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Tema:

**AVOIDING VOWEL PRONUNCIATION INTERFERENCE OF
MOTHER TONGUE IN ENGLISH THROUGH PHONETIC
EXERCISE**

**Tema de Investigación previo a la obtención del Título de “Diploma Superior
en Metodologías Comunicativas del Idioma Inglés”**

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Tema:

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INTERFERENCE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN
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ABSTRACT

Taking into account all the pronunciation problems teachers face every day with their students and the lack of interest to study a second language, it is a good idea to describe and analyze how vowel pronunciation interference of mother tongue influences in students who are learning English. To avoid this problem some games and activities are going to be presented to help improve students pronunciation and why not teachers' too. Since students start learning another language, in this case English, they find it difficult due to the complexity of the different sounds. These alternatives are to reinforce teachers' work in class. With this activities and games they not only improve the pronunciation (speaking skill) but also their listening comprehension. Besides it both teachers and students will have more ideas to be applied in class to make the teaching-learning process more efficient and entertaining.

RESUMEN

Tomando en cuenta todos los problemas de pronunciación que los profesores tienen que enfrentar todos los días con sus estudiantes y la falta de interés para estudiar un segundo idioma, es importante describir y analizar como la interferencia de la pronunciación de las vocales de nuestra lengua madre influye en los estudiantes quienes están aprendiendo Inglés. Para evitar este problema algunos juegos y actividades van a ser presentados para ayudar a mejorar la pronunciación de los estudiantes y porque no la de los profesores también. Desde que los estudiantes inician a aprender otro idioma, en este caso el inglés, lo encuentran difícil debido a la complejidad de los diferentes sonidos. Estas alternativas son para reforzar el trabajo de los profesores en clase. Con estas actividades y juegos ellos no solo mejoraran la pronunciación (destreza hablada) sino también su comprensión auditiva. Además de esto, ambos profesores y estudiantes tendrán más ideas para ser aplicadas en clase y así hacer el proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje más eficiente y entretenido.

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INTRODUCTION



Adults, teenagers and children have the necessity to learn English because our world pushes people to interact and transmit information each day. English has become an international language, and it is used for many purposes.

During the last years, many alternatives have been proposed to help students improve their language learning. All the institutions have emphasized in the acquisition of this knowledge. But as teachers we have noticed that with the different groups we have had the opportunity to work it is not a very big deal to learn English as a second language, but it really is when they want to speak and produce the correct sounds. These problems are due to that in our Language (Spanish) the position of our lips, tongue, etc, differs a lot from the ones we have in English. This language has more vowel sounds for example; different consonant sounds combinations that students are not familiar with.

Since English helps people interact with others around the world, it has become an important part of our knowledge. Nowadays, one of the priorities is to be competitive and to be able to communicate our thoughts and feelings. When you learn a language, especially depending on the age you start, the pronunciation is one of the aspects that Spanish speakers find more difficult. Every single accent that is used when people speak English is charming, but we have to do our best to acquire at least a similar native speaking accent improving it with suitable exercises.

CHAPTER I

1. SPANISH AND ENGLISH PHONOLOGY

1.1 Phonology

It is necessary to analyze some important definitions of Phonology from different sources of information to understand it better.

“Phonology is the study of the sound features used in a language to communicate meaning”. (Mary Spratt... 2005)

“Phonology is the study of sounds (or signs) as discrete, abstract elements in the speaker's mind that distinguish meaning”. (Wikipedia 2010)

“Phonology is the study of the speech-sound system of a specific language, and its laws that govern them”.(Pablo Maldonado 2010)

In English there are three features that include: phonemes, word stress, sentence stress and intonation. This investigation is going to focus its attention in the vowel phonemes mostly.

1.1.1 Phonemes

It's the smallest unit of speech that establishes differences in meaning in a language.

The vowel phonemes in English are:

/ a / / ɛ / / ɪ / / ɔ / / ʊ / / ə /

/ æ / / eɪ / / iː / / oʊ / / uɪ / / ʌ /

According to Spanish Phonology from Wikipedia 2010 “Spanish has five vowels /i/ /e/ /a/ /o/ /u/. Each occurs in both stressed and unstressed syllables”:

Here we can see some examples to clarify the 5 vowel sounds in Spanish.

