contrast activity relies on the use of the full linguistic repertoire and students' developing their metalinguistic awareness to deepen students' understanding of pronunciation elements across languages, including the target pronunciation in English. During classes, pronunciation needs often arise spontaneously, this activity offers a replicable framework for expanding students' metalinguistic awareness around pronunciation elements and a framework for producing the element even in self-study. Student and

teacher collaborate to share, speak, imitate, and analyze examples, making observations to better understand the similarities and differences. The Compare and Contrast activity disrupts accent discrimination by relying on the critical foundations inherent in pedagogical translanguaging. Students expand their knowledge and skills in their language(s) and may become familiar with the pronunciation of other interlocutors (the teacher or other students).

As a white cis-woman and native speaker of North American English, I hold a privileged position in teaching pronunciation. My accent is close to the "General American" accent which is often taught as a standard and being white allows me to be judged on intelligibility alone, whereas my non-white students and interlocutors do not have the same privilege. My training in Communicative Language Teaching taught me to use the teacher's accent as a model for pronunciation for students. I internalized this and brought it into my subsequent teaching experiences with little reflection because I have an "acceptable" accent. I may still be "correcting" pronunciation based on my familiarity with my own accent instead of helping students expand their repertoires. My intuition as a native speaker with a "General American" accent may affect what I think is most important for students to learn, including the three topics I have included in my lesson plans. Even now, after examining my own previously overlooked habits, I realize that helping students determine their goals may be influenced by my own lingering biases towards accents which are different than my own. Though I cannot control every factor of my biases I have brought into my lesson plans and insights, I hope that my project can help equitable pronunciation instruction evolve. Other teachers' feedback and critiques of the lesson plans, teacher reflection, and Compare and Contrast activity will help to continue the work I have started. Input and engagement from teachers of diverse racial and language backgrounds will help to evolve the pronunciation instruction materials to better meet students' needs and honor their identities.

It is my whole-hearted belief that teachers want the best for their students and are, generally, unintentionally promoting native-speaker standards of pronunciation due to the restrictions imposed by the English-only classroom. A lack of practical materials promoting equitable instruction may have caused a disconnect between the clear, critical, globally-minded thinking reflected in current trends in theory as well as in empirical research (García, 2017; Ramjattan, 2024) and the materials widely used by teachers (Gilbert, 2005; Miller, 2006; Latham-Koenig & Oxenden, 2014). In this thesis I have suggested that teachers would be better equipped to teach pronunciation more equitably if they considered the reflections I have outlined above and planned their own activities using the principles of pedagogical translanguaging that I have discussed.

I created initial lesson plans based on four principles of pedagogical translanguaging: the integral use of students' full linguistic repertoire, the development of students' metalinguistic awareness, the fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness, and the centering of students' multilingual identities. While piloting these lessons, I observed student engagement and noted my own reflections on the effectiveness of lessons. Through review of my observations and reflections, I refined the lesson plans and insights, with conclusions about what factors may be useful for more equitable pronunciation instruction.

The refined lesson plans offer possibilities geared towards disrupting the standard prevalent in English-only, Communicative Language Teaching classrooms which recognizes a white, monolingual, native speaker as the ideal. My lessons encompass activities which encourage students to think critically about the nature of accents. This can help them to think critically about the native-speakerist and racist ideologies that pronunciation instruction and accent discrimination can foster in their lives. All the activities I have devised activate the full multilingual repertoire and identity of the learner. They also rely on students' metalinguistic awareness in order to help them make connections across languages. These

can cement the new pronunciation elements they add to their repertoire. My insights included the importance of student agency and the teacher-as-facilitator stance. I also observed how students' goals and student identity shaped lessons, as well as the effects students' languages and their metalinguistic awareness had on student engagement.

Attention to learner agency and a teacher-as-facilitator mindset create an environment that promotes student engagement. Students engage in the process of gaining the knowledge and practice they need to make informed choices surrounding what pronunciation elements they adopt into their repertoire, and in what contexts they can choose to use the new elements they have adopted. The inclusion of these elements in pronunciation instruction creates tailored instruction that attempts to respond not just to a standard of intelligibility (as opposed to adhering to a native-speaker standard), but also to a standard constructed by the student for their specific needs. Equitable pronunciation instruction through pedagogical translanguaging may be able to disrupt a white, monolingual, native-speaker norm, rather than unwittingly promote accent discrimination. The lesson plans, insights, and recommendations I have detailed in this thesis project can provide the potential next steps or new ideas in contemporary pronunciation instruction which does not rely on deficit perspectives, but rather embraces the student's whole self, their language, perspectives, and goals.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

