pd's
IN DEPTH

Pronunciation/Aural
Discrimination Drills for
Learners of English

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Editors

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Foreword

This new book supplements rather than replaces my earlier book *The PD's* co-authored with Sara Cook Henderson. It is only the difficulties of working a continent apart that prevented collaboration on this book, done with her constant moral support. For all manner of support I wish to thank my husband and fellow-linguist, C. Douglas Johnson, and my son John Trager. Specifically for logistic, typing, and organizational support, I want to mention a distinguished and versatile student, Barbara Tanner.

Throughout the writing of *PD's in Depth*, I have been grateful to the staff of ELS Publications—to John Dermody for his encouragement in the earlier stages, to Dennis Oliver for helping to refine initial concepts, and to Ms. Pat Campbell, my editor, who encouraged and enabled me to complete the book.

Lastly, I wish to thank my delightful and gallant nonagenarian mother, Ethel Crossland Crowell, who was generous in her approval of this book even though I suspect she may have wished it were the sort that could be made into a movie.

Edith Crowell Trager Johnson
Professor Emeritus, Linguistics
Santa Barbara, California, 1982

Introduction

Although the basic subject matter of this text involves the English sound system, *PD's in Depth* is not a pronunciation book in the usual—that is, conventional or traditional—sense; it differs from most pronunciation works in several significant (and innovative) ways.

One important difference has to do with the orientation of the text materials. *PD's in Depth* is actually more concerned with aural discrimination than with pronunciation *per se.* As such, it deals with development of "critical listening skills." It is unlike most listening comprehension texts, however, in that it treats listening at the sound and word level, rather than at the level of sentences or conversational exchanges.

PD's in Depth is also different in that it is active and is a workbook. In most practice texts that deal with English phonology, students simply listen to and then repeat lists of words modeling "target" sounds or contrasts—a necessary, but often boring, activity. In *PD's in Depth*, the exercises are varied in both format and tasks (see "The Exercises," below): students are required not only to listen and repeat, but to listen and choose, and also to listen and write. Consequently, student involvement and interest are greatly increased.

The contents of *PD's in Depth* present another difference. Unlike most texts dealing with aspects of the English phonological system, *PD's in Depth* does not attempt to cover the entire array of English sounds. Instead, it concentrates on providing an in-depth treatment of consonants—including work with systematic pronunciation variations (allophones) as well as with "general" pronunciations (phonemes). In addition, *PD's in Depth* includes material that is generally not treated

at all: common spelling patterns and "relaxed" pronunciation (i.e., sound changes typically heard only in casual or informal speech).

The following section, "Overview of the Materials," presents the major features of *PD's in Depth* in detail.

OVERVIEW OF THE MATERIALS

PD's in Depth contains thirty lessons divided into seven parts. Part I (three lessons) features the stops—/b/, /p/, /d/, /t/, /g/, and /k/. In Part II (one lesson), the nasals—/m/, /n/, and /ŋ/—are presented. Part III (five lessons) treats the fricatives and affricates—/v/, /f/, /dh/, /th/, /z/, /s/, /zh/, /sh/, /j/, and /ch/. In Part IV (four lessons), /l/, /r/, /h/, /w/, and /y/ are worked with. Part V contains twelve lessons dealing with contrasts beyond the level of voiced/voiceless pairs—e.g., /b/-/v/ and /v/-/w/—and also includes lessons featuring often-confused consonant clusters: /bl/-/pl/, /br/-/pr/, /gl/-/kl/, and /gr/-/kr/. In Part VI (two lessons), students work with the pronunciations of the morphophonemes /S/ (/s/, /z/, /ɨz/) and /ED/ (/d/, /t/, /ɨd/). Part VII is a systematic treatment of "relaxed" pronunciation patterns (also known as "sandhi phenomena" or "reduced forms").

The lessons in Parts I - IV and Part VI follow the same general format: introduction of target sounds, then notes on how the target sounds are commonly spelled, then exercises. The introductory material in each lesson consists essentially of brief, nontechnical descriptions of how the target sounds are produced. The spelling notes point out the most common and predictable ways the target sounds are symbolized in written form. The exercises focus first on recognition and identification of target sounds, then on contrast—generally between voiced and voiceless sound-pairs having the same articulation (e.g., /b/ and /p/). Many of the lessons in Parts I - IV and VI also contain a section called "Special Features." The "Special Features" sections include two types of material: further spelling notes (always in terms of predictability of sound-symbol correspondences) and/or explanatory and practice material on important allophones of the target sounds.

The lessons in Parts V and VII follow formats which are different from the above. In Part V, each of the twelve lessons consists of contrast exercises for similar-sounding or frequently-confused sound pairs. Part VII deals with "relaxed" pronunciation patterns in three

broad areas: contracted forms, "dropping" of sounds, and sound changes. Its exercises focus on recognition of the patterns presented.