Stressed	Unstressed
Piso 'I step'	pisó 's/he stepped'
Peso 'I weigh'	pesó 's/he weighed'
Paso 'I pass'	pasó 's/he passed'
Poso 'I pose'	posó 's/he posed'
Pujo 'I bid' (present tense)	pujó 's/he bid'

1.2 The difference between English and Spanish in vowel pronunciation

Spanish is a Romance Language. Italian and Portuguese are directly related with it. Spanish is a main language which is spoken in Spain, Latin America and in the USA where you can find native speakers that are up to 400 million.

If we talk about the alphabet we can say that the Latin alphabet is used in Spanish. The vowels can take a delicate accent, and it also has the letter *ñ* that does not exist in English. When spelling English words or writing them from the teacher's dictation. Spanish students who are beginners may make mistakes with the English vowels *a, e, i*. The consonants *h, j, r, y* may also cause trouble, because they have considerably different names in Spanish. The English writing system itself does not cause particular problems to Spanish learners.

In Phonology, the phonological system of Spanish is kind of different from that of English, mainly in the aspects of vowel sounds and sentence stress but as we said before this investigation is interested in vowel sounds mostly. These differences are very serious obstacles to Spanish learners being able to acquire a native-English-speaker accent. Coe (1987) says:

"European Spanish speakers, in particular, probably find English pronunciation harder than speakers of any other European language."

Spanish has 5 pure vowels and 5 diphthongs. The length of the vowel is not significant in distinguishing between words. This contrasts with English, which has 12 pure vowel sounds and 8 diphthongs. The length of the vowel sound in this language plays an important role because Spanish learners may have a lot of difficulty in producing or even perceiving the various English vowel sounds. Some of the explicit problems include the failure to distinguish the sounds in words such as *ship/sheep*, *taught/tot*, *fool/full* or *cart/cat/cut*.

Producing English consonant sounds is not so problematic for many Spanish learners, but difficult enough!

The consonant phonemes are :

/p/ /t/ /k/ /f/ /s/ /θ/ /ʃ/ /tʃ/ /m/ /h/ /l/ /w/

/b/ /d/ /g/ /v/ /z/ /ð/ /ʒ/ /dʒ/ /n/ /ŋ/ /y/ /ɹ/

Voiceless consonants: /f/ /h/ /k/ /p/ /s/ /t/ /θ/ /ʃ/ /tʃ/

Voiced consonants: / b / / d / / g / / l / / m / / n / / ɹ / / v / / w /

/ y / / z / / ð / / ʒ / / dʒ / / ŋ /

The Spanish consonants phonemes are:

Stanley

		labio- bilabial	labio- dental	dental	alveolar	retro- flex	alveo- palatal	palatal	velar	labio- velar	glottal
STOP	voiceless	p			t		tʃ		k		
	voiced	b			d		dʒ		g		
FRICATIVE	voiceless		f	θ	s		ʃ				h
	voiced		v	ð	z		ʒ				
NASAL	voiced	m			n				ŋ		
LATERAL	voiced				l						
APPROXIMANT OR GLIDE	voiced					r		j		w	

Spanish/English Contrast.2002

1.3 The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

The International Phonetic Association (IPA) created the Phonetic Alphabet to promote the scientific study of phonetics.

Phoneticians and linguists use a *phonetic* alphabet which has been designed to represent all the possible sounds of the world's languages in a standard way. The following alphabet was updated by IPA in 2005.

	Labial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill				r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap				ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

My acknowledgement to the International Phonetic Association (Department of Linguistics, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada).

To conclude this chapter, we can say that Spanish and English Phonology are different. As teachers we have to let our students know at least something about the differences between these two languages to help them understand the correct pronunciation. One of the most difficult parts is the vowel pronunciation and that is why we want to present this investigation.

CHAPTER 2

2. MOTHER TONGUE INTERFERENCE

2.1 What is Mother Tongue Interference?

Mother Tongue Interference is well known as Language interference, Linguistic interference, cross-linguistic interference or transfer. It could be explained as the effect on the production of the language they are learning- in this case English- due to the obstruction of students' first language.

