



PIANO D'INTERVENTO PER LA RIDUZIONE
DEI DIVARI TERRITORIALI IN ISTRUZIONE

FORMAZIONE SULLE COMPETENZE DI BASE



INDIRE
ISTITUTO
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Pronunciation in the language classroom

Easy approaches to improve clarity

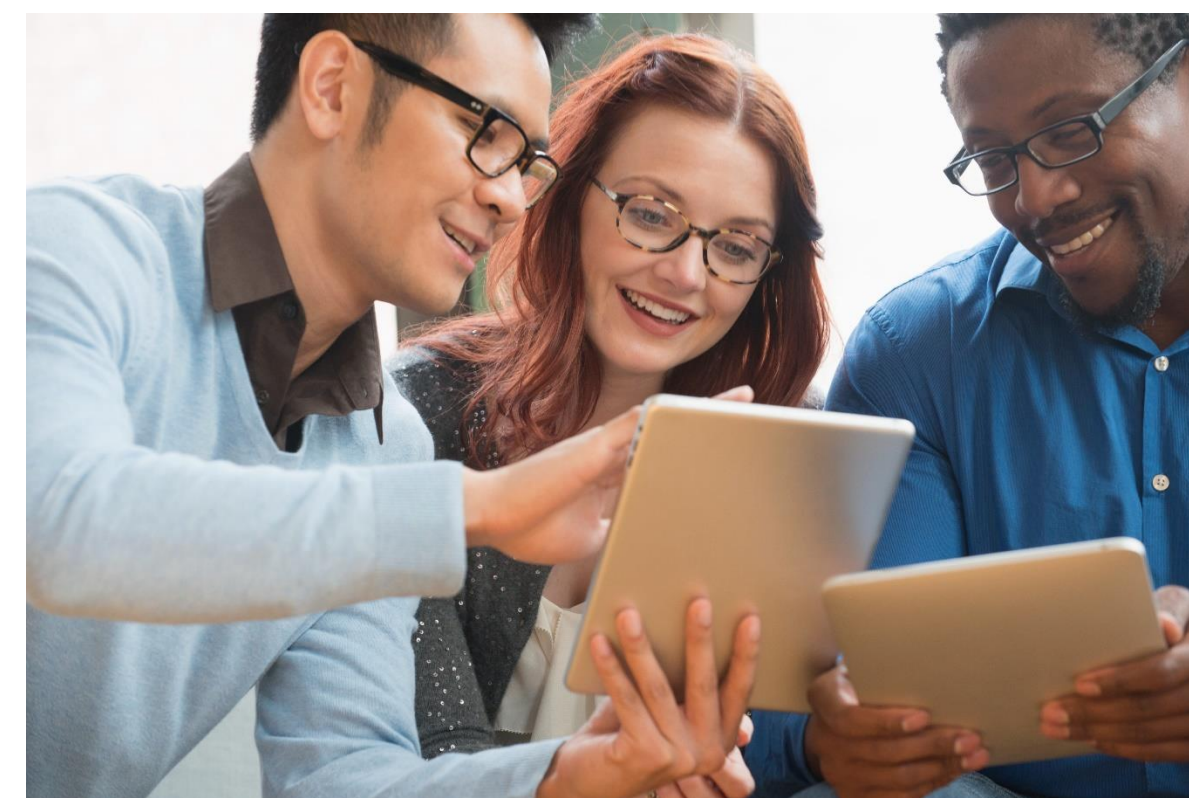
Dott. Giacomo Folinazzo (University of Toronto)

Key Points:

- Native speaker – myths and common beliefs
- Pronunciation - the science
- Common errors – contrastive analysis
- Segmentals – 4 tips
- Suprasegmentals – 2 tips

