

Richards, M. (2016). Providing individualized homework and accountability for ITAs via Internet resources. In J. Levis, H. Le., I. Lucic, E. Simpson, & S. Vo (Eds). *Proceedings of the 7th Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference*, ISSN 2380-9566, Dallas, TX, October 2016 (pp. 245-257). Ames, IA: Iowa State University.

TEACHING TIPS

PROVIDING INDIVIDUALIZED HOMEWORK AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ITAS VIA INTERNET RESOURCES

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Pronunciation instructors of international teaching assistants (ITAs) frequently provide individual feedback highlighting the fluency, suprasegmental, and segmental challenges most likely to inhibit a particular ITA's successful interaction with undergraduates. Yet providing ITAs with practice actually implementing individual feedback given, adequate to enabling their development of new, more communicatively effective pronunciation habits, remains difficult. However, the Internet and learning management systems (LMSes, e.g., Moodle) contain resources capable of supporting and holding students accountable for focused, self-directed work on nearly any pronunciation-related target. This article briefly overviews the challenge faced by ITA instructors of advanced pronunciation, the feasibility of individualizing assignments in advanced pronunciation classes, the second language acquisition (SLA) foundations for a series of exercises designed to address common ITA difficulties, and sample directions for all exercises described.

INTRODUCTION

One challenge faced by teachers in advanced pronunciation courses for ITAs is that while their students' overall intelligibility may be greater than that of students in lower-level pronunciation courses, there is often less uniformity in what advanced students' specific areas of weakness are. For example, while some students in advanced pronunciation courses may need continued work on fluency, others may be *extremely* fluent but difficult to understand because their distribution of pause units (Brown, 1977, 2011), phrase stress, and/or intonation are different than North American English-speaking students expect and therefore can easily process. In addition, many times advanced pronunciation courses include a few students who are quite strong prosodically, but whose persistent difficulty in pronouncing a small set of problem segmentals renders them sometimes incomprehensible. Also, such courses may include students who struggle not so much with any particular segmental as with the tendency in English phonotactics to tack one consonant upon another at the end of syllables. These students' pronunciation, therefore, is not only difficult to understand, but also may imply to listeners that they are weaker in English grammar than they actually are, since their production of key grammar markers such as “-s” and “-ed” is spotty at best. Finally, probably every advanced pronunciation course includes students who have tested into the course not so much because of pronunciation problems, but because of weakness in listening or pervasive grammar issues.

The challenge faced by teachers of advanced pronunciation courses then is to provide their students with enough instruction and practice specific to their particular areas of weakness so students can make substantial progress during the relatively brief period of the course and, ideally, learn how they can continue to develop their weak areas even after the course has concluded, whenever they feel the

need (e.g., as students near graduation and want to strengthen their competitive edge on the North American job market!). However, how can this be accomplished when instruction and practice that barely overview what some students need end up being overkill for others? After all, students understandably tend to have a very limited tolerance for instruction and activities they view to be “wasting their time.”

The obvious answer is providing students individualized instruction and practice, but since pronunciation instructors neither have time nor are paid to tutor their students, the bulk of the individualization that advanced pronunciation students actually receive tends to be limited to individual feedback on their fluency, suprasegmental, segmental, listening, grammatical, and pedagogical challenges revealed by the ITA test that placed them into the course; to individual feedback on in-class presentations and interactions; and to occasional individual mini-lessons dealing with particularly egregious errors or items about which a student specifically asks. That is, while it is possible many advanced pronunciation students receive adequate *information on what their individual areas of weakness are*, it is highly unlikely such students are being given *practice opportunities adequate to enabling their development of new, more communicatively effective pronunciation, listening, or grammar*. This paper therefore provides teachers with ideas based on several Web-available, ready-to-use resources for how they can provide (and hold students accountable for!) substantial practice of continuing weak areas within the sometimes severe constraints instructors face for how much time they can afford to invest in a given course.

How Can I Hold Students Accountable for Completing Individually Assigned Homework?

The major question instructors are likely to have in relation to the proposal that they provide advanced pronunciation students with individualized assignments is how to hold students accountable for *completing* their assignments. While there is probably no foolproof way of providing accountability, utilizing a resource like the Moodle learning management system's (LMS's) add-on "[questionnaire](#)," with its "respond daily" questionnaire type, allows teachers to provide students a reporting tool they can use only once per day. My questionnaire ([Appendix 1](#)) requires students to respond to two questions: 1) "Have you completed your 15-minutes-per-day homework today?" with the radio button options of "Yes" and "No" and 2) "Which assigned exercise or other allowable homework activity did you work on?" with an 80-character text input box in which students indicate the exercise they did. In order to pass, students must report having completed 15-minutes-per-day assignments at least 60 days throughout the semester.

