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OLIV VA O'RTA MAXSUS TA'LIM VAZIRLIGI**

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**“INTEGRATING PHONOLOGY IN LANGUAGE SKILLS
CLASSES” mavzusidagi**

BITIRUV MALAKAVIY ISHI

«Himoyaga tavsiya etildi»
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INTRODUCTION

Actuality of the theme

President of Uzbekistan - Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed a decree "On Uzbekistan's Development Strategy" which approved Uzbekistan's Five-Area Development Strategy for 2017-2021. One of the five areas is "Priority areas of development of the social sphere" which include the development of education and science. Education system has undergone significant changes since the adaption of the developing strategy.¹ For example, the ministry has recently approved a new decree on ways of teaching foreign languages more effectively in educational institutions. According to the decree, starting from 2017-2018 academic term foreign languages (German, French and English) will be taught and assessed in the framework of language skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In addition, the decree determines the advantages that must be given for students and teachers who has language levels from accredited foreign language assessing tools such as CEFR (Common European Framework of References). For instance, high school students with A1 language level will not have to pass language tests for the admission of colleges and academic lyceums in Uzbekistan. They will be given the maximal scores for foreign language assessment. Similarly, students of colleges and academic lyceums who has B2 language levels will be given maximal scores from foreign language assessment for the admission of universities in Uzbekistan. For teachers who teach specialty subjects in foreign languages, if they have B2 language level, they will be given up to 100 percent extra salary of their wage.²

From this decree only, one can see that the development of foreign language teaching is very important to further development of our country. For successful implementation of plans in the decree, we, foreign language teachers, should strive

¹ A decree on "Uzbekistan's Development Strategy", 2017

² The order of ministry office of Uzbekistan on "The ways of teaching foreign languages more effectively in educational institutions" N32(792), 17 August 2017

hard to make positive changes in this sphere. Teaching foreign languages in an integrated way is the most viable way to meet worldwide language standards.

Traditionally, the focus of teaching foreign languages laid on grammar and translation. However, today this is not considered a wise approach, and this has been replaced by an integrated approach. It is highly recommended that along with language skills, pronunciation should be taught as an integrated part of foreign language courses.

Phonology is one of the aspects of a language. The acquisition of phonology is essential, if one has to be fluent in his/her mother tongue or a second language. Having read some methodological books on teaching, I decided to write this book and I tried to reflect on my knowledge I acquired from the books and my own little teaching experience. This book mainly deals with teaching pronunciation as ESL (English is as a second language) classes. I hope this book will give you some insight into teaching pronunciation in your classroom.

Investigation level of the theme

There have been conducted several researches on teaching phonology along with four language skills. For instance, Penny Urr, Douglas Brown, Susan Bainbridge, Patricia O'Shea and others devoted some books and pages to give instructions and guidance towards teaching phonology in ESL classes. Their works are worth of reading carefully and being put into practice. This gradual qualification work has been written after reading their theory about teaching phonology in ESL classes, and this will discuss the methods, techniques and approaches for teaching pronunciation in language skills classes.

Aim of the qualification work

The main aim of our gradual qualification work is to investigate the theoretical researches on teaching phonology in language skills and through data analysis to explore the methods of teaching pronunciation that can be applied in Uzbek context.

Tasks of the work

- To give general overview of phonology;
- To look at phonology in English;
- To discuss different activities of teaching phonology;
- To determine the pronunciation teaching activities preferable in using in Uzbek language skills classes

Objective and subject of the work

The objective of this work is the methods of teaching pronunciation published methodological books of famous language methodologists.

The subject of the work is those who use this book to find about teaching pronunciation.

Novelty and practical significance of the work

The novelty of doing research on teaching pronunciation considering the works of well-known methodologists' works stems from the fact that by investigating their works we will explore the methods of teaching pronunciation which are suitable applying in Uzbek context. These methods have been analyzed several times and been chosen to use. However, our investigation is based on cultural, characteristics and age issues of teaching a second language, and this will be the novelty of this work.

For the practical significance of the work, we can say that the gathered methods and techniques of teaching pronunciation in this book may come handy for those who are struggling to come up with appropriate ways of teaching pronunciation along with language skills.

Articles published on the gradual qualification work

“Pronunciation activities in your classroom”, Lingvo, May, 2018

Literature overview of the work

Basic information of the qualification work is given from the works of great scholars such as Penny Urr, Douglas Brown, Susan Bainbridge, Patricia O’Shea. Apart from the above-mentioned data, I took information from the sources of Internet.

Content of the gradual qualification work

Our gradual qualification work consists of ___pages and the introduction, three chapters all of which have three items, conclusion, tables, appendix, and bibliography.

At the end of the gradual qualification, work there is given the general conclusion of the work, appendix and the bibliography.

CHAPTER 1: AN OVERVIEW OF PHONOLOGY AND PRONUNCIATION

Phonology is one of the branches of linguistics, in order to better acquire languages one has to learn it deeply. There are various theories and views on phonology. In the following, you can read about a linguist – Hayes' theory on Phonology.

There are two branches of linguistic science that deal with speech sounds: phonetics and phonology.

Phonetics is primarily an experimental science, which studies speech sounds from three viewpoints:

- **Production:** how sounds are made in the human vocal tract
- **Acoustics:** the study of the waveforms by which speech is transmitted through the atmosphere
- **Perception:** how the incoming acoustic signal is processed to detect the sound sequence originally intended by the speaker.

Phonology is also, sometimes, an experimental science, though it also involves a fair degree of formal analysis and abstract theorizing. The primary data on which phonological theory rests are phonetic data, that is, observations of the phonetic form of utterances. The goal of phonology is to understand the tacit system of rules that the speaker uses in apprehending and manipulating the sounds of her language. Since phonological data are phonetic, and since (as we will see) the very nature of phonological rules depends on phonetics, it is appropriate for beginning students to study phonetics first. In particular, a phonologist who tries to elicit data from native speakers without prior training in the production and perception of speech sounds will be likely to have a hard time. The material that follows can be taken to be a quick review of phonetics, or else a very quick introduction that can be amplified with reading and practical training from materials such as those listed at the end of the chapter.

In principle, a phonologist should understand all three of the areas of phonetics listed above: production, acoustics, and perception" Of these, production

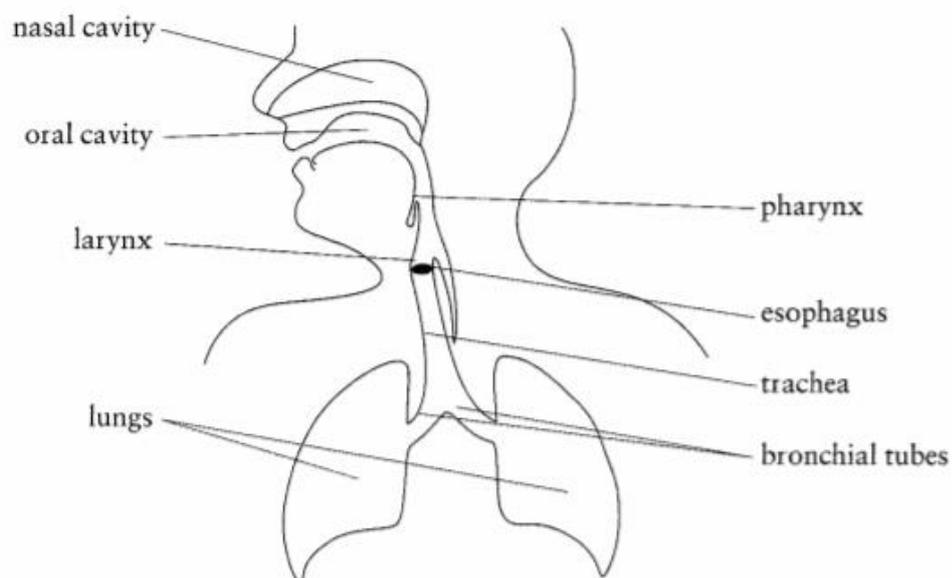
probably has the greatest practical importance for the study of phonology. Since it is also the simplest to describe, it is what will be covered here.

The production of sound

The term "vocal tract" designates all the portions of the human anatomy through which air flows in the course of speech production (see figure 1.1). These include (from bottom to top):

- The lungs and lower respiratory passages
- The larynx (colloquially: "voice box"). This is the primary (but not the only) source of sound in speech production
- The passages above the larynx, called the pharynx, oral cavity (mouth), and nasal cavity

Figure 1 The vocal tract

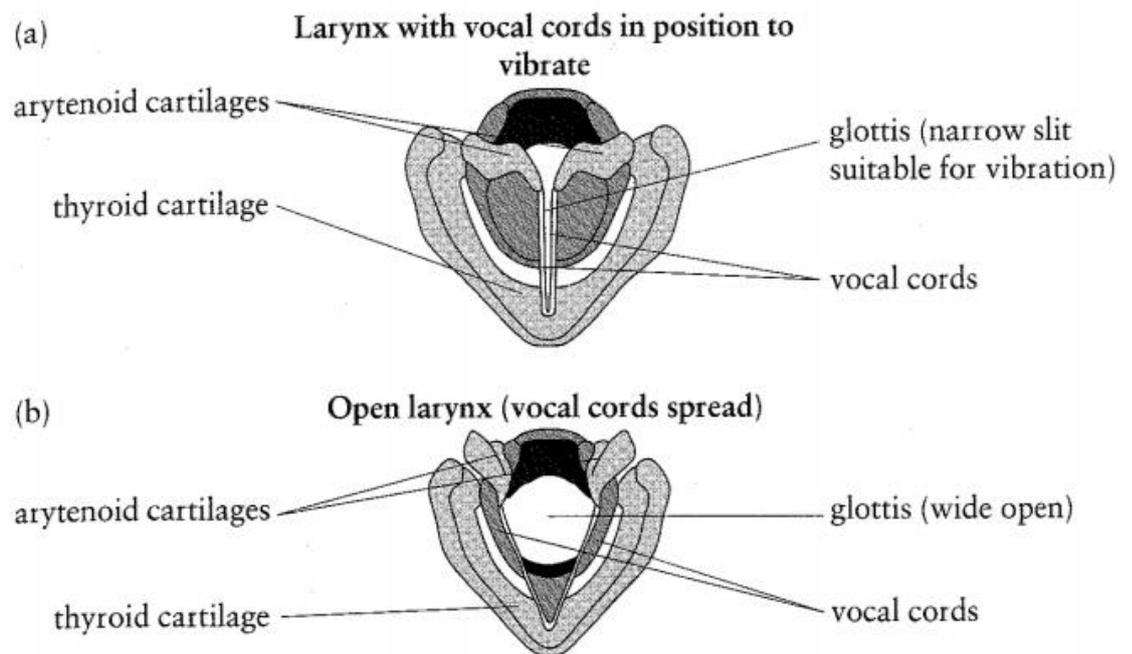


The lungs and respiratory muscles produce a fairly steady level of air pressure, which powers the creation of sound. There are occasional momentary peaks of pressure for certain speech sounds and for emphatically stressed syllables.. Air from the lungs ascends through the bronchial tubes, which join to form the trachea (windpipe). The bronchial tubes and the trachea form an inverted Y-shape

The larynx

The larynx is a complex structure of cartilage and muscle, located in the neck and partly visible in adult males (whose larynxes are the largest) as the "Adam's apple. Figure 2 shows two diagrams of the larynx:

Figure 2



The larynx contains the vocal cords (not "chords"), which are parallel flaps of tissue extending from each side of the interior larynx wall. The vocal cords have a slit between them, called the glottis. The vocal cords are held at their rear ends by two small cartilages called the arytenoid cartilages. Since these cartilages are mobile, they can be used to adjust the distance between the vocal cords.

