

Classroom Experience of English Language Learners

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ESL & The
International
Pathway
Program

The State
University of New
York at Fredonia



Goal of Presentation

To better understand and support English Language Learners in your classroom

Overview

- Who is an English Language Learner?
- What are Proficiency & Fluency?
- What might you notice in your classroom?
- What can you do to help?
- What other resources are available?



Who is an English Language Learner?

Maybe an international student
(but not Canadians, unless they're Québécois)



Maybe a student born in the US
(Puertorriqueños, or children of immigrant parents)



English is not the primary language learned as a child and used in day-to-day life



Proficiency & Fluency

What level of English is required for university course work?

Generally:

- Proficiency: knowing enough of something to use it
- Fluency: knowing enough of something to use it easily



Native English speakers have different levels of mastery or fluency

- Proficiency is NOT Mastery
- Fluency is NOT effortless



question

Rules to learning English

1. their our know rules



hemingay

this makes me feel so uncomfortable

This required level of proficiency is fairly standardized throughout US universities



Specifically:

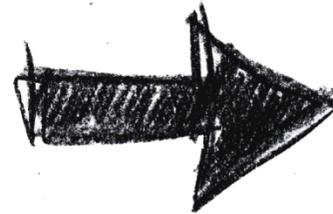
- Many different measures of English skills
 - Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): bands of competency
 - Beginner: A1, A2
 - Intermediate: B1, B2
 - Advanced: C1, C2



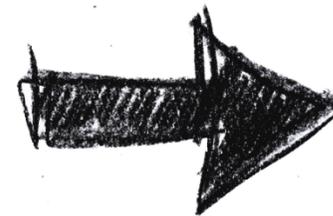
- JCC: high B1
- Fredonia: high B2
- Cornell: low C1

What this level of English can look like in your classroom:

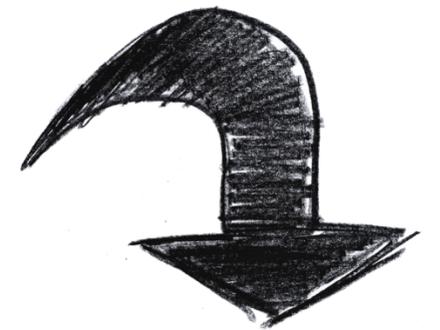
Taking time to retrieve words



Circumlocution



Hesitancy to verbally contribute



Paradox of Perception:

We often associate poor spelling, grammar, or pronunciation with lower intelligence (not being well read), to avoid sounding stupid (as mistakes are inevitable), some students avoid engaging. Students who take the risk to engage run the risk of being judged, as those who avoid engagement can also be seen as lacking interest or effort

I was an ESL student at SUNY Fredonia. When I first came here, I felt so welcomed by teachers and staff. As an ESL student, it was challenging to learn English language and college level courses at the same time. The teachers and staff provided support whenever I needed and it gave me motivation to reach my goals. I think it is important understand ESL students' needs and create welcomed environment for them. Especially, when students are so far away from their home.

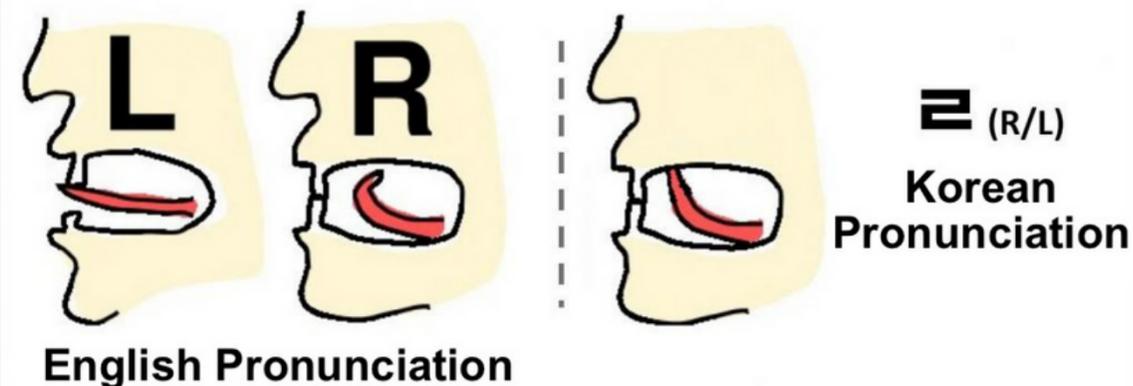
(I may have made some grammatical mistakes here. Still improving my English everyday in my life, because English is my second language)

-Misiduola Mahemuti, MA TESOL
SUNY Fredonia 2018, home
languages: Chinese and Uyghur



 aloeeveragel

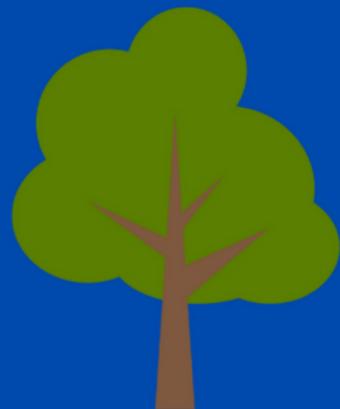
I remember in my Arabic class we were going over the alphabet and the teacher was like there's no 'P' etc and this white girl was like wait what but my names Paige and my teacher was like lol then we'd pronounce it as beige and she was so offended I'm crying thinking about it



Structural and Physical Challenges

Persistent grammatical “mistakes” or mispronunciation due to concepts their native language lacks:

