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978-0-521-60671-4 - Ship or Sheep?: An Intermediate Pronunciation Course

Ann Baker

Frontmatter

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Ship or Sheep?

**An intermediate
pronunciation course**

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The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that the URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.

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INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS

- Seven of the 50 units in this book are review units. Each of the other units introduces a different English sound, as well as other aspects of pronunciation (e.g. stress, intonation) which are also important for successful communication in English.
- You can use this book either working alone or with a class + teacher.
- You will need:
 - equipment to listen to the CD, and equipment to record your voice
 - a small mirror to compare your lip positions with the pictures
 - Your mask (cut it out from page 185). You will use it at the beginning of most units (but not Unit 1). You can also use it for extra practice of sounds that are difficult for you.
- First, find out which units are most important for you. To do this:
 - If possible, check your mother tongue in the *List of likely errors* (see website: http://www.cambridge.org/elt/elt_projectpage.asp?id=2500905) and make a printout of that part of the list.
 - Do at least one of the Diagnostic Tests (see pages ix–xi). If you are working alone, do Test A. Test B needs the help of a teacher, native speaker or near-native speaker. If you are working with a teacher, he/she will decide whether you do the tests.
- Decide whether you want to:
 - work first on the most important units for you, or
 - begin at the beginning and work through the book, spending more time on the most important units for you. You can choose to work simultaneously on Section A (vowels) and Section B (consonants). You can also do the seven review units.
- Read *Making English sounds* before beginning each section (see pages 1–2, 79–80). This introduces some essential vocabulary.
- Symbols used in the book:



means this material is recorded.



means the answers are in the Key (see pages 186–224).



means this exercise is suitable for a group or pair of students. If you are a student working alone, you could try it by using your imagination, e.g. by imagining another student.



means ‘use the mask’ (see page vi).



means ‘visit the website to practise’.

- Other symbols used:

Intonation is shown with arrows:  

The main word stress is shown in bold, e.g. pronunciation, **student**.

Sentence stress is shown with underlining, e.g. Sentence stress is shown with underlining, or sometimes with big and small circles:

OoOoOoooOo (Sentence stress is shown with underlining).

- Phonetic symbols used in this book are the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) (the Contents page shows all the symbols used). You can use this book without knowing these symbols, but it is useful to learn them so that you can check the pronunciation of new words in a dictionary. The *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* uses these symbols.
- In most units (but not in Unit 1), Exercise 2 *Minimal pairs* gives you practice in contrasting two sounds in words and sentences. If you don't have one of the two sounds in your language, practising the pairs of sounds can sometimes help you to hear – and then produce – the English sound.
- Dialogues are recorded. You can backtrack on the CD to repeat them as many times as you want. If you don't like backtracking, listen to the dialogue after you have done the dialogue tasks.

The Mask

There are two ways in which you can use the mask (which you cut out from page 185):

- 1 *At the beginning of the minimal pair exercises* Here, you are instructed to use the mask in most units after Unit 1. The mask symbol  at the beginning of the exercise indicates 'use the mask'. You can start the minimal pair practice with the mask covering the written words, just looking at the pictures and listening to the pair sounds (first in words and then in sentences). This will help you to focus on really listening to the sounds first. After you have listened for the first time, you can backtrack on the CD to listen again and repeat.
- 2 *Extra practice of difficult sounds* You can also use the mask, for example at the end of a unit, to enjoy extra practice of sounds that are difficult for you. Here, your task with the mask is to try to produce the contrasting sounds correctly while trying to remember the words and sentences. (e.g. 1 Mask on – listen and repeat. 2 Mask off – read aloud. 3 Mask on – remember and say aloud. 4 Mask off – read aloud to check.)

Other ways of having extra practice of difficult sounds

- 1 Make playing cards by photocopying the minimal pair charts (e.g. four copies) and cutting out the pairs. You can then play some of the card games described in the review units. If working alone, play *Pick up pairs*, Unit 7, page 27 or *Pick up same sounds*, Unit 14, page 52.
- 2 Check on the website
(http://www.cambridge.org/elt/elt_projectpage.asp?id=2500905)
to see if there is any extra practice material for this sound.

INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

- Please read the Introduction for Students on pages v–vi.
- **Level** This book is written for intermediate students, but previous editions have also been used by students at other levels. *Tree or Three?* is written for beginner–elementary level.
- **Class/Student working alone** The instructions are written for a student working alone, but can be used for classroom teaching as well. See the symbols in the students’ introduction, especially  .
- **Diagnostic Tests** You can use these if you need to assess students’ difficulties. But if you already know this for your class, you can choose to skip the tests and decide whether you want the students to work through the book or focus only on some units.
Students working alone can self-administer Test A with or without your input. To administer Test B, students can be asked to record their individual performances for your assessment. Or you may prefer to do this with them so that you can immediately check possible ‘reading’ rather than pronouncing mistakes, by asking them to listen and repeat the item.
- **List of likely errors** This is on the website so that it can be added to. It can be found at http://www.cambridge.org/elt/elt_projectpage.asp?id=2500905. It would be useful for each student to have a printout of the relevant part of this list.
- **Minimal pairs** In this book, these are pairs of words/sentences which differ by only one sound, e.g. *Bill bought a sheep./Bill bought a ship*. These sometimes help students to hear – and then pronounce – sounds that are difficult for them. You may want to extend students’ class practice of particular minimal pairs by inventing games or playing the following:
 - *Card games* These are described in Exercise 1 of the review units. Make more copies if using pairs from only one unit. This book is copyright, but permission is granted to make a single copy of the cards described in the review units, for the sole purpose of playing the card games outlined.
 - *‘Fingers’* For each pair, say words rapidly at random, e.g. *sheep sheep sheep ship ship ship sheep ship*. Students show with one or two fingers if they hear sound 1 or sound 2. Students practise in pairs and then back to back.

viii

- ‘*Mingling*’ Each student has one of the minimal pair cards. Students mingle (move around randomly), not showing their cards but repeating their word to find the others with the same sound. They form a group, which checks correct membership. The first group to complete their set of words with the same sound wins. Students swap cards within their group and check pronunciation of new words before all mingling again to find the person in the other group with the other half of their minimal pair. Students change cards with that person and check each other’s pronunciation. Then start the mingling game from the beginning so both sounds are used.
- **The mask** (See Introduction for Students.) The purpose of the mask is twofold:
 - to allow students to listen to and practise the minimal pair sounds first in words and then in sentences without being distracted by the written word
 - for extra practice of sounds they find difficult.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

All students should do Test A.

Test B requires the help of a teacher, native speaker or near-native speaker of English.

The tests are not to give you a mark. They may help you to find out which sounds and other aspects of English pronunciation could be the most difficult for you. You should also check this in the *List of likely errors* on the website: http://www.cambridge.org/elt/elt_projectpage.asp?id=2500905.

TEST A

Section 1 Sound discrimination

  Do not stop the recording or repeat. In each item you will hear two words. Sometimes the two words are the same. Sometimes they have one sound that is different. Listen once only to each item and tick the S (same) column or the D (different) column. If you are not sure, tick the question mark (?) column.

EXAMPLE If you hear, ‘sheep sheep’ tick the S column.

If you hear, ‘sheep ship’ tick the D column.

If you are not sure, tick the ? column.

	S	D	?
	✓		
		✓	
			✓

	S	D	?		S	D	?		S	D	?		S	D	?
1a				6a				12a				17a			
1b				6b				12b				17b			
2a				7a				13a				18a			
2b				7b				13b				18b			
2c				7c				14a				19a			
3a				8a				14b				19b			
3b				8b				14c				20a			
4a				9a				14d				21a			
4b				9b				15a				22a			
5a				10a				15b				22b			
5b				10b				16a				23a			
5c				11a				16b				23b			
				11b				16c				24a			

x

Section 2 Intonation

  Do not stop the recording or repeat. Listen to Lucy talking to Lesley on the telephone. In some items her voice goes up (↗) at the end. In some items her voice goes down (↘). Tick the ↗ or ↘ column for each item. If you are not sure, tick the ? column. Listen to the example first.

EXAMPLE

a) That's Lesley, isn't it?

b) That's Lesley, isn't it?

	↗	↘	?
	✓		
		✓	

	↗	↘	?		↗	↘	?
1				6			
2				7			
3				8			
4				9			
5				10			

Section 3 Word stress

  Do not stop the recording or repeat. In each item, tick the one word that is different from the others.

EXAMPLE

items column number alone ✓ listen

1

nowhere birthday mistake toilet postcard

2

guitar eighteen today machine English

3

away brother breakfast frightened valley

4

comfortable vegetables photograph lemonade minimal

5

telephoning supermarket conversation exercises helicopter

TEST B

(Note: This test requires the help of a teacher, native speaker, or near-native speaker of English.)

