An overview

Speaking and Pronunciation
• In spoken language which is more likely to lead to misunderstanding?

  - Poor grammar

  - Poor pronunciation
Aspects of Pronunciation

- Individual Sounds
  - vowels
  - consonants
  - dipthongs
- Syllable stress
- Sentence stress
- Intonation
- Rhythm
- Contractions
- Linking
Individual Sounds (Phonemes)

- Vowel sounds
  - ɪ,ʊ,u,ɔ,ə,ʌ,ɑ
- Diphthongs
  - ɪə,eɪ,uə,ʊə,əʊ,eə,aɪ
- Consonants
  - b,v,θ,ð,ŋ,ʃ,ʒ,
- Sinking
- Not the nine o’clock News sketch

Different phonemes will present different challenges for different nationalities.

It is useful to identify the phonemes which are difficult for you and to work on them on the English LAB online guide and/or SansSpace.
Syllable Stress

• Photograph
• Photographer
• Photographic

• Examine
• Examination

• To record
• a record

• To import
• An import

• To permit
• A permit

• Different syllables take stress in different words - other syllables can be very weak.

• Giving stress to the wrong syllable can sound strange and cause misunderstanding.
Sentence Stress

- English is a stress timed language.
- Stressed words/syllables come at approximately equal intervals.
- Main verbs and nouns carry most stress in a sentence

1 and 2 and 3 and 4
1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4

- Therefore the sounds which come between the stressed syllables are usually weak.
Imagine that you receive this telegram message:

- SELL CAR GONE FRANCE
- Will you SELL my CAR because I've GONE to FRANCE

The time taken to say each sentence should be the same.
• The tone of your voice rises and falls.
• How it does this will affect meaning.
• Flat intonation can sound rude or disinterested.
• The following sentences have different meanings

- “You don’t like English food, do you?”
- “You don’t like English food, do you?”
• Do you understand, John?
• Do you understand John?
• Can you see Janet?
• Can you see, Janet?
• Q. Do you like caviar? A. I don’t know.
• Q. Do you like caviar? A. I don’t. No
Contractions

• In spoken English we do not pronounce every word clearly.
• Auxiliary verbs get “squashed” or contracted.
• E.g
  - He has seen that film.
  - He’s seen that film.
  - I would have told him.
  - I’d’ve told him.
• In fast speech some words link together.

• Words ending in consonants link on to the next word when it begins with a vowel.

• For example
  - sooner or later
  - Out of Africa

• or an intrusive j or w sound appears.
  - Quickly(j)and quietly
  - No (w) idea