

Pronunciation guide for teachers of S'gaw speaking Karen students

by Shana Lee

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

August 2020

Faculty Advisor: Melissa Erickson
Content Reader: Andrea Echelberger
Peer Reviewer 1: Sarah Ellefson
Peer Reviewer 2: Rebecca Holman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	3
Five-step model	4
Word final consonant deletion within a middle school science curriculum	6
Vowels /I/ and /æ/ within a middle school social studies curriculum	15
Consonants /d/ and /z/ within a middle school math curriculum	23
References & resources	30

Lee, S. ELL Teachers Guide to Pronunciation: A Contrastive Analysis of S'gaw Karen and American English Phonetics and Phonology (2020)

While the numbers of S'gaw speaking Karen students in the Saint Paul Public School district has increased significantly over the past decade, there still exists a lack of linguistic resources available to ELL educators pertaining to the S'gaw language and helping students acquire English as an additional language. This capstone project is meant to help educators increase the comprehensible speech output in English of their S'gaw Karen speaking students, by looking at the similarities and differences of the phonetic and phonemic structures of S'gaw Karen and English. After performing a linguistic analysis of the two languages and taking into consideration the contrastive analysis hypothesis, intelligibility principle, and functional load theory, the following guide was created. It's purpose is to provide instructional steps for k-12 educators to utilize in their English language classrooms when working with S'gaw speaking students. Specifically this guide will address word final consonant deletion, vowel sounds /I/ and /æ/ and consonant sounds /d/ and /z/.

Five Step Model

As discussed in chapters two and three of my paper, Celce-Murcia et. al. (2018) presented a five-step communicative framework for teaching pronunciation in the classroom;

- 1) Description and Analysis
- 2) Listening Discrimination
- 3) Controlled Practice
- 4) Guided Practice
- 5) Communicative Practice

The first step of the model, Description and Analysis, allows the educator to explicitly call students attention to the linguistic feature and the manner of production. The second step of the model, Listening Discrimination exists to give students the opportunity to refine their auditory skills, in listening for the linguistic feature at hand. The third step of the model, Controlled Practice, is an extension of previous steps in regards to increasing the learners awareness of the feature however this step may include preset speech samples or exercises to have students work on their production. The fourth step of the model, Guided Practice, is the next step towards mastery, where the learner is still participating in structured exercises, however they are using their knowledge to

produce some of the speech more independently. The last step of the model, Communicative Practice, is meant to guide students towards fluency of the feature. This is the least structured step of the model, and necessitates attention to both the target feature as well as the surrounding text and holistic message (Celce-Murcia et. al., 2018).

This model of instruction for pronunciation was chosen as it explicitly teaches the linguistic feature and utilizes a gradual release model of mastery. It is also a model that is easily applicable to any of the four linguistic domains though listening and speech production are more heavily favored in pronunciation instruction.

While each of the following sections are presented as exercises built into existing curricular units, the goal is that educators will be able to use the given exercises for each step of the 5 step model as examples of how to address each phonological area of concern, and adapt them to fit their current content and classroom needs.

Word Final Consonant Deletion

Word final consonant deletion is prevalent to a higher degree for English learners whose first language is structured solely with open syllables. A few examples of these open syllable languages are Japanese, Hmong, common Slavic, and S'gaw Karen while languages like French and Turkish have a tendency to prefer open syllables vs closed syllables.

The following sections will progress through Celce-Murcia et. al.'s five step model for pronunciation, outlining and describing instructional exercises to help students with word final consonant deletion. Educators are encouraged to utilize the following exercises as a framework and guide to be expanded upon, and personalized to whatever their class' current curriculum is. All of the exercises provided are contextualized within a standards based, middle school science curriculum. The following exercises were created for level 1 newcomer English learners studying weather and the seasons, working on standards:

0E.2.1.1.2 Make daily and seasonal observations of local weather conditions to describe patterns over time.

2E.2.1.1.1 Represent data to describe typical weather conditions expected during a particular season.

