

Pronunciation: Drawing a Strict Line between Models and Goals

Dr. Majid Abdulatif Ibrahim

Dept. of English, Faculty of Arts & Sciences, Middle East University, P.O. Box 283, Amman
11831, Jordan.

Email: majidabd2@hotmail.com

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Abstract

Some non-native speakers of English presuppose that they are “the best” users of English simply because they have certain voice qualifications like voice softness and smoothness to imitate native speakers. That they are biased in favor of pronunciation leads them to think that pronouncing well is the single decisive criterion for someone to be identified as a “good” speaker of English. The limits of this phenomenon have sometimes transcended individuals’ pretensions when some teachers and lecturers have belittled learners and users of language by adopting this issue so extremely. The current paper aims at proving theoretically and practically that these pretensions are entirely true and that the actual situation of the English language is moving towards pronunciation goals (acceptability) rather than pronunciation models (accuracy). This paves the way that someone’s acceptable pronunciation suffices to label him/her as a non-native speaker of English.

Keywords: Pronunciation, Models, Goals, Accuracy, Acceptability, Non-Native Speakers.

Introduction

Human beings as they are, individuals are members of numerous speaking communities. By doing nearly everything, they simultaneously express themselves and relate to others consciously and unconsciously. These two aspects are important not only for indicating what they are but also for establishing who they are, namely, speech and pronunciation are good means to know persons’ identity.

On a general ground, pronunciation, as the production of significant sound, serves two chief purposes: In first place, it is manipulated to be part of a code of a particular language. So, distinctive sounds are as different as languages of the world. In this sense, pronunciation reflects the production and perception of speech sounds. Secondly, pronunciation is used to achieve meaning in contexts of use. Here, the code combines with other factors to make communication possible, and this, in turn, means that pronunciation plays the role of referring to acts of speaking.

In this position, an inquiry may be raised as to what extend non-native speakers need or want to join the native-speaking community. Being foreigners to our interlocutors inserts a stumbling block in front of the automatic assessments carried out within their routine value system. A foreign accent may place the speaker outside the orbit of the native speaker

community, and therefore may make him a handicap rather than an asset. For this reason, some non-native speakers of English presuppose that they are “the best” users of English simply because they have certain voice qualifications like voice softness and smoothness to imitate native speakers. That they are biased in favor of pronunciation leads them to think that pronouncing well is the single decisive criterion for someone to be identified as a “good” speaker of English. The limits of this phenomenon have sometimes transcended individuals’ pretensions when some teachers and lecturers have belittled learners and users of language by adopting this issue so extremely. Such an action may deprive most of them of seizing any opportunity to be speakers of English. In fact, pronunciation is a matter of self-image that speakers may prefer to keep their accent deliberately in order to retain their self-respect or to gain the approval of their peers.

The current paper aims at proving theoretically and practically that these pretensions are entirely true and that the actual situation of the English language is moving towards pronunciation goals (acceptability) rather than pronunciation models (accuracy). This paves the way that someone’s acceptable pronunciation suffices to label him/her as a non-native speaker of English. The paper is based on analyzing six non-native informants’ speech in which some of their non-native words are randomly compared with those uttered actually by BBC (RP) speakers of English as documented in *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary* (Roach et al 2006). This comparison is conducted in a form of tabulated data whose main content is transcribed phonemically (see Table (1)).

Standard English Pronunciation: Some Viewpoints

English is an international, global language which is spoken by nearly four hundred millions of non-native speakers. They are living in countries that need English as a foreign language for external purposes such as trade and scientific technology. Many other millions need to use English as a second language for internal purposes like administration, broadcasting and education (Quirk, 1968:1). Thus, this entails the use of different varieties of English. Non-native speakers are advised by several scholars (Ward, 1972; MacCarthy, 1978; O’Connor, 1980) to follow the main varieties of English with which they are familiar, i. e, British or American English, and for those who have the opportunity to emigrate to Australia, it is appropriate, due to their environment, to adopt the Australian model of English. In fact, there is a freedom margin on the non-native speaker’ part whose environment lacks the use of English for communicative purposes to select the appropriate native model of English in so far as suiting his convenience, because he should take into account that varieties have more in common. This may lead us to recapitulate that the models to be followed in speaking English are various and it is the speaker’s goal which determines what type of a pronunciation model is more suitable and then more communicative and mutual than others.