THE EXERCISES

Eleven distinct exercise types are employed in *PD's in Depth*. These may be classified into four categories: *repetition* (two types), *discrimination* (six types), *dictation* (two types), and *listening* (one type).

Repetition Exercises: In exercises of this type, students must listen to, and then repeat, either single-word examples of target sounds or minimal pairs (words differing in only one sound) illustrating target contrasts. In all repetition exercises, items have been carefully selected so as to illustrate combinations of target material with a wide range of vowel sounds, to show all positions in which the target sounds occur, and to be as "useful" (i.e., high-frequency) as possible. Repetition exercises are found in all parts of *PD's in Depth* except Part VII, where the focus is on recognition rather than production.

Discrimination Exercises: The six types of discrimination exercises and the tasks they involve are as follows:

yes/no exercises

Students hear (but do not see) phrases which may or may not contain the target sound(s). The students' task is to decide whether the target sounds are present in the phrases they hear. Students indicate their decision by circling "yes" or "no."

Exercises of this type are found in Parts I, II, III, and IV.

two-word same/different exercises

Students hear (but do not see) pairs of words which may or may not be identical. They must then decide whether the words they have heard are the same or different, and then indicate their decision by circling "S" or "D."

Exercises of this type are found in Parts I, II, III, and IV.

three-word same/different exercises

Students hear (but do not see) groups of three words. Sometimes all three words are the same; sometimes two are identical, but one is different. The students' task is to decide whether the words they have heard are *all* the same or whether there are two identical words and a "maverick." Students indicate their decision by circling "d" if all three words are the same, or by circling the letter of the "maverick" ("a," "b," or "c").

Exercises of this type are found in Part V.

sentence-completion exercises

Students see sentences. One element in each sentence may be completed in either of two alternate ways. The alternate completions are generally minimal pairs focusing on the target sound(s) of the lesson, and are both given. Students hear each sentence, but only one of the two possible completions is spoken. The students' task is to decide which of the two alternatives they have heard; they indicate their decision by circling the appropriate one.

Exercises of this type are found in Parts I - IV.

"pick the sound" exercises

Students see sentences. Each sentence has one missing element indicated by blanks. Each blank contains two (or, in some cases, three or four) representations of sounds—e.g., /dh/ /th/ or /s/ /z/ /ɪz/. Students hear each sentence in its entirety—including the missing elements. Their task is to listen for the missing elements, then decide which of the given sounds they contain. Students indicate their decision by circling the appropriate representation.

Exercises of this type are found in Parts III (Lessons 6, 8, 9), V, and VI.

"pick the ending" exercises

These exercises occur only in Part VI. In "pick the ending" exercises, students see pairs of words; one word in each pair is a base form, the other an inflected form with an /S/ or /ED/ ending. Each pair of words is followed by representations of the /S/ or /ED/ allophones—/s/, /z/, or /ɪz/; /d/, /t/, or /ɪd/.

x

The students' task is to listen to the pronunciation of each of the *base forms* (those for the inflected forms are not spoken), and then to decide how the inflected form should be pronounced. Students indicate their decision by circling the appropriate representation.

Dictation Exercises: Two types of dictation exercises are included in *PD's in Depth*. One type follows the "dicto-cloze" format. In this dictation type, students see sentences with blanks. They hear each sentence in its entirety, including the missing elements. As they hear each sentence, students must listen for the missing words, then fill in the blanks by writing what they hear (but do not see). This type of exercise is found in all sections of *PD's in Depth* except Part VII.

The other type of dictation is found only in Part VII. It follows a format similar to that of the "dicto-cloze," but with a significant difference. Again students see sentences with blanks. They also hear each sentence in its entirety, and must listen for the missing elements. The difference is that the missing elements are "relaxed" pronunciations—reductions, contractions, sound changes. The students' task is to decide what the *full forms* of the missing elements (which they hear but do not see) are. They must then write the full forms (in conventional spelling) in the blanks.

Listening Exercises: Exercises in which students are expected to listen but not repeat are found primarily in Part VII. In these exercises, students simply listen to examples as they follow written representations of the examples (in conventional spelling) in their books.

SYMBOLS USED IN THE TEXT

In *PD's in Depth*, the symbols used to represent sounds are, with one exception (that of /ŋ/), alphabetic. The International Phonetic Alphabet or other sets of characters traditionally used in phonetic transcriptions have not been used. The choice of symbols has been deliberate, and is motivated by the feeling that learning a separate phonetic alphabet is often an unnecessary task for most learners of English—and one which, in fact, may even impede (or at least interfere with) their progress.