STEP 1) Description and Analysis

Explanation: Today we are going to start focusing on pronouncing the ending sound of words. I have noticed that sometimes we struggle with producing the last sound of a

word, and the end sound is just as important as the beginning sound of a word! We don't want to leave it off, because it can be confusing for the listener.

Listen to each pair of sentences and raise your hand if they are the same.

The boy needs a **cow**. / The boy needs a **couch**.

The kid wants a **treat** from the store. / The kid wants a **tree** from the store.

I bought a **bow** yesterday. / I bought a **boat** yesterday.

It is very different to say I bought a bow than to say I bought a boat! One would be a lot of fun to have on a lake, while the other one wouldn't be very fun to have on the water!

Can anyone else think of similar sounding examples, except 1 ends in a consonant and the other ends in a vowel sound?

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to sort written words between those that end in a consonant and those that end in a vowel.

- Handout the following worksheet to students. 1 worksheet per pair.
- Have students cut out the two categories and each word.
- In pairs, students will sort the words, into their appropriate category, by sounding out each word, and sorting by appropriate end sounds.

consonants	vowels	cold	hot
thermometer	sunny	cloudy	sky
season	rainy	snowy	storm

warm	cool	degree	temperature
------	------	--------	-------------

STEP 2) Listening Discrimination

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to auditorily discriminate between words that end in consonants and those that do not.

- Have students number paper from 1-10
- The teacher will read off the following 10 words one by one.
 - For each word students must listen to the end sound.
 - If the word ends in a consonant sound, have them write the sound they hear next to the appropriate number.
 - Words: sunny / weather / cold / storm / degree / cool / rainy / season / sky / hot

Exercise 2: Students will be able to auditorily discriminate between words that end in consonants and those that do not.

- Hand each student the following sheet.
- As the teacher reads, they must circle the correct word to match what they hear.
- Go over as a class and have students switch for peer grading.

There are four seasons on Earth. Spring season arrives in March, when trees start turning gray/green and the weather begins to turn war/warm. After spring is summer when fruits and vegetables grow and you can make jay/jam. Then comes fall when leaves dry/drop to

the ground and the days stay/start to get shorter. As the weather turns cooler it can be nice to drink a hot cup of apple side/cider. Fall is also when kids dress up for Halloween and go in search of treats/trees. The last season of the year is the coldest, winter. During winter, ray/rain turns to snow in many parts and you might need to shove/shovel the sidewalk.

STEP 3) Controlled Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to correctly pronounce words with final consonants.

- Show students the word “blizzard”
- Ask for a volunteer to say it
- Explain to students that one way to increase their pronunciation of final consonants is by working backwards in chunks that they know, until they can say the whole word.

-d

-ard

-zzard

-izzard

-lizzard

blizzard

- Go through the following list of words as a whole class.

- ❑ You can either have each student build one word or you can have students rotate through with each subsequent
- ❑ Word list: season / storm / fall / summer / cool / cold / calm / front
- ❑ Have students work in pairs or small groups to create a sentence using each word (teacher discretion as to sentences should be oral or written).

STEP 4) Guided Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to identify the correct word final consonant words/open syllable word to complete a sentence.

- ❑ Handout students an article (the following is from NewsELA, 350L)
- ❑ Have each student get 2 different colored highlighters
- ❑ Read through the article as students follow along, pointing to each word.
- ❑ Have students work in pairs to re-read (out loud) the first paragraph. As they go through the paragraph, have them highlight words that end in a consonant sound in 1 color, and the words that end in a vowel sound in a 2nd color. Remind students to go based on sound when they say the word (not on spelling).
- ❑ After each paragraph review as a whole class, and mark a class copy on the whiteboard or computer screen.
- ❑ Continue on through each of the paragraphs, having students highlight each word in the paragraph, then reviewing as a whole class.

