Lesson Plan Draft: Differentiating Between /r/ and /l/

TESL 525: Teaching English Pronunciation

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Differentiating Between /r/ & /l/

Audience

This lesson plan is designed for students with Intermediate to Advanced proficiency and can be used with Ss’ ranging from 16-40 years old in an EFL context. This plan was designed to meet the needs of Korean students who have difficulty in both hearing and producing the initial /r/ and /l/ sounds; however, it is suitable to use in an ESL context as well, assuming the students show similar challenges in producing and hearing distinctions. The content of this lesson uses the communicative language approach which recognizes that, “learners progression from one phase to another may be a gradual one and that practice must extend beyond the controlled phase of repetition and oral reading”(p.45). This lesson assumes that Ss’ have a general knowledge of the articulatory anatomy, the important role pronunciation has in contributing to meaning, and the ability to use all four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking at the intermediate to advanced level.

Learning Outcomes:

- SWBT distinguish between the /r/ and /l/ sounds using listening discrimination activities

  *Phase II Listening Discrimination*

- SWBT identify the tongue, teeth, and mouth placement needed to articulate the /r/ and /l/ sound through viewing articulatory description presentations and practicing in mirrors.

  *Phase II - Place and Manner of Articulation*

- SWBT notice the importance of accurate pronunciation of /r/ and /l/ and how it effects meaning through the reading of minimal pair sentences with partners.
*Phase III – Listening Discrimination and Reproduction*

- SWBT reproduce the sounds of /r/ and /l/ through guided and communicative activities that focus on both fluency and accuracy (Celce-Murcia, 2010, p.68)

*Phase IV & V – Guided Practice and Communicative practice*

**Rationale**

This lesson plan focuses on the clear pronunciation and listening discrimination between the initial /r/ and /l/ sounds. The absence of /r/ and /l/ in the Korean language is the cause of this recognizable error (Cho & Park, 2006, p.238). The most comparable phoneme in the Korean language is rieul, a feature between the /r/ and /l/ phoneme. Helping students to understand why pronunciation mistakes are made between /r/ and /l/ by presenting them with a comparative analysis of the differences in mouth, tongue and muscle movements between Korean and English, can be highly beneficial for students (Cho & Park, 2006, p.244). The outcomes of this lesson are designed to help students work towards both intelligibility and comprehension in spoken language by focusing on how the voice quality of the learner’s native language differs from that of English (Esling & Wong, 1983, p.93).

It should be noted that the aim of this lesson should not to have students’ sound exactly like a native speaker of the target language, but rather that identification with the target group, insofar as that is the student’s goal, is often realized phonologically through the mechanism of voice quality (Esling & Wong, 1983, p.93).
This lesson plan incorporates all phases of the communicative language approach to teaching (description and analysis, listening discrimination, controlled practice, guided practice and communicative practice). In addition, this lesson plan should be taught at a pace that is suitable for context and may be adapted with additional materials and explanations to satisfy the needs of the current students.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials:**

1. Internet Connection & Computer to present the website with Articulatory Diagram: [http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html](http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html)

2. Chopsticks for each student

3. Hand Mirrors for each student

4. White Board/Chalk Board

5. Handout: Minimal Word Pairs (Appendix A)

6. Handout: Minimal Pair Sentences (Appendix B)

7. Handout: Dialogue Between Police Officer and Driver (Appendix C)

8. Handout: Create Your Own Story (Appendix D)

**I. Warm-up (5 minutes)**

1. Ask Ss how many letters are in their L1’s. Then ask how many letters there are in the English alphabet (26).
2. Tell the Ss’ that today we are going to focus on the consonants /r/ and /l/. Ask Students to think about what consonants in English do not exist in Korean. Ss’ may work in pairs to generate answers more quickly. List these on the board (making sure to list the /l/ and /r/): /b/, /d/, /g/, /v/, /Ø/, /Ò/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʤ/, /l/ /r/.

This helps us to identify the major areas of pronunciation errors made by Koreans.

3. Introduce the /r/ and /l/ by pronouncing several word pairs (red/led, rake/lake, wrong/long) and ask Ss’ if they can hear the difference. Ask a few Ss’ to pronounce the word pairs to the person sitting next to them and then ask their partner if they could hear the difference again?