When the vocal cords are held tightly together, the sound known as a glottal stop is produced; it can be heard in the middle of the expression "uh-oh" and is used as a speech sound in many languages.

If the vocal cords are placed close to each other but not tightly shut, and there is sufficient airflow from the lungs, then the vocal cords will vibrate, creating voicing. This is the configuration shown in figure 1.2(a). Voicing is the most important and noticeable sound source in speech. The vocal cords can also be spread somewhat apart, so that air passing through the glottis creates turbulent

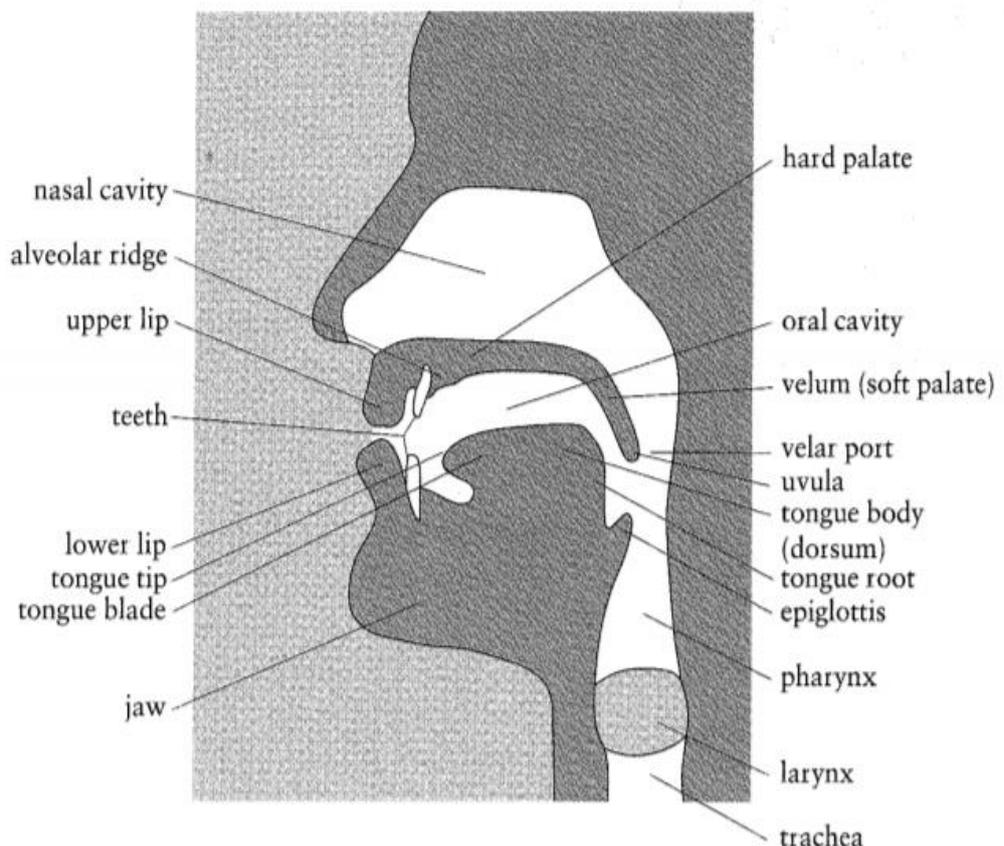
noise. This is the way an "h" sound is produced. The vocal cords are spread farther still for normal breathing, in which airflow through the larynx is smooth and silent. This is the configuration shown in figure 2

The cartilages of the larynx, especially the thyroid cartilage to which the front ends of the vocal cords attach, can stretch and slacken the vocal cords, thus raising and lowering the pitch of the voice. This is somewhat analogous to the changes in pitch that occur when a guitar string is tightened or loosened.

The upper vocal tract

Sound created at the larynx is modified and filtered as it passes through the upper vocal tract. This area is the most complex and needs the most detailed discussion; you should refer to figure 3 while reading the text.

Figure 3 The upper vocal tract



The main route through the upper vocal tract is a kind of arch, starting vertically upward from the larynx and bending forward through the mouth.. There is an opening about half way from larynx to lips, called the velar port, through

which air can pass into the nasal passage and outward through the nostrils. In figure 3, the velar port is wide open.

We will first cover the upper surface of the upper vocal tract (the roof of the mouth and the back of the pharynx), then the lower surface (floor of mouth, continued as the front wall of the pharynx). Going in the "upstream" direction, the crucial landmarks of the upper surface are:

- The upper lip"
- The upper teeth (in particular, the incisors).
- The alveolar ridge, a bony ridge just behind the base of the upper incisors.
- Most people can feel their alveolar ridge by moving the tongue along the roof of the mouth.
- The hard palate, which is that part of the roof of the mouth underlain by bone. You can feel the hard palate, and its rear edge, with the tip of your tongue.
- The velum, or soft palate. This is a flap of soft tissue that separates the mouth from the nasal passages. It is attached at the front (to the hard palate) and at the sides, but hangs loose at its rear edge" Various muscles can raise and lower the velum. When the velum is high, then the velar port is closed, and air is confined to the oral passage.²
- The uvula ([ˈjuːvj;>1J]). The little thing that dangles from the rear edge of the velum is called the uvula, Latin for 'little grape'. The uvula is vibrated (trilled) as a speech sound in some languages.
- The pharynx. Once we are past the velum, we are no longer in the mouth proper but in the rearward part of the upper vocal tract, commonly called the pharynx. The rear pharyngeal wall is continuous and has no significant landmarks all the way down to the larynx.

The crucial parts of the lower surface of the upper vocal tract are as follows:

- The lower lip and the tongue rest on the jaw, which raises and lowers the lower lip and tongue when it moves during speech.

- The lower lip is more mobile than the upper in speaking, though both move considerably. They can touch one another, closing the mouth, or the corners of the lips can be pulled in, creating lip rounding.
- The tongue is somewhat deceptive in its size and shape. The parts that are obvious to an external observer are the tip (sometimes called the apex) and the blade. These are merely an appendage to the much larger tongue body (also called dorsum), a roundish muscular body that can move in all directions. Movements of the dorsum can radically change the shape of the vocal tract, a fact that is crucial in the production of distinct vowel sounds.
- The rear surface of the dorsum is called the tongue root, behind it is a flap called the epiglottis³

³ Bruce Hayes. *Introductory Phonology*. A John Wiley and Sons, LTD, publication, UK. 2009. 1-5p.

1.2 Pronunciation features

Phonology and pronunciation should be an integrated part of EFL classes. It is because of the fact that it helps students to meet the world language standards that require professionals to be extremely fluent in foreign languages. In his research paper, Md. Claudia Andrea Cardenas Jimenez highlighted the importance of phonology and pronunciation at Universidad Technologica De Pereira Facultad De Bellas Artes Humanidades Licenciatura En Lengua Inglesa Pereira in 2014. The next few pages are overview of his research paper.

Pronunciation has been defined by Cook (1996) as a set of habits of producing sounds, the habit of producing a sound is acquired by repeating it repeatedly and by being corrected when it is pronounced incorrectly. Other authors as (Morley, 1994; Fraser, 2000) consider that this skill is the way we speak that immediately conveys something about ourselves to the people around us. The same authors state that pronunciation is related to intelligibility because learners with good oral skills in English are more likely to be understood. Even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect, such learners may avoid speaking in English, and thus experience social isolation, employment difficulties and limited opportunities for further study. Similarly, Labov & William (2003) proposed a more updated definition of pronunciation that the authors describe as the knowledge pertaining the different features of the target language phonological system, and the capacity for using them appropriately within the discourse.

The pronunciation skill has also been said to be the sum of many features that constitute the speech of language user. As stated by Crystal (2003) who differentiates among two main types of features, the segmental that the author defines as any discrete unit that can be identified, either physically or auditory, in the stream of speech, and the super segmental defined as phonemes that cannot be easily analyzed as distinct segments, but rather belong to a syllable or even word. Authors, such as (Ur, 2008; Kelly, 2000; Seferoglu, 2005) agree on that

pronunciation comprises the sounds of a language or phonemes, stress, rhythm, and intonation. Even though the categorization of segmental and super segmental features is varied enough, the same authors claim that a broad definition of pronunciation includes both super segmental and segmental features, which are implanted in the instruction of the phonological competence.

Theories conclude that segments are divided into phonemes. They are basic units of a language's phonology, combining them with other phonemes form meaningful units such as words or morphemes, phonemes also contain speech sounds. These sounds known as consonants that are articulated with complete or partial closure of the vocal tract which are divided in voiced and unvoiced, vowels; are sounds in spoken language divided in single vowels (short and long) and diphthongs; that refer to two adjacent vowel sounds occurring within the same syllable.

On the other hand, super segmental aspects involve intonation. This is defined as the variation of spoken pitch that is not used to distinguish words. Instead, it is used for a range of functions such as indicating the attitudes and emotions of the speaker. The stress; that refers to the relative emphasis that may be given to certain syllables in a word, or to certain words in a phrase or sentence and aspects of connected speech; that is a continuous sequence of sounds establishing utterances or conversation in spoken language. This is one of the classifications for the super segmental features; other authors organize them in different ways but they coincide in the fact that these aspects go beyond the segmental features.⁴

⁴ Mario Alejandro L. D. Scaffolding students' phonological competence through the integration of pronunciation learning strategies. Pierre University of technology. Pierre. 2014.

1.3 Pronunciation in EFL curriculum

Due to the fact that accurate pronunciation deserves knowledge in second language phonology. It is stipulated that concerning pronunciation, the phonological competence involve a knowledge and skill in the perception and production of the sound-units (phonemes) of the language. Their realization in particular contexts, the phonetic features which distinguish phonemes (distinctive features, e.g. voicing, rounding, nasality), the phonetic composition of words (syllable structure, the sequence of phonemes, word stress, word tones), sentence phonetics (prosody), sentence stress and rhythm intonation.

Pronunciation has gained importance in the EFL curriculum in the last years; however, it is one of the skills that tend to be neglected in language classrooms. Fraser (2000) states that learners perceive pronunciation as one of the most difficult aspects of English to acquire, that needs constant assistance and monitoring. By the same time, Underhill (2010) points out that in recent years, there has been a gradual shift towards awareness of the importance of pronunciation prompting to refer to pronunciation as the “Cinderella” of language teaching”.

Other studies support the fact that pronunciation has been neglected in EFL scenarios. Studies as conducted by Breitzkreutz, Derwing, and Rossiter (2001) verify the existing exclusion of pronunciation in pedagogical learning; also, the author’s remark the lack of adequate instruction pertaining to this language aspect. The same authors surveyed 67 Canadian ESL programs; it was found that only 30% of teacher respondents had received pedagogical training in pronunciation. The authors concluded that quite a few of the teachers identified the need to integrate pronunciation into the communicative classroom largely, but most lacked the requisite knowledge and training to do so. Given the importance of pronunciation in the EFL curriculum, Arias (2009) accounted the most common errors that ESL learners commit at the moment of articulating sounds in English. The author shows how EFL learners tend to substitute the correct pronunciation of

a phoneme for others that sounds similar. Those common errors are shown as follows:

Substituting				
/f/	by	/tʃ/		
/tʃ/	by	/f/		
/z/	by	/s/		
/θ/	by	/s/	or	/f/
/ð/	by	/d/		
/v/	by	/b/		
/ŋ/	by	/n/		
/m/	by	/n/		
/ʒ/	by	/ʃ/		
/æ/	by	/a/		
/ə/	by	any vowel, according to the spelling of the word		
/I/	by	/i/		
/U/	by	/u/		

Because of the rigorousness that EFL learners might face in the process of pronunciation development, the researchers who have been interested in this field, have examined many variables in an attempt to explain the increase of accurate pronunciation. Studies have not been numerous, but have been productive, Vitanova & Miller (2002) have argued that learners can see improvement in both segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation. However, once learners have mastered the basic sounds of English and identified some of the suprasegmental differences between their L1 and English, it is time to help them to learn some strategies so that language learners can study more effectively on their own.