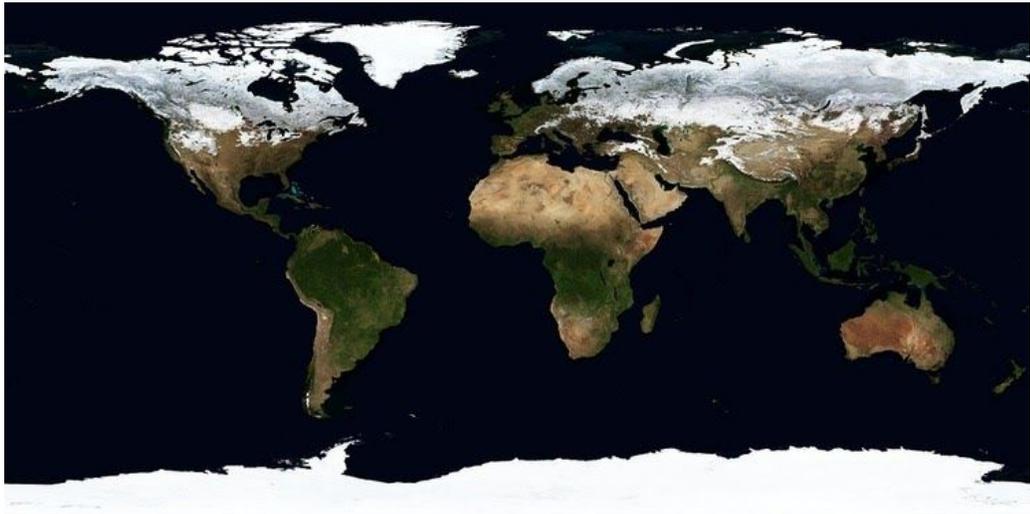
Weather and Climate: What is Climate?

Weather is always changing. It is different from day to day. But some places get certain kinds of weather more than others. For example, some places are very

sunny. Others are cold and rainy. Each place has its own climate. The climate is what the weather is usually like. It describes the weather over a long period of time.

Studying Climates

Scientists study climates. There are special tools for this. Scientists have tools to measure rainfall. Some tools measure how fast the wind is blowing. Scientists also take measurements of temperature. That is how hot or cold a place is.



This satellite image shows the differences in weather on the Earth's surface. Some parts of the world are snowy, while some are not. Photo from: NASA.

Things That Affect Climate

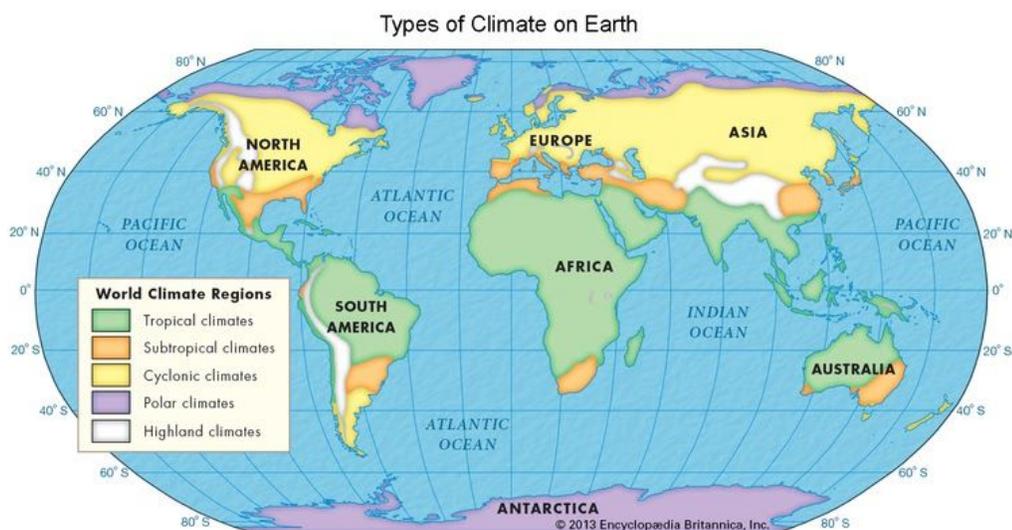
Many things can affect climate. The sun is one example. Another is winds. Human activities affect climate, too.

Sunlight falls on Earth unevenly. Some places get a lot of direct sunlight. Other places get very little sunlight.

