

沢井真夏波

和歌山・開智中3年

## My Grandma's New Dream

“Thank you, Makaha” said my grandmother, Yukié, to me.

She has been with me all my life. I can honestly say she is like a mother to me. Now 80 years old, she has lived her entire life without having anything to do with English. But now she dreams of going to the United States and speaking English there. She has this dream thanks to my poor English pronunciation. Let me explain.

Last year, my English teacher said to me, “Oh, your English pronunciation is not so good.” I felt bad about it and swore then and there that I would surprise my teacher and learn to pronounce English better.

So, I started looking for a book to practice my English pronunciation and came across “English Pronunciation Exercise for Good Health.” This book tells you that you use your facial muscles a lot to make English vowel sounds, and you use your breath a lot to make English consonant sounds.

I can't show you all the exercises today but I will demonstrate one for you — how to make the sound for the letter “p.”

Breathe in deeply through your nose. Hold your fists beside your chest; then push out both hands with the sound /p/! Now you heard my “p” sound, didn't you? It's a plosive sound. I push a lot of breath out of my stomach to open up my closed lips, /p/!

One day, my grandmother saw me exercising. “What are you doing, Makaha?” she asked me. “I am doing an English Pronunciation Exercise for a speech contest,” I replied. I also told her that these exercises not only help you pronounce English better, but also energize your body and keep it in good shape.

“Oh, that's wonderful”, she said. Then, my grandmother and I started to practice together. Her back and legs were getting weaker due to her age. Since she started doing these exercises, her backache has been alleviated a lot. Also, because she uses a lot of the muscles in her face to practice vowel sounds, her facial skin has become firmer and tighter. On top of that, to her joy, she has started going to an English conversation class.

Now, what about my pronunciation? Ummm, well, I need more practice, but my English teacher has given me a little praise.

In Japan today, we are experiencing a super-aging society. If elderly people start doing these exercises, they'll be healthier and able to speak English with good pronunciation, which means they would be great guides for tourists from all over the world.

Wow, this is an English revolution! The English pronunciation exercises provide you with the double effects of improving your English pronunciation and keeping your body healthy. But, for me, what these exercises offer above all is **new hope**.

My grandmother didn't use to have any connection to English, but once she began doing these exercises, she gained an all new interest in the language. What made me the happiest of all was to hear my grandmother's words: “Thank you, Makaha! You gave me a **new dream!**”

Oh, Grandma, I have a dream too! Let's go to the United States and speak English over there *together!*