According to the article about Mother Tongue Interference: "It is most often discussed as a source of errors (negative transfer), although where the relevant feature of both languages is the same, it results in correct language production (positive transfer). The greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative the effects of interference are likely to be". (Stanciu Lulia 2006)

There are a lot of aspects or parts of the speech on which Mother Tongue interfere when a student is trying to acquire a Foreign Language. These usual interference errors are commonly found in the following:

- Articles
- Gender
- Number
- Personal pronouns
- Relative pronouns
- Adjectives
- Prepositions
- Possessives
- Question formation
- Negation
- Verb tenses
- Passive voice
- Word order and
- False cognates

The areas mentioned before are merely grammatical, but the most important aspect in which mother tongue interferes is the way Spanish people pronounce something when they want to learn English. Non-native users of any language tend to carry the intonation, phonological processes, and pronunciation rules from their mother tongue

into their English speech. They may also create innovative pronunciations for English sounds not found in the speaker's first language.

The most relevant problems Spanish speakers have are the following described:

- Spanish speakers do not produce voicing contrasts between its fricatives. They might reduce the effect contrasts between /s/ and /z/; as well as fricatives might incorporate the voicing of a following consonant.
- Spanish students who are learning English tend to join /tʃ/ with /j/, and /dʒ/ and /ʒ/ with /j/.
- The sounds /j/ and /w/ often have a changeable degree of closing.
- Spanish allows only five (or six) word-final consonants: /s/, /n/, /r/, /l/ and /d/ (plus /θ/ in Castilian Spanish); speakers may omit word-final consonants other than these.
- In Spanish, /s/ must instantaneously precede or follow a vowel; often a word beginning with [s] + consonant will get an epenthetic vowel (typically [e]) to make *school* pronounced [es'kuwl] rather than [skuwl].
- The voiceless dental fricative /θ/ phoneme in Spanish exists only in certain places with specific dialects; where this sound appears in English, speakers of other Spanish dialects replace with /t/, /s/ or /f/ for it.
- Speakers tend to merge /ð/ and /d/, pronouncing both as voiced dental plosive unless they occur in intervocalic position, in which case they are pronounced [ð]. A similar process occurs with /v/ and /b/.

- The three nasal phonemes of Spanish neutralize in coda-position; speakers may invariably pronounce nasal consonants as homorganic to a following consonant; if word-final (as in *welcome*) common realizations include [n], deletion with nasalization of the preceding vowel, or [ŋ].
- One of the biggest problems occurs in the production of vowel sounds. We have to remember that English has more vowel sounds than Spanish.

2.2 Vowels and vowel combinations

According to the American variant of pronunciation we present the following chart, where the vowel sounds in English are showed to help students to acquire this foreign language.

SOUND	LETTERS	EXAMPLES	NOTES
	e, ee ea ie, ei	be, eve, see, meet, sleep, meal, read, leave, sea, team, field, believe, receive	been [i]; bread, deaf [e]; great, break [ei]; friend [e]
[i]	i y	it, kiss, tip, pick, dinner, system, busy, pity, sunny	machine, ski, liter, pizza [i:]
[e]	e ea	let, tell, press, send, end, bread, dead, weather, leather	meter [i:] sea, mean [i:]

[æ]	A	cat, apple, land, travel, mad; ❖ AmE: last, class, dance, castle, half	
[ɑ:]	ar a	army, car, party, garden, park; father, calm, palm, drama; ❖ BrE: last, class, dance, castle, half	war, warm [o:]
[o:]	or o aw, au ought al, wa-	more, order, cord, port, long, gone, cost, coffee, law, saw, pause, because, bought, thought, caught, hall, always, water, war, want	work, word [ər]
[u:]	o, oo ew ue, ui ou	do, move, room, tool, crew, chew, flew, jewel, blue, true, fruit, juice, group, through, route; ❖ AmE: duty, new, sue, student	guide, quite [ai]; build [i]
[u]	Oo u ou	look, book, foot, good, put, push, pull, full, sugar, would, could, should	

- ❖ AmE. American English
- ❖ BrE. British English

2.2.1 Problems for Spanish speakers when pronouncing vowel sounds in English

The most difficult problems for Spanish speakers who are learning English is how to pronounce some vowel sounds. Here, we have some examples of minimal pair which are going to help us to understand the difference between these two sounds.

