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INDEX

Introduction

Why have I chosen to do research on /dʒ/sound?

I have chosen to do research on this sound because it is rarely heard in River

Plate Spanish speakers and I had considerable difficulty in acquiring it.

Some River Plate Spanish speakers pronounce /ʃ/, others, for instance some

people who are from Misiones tend to pronounce /ʒ/ instead.

PART 1

WHAT EVERY TEACHER SHOULD KNOW

<u>Description of the sound</u>:

English   Spanish

Voice: **voiced**   Non-existent, only
Strength: **lenis**   occasionally voiced palato-alv
Place of articulation: **palato-alveolar**   affricate after /n/:*conyuge*
Manner of articulation: **affricate**   /kondʒʊxe/
Distribution: full

Soft palate is raised, nasal resonator shut off, obstacle formed by a closure made between the tip, blade and rims of the tongue and the upper alveolar ridge and side teeth, the front of the tongue is raised towards the hard palate in readiness for fricative release, closure is released slowly, during both stop and fricative stages vocal folds are vibrating, lip position conditioned by that of the adjacent sound. /dʒ/ may be devoiced in final and partially in initial positions.

<u>Spellings</u>:

All **j: j**am, **j**ob, **j**ar, py**j**amas, en**j**oy

All **g** before *e*: **g**eneral, mana**g**e, a**g**ent

All **dg**: ju**dge,** fri**dge,** lo**dge**

Some **g** before *i*: **g**inger, ima**g**ine, **g**iant

dj: a**dj**acent, a**dj**ective, a**dj**acent, a**dj**unct

Alternative pronunciation *ch* only in sandwi**ch**, spina**ch**, Greenwi**ch**, Norwi**ch**

*Word initial***:** gin, jest, jar, jaunt, Jew, jerk, joke, joist, jeer.

Word medial (intervocalic) midget, ledger, margin, fragile, urgent, adjacent, agenda

Word final: ridge, edge, large, dodge, judge, huge, age, dodge, gouge

4

(consonant preceding): bilge, bulge, hinge, sponge, change.

Compare /dʒ/ and /tʃ/: chin, gin; chest, jest; choose, Jews; cheer, jeer; larch, large; perch, purge; lunch, lunge.

<u>Difficulties:</u>

River Plate Spanish speakers pronounce /ʃ/ or /ʒ/ instead of /dʒ/. The students may omit the stop. There is a transfer of either /ʃ/ or /ʒ/ to replace /dʒ/. In Spanish /dʒ/ may occur in emphatic forms of '*yo'* or after /n/ '*inyecta* 'or /dz/might be heard among young speakers.

<u>Tips for correction</u>

    a) Recall the pronunciation of yo when emphatic.

    b) Teach students, with a help of a diagram and/or charts, the correct place of articulation.

    c) Insist on the pronunciation of /d/ before /ʒ/

    d) Indicate the spellings.

    e) Practice dialogues, songs and limericks

<u>CHOSEN APPROACH FOR THE TEACHING OF PRONUNCIATION</u>: **TBL**

The approach to be applied for the teaching of pronunciation is TBL (Task Based Learning). The tasks will be based on two fundamental issues related to real communication: meaningful interaction and isolated forms that students need to be learnt. The activities will be adapted to the students' needs and level. Tasks for pronunciation teaching can take a variety of different forms and it will be up to the task designer. The word 'form' is related to the various pronunciation features of individual sounds and suprasegmental features, too. Depending on the amount of intrinsic control over the use of formal features it is possible to distinguish essentially two types of task:

- *Unconstrained* or *less constrained,* which has wide focus on form. This type is suitable for supra-segmental elements, which encourages fluency. Relatively unconstrained tasks appear to be particularly helpful for practicing larger units such as rhythm, tone units, nucleous placement, and overall fluency. And

- *More constrained* with a narrow focus on form. The activities used are suitable for segmental elements. They offer greater precision in the production of individual sounds.

PART 2

THE TEACHING OF PRONUNCIATION

As all third year students, at 'Lenguas Vivas Sofia B. de Spangenberg' Teaching Training College, my classmates and I attend Lab 3. This subject has a workshop format which implies working not only individually but also cooperatively. Therefore, the idea of doing an individual final project within a shared work emerged.