In conclusion, it is of high relevance to bring to light what was mentioned in The Fifth Annual Pronunciation Conference in Second Language Learning and Teaching regarding this skill. In the event, the academic community concluded that pronunciation has been ignored or relegated in the EFL classroom, and this was the reason why the Annual Conference on Pronunciation Teaching and Learning emerged. Considering that this skill is not visible in the EFL curriculum, studies,

reflections presented in the conference induce the academic community to focus, and use applied approaches of pronunciation in the classroom, so that better results can be obtained in this phonological competence (e.g., Brodkey, 1972; Fayer & Krasinski, 1987; Smith & Rafiqzad, 1979).

Before moving on pronunciation techniques and learning strategies it is advised to learn about what includes teaching pronunciation, as these strategies and techniques help us to learn and teach pronunciation. According to Penny Ur, teaching pronunciation includes:

- the sound of the language
- stress and rhythm
- intonation⁵

Sounds

It is useful to be able to list and define the sounds, or phonemes, of the language by writing them down using phonetic presentations. Different books vary as exactly which, and how many symbols are used; for teachers British English, the simplified, phonemic alphabet shown in Figure 4 may be helpful. According to this, the sounds of words and sentences will be represented by the sound symbols indicated in the figure.

Regarding pronunciation techniques and procedures to work on pronunciation, literature suggests the following strategies targeted at promoting the phonological competence. According to Bradley-Bennett (2007), one of the crucial elements to improve pronunciation is listening (as long as the recordings are understandable for learners and meaningful for their lives). This listening material should include different voices and ranges, for listening just to the teacher limits students from understanding other people. In the same line, Gilbert (2008) proposes dictation of sentences including the specific sounds which are being worked. The author continues to say that linking words could be a proper way to work with final sounds. For example, “the boats_entered the water.

⁵ Mario Alejandro L. D. Scaffolding students' phonological competence through the integration of pronunciation learning strategies. Pierre University of technology. Pierre. 2014. 13p

Figure 4. The Phonetic Alphabet

Vowels		Consonants	
Symbol	Examples	Symbol	Examples
/ɑ:/	<u>arm</u> <u>part</u>	/b/	<u>bed</u> <u>about</u>
/æ/	<u>apple</u> <u>black</u>	/d/	<u>do</u> <u>side</u>
/aɪ/	<u>eyes</u> <u>drive</u>	/f/	<u>fill</u> <u>safe</u>
/aʊ/	<u>out</u> <u>now</u>	/g/	<u>good</u> <u>big</u>
/e/	<u>end</u> <u>pen</u>	/h/	<u>hat</u> <u>behind</u>
/eɪ/	<u>eight</u> <u>day</u>	/j/	<u>yes</u> <u>you</u>
/eə/	<u>air</u> <u>wear</u>	/k/	<u>cat</u> <u>week</u>
/ɪ/	<u>it</u> <u>sit</u>	/l/	<u>lose</u> <u>allow</u>
/i:/	<u>eat</u> <u>see</u>	/m/	<u>me</u> <u>lamp</u>
/ɪə/	<u>ear</u> <u>near</u>	/n/	<u>no</u> <u>any</u>
/ɒ/	<u>opposite</u> <u>stop</u>	/p/	<u>put</u> <u>stop</u>
/əʊ/	<u>open</u> <u>phone</u>	/r/	<u>run</u> <u>around</u>
/ɔ:/	<u>always</u> <u>more</u>	/s/	<u>soon</u> <u>us</u>
/ɔɪ/	<u>boy</u> <u>join</u>	/t/	<u>talk</u> <u>last</u>
/ʊ/	<u>would</u> <u>stood</u>	/v/	<u>very</u> <u>live</u>
/u:/	<u>you</u> <u>choose</u>	/w/	<u>win</u> <u>swim</u>
/ʊə/	<u>sure</u> <u>tourist</u>	/z/	<u>zoo</u> <u>loves</u>
/ɜ:/	<u>early</u> <u>bird</u>	/ʃ/	<u>ship</u> <u>push</u>
/ʌ/	<u>up</u> <u>luck</u>	/ʒ/	<u>measure</u> <u>usual</u>
/ə/	<u>ago</u> <u>doctor</u>	/ŋ/	<u>sing</u> <u>hoping</u>
		/tʃ/	<u>cheap</u> <u>catch</u>
		/θ/	<u>thin</u> <u>bath</u>
		/ð/	<u>then</u> <u>other</u>
		/dʒ/	<u>June</u> <u>age</u>

(based on Martin Hewings, *Pronunciation Tasks*, Cambridge University Press, 1993,

Note that this is quite difficult to do the first time – it takes a good deal of practice and learning to be able to transcribe quickly and accurately.

Rhythm and stress

English speech rhythm is characterized by tone-units: a word or group of words which carries one central stressed syllable (other syllables, if there are any, are lightened). The sentence: “Peter, come here, please!” for example, would divide into two tone-units: “Peter” and “come here, please”, with the two main stresses on the first syllable of “Peter”, and the word “here”.

Stress can be indicated in writing: probably the simplest way to do so is to write the stressed syllable in capital letters: for example, “Peter, come HERE, please!”

Intonation

Intonation, the rises and falls in tone that make the “tune” of an utterance, is an important aspect of the pronunciation of English, often making a difference to

meaning or implication. Stress, for example, is most commonly indicated not by increased volume but by a single rise in intonation (Brazil, Coulthard and Johns, 1980). A native speaker usually has little difficulty in hearing intonation changes in his or her own language; others, however, may not find it so easy. The different kinds of intonation are most simply shown by the symbols over the relevant syllable or word in order to show falling and rising intonations; and the symbols to show fall-rise and rise-fall. An appropriate stress and intonation representation for a rather bossy expression of our previous sentence example might be: PEter, come HERE, please.

The rhythm of English is, then, mainly a function of its stress patterns; these may also affect such aspects as speed of delivery, volume and the use of pause⁶.

⁶ Penny Ur. A course in language teaching. Cambridge University Press, 1991. 47-49p

1.4 Pronunciation techniques and learning strategies

Regarding pronunciation techniques and procedures to work on pronunciation, literature suggests the following strategies targeted at promoting the phonological competence. According to Bradley-Bennett (2007), one of the crucial elements to improve pronunciation is listening (as long as the recordings are understandable for learners and meaningful for their lives). This listening material should include different voices and ranges, for listening just to the teacher limits students from understanding other people. In the same line, Gilbert (2008) proposes dictation of sentences including the specific sounds which are being worked. The author continues to say that linking words could be a proper way to work with final sounds. For example, “the boats _entered the water.

Accordingly, Robertson (2003) estimates that in order to get students oral production sufficiently clear, the speed of speech could be reduced to achieve proper English production. In addition, he says that providing students with the script of the modeled pronunciation is suggested, but it should be gradually removed until the focus is completely on students’ word understanding. In the same fashion, Bradley-Bennett (2007) states that modeling syllables in a disjointed way (I... am... a... teach--er) or extending diphthongs (mah-ee neh-eem is...) could help students produce words accurately.

Consequently, Harmer (2011) suggests the use of other techniques for working on pronunciation such as identifying items from a list (listening a series of words and checking the ones which are included in the printed list), comparing minimal pairs (analyzing the difference between “day-they” not only in sound but in meaning), and using the phonetic symbols to clarify specific sounds. He also adds that these techniques might satisfy students who have different needs and attitudes towards pronunciation practice. Scholars like Cotterall, 2000; Hsiao & Oxford, 2002; Oxford, 1990 suggest that assisting learners to develop a repertoire of learning strategies is essential and recommend the inclusion of self-monitoring tools (self-correction) when learning pronunciation. One of these monitoring tools is suggested by Bradley-Bennett (2007), which is a “phone” made of PVC pipes

joint together. The learner speaks to one of the ends of the phone and listens to his partner on the other end. The techniques and procedures presented are samples of what research and literature provide to the world of teaching pronunciation.

Considering the importance of pronunciation in the EFL many, approaches have proposed other meaningful learning practices as strategies for addressing pronunciation in the classroom. For instance, the communicative approach (Hinofotis & Bailey, 1980) stipulates that L2 learners are not expected to sound like native speakers of English but rather to enable them to surpass the beginning level; therefore their pronunciation will not affect their ability to communicate. Due to this fact, the same authors named some strategies that aid students working on language communicatively, namely, listening and imitation, phonetic training, minimal pair drills, contextualized minimal pairs, visual aids, tongue twisters and developmental approximation drills.

Other authors have focused on the development of pronunciation learning strategies because of the rigorousness for developing accurate pronunciation; the goal of Pawlak (2010) as cited in the study conducted by Ingels (2011), is to develop a valid instrument for identifying PLSs use. The author provides useful definitions regarding the effectiveness of strategy use in the field of pronunciation; he states that pronunciation learning strategies are deliberate actions and thoughts that are consciously employed, often in logical sequence, for learning and gaining greater control over the use of various aspects of pronunciation. He highlights the fact that such strategy usage contributes to the development of declarative (explicit) and procedural (implicit) knowledge. Pawlak proposes some strategies for pronunciation learning, namely, critical listening, transcription, annotations and rehearsing corrections aloud. These strategies can be described as follows:

Critical listening

One PLS that has been vastly defined and addressed as productive for developing control over one's pronunciation aspects is critical listening. This strategy is defined by Izumi (2003), as a learner's deliberate intent for listening to their own production in order to identify non-target features. The same author

claims that listening holistically may allow a learner to identify the most noticeable features, such as the use of too many fillers and self-repairs or a lack of fluency. In this strategy, listening is meant to be more detailed and systematic, a critical process that provides an opportunity for learners to focus on their L2 production at the segment, syllable, word, phrase, and discourse levels.

Transcription

Another strategy characteristic of the pronunciation monitoring process is transcription. The author Lynch (2007) claims that this strategy cannot be separated from critical listening. In order for transcription to be effective, an L2 learner must also be able to attend and identify the target pronunciation features in their speech; so that when transcribing speech the learner can write down exactly what was spoken, including non-target-like production of segmental, suprasegmental, pauses, restarts, fillers, and repairs. The goal is to create an accurate written record of a speech without yet moving ahead to the evaluation phase, thus allowing the learner time to analyze and reflect on his or her output.

Annotation

Similarly, Foster and Skehan (1996) state that if the transcription strategy is employed students might consider using the annotation strategy as well. The authors explain that for this strategy, learners go one step further with the transcription described in the previous paragraph; learners review their own transcripts, looking for non-target features, and annotate (mark) corrections directly on the transcript in a contrasting color. During this transcript correction process, learners refer to a checklist to remind them of the pronunciation features they should monitor.

Rehearsing corrections aloud

Another strategy is rehearsing correction aloud which Sardegna (2009) remarks to be a good method for reflecting on the type of practice learners typically do when learning new L2 skills. The same author comments that after performing one of the pronunciation learning strategies with a given speech excerpt (i.e., critical listening, listening + transcription, or listening + transcription

+ annotating corrections), learners orally produce each speech excerpt. Then, implement the suggested feedback aiming to make their production as accurate as possible in terms of the target pronunciation features, during and following each rehearsal, learners monitor and evaluate their output, with the goal of identifying modifications that are needed in subsequent rehearsals in order to make their oral production target-like⁷.

