Unit 7
Lesson Plan
(With Notes for Teachers)
Vowels: Diphthongs

Date: Oct. 28-31
Class: Classes 1, 2 & 3, Grade 2011
Subject: English Pronunciation for Communication

Purpose:
The students will learn vowels: diphthongs in English.

Objectives: Students will be able to:
1. Define - in their own words a definition for Vowels: Diphthongs;
2. Compare – based on the understanding of the basic concept, compare them with other vowels;
3. Practice – imitate the sounds and do practice.

Resources/Materials:
2. Handouts: illustration of the phonemes in focus;
3. Recordings of native speakers

Activities and Procedures:
1. Warming-up: Asking the class to read the following phrases in falling tone and rising tone, pay attention to the words containing /ei/ /ai/ /ɔ i/ /au/ /ɔu/ /iә/ /ea/ /uә/ sounds.
   /i/: did pig give will
   /e/: bed leg says well
   /ɔ :/: jaw tore wore saw
   /a:/: car jar hard heart
   /u/: full could took sugar good books woolen socks
   /ә/: about annoy alive agree bread and butter at the counter
2. Display examples by playing the recording of the native speakers showing the typical pronunciation in English.
3. Have the students imitate the sound in focus.
   ● The tongue /ei/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups : ai ay ei ey ea
   ● The sound /ai/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups : i, y, ie, ye, igh
   ● This sound /ɔ i/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups : oi, oy
   ● This sound /ɔu/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups : o, oa,
ow

- The / au / is usually read in the following letters or letter groups: ou, ow
- The / ia/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups: ear, ere, ea, eer
- The /eә/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups: are, air, ear
- The /uә/ is usually read in the following letters or letter groups: ure, oor, our

4. Have the students make a comparison between /ei/ /ai/ /ɔi/ /au/ /әu/ and share what they have learned by reading out the practice materials in pairs.

Pair work:
A: May Day
   Labor Day
   No pains, no gains.
   Great changes have taken place in only one day.
B: quite right
   a nice knife
   a kind writer
   Time and tide wait for no man.
C: toilet paper
   joyful boys
   make a choice
   The boy was annoyed because his toy was destroyed.

5. Have the students listen to the conversations recorded by native speakers of English and try to get the sounds in focus correct in their pronunciation.

6. Have the students practice the guided conversation. Ask them to pay special attention to the sounds in focus in speech.

Dialogues 1:
A: Oh, may I stay, Mummy? Please say I can stay all day.
B: Yes, if they say you may.
A: They’ve got lots of places to play, and they’ve…
B: Wait, Jane!
A: I’ll take my painting book, and some of my games.
B: Wait till they say you may.

Dialogues 2:
A: Are you seeing Mike tonight?
B: Yes. He has a new motorcycle.
A: Did Mike let you ride it?
B: Yes. I tried it. And I like it.
A: Weren’t you frightened?
B: Sure. But I still like it.

7. Comment on the students’ performance by highlighting the achievement of the students and the efforts they need for the improvement.

8. Give advice to the students.
   - Read aloud words and phrases which include pronunciations of diphthongs /ei/ /ai/ /ɔi/ in college English book one page 60 to 61.
   - Make sentences and or advertising slogans containing the diphthongs.
Review and remember the words, phrases, sentences, dialogues and the chant learned in class.

9. Ask the students to do more practice after class and get ready for presentation during the next session.

10. Summary of the English Vowels Diphthongs:
   - Centring Diphthongs: /iә/ /eә/ /uә/
   - Closing Diphthongs: /au/ /әu/, ending in /u/
   - Closing Diphthongs: /ei/ /ai/ /ɔi/, ending in /i/


Notes for Teachers

**Vowels: Diphthongs**

In this unit, we will learn the diphthongs in English.

There are eight diphthongs in English. Diphthongs are sounds which consist of a movement of glide from one vowel to another. Perhaps the most important thing to remember about all the diphthongs is that the first part is much longer and stronger than the second part. Take /ai/ as an example. Most of this diphthong consists of the [a] vowel, and only in about the last quarter of the diphthong does the glide to [i] begin. As the glide to [i] happens, the loudness of the sound decreases. As a result, the [i] part is shorter and quieter. The English diphthongs can be shown in the following diagram (P69):

![Diphthong Diagram]

The following is a description of the eight English diphthongs (70).

/ iә eә uә/ are called centring diphthongs because they all glide towards the [ә] (schwa) vowel, as the symbols indicate. The starting point for /iә/ is a little closer than
[i] in *bit, bin. /eɪ/ begins with the similar vowel sound as the [e] of *get, men. /uː/ has a starting point slightly closer than [u] in *put, pull.

/ɛi ai ɔ i/

/ɛi/, /ai/ and /ɔ i/ the three diphthongs that glide towards [i]. /ɛi/ begins with the same vowel sound as the [e] of *get, men. /ai/ begins with an open vowel which is between front and back; it is quite similar to the [ʌ] in words like *cut, bun. The starting point of /ɔ i/ is a little more open than [ɔː] in *ought, born. The closing diphthongs have the characteristic that they all end with a glide towards a closer vowel. Because the second part of the diphthong is weak, they often do not reach a position that could be called close. The important thing is that a glide from a relatively more open towards a relatively more close vowel is produced.

/əu ɔu/

/əu ɔu/ are the two diphthongs that end with a glide towards [u]. So as the tongue moves closer to the roof of the mouth there is at the same time a rounding movement of the lips. This movement is not a large one, again because the second part of the diphthong is weak. The vowel position for the beginning of /əu/ is the same as for the "schwa" vowel [ə]. The lips may be slightly rounded in anticipation of the glide towards [u], for which there is quite a noticeable lip-rounding. /əu/ begins with a vowel similar to [ɑː] but a little more front. There is slight lip-rounding during the glide towards [u].

**Pronunciation difficulties with the diphthongs**

Most Chinese EFL learners have little problem with most of the diphthongs, but the following two are particularly important to ensure correct pronunciation.

1. Make sure that you have a correct starting point. For example, /iə/ start with an [i] which is neither [iː] nor [i]. It is a sound which is a little bit closer than /i/ in *big.

2. Make sure that the diphthongs end with a glide. One of the problems with some of the learners is the production of pure vowels where a diphthong should be pronounced. For example, some learners find it difficult to make a clear distinction between /e/ and /ei/.