The equator is an imaginary line. It goes around the middle of Earth. Places near the equator get the most sunlight. This area is very sunny. That gives it a hot climate. Places farther away get less sunlight. This gives them a cooler climate.

Winds affect climate, too. They carry warm and cool air. They also carry rain and snow.

Human activities also affect climate. Humans burn fossil fuels. These fuels come from the ground. They include oil and coal. People burn them for energy. The energy helps power cars. It also helps heat homes. But burning the fuels does something else, too. It releases gases. These gases stay in the air. They trap heat on Earth. Now, the planet is heating up. Scientists call this global warming.



Our planet has 5 main types of climates. Graphic: Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Types Of Climates

Each place has its own climate. No two climates are exactly the same. But some are similar. There are a few kinds of climates.

Tropical climates are warm all year. Some have a lot of rain. Others are dry.

Cyclonic climates are found north of the tropics. These areas have rain and snow. They usually have warm summers. Their winters are cold.

Polar climates are always cold. They have lots of snow and ice.

Article reference

Encyclopedia of Britannica adapted by NewsELA staff (2017). Weather and Climate: What is climate?. <https://newsela.com/read/elem-sci-climate/id/30614/>

STEP 5) Communicative Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to use final consonant words in speech from a scripted dialogue.

- Have multiple copies of each dialogue below printed, give each student 1 dialogue.
- Have students research the day's weather for a city of their choosing (have a map of cities and the current weather available)
- As they research their city, students will fill in the blanks and then practice saying their dialogue out loud.
- Do one as a whole class as an example.
- Have students find a partner.
- Have one student pose the question “What is the weather like today in your city? ”, while the second student answers using their dialogue.
- The first student will then have to guess based on the information given, which city their partner was reporting on.
- Ask students to practice it multiple times with their same partner, in order to recite it from memory in front of the class.

Today the weather is _____ and _____. The temperature is _____.

Because it is _____ and _____ you might like to _____. Also you will want to make sure you wear _____, _____ and not _____.

Tips for applying in other content areas

1. Consonant blends occur across all content areas and words! Listen for specific ones your students struggle with and have them practice.
2. Remember consonant blends can occur in all positions of a word, not just in the final position. Do students struggle with it more at the beginning of a word? In the middle? In the final position?

Vowel sounds /I/ and /æ/

A noticeable difference when comparing the phonological systems of English and S'gaw is that the vowels /I/ as in *bit* and /æ/ as in *bat* while present in English are lacking in S'gaw. That coupled with the fact that minimal pairs with /I/ and /æ/ have high relevance on Catford's table of relative functional load. Meaning that if one of the sounds is replaced by the other in a word, it will be difficult for a listener to discern the intended word and it's meaning, potentially leading to misunderstanding and a breakdown in communication.

The following sections will progress through Celce-Murcia et. al.'s (2018) five step model for pronunciation, outlining and describing instructional exercises to help students with differentiating between the two vowel sounds /I/ and /æ/. Educators are encouraged to utilize the following exercises as a framework and guide to be expanded upon, and personalized to whatever their class' current curriculum is. All of the exercises provided are contextualized within a standards based, middle school social studies curriculum. The following exercises were created for level 1 newcomer English learners studying map features, working on standards:

2.3.1.1.2 Locate key features on a map or globe; use cardinal directions to describe the relationship between two or more features.

3.3.1.1.1 Use maps and concepts of location (relative location words and cardinal and intermediate directions) to describe places in one's community, the state of Minnesota, the United States or the world.

STEP 1) Description and Analysis

Explanation: Today we are going to start focusing on two different vowel sounds /I/ and /æ/. I have noticed that sometimes we struggle with differentiating between the two different sounds.

Listen to the following word pairs and raise your hand if they sound different;

mit / mat

fit / fat

pit / pat

sit / sat

bit / bat

hit / hat

tit / tat

Can anyone else come up with a word pair with vowel sounds /I/ and /æ/?

One thing that can help you make the two sounds different is to pay attention to your mouth shape. Look at my mouth when I say words with /I/. Now look at my mouth shape when I say words with /æ/.



/I/



/æ/

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to identify the vowel sounds /I/ and /æ/ by looking at mouth shape.