⁷ Mario Alejandro L. D. Scaffolding students' phonological competence through the integration of pronunciation learning strategies. Pierre University of technology. Pierre. 2014. 14p

CHAPTER 2 IMPROVING PRONUNCIATION WITH CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

2.1 Identifying elements of foreign pronunciation.

In the first chapter, I tried to give you a general overview of phonology, teaching and features of pronunciation. I hope the information I provided would be handy for you to better understand phonology and pronunciation in the second language acquisition. In this chapter, I first give you some information on how to identify elements of foreign pronunciation. Then, I will provide the activities which you can do in your classroom to scaffold your student's pronunciation.

Penny Ur - a famous methodologist describes how to identify elements of foreign pronunciation as the followings.

Stage 1: Preparing materials

Using audio cassettes, (I would suggest a laptop or other device that is common in our contemporary world), prepare recordings, two or three minutes in length, of foreign accents; this can be done individually or in pairs or groups. The recordings should consist of short interviews with speakers who are not very proficient in the target language. In a country where the target language is not locally spoken, it makes sense to use as interviewees natives of this country, but other accents may be used in addition.

It is, of course, much easier just to ask people to read aloud in order to make a recording. However, resist the temptation. There are various reasons for this: someone reading aloud has time to think consciously about how they are speaking, and we are looking for "intuitive" pronunciation; the reading passage may include words the interviewees does not know; and perception of spelling affects pronunciation. Improvised speech produces much better samples, which may later, incidentally, be used to examine lexical and grammatical errors. If you find it difficult to think of questions for an interview, the interviewee can be asked to describe a picture, or retell a well-known story.

If you have not made such recordings before, make brief trial recording of a new seconds and play it back in order to check that you have the distance, volume,

microphone and so on properly adjusted. Begin the actual interview only when you are sure you are getting a clear recording.

Stage 2 Analysis

Listen to the recordings and try to analyze what it is about the accent which makes them “foreign”. This is quite difficult; you will find you need to listen to the recording more than once. It is easier if you note the words and phrases which sound generally foreign while listening the first time, and then during later listening and try to find what precisely wrong with them. If you know the phonetic alphabet and symbols of intonation and stress, this can help, but a rough description of what is wrong in lay language can quite adequate.

Stage 3 Pooling and comparing

If a group of teachers studying together has made several such recordings, then the next stage is to share findings. In small groups, each recording is listened to, and participants try to identify the errors and how and why they think this occurs.

Stage 4 Drawing conclusions

Discuss your findings, and draw conclusions. Questions that can usefully be investigated here are the following (some possible answers regarding English appear in the notes)

1. (If only one type of accent was recorded) What seem to be the most common errors?
2. (If there were different accents) Were there foreign-sounding pronunciations that were common to most or all of the speakers, and can you generalize about the kinds of errors?
3. Which errors do you think are the most important to try to correct?
4. With regard to the errors you want to correct: how would you explain these to the learners?
5. Are there any you would not bother to try to correct?

6. What further ideas do you have for getting learners to improve their pronunciation of the items you have found?⁸

Susan Bainbridge and Patricia O'Shea also have written some pages about how to identify elements of foreign pronunciation thorough activities in their chapter in the book of **An Integrated Approach: Techniques for Teaching Pronunciation Skills and Communicating in the ESL Classroom**. You can read the description of one of the activities below. In order to give you a clear picture of the activity I am presenting from the authors language.

As qualified Second Language teachers, we are familiar with the linguistic theory of Oral Communication; some may be familiar with the latest research into what we should be teaching but are unsure of how to teach it and perhaps lack confidence in their own skills in this area. Pronunciation in the second language field has traditionally been taught on a theoretical level by isolating sounds, concentrating on weak forms, then moving on to syllable stress, followed by sentence stress and intonation. This approach has been predominantly reliant on auditory learning and taught discretely. Our approach is to concentrate from the outset on the supra-segmental level (that is, dealing with intonation and rhythm) with every English competency level. We do this by utilizing the learning styles and techniques used in both the Arts and Sciences approaches to Oral Communication and applying them in a holistic, culturally grounded problem-solving approach in the second language classroom. The authors will henceforth draw on their individual experiences to share some techniques they find effective in the classroom. The techniques I use in the second language classroom draw upon the various strands of my career.

It is arguable that the discrete, 'abstract' phonemes that we traditionally introduce to our second language students at the outset do not exist in connected speech as these phonemes change depending on their position within the utterance and the intention of the message. As English speakers, what we actually and

⁸ Penny Ur. A course in language teaching. Cambridge University Press, 1991. 50p

holistically identify when we listen to English is the number of syllables, the stressed syllables, i.e. rhythm and the punctuation (pausing and the intonation pattern of the voice). It is Dr. Fraser's strong recommendation, which I wholly support, that this suprasegmental approach to oral communication should be integrated throughout the skills areas and taught from the outset in our classes (Fraser, 2001). In pursuit of this aim, Dr Fraser has produced an excellent CD-ROOM for teachers who need to improve their skills in teaching pronunciation.

Best practice oral communication theatre training teaches that every accent, dialect or language involves the use of a completely different set of muscles and habits. (Linklater, 1976; Rodenburg, 1992). In the Theatre Arts, we begin at the outset to teach our students this vital cultural aspect of spoken languages. Speech Pathology works from the premise that in order to produce clear communication we need to be able to access the right muscle and then form the neural pathways in order to produce it habitually (i.e. we form and establish successful speech habits).

In the Classroom

In a typical first session, using this approach with any level of English learner, we begin by asking our students to identify the habits they need to acquire to communicate successfully in English. This is achieved by asking them to work in groups to do a simple but invaluable exercise. In a mixed language or monolingual class, the groups are given a simple set of instructions in language appropriate to the language level of the group, spoken in the normal rhythm of connected speech; to a Elementary level class, the phrases will be shorter than to a High Intermediate class thereby giving the information in digestible 'bite sized chunks'. Delivering shorter phrases is the same technique a good communicator uses with first language speakers in a large audience. We are simply modeling good presentation skills, keeping the rhythm, pace and intonation intact, aided by 'gesture' accessible language and visual clues.

The following example is based on a mixed language class of low Intermediate students:

Part one

- In a moment / Akiko / is going to tell us / in Japanese/ about her family /
- Everyone / is going to put their hands / over their ears / and watch Yuki / Look at her face, / her arms / and her body.

Watch / what she shows / someone to do / to communicate well / in Japanese.

- When Akiko / stops speaking, / take your hands / away from your ears. / Talk to your group / and one person / in each group / write down / what Akiko does. / Copy / with your face and body / to help you to explain. /

- ***Choose the writer in each group***

- (Akiko and teacher model the instructions of the exercise)
- Ready, / hands over ears, / Akiko begin!

- ***Feedback onto board***

I usually repeat this with one volunteer from each language group. In a monolingual class, I ask one of the students to volunteer to tell us about their family or their home town in their own language. I ask each group to talk for a few minutes, then to tell me and show me what we have to do to communicate in that language. Then we look at what we need to do to be good communicators in English. I ask them first to repeat the visual exercise by putting their fingers in their ears while I tell them about my home town, then discuss, and one person from each group in turn show or tell me one thing they noticed.

Part two

In the second part of the exercise, I tell the students that I am going to talk to them for two to three minutes. I ask the students to listen to the sound of my voice; I tell them that on this occasion my words are not important and while I'm speaking they are to discuss with the rest of their group all the things they can see and hear me do with my voice and body to make my meaning clear. I tell them that I will help them to 'hear' by being the 'conductor' of an orchestra and hold an imaginary 'baton' between my thumb and fingers of both hands so they can 'see' as well as hear what my voice is doing. I ask them to feedback in the same way as in the previous exercise. By doing this, I am asking them to identify the *skills*

exercised in successful oral communication not to reiterate the theory; I am also asking them to 'feel' how English works, the rhythm and the dynamics of connected speech. If a student should give the word 'intonation' or 'stress' for example, I would ask them to explain what that means and show me what they heard. With the feedback on the board, we form 'rules' for communicating in English.

This is a very enjoyable exercise as it is student-centered and group focused, engages all the senses, allows for all learning styles, gives the learners responsibility for their learning, engages the student in the 'cultural' experience of the spoken language, and validates each mother tongue in the classroom by making the speaker the expert and the teacher of their own language. It also allows the students and the teacher to 'experiment' in a safe environment while giving the teacher the opportunity of becoming the student and discovering new skills alongside the students. Above all, students enjoy the dynamics of English and learn how to begin to enjoy communicating in the language. This exercise works for students of any age, level, culture, language group, or life experience. The list of 'rules', with help with vocabulary from the teacher, will always include variations of the following:

- You make a lot of movement with your face
- The movement goes upwards and outwards
- Your mouth moves a lot
- You 'smile' with your eyes
- Your face moves upwards and outwards
- You look at us
- It is like singing
- Some sounds are long and some are short
- Some sounds are loud and some are soft
- It is like the waves in the sea/riding a horse (they show the movement)
- You speak in 'chunks'
- Each 'chunk' is like putting a comma or a full stop when you are writing.

We integrate this into our communication in every skills area on an ongoing basis; for example, as we are listening to a text, introducing new phrases, looking at the structure of a sentence (noun phrase, verb phrase, etc.), understanding and giving instructions or explanations.

Part three

The next stage in the introduction process is to acquire the skill of identifying and producing the suprasegmentals, by integrating the above 'rules' through visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning. Native English speakers recognize a message by its rhythm, i.e. how many syllables, how long the syllables are, and which syllables are stressed. The techniques involved in this exercise are derived from Speech Pathology approaches and theatre training and can be introduced to any size of group. The teacher becomes the conductor of the orchestra or the choirmaster and the students follow as they 'conduct' their own 'orchestra'. Each student takes the 'baton' between the thumb and the forefinger of both hands, as the hands and the batons lift to conduct the orchestra. This action, with the eyes open, lifts the face muscles into a gentle 'smile' upwards and outwards. If, at the same time, the mouth is opened slightly a little breath will automatically go in. The 'smile' is a necessary exaggeration for the students as the smile muscles allow the soft palate to rise and fall for the pitch glides necessary for intonation, while the shape inside the mouth created by the gentle smile creates the space towards the mid- to front section of mouth to allow enough space for the sounds of English to take place (**Berry, 1994; Linklater, 1976; Rodenburg, 1992**). It is important to enjoy the exercise, to make it bigger, to exaggerate in order to stimulate the right muscles to begin to form a habit. We can use the instructions we are giving at the time as our message. We write this on the board: Smile // and / o /pen // your/mouth (I prefer to underline the stressed syllables on the board as I feel it is a clearer signal -than marking above the syllable with ')

The double slashes // represent the end of a phrase (a verb phrase, prepositional phrase or noun phrase for example). I make these phrases short at the beginning and then later give them the choice of where we put the pauses by

deciding which phrases we will join together. The single slash / separates the syllables.

The conductors' batons follow the voice and the voice follows the batons. The students feel seven distinct movements of the baton – six for the number of syllables (marked /) and the seventh making a 'full stop' for the finish of the unvoiced 'th' at the end of the one syllable word 'mouth'. The organs of articulation automatically follow the baton to produce the unvoiced 'th'. The students follow the teacher following the phrase. They feel the stressed syllables like a stick on a symbol. We do not concentrate on the syllables containing weak forms these syllables are tapped very lightly and treated like a tiny preparations with the baton for the next stressed syllable. They get very little actual 'attention' from the batons. The intonation pattern is marked by the batons as they follow the voice. The students themselves choose how the class will mark the flow of the intonation described by the batons over the written text. My students have described the feel of the intonation as 'the waves on the sea' and 'riding a horse over the jumps. After the introductory session, I also give the students a choice of how they will 'use' their baton. The more confident and outgoing students very quickly feel comfortable with conducting a large orchestra. The more introverted might prefer to use a 'pencil baton' and describe the movement with the tip of the pencil or crayon on a large piece of paper thereby conducting a smaller orchestra. The most important consideration is that the students follow the principle conductor - the teacher - and work as a consolidated group – the orchestra. Each time the baton is lifted - simultaneously the face muscles follow and move upwards and outwards into the smile movement, the mouth opens and the breath goes in. We are teaching our students the skills of English pronunciation and stimulating the particular set of muscles necessary for communicating in English.