Of course, students *can* lie one or more of the required 60 days, saying "yes" and listing some exercise they actually *haven't* worked on that day, but when I introduce the 15-minutes-per-day assignment at the beginning of the semester, I always remind my students that it is unreasonable for them to hope in the future to pass the ITA test that put them into my class (thereby avoiding being required to take future pronunciation classes) if they don't improve their pronunciation; that improving their pronunciation will probably also benefit their post-grad-school dream careers; and that the total pronunciation homework my course demands is relatively low (60 days of 15-minutes-per-day homework, which adds up to less than an hour per week, plus whatever time they need to prepare their various course presentations). In addition, each time I meet with students throughout the semester I check how many 15-minutes-per-day reports they have submitted and what they say they have been doing relative to their individualized assignments. In our meetings, we also talk about whether or not they are seeing progress through their 15-minutes-per-day exercises and if not, what

changes we can make to their assignments so they *do* see progress. By my second semester of having individualized 15-minutes-per-day homework as a major component of my course, I became convinced that most, if not all, of my students *were* actually doing the homework they reported each day. While in my courses I have utilized an LMS-based accountability tool, accountability could also be managed in other ways, e.g. via an email rule automatically sorting all emails from students with the subject line beginning "Today's 15 minutes completed." The remainder of the subject line could be the name of whichever exercise the student did.

Overviewing a Series of Exercises Addressing Common ITA Difficulties

At the beginning of the semester, I provide students individual feedback via Moodle's forum activity (in "separate group" mode" with one student per group; feedback could also be given via email). My feedback not only categorizes and prioritizes each student's particular strengths and weaknesses as identified by their ITA test, but also includes for each problem category (e.g., fluency, phrase stress, intonation, etc.) links to relevant 15-minutes-per-day exercises targeting that specific problem category. Several of my most commonly recommended 15-minutes-per-day exercises, the directions for which are presented to students via static pages on our course website, and their grounding in the primarily interactionist and cognitive second language acquisition (SLA) literature, are overviewed below. These exercises are designed to maximize student motivation (Dickinson, 1987) by allowing learners to use as input any of a wide variety of high-interest source materials such as TED Talks (ted.com/talks/) and Newsy reports (newsy.com). Most of my recommended exercises reflect Gass' (1997) integrated model of second language acquisition, in which learners 1) realize there is a gap in their language knowledge (the "apperception stage"), 2) comprehend input (the "comprehended input" stage), 3) compare their interlanguage to the input (the "intake" stage), 4) move to integrate the intaken feature into their L2 interlanguage (the "integration" stage), and 5) produce output demonstrating acquisition (the "output" stage).

The first exercise, *4/3/2* ([Appendix 2](#)), is well-respected in the literature as a fluency-development exercise (Maurice, 1983; Nation, 1989) because it grows students' "online planning" capacity (R. Ellis, 2005) by its demand for "pushed output" (Skehan, 1998b, Swain & Lapkin, 1995) and in addition, develops their ability to reduce the hyperactive language monitoring (Krashen, 1981; Levelt, 1983; Morrison & Low, 1983) that often generates an overabundance of repairs and other disfluencies. *4/3/2* also develops in learners increasingly automatized language and discourse knowledge by its demand for repeated production on a single topic (Skehan, 1998a). My 15-minutes-per-day adaptation of *4/3/2*, however, under the pressure of rendering it realistic for regular self-tutoring use, will undoubtedly disgruntle teachers having strongly sociocultural SLA bents, since it makes optional the authentic multiple-interlocutor communication built into Maurice's (1983) original conception of the activity.

The second exercise, *Fluency Buildup* ([Appendix 3](#)), reduces the challenge of fluency development to an absolute minimum, namely pause-unit-sized chunks (Brown, 1977, 2011), and can scaffold (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976) fluency development for students with stabilized/fossilized (Long, 2003) habits of hyperactive language monitoring (Krashen, 1981; Levelt, 1983; Morrison & Low, 1983) as well as phrase stress and intonation development for students whose ingrained phrase stress or intonation patterns render their spoken English difficult for their North American target listeners to understand. *Fluency Buildup* is also valuable because of the face validity it has for learners whose educational cultures place a high value on imitation as a means of learning.

