



AMERICAN  
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-  
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# Students and Professionals Who Speak English With Accents and Nonstandard Dialects: Issues and Recommendations

*ASHA Joint Subcommittee of the Executive Board on English Language Proficiency*

Reference this material as: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (1998). *Students and Professionals Who Speak English With Accents and Nonstandard Dialects: Issues and Recommendations* [Position Statement]. Available from [www.asha.org/policy](http://www.asha.org/policy).

Index terms: dialects

DOI: 10.1044/policy.PS1998-00117

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## Position Statement

It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) that students and professionals in communication sciences and disorders who speak with accents and/or dialects can effectively provide speech, language, and audiological services to persons with communication disorders as long as they have the expected level of knowledge in normal and disordered communication, the expected level of diagnostic and clinical case management skills, and if modeling is necessary, are able to model the target phoneme, grammatical feature, or other aspect of speech and language that characterizes the client's particular problem. All individuals speak with an accent and/or dialect; thus, the nonacceptance of individuals into higher education programs or into the professions solely on the basis of the presence of an accent or dialect is discriminatory. Members of ASHA must not discriminate against persons who speak with an accent and/or dialect in educational programs, employment, or service delivery, and should encourage an understanding of linguistic differences among consumers and the general population.