This is the introductory framework of the suprasegmentals. Once the framework has been established, it is integrated throughout the skills areas (see above). The 'baton' is used as a problem-solving tool for all areas of pronunciation in order to make the message clear. In addition to the suprasegmentals, the 'baton'

can describe, for example, a diphthong within a word or phrase, a short or long vowel, linking one sound to the next, forming a consonant cluster, ensuring the necessary amount of syllables are present, and finishing the syllable at the end of a phrase. It is as valuable a tool for acquiring listening skills as it is for speaking. Once the teacher is confident in his/her skills, it is a very enjoyable process transferring these skills to the students. In my workshops, I encourage my teachers to practice conducting the orchestra in front of a large mirror using any phrase that comes to mind.

Part four

Implementing Communication Activities in the Classroom

We have discussed the 'what' and the 'why' of teaching oral skills in the classroom, now it is appropriate to concern ourselves with exactly how to implement activities which will improve the oral skills of students. It is understood that any oral-based classroom must have clear guidelines established so the teacher can quickly and effectively deliver instructions or stop activities for a moment to clarify a point. It is also important that the teacher use a low tone when speaking, so students become accustomed to a reasonable level of speaking. They will naturally begin to imitate the teacher's voice level. In most oral activities thirty to fifty percent of the students may be speaking at any given time, therefore teachers need to be cognizant of overall noise level. Many of the activities included in this paper follow a format or structure that is used with only slight variations in complementary activities. It is important that the students are taught the processes and practice them before beginning any oral activity. These processes may include forming groups, moving furniture or making formations. A good teacher gives a specific name to each specific direction and has pre-taught the routine. Depending on the English level of your students and their age level, this teaching and explaining of the routine may take an hour or even extend over a couple of days. It

is the foundation of all successful oral activities, so it is time well spent. Proper training in formation routine makes for more successful oral activities and results⁹.

⁹ Susan Bridge and Patricia. O'shea An Integrated Approach: Techniques for Teaching Pronunciation Skills and Communicating in the ESL Classroom. 180-186p

Chapter 2.2 Improving pronunciation through activities

This chapter tells of improving pronunciation and suggests you some activities to conduct in your classroom in order to practice and improve your students' pronunciation.

The objective of improving pronunciation is that it needs to be said at the outset that the aim of pronunciation improvement is not to achieve a perfect imitation of a native accent, but simply to get the learner to pronounce accurately enough to be easily and comfortably comprehensible to other speakers. "Perfect" accents are difficult if not impossible for most of us to achieve in a foreign language anyway, and may not even be desirable. Many people – even if often subconsciously – feel they wish to maintain a slight mother-tongue accent as an assertion of personal or ethnic identity. This feeling should, surely, be respected.

Inquiry Ask a group of learners whether they want to achieve a "perfect" native accent or not. If they say no, find out whether this is only because they think it is impossible, or because they genuinely do not see it as a desirable objective.

Why do learners make pronunciation errors?

Learners' errors of pronunciation derive from various sources:

1. A particular sound may not exist in the mother tongue, so that the learner is not used to forming it and therefore trends to substitute the nearest equivalent: she or he knows
2. A sound does exist in the mother tongue, but not as a separate phoneme, that is to say, the learner does not perceive it as a distinct sound that makes a difference to meaning. In Hebrew, for example, both the /i/ and /i:/ (ship/sheep) sounds occur, but which is used depends only on where the sound comes in the word or phrase, not what the word means; and if one is substituted for the other, no difference in meaning results. These are called "allophonic variations" of a phoneme, or "allophones". The result is that the Hebrew-speaking learner is not naturally aware of the difference in English, and may not even hear it.

On the whole, the second of the two problems is the more difficult. A totally new sound is often easily perceived as alien, and once you hear a sound you are well on the way to being able to pronounce it. But if you cannot hear it then you cannot even attempt to pronounce it, and the problem of perception needs to be overcome before any progress can be made.

Question Consider some foreign language learners with whom you are familiar- preferably your own students – whose mother tongue you also know. Can you identify instances of mistakes in sound formation and why they make them (for example, the sound does not exist in their own language, or exist only as an allophone)

3. The learners have the actual sounds right, but have not learnt the stress patterns of the word or group of words, or they are using an intonation from their mother tongue which is inappropriate to the target language. The result is a foreign-sounding accent, and possibly misunderstanding.

Question Listen to some not very advanced learners speaking the foreign language or if you did the previous unit, listen again to a recording. Can you identify three or four instances of inappropriate stress or intonation?

Getting learners to perceive

The first thing that needs to be done is to check that the learner can hear and identify the sounds you want to teach. The same goes for intonation, rhythm and stress: can the learner hear the difference between how a competent, or native, speaker of the language says a word, phrase or sentence and how a foreign learner says it?

This can be done by requesting imitation; or seeing if learners can distinguish between minimal pairs (such as ship/sheep, man/men, thick/tick; see Gimson, 1978); or by contrasting acceptable with unacceptable pronunciation through recordings or live demonstration.

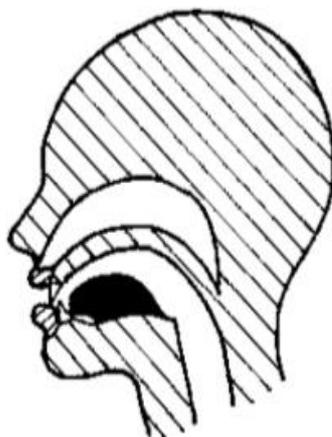
Note that you can check perception of sounds using single words or even syllables, but work on stress and intonation nearly always needs to be based on longer units.

Question Choose an error that seems to you particularly widespread and persistent. How might you test learners to find out if they really perceive the difference between their version and the correct one?

Telling learners what to do

The next stage for some learners maybe some kind explicit exhortation: this is what it ought to be, this is what you are doing wrong. For sound formation it may help actually to use sketch of the mouth (see **figure?**), and to describe the pronunciation of a sound in terms of lips, tongue, teeth, etc. But for other aspects of pronunciation a brief explanation is sufficient, followed by demonstration an invitation to imitate and practice

Figure 4



Question Again; choose a typical learner error you are familiar with. How would you explain to the learner what he or she is doing wrong and how to put it right?

Practicing correct pronunciation

Finally – When we are satisfied, that the pronunciation point has been satisfactorily perceived and learners can, if they take care, produce an acceptable version – we come on to the stage of practice: consolidating and establishing the habits of acceptable pronunciation through exercises that provide repetition and reinforcement.

Ideas for improving learners' pronunciation

- Imitation to teacher or recorded model of sounds, words and sentences
- Recording of learners speech, contrasted with native model
- Systematic explanation and instruction (including details of the structure and movement of parts of the mouth)
- Imitation drills: repetition of sounds, words and sentences
- Choral repetition of drills
- Varied repetition of drills (varied speed, volume, mood)
- Learning and performing dialogues (as with drills, using choral work, and varied speed, volume, mood)
- Learning by heart of sentences, rhymes, jingles
- Jazz chants
- Tongue twisters
- Self-correction through listening to recordings of own speech ¹⁰

¹⁰ Penny Ur. A course in language teaching. Cambridge University Press, 1991. 52-54p

2.3 Classroom activities for improving pronunciation

There are some sounds in English that can be difficult for any learner, and there are also distinctions between sounds that some students find confusing because there is no such distinction in their mother tongue. When all, or at least several, of your students are struggling with the same problem, it is definitely worthwhile doing some activities to target specific areas.

First, they need to be able to hear the difference between the incorrect and the correct sound. Then they need to learn how to make the correct sound. Finally, they also need to be able to recognize (when reading, for example) when and how to make the correct sound.

What are minimal pairs and how can they help your Students?

Maybe you have already been noticing particular words or sounds some of your students are having trouble with. At any rate, it is worth doing a little bit of research to find out where your students are most likely to need help based on their first language(s).

Then you can look for appropriate minimal pairs—words that are exactly the same except for one different sound. These can help you target the sounds that your students need to focus on. A simple example would be:

“Ship” and “sheep”

The sounds “i” and “ee” in these two words are significant because they are the only difference between two words which have different meanings, but for many ESL students the two sounds are not distinct in their mother tongue. By learning to recognize and reproduce the difference in these words’ sounds and meanings, students can start heading towards pronunciation mastery. Try to choose pairs of words that not only contain your required minimal pairs, but are also suitable to the ability level of your students. The pairs will be useful to practice the target sounds through fun activities.

Now the big question: Can you explain the physical difference between the two sounds to your students?

Sometimes you can say the sounds over and over, with your students trying to mimic, but they just do not seem to be able to hear or feel the difference. You need to be able to tell them how to make the new sound(s).

If you are not already familiar with the Phonemic Chart, then you might find it helpful because it shows how and where each sound is made. You do not have to learn the symbols or teach your students the symbols, although some older students particularly enjoy learning them. However, it will be useful for you to be aware how each sound is made. With that in mind, let's take a look at some fun activities you can use to better teach pronunciation to your students.

10 ESL Activities to Teach Perfect Pronunciation

There are lots of games and activities you can use to teach this topic. Since they will all involve speaking and listening, they are naturally engaging and interactive games. The purpose of these is to focus on the particular sounds your students are having problems with using appropriate minimal pairs of words.

1. Minimal Pairs Bingo

This is one of the easiest ways to focus on particular pairs of sounds. A Bingo card commonly has 5 x 5 squares, so you can use 25 words (12 minimal pairs, or more than two words for some sounds). One or more spaces on each card could be a "free" spot, or you could change the size, maybe to 4 x 4. (I have found that 25 words works well for a full lesson, and everyone will be able to learn them all by the end.) Go to a website such as ESL activities to create your Bingo cards. You simply type in the words you want to use, choose how many individual cards you need and then let the program randomize the cards so that they each have a different arrangement of the same words. Have a spare card cut up into individual squares that you can jumble and use to call the words.

Do not let the students mark their cards. Provide markers such as small stones or sunflower seeds that they can put on each word as they hear it (and then remove to play again). If you have "free" spots they can start the game by putting markers on those. The first student to get five markers in a row in any direction calls "Bingo!" Students remove their markers and a new game starts with the

winner as the new caller. After a game or two the students can swap cards to get a different arrangement of words to look at. At the end of the lesson you can review the words and target sounds with the whole class.

This activity can give students the opportunity to hear the difference between the minimal pairs, recognize the different words written on the card and clearly pronounce the difference when they win and have a chance to be the caller. As each word is called, students tend to all say it quietly to themselves as well.

2. Odd One Out

Put similar words into groups of three—two with one sound, and one with a different (although similar) sound. Or, you could have groups of four or five which contain the same sound, but only one that's different. For example: meet, seat, sit (for vowels) plays, pace, space (for consonants)

The selection of the odd word can be a reading exercise—where students read the words to themselves out loud and identify the sounds in the written words—or a listening exercise—where the teacher reads the words and the students respond to the “odd” word. Likewise, selected students could try reading the words aloud for others to identify the odd word, or they could work in pairs or small groups with one person pronouncing the words and the others indicating which is odd.

There are a number of different activities you could run with these groups of words—depending on the ages and abilities of your class, and your classroom arrangement.

Ask the students individually to read through the word groups and pick which words have different sounds. Ask the students to discuss the groups of words with a partner and decide which one is odd. Divide the class into two teams, in two lines, and ask the person whose turn it is to choose the odd word as you read them out loud. Make the question part of another game like Tic Tac Toe. The team or individual whose turn it is to place an X or an O must first pick the odd one out. They proceed with their turn if they choose the right word. If they can not identify

the odd word, then they lose their turn. Play Run and Grab (see below) putting the words on the board and having participants run up to pick the odd word.