/ a / / ɛ / / ɪ / / ɔ / / ʊ / / ə /

/ æ / / eɪ / / iː / / oʊ / / uɪ / / ʌ /

2.2.1.1 Vowel Sounds /æ/ and /ʌ/

The Vowel Sound /æ/ is the equivalent as the /ea/ in Spanish and the sound /ʌ/ is an /a/ in Spanish but very short and one particular thing is that your jaw opens down very fast.

/æ/

/ʌ/

cat

cut

ban

bun

dam

dumb

shatter

shutter

stamp

stump

2.2.1.2 Vowel Sounds /iy/ and /ɪ/

The vowel sounds /iy/ and /ɪ/ are like the /i/ in Spanish but there are some difference. The /iy/ is longer and clear like you were smiling and the /ɪ/ is shorter and fast your mouth is almost closed.

/iy/	/ɪ/
sheep	ship
heat	hit
eel	ill
receive	sieve
leave	live

2.2.1.3 Vowel Sounds /o/ and /uw/

These sounds for Spanish speakers seem to be equal but they are not. The first one is shorter and the other is longer. Here, we have some examples:

/o/	/uw/
Look	Luke

CHAPTER 3

3. PRONUNCIATION

3.1 Pronunciation- Definition

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia “Pronunciation refers to the way a word or a language is spoken, or the manner in which someone utters a word”.

A word can be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors, such as: the area in which they grew up, the area in which they now live, if they have a speech or voice disorder, their ethnic group, or their social class. When those factors are named, it is also important to mention that when teachers from any high school start working with a new group of students (8th year); they also have to consider from which elementary school they come from that means education. Santo Domingo High School is one of the remarkable institutions of Ambato where lots of female adolescents from public and primary schools go to study. As a result, teachers will be working with a very heterogeneous group.

3.2 Teaching Pronunciation

Individual sounds are not the only ones considered in Pronunciation. As we have mentioned spoken English is influenced by: word stress, sentence stress, and intonation. English pronunciation includes too many difficulties for Spanish speaker who want to

learn English and eliminate completely their own accent. For the communication to be effective, first work on problems that significantly hinder communication like misunderstandings.

Spanish as student's first language interferes with English Pronunciation. For example, in Spanish the /p/ is not aspirated but it is in English, so when our students pronounce "pig" without a puff of air on the /p/, a native English speaker might hear "big" instead of the word that they want to pronounce. Students sometimes are able to identify some problems with specific sounds- especially when they have a real experience with an American, but they are not always able to do it. It is the teacher's job to take notes of his or her student's problem sounds. The inability to hear some specific English sounds that Spanish does not have make students find learning English a difficult matter. These different sounds usually are vowels, as "eat" and "it" which many students cannot differentiate. For these problems, the listening skill is vital because learners cannot produce a sound they can't hear.

Here are some ideas for focusing on specific pronunciation features according to Brown Douglas 2001 page

3.2.1 Voicing

To help your students understand about voiced and voiceless sound have them touch their throats while pronouncing sounds like "z" and "s" even though the mouth is in the same position , they will feel vibration with the voiced sounds only.

3.2.2 Aspiration

It refers to a puff of air when a sound is produced. The more commonly aspirated sounds in English at the beginning of a word are: /p/, /t/, /k/ and /ch/. A good way of exemplify them are having your students hold a piece of paper few centimeters away from their mouths and push it with a puff or air while pronouncing a word containing the target sound.

3.2.3 Mouth position

Drawing tongue and lip position and show them to the students and model sounds for them and also use a mirror to see their mouth, lips and tongue while they imitate the teacher is relevant to acquire a good pronunciation.

3.2.4 Intonation

Humming takes student's attention and it will help with their pronunciation.

3.2.5 Linking

It's better to pronounce phrases and complete sentences as one soft sound instead of a series of separated words. Teachers should help students to repeat a phrase, adding more of the sentence as they can master it.