The question of the identity of standard pronunciation brings with it some sort of difficulty for anyone to define and, to some extent, to deny its existence. Standard English is a type of dialect accepted and approved by the educated people and gains an authoritative body. In reality, no two persons of the same birthplace and educational background speak alike, and no one has the right to impose one of the varieties to be used as a standard pronunciation. Pronunciation cannot stand by itself as an identity for the speakers without the contribution to idioms, usages and the social behavior.

From a theoretical angle, pronunciation is the type of linguistic organization that characterizes one national standard language from another one completely and that associates the national standards varieties with the regional ones. Moreover, it is the least

institutionalized aspect of language in comparison with grammar and lexical items since its norms are less subservient to educational and national constraints than to social ones and this means, in effect, that some regional accents are less acceptable than others (Quirk 1985).

Although there is a general agreement on Standard English as far as it is very much manipulated in lexical and syntactic aspects, an increasing recognition grows as to what extent the reality of pronunciation standardization is doomed to suspicion. To a native speaker's point of view, a person who converses with foreigners knows that a good pronunciation does not necessarily cope with the ability to express oneself fluently in a foreign language. Fluency, in a way or another, is a quality that varies considerably, both on foreigners' part as well as native speakers' part, according to the situation and the topic of conversation (Corder, 1973:256).

Davies (2003) goes further eliminating the native speaker concept as being full of ambiguity since it is both myth and reality. By remaining a learner, the native speaker gains access to the standard language. It is the membership of the group of native speakers that determines behavior, that is, adoption of the standard language rather than the other way: behavior determines membership. Besides, it is membership as a native speaker that specifies the choice of the code to be used in a communicative interaction including the standard language. Such an emphasis on identity allows us to admit that a failure to define the native speaker may indicate that native speakers define themselves passively as not being non-native speakers: to be a native speaker means not being as a non-native speaker.

It is difficult for a non-native speaker to become a native speaker of a second language precisely because the latter is a person who has early acquired the language. However, the limitations imposed by the later acquisition, when successful, tend to be psycholinguistic rather than sociolinguistic. The non-native speaker can acquire the communicative competence of the native speaker; she/he can acquire the confidence necessary to membership. Leaving aside the matter of dialectal divergence, what is more difficult for the non-native speaker is to gain the speed and the certainty of knowledge relevant to judgments of grammaticality. But as with all questions of boundaries (for the native speaker is a boundary that excludes), there are major language differences among native speakers. Native speakers may be prepared to make judgments quickly about grammaticality but they do not necessarily agree with one another. If a non-native speaker is willing to pass as a native speaker and is so accepted, then it is surely irrelevant if she/he shows differences on more and more refined tests of grammaticality (Cook, 1999).

Pronunciation and Speech

Though speech and pronunciation in particular belong to the same activity, namely, the oral form of language, the latter is concerned with the way in which speech is produced, whereas the former is the manifestation of what is said via thoughts, lexical items, style and the like. If learning languages can be best carried out in writing, then understanding them mutually can be fruitfully accomplished when listening or hearing others. When someone involves in speech (whatever the form of speech may be: conversation, dialogue or chatting), certain considerations should be mentally taken into account before he/she utters any words or expressions. The speaker has to select appropriate and acceptable words to be exploited in a given context consciously. The "brain instruction" orders the speech organs with the air in the lungs to emit sounds out of the speaker's mouth at different speech rates, and this lucidly reveals that speech does not only go into the orbit of pronunciation but also exceeds it. In fact, one may be able to utter and make use of certain words and phrases, but he/she is not

able to participate actively in conversation which requires more than pronunciation; he/she may get entangled with an unwanted position in which his/her suitable expressions are lost at the moment he/she intends to speak.

On the cognitive footing, Speech is the carrier of language, the vehicle for reflective thought. The mental life of the species may be merely a welter of emotion and unconsidered reaction if it is not for the gift of language, with its facility for framing conceptual propositions, ranging from the simple and the concrete to the complex and the most highly abstract. Equally, language is the essential articulation of the cognitive machinery of society, as embodied in the traditional and contemporary institutions of literature, education, science, commerce, law, and government.