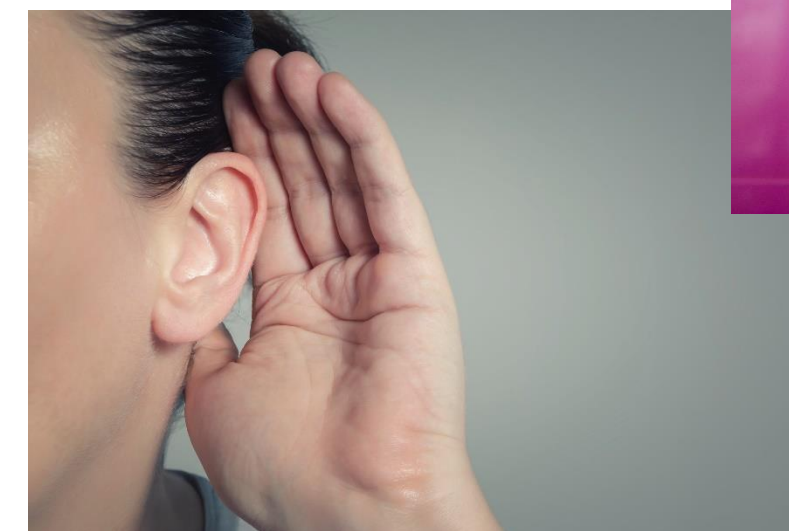
Native speaker – myth, fears, and uselessness

- The term “native speaker” is no longer used in the CEFRCV and it is disappearing in the literature
- The perfect pronunciation is a myth
- Canada, USA, Singapore, England, Australia, New Zealand, etc.
- The question of when (age and level)
- Clarity should be the goal
- Clarity can be improved



Pronunciation

- Phonetics is a science with specific rules. Practice alone does not equal improvement.
- Three fundamental steps:
 - **awareness**
 - **sound distinction** (hearing)
 - **production** (physical aspect of speech mechanism)
 - **(self) monitoring** (for habit formation)