3.2.6 Syllables

Illustrate syllable stress using your hands softly and loudly corresponding to the syllables of a word. For example, “hotel” would be soft-loud.

3.2.7 Specific Sounds

Practicing minimal pairs and tongue twisters are useful to distinguish difficult sounds. They also may help them to improve their pronunciation.

3.3. Factors that affect Pronunciation

There are many factors that influence the correct students' acquisition of the pronunciation of a new language. Here we have some of them.

This list was adapted from Kenworthy 1987: 4-8.

1. Native Language.- Clearly, the native language is the most influential factor affecting a learner's pronunciation. If you are familiar with the sound's system of a learner's native language, you will be better able to diagnose student difficulties.
2. Age.- Generally speaking , children under the age of puberty stand an excellent chance of “ sounding like a native” if they have continue exposure in authentic

context. Beyond the age of puberty, while adults will almost surely maintain a “foreign accent”, there is not particular advantage attributed to age. A fifty year-old can be as successful as an eighteen year old if all other factors are equal. Remind your students, especially if they are older, that “the younger, the better” is a myth.

3. **Exposure.-** It is difficult to define exposure. One can actually live in a foreign country for some time, like many Ecuadorian people who went to live in the USA, but not take any advantage of it. Research seems to support the notion that the quality and intensity of exposure are more important than mere length of time. If class time spent focusing on pronunciation demands the full attention and interest of the students, then they stand a good chance of researching their goal.

4. **Innate phonetic ability.-** Often referred to as having an ear for language, some people manifest a phonetic coding ability that others do not. Therefore, if pronunciation seems to be naturally difficult for some students, they should not despair; with some effort and concentration, they can improve their competence.

5. Identity and language ego.- Yet another influence is one's attitude toward speakers of the target language and the extent to which the language ego identifies with those speakers. Learners need to be reminded of the importance of positive attitude toward the people who speak the language, but more important, students need to become aware of- and not afraid of- the second identity that may be emerging within them.

6. Motivation and concern for good pronunciation.- some learners are not particular concerned about their pronunciation, while others are. The extent to which learner's intrinsic motivation propels them toward improvement will be perhaps the strongest influence of all of the six factors in this list.

3.4. Pronunciation Tips

According to English Club 2010, there are some English pronunciation tips that will be helpful to improve students' pronunciation:

- Do not confuse pronunciation of words with their spelling! For example, "sea" and "see", although spelled differently, are pronounced the same. Also, identical letters or letter clusters in words do not always produce the same sound. For example, the "ought" in "though" and "through" represents a different sound in each word. Learn to practice what you hear, not what you see.

CHAPTER 4

4. ACTIVITIES AND GAMES TO AVOID VOWEL PRONUNCIATION INTERFERENCE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN ENGLISH THROUGH PHONETIC EXERCISES.

There is a variety of games that can help teacher and students to avoid vowel pronunciation interference of mother tongue; here we present some of them.

4.1 WHAT'S THIS?

Source: www.english4kids.com

Skill: Speaking

Competence: Students pronounce the single words correctly. Enjoy playing with English sounds

Time: 10 minutes

Resources: Flash cards using vowels sounds

Level: Starters,

Task:

First the teacher introduces the vocabulary by showing students the cards one after the other. Then later, holds the cards to the chest, making sure students can't see. Students try to guess what card the teacher is holding to his/her chest. Every time they make a wrong guess, the teacher gets a point. When they make a right guess, the students get a point and the teacher pretends to be disappointed that the students are gaining a point. Keep playing until you have exhausted the cards. The students love to beat their teacher. Lots of fun with this!

4.2 MIMING OR MAKING SOUNDS

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To identify the different vowel sounds

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 15-20

Resources: Flash cards

Level: Starters- beginners

Task:

Review minimal pairs with your students using pictures

Divide the class in two groups

Taking turns the students choose a card and mime or make sounds for their team

The team has five seconds to answer (one by one by one)

Teacher checks the correct pronunciation and shows the picture and decides it's right or wrong

The team with the most points wins.