One day, during the reading at first sight of a story, ideas of 'Tree of Sounds' for the final project appeared magically. The characters that would help children to learn sounds belong to this collaborative story. The sound that came down off the tree, to help the children in the speaking class described below, is 'The /ʤ/ Joker'.

Group Description

I have chosen a group of 12 year old students I am teaching in a school situated in 'Retiro' neighbourhood, in shanty town 31 more precisely. The school receives a grant from the National and City of CABA governments. They have been learning English since they were in 4th form. As they belong to different bordering countries, it is clearly observed that they have also different social and language backgrounds. Most of them did not have English as a subject in their previous Schools. They have a lower level of English in comparison with children from other State schools. There is considerable resistance to learn this subject in some cases, which makes me reflect on how to address the teaching practice. They have just had a test on Present Continuous. Next week I will introduce the Present Simple and I will be able to put this project into practice. They prefer games rather than writing activities. The coordinator decided not to follow a course-book this year, in order to explore what activities work with this work and which ones do not. Luckily, these children are always eager to participate.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference[1], my students are A1 because they

- Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of concrete type.

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[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages

- Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they live, people they know and things they have.

- Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Diagnosis

I found that they have difficulties of all sorts. With reference to sounds, they tend to replace the palate alveolar voiced affricate /dʒ/ in **j**eans for the palate-alveolar voiceless fricative /ʃ/. Not only have they trouble with consonants, but also with vowels.

Diagnosis Chart for River Plate Spanish speakers.

They find really hard to produce the following pair of sounds:

o   The bilabial plosive /b/ and the labio-dental fricative /v/. [β] tends to be used for both. It sounds more laxed.

o   /t/ is very dental in Spanish

o   The alveolar plosive /d/ and the dental fricative /ð/ are confused and often used interchangeably.

o   /g/ is often replaced by a similar friction sound [ɣ]

o   The voiced alveolar fricative /z/ and the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ are usually confused and used with no discrimination.

o   The glottal fricative /h/. They tend to pronounce [χ]

o   The voiceless dental fricative /θ/ is replaced by the labio-dental fricative /f/. For example, they usual-ly say /friː/ instead of /θriː/

o   My students tend to add a sound in clusters, generally a spanish /e/ at the beginning of some words. For instance, they say /espɔːt/ instead of /spɔːt/ or /eskʊl/ instead of /skʊl/

o   They have difficulties in pronouncing the English vowels, which are closely related with the proper quality and length of them. While Spanish has 5 pure vowels and 5 diphthongs, English has 12 pure vowel sounds and 8 diphthongs. River Plate Spanish speakers tend not to produce a significant dis-tinction between vowels. The length of the vowel sound plays an important role. *It is not surprising,*

7

therefore, that Spanish learners may have great difficulty in producing or even perceiving the various English vowel sounds. Specific problems include the failure to distinguish the sounds in words such as ship/sheep, taught/tot, fool/full or cart/cat/cut.[2]

<u>Suprasegmental features. Students' needs</u>

o Regarding intonation, students tend to say phrases or short sentences using a Spanish intonation. As Robin Walker stated in his article, there is no equivalent system in Spanish to the system of nuclear stress in English.

o They are not able to produce English tones. The difficulty is based on the differences between the two languages and their own intonation systems. Spanish is a syllable-timed language, whereas English is a stress timed language. "*When Spanish speakers transfer the intonation patterns of their mother tongue into English, which is a stress-timed language, the result can be barely comprehensible to native English speakers. This is because the meaning or information usually conveyed in English by the combination of stress, pitch and rhythm in a sentence is flattened or evened out by the Spanish learner."*[3]

o In general, students cannot be aware of nucleus placement. Moreover, they usually set nuclear stress on the wrong word.

My own Syllabus:

Purposes of investigation led me to explore how this teaching approach works with this group. I will focus on:

/dʒ/ versus /tʃ/ bearing in mind that the central sound to be learnt remains in /dʒ/

A framework to Teach Pronunciation

I will work with TBL (Task-Based Teaching) approach. TBL subscribe to two basic assumptions:

- Interaction

- Meaning

Both interaction and meaning are important to language learning, which means that it is desirable for

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[2] [2] http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/langdiff/spanish.htm

[3] http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/langdiff/spanish.htm

classroom activities to have a focus on pragmatic meaning rather than on linguistic forms. Communicative language teaching is based on meaningful interaction. The practices of isolated forms are not welcomed. Language items to be learnt must be noticed first. The activities chosen must have a connection with the real world and be suitable for the learners. This approach involves going through five steps in which I will use games to help them notice first and then practice.