3. Run and Grab

You could have your minimal pairs on flashcards or you could simply write two (or more) words at a time on the board. Create two teams and then pair students up with a member of the opposite team. In turn, each pair goes to stand at the back of the room, looking down an aisle at the board. When you call one of the minimal pairs out, the pair races to the front to touch the correct word (the odd word out) on the board or grab the appropriate flashcard. Students from the winning team could have a turn at calling the words for others to run to younger students especially enjoy activities that include movement and a chance to race, but older students also find it enjoyable.

4. Basketball

If your students are keen on basketball then there are a couple of ways you can use this to inspire them to practice their minimal pairs. Board Basketball—Set questions using minimal pairs such as choosing the “odd one out” (see above) or asking students to choose the correct word as in Run and Grab (see above). When students give the correct answer, they (or their team) score “baskets” (points) on the board. An optional additional to this game is to have students take a shot at throwing a ball into a hoop or receptacle after they identify the correct odd word. (Making the shot wins them another point.)

Crumple and Shoot Basketball—the minimal pair words are written on pieces of (scrap) paper. Students are lined up in two teams. In turn, the front student picks up the paper and reads the word. If it is read correctly they then crumple it up and throw it into a basket/bin/receptacle a set distance away. (Getting it into the basket wins another point.)

Or you could display words on a screen (with an LCD projector) or on flashcards. When the student whose turn it is gets it right they can throw a ball (or other object) into the basket or bin, gaining another point.

5. Sound TPR (Total Physical Response)

Younger students especially enjoy any activity that involves movement. Designate particular movements to particular sounds, as lively or as gentle as you like. For instance, they could be sitting at their desks and raise a hand, clap or stand up when they hear a particular sound, or they could be standing in a space and jump or run in response to sounds. As with “Odd One Out” (see above), this could be reading based or listening based. They could respond to words on flashcards by correctly pronouncing them and moving in the prescribed way, or they could respond to the teacher (or another student) saying the words.

If you’re teaching younger students—who may also be learning to read and write—they should also be learning phonics, which relates each sound to English letters. There are established systems of hand signs or gestures for each sound which you may find useful here. These can be seen under Visual Phonics on YouTube, or you can look up Jolly Phonics.

6. Dictation

Dictation is when someone speaks aloud and someone else writes it down. Getting your students to write down what you say is good listening practice for them, and when you are dictating minimal pairs, they need to listen especially carefully. There are a few different dictation activities you can use. Minimal Pairs Dictation—the teacher reads out minimal pairs in a particular order and the students write them down. Or the students could have the words already written down and you could instruct them to put marks, numbers, colors, etc. on particular words as you read.

Running Dictation—the students work in pairs. One student runs to read the words or sentences from somewhere farther away, like on the wall outside the classroom. They then dictate to the other student who writes them down. The dictation could be single words, minimal pairs or sentences including target words and sounds.

Fast Dictation—this is where the dictation is read in one continuous stream instead of a few words at a time with breaks. The students listen and write any words or phrases they notice (without panicking!) In this situation, the dictation

should include some target words (in minimal pairs) which the students should listen for specifically and write down in the order they hear them.

Picture Dictation—the students have a picture, background or series of pictures containing objects that represent the minimal pair words. They follow instructions to highlight the pictures of their minimal pair words, which may include, collaring, making marks or drawing additional items.

7. Fruit Salad

This is generally a game where the players sit in a circle with one player standing in the middle. The players have each been designated as a type of fruit. The middle player calls a fruit, and all of the players who have been assigned that fruit must rush to change places while the middle player tries to take one of their chairs. Periodically they can call “fruit salad!” and then everyone must change places. Instead of using the names of fruits, you can designate words containing minimal pairs to groups of students, and maybe choose another word for the “fruit salad!” command.

For example, as the students are sitting in the circle they “number off” one by one around the circle with:

“pea,” ” bee,” “pin,” “bin”

Then the person in the middle will call “pin!” or another given word to get their peers running around.

8. Chinese Whispers

When someone is genuinely whispering, and therefore not using their voice, it is nearly impossible to hear the difference between some words. For example, “bit” and “pit.” In a social situation where whispering is used we rely on context to fill out the meaning.

In the classroom, Chinese Whispers is a game that involves passing a message from student to student, hopefully without it getting changed too much. In order to play Chinese Whispers as a pronunciation game it might be best to allow speaking and to ask students to carry the message farther away where it cannot be overheard by others.

One student could be outside the door and you tell them what the message is. Then the second student goes outside and they tell them the message. The first student comes back in the classroom and sends the next student out. This goes on until every student has heard the secret word. The final student comes back into the classroom to say what they think the message was. If the message contains words from your minimal pairs list, it will probably have changed, maybe more than once.

9. Card Games

Flashcards are a wonderful resource that every ESL teacher should have bundles of. They can be used for whole class activities and games, or you can create multiple smaller sets to be used by individuals at their desks or in pair/group work activities. Here are a few examples:

Hold it High—Just like Run and Touch (see above) if students have individual sets of cards on their desks, they can hold up the appropriate one when it is called, and the teacher can then look around and have a quick check that everyone is correct. To move from reading to speaking they should firstly say it as they hold it up, and secondly individual students could have a turn at the front.

Happy Families—Create a set of cards containing maybe 6 – 10 families of 4 cards, colour coded by families. For example, “boo zoo boom zoom,” “cap tap cub tub,” “kick thick kink think,” etc. Supply a complete list for each member. The cards are distributed like in Go Fish. Students in groups of four play, trying to collect sets of four by asking the person next to them if they have particular cards.

Snap—Make the same decks of cards as in Happy Families. Students can play Snap in pairs or groups with a stack of cards containing relevant minimal pairs. The student placing the card down on the deck should call it at the same time. The next student must put down a card that fits in with that card family. The group proceeds until the winner has no cards left.

Catching Cards—Students gather at the back of the room. The teacher throws individual flashcards and students try to catch them. When they get one they say the word and show it to everyone.

Pair Up—Students are each handed a flashcard with a minimal pair word. They have to walk around and either find others with the same word/sound.

Bean Bag Toss—Lay the flashcards containing the minimal pairs spread out on the floor. Each student takes a turn throwing a bean bag onto a card and clearly saying the word on that card. (They could then collect the card and win a point.)

Stepping Stones—Lay the cards on the floor. Students use them as “stepping stones” to cross a river, saying each one clearly as they step on it.

10. Minimal Pair Math

Assign a number to each of the minimal pair words you wish to focus on. Then call out the words in your chosen sequence, possibly joined with mathematical symbols (e.g., plus, minus). Students can write down the words and their associated numbers while you speak. Ask the students to give you the final number that all these words add up to.

Pronunciation up keep

Obviously just doing a couple of activities once or twice may not fix the pronunciation problems your students are having. Hopefully, these activities for targeted practice will lead your students to a better understanding of English pronunciation so that an occasional “nudge” (rather than nagging) will keep them on track. Whenever the opportunity arises, you can remind them of these pronunciation lessons and minimal pairs when those minimal pair words pop up again in speaking, listening and reading lessons. This is a great way to continue pointing out the words used in your minimal pairs in context. Then students can hear how they sound (again) and get a feel for which words have which meanings. Practicing a whole phrase or sentence containing the troublesome sound is more likely to cement it in their memory, especially if it is part of a song or a video that they can watch and practice along with. The important thing is to integrate these activities into your class’s routine whenever possible, and to keep reinforcing the

different sounds and meanings. With time, great English pronunciation will come.¹¹

Carouselling

This formation has various names and it can be used successfully for teaching conversation techniques and/ or question and answer dialogue strategies. The formation places half of the class in a circle on the perimeter of the classroom. It does not have to form a circle. Students might stand in each corner of the room or three along each side of the room, depending on the number of students in the group. Then the other half of the class each pairs up with a student in this outer ring and this second group is treated as the inner circle. The outer circle students never change location. The inner circle students rotate left to the next outer circle collaborates each time the teacher says "Change" (or rings a bell, or claps their hands and so on). It is important that the students practice this initial pair-up and rotation a couple of times before any actual oral activity is introduced. It can become a fun activity in itself as the teacher has the class sitting in seats and then says "Carousel" or "Circle Pairs" and times the class to see how quickly they can form the two circles. Once they know the routine then an activity such as the following can be introduced. Students receive a lesson or review on 'wh ' questions. Then they are asked to write five questions they would like to ask a classmate. While they work the teacher moves around the classroom correcting each student's questions. When each student has five questions then the class moves into carousel position. Each pair then asks each other their questions and answers the others questions. The teacher moves between partners and as the first or second pair finishes, the teacher says 'change' or 'rotate' and the inner circle moves left to the next person. Then the new pairs begin again, asking each other their questions and responding. This continues until the people are back in the original pairs. This is a marvelous activity for large classes. The most important aspect is that fifty percent of the class is speaking at all times. It is actually a drill to perfect certain structures, but far more interesting than memorization. Below are some topics that have been

¹¹ <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-english/esl-pronunciation-activities/>

used successfully with carouselling with some creative thought the list could be infinite?

“wh” questions	Introductions	Small talk
specific verb tense practice e.g. What were you doing last night at 8 o'clock? I was eating dinner.	spelling peer drills Each student has five words and asks, "How do you spell? Partner spells the word.	vocabulary expansion Each student has five categories and says to their partner, "name three vegetables". The other student does so.

Rotational Group Work:

Divide the class into groups of three to four students (make one group with the extra member if the class size is not divisible by either number). Each group will work at a table and the teacher or the group chooses one student in each group to be Ms/Mr. X. Each table will have a large sheet of white paper, markers or colored pencil and any other items the teacher may choose to add. As with carouselling this activity structure can work with any age level or English level. The group begins to work on an assigned topic or goal and works for five to ten minutes together. Then the teacher directs the X person to move to another group. Now each group has a new member. This new person tells the group what additions they can make from ideas she/he brings from the previous group or simply brings fresh ideas as discussion continues. The teacher rotates the 'floater X' every five or ten minutes until the groups are back to their original members. Now, the groups complete their flow chart, graphs, labeled collages or whatever the teacher has directed. The final papers/boards are displayed and if the class is a higher English level, each group can present their work to the rest of the class. Below is a chart with some ideas that work well with rotational group work.

Vocabulary expansion Lexical groups: list as many as possible e.g. types of animals.	Mind-Mapping Brainstorming ideas for some type of plan e.g. invention, project	Flow Charts To expand on any idea e.g. steps to write an essay
Collage Groups must create a list of new words and draw pictures or cut pictures from magazines	Charts Create a chart together with any information they are asked to gather e.g. compare/contrast	Timelines Research or thought based e.g. history of the telephone/major events in an average person's life

Pair Work:

It is important in any pair work that the teacher attempts to ensure that English is spoken during the activity. Therefore, the activities have to include 'controlled conversation' so that the point of the exercise entails speaking English to achieve the goals. Otherwise, the teacher will find it impossible to monitor seven to twelve groups while they work simultaneously.