- Have students number paper from 1-8
- Teacher will silently say each word pair

1. mit	mat	5. lat	lit
2. pit	pat	6. vat	vit
3. bat	bit	7. fat	fit
4. sit	sat	8. hit	hat

- Students will write down the correct vowel sound (I or a) for each word pair (2 answers for each number)
- Have students switch sheets for peer correction
- As you go through answers, call on students to say each word pair

STEP 2) Listening Discrimination

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to auditorily discriminate between words that end in consonants and those that do not.

- Handout worksheet to students.
- Read the script for students.
 - Key vocabulary words are: latitude- longitude- atlas- absolute- meridian- map- relative- cardinal

Maps are important tools that we use everyday. They can be used in all different areas. You can find maps on the internet or in an atlas, which is like a big book of maps. The four cardinal directions on a map are North, South, East and West. Maps can tell us both the relative location and the absolute location. The relative location is the general area where something is located, and we can use the cardinal directions to give relative location. *Example: The BP gas station is south of Murray Middle school.* Absolute location gives the exact spot where something is located by using lines of latitude and lines of longitude. The lines of latitude, which run from East to West and the lines of longitude, which run from North to South. The equator is where the lines of latitude are equal to zero and the prime meridian is where the lines of longitude are equal to zero.

- As you read, they must fill in the word with the correct sound they hear /I/ or /æ/.
- Have students switch sheets for peer correction.
- Ask for volunteers to read through the entire script out loud for the class (or have students popcorn read a sentence each).

STEP 3) Controlled Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to identify the vowel sounds /I/ or /æ/ in vocabulary words.

- Handout blank bingo sheets to students (4 x 4 is best)

- ❑ Project the following vocabulary list and have students choose which words to put on their bingo sheet (they will not use all of the words!)

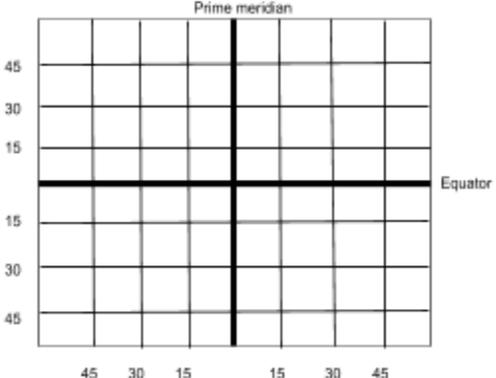
latitude- author- longitude- atlas- orientation- absolute- meridian- map-
relative- cardinal- political- prime- scale- legend- title- date

- ❑ Play bingo!
 - ❑ Teacher will show the word being called on the board.
 - ❑ Call on a student to say the word
 - ❑ Have another student say if the word contains /I/ or /æ/, and if so, which vowel sound it has.
 - ❑ To verify that a student has won bingo, have them say each of the words in the winning combination.

STEP 4) Guided Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to use map vocabulary and words with /I/ or /æ/ to give directions.

- ❑ Hand students a piece of graph paper with equator, prime meridian, latitude and longitude lines already marked. *See example worksheet on next page.*



1. Go to latitude line _____ and longitude line _____. Draw a circle there.

2. Go to latitude line _____ and longitude line _____. Draw a star there.

3. I'm going to give you directions to get from the circle to the star.

4. Go ___ squares _____ to latitude/longitude line _____.

5. Turn _____ and go _____ squares to latitude/longitude line _____.

Continue to use steps 4 and 5 to give directions until you have reached your star.

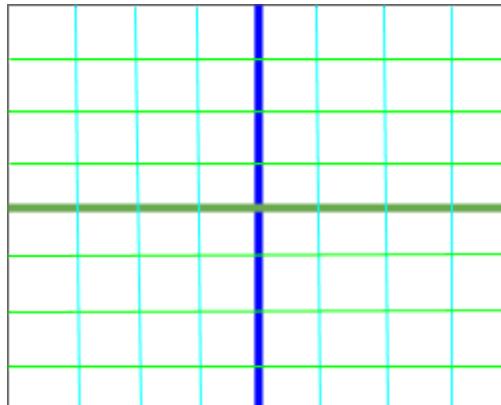
- Have each student draw in a circle and a star, anywhere they choose.
- Have students create and draw in a route in blue marker to get from the circle to the star. It can be as short or as long of a route they want.
- Have each student fill out the bottom of their worksheet, so they have their instructions pre-written.
- Divide students into partners.
- The first student will give directions to their partner, while the listener draws in the route in a red marker.

