Editing Pronunciation in Clicker 5®
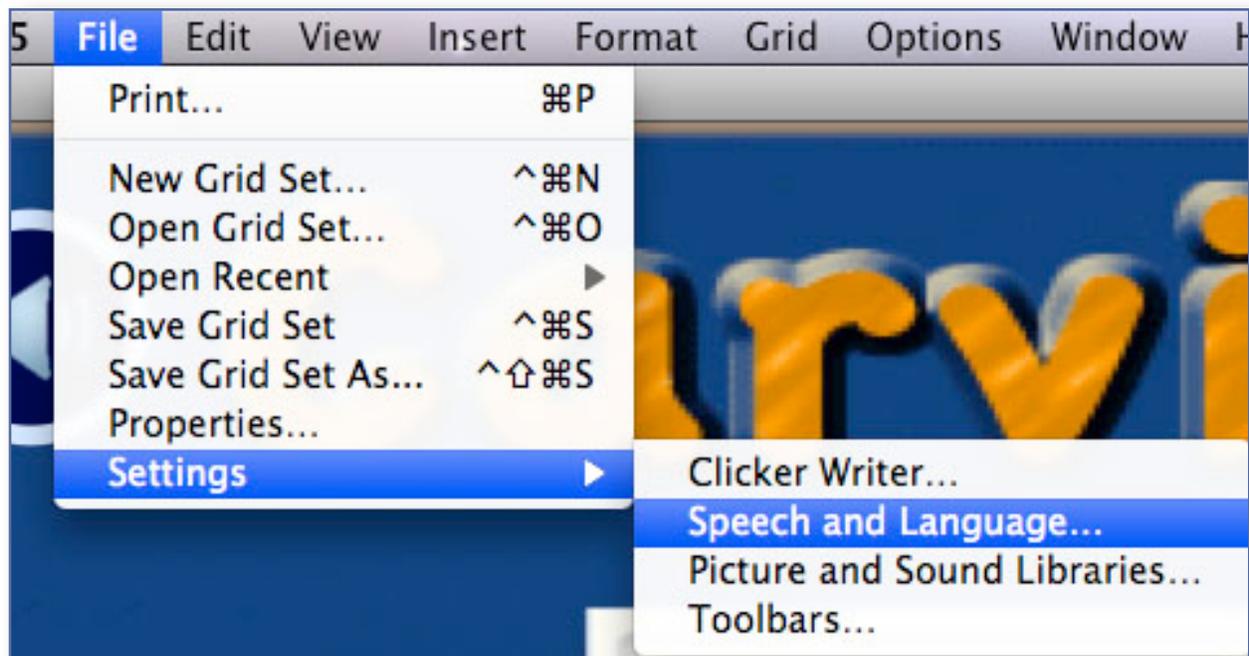
Depending on which computer you use for Clicker 5®, you may notice that some words, especially proper names and technical terms, are mispronounced when you click a word or cell to have it read aloud. The exact pronunciation you hear depends on both the operating system and the particular speech engines installed, so there is no way to set this and save it with a grid set. Clicker 5 installs some special high quality voices, and you can change the way those pronounce a word. Here's how!