**Lesson 1: A critical discussion of student's pronunciation needs and accent + Phoneme level: Schwa**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">1. Co-construction of goals & Addressing accent myths discussion<br>Aims:<ul><li>Teacher will understand student's motivations and experiences, language and communities</li><li>Student will become familiar with the more critical aspects of accent and pronunciation</li></ul>NOTE: Ideally, this conversation would give the teacher an idea of certain pronunciation elements which could be the focus of subsequent lessons. I was already aware that schwa, syllable stress and timing, and sentence stress were goals for my students.<br>This activity should also be revisited to discuss biases (persona, racial, native-speakerist) which may be affecting students' intelligibility or ability to be accepted by their interlocutors.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage + Aim</td><td>Student engagement</td><td>Teacher information</td></tr>
<tr><td>Their goals, wants, and needs in terms of pronunciation and accent change</td><td><ul><li>It can be useful to have a slide for note taking with the student or to have the prompts written out for them</li></ul></td><td>Prompts for discussion:<ul><li>What do you use English for currently? With which communities?</li><li>What prompted you to learn more about pronunciation?</li><li>What other language(s) do you use?</li><li>Do you have a community who you use (above language(s)) with?</li><li>Do you have any short-term goals which you want to prepare for?</li><li>What is your background and career? (if related)</li></ul>Cover general logistics:<ul><li>Pronunciation changes are a marathon not a sprint, requires practice over time</li><li>Pronunciation classes like this should aim to expand the repertoire of the student, to add to the pronunciation elements the student already has, not "correct" a student's pronunciation or replace one element for another</li></ul></td></tr>
<tr><td>Student experiences with</td><td><ul><li>Write down student goals together, this slide can be</li></ul></td><td>Prompts<ul><li>What experiences prompt the</li></ul></td></tr>
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| pronunciation and accent | revisited | feeling of needing to change pronunciation?<br>• What are your expectations surrounding your pronunciation? |
| Accent beliefs and myths | Myth 1: There is an ideal accent I should strive to attain.<br>• Everyone has an accent, but some accents are more prestigious and more "acceptable" than others.<br>• It is often more important to "be understood' by the people you 9the student) talks to<br>• Different audiences/communities have different ideas of what they expect to hear in someone's accent or pronunciation<br>Myth 2: A "native-speaker-like" accent is attainable and will help fix the issues that caused the student to pursue "accent reduction" or pronunciation changes.<br>• Sounding like a native-speaker is very difficult and probably not fair or necessary<br>• There are many different native accents, and some native accent are also considered more "acceptable" than others.<br>• Multilingualism, not monolingualism, is the norm globally, meaning accent variation from multilinguals is common and may not be necessary to communicate intelligibly.<br>• The listener may be unwilling to communicate regardless of a speaker's intelligibility because of other biases, like racism<br>Myth 3: Miscommunication between my student and others is due to the student's accented English.<br>• The burden of communication is on all interlocutors; it is a mutual responsibility.<br>• Even monolingual English | Myth 1: There is an ideal accent I should strive to attain.<br>• No speaker lacks an accent, but some accents are more prestigious and more "acceptable" than others.<br>• Using intelligibility and comprehensibility as a guiding rule allows us as teachers to put "being understood" and "being understood more easily" as the broad goal of lessons for student.<br>• Consideration of goals, including what language communities the student strives to interact with, impacts the pronunciation elements the student may incorporate into their repertoire<br>Myth 2: A "native-speaker-like" accent is attainable and will help my student fix the issues that caused them to pursue "accent reduction" or pronunciation changes.<br>• Native-speaker-like pronunciation is an unrealistic goal as it is nearly impossible to attain.<br>• Native speaker accents are extremely variable and are also subject to similar discrimination based on prestige.<br>• Multilingualism, not monolingualism, is the norm globally, meaning accent variation from multilinguals is common and may not be necessary to communicate intelligibly.<br>• The overlap between other biases and accent, such as racism, implies that the listener may be unwilling to communicate regardless of a speaker's intelligibility.<br>Myth 3: Miscommunication between my |

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| | speakers miscommunicate among themselves.<br>• Successful communication can be hindered by a variety of factors outside of accent.<br>• Factors such as technical difficulties, interfering sounds, a lack of patience or prejudice from the interlocutor | student and others is due to the student's accented English.<br>• The burden of communication is on all interlocutors; it is a mutual responsibility.<br>• Even monolingual English speakers miscommunicate among themselves.<br>• Successful communication can be hindered by a variety of factors outside of accent.<br>• Factors such as technical difficulties, interfering sounds, a lack of patience or prejudice from the interlocutor |
| **2. Introduction: Analysis, Impact, and Necessity**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will understand the main information about what schwa /ə/ is<br>• Student will understand the necessity of learning and using schwa /ə/<br>• Student will feel motivated to learn the pronunciation of schwa /ə/ | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Introduce main information about what schwa is | • American "thinking" noise: sounds like "uhh"<br>• Always unstressed → never in stressed syllables<br>• All written vowels can be pronounced as schwa<br>• No specific mouth position, relaxed tongue<br>• Very quick → we move from the sound before to the sound after quickly, we do not put much attention on schwa | • American "thinking" noise: sounds like "uhh"<br>• Always unstressed → never in stressed syllables<br>• Wide range of orthography/spelling → all written vowels can be pronounced as schwa<br>• "Neutral mid-central lax vowel" → no specific mouth position, relaxed tongue<br>• Very quick → speaker moves from the sound before to the sound after quickly, we do not put much attention on schwa |
| Importance, necessity | Information to discuss with the student:<br>• Schwa is the most common vowel sound in American English and plays an essential role in interacting with US English speakers. It is something US English speakers use unconsciously and expect to hear | This activity should answer the questions:<br>• Why is it necessary to use this element?<br>• How does this element help the student meet their goal(s)?<br>• Does this element help the student be better understood on a technical level of intelligibility? |

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| | from other speakers.<br>• This sound is a building block for pronouncing words and phrases with the stress and rhythm often expected by native English speakers.<br>• Stress and rhythm are part of a category of features which have the most impact on intelligibility | • Does this element help the student "be heard"/accepted on a social level?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student's intelligibility in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student's social integration in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student's comprehensibility in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• Comprehensibility may also affect social standing or the ability to be "heard" by the community |
| **3. Producing schwa /ə/**<br>• Student will be able to produce schwa /ə/<br>• Student will be able to compare/contrast the movement, sensation, sound of element, schwa /ə/ across their language(s) and English | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Physical demonstration | • Review picture of mouth shape from profile view<br>• Describe physical characteristics:<br>• Relaxed jaw - not pulling down, resting position<br>• Relaxed tongue - neutral, low position, resting on the bottom of the mouth<br>• Relaxed lip shape - Not making a specific lip shape<br>• No throat tension - voiced (all vowels are voiced in American English) | • Practice schwa:<br>• "Face-to-face" without the slides showing on screen<br>• Ask the student to enlarge their video and watch their own mouth shape and movement while pronouncing the different stresses |
| Compare and Contrast across languages<br>• Create awareness | Compare and Contrast to create a "key reference":<br>This activity has a flow to it. This activity relies on sharing, speaking, imitating, and analyzing the examples back and forth | The "key reference" is a simple phrase or note for the student to use as a reminder of the target pronunciation based on their existing repertoire of pronunciation elements. |