The third 15-minutes-per-day exercise, *Shadowing* ([Appendix 4](#)), also involves following a model, but allows learners to use expert speaker talk directly as a scaffold (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976) toward producing more comprehensible output (Swain, 1995) while pushing learners to match the

talking speed of the speaker they are shadowing, *Shadowing* thus increases fluency and develops learners' capacity to subdue an overactive language monitor (Krashen, 1981; Levelt, 1983; Morrison & Low, 1983) as well as supports their development of more target-like phrase stress and intonation.

The fourth exercise, *Analyze2Imitate: Pause Units, Phrase Stress, and Intonation* ([Appendix 5](#)), requires students to be far more analytical than any of the previous exercises and aims to disrupt stabilized (Long, 2003) pause unit (Brown, 1977, 2011), phrase stress and intonation patterns problematic for a student's target listeners by requiring learners to develop via a transcript of a speaker's talk their own "enhanced input" (Sharwood Smith, 1993) for use in imitating that talk. *Analyze2Imitate's* form-focused (R. Ellis, 2002; Long, 1991; Long & Robinson, 1998) input enhancement process requires learners to notice (Schmidt, 2001) and mark their chosen speaker's 1) pause units, 2) phrase stress (highlighting all instances of default vs. non-default phrase stress in different colors), and 3) uses of non-default (i.e., non-falling) intonation (via underlining). This process obviously necessitates that learners engage in repeated listening which, according to the input frequency research (N. Ellis, 2002), should also contribute to learners' noticing of target forms (Schmidt, 2001). *Analyze2Imitate* then requires learners to use their enhanced transcript to guide their recorded re-enactment of the speaker's talk and then assess their recording against their enhanced transcript to identify where they successfully imitated the expert speaker and where they did not. I have found that learners appreciate the immediately visible learning brought about by this somewhat complex exercise.

The final exercise introduced in this paper, *Analyze2Imitate: Ending Consonants* ([Appendix 6](#)) basically reflects the same SLA theoretical and research foundation as *Analyze2Imitate: Pause Units, Phrase Stress, and Intonation* ([Appendix 5](#)) except that the *Ending Consonants* exercise may not require students to engage in repeated listenings because its input enhancement (Sharwood Smith, 1993) demands are relatively simple, namely highlighting all consonants following the last pronounced vowel for all words in a transcript. The aim of the *Ending Consonants* exercise is to help learners acquire the ability demanded by both English vocabulary and English grammar of appending one consonant after another at the end of words, a pronunciation feature many English language learners find difficult to acquire since the English tendency to close syllables with consonants is marked among the world's languages (Eckman, 1977, 2004). (Incidentally, the *Analyze2Imitate* design is useful for non-pronunciation purposes as well: Another 15-minutes-per-day exercise I recommend is *Analyze2Imitate: Grammar* ([Appendix 7](#)). This exercise has students highlight grammar features with which they tend to make mistakes, e.g. highlighting all verbs if they have trouble with verb tenses or subject/verb agreement or all instances of the article "a" and plural "-s" if they have trouble using the countable noun markers that English requires.)

Obviously, underlying all *Analyze2Imitate* exercises are the emergentist (cf., N. Ellis, 2002, 2007) and skill-acquisition (DeKeyser, 1998; Johnson, 1988, 1996) theories' claims that conscious, explicit, declarative language knowledge *can* become unconscious, implicit, and procedural and that intentional learning *can* lead to acquisition, not merely "learning" (Krashen, 1994). Other emergentist assumptions (cf., N. Ellis, 2002, 2007) instantiated in the *Analyze2Imitate* exercises are that 1) acquisition involves gradual strengthening of associations, e.g., associations between a speaker's meaning and his or her use of contrastive/emphatic stress and non-default intonation, and 2) language in the brain is primarily rooted in exemplars, not rules (though learners do inductively derive rules from exemplar patterns).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper has been to demonstrate to instructors of advanced pronunciation students that they do *not* need infinite amounts of motivation, time, energy or any other resource to provide students such as ITAs with substantial SLA-theory-and-research-grounded practice that wholly parallels their widely varying individual needs. In our era of increasing selection in high-quality Internet resources that are easily turned to language-learning advantage, individual student feedback linked to appropriate SLA-grounded exercises will suffice if combined with an appropriate accountability mechanism. Such exercises will not only build students' language capacity during our courses, but provide them learner training for continued independent language acquisition. So let's individualize our ITA students' homework!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Monica Richards is a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Linguistics and Technology at Iowa State University. Her research and materials development interests relate to SLA-grounded pedagogy for all skills, particularly pronunciation. All exercises below — in addition to other recommended 15-minutes-per-day exercises on pronunciation, grammar, listening, etc. — are available for linking on her website relateworldwide.org.