Speech is the most interactive of all social human skills. People's personal experience of social life would undoubtedly have a very different form if the human species had not developed the ability to communicate through speech, because people use speech to initiate, calibrate, negotiate, and consolidate their social relations with others. In this social sense, speech is worth studying because more is learned about the social meaning of what it is to be human. In this same vein, speech is worth studying in order to find out what is universally characteristic of human beings as a species (Hauser, 1996), versus the specifics of a given culture and its language. By extension, it is worth learning what is general to a community, versus what counts as idiosyncratic variation at a personal level. Looking at pronunciation, for instance, it may be asked why the spoken languages of the world seem to use only a quite limited selection of contrasting sound patterns, from the total range of sound types that the speech apparatus is capable of producing. As a further generalization, the languages of the world tend to share broadly similar sound types from this restricted set of possibilities. More is learned about the communicative principles of language by exploring the criteria behind the selections made by linguistic evolution in this area.

More significantly, political and social parameters should be more preoccupied than linguistic ones when speech is thoroughly looked upon. There are social ranks according to which people judge that such and such a dialect or accent is the "correct" one. Moreover, faced with the considerable diversity of English accents, the non-native speaker may wish that it is convenient to adopt a neutral, multi-purpose, international pronunciation of English. It is claimed by some scholars that as a result of the great improvement in communications, the present divergences in English as it is spoken throughout the world may gradually be eliminated and there would emerge a universally intelligible pronunciation of English which all can use (Cruttenden, 2007).

Insisting on "correct" pronunciation may not always be received with welcome, and above all, it may not be feasible. People manipulate a great deal of their identity in the way they speak that their pronunciation proves an extreme reaction against change, particularly with those who are older learners. There is compelling evidence that early language learning is full of advantage in the domain of pronunciation. Thus, while no age stands out as optimal for all aspects of foreign language learning, it has been verified that because of certain psychological factors, people's resistance to modifying their pronunciation increases as they get older: their ego-boundaries is concretely constructed with age, their language ego becomes less flexible (Ellis, 1994).

Crystal (1988) discusses some of the most frequent pronunciation complaints heard from BBC listeners. He points out that what is often regarded as "sloppy" speech is, in fact, characteristic of everyday usage for most speakers. Explaining why a pronunciation has developed does not explain why some people have come to hate, and it is the same with

other areas of usage. The reason behind such a tendency may be something to do with the way one social group, at some time in the past, adopted a usage in order to keep themselves apart from another social group which did not. In particular, an accent comes to be used like a badge, showing a person's social identity, and thus there are several pronunciation patterns which are loaded in this way.

Any pronunciation can be combined with either good or bad voice-production. Much of what is sometimes called 'beautiful' or 'ugly' in speech is merely convention. The beauty or ugliness applies to certain environments, and we are apt to attribute beauty or ugliness to sounds which remind us of those environments. A study of phonetics reveals that we ourselves make use of pronunciation which, at first sight, we may be tempted to condemn. Accordingly, we learn to become very tolerant of other people's pronunciation

Pronunciation and Language Teaching

Pronunciation teaching has not always drawn teachers' and language-teaching theorists' interest, and in the 1970s and 1980s it was fashionable to treat it as being outdated activity. It has been presupposed that attempts should be made on learners' part to sound like native speakers of BBC pronunciation (formerly RP). This is severely criticized and it is encouraging to see that in recent years there has been an increasing growth of interest in pronunciation teaching and many new publications on the subject – an interest which puts an end to the delusion of imitating every pros and cons of a native-like speech (Roach 2009). No pronunciation course designers have ever stated that learners and language users ought to speak with a perfect BBC accent, simply because this gets lost in the shuffle between models and goals: the model selected is BBC, but the goal is to develop the learner's pronunciation sufficiently to permit effective communication with native speakers.

In his own words, Jones (1956: 4) writes: "‘good’ speech may be defined as a way of speaking which is clearly intelligible to all ordinary people. ‘Bad’ speech is a way of talking which is difficult for most people to understand the speaker. A person may speak with sounds very different from those of his hearers and yet be clearly intelligible to all of them. His speech cannot be described as other than ‘good’".