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| around challenges and advantages the student may encounter due to cross-linguistic influence between languages<br>• Allow student space and encouragement to make connections between languages<br>• Use comparisons across language to create a "key reference" | between teacher and student.<br>• Choose a sentence in English with examples of the pronunciation element<br>• Have the student translate the sentence into their language(s)<br>• Read aloud the sentences, the intention is to speak/listen to the pronunciation of different elements across languages and draw similarities and differences from each other.<br>• The teacher reads aloud the English sentence, the student repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the pronunciation element<br>• The student reads aloud their language translation sentence, the repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the features (manner and place of articulation, voicedness etc.) of the pronunciation elements which are similar to the target English element<br>• The student and teacher discuss these observations and create a key reference that the student can compare their pronunciation to for help maintaining and practicing the element | For example, a student might remember schwa is similar to a vowel in their language(s) but with a lower jaw height.<br>See Appendix E, p. 114 for an expanded example<br><br>Guiding questions from teacher:<br>• Is this sound familiar or new? Have you studied it before in English lessons?<br>• Have you had the experience of feeling like native US English speakers "talk fast"? → this feeling often comes from the quick syllables resulting from vowel reduction<br>• Are there any similar "uh" sounds in your other language(s)?<br>• What makes it feel similar?<br>• Where is your tongue? What is it touching in similar sounds or in trying to make schwa?<br>• Is your jaw high, in the middle, or low in similar sounds?<br>• Do you round your lips or relax them?<br>• Does your jaw feel tense or relaxed?<br>• Do you recognize this sound from your own learning of or use of English?<br>• Are there words or examples you can think of? → teacher writes these out to point out which do or do not contain schwa<br>Other information for the teacher to keep in mind:<br>• Many languages have no vowel reduction and schwa does not exist, so it's not unusual for students to express frustration with difficulty pronouncing the unfamiliar sound<br>• Similar sounds to schwa like "ʌ" (stress "uh" sound, like in "cup") |

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| | | and “ɛ” (eh sound, like in “pen”) can cause confusion because they are similar to schwa: compare tension, and tongue and jaw placement between those and schwa |
| **4. Examples and Environments**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to perceive schwa /ə/ in various environments<br>• Student will be able to predict schwa /ə/ in various environments | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Identification<br>• Become more familiar with the environments schwa /ə/ appears in | There are several categories of word that schwa appears in consistently and can generally be memorized:<br>1. Word endings that sound like “shuhn”: -tion, -ssion, -cian<br>2. Word endings that sound like “shuhs”: -cious, -tious, -scious, -ous in general<br>3. Words that end in “-ble”: -able, -ible<br>4. Words that end in “-nce”: -ance, -ence<br>5. Words that end in a vowel + n or m<br>There are several categories of word that schwa appears in often but have more common exceptions:<br>1. 2 syllable words starting with “a”: “about,” “adult,” “amazed”<br>2. Words that start with “de-”/ “be-” / “pre-” / “re-” if the root of the word cannot stand alone as a recognizable word<br>1. i.e. “decision” - “cision” is not a word on its own so “de” is pronounced with schwa<br>2. “preschool” - “school” is a standalone word so “pre” is pronounced with /i/ and not schwa<br>Several functional or grammar words contain schwa:<br>1. “The” before consonants | It is most effective to show the category and come up with several word examples. Emphasizing the schwa with colored fonts, highlights or capital letters is helpful for marking the pattern.<br><br>Be aware that students might express some realization, surprise, or frustration related to seeing familiar words with the new knowledge that contain schwa. Students may not be aware that schwa exists in these words. |

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| | 2. “A” before consonants and “an”<br>3. “To” before consonants<br>4. “of” | |
| Identification in sentences | Example sentences should emphasize the frequency of schwa.<br>1. The student can practice identifying words in the sentence that contain schwa based on the identifiable categories outlined previously and based on the teacher reading the sentence aloud | Example:<br>“They arrived at the train station before their friends.”<br>(Schwa marked with IPA:<br>They /ə/rrived at th/ə/ train stat/ə/n b/ə/fore their friends.)<br><br>This activity can be skipped or shortened in favor of moving on to the next activity. The next activity uses authentic material from the student, which may be more relevant to the student’s identity and goals. |
| **5. Structured Perception and Production Practice**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to perceive schwa /ə/ in structured practice<br>• Student will be able to produce schwa /ə/ in structured practice | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Structured<br>• Student will practice with text aloud, identifying schwa and pronouncing it with structured support from the written material | Structured practice with authentic material:<br>• In authentic text material, teacher models a sentence aloud<br>• Student repeats the sentence<br>• Feedback: encouragement and adjustment based on key reference<br>• Repeat with the student reading their authentic text material, with the teacher offering support through modeling and discussion prompts | Using the key reference defined in the Compare and Contrast activity, teacher and student practice with authentic material related to the student. Student’s goals relate to the communities they interact with so materials should be related to their needs such as the transcript or slides of their next presentation, research they have written, or news related to their work.<br><br>Practicing in the structured way outlined here also helps students build their intuition and revisit their goals. Teacher and student should:<br>• Experiment with using or omitting schwa in the identifiable environments to help to student build ownership of the pronunciation element<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using schwa and how using it relates to student goals, including both |

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| | | intelligibility and comprehensibility<br>• A common comprehensibility challenge can be listener's interpreting word differently based on hearing a full vowel when the listener expected schwa. This kind of misunderstanding does not usually reduce intelligibility but can reduce comprehensibility, causing frustration<br>for speaker and listener over time.<br>• Discuss the environments or words the student wants to use schwa (related to their goals) or if it is less important in other environments |
| **6. Extemporaneous Production Practice**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to better produce schwa /ə/ in more extemporaneous practice | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Summary presentation<br>• Student will practice with their own words in a more unstructured fashion, predicting and producing schwa | Teacher and student use authentic material to create notes for a short speech<br>• Using authentic material, divide into sections<br>• Student takes short notes for content and for practice marking words with schwa<br>• Student uses notes to present the content with attention to producing schwa<br>• Teacher makes notes, then gives feedback<br>• Repeat the presentation at least 2 times, each with less and<br>less reliance on the notes as student becomes more familiar with the subject | Producing new elements is a challenge as the student forms new muscle memory. Allow space for revisiting structured practice, examples, or discussion around students possibly expressing frustration.<br><br>Practicing with a summary presentation also helps students build their intuition and revisit their goals. Teacher and student should:<br>• Experiment with using or omitting schwa in the identifiable environments to help to student build ownership of the pronunciation element<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using schwa and how using it relates to student goals, including both intelligibility and comprehensibility<br>• Discuss the environments or words the student wants to use schwa (related to their goals) or if it is less important in other environments |

