Creating pronunciation training content for your language of interest – A hands-on workshop

Jaques Koreman
Department of Language and Literature, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

WHY?

A foreign accent can lead to lower intelligibility or comprehensibility (Munro & Derwing, 1995). This can have negative consequences in communication (Lev-Ari & Keysar, 2010). Nevertheless, pronunciation is often a neglected area in language courses (Foote et al., 2016). For this reason, we have developed online pronunciation training to complement classroom teaching.

WHAT?

The Computer-Assisted Listening and Speaking Tutor (CALST) is a multilingual platform for pronunciation training. It is multilingual in two ways:

1) it offers pronunciation exercises for several target languages – presently: English, Spanish, Italian, Greek, and Norwegian, with Catalan under development;
   Maybe you want to be the expert who provides content for a new language?

2) it tailors exercises to the learner's native language comparing the two languages in
   L1-L2*map* (500+ languages based on UPSID).
   This is done automatically, also for new target languages in CALST.

The exercises in CALST are simple discrimination and identification (listening) exercises, pronunciation exercises, and spelling exercises. These familiarize learners with speech sounds that do not occur in their native language, and the same exercises also provide training for unfamiliar consonant clusters, word stress patterns, and lexical tones. The comprehensive language content ensures that learners can train all linguistic contrasts that may pose a challenge for any learner.

HOW?

In the workshop, we will first present CALST and L1-L2*map.* Then a short explanation will be given of the principles which we have adopted to devise language content; examples from CALST exercises will be given to demonstrate them. This will be followed by hands-on application of these principles to *your* language of interest:

1. Determine the sound inventory of consonants and vowels & create an exercise.
2. Determine allophonic variation & create an exercise.
3. Determine variable grapheme-to-phoneme mapping & create an exercise.
4. Select a consonant cluster, stress pattern, or lexical tone contrast & create an exercise.

Participants should bring their laptops. We hope to see you there!

References:

Foote, J. A., Trofimovich, P., Collins, L., & Urzúa, F. S. (2016). Pronunciation teaching practices in communicative second language classes. *The Language Learning Journal 44*(2), 181-196.

Lev-Ari, S., & Keysar, B. (2010). Why don't we believe non-native speakers? The influence of accent on credibility. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 46(6), 1093–1096.

Munro, M. J., & Derwing, T. M. (1995). Foreign accent, comprehensibility, and intelligibility in the speech of second language learners. *Language Learning*, *45*, 73-97.