Segmentals – basic principles

- **Voicing** (vibration or no vibration) – s, z, f, v, k, g, t, d

- **Vowels:**

7 short vowels: /ɪ/ /ʊ/ /ə/ /e/ /ɒ/ /ʌ/ /æ/

5 long vowels: /i:/ /u:/ /ɑ:/ /ɔ:/ /ɜ:/

8 diphthongs: /eɪ/ /aɪ/ /ɔɪ/ /əʊ/ /aʊ/ /ɪə/ /eə/ /ʊə/

- **New sounds (not in Italian)**

Th = ə. θ ʒ = garage

4 tips

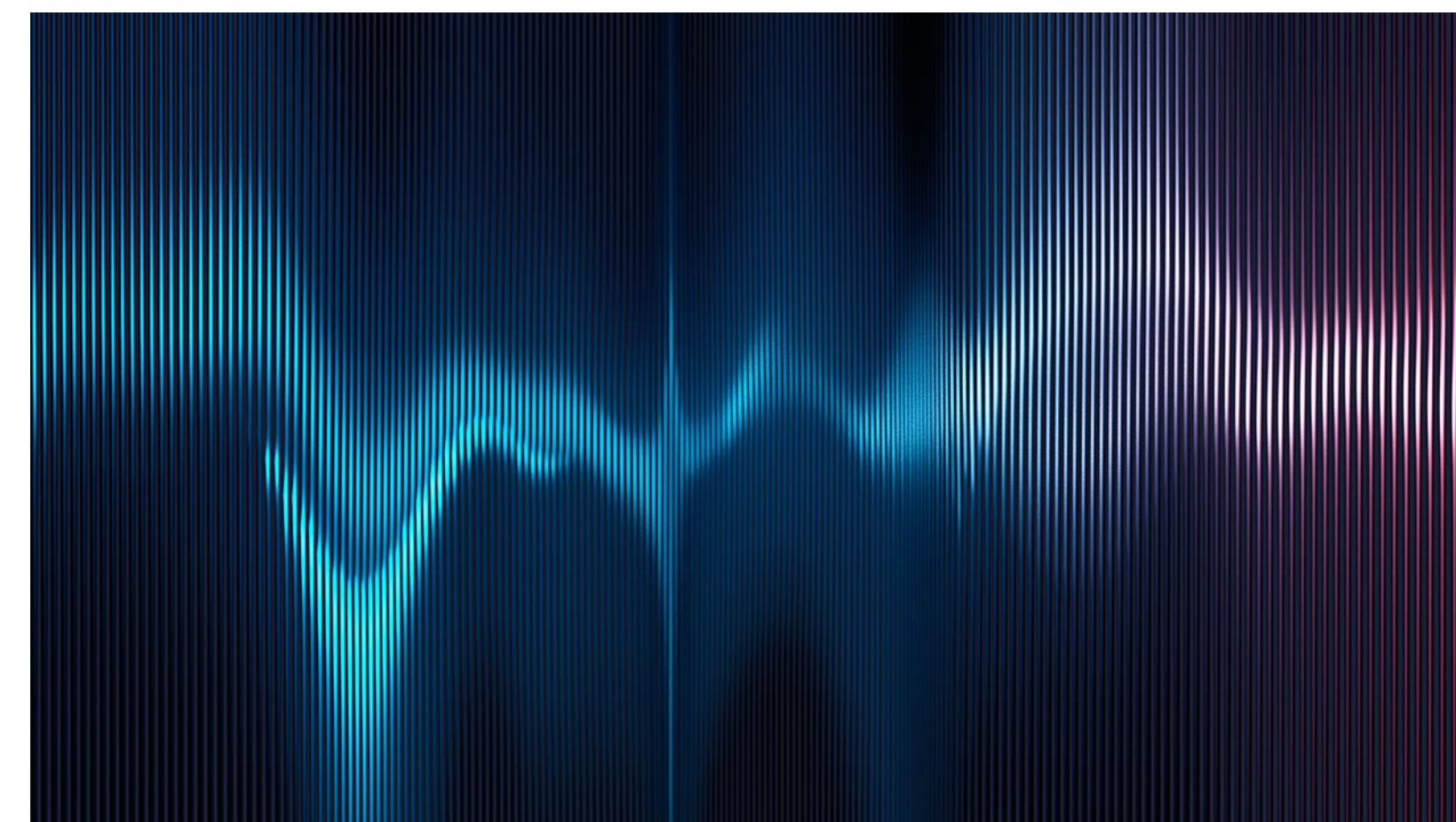
- Word endings (adding schwa)
- Key consonant sounds: S vs Z and TH
- Aspiration: /h/ /p/ /t/ /k/
- Word stress and linking

Word endings

- **Adding schwa /ə/**
English words that end with a consonant:
e.g. Facebook, take, push, social, app, site
- **-s endings in words:** /s/ /z/ /əz/
mats /s/
cars /z/
glasses /əz/
- **-ed endings in verbs:** /d/ /t/ /əd/
played /d/
walked /t/
wanted /əd/