**Appendix B**

**Lesson 2: Word level: syllable stress and timing**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">1. Co-construction of goals & Addressing accent myths discussion<br>• Revisit student experiences and goals as necessary</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">2. Introduction: Analysis, Impact, and Necessity<br>Aims:<br>• Student will understand the main information about what syllable stress and timing are<br>• Student will understand the necessity of learning and using syllable stress and timing<br>• Student will feel motivated to learn syllable stress and timing</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage + Aim</td><td>Student engagement</td><td>Teacher information</td></tr>
<tr><td>Introduce main information about syllable stress and timing</td><td>• English is broadly defined as a stress-timed language: the stress of the syllable and the length of the syllable work together<br>• Primary stress, secondary stress, unstressed syllables<br>• Primary stress: louder, longer, slightly higher in pitch: full vowel length<br>• Secondary stress: “neutral” : full vowel length<br>• Unstressed: quicker, softer: reduced vowel</td><td>Example: “accommodation”<br>Primary stress: “da”<br>Secondary stress: “cco”<br>Unstressed: “a” / “mmo” / “tion”<br>Written in IPA: /ə.ˌkɑ.mə.ˈdeɪ.ʃən/</td></tr>
<tr><td>Importance, necessity</td><td>• Syllables stress and timing are part of a category of features which have the most impact on intelligibility<br>• Producing words with the expected stress and timing make them more recognizable by US English speakers<br>• A word using syllable stress that is expected by listeners can be clearer than the same word with expected pronunciation of individual sounds alone<br>• Lessens “work” done by listener, resulting in less misunderstandings<br>• Clarifies the part of speech (changes in part of speech can be reflected in syllable stress)</td><td>This activity should answer the questions:<br>• Why is it necessary to use this element?<br>• How does this element help the student meet their goal(s)?<br>• Does this element help the student be better understood on a technical level of intelligibility?<br>• Does this element help the student “be heard”/accepted on a social level?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student’s intelligibility in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• What impacts might using or not</td></tr>
</table>

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| | | using this element have on the student's social integration in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student's comprehensibility in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• Comprehensibility may also affect social standing or the ability to be "heard" by the community |
| Building on last lesson | • Schwa is a building block to understanding syllable stress, and timing<br>• The unstressed syllable frequently contains schwa | |
| **3. Producing sentence stress and contrastive focus**<br>• Student will be able to produce syllable stress and timing<br>• Student will be able to compare/contrast the movement, sensation, sound of syllable stress and timing in their language(s) and English | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Physical demonstration | Describe physical characteristics:<br>• Pushing the air more for stressed syllables<br>• Raising the pitch slightly for the syllable<br>• Holding the stressed syllable of the word slightly longer | This is mostly a discussion with some practice. The most helpful activities for producing sentence stress come in the Compare and Contrast activity and the structured perception and production practice. |
| Cap counting | Clap-counting activity: identifying stress of syllables in example sentences<br>• A loud clap for primary stress, a softer clap for secondary stress, and silent movement for unstressed syllables<br>1. Teacher reads the individual words of the sentence aloud, clapping to identify the different syllable stresses<br>2. Teacher repeats and the student and teacher clap along<br>3. Teacher repeats and the student | Teachers are encouraged to re-ruse examples from the previous lesson or previously used authentic material. This creates a strong link between pronunciation elements.<br><br>Example:<br>Schwa: "They arrived at the train station before their friends."<br>(Schwa marked with IPA:<br>They /ə/rrived at th/ə/ train stat/ə/n b/ə/fore their friends.) |

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| | claps alone<br>4. Student reads and claps<br>5. Repeat for word and sentence examples | "They aRRIVED at<br>the train STAtion beFORE their friends."<br>Schwa marked with bold, primary stress marked with capital letters<br>-<br>Practicing with clap counting can help students build their intuition and revisit their goals. Teacher and student should:<br>• Experiment with using different syllable stresses identifiable environments to help to student build ownership of the pronunciation element<br>• Experiment with using different syllable stresses identifiable environments to help to student build awareness of how different stresses affect meaning and understanding<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using syllable stress and how using it relates to student goals, including both intelligibility and comprehensibility |
| Compare and Contrast across languages<br>• Create awareness around challenges and advantages the student may encounter due to cross-linguistic influence between languages<br>• Allow student space and | Compare and Contrast to create a "key reference":<br>This activity has a flow to it. This activity relies on sharing, speaking, imitating, and analyzing the examples back and forth between teacher and student.<br>• Choose a sentence in English with examples of the pronunciation element<br>• Have the student translate the sentence into their language(s)<br>• Read aloud the sentences, the intention is to speak/listen to the pronunciation of different elements across languages and draw similarities and differences from each other.<br>• The teacher reads aloud the English sentence, the student repeats, both imitate each other and make | The "key reference" is a simple phrase or note for the student to use as a reminder of the target pronunciation based on their existing repertoire of pronunciation elements.<br>For example, a student might remember schwa is similar to a vowel in their language(s) but with a lower jaw height.<br>See Appendix E, p. 114 for an expanded example<br><br>Guiding questions from teacher:<br>• Is this sound familiar or new? Have you studied it before in English lessons?<br>• Have you had the experience of feeling like native US English speakers "talk fast"? → this feeling often comes from the |