Pair work is successful if the partners are practicing some dialogue that they will record or perform for the class. All oral activities, but particularly pair work should have a quick pace and very specific time constraints. If the students are given an extended period of time to complete an activity that normally takes half the time, then superfluous chatter and unnecessary noise will take over the

classroom. Some pair work activities that students enjoy and that improve oral skills are:

Prepare oral dialogue for recording	Prepare oral dialogue for performance in class	Write a dialogue together to submit or perform
Record as many words as possible in a specific category	Write a story together but students write alternative sentences	Create a survey together to ask the other students in class

Memory Games:

Standard and traditional memory games are very good if the teacher learns how to take them to another level and expand on them horizontally. Most readers know the oral activities such as having the class sit in a circle and make a story. The teacher begins the story with a first line, for example, "Last night I went to Dubai." The student to her right must repeat the teacher's statement and add the next sentence. E.g. "Last night I went to Dubai. I ate at a restaurant." The next student must repeat the two statements and add another, and so on. This in itself is a fine activity particularly for drilling a certain verb tense. The teacher makes corrections and the next students must make no errors. So all students are listening intently and trying to memorize each sentence. This type of activity can be taken a step further and can become as challenging as the class can handle. For example, if the students know the past tense, but often make pronoun errors, then the teacher can ask the students to change the pronouns as they repeat each sentence. E.g. Last night he went to Dubai. She ate in a nice restaurant. I went to a movie¹².

Conclusion of this chapter

All of the activities described in this chapter have common denominators. They each follow a set structure that can be used often by the same teacher, but

¹² Susan Bridge and Patricia. O'shea *An Integrated Approach: Techniques for Teaching Pronunciation Skills and Communicating in the ESL Classroom.* 187-190p

offer great variety because of the actual content. They can also be very easily adapted to any age group or language level. They also allow students of varying language levels to perform at their own level, speak often and listen for purpose to the words of others.

Chapter 3 PRACTICAL PART

3.1 Description and purpose of the research on exploring suitable pronunciation learning activity to use in middle schools

In first and second chapters, I presented an overview of phonology and pronunciation, and the description of some activities for you to use in your classroom to boost your students' pronunciation. As a part of my diploma thesis, during internship at 7th school in Namangan, I did a little research. This chapter is devoted to the description of this research. From this chapter, you can learn about my little research I have done on exploring the most effective pronunciation activity.

Pronunciation learning activities can result profitable for increasing accuracy in the production of pronunciation features, as shown in the study conducted many researchers. My goal for this study was to improve schoolchildren's pronunciation and to explore the pronunciation activities which are suitable to our Uzbek context. For this purpose, two classes of 6th grade pupils at 7th middle school in Namangan were asked to participate in extra-curricular English classes at the 7th school in Namangan. The classes were held twice a week and lasted about an hour. During five weeks, I conducted pronunciation-improving activities and made sure whether the activities were working well or not. Data resulting from activity use was gathered throughout five weeks in order to explore the activities that can be effective in the classroom. I found that some activities worked well, and students seemed to have improved their pronunciation. Thus, I concluded that such pronunciation-improving activities are very useful for students to gain fluency in second language.

In order to implement pronunciation-learning activities, I met participants on a weekly basis. New vocabulary was previously assigned to each group with the purpose of giving the learners the opportunity to learn it by heart before gathering in the group session. Each group entered the classroom having passed a test on vocabulary. In five weeks of period time, I managed to conduct five different

Cook, book

Wheat, sheet

Procedure

- I divided each group into two sub-groups. I asked each group to place all of their cards face down on the table.
- Pupils took it in turns to turn over two cards. They said the two words aloud to see if they rhymed. If the two cards rhyme, they kept them.
- When there were no cards left on the table, each student counted how many cards they had to see who was the winner.
- For this activity students needed to recognise that some words have a similar pronunciation even though the spelling is very different. I included lots of simple and easy pairs of words as the students' language levels were not that high. For example:

Town, noun

Turn, earn

Though, low

Paw, store

Some, thumb

Lake, break

- You can also play this game with homophone pairs instead of rhyming pairs. Begin by explaining what a homophone is. You can give examples in the students' own language and in English, emphasising that the words have the same sound, but not the same spelling or meaning. For example:

Some, sum

Threw, through

So, sew

Pair, pear

Right, write

Group A's data

Time of the activity	22 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	6
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	4

Group B's data

Time of the activity	18 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	4
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	1

Week 2

The tongue twister game (appendix 2)

All of the 16 pupils participated in the first week. I conducted Rhyming Pair Game by Kate Joyce, British Council. All levels and ages enjoy tongue twisters. They work well as a warm-up to get students speaking, and they help students to practice pronouncing difficult sounds in English.

Procedure

I wrote some English tongue twisters on the board. Asked them to read the tongue twisters aloud. Then faster. Then three times in a row. Here are some examples:

She sells seashells on the seashore

A proper copper coffee pot

Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran

Red lorry, yellow lorry, red lorry, yellow lorry

A big black bug bit a big black bear

***Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where is the peck of pickled peppers
Peter Piper picked.***

- I asked the students if they have any tongue twisters in their L1. Had a go at saying them myself. This usually causes a good laugh, and makes the activity more two-way and interactive.
- Then asked the students to have a go at creating their own tongue twisters. This activity is a variation of the famous 'Consequences' game.
- Wrote the following questions on the board:
 1. Write your first name
 2. What did she/he do?
 3. Where?
 4. When?
 5. Why? Because...
- Then gave students the following instructions:
 - Get into teams of about 5 people
 - On a piece of blank paper write your answer to question 1.
 - Pass the paper to the person on your right.
 - Write an answer to question 2 on the paper you have just received.
 - Your answer must begin with the first sound in the person's name (e.g. Bob - bought a bike)
 - Pass the paper on again and write an answer to question 3 again using the sound at the beginning of the name.
 - Continue until all the questions have been answered.
 - Pass the paper back to the person who started with it. Read all of the tongue twisters aloud.
 - It might help if you give the students some examples before they begin the exercise:

Bob bought a bike in Bali on his birthday because he was bored

Susan sang a song at the seaside on the 6th of September because she saw some sunshine

Group A's data

Time of the activity	16 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	8
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	1

Group B's data

Time of the activity	10 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	7
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	2

Week 3

This time some students did not participate in the classes. Two students from Group A and one student from Group B did not come to the course. However, this did not affect to end result of my research. We did homophones dictation the students who were present in the course. Shaun Dowling, Teacher trainer, Cultura Ingles, from Brasilia created this activity.

Homophones can be one of the reasons students spell or hear something incorrectly. By raising learners' awareness of these types of words in an open and fun manner, teachers can help learners understand why they have difficulty with a

particular listening activity or even with spelling a word wrongly. This materials light activity needs little preparation and allows students to notice these problems.

Procedure

- I chose from 10 homophones to dictate.
- Told the students you were going to say about 10 words and for them to write them down.
- Asked students to stay silent while they dictate and not to check with a partner.
- Dictated each word clearly and allowed students time to write

Here are the 10 homophones I had chosen with their homophone in brackets

Band (banned)-I'll (aisle, isle)

Nose (knows)-right (write)

There (their, they're)-sun (son)

Past (passed)-cell (sell)

Flu (flew) Knot (not)

- In pairs, I had the students check what they have written down. As students check, they wrote the words (not in brackets) up on the board.
- After the pairs have finished they may see a difference in their lists. Ask the whole group if they have written down the same as the list on the board.

Many students may feel they have written down the wrong words if their own words are different from the list on the board. In this case, as you wrote the second similar sounding word (these are the homophones in brackets), I asked the students if their list was similar to these other words. Some discussion took place there as students laughed and smiled about what they had written, so I asked them if they could ask me what is the difference between the two words. They said the spelling and also the meaning.

- Then, I elicited from students the similarities of the words. If they disagreed that the sounds were not the same then it was a good idea to drill the words for students to hear and ask them if the homophones sound different.

- Then, I elicited again, what differences there were between the words. You wrote those differences and similarities on the board for clarity.
- Then, I introduced the word 'homophone' and saw if students know of any other English homophones.

- Group A's data

Time of the activity	10 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	90%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	5
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	2

Group B's data

Time of the activity	14 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	7
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	1

Week 4

All of the participants were present this time. I conducted **Homophone game** activity that is a natural follow on from the Homophone dictation and can be used to help the students practice and remember homophones. The creator of this activity is Shaun Dowling, Teacher trainer, Cultura Ingles, from Brasilia

Procedure

- I asked 3 volunteers to sit in a chair facing the board (about 2 to 3 meters away was fine). I gave each pupil a piece of chalk or marker.

- Then, told learners they were going to run up to the board and write two versions of the homophone from the word I read out. The one who was the slowest stood seated and the other two sat back in their original places.
- Read out any homophone you felt would be easy for the first 3 participants, for example *'one / won'*.
- The students ran up and write *'one'* and *'won'*. The slowest sat back down and the quickest went back to their places. Now 2 other people came up and the game was repeated.

This game was a competition and was played in a light-hearted spirit. I Did not really want one person losing all of the time so I liked to cheat and showed the student who was always losing the word so they had a chance of winning. This game also helped to highlight some sounds which are particularly difficult for students to hear and write, for example my learners had difficulty when I said the homophone *'heel/heal'* / **hi:l**/ and tended to write *'hill'* / **hil**/ or I said *'there'* and they wrote *'dare'*

Apart from the homophones mentioned in the dictation activity. Here is a further list of homophones I have found particularly useful with my intermediate students.

read / red	steel / steal	tour / tore	rose / rows
weather / whether	mist / missed	hi / high	cereal / serial
scent / cent / sent	which / witch	dye / die	Board / bored
not / knot	site / sight/	higher / hire	mind / mined
sawed / sword	would / wood	break / brake	tire / tyre
heard / herd	some / sum	air / heir	groan / grown
piece / peace	none / nun	allowed / aloud	road / rowed
be / B / bee	root / route/	whale / wail	so / sew / sow
he'll / heal / heel	flower / flour	toes / tows	soul / sole
which / witch	bear / bare	deer / dear	bite / byte
here / hear	bread / bred		

Group A's data

Time of the activity	18 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	80%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	8
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	3

- Group B's data

Time of the activity	16 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	70%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	6
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	2

Week 4

In this week, all the participants took part in the activities. We did the activity of remembering the phonemes by *Paul Kaye, British Council, Syria*.

Learning and remembering the phonemic symbols can be quite a challenge. Here are some two activities which I did in the class. They can help even lower levels with this.

Symbols

This activity focuses on some of the easier symbols and works towards the more difficult vowel sounds. It then helps students to record and remember them.

- I Cut up the words and symbols in worksheet A (annexe pron match)
- Then, asked learners to match the individual sounds in the first column to the words in the second column.
- Next, asked them to match the words to the complete phonemic script of each word in the third column.

- Then, gave learners worksheet B, their record sheets, and explained that this is a record of the symbols they learnt in the class.
- Discussed the first example given, and emphasized how important it was to underline the correct letters in the words.

Word	Vowel
Van	æ

- asked them to find at least three more from the exercise.

Hangman

This is a fun, non-threatening way to finish the class. It relies on you to produce the symbols and the learners to produce the sounds. It helped learners understand that phonetic script was made up of sounds, not letters. It also gave them instant transcription of sounds into symbols.

- Thought of a word and the phonetic script for it, for example fish
- Like normal Hangman, I wrote up on the board a series of spaces, but each one representing a sound, i.e. for fish:
- Asked learners to give me sounds that they thought may be in the word. As they said them, wrote up the corresponding symbol on the board so they could see it.
- When they gave me a sound that was already on the board, pointed to the corresponding symbol as I corrected them.
- Learners continued until they guessed the word.