4.3 TONGUE TWISTERS

Source: English Tongue Twisters www.uebersetzung.at/twister/en.htm

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To improve students' pronunciation by exercising their tongue.

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 10 minutes per each

Resources: tongue twisters

Level: elementary

Task:

First, the teacher writes down the tongue twisters on the board or hand out papers with them to students. Then the teacher pronounce the tongue twisters one by one and make students repeat and practice, while students are doing it, the teachers has to be monitoring. In this way they will learn exercise their tongue and it will help then to improve their pronunciation. (See annex 1)

4.4 MINIMAL PAIRS COMPETITION

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To difference similar sounds

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 20 minutes or more

Resources: pictures with the sounds

Level: any level

Task:

The teacher chooses two groups of minimal pairs and places two big pictures on the walls (one separated from the other) with drawings and the corresponding sounds on them, every time the teacher pronounces a word, the students have to identify the correct sounds and run toward the correct picture. After all the children are in one of the two sides the teacher says who are right and who are wrong and also reinforces the two sounds.

4.5 PRONOUNCING WITH PICTURES

Source: English Pronunciation Resources- For All

Skill:	Speaking
Aim:	To pronounce the different vowel sounds correctly.
Competence:	Linguistic
Time:	15 minutes or more
Resources:	Pictures
Level:	starters- beginners -elementary
Task:	

The teacher brings some pictures to help the students to pronounce the different vowel sounds and the diphthongs correctly. The teacher puts the cards on the board. Students listen and repeat. The teacher will exaggerate the sounds, the tongue and lips positions. After students have practiced he/she takes some pictures away and chooses a pupil to repeat all the words and so on until they can say these words in a correct way. With this exercise Ss are not only going to notice the different vowel sounds but also to realize that most of the time English spelling and pronunciation are different. (See annex 2).

4.6 A BOARD GAME

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To pronounce the minimal pairs correctly

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 20 minutes or more

Resources: sheet of papers(board game), dices.

Level: Any level

Task:

The teacher prepares a board game using minimal pairs studied. Then, he/she explains the task. After that, students use dices and take turns and depending on the number they get they pronounce the word correctly if not they have to go back two spaces and if they

do it well they continue playing. When a pair finishes playing they can choose another partner to play with. The teacher has to monitor the pronunciation while students are playing and join the groups if possible.

4.7 HOMOPHONES

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To identify the homophones

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 20minutes or more

Resources: cards, classroom things

Level: elementary and up

Task:

The teachers prepares cards with pictures related with homophones and put them in a box. Then, the class is divided in two groups. The teacher shows a picture and Ss have to run to find the homophone card in the box. The student that first find the correct card has the opportunity to pronounce and if he/she does it correctly gets a point. The team with the most points is the winner.

4.8 FLY SWATTING

Source: www.english4kids.com

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To identify the sounds and pronounce them correctly

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 15-20

Resources: fly swatters, words (minimal pairs, homophones)

Level: All levels (simplify for very low levels)

Task:

With fly swatting games teachers can teach, practice and review any type of vocabulary using picture cards or words. The teacher puts flashcards in a circle on the floor, sticks them on the walls or writes words on the board of the classroom. Then the teacher makes a sentence using one of the words on the cards. Students have to run to the word or card and slam it with their fly swatters. To get the necessary reward or praise, the students must say the word they hit with the fly swatters or repeat the sentence the teacher used with the word.

4.9 TIC TAC TOE

Source: Interchange 1- Games – Teacher’s edition Page T- 148

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To practice vowel and consonant sounds

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 15 minutes

Resources: words, classroom things

Level: preintermediate

Task:

Teacher and students review the different sounds studied. The class is divided in two groups and each one has a specific color (marker). There are some symbols written on the board. Taking turns students have the chance to pronounce and write a word that corresponds to the sound. (See annex 3).

