Correcting Pronunciation

Southeast Asian Edition
When to correct:

• When first learning a new word
• When the error drastically affects communication
• When the error creates a wrong word

Pick your battles!
When NOT to correct:

• When correcting interrupts the flow of discussion
• When correcting the student in front of peers would hard confidence
• When the error is engrained
How to correct:

• Notice your mouth and lip movement
• Pay attention to your tongue
heat /iː/  
hit /i/  
hate /ei/  
head /ɛ/  
hat /æ/  

oot /uː/  
hook /ʊ/  
hum /ʌ/  
haunt /ɔː/  
the /ə/  
hot /ɒ/  

Closed  
Half closed  
Half opened  
Opened  

Front  
Middle  
Back  

Unrounded  
Rounded
How to correct:

• Break the word into sounds
• Focus on final consonant sounds
• Over exaggerate
• Watch the stresses
• Record yourself and your student
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• Final consonants
  • Some languages have few
  • Some have none
  • Some languages use a c-v format for all syllables
  • Students will often drop a final consonant
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• Words rarely (or never) start with a vowel
  • Again with the c-v syllable format
  • Students will often drop an initial vowel
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• Troubles with schwa /ə/
  • May be lengthened
  • May be added (particularly to get rid of a final consonant)
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

- Few or no consonant clusters
  - Students will sometimes separate the consonants with a /ə/
  - Strawberry becomes sətərawlberry
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• /r/ doesn’t exist (or is underused)
  • Replaced by an /l/ or an /r/-/l/ hybrid
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• Dropping the /r/ from r-colored vowels
  • Vowel takes on it’s normal sound
  • i.e. first becomes fist
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• /θ/ and /ð/ do not exist
  • Replaced by /t/ or /f/ or /s/
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• Struggles with voiced vs voiceless
  • /b/ to /p/
  • /d/ to /t/
  • /z/ to /s/ ← very common mistake
Correcting Southeast Asian pronunciation errors

• Confusing/misusing short and long vowel sounds and diphthongs
  • “meat” to “mitt”
  • “wait” to “wet”
  • “but” to “bot” or “bought”