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in the First-Year UGB”

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AUTOR:

Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

ASESORA:

Mgs. Mercy Noguera A.

IBARRA, JULIO 2025

Ibarra, 21 de julio del 2025

Mgs. Mercy Noguera Arcos

ASESORA

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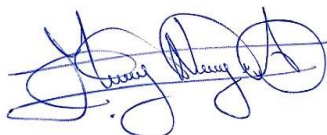
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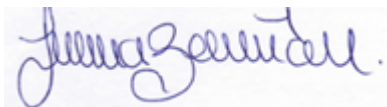
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C.C.:

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(f):
Mgs. Mercy Noguera Arcos
C.C.: 1002673687



(f):
Mgs. Ana Julia Beltrán
C.C. :1002694337

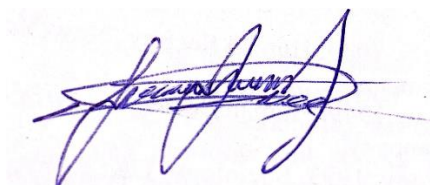


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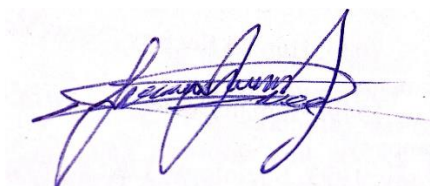
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Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres
C.C.: 1720920626

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C.C.: 1720920626

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DEDICATORIA

A todos, a aquellos que formaron parte de mi vida en esta etapa tan importante, quienes compartieron varios momentos de enseñanza y aprendizaje mostrando comprensión y apoyo. A aquellos que no me dejaban decaer y me motivaban a seguir adelante. A las personas que estuvieron a mi lado apoyándome y lograron que este sueño se haga realidad.

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RESUMEN

El presente estudio analiza la pronunciación en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés durante el primer año de la UGB en la Unidad Educativa Católica La Victoria. A pesar de que el inglés es un idioma global, fundamental para los ámbitos académico y profesional, la pronunciación tiende a recibir menos atención en el aula en comparación con otras habilidades lingüísticas. La pronunciación es clave para comunicarse con claridad y ser comprendido. Sin embargo, en muchos entornos educativos, su enseñanza directa es limitada o está mal estructurada. Utilizando un enfoque de métodos mixtos, se analizó la enseñanza actual de la pronunciación, los principales factores experimentados por los estudiantes y las posibles soluciones para desarrollar sus habilidades. Se incluyeron técnicas como encuestas a los estudiantes, entrevistas a los profesores y observaciones en el aula. Los resultados indican que la falta de confianza en sí mismos y la exposición limitada a modelos de pronunciación adecuados, entre otros factores, hacen que muchos estudiantes se sientan ansiosos e inseguros al hablar. Sin embargo, cuando los estudiantes reciben comentarios directos, apoyo emocional y oportunidades para conectar a través de juegos, canciones o herramientas digitales, se sienten más seguros y motivados para aprender. Los profesores también coinciden en que la pronunciación es una habilidad crucial que debe enseñarse de forma independiente, aunque se incluya en otras áreas del inglés. Sin embargo, mediante el uso de herramientas dinámicas e interactivas como Nearpod, LyricsTraining y ELSA Speak, los estudiantes pueden mejorar su pronunciación a través de actividades divertidas que se centran en diversos aspectos de la pronunciación. Además, al utilizar estas herramientas, los estudiantes demuestran una mayor confianza y participan más activamente en el aprendizaje. En conclusión, el estudio destaca que la pronunciación no solo consiste en hablar correctamente, sino también en animar a los estudiantes a mejorar su confianza y expresarse con claridad mediante la práctica continua.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Pronunciación, proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, herramientas tecnológicas.

ABSTRACT

The present study analyzes pronunciation in the English teaching and learning process during the first-year UGB at the Unidad Educativa Católica La Victoria. Despite the fact that English is a global language, fundamental for academic and professional fields, pronunciation tends to receive less focus in the classroom compared to other English skills. Pronunciation is key to communicating clearly and being understood. However, in many educational settings, its direct teaching is limited or poorly structured. Using a mixed-methods approach, the current teaching of pronunciation, the main factors experienced by students, and possible solutions for developing their skills were analyzed. Techniques such as student surveys, teacher interviews, and classroom observations were included. The results indicate that a lack of self-confidence and limited exposure to appropriate pronunciation models, among other factors, make many students feel anxious and insecure when speaking. However, when students receive direct feedback, emotional support, and opportunities to connect through games, songs, or digital tools, they feel more confident and motivated to learn. Teachers also agree that pronunciation is a crucial skill that should be taught independently, even though it is included in other areas of English. However, by using dynamic and interactive tools such as Nearpod, LyricsTraining, and ELSA Speak, students can improve their pronunciation through fun activities that focus on various aspects of pronunciation. Additionally, by using these tools, students demonstrate greater confidence and engage more actively in learning. In conclusion, the study highlights that pronunciation is not only about speaking correctly, but also about encouraging students to improve their confidence and express themselves clearly through continuous practice.

KEYWORDS: Pronunciation, teaching-learning process, technological tools.