The Experience

It was a great surprise to see the enthusiasm and welcome to the games and activities by my students. When I introduced the sound to them and made them notice that we, as River Plate Spanish speakers, have this sound they were startled at the beginning. However, later on they found out that Spanish words such as *"cónyuge", "inyectar", "inyección"* included the / dʒ / sound. I had to explain the meaning of *"cónyuge"* in our native language because they did not know it; some of them thought I had invented the word. They were quickly aware that there is vibration in our vocal folds when we produce the sound. They were able to feel it the moment they put their hands on their throats and imagined they were the wheels of a train. After that game, it was relatively easy to realize when the sound appeared in the different words and examples provided by the text of Joker's routine. They actively participated in the rest of the games. In the 'Memo test' and 'Race of Sounds,' they recognized the sound easily and produced it with little difficulty.

 I think that the reason of the success is that all of the words used for those games bore the target sound. In contrast, when they have to distinguish the sound to acquire from others, they found the aim more difficult to achieve. For instance, in games such as 'Shopping for Sounds' and 'Listen and Jump.'

Reflection Time

The experience of teaching phonology through games has been useful as well as valuable. I must admit that putting the project into practice exceeded my expectations.

It is important to highlight that my students were motivated and eager to participate in the games that were carefully planned with the help of our teacher. They achieved the target sound quickly and were able to be aware of how to produce /dʒ/. They learnt and had a lot of fun as well.

Even though our teaching practices are based on TBL approach, many graduate teachers and most of us do not usually teach pronunciation in this way because we feel that we have not enough training to do so. It is

true that we spend considerable time learning how to pronounce sounds and how to produce tones in college; however, we still need to improve on our teaching approaches to the teaching of pronunciation. But this project broadens our minds.

The initial impression I had when the teacher presented the project to us was, ' Oh! How difficult it is!´ 'Will I be able to carry out this project with the lengthy syllabi my students have to cope with?' I had a great surprise seeing enthusiastic children playing and learning at the same time. Children loved playing with language and sounds. They really enjoyed doing kinesthetic activities.

 Having stated these positive aspects of teaching phonology I will try to incorporate these lessons in class and try them out with other groups little by little. I will analyze priorities and adapt activities to students' needs. Some famous philosophers and writers said, "Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything."[4] "Do your best, and be a little better than you are."[5]

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[4]George Bernaerd Shaw.

[5]Gordon B. Hinkcley

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Appendix

GROUP STORY: (Student's from Lenguas Vivas Sofía B. De Spangenberg)

<p align="center">The Tree of Sounds</p>

Once upon a time, there was a big tree in the playground of a school in Palermo. It had lots of green leaves and on top of these leaves, near the sky, there lived some letters. The letters saw everything from up above, but they couldn't get down from the leaves. Every day they saw the children play on the playground during break. They saw them playing hide and seek, scotch hop and tag. And they really wanted to join the children in the fun, but they did not know how.

One day, the children were in break, practising for their English lesson. The letters were watching from above and saw how the students struggled to pronounce English sounds, because they were River Plate speakers. The letters wanted to help them. Since they were part of the tree of sounds, they knew that they could help children to speak any language! But although they tried, they could not get down from the leaves in order to go and help the kids.

One night, there was a storm, and lightning struck on the tree! The letters felt energy throughout their bodies and suddenly they realized that they had popped out of the tree magically alive and free to move around! They knew what to do next! They were going to help the children pronounce all the English sounds.

From that day on, they have been out and about helping River Plate speakers learn English sounds! The twin sisters teach children to say "Cheese!" and "Chip" for pictures. Happy Horse teaches the students his special laughter "hahaha". Zoe the Zebra teaches kids to dance in a zigzag way. And the Joker helps them jump joyfully like a jelly!

Have fun with them!

Introduction of the character Joker (drawing)

Joker is always making **j**okes. He is a **j**olly **g**enius. In the morning, he has yoghurt with cornflakes for breakfast and goes to school. **J**oker eats a sandwi**ch** and **j**elly everyday. He drinks a lot of ora**ng**e **j**uice, too. He loves doing **j**igsaw puzzles when he comes back home. He goes **j**ogging in the afternoon. Then he has a shower and puts on his **j**eans and **j**acket to visit his **j**oyful friends. After that he has dinner with his family. Finally, he **j**umps and **j**umps again and goes to bed at 10 o'clock. (Story adapted to the group)

Joker wants to help children to pronounce his name and his friends' names, too. He will help children pronounce other words, too.