Group A's data

Time of the activity	10 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	8
How many times a teacher gives	1

explanation of the activity	
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Group B's data

Time of the activity	12 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	5
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	3

Week 5

In the last week of the research all the participants took part, we did the activity of **C for consonant, V for vowel** by Alan Stanton, teacher trainer and materials writer. This is an activity to be carried out before introducing phonemic symbols. It is designed to teach students:

- The difference between sounds and letters
- The difference between vowel sounds and consonant sounds
- The difference between one sound and two sounds

Procedure:

1. I Chose ten words that students already know. It was important that they are familiar words.
2. Chose four or five other familiar words as examples.
3. Demonstrated on the board that the word 'cat', for example, can be written CVC, Consonant sound, Vowel sound, Consonant sound. This as a very easy example, but there were more difficult ones. 'Caught' is CVC, 'through' is CCV, 'breakfast' is CCVCCVCC, 'brother' is CCVVCV, 'hour' is VV, 'carrot' is CVCVC.
4. Asked students to do the same with the ten words I had chosen. I asked them to do this by looking and writing, by looking, listening and writing, by listening, saying (to each other) and writing – whichever combination seems valuable and necessary.

5. If you were not sure about a word, I let check the phonemic symbols in a dictionary.

6. Checked students' answers and explained any difficulties.

This activity clarified many points for students. For example, that 'br' is two sounds but 'th' is one, final 'er' is one and 'rr' is one. It will show that 'h' is sometimes silent and sometimes not and that final 'r' is silent. Note that diphthongs count as one vowel sound. This activity is good preparation for learning phonemes because it focuses on sounds and not letters.

Group A's data

Time of the activity	20 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	70%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	4
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	4

Group B's data

Time of the activity	25 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	70%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	3
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	4

3.2 Findings and discussion of the gathered data

As you see above the activities were done in two different classes, and the results of assessment of the activities were somehow different. In order to assess the activities on average I added the numbers and percentages of each group and then divided the results into two as there were two different groups. After the calculations, the following data came out.

Week 1 Paring game

Time of the activity	20 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	5
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	3

Week 2 The tongue twister game

Time of the activity	13 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	8
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	2

Week 3 Homophones game

Time of the activity	18 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	75%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	7

How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	2
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Week 4 Remembering the phonemes

Time of the activity	11 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	100%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	7
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	2

Week 5 C for consonant, V for vowels

Group A's data

Time of the activity	23 minutes
The level of involvement of the activity	70%
The number of pupils who seemed to like the activity	4
How many times a teacher gives explanation of the activity	4

These tables show that the activities which took the least time are the activities of “The tongue twister” and “Remembering the phonemes” lasting for 13 and 11 minutes respectively. Of course, a fifteen-minute activity is too much to do during a forty-minute lesson. A teacher may feel pressured for time. However, sometimes we need to take time and conduct such activities in our classrooms. The benefits pupils get from such activities are tremendous and they help them to reach fluency in their target language. Indeed, they contribute to the effectiveness and

productivity of a lesson. The gathered data, for example proves this, the involvement levels of the two activities are 100 percent. There was not been a student who was sitting silently being a spectator of a lesson. In addition, almost all of the students seemed to like these activities which makes a lesson more interesting and evolving.

In a word, as end result of this little research it can said that the most suitable pronunciation learning activities to our schools are “”The tongue twister” and “Remembering the phonemes”. I would recommend you to conduct them in your classroom.

It also should be noted that there are different rules and facilities in schools, therefore these activities may not compatible to your tastes. Thus, it is recommended to be critical and selective when deciding to do any activity in your classroom.

Conclusion

Pronunciation is, nowadays, by far one of the fields of interest in, both second language research and English language teaching. The current trends in language teaching suggest and encourage English teachers to promote this skill in the EFL scenarios and, for this purpose a wide range of strategies have been proposed, which Peterson classifies based on Oxford's model of strategy types; memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social strategies. The importance of the implementation of these strategies lies in the fact that language learners need to become autonomous and conscious users of tools and actions in their learning process that will, eventually, allow them to gain control over the use of various aspects of pronunciation.

The best way to improve pronunciation is after receiving a little theoretical knowledge doing pronunciation-improving activities as I stated in this graduation qualification. Before you decide to conduct any pronunciation activity in your classroom, you need to introduce your students to basics of phonology and pronunciation. Their theoretical knowledge would be strengthened while doing the activities.

For completing this diploma thesis, I read more than 10 books and articles on phonology and pronunciation. After careful consideration and research, I gathered data and presented you what I thought most useful and suitable to my topic. While completing this diploma work I understood that phonology and pronunciation is a field of study that is very broad and interesting.

The process of conducting activities at 7th middle school was very challenging, and this was my first time to experiment in teaching foreign language. Although I had many difficulties in following the instructions of the activities, I was determined and kept working hard. Eventually, I accomplished what I intended to, and this was my first satisfactory practical work in this field.

I am thankful to the participants and host school of what they have done for me. This would not be my last research; I keep doing such researchers in the future, and strive very hard to make positive changes on this field in my country.

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Appendix 1

Rhyming and pairing game

This activity is a pronunciation and memory game. It works best if you split the class into small groups. You will need to produce a set of cards for each group with one word on each card.

Author:

Kate Joyce

The sets of cards should be made up of lots of rhyming pairs of words. For example:

house, mouse

die, cry

cook, book

wheat, sheet

You can download a set of pairs' cards below.

Procedure

Ask each group to place all of their cards face down on the table.

Students must take it in turns to turn over two cards. They must say the two words aloud to see if they rhyme. If the two cards rhyme, they can keep them.

When there are no cards left on the table, each student counts how many cards they have to see who is the winner.

For this activity, students need to recognize that some words have a similar pronunciation even though the spelling is very different. For higher levels, include lots of difficult pairs of words. For example:

town, noun

turn, earn

though, low

square, air

paw, store

some, thumb

lake, break¹³

You can also play this game with homophone pairs instead of rhyming pairs. Begin by explaining what a homophone is. You can give examples in the students' own language and in English, emphasizing that the words have the same sound, but not the same spelling or meaning. For example:

threw, through

so, sew

pair, pear

right, write

hare, hair¹⁴

Appendix 2

Tongue Twister game

All levels and ages enjoy tongue twisters. They work well as a warm up to get students speaking, and they help students to practice pronouncing difficult sounds in English.

Author:

Kate Joyce

Procedure

Write some English tongue twisters on the board or on pieces of paper to distribute to students. Ask them to read the tongue twisters aloud. Then faster. Then three times in a row. Here are some examples:

She sells seashells on the sea shore

A proper copper coffee pot

Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran

Red lorry, yellow lorry, red lorry, yellow lorry

A big black bug bit a big black bear

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where's the peck of pickled peppers

Peter Piper picked?

¹³ <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/tongue-twister-game>

¹⁴ <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/rhyming-pair-game>

Ask the students if they have any tongue twisters in their L1. Have a go at saying them yourself. This usually causes a good laugh, and makes the activity more two-way and interactive.

Now ask the students to have a go at creating their own tongue twisters. This activity is a variation of the famous 'Consequences' game. Write the following questions on the board:

Write your first name

What did she/he do?

Where?

When?

Why? Because...

Now give students the following instructions:

Get into teams of about 5 people.

On a piece of blank paper, write your answer to question 1.

Pass the paper to the person on your right. Write an answer to question 2 on the paper you have just received. Your answer must begin with the first sound in the person's name (e.g. Bob - bought a bike).

Pass the paper on again and write an answer to question 3, again using the sound at the beginning of the name.

Continue until all the questions have been answered.

Pass the paper back to the person who started with it. Read all of the tongue twisters aloud.

It might help if you give the students some examples before they begin the exercise:

Bob bought a bike in Bali on his birthday because he was bored

Susan sang a song at the seaside on September 6 because she saw some sunshine.

Laura laughed in the laundrette at lunchtime because she lost her laundry¹⁵.

¹⁵ <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/tongue-twister-game>

Appendix 3

Homophones dictation

Homophones can be one of the reasons students spell or hear something incorrectly. By raising learners' awareness of these types of words in an open and fun manner, teachers can help learners understand why they have difficulty with a particular listening activity or even with spelling a word wrongly.

Author:

Shaun Dowling

This materials-light activity needs little preparation and allows students to notice these problems.

Procedure

Choose from 8 to 10 homophones to dictate.

Tell your students you are going to say about 10 words and for them to write them down.

Ask students to stay silent while you dictate and not to check with a partner.

Dictate each word clearly and allow students time to write

Here are the 10 I usually choose with their homophone in brackets

band (banned) I'll (aisle, isle)

knot (not) right (write)

there (their, they're) sun (son)

past (passed) cell (sell)

flu (flew) made (maid)

In pairs, have students check what they have written down. As students check, write the words (not in brackets) up on the board.

After the pairs have finished they may see a difference in their lists. Ask the whole group if they have written down the same as the list on the board. Note that many students may feel they have written down the wrong words if their own words are different from the list on the board.

Now as you write the second similar sounding word (these are the homophones in brackets), ask students if their list was similar to these other words. Some discussion may take place here as students laugh and smile about what they have written, so ask students if they can ask you what is the difference between the two words. They should say the spelling and the meaning.

Now elicit from students the similarities of the words. If they disagree that the sounds are not the same then it is a good idea to drill the words for students to hear and ask them if the homophones sound different.

Now elicit again, what differences there are between the words. You can write these differences and similarities on the board for clarity.

Now introduce the word 'homophone' and see if students know of any other English homophones.

Appendix 4

Remembering game

Learning and remembering the phonemic symbols can be quite a challenge. Here are some two activities which I did in the class. They can help even lower levels with this.

Symbols

This activity focuses on some of the easier symbols and works towards the more difficult vowel sounds. It then helps students to record and remember them.

- I Cut up the words and symbols in worksheet A (annexe pron match)
- Then, asked learners to match the individual sounds in the first column to the words in the second column.
- Next, asked them to match the words to the complete phonemic script of each word in the third column.
- Then, gave learners worksheet B, their record sheets, and explained that this is a record of the symbols they learnt in the class.
- Discussed the first example given, and emphasized how important it was to underline the correct letters in the words.

Word	Vowel
Van	æ

- asked them to find at least three more from the exercise.

Hangman

This is a fun, non-threatening way to finish the class. It relies on you to produce the symbols and the learners to produce the sounds. It helped learners understand that phonetic script was made up of sounds, not letters. It also gave them instant transcription of sounds into symbols.

- Thought of a word and the phonetic script for it, for example fish
- Like normal Hangman, I wrote up on the board a series of spaces, but each one representing a sound, i.e. for fish:
- Asked learners to give me sounds that they thought may be in the word. As they said them, wrote up the corresponding symbol on the board so they could see it.
- When they gave me a sound that was already on the board, pointed to the corresponding symbol as I corrected them.
- Learners continued until they guessed the word¹⁶.

Appendix 5

This is an activity to be carried out before introducing phonemic symbols.

Author:

Alan Stanton

It is designed to teach students:

The difference between sounds and letters

The difference between vowel sounds and consonant sounds

The difference between one sound and two sounds

Procedure

¹⁶ <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/rhymimg-pair-game>

Choose ten words that students already know. It is important that they are familiar words.

Choose four or five other familiar words as examples.

Demonstrate on the board that the word 'cat', for example, can be written CVC, Consonant sound, Vowel sound, Consonant sound. This is a very easy example but there are ones that are more difficult. 'Caught' is CVC, 'through' is CCV, 'breakfast' is CCVCCVCC, 'brother' is CCVVCV, 'hour' is VV, 'carrot' is CVCVC.

Ask students to do the same with the ten words you have chosen. You can ask them to do this by looking and writing, by looking, listening (to you) and writing, by listening, saying (to each other) and writing - whichever combination seems valuable and necessary.

If you are not sure about a word, check the phonemic symbols in a dictionary.

Check students' answers and explain any difficulties.

This activity will clarify many points for students. For example, that 'br' is two sounds but 'th' is one, final 'er' is one and 'rr' is one. It will show that 'h' is sometimes silent and sometimes not and that final 'r' is silent. Note that diphthongs count as one vowel sound. This activity is good preparation for learning phonemes because it focuses on sounds and not letters¹⁷.

¹⁷ <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/c-consonant-v-vowel>