- ❑ Have students compare the red route to the original, then switch partners and repeat.

STEP 5) Communicative Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to use words with /I/ or /æ/ to describe the absolute and relative locations of global cities.

- ❑ Label the 4 sides of the room with the cardinal directions.
- ❑ Tape in the equator and prime meridian lines.
- ❑ Tape in lines of latitude and longitude at the 30°, 60° and 90° for all directions.



- ❑ Have slips of paper with cities and their absolute locations written on them; have each student draw one.
- ❑ Students need to stand at their absolute location, and write their city name on a small whiteboard or piece of paper.
- ❑ Have students practice describing their location (*Example student script: My city is _____.* The absolute location of _____ has a latitude is 32degrees north of

the equator and a longitude of 58 degrees west of the prime meridian. The relative location of _____ is _____.)

- ❑ Each student will take a turn to share their city and the absolute and relative locations.

Tips for applying in other content areas

1. Identify content specific words that contain /I/ and /æ/ sounds
2. Have students practice listening for the two sounds and assess whether they are able to differentiate between the two sounds.
3. Provide them as many opportunities to practice as possible, even if just 5 minutes a lesson
4. While teacher feedback is necessary, peer feedback is also crucial to developing fluency
5. The focus on vowel sounds doesn't have to be multiple full lessons, every day of the week. Pick and choose where it fits into your curriculum

Consonant sounds /d/ and /z/

Another important phonological difference between English and S'gaw is that while English contains both the voiced alveolar stop /d/ and the voiced alveolar fricative /z/, S'gaw only contains /d/. The lack of /z/ in S'gaw is important as the pair /d/ and /z/ is listed at the top of Catford's table of relative functional load, carrying 100% load. Meaning that if a student were to say *zip* instead of *dip* it would be difficult for a listener to discern the intended word and its meaning, potentially leading to misunderstanding and a breakdown in communication.

The following sections will progress through Celce-Murcia et. al.'s five step model for pronunciation, outlining and describing instructional exercises to help students with consonants /d/ and /z/. Educators are encouraged to utilize the following exercises as a framework and guide to be expanded upon, and personalized to whatever their class' current curriculum is. All of the exercises provided are contextualized within a standards based, middle school math curriculum. The following exercises were created for level 1 newcomer English learners studying , working on standards:

2.2.2.2 Use number sentences involving addition, subtraction, and unknowns to represent given problem situations. Use number sense and properties of addition and subtraction to find values for the unknowns that make the number sentences true.

3.2.2.2 Use multiplication and division basic facts to represent a given problem situation using a number sentence. Use number sense and multiplication and division basic facts to find values for the unknowns that make the number sentences true.

STEP 1) Description and Analysis

Explanation: Today we are going to start focusing on two different vowel sounds /d/ and /z/. I have noticed that sometimes we struggle with differentiating between the two different sounds.

Listen to the following word pairs and raise your hand if they sound different;

do / zoo

bud / buzz

dip / zip

maid / maze

den / zen

bead / bees

pride / prize

card / cars

Can anyone else come up with a word pair with consonant sounds /d/ and /z/?

One thing that can help you make the two sounds different is to pay attention to what your throat is doing. Put 2 fingers to your throat, and I want you to make the /d/ sound. Can you feel anything moving? A little bit probably. Now make the /z/ sound. Does it feel different from the /d/ sound?

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to

- Have a bunch of categories written down on slips of paper.
- Give each student a chance to choose either /d/ or /z/ and to draw out a slip
- As a whole class, create a list of words in the category that contain the sound (depending on proficiency, let students draw, act out or use their L1

to help communicate the word, then their peers or the teacher can help write out the word in English).