Ask the student to read each test item, and record the grading on the result sheet (page xii).

A student’s performance can be recorded, or the student can be asked to repeat an item as many times as necessary to record a result. The reasons for mispronunciation are many, and some may be caused by reading difficulty. To check this, say the mispronounced word correctly and ask the student to repeat it. If the student can then say it correctly, add the symbol R to your grading on that item, indicating that the student can pronounce this sound but may have difficulty when reading it.

Suggested symbols for grading: ✓ no difficulty with this sound
X difficulty with this sound
R may have difficulty reading this sound

Shopping list

- 1 some cheese (cheap cheese); some tea (Chinese tea)
- 2 fifty biscuits; four fish
- 3 ten eggs (big eggs)
- 4 jam; apples and oranges; a cabbage
- 5 ten tomatoes (large tomatoes)
- 6 five kilos of veal (very good veal)
- 7 some strong string (long string)
- 8 four forks (small forks); spoons; cups; small paper plates
- 9 some good sugar; milk; coffee; a cake
- 10 pick up Jude’s blue shoes at the shoe shop; two kilos of brown rice; a grapefruit
- 11 nuts; honey; half a dozen hot buns
- 12 one lemon; nine brown onions; flowers for the house
- 13 some paper for my mother’s letters; collect Grandfather’s leather jacket from the cleaner’s
- 14 a girl’s shirt and skirt (size thirteen); cold drinks (don’t get dry ginger); some good bread
- 15 eight small cakes and paper plates; some sausages for supper
- 16 some yellow roses for your sister
- 17 white wine (sweet wine); some ice
- 18 beer for Bob (buy it from the pub near here)
- 19 some shampoo for Claire’s hair; some pears
- 20 some tins of New Zealand peas, or frozen beans
- 21 fresh English fish from the fish shop
- 22 a toy for the little boy (a blue or yellow ball)
- 23 something for Mr Smith (it’s his birthday on Thursday)
- 24 a small cheap television for the garage

RESULTS SHEET AND FINDINGS from *List of likely errors*

In any of the three columns, place a cross against the sound where there may be difficulty.

SOUNDS	(Diagnostic page Test B)	Diagnostic Test A	Findings from <i>List of likely errors</i>
1 /i:/ (sheep)	3	1a	
/tʃ/ (chip)	120	1b	
2 /ɪ/ (ship)	7	2a	
/f/ (fan)	131	2b, 2c	
3 /e/ (pen)	11	3a	
/g/ (girl)	101	3b	
4 /æ/ (man)	15	4a	
/dʒ/ (jam)	124	4b	
5 /ɑ:/ (heart)	23	5a, 5b	
/t/ (table)	89	5c	
6 /v/ (van)	135	6a, 6b	
7 /ɒ/ (clock)	29	7a	
/ŋ/ (ring)	168	7b, 7c	
8 /ɔ:/ (ball)	174	8a	
/p/ (pen)	81	8b	
9 /ʊ/ (book)	36	9a	
/k/ (key)	97	9b	
10 /u:/ (boot)	39	10a	
/r/ (rain)	176	10b	
11 /ʌ/ (cup)	19	11a	
/h/ (hat)	147	11b	
12 /n/ (nose)	165	12a	
/aʊ/ (house)	63	12b	
13 /ə/ (camera)	48	13a	
/ð/ (the feather)	155	13b	
14 /ɜ:/ (girl)	43	14a, 14b, 14c	
/d/ (door)	93	14d	
15 /eɪ/ (male)	54	15a	
/s/ (sun)	107	15b	
16 /əʊ/ (phone)	66	16a, 16b	
/j/ (yellow)	143	16c	
17 /aɪ/ (fine)	57	17a	
/w/ (window)	139	17b	
18 /ɪə/ (year)	70	18a	
/b/ (baby)	85	18b	
19 /eə/ (chair)	73	19a	
/m/ (mouth)	162	19b	
20 /z/ (zoo)	110	20a	
/ʃ/ (shoe)	114	21a	
22 /ɔɪ/ (boy)	60	22a	
/l/ (letter)	172	22b	
23 /θ/ (thin)	151	23a, 23b	
24 /ʒ/ (television)	117	24a	