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APPENDIX 1

Moodle's "Questionnaire" activity used as a daily homework reporting tool ([Return to text](#))

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
ISUComm Courses

Individual OECT Homework Reporting Tool

[Home](#) → [My courses](#) → [English as a Second Language](#) → [Engl 180D - 4 - S14](#) → [General](#) → [Individual OECT Homework Reporting Tool](#) → [Answer the questions...](#)

Individual OECT Homework Reporting Tool

As graduate students, we're all busy and it's easy not to complete homework for which we're not held accountable. Therefore, report here having completed your 15-minutes-per-day homework every day (required 4 days per week beginning Monday, January 27th) **after** completing your 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment for that day. Don't forget to **report** your work each day, because **our tool allows you to report only one day's 15-minutes-per-day assignment each day (!)** and because you **must** have reported completing your 15-minutes-per-day homework for at least 60 days before the end of the semester!

1 * Have you completed your 15-minutes-per-day homework today?

Yes No

2 * Which assigned exercise or other allowable homework activity did you work on?

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

You are logged in as [Monica Richards: Student](#)([Return to my normal role](#))
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APPENDIX 2

Directions for sample 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment 4/3/2
(adapted from Paul Nation's *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*, 2001) ([Return to text](#))

4/3/2 directions

Directions for building fluency via 4/3/2

1. Choose one of the following to teach/present:

- Choose a concept/problem/example in your field that you could explain to an undergrad in just a few minutes
- Choose 2-3 slides from one of your class or conference presentations
- Choose 2-3 slides from an interesting presentation you find on [Slideshare](#), [Slideboom](#), or [Speaker Deck](#) or a few frames from an interesting presentation you find at <http://prezi.com/explore/>
- Choose a brief online article discussing interesting information you might want to tell someone in the future

2. Unless you're using existing slides or Prezi presentation frames, spend 5-15 minutes outlining the main points/important details you want to mention. (Do not write a transcript!!!)

3. Set the countdown timer below for 4 minutes and give your talk (either to a partner or to an imaginary audience. If you give your talk to an imaginary audience, don't let yourself start over if you make a mistake! Just continue on—you can correct your mistake when you give your talk in 3 minutes.)

4. Set the timer for 3 minutes and give your talk again.

5. Set the timer for 2 minutes and give your talk again. (Can you sense that this time you were more fluent and more accurate—and you used more complex language—than when you gave your talk the first time?)



(FYI: It's great if you can do this exercise with three other people, because then you can rotate partners once you have both given a talk to and heard a talk from your current partner. Doing this exercise in a group of 4 allows all of you to give your talk to a new "real audience" every time the amount of time for your talk changes.)

APPENDIX 3

Directions for sample 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment *Fluency Buildup* ([Return to text](#))

Fluency Buildup

If your OECT Feedback indicates you struggle with fluency,

1. **Find a TED Talk (e.g. from Monica's list of recommended 3-minute TED Talks) or Newsy report** you find interesting.
2. Select the transcript text with your mouse and click "Ctrl + C" to copy it. Paste your copied text into a Microsoft Word or other document by clicking Ctrl + V.
3. **Watch the TED talk at least twice, inserting "/" where the speaker makes a short pause and inserting "//" where the speaker makes a long pause.** (Use pencil if you do this with a printed transcript, so you can easily fix mistakes!)

When you see / a diagram like this, / I don't want you to be afraid. I want you to be excited. I want you to be relieved. / Because / simple answers may emerge. / We're discovering in nature that / simplicity often lies / on the other side of complexity. So for any problem, / the more you can zoom out / and embrace complexity, the better chance you have / of zooming in / on the simple details / that matter most. (Eric Berlow: "Simplifying Complexity," TED)

4. **Listen again to how the speaker says a sentence or two and then pause the video.**
5. **Say the first phrase 5 times, without any pauses and following the speaker's phrase stress, intonation, etc.** (If you do pause when saying the phrase, start over at 1 again when counting your 5 times.), e.g.