   It will be evident that a majority of Korean Ss’ will have difficulty in both hearing and producing the /l/ and /r/ sound.

II. Place and Manner of Articulation (15 minutes)

Contrastive rhetoric: Explain to the Ss’ that /r/ and /l/ sound can be difficult to make for Korean Ss’ because they have a sound in between both the /r/ and /l/ which is very similar and is called ‘rieul’. When rieul is shown at the beginning of a word, it is pronounced as an /l/, however, it is very rare for words to start with rieul and if it does, Koreans tend to cut the rieul off the beginning of the word altogether. When rieul is used mid-word, it is pronounced as an /r/.

   1. Pass out mirrors (or have students take out their own). Explain to the Ss’ that to make both the /r/ and /l/ sound they will be using both their tongue and teeth.

   2. Instruct Ss’ that they will first learn to make the /r/ sound. The teacher will then present the articulatory description using the website: http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html. The teacher will encourage Ss’ to pay attention to how the tip of the tongue is
turned up and back, noting that there is no contact between the front part of the tongue and the teeth or roof of the mouth.

3. Ss’ should pronounce each of the following words using their mirrors (right, red, room, repeat, rich) after watching the animated video.

Ask Ss’: Where is the tongue going?

What are the lips doing?

4. The Ss’ will then watch the articulatory description of the /l/ sound using the website: http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html. The T will encourage the Ss’ to note how the tip of the tongue is touching the alveolar ridge just behind the upper teeth, noting that there should be no contact between the sides of the tongue and the teeth further back.

5. Ss’ should pronounce each of the following words using their mirrors (light, long, last, love)

* The teacher can note that for ‘rieul’(ㄹ) the tongue placement is in the middle, while for the /l/ your tongue is just behind the teeth and for /r/ your tongue is turned up and back.

### III. Listening Discrimination and Reproduction (15 minutes)

**A Minimal Pair Words**

1. Explain to the Ss’ that they will first listen to the pairs of words (See Appendix A).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lay</th>
<th>Ray</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>really</td>
<td>lilly</td>
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<tr>
<td>list</td>
<td>wrist</td>
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<tr>
<td>lies</td>
<td>rise</td>
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<tr>
<td>lent</td>
<td>rent</td>
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</table>
2. Ss’ will then be given a chopstick to place across their mouths. They should push this chopstick back and hold it with their lips, not their teeth. The T will explain that when pronouncing the /l/, the tip of the tongue should touch the chopstick and can even push it out of their mouth when pronouncing a rule. When pronouncing the /r/ the tongue should not touch the chopstick. The Ss’ will practice saying each pairs of words with the chopstick in their mouth. If the Ss’ have moved the chopstick, then they know that they have are beginning to pronounce /l/ correctly.

B. Minimal Pair Sentences

1. The T distributes the Minimal Pair Sentences handout (See Appendix B).

2. The T explains that each of the sentences will be read once, pronouncing only one minimal word from each pair. The Ss’ are to circle the minimal pair word that they hear. Before reading the sentences the T will go over the minimal pair words to ensure Ss’ understand their meaning.

3. The T may circulate around the room or collect paper to check Ss’ ability to discriminate between the /r/ and /l/.

4. Ask the students’ what kind of impact the sentence would make if the wrong word were heard?

5. Have Ss’ read the sentences in pairs choosing one word from each pair while their partner circles the word they hear. Ss’ can check for the correct answer after each sentence.

VI. Guided Practice (10 minutes)
1. Ss’ work in pairs to read the dialogue between the Police officer and driver (See Appendix C).

2. Ss’ will first highlight the /l/ and /r/ sounds in the dialogue. One partner will then read the part of the police officer while the other reads the part of the driver. After Ss’ have finished reading to each other, they can read and perform the dialogue for the whole class.

* The T should circulate around the room listening to each pair of Ss’ and provide feedback.

* Ss’ should be encouraged to focus on fluency over accuracy in this task.

V. **Communicative Practice/Evaluation** (15 minutes)

1. Ss’ work in pairs to create a role-play (See Appendix D)

2. The Ss’ will be given 5-7 minutes to write their role-play. During this time the T will circulate around the room to provide students with guidance as they write their dialogues.

