

CONTRASTS

Sample answers

1. Ship or sheep?

<http://www.shiporsheep.com/page1.html>

What tenets of structuralism and behaviorism are apparent in this activity?

Minimal pairs, sound, association of signifier and signified with written word and picture; endless practice opportunities.

2. Cliff Hanger and the Sheep on a ship

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXWX87z90Q8>

What other minimal pair appears in this short film?

Save and shave, which differ only in the initial consonant

3. Fourteen or forty?

<http://www.manythings.org/mp/m08.html>

a. How do the instructions aim to enhance the learning experience?

The learner should first listen, then listen and repeat, and then listen to discriminate. Repetition is encouraged to produce overlearning or automatic responses.

b. In what way can the instructions be said to conform to behaviorist principles?

The learner practices short sentences. Attention is focused on a small element - the minimal pair - with emphasis on discrimination.

4. Vowel contrast flashcards

<http://www.speech-language-therapy.com/txvowelcontrasts.html>

To what extent might they be appropriate for second language learners?

They are perhaps not ideal, because not all contrasts will be problematic for SL learners, and a lot of vocabulary knowledge is assumed. However, picture-word association is good, and appealing for young learners.

5. Minimal pairs

<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/wordscape/wordlist/>

a. Sheep/ship.

bean	bin
cheek	chick
heal/heel	hill
peach	pitch
scheme	skim
seek	sick
steal	still
we'll	will

b. Now look for other contrasts which cause problems for French EFL learners. For each contrast list three more minimal pairs which you think might cause problems for French EFL learners.

caught/coat: law/low, bald/bold, clause/close, hall/hole, saw/sew

none/known: come/comb, fuck/folk, fun/phone, loves/loaves

fell/fail: chess/chase, heaven/haven, less/lace, pens/pains, test/taste

c. Which consonant contrasts might be problematic for French EFL learners?

teeth/teethe, mouse/mouth, ships/chips, shell/gel sounds not present in French

6. French EFL learners

Pronunciation problems of French learners of English.

<http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/l1french.html>

What are the underlying methodological assumptions in this presentation?

A contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 shows problem areas for learners. The systematic analysis of small components will aid remediation. Structuralist manuals, displayed in the final column of the table, will help learning of these contrasts.