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Back to Basics: Accent Modification

Robert McKinney, MA, CCC-SLP

Moderated by:
Amy Hansen, MA, CCC-SLP, Managing Editor, SpeechPathology.com

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- Email customerservice@SpeechPathology.com
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- Log in to your account and go to Pending Courses
- Must pass 10-question multiple-choice exam with a score of 80% or higher
  - Within 7 days for live webinar; within 30 days of registration for recorded/text/podcast formats
- Two opportunities to pass the exam

Back to Basics:
Accent Modification

Robert McKinney, M.A., CCC-SLP
SDSU Accent and Communication Training Program
rmckinney@sdsu.edu
Learning Outcomes

After this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain the roles of accentedness, intelligibility, comprehensibility, and naturalness in second language phonological acquisition.
- Select appropriate segmental targets for accent modification based on the principles of contrastive analysis, functional load, intelligibility, and naturalness.
- Identify suprasegmental targets for clients to maximize their ability to communicate effectively.

Accent Frameworks
The World of Accents

- What is an accent?
  - Broad Definition
  - Narrow Definition

- Accent Facts
- Critical Period Hypothesis/Ultimate Attainment
- Effective Communication
- Accents and their Impacts

*...features of pronunciation which identify where a person is from, regionally, and socially*
- Crystal (2008)

*...phonological cues, either segmental or suprasegmental, which identify the speaker as a non-native user of the language.*
- Scovel (1989)
Accent Frameworks

Paradigms

- Accentedness
- Intelligibility
- Comprehensibility
- Naturalness

Clear and Natural

Accent Modification

Background

- Providers
- Settings
- Clients
- Efficacy
  - Saito (2012)
  - Lee, Jang, & Plonsky (2015)
  - Khurana & Wang (2013)

Photos are from Here’s How to Do Accent Modification: A Manual for Speech-Language Pathologists by McKinney, R. Copyright © 2019 Plural Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission.
Accent Modification
SLP Strengths

- Communication Expertise
- Technical Knowledge
- Clinical Experience
- Training
- Counseling

Accent Modification
How it Differs for SLPs

- Non-disordered Adults
- Elective
- Terminology
- Suprasegmentals
- Naturalness
- Different Set of Consonants
- Vowels
Accent Modification
Training Principles

• Effective Communication
• Clear and Natural
• Suprasegmentals
• Segmentals
• Production/Perception

Accent Modification
Techniques

• Modeling and feedback
• Auditory discrimination
• Phonetic training
• Role plays
• Minimal pairs
• Self-rating
• Visual feedback
• Tongue twisters
• Reading aloud

• Conversation starters
• Recording and review
• Awareness building
• Identification of stress
• Counseling
• Generalization training
• Shadowing
• Mirroring
• And many more…
Assessment

- Goals
- Resources
- Intelligibility
- SDSU ACT Assessment
  - Segmental Assessment
  - Diagnostic Passage
  - Spontaneous Speech Sample
  - Questionnaire
  - Role Play
- Other Considerations

Segmentals

Principles of Target Selection

- Clear and Natural
- Contrastive Analysis
- Functional Load
- Phonotactics
- Perception vs. Production
- Stimulability and Ease
Segmentals
Contrastive Analysis