It is not sufficient for the foreign user of English to be presented with a general account of British attitudes to BBC English. Not only does he require advice on whether BBC English is an appropriate model in the first place but also he should be provided with some sort of guidance on acceptable tolerance and deviations from this model. As socio-linguistically viewed, Trudgill (2002) ascribes that BBC speakers scored low on traits like friendliness, companionability and sincerity, and messages couched in BBC English also proved to be less persuasive than the same messages in local accents. The BBC accent is no longer the necessary passport to employment of certain sorts that it once was. Other accents than the BBC one are very much more common than those were forty years ago.

More importantly, Harmer (1982:166), in his attempt to define accuracy, has envisaged it as a capacity to be concomitant to the linguistic rules with no deviation from this orientation, whereas fluency refers to the spontaneous and confident use of the language without thinking of its strict forms and rules. Insistence on accuracy seems to be closely related to teachers' educational background. It has been the consensus of innocent-looking opinion that the wind of change has blown and that language teaching has witnessed a great shift from traditional approaches into modern ones; the communicative method is, no doubt, the most prominent one.

A Procedure of Collecting Data Samples

When listening to the media, the researcher has found that different samples of non-native speakers of English, who have been interviewed for giving their own opinions, attitudes, or impressions on certain political, educational and social issues, are remote – when they utter their words – from what is called the “accurate pronunciation” represented by the “standard” or “BBC pronunciation”. It has been noted that the pronunciation of some random words (not all of words are tackled) is not as precise as that of native speakers of English. Some words are articulated with a different phonetic shape; others are said with a phonetically deformed shape. However, the interviewees’ ill-pronunciation is received by welcome and it is totally accepted to the extent that there is neither interruption and rejection nor misunderstanding on the part of program interviewers.

It would be convenient to identify the informants and to shed an eliminating light on the nature of their discourses as follows (For a fuller account of their recorded speech, see Appendix (1)):

1. A university professor (Kuwaiti): His speech was recorded when broadcasted on KTV2. He talked about the extent to which parents are responsible for playing a pivotal role in keeping an eye on TV programs their children are watching.
2. A university professor (Egyptian): His speech was recorded as broadcasted on KTV2. He commented on what was meant by hyperactivity in children, concentrating on the fact that there were different lines of such hyperactive children.
3. A manager of Lisbon World Exposition (Portuguese): Her speech was recorded when broadcasted on Portuguese TV. She displayed the rationales behind holding such a Fair and shed some light on the number of visitors who attended it.
4. The Austrian Foreign Minister (Austrian): His speech was recorded as broadcasted on Austrian International Radio. He answered various questions and quires concerning the Turkey-Greece crisis of Cyprus.
5. A Sierra Leonean tourist guide (Sierra Leonean): her speech was recorded when broadcasted on the Voice of America Radio (VOA). She exposed children’s educational, pedagogical and healthy circumstances in the country.
6. A Brazilian correspondent (Brazilian): His speech was recorded as broadcasted on the Voice of America Radio (VOA). He made direct references to the unjust division of wealth between the richest countries and the poorest ones in the world.

Analysis of Informants’ Random Word and Expression Pronunciations

Having a scrutinizing look at Table (1) elucidates that nearly all of informants have committed mistakes in uttering English vowels. They have mostly replaced some of these vowels by other ones, and consequently a hearer may interpret words with divergent meanings.

As far as the first informant’s word pronunciations are concerned, the table shows that in a word like “very”, /e/ which is a short front vowel is replaced by the long central vowel /ɜ:/. In “show”, /ɔ:/ is substituted for /əʊ/ so that the word becomes another one, namely, “shore” /ʃɔ:/. In the word “atmosphere”, the /-i:r/ sequence is uttered instead of the /ɪə/ diphthong, and a weak penultimate syllable /-mə-/ is thus changed into a strong penultimate syllable /-mɒ-/ resulting that the first syllable of the word, which carries the secondary stress in BBC English, is said to have a primary stress. Words such as “also”, “power”, “closely” and “notice” are also given different articulations on the informant part as follows: the /əʊ/ diphthong of “also” is replaced by /ɒ/, the /aʊə/ triphthong of “power” by /əʊr/, the /əʊ/ diphthong of “closely” by /ɔ:/ and the /əʊ/ diphthong of “notice” by /ɔɪ/.

