

BRITISH COUNCIL - IELTS SPEAKING - PRONUNCIATION



Accuracy and Variety



This criteria focuses on the accuracy and variety of pronunciation features.

This includes word stress, which is the stronger pronunciation of a syllable over the others in the word. Stressing the **wrong syllable** in a word is a frequent error, so refer to a dictionary to confirm the correct word stress if you are unsure.

For instance:

repu**T**ation cer**T**ificate as**S**umption

Word stress can be confusing when it changes with different parts of a word family.



Improve Your Pronunciation

Try the British Council's interactive phonemic chart online or via the iPhone app, to improve your pronunciation of individual sounds & words.

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/mobile-learning/sounds-right>

Click here to learn more

Sentence Stress

There are also important sentence-level features of pronunciation to practice and improve:

With sentence stress in English, we give stress to certain words while other words are quickly spoken. For instance, some words in a sentence are emphasized or slightly louder than other words.

If I were **YOU**, I'd go by **BUS**.



Learn about intonation – this is the pitch of your voice changing as you talk. Monotone intonation is typical of someone who has memorised long responses – this may result in lower scores.

Try to understand the effect of sentence stress and intonation on meaning. Focus on stressed words, non-stressed words and syllables – and then practice using these in different ways. For example, read out these sentences below on the left, then match them with their associated meaning on the right. One has been done as an example.

- I said she might consider a new car.
- I **SAID** she might consider a new car.
- I said **SHE** might consider a new car.
- I said she **MIGHT** consider a new car.
- I said she might **CONSIDER** a new car.
- I said she might consider a **NEW** car.
- I said she might consider a new **CAR**.

- Not just any car.
- It's a possibility.
- It was my idea.
- Not something else.
- Don't you understand me?
- Not another person.
- She should think about it. It's a good idea.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/english-sentence-stress>

Click here to learn more

Practice Chunking

This is talking in a rhythm which delivers chunks of words with short silences in between the occasional key word stressed. Good public speakers often use this skill.

For instance:



- Pronunciation Features -

You can become familiar with a range of pronunciation features by listening to a variety of authentic English sources. For instance, try to BBC radio, or the Voice of America, in whatever subjects or topics interest you. Even if you're not listening closely, having the radio or television on can help attune you to the rhythm and intonation of another language.



British Broadcasting Corporation



Voice of America

Look out for other videos & downloads on IELTS Speaking & Writing.