| | | |
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| encouragement to make connections between languages<br>• Use comparisons across language to create a "key reference" | observations about the pronunciation element<br>• The student reads aloud their language translation sentence, the repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the features (manner and place of articulation, voicedness etc.) of the pronunciation elements which are similar to the target English element<br>• The student and teacher discuss these observations and create a key reference that the student can compare their pronunciation to for help maintaining and practicing the element | quick syllables resulting from vowel reduction<br>• Are there any similar "uh" sounds in your other language(s)?<br>• What makes it feel similar?<br>• Where is your tongue? What is it touching in similar sounds or in trying to make schwa?<br>• Is your jaw high, in the middle, or low in similar sounds?<br>• Do you round your lips or relax them?<br>• Does your jaw feel tense or relaxed?<br>• Do you recognize this sound from your own learning of or use of English?<br>• Are there words or examples you can think of? → teacher writes these out to point out which do or do not contain schwa<br>Other information for the teacher to keep in mind:<br>• Many languages have no vowel reduction and schwa does not exist, so it's not unusual for students to express frustration with difficulty pronouncing the unfamiliar sound<br>• Similar sounds to schwa like "ʌ" (stress "uh" sound, like in "cup") and "ɛ" (eh sound, like in "pen") can cause confusion because they are similar to schwa: compare tension, and tongue and jaw placement between those and schwa |

**4. Examples and Environments**

Aims:

- Student will be able to predict and perceive syllable stress and timing in word and sentence examples

| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
|---|---|---|
| Identification | Review common environments materials:<br>• The syllable before specific word | There are always exceptions to the rules. It is encouraged to focus on words |

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| | endings always has primary stress: Word endings that sound like "shuhn," -(consonant)+-ic (i.e. speCIfic)<br>• Part of speech:<br>• Nouns: often 1st syllable has primary stress, especially compound nouns<br>• Compound nouns have 1st syllable primary stress, 2nd syllable secondary stress<br>• Verbs: often 2nd syllable<br>• Change in stress due to change in parts of speech: "rə-CORD" - verb, "REH-cord" -noun | students feel are important to their everyday vocabulary. |
| **5. Structured Perception and Production Practice**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to perceive syllable stress and timing in structured practice<br>• Student will be able to produce syllable stress and timing in structured practice | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Structured<br>• Student will practice with text aloud, identifying syllable stress and pronouncing it as expected with structured support from the written material | Structured practice with authentic material:<br>• In authentic text material, teacher models a sentence aloud<br>• Student repeats the sentence<br>• Feedback: encouragement and adjustment based on key reference<br>• Repeat with the student reading their authentic text material, with the teacher offering support through modeling and discussion prompts | Using the key reference defined in the Compare and Contrast activity, teacher and student practice with authentic material related to the student. Student's goals relate to the communities they interact with so materials should be related to their needs such as the transcript or slides of their next presentation, research they have written, or news related to their work.<br><br>Practicing in the structured way outlined here also helps students build their intuition and revisit their goals. Teacher and student should:<br>• Experiment with using different syllable stresses identifiable environments to help to student build ownership of the pronunciation element<br>• Experiment with using different syllable stresses identifiable environments to help to student |

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| | | build awareness of how different stresses affect meaning and understanding<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using syllable stress and how using it relates to student goals, including both intelligibility and comprehensibility |
| **6. Extemporaneous Production Practice**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to better produce syllable stress and timing in more extemporaneous practice | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Summary presentation<br>• Student will practice with their own words in a more unstructured fashion, predicting and producing syllable stress and timing | Teacher and student use authentic material to create notes for a short speech<br>• Using authentic material, divide into sections<br>• Student takes short notes for content and for practice marking words with schwa<br>• Student uses notes to present the content with attention to producing schwa<br>• Teacher makes notes, then gives feedback<br>• Repeat the presentation at least 2 times, each with less and less reliance on the notes as student becomes more familiar with the subject | Producing new elements is a challenge as the student forms new muscle memory. Allow space for revisiting structured practice, examples, or discussion around students possibly expressing frustration.<br><br>Practicing with a summary presentation also helps students build their intuition and revisit their goals. Teacher and student should:<br>• Experiment with using different syllable stresses identifiable environments to help to student build ownership of the pronunciation element<br>• Experiment with using different syllable stresses identifiable environments to help to student build awareness of how different stresses affect meaning and understanding<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using syllable stress and how using it relates to student goals, including both intelligibility and comprehensibility |

**Appendix C**

**Lesson 3: Phrase & sentence level: sentence stress, contrastive focus, thought groups**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">1. Co-construction of goals & Addressing accent myths discussion<br>• Revisit student experiences and goals as necessary</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">2. Introduction: Analysis, Impact, and Necessity<br>Aims:<br>• Student will understand the main information about sentence stress and contrastive focus<br>• Student will understand the necessity of learning and using sentence stress and contrastive focus<br>• Student will feel motivated to learn the pronunciation of sentence stress and contrastive focus</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage + Aim</td><td>Student engagement</td><td>Teacher information</td></tr>
<tr><td>Introduce main elements</td><td>• Sentence stress: most impactful, important word(s) are stressed in a sentence<br>• Can change the meaning of a sentence<br>• Something done automatically by native English speakers<br>• Normal to have in every sentence, often expected<br>• Slightly louder, longer in duration, and higher in pitch<br>• Contrastive focus: implicit or explicitly draws attention to contrasting information</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Importance, necessity</td><td>• Sentence stress and contrastive focus, and part of a category of elements which have the most impact on intelligibility<br>• Sentence stress marks the most important, meaningful topic words of the sentence for others<br>• It is something that native English speakers unconsciously expect<br>• Contrastive focus clarifies the meaning and importance of meaningful words in a sentence<br>• Sentence stress and contrastive focus can be key elements for clarifying and emphasizing meaning in presentations or</td><td>This activity should answer the questions:<br>• Why is it necessary to use this element?<br>• How does this element help the student meet their goal(s)?<br>• Does this element help the student be better understood on a technical level of intelligibility?<br>• Does this element help the student “be heard”/accepted on a social level?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have</td></tr>
</table>

