



Building Better Communication Skills at Work Assessment PreTest Summary **MK**

Date:

Examiner: Lorna D. Sikorski, M.A., CCC. SLP

Data from **P.O.E.C.** accent assessment tool conducted live online on 08/22/2019 form the basis of this Initial Assessment Summary. **Information reported as percentages of accuracy, unless noted otherwise.**

SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH: *“How clear is your oral English -- your accent for American English?”*

FORMAL TEST USED: **POEC (Proficiency in Oral English Communication)**

A. Intonation

“How skillfully do you use stress, pitch & other “music” rules of English?”

Word Level

75%

Basic Messages* – word stress/appropriate pitch

28% / 100% **

Contrastive Intonation* – word stress/appropriate. pitch

13% / 60 % **

** *This is a double score, standing for correct stress + correct pitch usage*

B. Sounds of American English

“How well do you pronounce American English?”

Vowels

66%

Consonants

70%

C. Auditory Discrimination

“How sharp is your ear for sounds and hidden English rules?”

65%

LANGUAGE FLUENCY IN AMERICAN ENGLISH: *“How accurate, and how (appropriately) sophisticated is your American English?”*

Spontaneous Communication Opportunities Observed:

- **P.O.E.C.** sentence creation accuracy for **oral grammar and usage** in American English:

- Accuracy for grammar/usage (as measured by the number of errors) in 56 sentences M created for the test **30%**

-Basic Vocabulary recognition on this 56-sentence subtest: **98%**

- Speech Sampling: Average number of Grammar/Language Usage errors across a monologue and 2 phone message samples of spontaneous speech: **3**

This was a very interesting communication issue to review. Clearly, the more control you had of **what** you were talking about, the greater the language usage/accuracy! When you were **not** prepared for the **content or the speech demands**, the more grammar and usage errors you made. This significantly impacted how 'readable' your speech was. 41% of the noted grammar or usage errors in the various activities were verb issues, which then caused some sentence construction and/or word order issues. 43% of the noted errors had to do with preposition choices, preposition substitution, or preposition use that was either incorrect or non-idiomatic for English (e.g., 'in/on the beach"). These issues (immediately above), while they stand out, are more of a 'distraction' to the listener, rather than one that actually block the message.

**LDS Rating Scale	4+	4	4-	3+	3	3-	2+	2	2-	1+	1
	Minimal Problem <-----> Severe Problem										
** PLEASE NOTE: "5" = Native Speaker											

OVERALL RATINGS (See Below for ratings scale explanation)

Language Skills	3
Intonation	2+
Sounds of American English	2+
Auditory Discrimination	2+
Attitude/Commitment	5

Summary:

First, it was a pleasure to meet you in our online session! I look forward to speaking with you at length next week so that we can review this summary and I can give you verbal examples which may help you to understand the scoring and the final ratings. Second, you are definitely an excellent candidate to begin focusing more exclusively on your oral speech skills. I am confident you have the drive and the language skills to do that effectively! The easy flow of your speech indicates that you can form your thoughts quickly – which is a necessary skill to begin to ‘play’ with **how you speak** (*and that is what any good accent program should do*).

Here are some brief elements to review. Initially, it may be easier to look at the **OVERALL RATINGS** to see where the breakdowns are. It is important to note that, on this rating scale above, “5” = **Native Speaker**. Clearly, one of the most significant elements that are preventing your speaking partners from ‘reading’ you easily (i.e., allowing them to focus on **what** you are saying) is **Intonation**. There were many words which had the stress on the wrong syllable, or it was unclear which syllable was the most important one! That makes it very tough for native North American English speakers to understand those words. Perhaps more importantly, however, is the *flow* of your messages. It is often unclear what is the most important word in your thought: that, too, makes it hard for the US/Canadian listener to ‘grab’ what you’re saying quickly! These are ‘hidden’ rules/issues that are rarely taught when you learn English overseas. Make no mistake, however: adults can improve these skills! Your sound errors were (nearly) equally consonant and vowel errors. Improving those will certainly improve your accent, but focusing on the vowels will make the most impact. The listening challenges in the assessment revealed that you don’t always hear critical differences in the sounds. Listening skills for recognizing the sounds is paramount to practicing effectively with any non-human practice materials (audio, cd/downloadable programs, etc.). It will be important to sharpen your ear to recognize the sounds so that your practice will be effective.

Again, all the above are usual elements I see in an accent evaluation. All of them can be prioritized and addressed with some commitment from you. I am fully confident that, given the right approach strategy, you can make a good, solid improvement in your oral skills for North American English (which is the way we typically describe Canadian/US-based English!). There is no absolute ‘right path’ to your success here! It has to fit in your daily life without being burdensome or you will too quickly become discouraged and quit. Sounds like all self-improvement attempts, right? Let’s talk soon and see if we can figure out how best plan for you in the next 4-6 months!

I look forward to chatting with you further in our Q&A session soon.

Sincerely,

Lorna Sikorski



Lorna D. Sikorski, M.A.

lornasikorski@ldsassoc.com

6/29/2020 - 3

Initial Evaluation Summary: M

LDS & ASSOCIATES Online Learner Center

Email lornasikorski@ldsassoc.com

714 838 6002 phone/TEXT