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How Can ESL/EFL Teachers Help Spanish Speakers Sound Out Vowels in English?

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How can ESL/EFL Teachers Help Spanish Speakers Sound Out Vowels in English?

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BACKGROUND

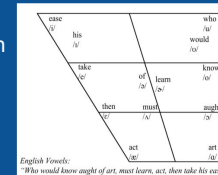
- English vowel sounds are difficult for Spanish speakers and placing appropriate Stress (Flege, J., & Bohn, O., 1989)
- Spanish only has the 5 vowel sounds and English has up to 20 depending on dialect spoken, (Becker, J., & Fisher, S., 1988)
- 14 single vowel sounds (Monophthongs) and 5 double vowel sounds (diphthongs)
- The Schwa sound not existing in Spanish (Helman, 2004)



CHALLENGES

- Various vowel sounds for 5 vowels in English
- Diphthongs
- The Schwa sound

Vowel sounds can be described by: Tongue Height, Tongue Advancement, Rounded or Unrounded and Tense or Lax



Instructional Strategy 1

Vowels Sounds

- Tense /e/ in "Sheep"
- Relaxed /i / in "Ship"

Comparison:

- Sheep/Ship
- Reach/Rich
- Cheap/Chip
- Feel/Fill
- Leave/Live



Activity: Recordings and Jamboard

- Work in pairs
- One student records themselves
- Saying words we compared in class and sends it to the other student
- The other student on jamboard
- Finds pictures to connect to the words he was sent

Instructional Strategy 2

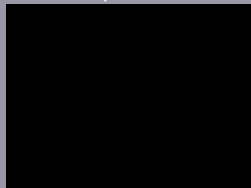
The Schwa Sound

Any vowels that belong to syllables that are not stressed

- Beginning (eg. about)
- Middle (eg. cinema)
- End (eg. banana)



Activity: Using Adobe Audition to record and visually see differences in pitch and volume



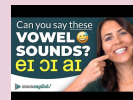
Instructional Strategy 3

Diphthongs

A sound combination created when two vowels are in a single syllable

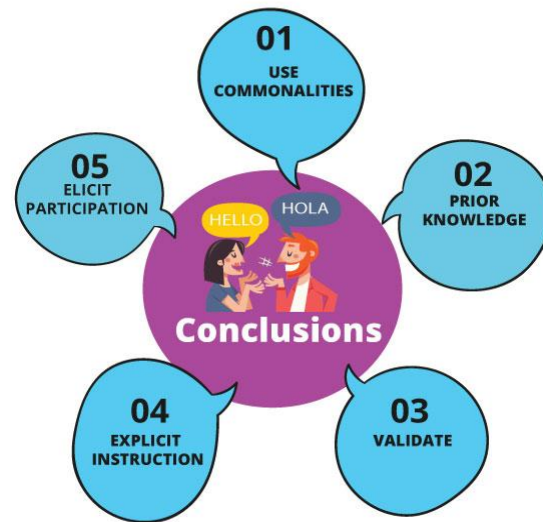
Sound begins as one vowel and and moves toward another

- /ei/-say
- /ɔi/-boy
- /ai/-bike



Activity: Working in pairs

- Get students in pairs
- Give them a list of diphthongs
- Get them to create a sentence using at least four diphthongs
Ex. Avoid those annoying boys and their noisy toys.
- Write in a poster
- Share with the class.
- Students can participate and try
- To find the diphthongs they used.



REFERENCES

- https://docs.google.com/document/d/10zIIeI4YHkEI8yW4fb4jSz0R3qaYUX_hOhjg4Zfz1sY/edit?usp=sharing