| | | |
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| | speeches even among communities of English as an additional language speakers | on the student's intelligibility in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student's social integration in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• What impacts might using or not using this element have on the student's comprehensibility in the communities the student interacts with?<br>• Comprehensibility may also affect social standing or the ability to be "heard" by the community |
| Building on last lesson | • Syllable stress and timing contribute to the words stressed in phrases and sentences<br>• Grammar words which often contain schwa ("to," "the" most notably) and are reduced in sentences, contributing to the flow of the sentence | |
| **3. Producing sentence stress and contrastive focus**<br>• Student will be able to produce sentence stress and contrastive focus<br>• Student will be able to compare/contrast the movement, sensation, sound of sentence stress + contrastive focus across their language(s) and English | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Physical demonstration | • Describe physical characteristics:<br>• Pushing the air more for stressed sounds<br>• Raising the pitch slightly<br>• Holding the stressed syllable of the word slightly longer | This is mostly a discussion with some practice. The most helpful activities for producing sentence stress come in the Compare and Contrast activity and the structured perception and production practice. |
| Compare | Compare and Contrast to create a "key | The "key reference" is a simple |

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| and Contrast across languages<br>• Create awareness around challenges and advantages the student may encounter due to cross-linguistic influence between languages<br>• Allow student space and encouragement to make connections between languages<br>• Use comparisons across language to create a "key reference" | reference":<br>This activity has a flow to it. This activity relies on sharing, speaking, imitating, and analyzing the examples back and forth between teacher and student.<br>• Choose a sentence in English with examples of the pronunciation element<br>• Have the student translate the sentence into their language(s)<br>• Read aloud the sentences, the intention is to speak/listen to the pronunciation of different elements across languages and draw similarities and differences from each other.<br>• The teacher reads aloud the English sentence, the student repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the pronunciation element<br>• The student reads aloud their language translation sentence, the repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the features (manner and place of articulation, voicedness etc.) of the pronunciation elements which are similar to the target English element<br>• The student and teacher discuss these observations and create a key reference that the student can compare their pronunciation to for help maintaining and practicing the element | phrase or note for the student to use as a reminder of the target pronunciation based on their existing repertoire of pronunciation elements.<br>For example, a student might remember schwa is similar to a vowel in their language(s) but with a lower jaw height.<br>See Appendix E, p. 114 for an expanded example<br><br>Guiding questions from teacher:<br>• Is this sound familiar or new? Have you studied it before in English lessons?<br>• Have you had the experience of feeling like native US English speakers "talk fast"? → this feeling often comes from the quick syllables resulting from vowel reduction<br>• Are there any similar "uh" sounds in your other language(s)?<br>• What makes it feel similar?<br>• Where is your tongue? What is it touching in similar sounds or in trying to make schwa?<br>• Is your jaw high, in the middle, or low in similar sounds?<br>• Do you round your lips or relax them?<br>• Does your jaw feel tense or relaxed?<br>• Do you recognize this sound from your own learning of or use of English?<br>• Are there words or examples you can think of? → teacher writes these out to point out which do or do not contain schwa |

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| | | Other information for the teacher to keep in mind:<br>• Many languages have no vowel reduction and schwa does not exist, so it's not unusual for students to express frustration with difficulty pronouncing the unfamiliar sound<br>• Similar sounds to schwa like "ʌ" (stress "uh" sound, like in "cup") and "ɛ" (eh sound, like in "pen") can cause confusion because they are similar to schwa: compare tension, and tongue and jaw placement between those and schwa |
| **4. Examples and Environments**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to perceive sentence stress + contrastive focus in sentences<br>• Student will be able to predict sentence stress + contrastive focus in sentences | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Identification<br>• Become more familiar with the patterns of sentence stress<br>• Express or discuss challenges and success | Example sentence given with 1 word marked with meaning of the sentence to the side.<br>1. Practice producing the stress<br>2. Discuss the meaning<br>3. Repeat with other words in the sentence<br>4. Repeat with other sentences x2 | Example:<br><br>"The cat leapt outside." Meaning: the CAT leapt, not another subject<br><br>"The cat leapt outside." Meaning: The cat LEAPT, not walked, crawled, or jumped<br><br>"The cat leapt outside." Meaning: The cat leapt OUTSIDE, not another place |
| **5. Structured Perception and Production Practice**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to perceive sentence stress and contrastive focus in structured practice<br>• Student will be able to produce sentence stress and contrastive focus in structured practice | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Structured<br>• Express the possibilities | Example sentence given with marking on one word<br>• Student decides on the meaning | Practicing in the structured way allows for further inquiry into languaging. Student and teacher |

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| of meaning through different sentence stress + contrastive focus | and imagines a scenario or conversation where the sentence stress clarifies the meaning<br>• (e.g. “The cat leapt outside.”: The speaker is surprised the cat leapt, instead of moving a different way.)<br>• Feedback<br>• Repeat for each word in the sentence<br>• Repeat with other sentences | should:<br>• Experiment with changing sentence stress and contrastive focus from word to word to create and decipher different meanings in English<br>• Experiment with changing sentence stress and contrastive focus from word to word in other language(s) to create and decipher different meanings<br>• Experiment with using or omitting sentence stress and contrastive focus in recognized environments<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using sentence stress and contrastive focus and how using it relates to student goals, including both intelligibility and comprehensibility |
| Authentic material structured practice | Practicing changing meaning in authentic material from students<br>• Read aloud and experiment with changing the sentence stress and how the meaning can change<br>• Compare to other language(s) and how to convey the same meaning | This activity requires the teacher to make observations about the student's pronunciation and meaning. The flow of listening and repeating what the student said then discussing together the possible meaning(s) is similar to the Compare and Contrast activity. |
| **6. Extemporaneous Production Practice**<br>Aims:<br>• Student will be able to better produce sentence stress and contrastive focus in extemporaneous practice | | |
| Stage + Aim | Student engagement | Teacher information |
| Summary presentation<br>• Student will practice with their own words in a | Teacher and student use authentic material to create notes for a short speech<br>• Using authentic material, divide into sections<br>• Student takes short notes for | Producing new elements is a challenge as the student forms new muscle memory. Allow space for revisiting structured practice, examples, or discussion around students possibly |