What you say: "When. . . .you see. . . ."

What you think: 'Oh, no! I paused. I need to start over. . .'

What you say: "When you see. . . , When you see. . . , When you see. . . , When you see. . . , When you see. . . ."

What you think: 'Okay, I can go to the next phrase. . . .'

6. **Do the same thing with the second phrase 5 times.**
7. **Now say the first and second phrase together 3 times, pausing only between the phrases:**

What you say: "When you see / a diagram like this,. . . , When you see / a diagram like this,. . . , When you see / a diagram like this,. . . , "

8. **Say the third phrase 5 times** as above.
9. **Now say the first, second, and third phrase together 3 times.**
10. **Continuing adding one phrase at a time, listening to the video when needed a few sentences at a time, until you can say an entire paragraph fluently, pausing only where the speaker paused.**
11. **Start over with the next paragraph at step 6 above. Once you've finished practicing the second paragraph, practice saying both the first and second paragraphs 3 times, allowing yourself to pause only where the speaker did.**
12. **Continue this process until you can give the speaker's entire speech fluently.**

APPENDIX 4

Directions for sample 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment *Shadowing* ([Return to text](#))

Shadowing

If your OECT Feedback indicates you should work on your English pause units, phrase stress, and/or intonation via shadowing, watch the video below to learn about this technique:



Then, find a **TED Talk** (e.g. from **Monica's list of recommended 3-minute TED Talks**) or a **Newsy** report you find interesting and shadow the speaker's pause units, phrase stress (i.e. lengthening of the stressed vowel in the final key word of the pause unit), intonation (i.e. the rise and fall of his or her voice), etc.

APPENDIX 5

Directions for sample 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment
Analyze2Imitate: Pause Units, Phrase Stress, and Intonation ([Return to text](#))

Analyze2Imitate: Pause Units, Phrase Stress, and Intonation

1. Find a **TED Talk** (e.g. from **Monica's list of recommended 3-minute TED Talks**) or a **Newsy report** you find interesting.
2. Select the transcript text with your mouse and click "Ctrl + C" to copy it. Paste your copied text into a Microsoft Word or other document by clicking Ctrl + V.
3. **Watch the TED talk at least twice, inserting "/" where the speaker makes a short pause and inserting "//" where the speaker makes a long pause.**
4. **Highlight the last "important word" of each pause unit (usually a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb)**, since this is the default position for phrase stress in English.
5. **Listen to the talk one more time to check whether the speaker actually stresses in each pause unit the word(s) you highlighted. Change your highlighting as necessary to match the speaker's actual phrase stress.** (FYI: English speakers tend to add phrase stress to a word by making whichever of its vowels receives the word stress longer.)
6. **If the speaker stresses a word in order to contrast it with another word, highlight in a different color the specific syllable he/she actually stresses** (It's important to highlight the exact syllable the speaker stresses and not just the word since contrast stress can not only change the word that gets stressed, but also which syllable in that word gets stressed). For example, Eric Berlow in his TED talk, "Simplifying Complexity," consistently shifts his word stress for the word "complicated" to contrast it with the word "complex":

"So / I hope to convince you that complex / doesn't always equal complicated. // So for me /, a well-crafted baguette, fresh out of the oven /, is complex /, but a / curry / onion / green olive / poppy cheese bread is complicated" (Eric Berlow: "Simplifying Complexity," TED).

7. **Read the transcript again, underlining each pause unit you think the speaker will mark with a rising tone vs. the default falling tone or other tones sometimes used in English.**
8. **Listen again to the talk to check/correct your predictions.**

"I also figured out / that / if you really want something badly enough, / you can do anything / for 30 days. // Have you ever wanted to write a novel? // Every November, / tens of thousands of people / try to write their own fifty thousand word novel / from scratch / in 30 days. // It turns out, / all you have to do / is write sixteen hundred and sixty-seven words a day / for a month. // So I did. // By the way, the secret / is not to go to sleep / until you've written your words for the day. // You might be sleep-deprived, / but / you'll finish your novel. // Now / is my book / the next great American novel? // No. / I wrote it in a month. / It's awful. / But / for the rest of my life, / if I meet John Hodgman at a TED party, / I don't have to say, / "I'm a / computer scientist." / No, no, / if I want to, I can say, / "I'm a novelist." /" (Matt Cutts: "Try something new for 30 days," TED).