3. The Ss’ will take turns presenting their dialogues in front of the class while the T records them.

* The T can play the recordings back later for self-reflection or peer feedback.

VI. **Assessment**

In this lesson plan, informal assessment is the most appropriate. The teacher should be sure to continuously circulate around the room while Ss’ are completing their activities, providing immediate feedback. Formal assessment can be provided through the grading of the listening discrimination exercise as well as the written dialogue for the role-play as a part of the communicative practice.
VII. Extension Activities (Optimal In-Class/Homework)

1. Ss’ can watch their recorded role-plays and provide feedback to each other on the /r/ and /l/ sound.

2. Ss’ can complete the Create Your Own Story – Group Task (See Appendix E).

The T reads the instructions to the Ss’ and breaks them up into groups. The T gives each group five minutes to create their own story using nine of the words listed. After the Ss’ have completed the Group Task, the T hands out the Individual Task and reviews the directions. At the end the T gives Ss’ the opportunity to list some words in which they felt they heard some of their peers pronounce incorrectly or perhaps they need more practice with.
Appendix A

Minimal Word Pairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lay</th>
<th>Ray</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Really</td>
<td>Lily</td>
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<tr>
<td>List</td>
<td>Wrist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lies</td>
<td>Rise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lent</td>
<td>Rent</td>
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Appendix B

Listening Minimal Pair Sentences (adapted from [http://www.englishclub.com/phonunciation/minimal-pairs-l-r.htm](http://www.englishclub.com/phonunciation/minimal-pairs-l-r.htm)).

1. The student likes to *(read/lead)* the rest of the class.

2. Can you please pass the *(led/red)* pencil?

3. I try to *(pray/play)* with my daughter every evening.

4. Alex has a *(loyal/royal)* wife named Adrienne.

5. The teacher was disappointed by students *(long/wrong)* answers.

6. I never thought she would *(glow/grow)* so much.

7. Colleen’s horse stepped on some *(grass/glass)* while riding on the trail.
Appendix C

Dialogue between a police officer and a driver (adapted from Celce-Murcia et al, 2010, p. 68)

Police officer stops a driver after he makes an illegal right turn at a red light. The driver rolls down his window.

**Police Officer:** Hello sir. I know it’s bright outside but didn’t you see the sign that said “no right on red”?

**Driver:** Well yes but I’m sure the light was green.

Police Officer: Sir, it was red. Are you color blind?

**Driver:** No Officer.

**Police Officer:** Well sir the light was red and you broke the law. I think you should take off those sunglasses.

(driver takes off his glasses)

**Driver:** Ahh yes, officer. This does change the colors. I’m so sorry. Does this mean I am free to go?

**Police Officer:** Well sir, I recommend you don’t wear those glasses any longer and slow down when making right turns at traffic lights.

**Driver:** Yes Officer. Thank you. I can’t afford my insurance rates to rise.
Appendix D

Role-plays

In partners, create a dialogue around the following situations. Be sure to use words beginning with /r/ and /l/.

Role – play #1

**Student A:**

You are the Manager for Ralph’s Real Estate Company.

Roger calls to find out information on a house. You must give him directions to the house as well as information on the colors that you would find inside and outside the house.

**Student B:**

You are Roger. Call Ralph’s Real Estate Company to get more information on the house you are interested in, such as colors and location.

Role – play #2

**Student A:**

You are a boat operator at Larry’s Boat Adventures. Your boat got stranded in the ocean. Call Beverly’s Boat Service for help. Tell her how many miles out you are (30), how many passengers you have (13) and to hurry!

**Student B:**

You are Beverly, the founder of Beverly’s Boat Service. Larry’s Boat Adventures calls and tells you he is stranded. Tell Larry that you are located too far away and that he should contact someone else.
Appendix E

Create Your Own Story (activity adapted from Celce-Murcia, 2010, pg. 70-71).

**Group Task:** In your group, choose nine words from the list below. Then create a story using these words in any order. Please be prepared to share your story with the class.

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<th>/r/</th>
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<td>freeze</td>
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**Individual Task:** Check off the words that you hear each group mention in their story. Put a star * next to any words that you believe were pronounced incorrectly.

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(Activity adapted from Celce-Murcia, 2010, pg. 70-71).
References