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| more unstructured fashion, predicting and producing schwa | content and for practice marking words with schwa<br>• Student uses notes to present the content with attention to producing schwa<br>• Teacher makes notes, then gives feedback<br>• Repeat the presentation at least 2 times, each with less and less reliance on the notes as student becomes more familiar with the subject | expressing frustration.<br><br>-<br><br>Practicing with a summary presentation also helps students build their intuition and revisit their goals. Student and teacher should:<br>• Experiment with changing sentence stress and contrastive focus from word to word to create and decipher different meanings in English<br>• Experiment with changing sentence stress and contrastive focus from word to word in other language(s) to create and decipher different meanings<br>• Experiment with using or omitting sentence stress and contrastive focus in recognized environments<br>• Revisit discussion around the necessity and impact of using sentence stress and contrastive focus and how using it relates to student goals, including both intelligibility and comprehensibility |

**Appendix D**

**Teacher Reflection**

| **Teacher Reflection**<br>Purpose:<br>• Teacher can reflect on their possible beliefs and biases around accent and pronunciation<br>• Teacher can reflect on the impacts their beliefs and biases may have on their lessons | |
|---|---|
| 1. Reflection questions | Reflection on my experiences as a learner:<br>• What experiences have I had learning pronunciation?<br>• What types of activities did my teacher use?<br>• How did I feel during those lessons?<br>Reflection on my role as a teacher:<br>• How do I see the teacher's level of authority in the pronunciation classroom?<br>• How do I evaluate what expertise students bring to class?<br>Reflection on the integration of pronunciation in the classroom:<br>• What are appropriate goals for pronunciation teaching?<br>• By what standard do I, as the teacher, evaluate my students?<br>• What tools and materials do I use to teach pronunciation? Why do I use these tools and materials? |
| 2. Accent myths for consideration | Consider these myths and write responses to the below questions:<br>Myth 1: There is an ideal accent my students should strive to attain.<br>• Do I agree or disagree? Why?<br>• What accent(s) is/are often used as models in my classroom(s)?<br>Myth 2: A "native-speaker-like" accent is attainable and will help my students fix the issues that caused them to pursue "accent reduction" or pronunciation changes.<br>• What kinds of issues do I think students are worried about being caused by their accent or pronunciation?<br>• Do I agree a "native-like" accent can help a student overcome these issues? How?<br>Myth 3: Miscommunication between my student and others is due to the student's accented English.<br>• What do I consider miscommunication?<br>• Among whom does miscommunication happen?<br>• Who is responsible for miscommunication? |
| 3. Addressing accent myths | Compare your responses to the 2nd activity "Accent myths for consideration."<br>• Are there differences between your responses and the information below?<br>• Is there anything you are surprised by or have not considered before?<br>Myth 1: There is an ideal accent my students should strive to attain.<br>• No speaker lacks an accent, but some accents are more prestigious and more "acceptable" than others.<br>• Using intelligibility and comprehensibility as a guiding rule allows us as teachers to put "being understood" and "being understood more easily" as |

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| | the broad goal of lessons for students.<br>• Consideration of a student's goals, including what language communities the student strives to interact with, impacts the pronunciation elements the student may incorporate into their repertoire<br>Myth 2: A "native-speaker-like" accent is attainable and will help my students fix the issues that caused them to pursue "accent reduction" or pronunciation changes.<br>• Native-speaker-like pronunciation is an unrealistic goal as it is nearly impossible to attain. Native speaker accents are extremely variable and are also subject to similar discrimination based on prestige.<br>• Multilingualism, not monolingualism, is the norm globally, meaning accent variation from multilinguals is common and may not be necessary to communicate intelligibly.<br>• The overlap between other biases and accent, such as racism, implies that the listener may be unwilling to communicate regardless of a speaker's intelligibility.<br>Myth 3: Miscommunication between my student and others is due to the student's accented English.<br>• The burden of communication is on all interlocutors; it is a mutual responsibility.<br>• Even monolingual English speakers miscommunicate among themselves.<br>• Successful communication can be hindered by a variety of factors outside of accent.<br>• Factors such as technical difficulties, interfering sounds, a lack of patience or prejudice from the interlocutor |
| 4. Considerations for the language learning classroom | In light of the reflections on the above three activities, reflect on the future possibilities of your pronunciation teaching:<br>Reflection on my experiences as a learner:<br>• How did your experiences as a learner affect your classroom planning? Do I think past teachers were influenced by the accent myths discussed here?<br>Reflection on my role as a teacher:<br>• How could I create the necessary conditions for students' to exercise agency over their expanding pronunciation repertoire?<br>• How can I acknowledge and use student expertise in the classroom?<br>Reflection on the integration of pronunciation in the classroom:<br>• How do I view the common models of pronunciation and accent I use in the classroom? Do native-like models serve the needs of your students? Why/why not?<br>How can your classroom become a place where ideologies around accent and pronunciation are given critical attention by teacher and students? |

## Appendix E

## Compare and Contrast Activity for Translanguaging Classrooms

**Aims:**

- Student(s) will be able to use the "key reference" as a resource to practice and maintain the production of the target element of pronunciation
    - The "key reference" is a simple phrase or note for the student to use as a reminder of the target pronunciation based on their existing repertoire of pronunciation elements.
- Student(s) will consider expanding their repertoire to include a new English language pronunciation element