Transcription

/ ˈdʒəʊkə ɪz ˋɔːlweɪz meɪkɪŋ dʒəʊks / hi ɪz ə ˈdʒɒli ˋdʒɪnɪəs / ɪn ðə ˌmɔːnɪŋ / hɪ hæz jɒgət wɪð ˋk ɔːnfleɪks fə brekfɑːst / ən ˈgəʊz tə ˋskuːl / ˈdʒəʊkə r iːts ə sændwɪdʒ ən ˋdʒeli evri deɪ / hi ˈdrɪnks ə ˋl ɒt əv ɒrɪdʒ dʒuːs / ˋtuː / hi ˈlʌvz duːɪŋ dʒɪgsɔː ˌpʌzlz / wen hi ˈkʌmz ˋbæk həʊm / hi ˈgəʊz ˋdʒɒgɪŋ ɪ n ði ɑːftənuːn / ˇðen / hi ˈhæz ə ʃaʊə / ən ˈpʊts ɒn hɪz ˌdʒiːnz ən dʒækət / tə ˈvɪsɪt hɪz dʒɔɪfʊl ˋfrendz / ˈɑːftə ˌðæt / hi ˈhæz ˋdɪnə wɪð hɪz fæmɪli / ˇfaɪnəli / hi ˈdʒʌmps ən ˋdʒʌmps əgeɪn / ən ˈgəʊz tə ˌbed / ət ˈten ə ˋklɒk #

LESSON PLANS

LESSON 1

**Objective**: Students awareness of the sound to be learnt / dʒ /.

Material: A simple text about the character 'Joker' (Joker's routine)

PRE-TASK: Introduce the task. The teacher will introduce a character called 'Joker' to her students. She will read and the students must follow the text. By doing this the teacher will be raising awareness of the fact that there is a special sound that is repeated several times and they have to discover and try to re-produce it. In Spanish there are words that include this sound. For example, "*cónyuge", "inyectar", "inyección";" llama", "yunque"*, emphatic "*yo".*

TASK (Exposure). This step will involve awareness through a game. The teacher will say to her students: 'Think of a train. Turn on the motor of a train / dʒ dʒ dʒ dʒ dʒ dʒ /. Imagine you are the wheels of the train. Feel the wheels of the train on your throat. (Assimilation activity)