4.10 VOCABULARY TENNIS

Source: Interchange 1- Games – Teacher’s edition Page T- 148

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To practice different vowel and consonant sounds

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 15 minutes

Resources: classroom things, lists of sounds

Level: preintermediate

Task:

The class is divided into two teams. The teacher explains the game and calls out a specific vowel or consonant sound chosen. Team A serves by saying a word in that category. Team B returns the serve by saying a different word. The team says words from the category. The game continues until one team can't think of any more words. The other team gets a point. Call out a different sound and play the game again

4.11 WHICH DOESN'T BELONG

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To recognize same and different sounds

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 10 minutes or less

Resources: classroom things, lists of sounds

Level: basic 2 -up

Task:

Students pronounce the word and identify with word is not pronounced like the other two.

Teacher monitors the class and when the time is up checks the correct answers. (See annex 4).

4.12 MINIMAL PAIRS

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To identify the difference in pronunciation

Competence: Linguistic

Resources: worksheet, classroom things

Level: Basic 2 or up

Task:

Choose a minimal pairs list and practice them with students. Then, divide the class in two groups and model the task. Two students from the same group participate one reads the sentence emphasizing the minimal pairs sound and the other circle the word he/she

considers correct. After that, the teacher checks if the answer is right and reads the sentence again. The group with the most points wins.

4.13 PRONOUNCING MINIMAL PAIRS

Source: www.about.com. English as a Second Language

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To improve students' pronunciation using minimal pairs

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 20 minutes

Resources: board, pens and paper,

Level: basic

Task:

Write examples of minimal pairs on the board. If students have learned the IPA, it is a good idea to employ the phonetic transcriptions of the words on the board.

Demonstrate the correct pronunciation of the minimal pairs written on the board.

Elicit students to give examples of other words which use the same changing phonemes.

Example: bat - bet (written on board) student: "cat - kept"

It is a good idea to accept more than one phonological difference as long as the target phoneme has been reproduced.

Distribute minimal pair sheet.

For lower levels: Reproduce the minimal pairs in chorus by first giving the example and then having students repeat together.

For upper levels: Have students work in pairs taking turns reproducing the minimal pairs.

Repeat as many times as you feel necessary.

Have students use the minimal pairs sheet as a model to produce another, similar, minimal pair sheet. (See annex 5).

4.14 SOUNDS /iy/ and /i/

Skill: Speaking

Aim: To improve recognition and pronunciation skills of single words

Competence: Linguistic

Time: 15 minutes

Resources: board, pens and paper, teacher's voice

Level: Any level

Task:

Practice the following sentences. Underline parts of the words that contain the sound /i/.

(See annex 6).

Practice the following sentences. Underline parts of the words contain the sound /I/. (See

annex 7).

Practice the following sentences. The vowel sounds /i/ and /I/ are both included in this

sentences. (See annex 8).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS:

- It is possible to avoid vowel pronunciation interference of mother tongue through phonetic exercises.
- Teachers have to be well prepared to help and correct student's mistakes in pronunciation.
- The games and the activities prepared in this proposal are very helpful for teachers and the students.
- There is a lot of material that teachers can use to improve students pronunciation, but they has to select the best ones.
- Students can acquire a better pronunciation not only by doing boring exercises but also having fun with sounds.

RECOMENDATIONS

- Teachers should investigate and study more about the different English sounds.

- Teachers and students ought to apply this games and activities in class.
- It's a good idea to have a bank of activities and games to choose the best ones or to modify them according to the level and the necessities.
- Teachers should also present the pronunciation tips through these activities and games in an attractive way, thus students will feel encouraged.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Source: English Tongue Twisters www.uebersetzung.at/twister/en.htm

Rubber, baby, baggy, bumper.

She sells seashells by the seashore.

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck

If a woodchuck could chuck wood.

ANNEX 2

Source: English Pronunciation Resources- For All

a:	car	ʌ:	bus
ɔ:	ball	ɪ:	pig
iy:	read	ʊ:	book
uw:	shoe	ʒ	shirt
e	bell	ə	teacher
æ	hat	eə	chair
ey	rain	aw	cow
ay	kite	oy	toys

ə	Æ	ð
dʒ	ɔɔ	tʃ
Aw	ʌ	ey

ANNEX 4

Which word is not pronounced like the other two?

meet meat might

seal sail sale

pear pair peer

same sum some

way we weigh

hole whole hail

deer dire dear

floor flower flour

hear her here

right rat write

wear we're where

wish witch which