**Activity instructions:**

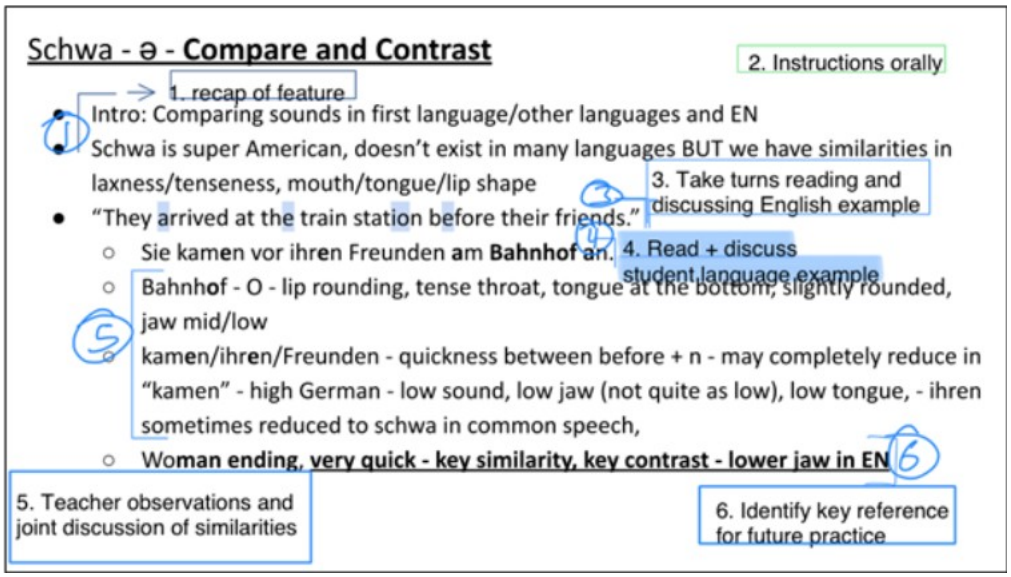
- Conduct a short introduction to the element and discussion about why the element may be necessary for the student(s) to use
    - This can be modelled after the Lesson plans, section 2 "Introduction: Analysis, Impact, and Necessity" (Appendix A, p. 85, Appendix B, p. 96, Appendix C, p. 104)
- Give the instructions to the student about the activity:
    - "We will compare and contrast the similar sounds in order to create a 'key reference' to pronouncing the element."
    - Compare and contrast to create a "key reference":
    - This activity has a flow to it. This activity relies on sharing, speaking, imitating, and analyzing the examples back and forth between teacher and student, or between students.
- Choose a sentence in English with examples of the pronunciation element
- Have the student translate the sentence into their language(s)

- Read aloud the sentences, the intention is to speak/listen to the pronunciation of different elements across languages and draw similarities and differences from each other.
    - The teacher reads aloud the English sentence, the student repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the pronunciation element
    - The student reads aloud their language translation sentence, the repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the features (manner and place of articulation, voicedness etc.) of the pronunciation elements which are similar to the target English element
    - The student and teacher discuss these observations and create a key reference that the student can compare their pronunciation to for help maintaining and practicing the element

(See below for an example)

Figure 2.

*Example of Compare and Contrast activity with German student in Lesson 1: Schwa*




**This slide example shows the "completed" activity, however each step was done live with the student in the order described.**

1. Teacher and student reviews the main information physical demonstration of schwa.
2. Teacher describes the instructions for the activity.
3. Teacher and student take turns reading and discussing the English example.
4. The student reads aloud their language translation sentence, the repeats, both imitate each other and make observations about the features (manner and place of articulation, voicedness etc.) of the pronunciation elements which are similar to the target English element.
5. Notes on teacher observations and joint discussion of similarities and differences in the features of the German pronunciation elements and the English schwa.
    a) The bolded letters in the student language sentences are marked to show teacher observations of sounds which shared similar features to schwa. I repeated the words and the student corrected me while we made observations together on the mouth shape(s), tenseness, tongue height, lip rounding of the sounds. Initially I perceived the “o” in Bahnhof as more similar to schwa than it actually is but the student corrected me. I relied on the student’s language knowledge and skills to make connections between the German sounds and the English schwa. When I repeated the words “kamen,” “ihren,” and “Freunden,” my student described that while I was pronouncing them correctly, I had actually copied his informal or casual pronunciation and in a more formal setting the bolded “e” in the “-en” ending would be a fuller vowel. This distinction was important for him to make the connection that it was the more casual pronunciation which had greater similarities to the schwa pronunciation.
6. The bolded line is the key reference created for the student to use for future practice and maintenance of the schwa.

a) We came to the conclusion that this "-en" ending has a similar quickness, lack of lip rounding, and low tongue placement to schwa, however the English schwa has a slightly lower jaw height. This key reference allows the student to compare their own pronunciation of schwa to the more familiar "-en" ending, therefore they can reliably and sustainably practice the sound on their own. The student in the above example only needs to remember to lower the jaw slightly from the "-en" position to produce schwa.

**Guiding questions from teacher:**

- Is this sound familiar or new? Have you studied it before in English lessons?
- Do you recognize this sound from your own learning of or use of English?
- Are there words or examples you can think of?
- Are there similar sounds in your language(s)? What makes them feel similar?
    - Where is your tongue? What is it touching in similar sounds or in trying to make the English sound?
    - Does your tongue move to make the sound or stay in one place?
    - Is your jaw high, in the middle, or low in similar sounds?
    - Does your jaw feel tense or relaxed?
    - Do you round your lips or relax them?

**Adjusting for groups:**

For teachers working with groups of students, this activity could be done in pairs while the teacher engages with different pairs as another interlocutor offering their own production and analysis of the examples. It should be noted that individuals may translate the English example differently. My recommendation is to use the sentence as translated by the individual (and not to create a more "objective" version) because the language choices are intrinsic to the student's multilingual identity. This

means that potentially two students who share a home language may go through the activity twice with only slight differences. Students who share a home language can discuss the same translation if they agree on it. A crucial part of this activity is to activate students' metalinguistic awareness and to create their own comparisons, so relating their observations to their own translations is important. It is also likely the paired students will have different home languages. In this case, the students also will need to take turns with their translated sentence and discussion. In both situations, one student will translate the sentence and the other student will listen, repeat and observe first. The students will discuss together to create the key reference for the main speaking student who translated the sentence before changing the main student. The students may share their key references as a group when they finish the pair discussion.