

## Language Activities

### Pronunciation Activities

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Pronunciation is an often overlooked aspect in language learning as it is not considered to be significant enough. This may be true to a certain extent, but minor variations in the pronunciation of certain sounds may change the entire meaning of a word, thereby hampering communication. This is especially evident in the case of minimal pairs. Given here are a few language activities that require very little preparation and that can be easily conducted in the classroom to help learners distinguish between various sounds.

The examples in the activities mostly have fricative sounds as learners in Indian classrooms tend to make more mistakes in the pronunciation of fricatives. The activities can be easily adapted to another sound by changing the word base.

#### General Objectives

To enable learners to:

1. Enhance their pronunciation skills;
2. Overcome certain common pronunciation-related errors that occur due to the impact of their mother tongue;
3. Differentiate between similar sounds and develop an understanding of sound contrasts;
4. Understand certain sounds which are not a part of their mother tongue sound system;
5. Practice and develop their pronunciation skills.

#### ACTIVITY ONE: HOPPING SOUNDS

Level: Beginner

Time required: 10-15 minutes

Material required: Phonic cards

Student group size: Entire class

#### Methodology:

- Select two sounds that you want to practice in the class; for example, the initial sounds in the words 'ship' and 'sip'.

- Cut out a pair of cards for each learner that is big enough to be tied to their shoes. Write one sound on each card. Help the learners tie or paste the cards on their shoes. You could attach the 'sh' card on the right foot and the 's' card on the left foot of each learner.
- Discuss the two sounds using different words. Ask the learners to identify the sounds by lifting the foot which has the corresponding sound attached to it.
- Start the activity. Call out a word and ask the learners to analyse the sounds in that word. If the word contains any of the sounds on the card tied to their shoe, they have to hop on that foot.
- Multiple sounds or words with multiple target sounds can be used to increase the difficulty level of the activity.
- Target sounds: /s/, /z/, /ch/, /dz/, /sh/, /j/
- Sample Words:

Zoo	Shirt	Vision	Sip	Jug	Chips
Zero	Bush	Measure	Cast	Jam	Chair
Music	Shop	Treasure	Caps	Jar	Cheese
Puzzle	Ocean	Casual	Silly	Cage	Chest
Desert	Show	Decision	Soap	Adjust	Inch
Cousin	Cushion	Division	Cinema	Badge	Beach
Laser	Fresh	Explosion	Books	Joker	Lunch
Bees	Shine	Television	Safe	Juice	Chase
Prize	Punish	Pleasure	Bus	Age	Speech

### ACTIVITY TWO: FINDING PATTERNS

Level: Beginner

Time required: 15 minutes

Material required: Worksheet/Blackboard

Student group size: Entire class

#### Methodology:

- You may ask the learners to work individually or in pairs.
- Explain the task before distributing the worksheet to the learners.

- Write the following example on the blackboard: Sip : Seep :: Sit : ? Answer: Seat
- Ask the learners to analyse the first pair of words in the example by identifying the difference in the /i/sounds of the two. This pair demonstrates short and long variations of the /i/ sound. Guide the learners if they are facing a problem.
- Ask the learners to make the same change to the word of the second set to complete the set and form an analogy. In this example they will have to change the short /i/ in the word 'sit', to a long /i/ and form the word "seat".
- Take up more such examples if needed.
- Learners must be encouraged to speak the words aloud to understand how they sound.
- Distribute the worksheet and sort out the problems individually with the learners.

### Sound Analogy worksheet

Identify the sound relation between the first two words. Follow the same sound pattern to complete the second pair of words.

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. Bat: Bait :: Pant: _____     | i. Beg : Bug :: Bed : _____     |
| b. Race: Rice :: Bake : _____   | j. Hat : Hut :: _____ : Cub     |
| c. Near : Knee :: _____ : Bee   | k. Fit : Feet :: Hit : _____    |
| d. Boy : Buy :: Toy : _____     | l. Man : Mine :: Back : _____   |
| e. Cat : Cart :: Pack : _____   | m. Sheep : Ship :: _____ : Pick |
| f. Oil : All :: _____ : Ball    | n. Tin : Ten :: _____ : Pen     |
| g. Soil : Seal :: Noise : _____ | o. Mad : Maid :: Plan : _____   |
| h. Bat : Bite :: Cat : _____    | p. Hat :Heart :: _____ : March  |

Answers to the worksheet:

- |          |          |         |          |
|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| a. Paint | e. Park  | i. Bud  | m. Peak  |
| b. Bike  | f. Boil  | j. Cab  | n. Pin   |
| c. Bear  | g. Knees | k. Heat | o. Plain |
| d. Tie   | h. Kite  | l. Bike | p. Match |

### ACTIVITY THREE: CROCODILE RIVER

Level: Intermediate

Time required: 30 minutes

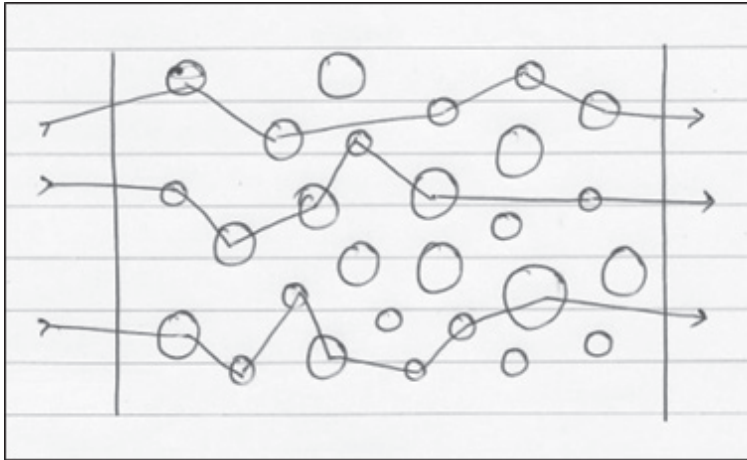
Material required: Coloured chalk to draw the game and sound cards.