In most cases, the symbols used in *PD's in Depth* have the advantage of being the same as the most common spellings of the sounds represented. In addition, alphabetic symbols make voiced/voiceless contrasts (the emphasis in the first section of the text) more obvious. Furthermore, use of an alphabetic system makes it unnecessary for students to use one set of symbols for sounds and another for conventional written representations. The primary advantage of an alphabetic system, then, is practicality.

The phonetic symbols used in *PD's in Depth* are compared with more traditional symbols in the chart on page xv.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Answers for all *PD's in Depth* exercises are given in the Key at the end of the text proper. In *yes/no, same/different, "pick the sound,"* and *"pick the ending"* exercises, the cues are also given, since they are not printed in the exercises themselves (students hear the cues, but do not see them).

PD's in Depth is also fully supplemented by cassette recordings of all exercise material. Inasmuch as accurate modeling of target sounds (not to mention correctness of exercise cues) is of critical importance for effective use of the text, the tapes should be considered indispensible for optimum use of *PD's in Depth*.

To the Teacher

Because of its "active" orientation, workbook-like format, and recorded exercises, *PD's in Depth* is appropriate for use in a wide variety of learning situations in addition to the classroom setting. It is particularly well-suited for use in language laboratories, learning centers, and individualized study programs, since its nontechnical explanations and simple instructions enable most students to work through the lessons with a minimum of guidance.

PD's in Depth is designed for intermediate through advanced students. With thorough introduction of lesson material and, of course, sufficient explanation of unfamiliar vocabulary, it may be used at lower levels of instruction. It is not, however, intended for students who are at the true-beginning stage of English study.

For optimum effectiveness, the tapes that accompany *PD's in Depth* should be used with the text. If this is not possible, the text may be used without the tapes by copying answers from the Answer Key in the back of the book into the appropriate places in the body of the text. This is absolutely necessary for those exercises built around cues or completion items which are not printed in the text proper (for example, in *yes/no* and *same/different* exercises).

To use *PD's in Depth* most productively, the following considerations should be kept in mind:

1. Although all the *PD's in Depth* lessons lend themselves to repetition for purposes of pronunciation improvement, a substantial portion of the exercise material has been designed to provide practice with aural discrimination rather than with pronunciation *per se*. For best results, therefore, the exercises should be done as described in the text.

2. For maximum effectiveness, the text should be worked through sequentially, since the lessons within each part build one on another; this is especially true of Parts I - IV, which contain the most basic material. In no event should students attempt Parts VI or VII until the content of Parts I - IV is familiar.

3. Even though an effort has been made to provide clear and simple instructions, students may not fully understand the tasks required of them in particular exercises. For best results, therefore, any points of confusion should be clarified before students begin to work through a lesson.

4. It should be pointed out to students that, although they may well encounter unfamiliar words in *PD's in Depth*, it is not a vocabulary text. Therefore, they should learn the meanings of any new words either before or after they begin to work with a lesson.

5. Some exercises (particularly those involving dictation) can be quite challenging. It may, therefore, be necessary for students to hear individual items, or even entire exercises, several times before they can be expected to understand.

6. In exercises involving dictation, *sounds* are more important than spelling in and of itself. Consequently, students should not be penalized if they have correctly heard the target sound(s), but made minor orthographic errors.

7. It should be kept in mind that the introductory and explanatory information in each lesson, though generally brief is as important as the exercises.

8. The Answer Key will be used most productively if students work through a lesson, then listen again to the lesson material as they check their answers.

9. The lessons in Parts I - VI require a minimum of thirty to forty minutes to complete; Lesson 30 in Part VII requires at least two and one-half hours. The actual length of time needed for any given lesson in its entirety will, however depend on many factors—the amount of extra explanation needed, particular points of difficulty, background of the students, and so forth.

10. It is not necessary to complete any *PD's in Depth* lesson in one sitting; many, in fact, can best be handled in two or even three installments. In no case should Lesson 30 (Part VII—"Relaxed Pronunciation Patterns") be attempted in one fell swoop.

ENGLISH CONSONANT SYMBOLS

Key Words	symbols used in *PD's in Depth*	IPA[1] equivalent	American Phonemic[2] equivalent
bill	/b/	/b/	/b/
chill	/ch/	/tʃ/	/č/
dill	/d/	/d/	/d/
fill	/f/	/f/	/f/
gill	/g/	/g/	/g/
hill	/h/	/h/	/h/
Jill	/j/	/dʒ/	/ǰ/
kill	/k/	/k/	/k/
Lil	/l/	/l/	/l/
mill	/m/	/m/	/m/
nil	/n/	/n/	/n/
sing	/ŋ/	/ŋ/	/ŋ/
pill	/p/	/p/	/p/
rill	/r/	/r/	/r/
sill	/s/	/s/	/s/
shill	/sh/	/ʃ/	/š/
till	/t/	/t/	/t/
thigh	/th/	/θ/	/θ/
thy	/dh/	/ð/	/ð/
vine	/v/	/v/	/v/
wine	/w/	/w/	/w/
whine[3]	/hw/ (/w/)	/ʍ/ (/w/)	/hw/ (/w/)
you	/y/	/j/	/y/
zoo	/z/	/z/	/z/
vision	/zh/	/ʒ/	/ž/

