

You should **slow** down
and speak **clearly**.
Until you **learn**
the correct intonation and rhythm
of the **target** accent,
reduce your speed.
If you speak too **quickly**
with the **wrong** intonation and rhythm,
local **speakers** may have a **hard** time
understanding you.
It is **also** important
to be an **active** listener.
When you **hear**
what **others** have to say,
you will **speak**
more **directly** to their **concerns**.
If you **focus** closely
on **engaging** with them,
you will **naturally** **empathise**
and **assume** **aspects**
of their **speech**
in your **own**.
And one should **try**
to **always** face your listener
and establish good **eye** contact.
You will convey the **right** attitude
and will be **more** sensitive
to **subtle** signs of feedback
from your listener.
In fact,
watch the mouth movements
of the speakers
of the target accent.
Privately,
try to mimic them
by unleashing the actor inside you;
even pretend to be them.
You can search on YouTube for model speakers
and visualise being them.
It is useful then,
to repeat what you hear,
imitating the intonation and rhythm
of their speech.
It also pays
to ask people for their opinion.
Many people
make a list
of frequently used phrases or sounds
that are difficult to get right
and ask a local to pronounce them
and later practise what they hear.
The more analytical

will take the time to highlight
the key word in each thought
(or chunk of language)
by raising the pitch, volume and clarity
of your voice on that word.

People unconsciously listen
for these pitch changes.

Eye contact
and falling intonation
at the end of important utterances
will give you more authority.

Rising intonation
may serve as social,
inviting response.

Equally important,
try to speak with the soundscapes
that are characteristic
of speakers you want to sound like.

One should pay close attention
to the way
they say common expressions.

It is important
to treat voices like music
and try to tune in.

If you can simply hear the difference
between them and yourself,
you are well on your way
to changing the way you speak.

Of course
it is also a great idea
to listen to podcasts,
radio talk-back,
and audio books,
and even listen and read
at the same time.

Some people
even record themselves
reading sections of a book
and compare their voice
with that of the speaker.

Depending
on the particular accent you have,
it is often recommended
to pay attention to word endings
and how some words run together.

It is also suggested
to pay special attention
to “s” and “ed” endings.

Notice
how the endings of words work
when they are followed by other words
beginning with a vowel.

You can read aloud as habit
using a novel or the newspaper,
for fifteen minutes each day,
and trying to read
in your target accent.

This will help you
to strengthen the mouth muscles
that you use when you speak it.

Watch a French speaker on TV without sounds
and notice how the face moves differently
to English counterparts.

Research has shown
that it takes about three months
of daily practice
to develop strong enough mouth muscles
for speaking a new language.

Even accent training
involves using new muscle groups.

It's as complex
as developing coordination for a new sport,
like for a tennis serve
or swimming butterfly.

Furthermore,
listen carefully to yourself recorded
and check for deviation
from the target accent.

This is an excellent exercise
because it will help you
become conscious
of the way your voice sounds different
from that you wish to assimilate.

Yet above all else,
you need to be patient.

You can change the way you speak
but it won't happen overnight.

People often expect instant results
and give up too soon.

You can change the way you sound
if you are willing
to put some effort into it.