In respect to the second informant's pronunciation, the table displays that in such words as "different" and "psychologist", the suffixes (-ent) and (-ist) are pronounced as /-ent/ and /-est/ instead of /-ənt/ and /-ɪst/. This entails a stress shift from the first syllable into the last one. The word "condition" is usually uttered in BBC English as /kən'dɪʃən/ in which the first and final syllables are the weakest ones containing the /ə/ vowel in comparison with the penultimate syllable /-dɪ-/ which is supposed to be more prominent: it carries the primary stress. However, the word is pronounced as /'kɒndɪʃən/ so that the first syllable becomes the prominent one among the others. The table also illustrates that there is a growing tendency on the second informant part to articulate the /e/ short vowel more frequently than the /eɪ/ diphthong particularly in the words "range" and "age", in the penultimate syllable of the word "educational" and in the final syllable of the words "concentrate", "motivate" and "cooperate" respectively. Moreover, there is a vague pronunciation which is heard in the word "cooperate": it is articulated as a tri-syllabic word in such a way that the first and second syllables are fused together to form one syllable containing one vowel peak /ɒ/, while, in BBC English, it is a four-syllable word.

As for the third informant's pronunciation, the table indicates that the word "exhibition" is said with an entirely divergent phonetic shape where the two-consonant cluster /ks-/ become /gz-/ and the /ɪ/ vowel in the penultimate syllable is uttered /i:/ instead. In addition, the word "this" and expressions like "as well" and "it was" are articulated with phonetically deformed shapes: /dɪd/, /əz vel/ and /ɪd wɑ:z/ successively. The table also demonstrates that the word "academy" is heard as /əkədəmɪə/: the final /ɪə/ replaces the /ɪ/ vowel. The /u:/ long vowel is said instead of the /ʊ/ short vowel in such a word like "book". In the word "scientist", the suffix (-ist) is uttered in BBC English as /-ɪst/, while the informant pronounces it as /i:st/.

In relation to the fourth informant, the table uncovers the following facts: the final consonant /d/ in the word "should" is given the pronunciation of the voiceless /t/. The word "existing", pronounced in BBC English as /ɪg'zɪstɪŋ/, is uttered as /'ɛksɪstɪŋ/ in which the /'ɛsk-/ sequence replaces the one of /ɪg'z-/ , and this entails some sort of a shift in stress placement. The words "because" and "way" are articulated as /bekɔ:z/ and /wɜ:z/ instead of /bɪkɔz/ and /weɪ/ as known in BBC English. The word "without" is somewhat given a German pronunciation and consequently a non-English word emerges: /vəzəʊt/. Moreover, the words "our" and "finished" are said to have the /əʊə/ triphthong instead of the /aʊə/ triphthong and the /i:/ long vowel instead of the /ɪ/ short vowel respectively.

The fifth informant, as the table elucidates, has pronounced his own words as follows: the word "carpenter" is uttered in a way that the /ɑ:/ long vowel is replaced by the /ʌ/ short vowel. In words like "skill" and "teacher", the informant tends to substitute the /ɪ/ short vowel for the /i:/ long vowel and vice versa respectively. The word "a lot of" is articulated in such a totally different way that a non-English word is obtained, i.e. /əhu:təv/. In the word "escape", there is a considerably confused pronunciation with the /esk-/ sequence to the extent that it is uttered as /ekst-/, while in a word like "things", the /ɪ/ short vowel and the /n/ consonant are articulated as /i:/ and /ŋ/ successively.

According to the last informant's word pronunciations, the table shows that he utters the following words: "develop" in which the /i:/ long vowel and the /ə/ short vowel replaces /ɪ/ and /e/ respectively, and thus there is a shift in stress placement, "transition" where /ə/ and /i:/ are pronounced instead of /æ/ and /ɪ/ respectively in both the ant-penultimate and penultimate syllables, and "negative" in which the suffix (-ive) is uttered as /-i:v/ instead of /-ɪv/.

