

#### WHERE CLASSICAL WISDOM MEETS INTELLIGENT LEARNING

### 12. Common Pronunciation Challenges

## **BVPT-104: English & Communication**

**Unit 3: Developing Pronunciation and Vocabulary** 

Topic: Common Pronunciation Challenges - Identifying and Overcoming Difficulties in English Pronunciation

## ☐ What Is a Pronunciation Challenge?

Pronunciation challenges are **difficulties in speaking words correctly**, clearly, and naturally. These are especially common for students whose **mother tongue is not English**, because some English sounds may not exist in their native language.

In healthcare, incorrect pronunciation can lead to:

- Confusion (e.g., "pain" vs. "pin")
- Miscommunication with patients or doctors
- Reduced confidence during viva or professional speech

# □ Common Pronunciation Problems in Indian English Speakers

Type of Challenge	Examples	Explanation
Consonant Sound Confusion /v/ vs /w/ → "vine" vs "wine"		These sounds are pronounced similarly in many Indian languages
Th-Sound Difficulty	"think" → "tink"; "that" → "dat"	The soft /0/ and /ð/ don't exist in most Indian languages
Silent Letters Ignored	"honest" → "h-onest", "knee" → "knee"	Silent letters are often mistakenly pronounced
Ending Sound Dropping	"walked" $\rightarrow$ "walk", "helps" $\rightarrow$ "help"	Final consonants (-ed, -s) are often skipped or softened
Stress Misplacement	"PHYSioTHERapy" instead of "PHYSiotherapy"	Wrong syllable stress can change meaning or sound unnatural
R & L Confusion	"light" vs "right"	In some regional accents, /l/ and /r/ are interchanged
Flat Intonation	Monotone voice	Lack of pitch rise/fall makes speech dull and unclear

## ☐ How to Overcome Pronunciation Challenges

## 1. Listen and Repeat (Shadowing Technique)

- Watch English videos or listen to audio clips
- Pause and repeat exactly how the speaker says it
- Focus on accent, stress, and rhythm

☐ Try BBC Learning English or TED Talks

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#### 2. Use a Mirror to Watch Your Mouth

- Some English sounds require specific lip, teeth, or tongue positions
- Practise in front of a mirror (especially for "th", "sh", "v", "z")

#### Example:

- For /8/ in "think", tongue should lightly touch between your teeth
- For /v/, lower lip touches top teeth

### 3. Record and Compare

- Read aloud and record your voice
- Compare with a native speaker's recording
- Spot the mistakes and try again

#### 4. Learn and Practise Minimal Pairs

Words that differ by only one sound—great for training ear and tongue!

#### **Minimal Pairs Difference**

Ship / Sheep /I/ vs /i:/
Bat / Bet /æ/ vs /e/
Thin / Then /θ/ vs /ð/
Fan / Van /f/ vs /v/

#### 5. Master Word Stress & Sentence Stress

- Use a dictionary with phonetic symbols and stress markers
- Practise stressing the **right syllable** in multi-syllable words

#### ☐ Example:

- PHYSioTHERapy → □
- PHYSio-therapy → □
- reHAbilitation → □ (stress on "bil")

#### 6. Practice Intonation and Rhythm

- English is a "stress-timed language" some words are stressed more than others
- Record sentences and identify how voice rises and falls

#### ☐ Practice sentences:

- "I will call you TOMORROW." (stress on 'tomorrow')
- "She DID it again!" (emphasis on 'did')

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## 7. Use Phonetic Tools & Apps

- Try apps like:
  - Elsa Speak
  - Sounds: The Pronunciation App
  - o YouGlish (for word examples from real speakers)

## Sample Practice Exercise

Say these aloud, focusing on correct sound and stress:

- 1. "The physiotherapist helped the patient walked again."
- 2. "Please **press** the bell if you feel **pain**."
- 3. "He has a **silent** knee injury."

☐ Record → Listen → Correct

# □ Summary Table

ProblemFix It By...Wrong stressLearn word syllable emphasisDropped endingsSpeak slowly, exaggerate soundsTh-sound issuesUse tongue-tip between teethFlat speechPractice with rising-falling toneSound confusionMinimal pairs + daily drills

# ☐ Quick Tips to Improve Pronunciation

- ☐ Speak slowly at first
- $\hfill \square$  Break difficult words into syllables
- ☐ Use English daily—talk to yourself in English
- ☐ Don't fear mistakes—every mistake teaches something!

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