- ❑ Before moving onto the next student and category, go over the list, and have students repeat the words, using *I say-You say* model.

STEP 2) Listening Discrimination

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to auditorily discriminate between words that contain the /d/ sound and those with the /z/ sound.

- ❑ Write d and z in large print on separate sheets of paper. Make 2 sets.
- ❑ Post each set on the same wall, approximately 4-6 feet apart.
- ❑ Have students divide into 2 teams, and stand in a line, on the opposite side of the room.
- ❑ Hand the first person in line a fly swatter.
- ❑ When you say a word, have the student with the fly swatter race to the other side and swat the sound they hear.
 - ❑ add- times- zero- digit- difference- equals- divide- adds
- ❑ First person to correctly swat the sound, gets a point for their team.

STEP 3) Controlled Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students

Vocabulary practice in partners- having 1 student say a word and the other hold up a card with which word they hear

STEP 4) Guided Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to use a scripted dialogue with /d/ and /z/ sounds to verbally express mathematical equations.

- ❑ Before class, prepare colored cards (each mathematical function on a different color paper). Write out 1 equation on each card. Make enough so that each student should have an addition, subtraction, multiplication and division card. You will need 2 copies of the cards.
- ❑ “Hide” 1 copy of the cards around the classroom randomly.
- ❑ Tell students that today they will get a chance to talk about math instead of just using numbers. They will describe 4 types of equations, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- ❑ Project the following sentence stems on the board and practice saying the sentences using *I say - You say*
 - ❑ When you add _____ to _____ it equals _____.
 - ❑ When you subtract _____ from _____ the difference equals _____.
 - ❑ When you times _____ by _____ it equals _____.
 - ❑ When you divide _____ by _____ it equals _____.
- ❑ Tell students they have __ minutes to find 4 cards (1 of each color) and to take their seat again.
- ❑ Handout the following worksheet, have students paste or tape their card onto their worksheet and write out their sentences, using the sentence stems on the board.

Mathematical Sentences Scavenger Hunt		
Your cards	Sentence	Matching Card

- Once students have their sentences written out, give them 5 minutes to practice saying their sentence out loud.
- Ask for students to share out 1-2 of their sentences

STEP 5) Communicative Practice

Exercise 1: Goal - Students will be able to use mathematical words with /d/ and /z/ sounds Hand out the 2nd copy of the cards randomly to students. Tell them it is a secret and they cannot show each other what is on their cards.

- Ask a student or students to recap what was done the previous lesson with /d/ and /z/

- ❑ Have additional students share out different sentences from the previous lesson closure
- ❑ Students will have 8-10 minutes find the matching cards to their equation, by walking around and asking
 - ❑ Student 1 will have to ask one another “What math equation do you have?”
 - ❑ The other student will answer using their written out sentence
 - ❑ If student 1 has the correct card that matches the sentence they heard, they will hand their card to student 2 (who glues or tapes it on their sheet).
 - ❑ Students should continue to walk around the room and ask each other “What math equation do you have?” until they have no more loose cards in their hand, and all 4 of the “matching cards” boxes on their sheet are filled.

Tips for applying in other content areas

1. Identify content specific words that contain /d/ and /z/ sounds
2. Have students practice listening for the two sounds and assess whether they are able to differentiate between the two sounds.
3. Provide them as many opportunities to practice as possible, even if just 5 minutes a lesson
4. While teacher feedback is necessary, peer feedback is also crucial to developing fluency

5. The focus on vowel sounds doesn't have to be multiple full lessons, every day of the week. Pick and choose where it fits into your curriculum

References

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D., Goodwin, J. & Griner, B. (2018). *Teaching pronunciation (2nd ed.)*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Encyclopedia of Britannica adapted by NewsELA staff (2017). Weather and Climate: What is climate?. <https://newsela.com/read/elem-sci-climate/id/30614/>

Additional Resources

MN Literacy Council:

www.literacymn.org

Drum Publication Group (Karen language information):

www.drumpublications.org

Karen Organization of Minnesota:

www.mnkaren.org