Table (1)

Informants' Word Pronunciations in Comparison with BBC English Ones

	Words	Informant's Pronunciation	BBC English Pronunciation
THE FIRST INFORMANT	very	/vɜ:ri/	/veri/
	show	/ʃɔ:/	/ʃəʊ/
	also	/ɔ:lsə/	/ɔ:lsəʊ/
	power	/pəʊr/	/paʊə/
	closely	/clɔ:zli/	/kləʊsli/
THE SECOND INFORMANT	notice	/nɔ:ti:s/	/nəʊti:s/
	different	/dɪfr'ent/	/'dɪfrənt/
	psychology	/saɪkɒlə'dʒest/	/saɪ'kɒlədʒɪst/
	condition	/'kɒndɪʃən	/kən'dɪʃn/
	cooperate	/'kɒpəret/	/kəʊ'pɒrət/
	age	/edʒ/	/eɪdʒ/
	range	/rendʒ/	/reɪndʒ/
	educational	/edju:keɪni/	/edju:keɪnl/
concentrate	/kɒnsəntret/	/kɒnsəntreɪt/	
THE THIRD INFORMANT	exhibition	/egzə'bi:ʃ/	/eksɪ'biʃn/
	academy	/əkædmɪə/	/əkædmɪ/
	it was	/ɪd wɔ:z/	/ɪt wɔ:z/
	this	/dɪd/	/ðɪs/
	as well	/əz vel/	/əz wel/
	scientist	/saɪn'ti:st/	/'saɪntɪst/
	book	/bu:k/	/bʊk/
THE FOURTH INFORMANT	should	/ʃɒt/	/ʃʊd/
	existing	/'eksɪstɪŋ/	/ɪg'zɪstɪŋ/
	because	/be'kɔ:z/	/bɪ'kɒz/
	without	/vəzəʊt/	/wɪðəʊt/
	way	/wɜ:/	/weɪ/
	our	/əʊə/	/aʊə/
	finished	/fɪni:ft/	/fɪnɪft/
THE FIFTH INFORMANT	carpenter	/kɑ:pɪntə/	/kɑ:pɪntə/
	skill	/ski:l/	/skɪl/
	country	/kɒntri/	/kʌntri/
	teacher	/ti:tʃə/	/ti:tʃə/
	A lot of	/əhu:təv/	/əlɒtəv/
	escape	/'ekskeɪp/	/es'keɪp/
things	/θi:ns/	/θɪŋz/	
THE SIXTH INFORMANT	develop	/'di:vələp/	/dɪ'veləp/
	transition	/trænzi:ʃn/	/trænziʃn/
	negative	/negə'ti:v/	/'negətɪv/

Conclusion

Both of the theoretical and practical tracks of this paper unveil that pronunciation is one of the criteria according to which speech is evaluated. Moreover, an accent cannot be regarded as being one of the individual's defects if it does not satisfy the others who prefer scales of superiority. Accuracy cannot, therefore, substitute fluency and acceptability of one's speech, and this, in turn, leads to state that rigid and authoritarian models of pronunciation should not stand as a stumbling rock in front of the flexibility of reaching the goals of pronunciation. In fact, Language users have to be vividly interactive to what is going on in reality.

Designing models and reaching goals are necessarily to be co-existed in the realm of English pronunciation. This inevitable co-existence equips phoneticians with a hard push to give a language user open options for selecting, according to his convenience, such and such an English variety. Though claims are not made as to whether listening and trying to pronounce exactly like native speakers is prohibited, it is not legitimate to degrade others' speech because of their inability to imitate native speakers. In addition, it is of great significance not to minimize the pivotal role played by the mother-tongue interference into the target language. The proof that does not need a shred of doubt is that the non-native interviewees who have been interviewed in media are not reprimanded by uttering most of the words in a distinct way from BBC English. In particular, some of them are of holding senior posts (e.g. politicians) in which their discourses have not to be interpreted divergently simply because this may necessitate dire consequences.