NOTES
[1]"IPA" stands for *International Phonetic Association*.
[2]The American Phonemic symbols are derived from the Trager-Smith analysis of English.
[3]The sound spelled with the letters *wh* is pronounced /hw/ (/ʍ/) in some dialects, and /w/ in others.

A SELECTED LIST OF
PRONUNCIATION/AURAL DISCRIMINATION PROBLEMS
FOR ALL/MOST LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

Problems for	areas of difficulty	PD's in Depth lessons
all students	/dh/-/th/	6
	/r/	10
	/S/, /ED/	29
	"relaxed" pronunciation	30
most students	final /b/, /d/, /g/, /p/, /t/, /k/	1, 2, 3
	/d/-/t/	2
	/ŋ/	4
	/z/-/s/	7
	/l/-/r/	10
	/v/-/w/	16
	/ch/-/sh/	24
	/y/-/j/	25
	consonant clusters	26, 27

A SELECTED LIST OF
PRONUNCIATION/AURAL DISCRIMINATION PROBLEMS
ACCORDING TO STUDENTS' NATIVE LANGUAGES

Problems for speakers of	areas of difficulty	PD's in Depth lessons
Arabic	/b/-/p/	1
	/ŋ/	4
	/sh/-/j/-/zh/	8, 9
	/g/-/j/	3, 9
	consonant clusters	26, 27
Burmese	final /b/, /d/, /g/, /p/, /t/, /k/	1, 2, 3
	/v/-/f/	5
	/l/-/r/	10
	consonant clusters	26, 27
Chinese	/b/, /d/, /g/	1, 2, 3
	/v/	5
	/dh/-/th/	6
	final consonants except /n/, /ŋ/	1-10, 14-29
	/sh/-/ch/	24
French	/dh/-/th/	6
	/h/	11
	/s/-/t/-/th/	19, 20
	/ch/-/sh/	24
German	/b/-/p/	1
	/n/-/ŋ/	4
	/dh/-/th/	6
	/z/-/s/	7
	/v/-/w/	16
	/t/-/th/	20
	/d/-/dh/	22
	/ch/-/sh/	24
	/y/-/j/	25
	voiced final consonants	1-10, 14-29

Problems for speakers of	areas of difficulty	PD's in Depth lessons
Greek	/n/-/ŋ/	4
	/z/-/s/	7
	/w/, /hw/	12
	/b/-/v/	15
	/s/-/sh/	21
	/z/-/dh/	23
	/ch/-/sh/	24
	/y/-/j/	25
Haitian Creole	same as French plus final consonants	1-10, 14-29
Indonesian	/v/-/f/	5
	/dh/-/th/	6
	/zh/-/sh/	8
	/v/-/w/	16
	consonant clusters	26, 27
	final /b/, /d/, /g/, /z/, /j/	1-3, 7, 9
Farsi (Persian)	/ŋ/	4
	/v/-/w/	16
	/th/-/s/	19
	consonant clusters	26, 27
Italian	/dh/-/th/	6
	/h/	11
	/s/-/sh/	21
	consonant clusters	26, 27
Japanese	/dh/-/th/	6
	/l/-/r/	10
	/v/-/w/	16
	/s/-/sh/	21
	/ch/-/sh/	24
	consonant clusters	26, 27

Problems for speakers of	areas of difficulty	PD's in Depth lessons
Korean	/b/-/p/	1
	/d/-/t/	2
	/g/-/k/	3
	/dh/-/th/	6
	/j/-/ch/	9
	/l/-/r/	10
	all voiced consonants	1-10, 14-29
Laotian	same as Thai, but not /l/-/r/	
Navajo	/b/-/p/	1
	/m/-/n/-/ŋ/	4
	/v/-/f/	5
	/dh/-/th/	6
	/p/-/f/	14
	/b/-/v/	15
	/f/-/s/	17
	/th/-/s/	19
	/th/-/t/	20
	/d/-/dh/	22
	/z/-/dh/	23
Polish	/ŋ/	4
	/dh/-/th/	6
	/l/	10
	/w/	12
Portugese	final /b/, /d/, /g/, /p/, /t/, /k/	1-3
	/n/, /ŋ/	4
	/j/-/ch/	9
	final /l/	10
	/h/	11
	consonant clusters	26, 27