

Well Said Coaching

Assessment

Name	JXXXX SXXXXX
Native Language	Spanish
Occupation	Sales
Goal	Reduce accent to increase comprehensibility and improve rapport with clients and customers

Assessment Summary: Speaker has very high English fluency overall. He has a strong vocabulary and makes few grammatical errors. His pronunciation errors were typical of native Spanish speakers, but were fairly minimal. Speaker's most common problems included:

- Substituting full vowel sounds for unstressed vowel sounds.
- Overemphasizing the second sound in diphthongs (vowels comprised of two sounds.)
- Devoicing of final /t/; mispronunciation of words starting with a voiced "th" (the.)
- Stressing the wrong syllable in a word.
- Stressing the wrong word in a sentence or thought group.
- Using too even a sentence rhythm (more so in reading than extemporaneous speaking.)
- Using too little falling intonation at the end of sentences.

Pronunciation Targets: The speaker's goal is conversational more than formal or prepared speech and his comprehensibility is already strong. Therefore, suggested targets focus on suprasegmental issues (the "music" of English) and include vowel sounds which impact that music. Please note: while specific consonant problems were noted in the assessment, these sounds do not impact the speaker's comprehensibility or "music", and therefore have not been suggested as targets for this program. They could be addressed in a subsequent program or through self-study.

- a. Vowels: /ɪ/, /ʌ/, diphthongs (/aɪ/, /ɔɪ/)
- b. Word Stress (stressing the correct syllable)
- c. Prominence (stressing the correct word within a sentence)
- d. Intonation (using the proper pitch)

Well Said Coaching Program Recommendation: 8 Week Program

1. SEGMENTALS

Vowels (Incorrect Pronunciation)

Symbol		Examples	Symbol		Examples
/i/ →			/u/ →		
/ɪ/ → /i/	✓	killed, him, sister	/ə/ →		
/eɪ/ →			/aɪ/ →	✓	ɪ*
/ɛ/ →			/aʊ/ →		
/æ/ →			/ɔɪ/ →	✓	boy, spoil*
/ɑ/ →			/ʌ/ → /ɑ/, /ʊ/	✓	other, another, culture
/ə/ →			Vowels before /l/		
/ɔ/ →			Vowels before /r/		
/oʊ/ → /ɔ/	✓	close	Others/Notes		*Diphthongs (/aɪ/, /ɔɪ/) are elongated on second phoneme; boy, acquired, l, spoil
/ʊ/ → /u/	✓	Woolworth			

Consonants (Incorrect Pronunciation or Omission)

Voiceless	Initial or Medial	Examples	Final	Examples
/p/ →				
/t/ →				
/k/ → ∅	✓	respect (omission)		
/f/ →				
/h/ →				
/θ/ →				
/ʃ/ →				
/tʃ/ →	✓	watching		
/b/ →				
/d/ → /t/			✓	happened, spoiled, learned

/g/ →				
/v/ →				
/w/ →				
/ð/ → /d/	✓	that, the, then		
/z/ →	✓	thousand, pleasing	✓	kids, neighbors, is
/ʒ/ →				
/dʒ/ →				
/y/				
Nasals	Initial or Medial	Examples	Final	Examples
/m/ →				
/n/ →				
/ŋ/ →				
/l/ and /r/	Initial or Medial	Examples	Final	Examples
/l/ →				
/l/ in /Cl/ →				
/r/ →				
/r/ in /Cr/ →				

Other Consonant Problems		Examples
<ed> ending is omitted or mispronounced	✓	acquired, endured
/s/ ending is omitted or mispronounced		
Initial voiceless stops are not aspirated		
Final voiced consonants are often voiceless		
Final consonants are often omitted		
Many problems with consonant groups		

Pronunciation of:		
Other consonant problems		

2. SUPRASEGMENTALS

Stress Placement		Examples
Stress on the wrong syllable of a word	✓	Rockefeller, empire, permanently, upbringing
Stress on the wrong syllable of a compound noun	✓	body guards
Stress on the wrong word of a two word verb		
Function words are stressed	✓	“who <u>is</u> the only boy”, “I <u>am</u> the youngest”, “I have <u>been</u> ”
Other: two word phrases given wrong stress	✓	“ever <u>since</u> ”, “older <u>people</u> ”

Vowel Reduction		Examples
Unstressed vowels are not reduced	✓	/ɪ/ → /i/
Function words are not reduced		
/h/ is not reduced in function words		
Can't =can _____		

Rhythm, Length and Timing		Examples
Too even – all syllables are nearly the same length	✓	(happens intermittently)
Stressed syllables are too short		
Stressed vowels before voiced consonants are too short		
Unstressed vowels are too short or omitted		
Syllables in long words are mispronounced or omitted		
Too fast		
Too slow		

Irregular rhythm (speeds up and slows down)		

Linking and Pausing		Examples
Choppy: Words are not smoothly linked within phrases		
Glottal stop is inserted before vowels		
Glottal stop is inserted at ends of words		
Final consonants are released or aspirated	✓	/d/→/t/ (happened)
/ə/ or /ɛ/ is inserted in consonant groups		
Sloppy: Words are slurred or excessively run together		
/d/ or /t/ between vowels is excessively weakened		
Poor phrasing and pausing		
Not fluent in reading aloud		
Not fluent in speaking freely		
Other problems with rhythm		

Intonation: Location of Sentence Stress (the major rise or fall)		Examples
Sentence stress on the wrong word		
Often falls at the beginning of sentence		
Often falls on adjectives instead of nouns		
Does not shift for contrast or emphasis	✓	(more in reading)
Too many sentence stresses (too many rises and falls)		

No clear sentence stress (flat, narrow pitch range)	✓	(more in reading)
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Intonation: Pitch Pattern-Problems with:		Examples
Fall in statements		
Doesn't jump up enough before falling		
Rises instead of jumping before falling		
Doesn't fall enough on one syllable words		
Doesn't fall low enough at end of sentence	✓	"she has four kids"; "purpose for studying English"; "childhood memory"
Fall in information ("WH") questions		
Rise in "yes-no" questions		
Rise before a pause		
Rise in a series		
Rise in direct address		
Pitch pattern in choice ("or") questions		
Jumps up and down; doesn't fall and rise smoothly		
Monotonous when reading	✓	(moderate)
Not loud enough		
Other problems with intonation		

Source: Dauer, Rebecca M., "Accurate English: A Complete Course in Pronunciation," Prentice Hall Regents, 1993.