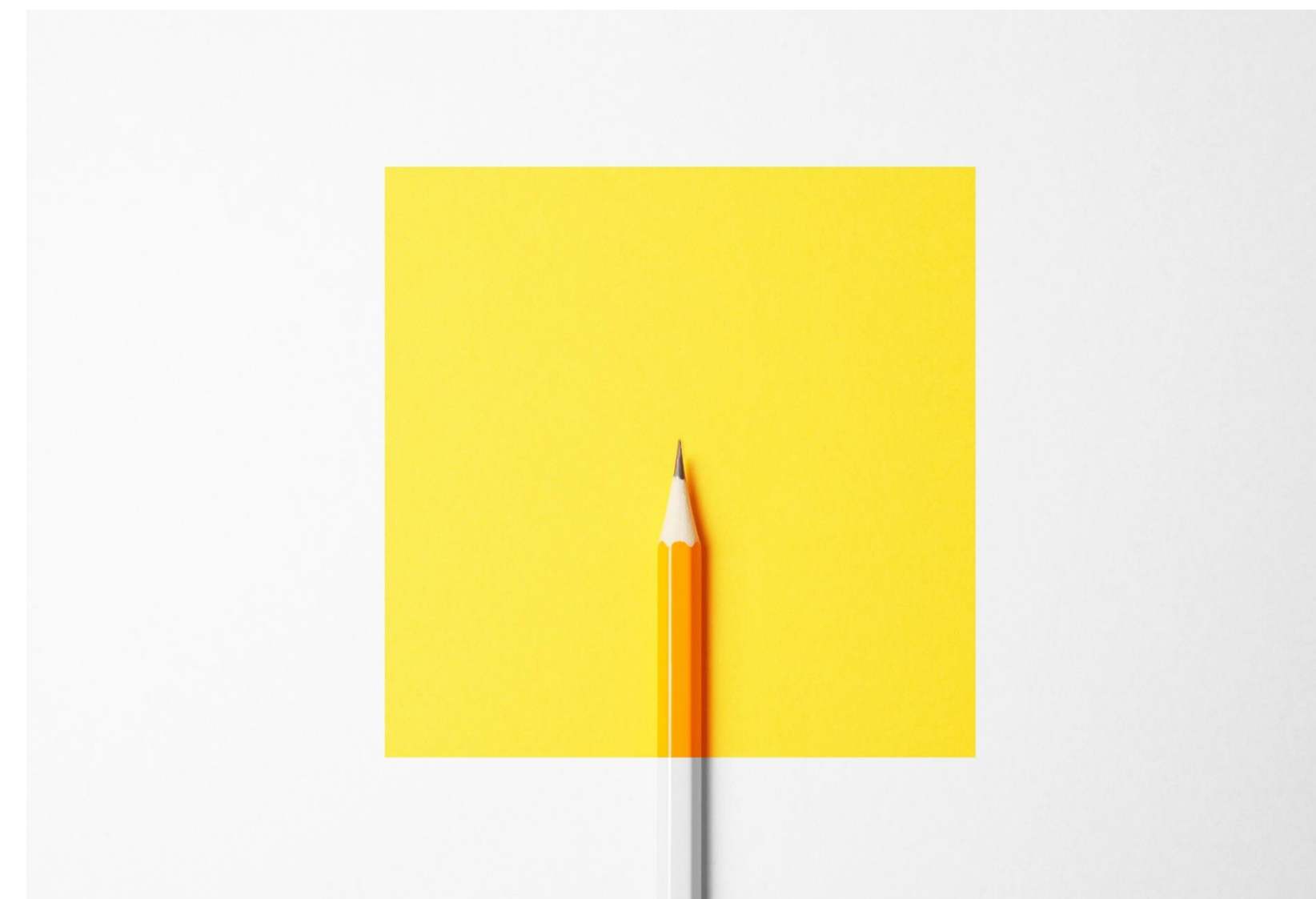
Key consonants and voicing

- **/s/ vs /z/**
sleep, sneeze, slow, smack
-Teaching tip: vocal folds
- **TH: /ə/ /θ/**
three, thanks, both, think
those, that, these, brother
-Teaching tip: finger



Aspiration (puff of breath)

- /h/
Hotel, happy, hello
- /p/ /t/ /k/
people, tower, pizza, tip, cake



Teaching tip: piece of paper

Suprasegmentals

- **Word Stress**

Photography, direect, apartment, observatory

- **Linking**

Get it, spent all of it, take it all, go away, see it



Teaching tips

- Make it fun (it can be silly at first)
- Use tongue twisters
- Have students imitate speakers (actors, famous speeches)
- Invite audio and video recording,
- Promote comparison and self monitoring
- Raise awareness of differences
- Underline the importance of clarity
- Use songs (raps, reading lyrics) to train the ear
- Use online tool and apps
- Raise awareness
- Include pronunciation in your lessons and assessments

Useful sites

<https://easypronunciation.com/en/>

<http://www.tedpower.co.uk/l1italian.html> (Typical errors of Italian speakers)

www.lyricstraining.com (Listen to songs and type lyrics)

<https://www.naturalreaders.com/online/> (Text to speech software)

<https://howjsay.com> (Audio dictionary)

<https://speechnotes.co> (Speech to text)