- Korean: no R or TH sound, central vowels, or diphthongs
- Arabic: no P or V sound
- Japanese: only 5 vowels sounds (English has 20), no L or TH sound, no articles or plural
- Chinese: no TH sound, tense, plural, or conditional

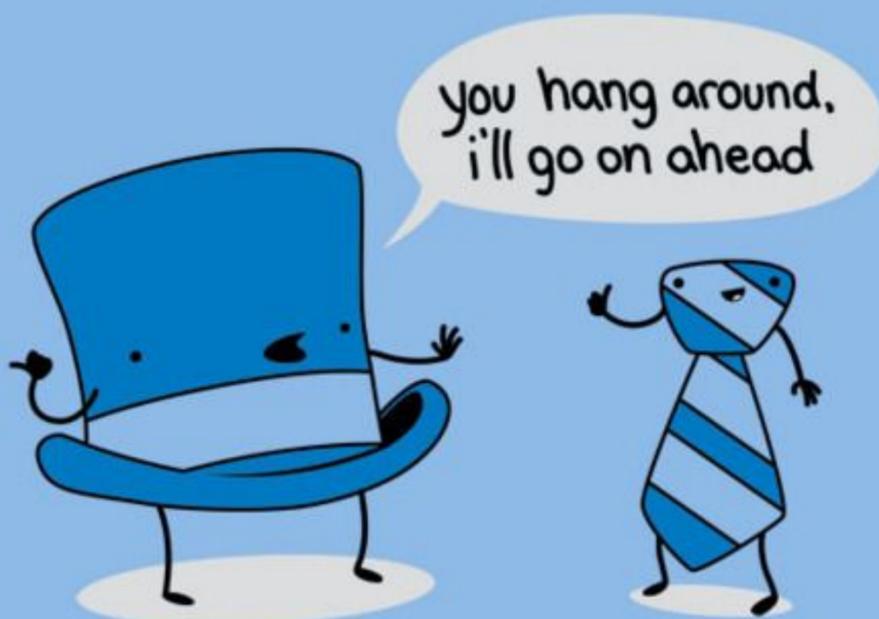


"In our neck of the woods..."
"Wait. What part of the tree is that?"



Southern accents :

"AAH HAVE AN AAH-LASH IN MAH
AAH"



English Accents & Idioms

Accents within English,
dialects, idioms,
colloquialisms, phrasal
verbs, and figurative
language, further
complicate comprehension

Examples of non literal English

Every day Idioms

- up in the air
- touch base
- under the weather
- piece of cake
- call it a day
- hang on
- out of hand

Phrasal verbs

- break up, break out, break down, break in
- bring up, bring over
- give up, give in
- back up, back off
- come down to, come down with
- fill in, fill up, fill out
- (there are over 10k phrasal verbs in English)

Colloquialisms

- take a rain check
- screw up
- bummed out
- no biggie
- couch potato
- pig out
- out of the gate
- rat race
- off the bat
- over the top

Figurative Language

- blocking off time (in a calendar)
- fit as a fiddle
- stepping stone
- melting pot
- time is money
- cast a wide net
- something that is dizzying or makes your head spin
- opportunity knocks

- Oral communication is fluent in daily interpersonal communication, but it is difficult to use for academic communication or writing.
- Some ESL students can read fast, but listen and speak slowly, they need extra time to translate and combine words in their mind.
- Please assign groups instead of letting students choose freely, and try to divide ESL students into different groups.
- Please allow them to read, take notes, and do written assignments with the help of translation tools, such as translation apps, electronic dictionaries, or their home languages. Notes or assignments can be arranged, translated into English and submitted after class.

-Jun Meng, MA TESOL 2020, home language Chinese



Avoid

- Putting students on the spot about their culture, or language backgrounds
 - "You are from ____, what do you think about ____."
- Making assumptions about their language background or ability
 - A Hispanic name does not necessarily indicate fluency in Spanish



Engage

- In active listening/reading (listening vs hearing)
- Students who are hesitant to participate in low pressure ways: emails are a great way to establish a comfortable rapport with ELLs. Having the time to consider and write a response is less stressful than having a face-to-face conversation

Ways to be inclusive



my english
inside my head



my english
when
im talking

Be Conscious of

- The language you use
- Pacing
- Your own assumptions or biases



Reminder: English Language Learners may have some unique perspectives to add to classroom discussions, but they may not be comfortable being called out based on these differences. Make sure to establish a rapport before making assumptions.

Other resources on campus

- Starfish advising Flag for English Language support
- Skills classes (Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing, Grammar) via ESL & International Pathway
- Some sections of Fredonia Foundations designed for ELLs
- International Student Services offers a robust events program open to all students



- Courses taught by experienced Fredonia instructors
- Enroll in 5, 10, 15, or 20 hours per week
- Available Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters

Contact pathway@fredonia.edu for current semester schedule and cost

**ENGLISH
DOESN'T
HAVE TO BE
A STRUGGLE**

ACADEMIC ENGLISH SUPPORT AT FREDONIA

The ESL & International Pathway Program at Fredonia offers non-credit courses to support English Language Learners. Current Fredonia students can enroll in skills courses like Speaking & Listening, Writing, Reading, and Grammar, all of which are focused on achieving academic success in Fredonia degree courses.

non-english speaker: I am awfully sorry at the terrible state of my English abilities, as for the English language is not my mother tongue. I hope you forgive me for every foolish mistake I make.

english as first language: lol it okei

Thank you!

For questions, requests and anything else we can help you with, please email us at pathway@fredonia.edu