Student group size: Between 6-8 students at a time

#### Methodology:

- Target sounds: /s/, /sh/, /z/, /dz/. Write the target sounds on small chits or cards. Make multiple cards for each sound, mix all the chits well and put them in a bowl.
- Draw the game on the floor using chalk. Draw two parallel lines 10-15 feet apart. These represent the banks of a river. Randomly chalk out stones that will help the learners cross from one side of the river to the other.
- Write words corresponding to the selected target sound on the chalked stones. Each stone should have only one word. You may include a few distracters to increase the difficulty level.

For example:



- Put the sound cards' bowl on one of the two banks.
- Ask one or two students to play the role of the crocodiles. They have to stand in the middle of the river.
- The objective of the game is to cross the river. Learners have to pick out a sound card from the bowl and read it aloud to recognise the sound they have

picked. They have to then cross the river by stepping on the stones which have the word containing the sound written on their sound card.

- For example, if a learner picks up the /sh/ sound, he/she has to cross the river from one bank to the other by stepping on the stones that have words with the /sh/ sound.
- If a person steps on the wrong stone, the crocodile has to catch them. The learner who gets caught then becomes the crocodile.

- Sample Words:

/s/: soap, sister, case, cast, cups, juice, pants, bus, office, horse,

/sh/: shape, shirt, chef, shy, tissue, dish, lotion, ocean, polish, fresh

/z/: easy, cosy, nose, zebra, zipper, dogs, music, bees, cheese, rose

/j/: germs, jeans, cage, magic, age, bridge, jump, joke, page, subject

Distracters: cup, book, touch, Asia, chair azure, measure, vision, usual,

#### ACTIVITY FOUR: CHINESE WHISPERS

Level: Beginner-Intermediate

Time required: 15 minutes

Material required: None

Student group size: 10-15 students in a group

##### Methodology:

- This game is based on the lines of the traditional game of Chinese Whispers.
- Explain the rules of Chinese Whispers to the learners and then explain the modification that needs to be made for this game.
- The teacher has to whisper a word to the first student. The student has to change any one sound in that word to make a new word and whisper it to the next student. For example, in the following chain of words, the sounds that can be changed to form new words have been underlined.
- Example: ship – sip – sit – knit – nib – bib – bob – mob – moth – math, etc.
- The game continues in this manner until all learners get a turn. The last student calls out the word aloud.
- The teacher traces the changes that the learners have made. (certain words may be repeated)

### ACTIVITY FIVE: WORD SNAKES AND LADDERS

Level: Intermediate-Advanced

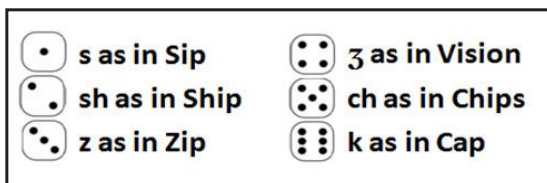
Time required: 30 minutes

Material required: For each group - Customized game board, dice, and game men.

Student group size: Four- six students in a group

#### Methodology:

- Ask the learners to sit in groups which are convenient as per the class size.
- Revise the target sounds using a few examples. Ask the learners to identify words containing particular sounds. For example: Ask them to identify words that contain the /ch/ sound.
- Explain the game before distributing the game boards to the learners.
- Show to the class, the modified Snake and Ladders board game. Each of the words on the board have a few underlined alphabets that correspond to a sound in the word. Highlight that only six types of sounds have been underlined. Using a few examples, demonstrate that the sound may be at the start, middle or end of a word.
- Explain the dice and the sound key. Each number on the dice represents a sound that the words on the board contain.



- Learners have to roll the dice, identify the sound on the top face of the dice and move to the next word containing that sound. Ask them to pronounce the words aloud to do so.

For example: If the dice reads /z/ the student would have to move to the next underlined /z/ sound.

- The game would follow normal Snakes and Ladders rules. The only exception being- There would be no second chance at throwing the dice if one gets a six.
- Target sounds: /z/ /ʒ/ /Z/ /s/ /c&/ /k/

- Game board:

**Word Snakes and Ladders**

Finish	V <u>ision</u>	<u>K</u> itchen	Use	Branch
C <u>in</u> ema	<u>S</u> ocks	M <u>eas</u> ure	B <u>ush</u>	No <u>isy</u>
<u>I</u> nches	D <u>ogs</u>	<u>S</u> ugar	T <u>reas</u> ure	Ch <u>ick</u> en
<u>T</u> aps	F <u>resh</u>	D <u>o</u> zen	<u>P</u> icture	<u>U</u> sual
D <u>iv</u> ision	<u>C</u> orner	<u>T</u> ouch	<u>Z</u> ebra	<u>C</u> ase
<u>B</u> us	<u>Ch</u> ocolate	<u>T</u> ask	<u>P</u> leasure	<u>W</u> ashing
<u>T</u> issue	<u>N</u> ose	<u>T</u> elevision	<u>K</u> eep	<u>S</u> he
<u>S</u> oap	<u>D</u> ecision	<u>L</u> aser	<u>S</u> hine	<u>T</u> eacher
<u>R</u> azor	<u>M</u> atch	<u>M</u> ash	<u>C</u> atch	<u>S</u> afe
<u>C</u> ast	<u>S</u> hirt	<u>Z</u> ero	<u>C</u> asual	<u>C</u> hair

s as in Sip	Cas in Vision
sh as in Ship	ch as in Chips
z as in Zip	k as in Cap

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