Important: You need to do this on every computer in which you plan to use grid sets that include the changed words. The change is stored in an exceptions dictionary with your installed Clicker 5, not recorded in the grid set.
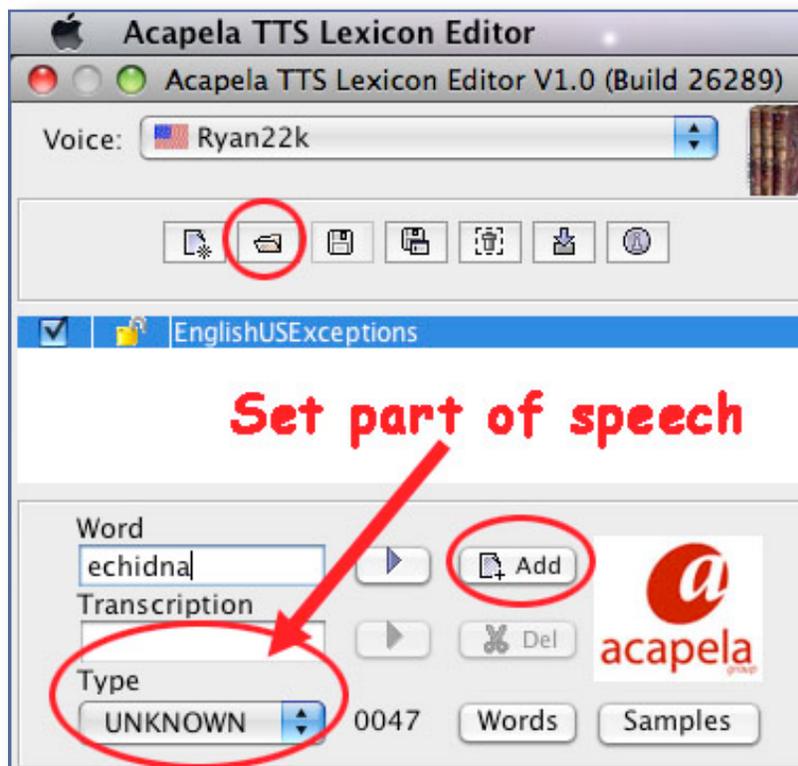
Launching the Lexicon Editor

1. To change pronunciation in Clicker 5, first go to **Settings-> Speech and Language-> Change Voice**.

2. Click the Change Pronunciation button to launch the **Acapela TTS Lexicon Editor**. It's a separate utility, opens in a in a separate window, and may take a few moments to launch. Note: I've had it open behind other windows sometimes. If it doesn't open, move the Clicker 5 window and see if it's behind.

3. In the Lexicon Editor window, notice a list of dictionaries. The current one is highlighted and has a checkmark. There are buttons above the dictionary list to make a new dictionary, or load an existing one. In my Clicker 5 Mac, the **U.S. Exceptions** dictionary is the default, indeed the only choice, so I used that. If you have several dictionaries listed, choose one.
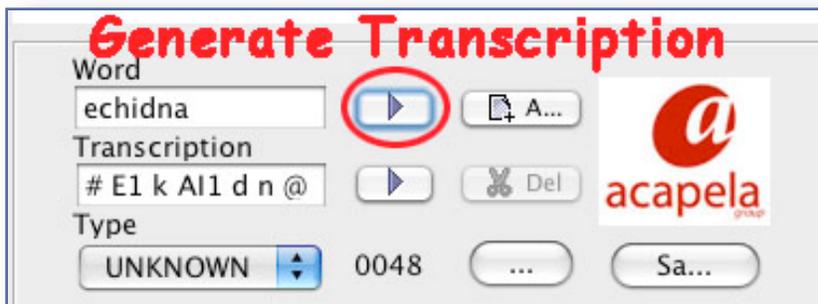
4. Type in the word you want to change in the **Word** space. Be sure you type it exactly!

5. Use the pull-down menu under **Type** (bottom line of window) to mark the part of speech for the word.

6. Notice the buttons beside **Type**. The first is **Words**. It just has three dots **(...)** in my Clicker 5 Mac, but when I click it, I get a list of all the words in the dictionary. Just to the right of that, there is a **Samples** button. (In my copy of Clicker 5 Mac, it only has part of the name, **Sa...**) Clicking it gives you a set of **Phonemes Samples** in a separate window.

6. Click the black triangle beside the **Word** space. You will hear the word, and see its phonetic **Transcription** appear in the space below. These are formal codings for the phonemes, not just typing the word the way you think it would sound.

Generating the Corrected Transcription

Now you must enter a corrected transcription. If you know formal phonetic markings, just type in the correct transcription.

If not, you can click the **Samples** button. This displays sample words, with the phoneme for each sound to the left, and the phoneme in caps

within the word itself to the right. Scroll down to find a word containing the sound that is being mispronounced, and you can see what the coding for that phoneme should be.

Alternately, you can use a trial and error method, as I'll explain. I actually found trial and error easier!

Caution: Note that there is a # followed by a space at the beginning. That has to be there, or else the editor won't be able to read it, so be sure to not erase it.

Trial and Error Shortcut

General strategy: Figure out what part of the word is being read out wrong, and type in a word that has the sound you want it to use. Generate its transcription. Note the phonetic coding for the sound in question, and substitute that into the original transcription for the word you need to change.

