Fronting Minimal Pairs

Sounds made at the back of the mouth get replaced by sounds made at the front.



RESOLVES
Velar fronting by 3;6 · Palatal fronting by 4;0

PAIRS
15

SOUNDS
k, g, ng, sh, ch (as "ts"), j (as "dz")

Fronting happens when a child makes a sound with the tip of the tongue that should be made with the back of the tongue. The most common version is velar fronting, where /k/ turns into /t/ and /g/ turns into /d/ - so "cookie" comes out as "tootie" and "go get it" becomes "doe det it." A second version, palatal fronting, moves SH and CH forward into S and TS, so "shoe" sounds like "Sue." Front sounds are simply easier to see and feel, which is why toddlers reach for them first.

Try this: For /k/ and /g/ the trick is getting the tongue to the back. Lie the child on their back, or tip the head back, so the tongue falls toward the throat; a yawn, a gargle or a pretend cough finds the spot. Then "kuh" with the mouth open wide, and only once that is easy, "key" and "tea" side by side.

/k/ (9 pairs)

TARGET		CHILD SAYS	TARGET		CHILD SAYS
 **key**	>	 tea	 **neck**	>	 net
 **cub**	>	 tub	 **bike**	>	 bite
 **cap**	>	 tap	 **peek**	>	 Pete
 **cape**	>	 tape	 **dock**	>	 dot
 **back**	>	 bat			

/g/ (2 pairs)

TARGET		CHILD SAYS	TARGET		CHILD SAYS
 **mug**	>	 mud	 **egg**	>	 Ed

/sh/ (4 pairs)

TARGET		CHILD SAYS
 **shoe**	>	 Sue
 **ship**	>	 sip

TARGET		CHILD SAYS
 **sheet**	>	 seat
 **shine**	>	 sign

* not a real word - written the way a child would say it