FOLLOW UP /Controlled practice. Students focus on the articulation of a particular sound or sound contrasts. There will be some words in construction papers in a train format. Students will be divided in two groups. They have to catch (touch) the train as soon as possible while the teacher dictates a word.
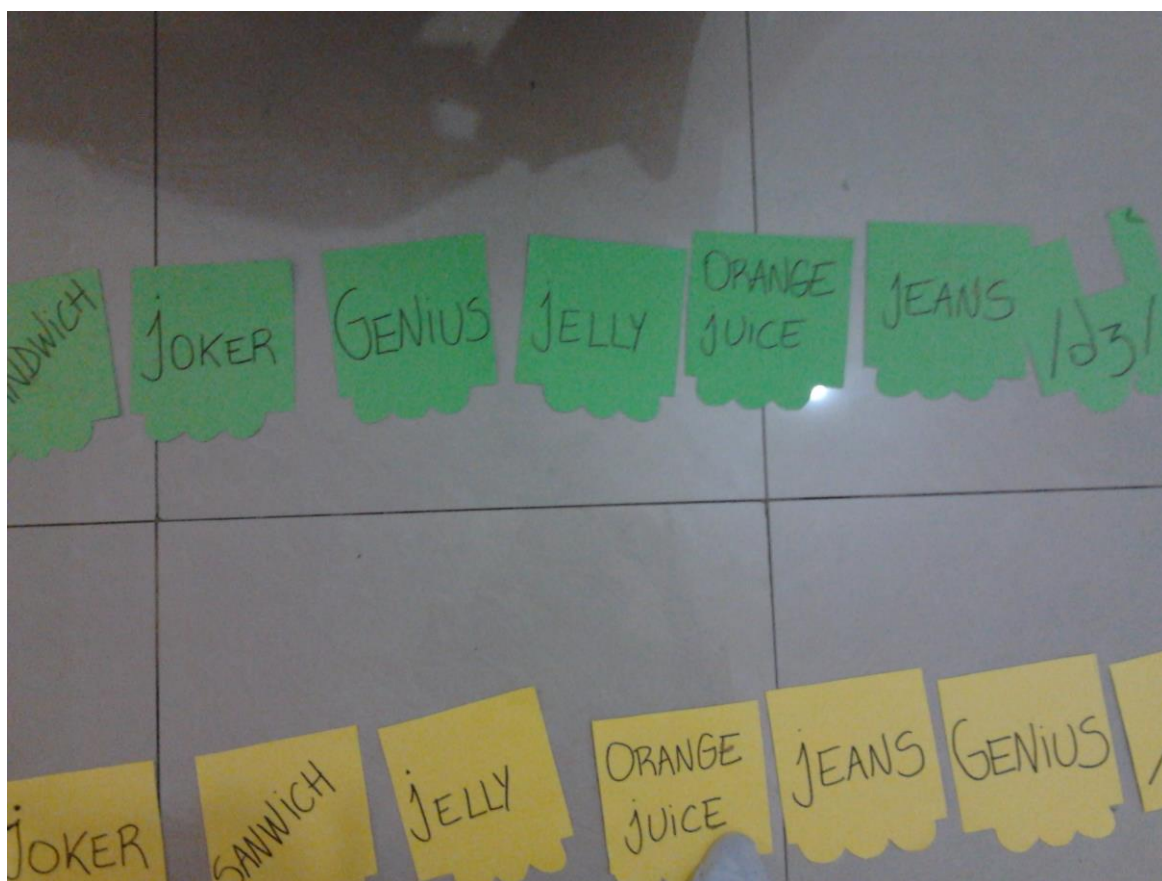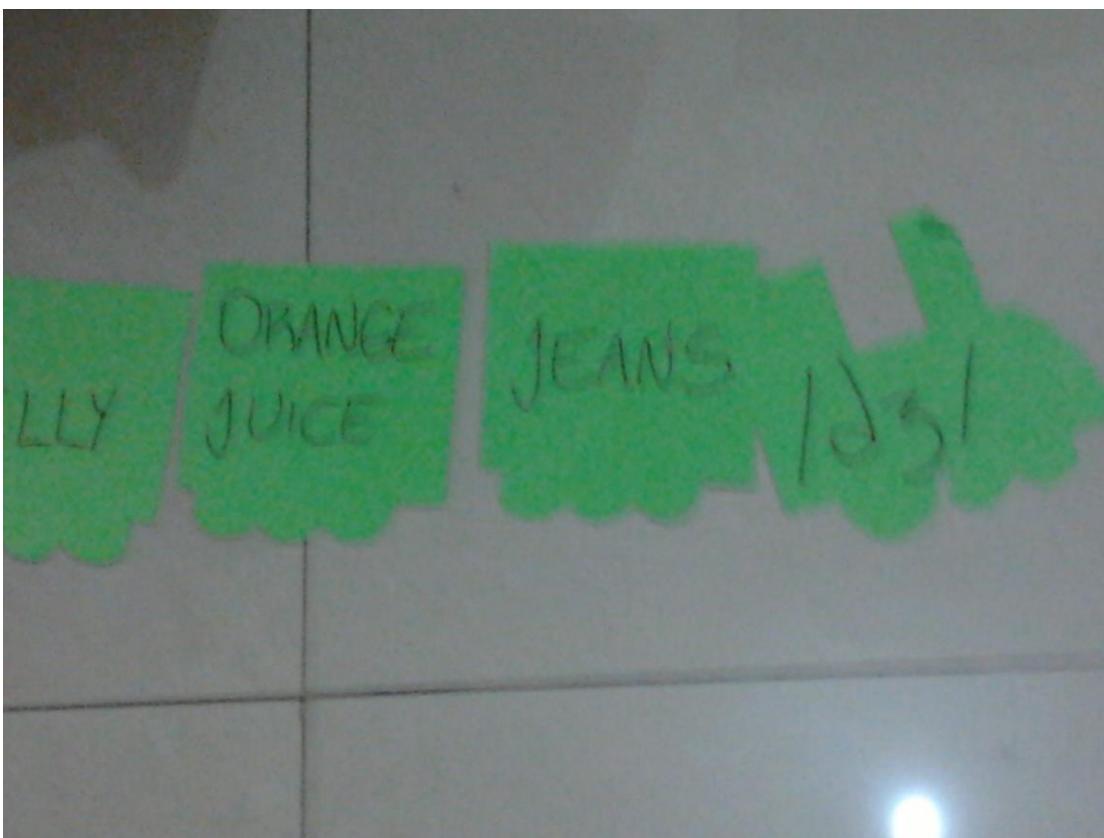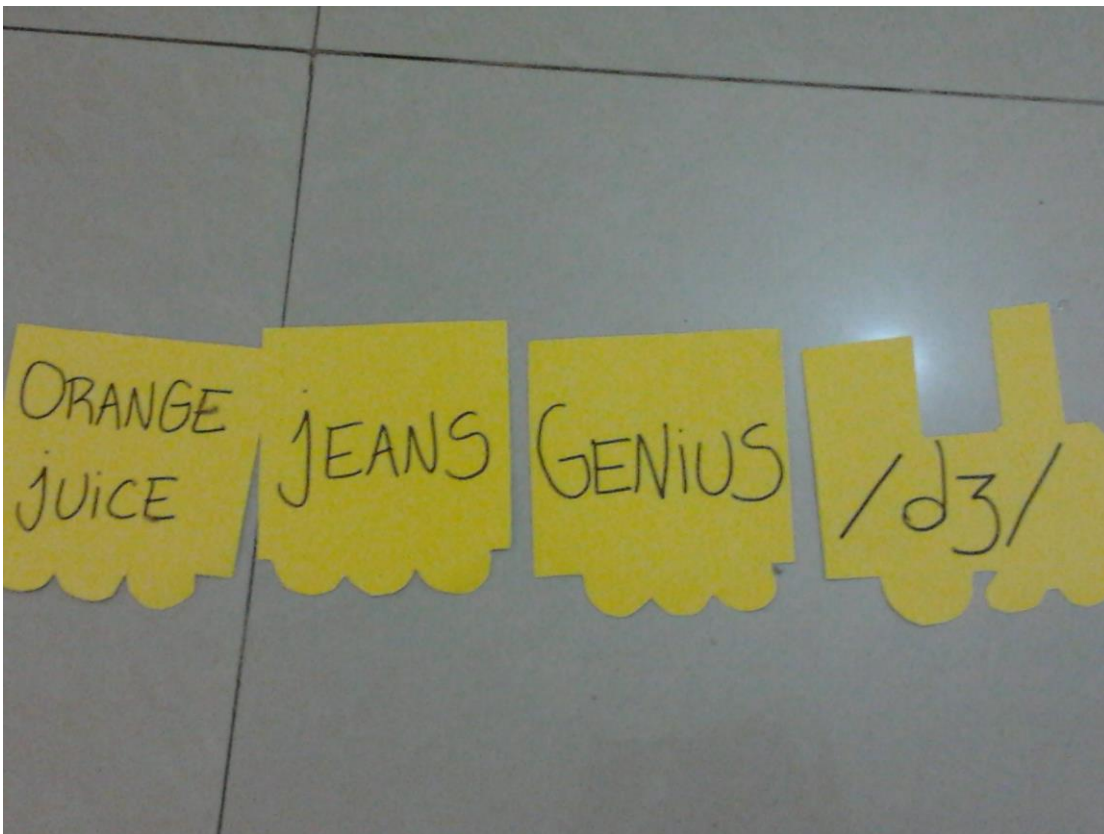
LESSON 2