Example: echidna

1. By default, the voices were pronouncing **echidna** to sound like **eck-eyed-na** . Most of the word was okay, but there was a problem with the vowel in the middle syllable. The original transcription for echidna was # **E1 k AI1 d n @** .

2. So now I knew what to change, the vowel code in that middle syllable. But I did not know the proper notation, so I guessed. I erased **echidna**, and typed **kid** **i**nto the **Word** space, since its vowel is pronounced like the middle syllable vowel of **echidna**.   I clicked the black arrow beside **kid**, and generated # **k_h I1 d** in the **Transcription** box.   Okay, looks like the short **i** is represented by a capital **I**, and there is a **1** after it. I'm not sure why the **1** is there, but--whatever works! Also, I notice there is **kh** for **k,** so I'll try that, too.
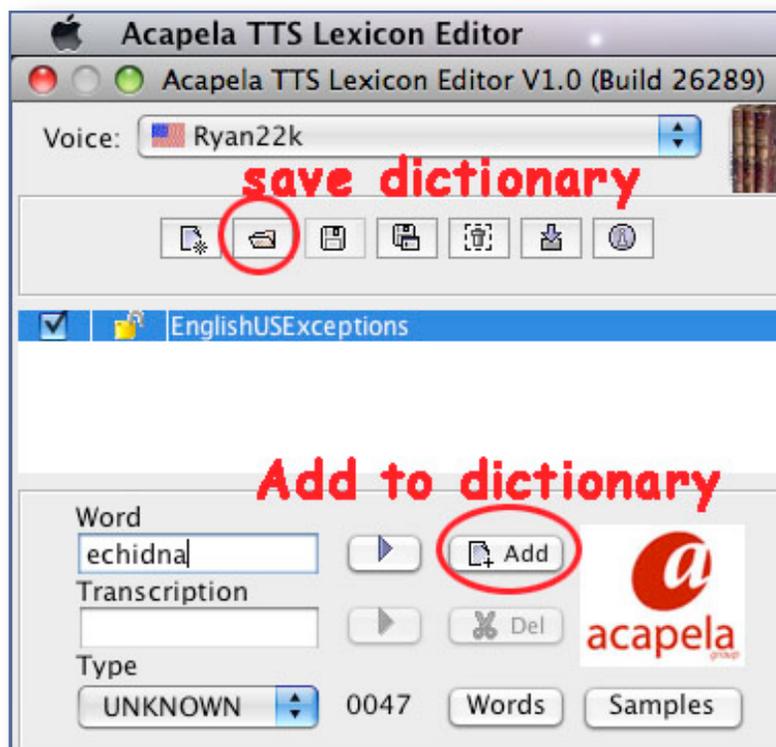
3. Next, I deleted **kid**, typed in **echidna**, and clicked the black triangle beside it again, to get the default transcription for echidna back into the **Transcription** box.   I substituted **k_h I1** for the **k AI1** in the original transcription , carefully changing only that middle syllable.

E1 k AI1 d n @ -----> # E1 k_h I1 d n @

4. I tested my change by clicking the black triangle beside the corrected transcription, and it sounded much better. Great!

5. Next, I clicked the **Add** button, to add **echidna** and its corrected pronunciation to the dictionary. (The **Add** button in my Clicker 5 just has a little icon and **A...**)

6. I clicked the **Words** button at the bottom **(...)** to display a list of all the words in this US Exceptions dictionary. Once I had clicked **Add**, I saw echidna listed there. But there is also an icon up above to **save the modified dictionary**. Be sure to click that, too.

Important! Be sure that you remember to click **Add, a**nd then go up and click the button to **save the modified dictionary.** If you skip these, the change will not be recorded!

I didn't hear a change in pronunciation until after I saved the gridset, restarted Clicker 5, and opened the grid set again. Also, you must enter both the capitalized and lower case versions of a word, since these are regarded as separate exceptions.

Caution: This procedure only affects the Acapella voices, which in my installation are called Ryan and Heather. Default Microsoft or Apple voices will still mispronounce the words. Also, if you are using one of these other voices, the **Change Pronunciation** button will be grayed out.