Appendix (1): Informants' Samples of Recorded Speech

1. Parents need to take control of the television viewing of Preschoolers and children of early school age. A workable technique is to make a simple but firm weekly plan as to what programs will be permitted and how much time overall may be spent in viewing. Any child's weekly schedule normally involves a certain amount of time for school, naps (for young children), outdoor play and indoor play. There should not, therefore, be great amounts of unfilled time when the child gravitates towards the TV set. Parents can demonstrate while the child is still very young that TV is a medium to be used selectively. They can quite literally point children in the direction of informative, educational programs. There are some remarkable things for a preschooler to see and enjoy on television, and parents can impart the wonders of it while discouraging undesirable programs.
2. It is normal for children to occasionally forget their homework, daydream during class, act without thinking, or get fidgety at the dinner table. But inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity are also signs of attention deficit disorder (ADD/ADHD), which can affect your child's ability to learn and get along with others. The first step to addressing the problem is to recognize the signs and symptoms.
3. Expo '98 (1998 Lisbon World Exposition) was an official specialized World's Fair held in Lisbon, Portugal from Friday, 22 May to Wednesday, 30 September 1998. The theme of the fair was "The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future," chosen in part to commemorate 500 years of Portuguese discoveries. The Expo received around 11 million visitors in 132 days, while 155 countries and organizations were represented. The idea to organize a World's Fair in Portugal originated in 1989 between two Portuguese, António Taurino Mega Ferreira and Vasco Graça Moura, who were in charge of organizing the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of Vasco da Gama's arrival in India in 1498.

4. The proposal, put forward by the Greek Cypriot leader Nikos Anastasiadis, has been raised several times before and involves the Turkish side handing back Famagusta's Varosha suburb to Greek Cypriots in exchange for some Greek Cypriot confidence building offers to Turkish Cypriots. Downer then said the talks would commence in October. The U.N. envoy has also voiced hopes that the talks will end in a couple of months, which Ankara also welcomed, according to the Turkish diplomat. "Neither we, nor the U.N. want the talks be open-ended," said the diplomat, "But bringing a deadline to the negotiations is not on the table, since the Greek side rejects such a timetable."
5. Children in Crisis are running projects to deliver primary school education to the most vulnerable, neglected children in Sierra Leone, those who are not reached by Government or other NGOs. We are working to ensure that those who might otherwise be discriminated against because of poverty, geography, gender or disability are given that life-changing chance of a primary school education.
6. The absolute poverty in our world is shocking and so is the in-difference of the rich world to the situation. More than a fourth of the population of the earth, that means more than 1.2 billion people, lives in absolute poverty. Marks of absolute poverty are starvation, scarcity of health re-sources and lack of pure water. In such contexts people are in reality denied that right of life which is the most fundamental human right. Women and children are worst off. They often face a double injustice, as inhabitants of the South and as living at the bottom end of the scale within their own societies.

Appendix (2): English Phonemic Symbols

The vowels:

ɪ	as in bit /bɪt/	ʊ	as in put /pʊt/	ə	as in ahead /əhed/	əʊ	as in load /ləʊd/
i:	as in beat /bi:t/	u:	as in suit /sju:t/	ɜ:	as in word /wɜ:d/	aʊ	as in cow /kaʊ/
e	as in bet /bet/	ɒ	as in pot /pɒt/	eɪ	as in face /feɪs/	ɪə	as in ear /ɪə/
æ	as in bat /bæt/	ɔ:	as in more /mɔ:/	aɪ	as in nice /naɪs/	eə	as in fair /feə/
ɑ:	as in arm /ɑ:m/	ʌ	as in blood /blʌd/	ɔɪ	as in coin /kɔɪn/	ʊə	as in poor /pʊə/

The consonants:

p	as in pray /preɪ/	ʃ	as in she /ʃi:/
b	as in bee /bi:/	ʒ	as in measure /meʒə/
t	as in tame /teɪm/	h	as in heat /hi:t/
d	as in door /dɔ:/	tʃ	as in choice /tʃɔɪs/
k	as in kid /kɪd/	dʒ	as in jam /dʒæm/
g	as in go /gəʊ/	m	as in mood /mu:d/
f	as in feed /fi:d/	n	as in night /naɪt/
v	as in view /vju:/	ŋ	as in sing /sɪŋ/
θ	as in theft /θeft/	l	as in less /les/
ð	as in this /ðɪs/	r	as in read /ri:d/
s	as in sense /sens/	w	as in we /wi:/
z	as in zoo /zu:/	j	as in yes /jes/

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