Objective: To listen for the target sound in initial, final or medial position.

Materials: List of words (some contain the target sound, some do not); painter's tape; music

List of words: jump – garage – chicken – jar – joker –run – January – Japanese – enjoy – chocolate – juice – happy – orange – yellow – jungle – junior – picture – judo - teacher – adjective – sleep – jaguar – watch – energy – catch – object

PRE-TASK: The teacher will show the students flashcards containing the target sound and they have to name the objects using the /dʒ/ sound. Flashcards: joker - jelly - orange – orange juice – jaguar – jump – jeans – jumper – jacket – go jogging – jump – genius (Aladdin). Most of them were used in Joker's routine text.

TASK: Listen and jump game. Procedure:

1. Children stand on the outside of a circle made with painter's tape.

2. Teacher calls out one word at a time from her word list. If the word contains the target sound, children jump into the circle.

3. If the next word the teacher reads has the target sound, they stay where they are. If not, they jump back out.

FOLLOW UP: Memo Test game. Students will match the words containing the /dʒ/ sound with their pictures. They will match the words they have recently learnt, most of them used in the previous games and the ones in the text.

LESSON 3

Objective: To pick up flashcards that contains the target sound.

Material: Flashcards of snacks, food, drinks and desserts including the /dʒ/ sound and others that contain the /tʃ/ sound. Flashcards: orange juice – jar of strawberry marmalade – cheese – jelly – pear juice – chocolate cake – sandwich – hamburger – chips – jellyfish – chicken – jellybeans - gingerbread

PRE-TASK: Joker's routine text. What does Joker eat and drink everyday? True or False activity. Correct the false statement.

Joker has apple juice and gingerbread for breakfast.

Joker eats a sandwi**ch** and **j**elly everyday.

Joker drinks a lot of lemon juice.

TASK: **Shopping for sounds** (accommodation productive activity).

Procedure:

1. The teacher will give the shoppers bags or baskets. The flashcards will be spread and face down on the desks.

2. Students take turns to pick up a card and say the word. If the sound in the flashcard matches the target sound, they place the flashcard in their basket and turn over another card. If the flashcard does not match they turn the card face down so other players have the chance to see it. The teacher reminds them that they must say the words aloud.

3. The next player continues in the same way.

1) **FOLLOW UP: Role-Play**: In groups of 4 or 5, one of the students will perform the cashier and the rest are the shoppers.

Possible dialogue 1

Shopper 1: Hello.

Cashier: Hello

Shopper 1: How much is the jar of marmalade?

Cashier: It's 15 pesos.

Shopper 1: Here you are.

Cashier: Thank you. Goodbye.

Shopper 1: Goodbye.

Possible dialogue 2

Shopper 2: Hello.

Cashier: Hello

Shopper 2: How much is the orange juice?

Cashier: It's 10 pesos.

Shopper 2: Here you are.

Cashier: Thank you. Goodbye.

Shopper 2: Goodbye.

GAMES

<u>Game 1: Let's imagine a train</u>. Turn on the motor of a train / dʒ dʒ dʒ dʒ dʒ dʒ /. Imagine you are the wheels of the train. Feel the wheels of the train on your throat. We can add movement imitating the train.

<u>Game 2: Listen and Jump game</u>.

<u>Objective</u>: To listen for the target sound in initial, final or medial position

<u>Materials</u>: List of words (some contain the target sound, some do not); painter's tape; music

List of words: jump – garage – chicken – jar – joker –run – January – Japanese – enjoy – chocolate – juice – happy – orange – yellow – jungle – junior – picture – judo - teacher – adjective – sleep – jaguar – watch – energy – catch - object

<u>Procedure</u>:

1. Children stand on the outside of a circle made with painter's tape.

2. Teacher calls out one word at a time from her word list. If the word contains the target sound, children jump into the circle.

3. If the next word the teacher reads starts with the target sound, they stay where they are. If not, they jump back out.

<u>Game 3: Race of sounds</u>

<u>Objective</u>: To listen to the target sound.

<u>Materials</u>: Train engine and carriages made of construction paper that contains words with the target sound. The train engine will carry the phoneme and the carriages the words. There will be 2 sets of identical words.

<u>Procedure</u>:

1. Children are divided in two groups. They line up and listen to her teacher say the word.

2. The carriages containing the words will be distributed on the board mixed up.

3. The teacher calls out the word at random and the children have to catch the correct word.

4. The first group, who makes the train, wins.

<u>Game 4: Shopping for sounds</u> (accommodation productive activity)

<u>Objective</u>: To pick up flashcards that contains the target sound (visual input and awareness)

Material: Flashcards of snacks, food, drinks and desserts including the /dʒ/ sound and others that contain the /tʃ/ sound.

Procedure:

1- The teacher will give the shoppers bags or baskets. The flashcards will be spread and face down on the desks.

2- Students take turns to pick up a card and say the word. If the sound in the flashcard matches the target sound, they place the flashcard in their basket and turn over another card. If the flashcard does not match they turn the card face down so other players have the chance to see it. The teacher reminds them that they must say the words aloud.

3- The next player continues in the same way.

PHOTOGRAPHS