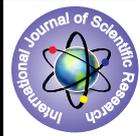


Consonant Cluster Cards- A Tool to Enhance Pronunciation



Education

KEYWORDS : : consonant cluster cards, English pronunciation, vocabulary, thinking power.

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ABSTRACT

In this article we have dealt with the concept of using consonant cluster cards to develop learners' pronunciation in terms of consonant clusters. The non native speakers of English find it very difficult to pronounce words with consonant cluster sets as they do not have any such equivalent sounds in their mother tongue. With proper guidance in articulation and drill and practice in consonant cluster sounds we can enhance the learners' pronunciation. Consonant cluster cards are very useful in giving guidance and drill and practice. Along with the development in pronunciation learners acquire thinking power, correct spelling, vocabulary and interest to use English language. As these are learner centered the students use these activities freely without any fear or hesitation. These cards can be used frequently in the English class rooms to motivate the learners to pronounce well.

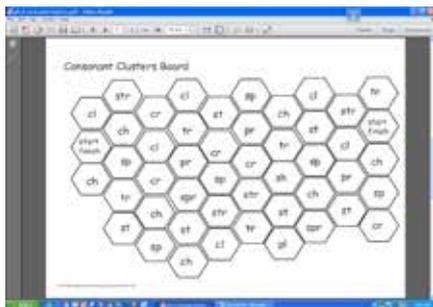
INTRODUCTION:

According to one study (Pronunciation, 2011), „Pronunciation“ means language is used and spoken, or the attitude in which the one give voice to a word. Moreover, it can be defined as pronunciation is about the sounds which are made while speaking and using the languages. In other words, pronunciation refers producing sounds, and communication consists of sounds. In learning English as a foreign language, learners pay attention to grammar; vocabulary. However, most of the learners do not emphasize the pronunciation. Yet, pronunciation learning improves speaking as well. As Harmer (2007, p. 248) states that “pronunciation teaching not only makes students aware of different sounds and sound features (and what these mean), but can also improve their speaking immeasurably”. The process of learning pronunciation makes learners be aware of the sounds which they are using while speaking (Harmer, 2007). In that way, learners could communicate in target language effectively. For instance; the one who could comprehend grammar but could not use correct pronunciation may not be understood by native speaker. This article emphasizes the development in pronunciation in terms of consonant clusters.

CONSONANT CLUSTERS:

A consonant cluster is a group of two or more consonant letters together in a word. For example, in the word “brilliant”, “br” is a consonant cluster; as is “ll”, and also “nt”. Consonant clusters are also sometimes known as “consonant blends”. Consonant clusters can occur at the beginning (an initial consonant cluster), in the middle (a medial consonant cluster) or at the end of a syllable (a final consonant cluster). For example, in the world brilliant which has two syllables, there is a consonant cluster at the beginning of the first syllable (“br”), at the end of the first syllable (“ll”), and at the end of the second syllable (“nt”). They can also occur in the middle of a syllable, for example the consonant cluster “ch” in the middle of the word “ache”.

THE CONSONANT CLUSTER CARDS:



CONSONANT CLUSTER CARD :1

The consonant cluster card :1 has a lot of shells with various consonant clusters printed inside. The learners can start their activity from any corner of the card and they can build as many words as they can on the consonant clusters given in each shell to finish the activity. Each time while building a word out of the shell they have to pronounce the word correctly. If they commit any error in spelling or pronunciation their move will not be calculated as a valid one. As it is a pair activity learners are interested to coin words. This improves their vocabulary and also their pronunciation. It also develops the learners' thinking power. This activity can be given again and again as there is no limitation in building words.



CONSONANT CLUSTER CARD: 2

The consonant cluster card :2 has a lot of shells with various clues printed inside. The learners can start their activity from any corner of the card and they can build as many words with consonant cluster sets as they can on the clues given in each shell to finish the activity. Each time while building a word out of the shell they have to pronounce the word correctly. If they commit any error in spelling or pronunciation their move will not be calculated as a valid one. As it is a pair activity learners are interested to coin words. This improves their vocabulary and also their pronunciation. It also develops the learners' thinking power. When compared to card:1 , card:2 is more challenging in guessing the correct words made up of consonant clusters.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTIVITIES:

*These activities were influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They

work best in mixed classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of speaking and listening. They provide teachers opportunities for assessment of speaking and listening and other formative assessment.

*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts, discuss, paraphrase and move them about physically, they help to develop thinking skills.

*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in mother tongue and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions.

ADVANTAGES:

Consonant cluster cards;

- Improve the learners' pronunciation specifically in terms of consonant clusters.
- Train the learners in using correct spelling.
- Accelerate logical thinking of the learners.
- Help the learners to build their vocabulary bank.
- Motivate the learners to use the cards interestingly.
- Develop the learners' basic skills in English.
- Are easy to use.
- Are simple and less expensive.
- Are not time consuming.
- Are learner centered.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, it could be said that there are some factors which are important for pronunciation teaching and learning. The first one is correct pronunciation. Correct pronunciation has a significant role in a foreign language. This role should be known and comprehended by foreign language teachers. In addition, foreign language learners and language teachers should emphasize pronunciation. Secondly, in teaching pronunciation process, teachers should consider the factors that affect pronunciation teaching process. Pronunciation should be taught as possible as early, especially in the childhood. Finally, while teaching pronunciation, learners may encounter some problems and because of that situation, they may get bored. Hancock (1995) explains that language teachers should prevent this situation by using games and some effective activities such as drills and games. The consonant cards are of better use in developing pronunciation. Thus, in the process of learning a foreign language, pronunciation should be considered as the most important element because, it effects all language skills such as; comprehension, listening and speaking.

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