9. **Record yourself giving the talk** (perhaps using a tool like <http://online-voice-recorder.com/>). Pay attention to pausing only where you marked either "/" or "//", to lengthening the stressed vowels in each of your highlighted words, and to using rising intonation with every pause unit you underlined.
10. **Check your recording.** Did you pause only where you marked "/" or "//"? Did you lengthen the stressed vowels of all your highlighted words? Did you use rising intonation for all of your underlined pause units? Mark in **bold** any pause units in which you made a pausing, phrase stress, or intonation mistake.
11. **Rerecord the talk**, paying particular attention to the stress and intonation of the words and phrases you marked in **bold**.

APPENDIX 6

Directions for sample 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment

Analyze2Imitate: Ending Consonants ([Return to text](#))**Analyze2Imitate: Ending Consonants**

If your OECT Feedback indicates you frequently omit final consonant sounds:

1. Find a TED Talk (e.g. from [Monica's list of recommended 3-minute TED Talks](#)) or a Newsy report you find interesting.
2. Select the transcript text with your mouse and click "Ctrl + C" to copy it. Paste your copied text into a Microsoft Word or other document by clicking Ctrl + V.
3. Watch the TED talk at least twice, inserting "/" where the speaker makes a short pause and inserting "/" where the speaker makes a long pause. (Use pencil if you do this with a printed transcript, so you can easily fix mistakes!)
4. Read through the talk, highlighting all final consonant sounds like in the example below:

When you see / a diagram like this, / I don't want you to be afraid. I want you to be excited. I want you to be relieved. / Because / simple answers may emerge. / We're discovering in nature that / simplicity often lies / on the other side of complexity. So for any problem, / the more you can zoom out / and embrace complexity, the better chance you have / of zooming in / on the simple details / that matter most. (Eric Berlow: Simplifying Complexity, TED)



APPENDIX 7

Directions for sample 15-minutes-per-day homework assignment

Analyze2Imitate: Grammar ([Return to text](#))

Analyze2Imitate: Grammar

The first step in improving your spoken English grammar is to increase your ability to hear errors as errors. One way you can develop this ability is the following:

1. Find a TED Talk (e.g. from [Monica's list of recommended 3-minute TED Talks](#)) or a [Newsy report](#) you find interesting.
2. Select the transcript text with your mouse and click "Ctrl + C" to copy it. Paste your copied text into a Microsoft Word or other document by clicking Ctrl + V.
3. Record yourself reading the transcript aloud (perhaps using a tool like <http://online-voice-recorder.com/>), as naturally as possible, pretending you really are giving the talk.
4. Highlight in different colors all potential locations of the error types you know you have trouble with (e.g. Highlight all verbs in your transcript in green if you know you have trouble with verb tenses and/or subject/verb agreement. Highlight all plural nouns in your transcript in yellow if you tend to say things like "two factor_." Highlight all articles—"a" and "an" and "the"— in orange if you know you tend to make article mistakes.)

"Unless we **do** something **to prevent** it, over **the** next 40 **years** we're **facing** **an** epidemic of neurologic **diseases** on **a** global scale. **A** cheery thought. On this map, every country that's **colored** blue **has** more than 20 percent of its population over **the** age of 65. This **is** **the** world we **live** in. And this **is** **the** world your **children** **will live** in. For 12,000 **years**, **the** distribution of **ages** in **the** human population **has looked** like **a** pyramid, with **the** oldest on top. It's **already flattening out**. By 2050, it's **going to be** **a** column and **will start to invert**. This **is** why it's **happening**. The average lifespan's **more than doubled** since 1840, and it's **increasing** currently at **the** rate of about five **hours** every day. And this **is** why that's **not entirely** **a** good thing: because over **the** age of 65, your risk of getting Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease **will increase** exponentially. By 2050, there'll **be** about 32 million people in **the** United **States** over **the** age of 80, and unless we **do** something **about** it, half of them **will have** Alzheimer's disease and three million more **will have** Parkinson's disease." (Gregory Petsko: "The coming neurological epidemic," TED).

5. For each highlighter color you used, listen carefully to your recording one time, paying close attention to what you actually said for the words highlighted in that color vs. what the transcript indicates you ought to have said. Mark in bold any highlighted words on your transcript with which you made an error.
6. Rerecord yourself giving the talk one more time, paying particular attention to any words marked in bold on your transcript. (But you don't need to listen to/check this second recording again unless you want to.)