

## Characteristic Difficulties with English for Speakers of Spanish

1. Adding /ə/ before words beginning with the letter s: esports, espeak, estory
2. Spanish does not have a distinction between short and long vowels
3. Difficulty recognizing and using English vowels
  - a. Sit and seat, sheep and ship are confused
  - b. Cart, cat, and cut are confused
  - c. Caught and cot are confused
  - d. Caught and coat are confused
  - e. Pool and pull are confused
  - f. Not and note
  - g. This and these
4. Strong devoicing of final voiced consonants
  - a. final /d/ replaced with /t/ ex. birt for bird
  - b. /p/, /t/, /k/ sound like /b/, /d/, /g/ to English ears
  - c. rich for ridge, bath for bathe
  - d. drean or dreang for dream
5. In Spanish, all syllables take up the same amount of time. Practice uneven sentence rhythm of stressed and unstressed words of English
6. Will attempt to match syllables, stresses, and pronunciation of words in English to similar word in Spanish
7. Narrower range of pitch, producing a bored effect
8. /b/ sounds like /v/ often
9. /z/ sounds like /s/, /s/ sometimes sounds like /sh/
10. Sh, ch, tch and j confusion of sounds
11. Switching /y/ and /j/: mayor pronounced like major, yes pronounced as jess
12. /l/ pronounced as /j/ (jump)
13. /H/ sounds like the /k/ in loch
14. Confusion between sounds of year, cheer, jeer
15. Difficulty spelling words with double letters (rare in Spanish except for ll)
16. "False Friends" – words that sound very much like an English word, but do not mean the same thing. I.e. Libro (bookcase) and libreria (bookstore) are often confused with library.
17. Omission of the subject. In Spanish, a subject is not always necessary (it is understood from the verb, particularly when we would use a pronoun to replace the subject of the previous sentence).
18. Gender problems. The Spanish pronoun "su" covers both males and females, so often Spanish speakers will use him and her interchangeably.
19. Order of Adjectives and Nouns. In Spanish, the noun come first, then it modifiers.
20. Dropping the final t in a contraction: don for don't, won for won't

## Pronunciation Guide

American English Pronunciation of Consonant Sounds with Symbols					
Phonemic Symbol	AHD <sup>1</sup> Symbol	Examples	Phonemic Symbol	AHD Symbol	Example
/b/	/b/	<i>boy, cabin</i>	/p/	/p/	<i>pink, hip</i>
/tʃ/	/ch/	<i>cheer, watch, cello</i>	/r/	/r/	<i>rest, far</i>
/d/	/d/	<i>dog, bed</i>	/s/	/s/	<i>sink, bus</i>
/f/	/f/	<i>fill, phone, life</i>	/ʃ/	/sh/	<i>she, special,</i>
/g/	/g/	<i>go, log</i>	/t/	/t/	<i>tiny, little</i>
/h/	/h/	<i>his, cohort</i>	/ð/	/th/	<i>the, bathe</i>
/dʒ/	/j/	<i>joy, giant, budge</i>	/θ/	/th/	<i>thin, bath</i>
/k/	/k/	<i>cat, king, lack</i>	/v/	/v/	<i>view, weave</i>
/l/	/l/	<i>long, ill</i>	/w/	/w/	<i>win, when</i>
/m/	/m/	<i>my, team</i>	/j/ <sup>2</sup>	/y/	<i>you, mayor</i>
/n/	/n/	<i>no, knife</i>	/z/	/z/	<i>zoo, rise</i>
/ŋ/	/ng/	<i>sing, think</i>	/ʒ/	/zh/	<i>leisure, beige</i>

American English Pronunciation of Vowel Sounds with Phonemic Symbols					
Phonemic Symbol	AHD Symbol	Examples	Phonemic Symbol	AHD Symbol	Example
æ	ă	<i>can, hat</i>	ɔ:	ô	<i>caught</i>
eɪ	ā	<i>cane, bait</i>	ɔr	ôr	<i>north</i>
ɛər	âr	<i>air, hare</i>	ɔɪ	oi	<i>joy, noise</i>
ɑ:	ä	<i>father</i>	ʊ	oo	<i>took</i>
ɑr	är	<i>arm</i>	ʊər	oor	<i>tour</i>
ɛ	ě	<i>bet, head</i>	u:	oo	<i>soon</i>
i:	ē	<i>meet, beat</i>	aʊ	ou	<i>out</i>
ɪər	îr	<i>here</i>	ʌ	ü	<i>cut</i>
ɪ	ĭ	<i>pit</i>	ɜr	ûr	<i>word</i>
aɪ	ī	<i>my, light</i>	ə	ə	<i>about, the</i>
ɒ	ö	<i>hot</i>	ər	ər	<i>butter</i>
oʊ	ō	<i>no, know</i>	ju:	yoo	<i>view,</i>

<sup>1</sup> American Heritage Dictionary

<sup>2</sup> While the IPA symbol for this sound is /j/, I will use the AHD symbol of /y/