- Compare Phonemic Inventories
- Allophones
- Phonotactics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spanish Only</th>
<th>Shared</th>
<th>English Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consonants</strong></td>
<td>/x, r, p, t, β, y'/</td>
<td>/b, d, g, t, k, m, n, s, j, f, ʃ, ʒ/</td>
<td>/θ, ɹ, θ, ð, z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vowels</strong></td>
<td>/a, o, a/</td>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>/æ, a, e, u, ɛ, ə, aʊ, au, oʊ, ɔɪ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Segmentals
Contrastive Analysis Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hungarian Only</th>
<th>Shared</th>
<th>English Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consonants</strong></td>
<td>/s, z, cs, js, r, y'/</td>
<td>/b, d, g, t, k, m, n, s, ʃ, ʒ, f, ɾ, ɹ/</td>
<td>/θ, ɹ, θ, ð, w/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vowels</strong></td>
<td>/o, a, e, i, y, ə, oː/</td>
<td>/i, o, u* plus length distinction</td>
<td>/e, ø, øː/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Russian Only</th>
<th>Shared</th>
<th>English Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consonants</strong></td>
<td>/s, ʃ, c, jx, r* Plus palatalization</td>
<td>/b, d, g, t, m, n, f, v, s, ʃ, ʒ, l, ɾ* Plus palatalization</td>
<td>/θ, ɹ, θ, ð, ʒ, w/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vowels</strong></td>
<td>/a, e, o, ɪ/</td>
<td>/i, u, o, a/</td>
<td>/æ, a, u, e, o, ou, at, ao, au, oʊ, ɔɪ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Segmentals
Functional Load

- Definition
- Factors
  - Minimal Pairs
  - Frequency
  - Lexical Class
  - Dialectal Variation
- Examples
  - /i,ɪ/ vs. /u,ʊ/

Segmentals
Functional Load Comparison - Consonants
Catford (1987)

- Top FL Consonants
  - /k,h/
  - /p,b/
  - /p,k/
  - /p,t/
  - /p,h/, /s,h/
  - /l,r/
- Low FL Consonants
  - /b,v/
  - /ʃ,ʧ/
  - /ʤ,j/
  - /v,w/
  - /t,θ/
  - /s,z/
Segmentals
Functional Load Mismatch

- Low Functional Load Consonants
  - /t,d,f,v,θ,ð,s,z,ʃ,j,ʧ,ʤ,ɹ,w/

- Typical Targets for Spanish L1
  - /ʃ,ʧ//d,ð//θ,t//ʤ,j//ʃ,ɹ//s,z/

Segmentals
Functional Load Comparison - Vowels
Catford (1987)

- Top FL Vowels
  - /ɪ,æ/  
  - /i,ɪ/  
  - /o,ɔ/  
  - /u,ʊ/  
  - /e,ɛ/  
  - /æ,a/  
  - /ɛ,ɹ/  

- Low FL Vowels
  - /oʊ,au/  
  - /a,o/  
  - /a,u/  
  - /u,ʌ/  
  - /aɪ,aʊ/  
  - "pin"/"pen"
Segmentals
Consonant Training

- Typical Targets
  - /θ,ð,w,v,z,ʒ,tʃ,ɹ,dʒ,ŋ/
  - Highly dependent on L1

- Allophones
  - [ɾ,ɹ,ʔ,ɫ]
  - Syllabic consonants /l,n,m/

- Techniques

---

Segmentals
Minimal Pairs/Sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. /r/</th>
<th>b. /l/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 right</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 correct</td>
<td>collect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bar</td>
<td>ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. /θ/</th>
<th>b. /t/</th>
<th>/s/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 path</td>
<td>pat</td>
<td>pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 thank</td>
<td>tank</td>
<td>sunk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Segmentals

Vowels

- Typical Targets
  - /ʌ, ø, ʊ, æ, u, i/ + all rhotic diphthongs
  - Highly dependent on L1

- IPA
- Methods
- Minimal Pairs

---

Suprasegmentals

Major Features 1

- Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slow</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Fast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 Words per Minute</td>
<td>180 Words per Minute</td>
<td>240 Words per Minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Syllables per Second</td>
<td>4.0 Syllables per Second</td>
<td>5.3 Syllables per Second</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Syllables per second

4 Syllables per second
Suprasegmentals
Major Features 2

- Syllables and Endings
  - Number
  - “ed”/”s”
- Syllable Stress
- Vowel Reductions
- Linking
  - Consonants
  - Vowels
- Reduced Speech

---

Suprasegmentals
Major Features 3

- Phrasing
- Phrasal Stress

I went to the store to buy some milk.
Suprasegmentals
Major Features 3

- Emphasis
- Intonation

It’s a beautiful day.

- Grammar
- Meaning
- Emotion

- Communication Style

Final Thoughts/Q&A