INTRODUCTION

Today, English is considered the lingua franca of the world, making it a key tool for internal cultural communication. Therefore, it is crucial for access to knowledge and a wide range of professional opportunities. In educational institutions throughout Latin America, English proficiency is essential for a meaningful and competitive professional life, and its teaching has become fundamental at various academic levels.

One of the most important aspects of learning English is pronunciation, which not only affects comprehension in the classroom but also students' confidence and ability to communicate with others. However, the teaching of pronunciation remains one of the areas that has minimal relevance and emphasis in education, so even some teachers face these types of limitations in terms of training or access to teaching resources.

In Ecuador, the concern is a growing problem due to the limited exposure of native speakers to the language and also the lack of specialized training in phonetics and intonation. In addition, there is some variation in accent, for example, between British and American English, which causes some confusion for students when learning. Theories such as Krashen's input hypothesis and sociocultural theory emphasize certain essential elements that enable better learning, namely the importance of context and continuous exposure to what one wishes to learn.

Considering a researcher and professional perspective, the motivation to address this issue stems from the fact that one must be aware of these common pronunciation difficulties and errors, especially as a future professional and English teacher. It is extremely important to find effective strategies to overcome these types of problems. As an educator, it is crucial to be able to provide meaningful teaching that benefits the linguistic development of future students.

The central problem identified is that students often fail to acquire the essential pronunciation skills that would enable them to communicate clearly and confidently. This lack of learning about pronunciation limits their ability to speak and their confidence in the

language. Therefore, this study focused on first-year students at the La Victoria Catholic Educational Unit to explore how the area of pronunciation is addressed and how the students' learning process can be improved.

This research study is organized into five chapters. The first section presents the theoretical framework and previous research and main theories that support the teaching of pronunciation. The second section presents the methodological approach of the instruments and procedures used for data collection and analysis. The third section describes the results obtained through surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. The fourth section analyzes the results in relation to what was mentioned in the other chapters. Finally, the fifth section offers conclusions for improving the teaching of pronunciation in the educational context.

Objectives

General objective

1. To analyze the importance of pronunciation in the English teaching-learning process for enhancing the accurate proficiency of first-year UGB students, using a mixed methodology.

Specific Objectives

1. To review the current literature on the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process through analytical reading in different scientific sources.
2. To identify the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria” through information collection.
3. To provide recommendations for improving the pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”, based on the findings of the study.

Variables

It discusses two main types of variables such as dependent and independent to investigate how various factors influence the teaching and learning process with a particular focus on pronunciation.

Independent variable

The independent variable considered is the teaching and learning process because it represents methods and strategies implemented in the first-year UGB with the aim of analyzing how it impacts in students' development, especially in pronunciation.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this research is English pronunciation because it is the outcome being measured regarding to the teaching and learning process. As the teaching strategies vary, any improvements or challenges in students' pronunciation can be observed and attributed to those instructional changes.

Research Questions

- How does teachers' pronunciation influence students' English pronunciation learning in the first UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”?
- What are the specific English pronunciation challenges faced by students in the first UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”?
- How do variations in accents, such as American and British, affect the students' pronunciation in the English learning process?
- What strategies can teachers implement in the English teaching-learning process for pronunciation training?
- What are the most effective resources and methods available to support teachers in enhancing students' pronunciation skills in the first UGB?

STATE OF THE ART

1.1 Importance of English worldwide

Over the years, one of the most internationally spoken languages in the world has been as many people around the world use this language to communicate verbally or through messages in various fields such as business, education and international relations. Many articles or scientific papers are also written in this language due to the breadth of speakers of this language. According to Das et al. (2020) English has become one of the most learnt foreign language worldwide and it is considered as lingua franca (p. 30). The main reason many individuals from different countries seek to learn this language is because of the wide possibilities and benefits across various fields. In this context, numerous opportunities exist in a wide variety of contexts. In fact, English language can be found in various fields around the world including technology, education, science, medicine, business and others (Rao, 2019, p. 66).

Additionally, Ilyosovna (2020) mentions that language serves as a main tool of communication, it allows individuals to express and exchange their ideas and thoughts with others (p. 22). Individuals around the world have their own mother tongue, in addition, in most countries, English is considered as a second language. The commercial exchanges made in any country are due to the peaceful and smooth communication using the English language and these exchanges strengthen the economy of the country and also allow the help between them.

In an educational context, English plays a very valuable role in facilitating understanding and providing access to a variety of knowledge and opportunities in different ways. In addition, the publication of different studies and academic papers are written in English, thus highlighting the importance of the language in the context of academic communication. That is precisely why many schools and universities around the world offer courses for teaching English, especially to achieve proficiency in the language that would allow students to broaden their horizons to new opportunities.

This English proficiency can be used in various applications, especially where English communication skills are highly valued. This ability to communicate properly not only allows professional growth but also more personal improvement. When it is required to visit another country, it will be the use of this language to interact with the people of the place and to be able to make oneself understood of any need that may arise.

People have recognized the importance of language since ancient times. Language, as a tool, is of considerable significance to human beings in communication and information exchange. Language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a bridge connecting people. It is a link for communication in business and trade among different nations and plays an important role in the process of spreading civilization. With the advancement of globalization, English has emerged as the dominant language for international communication and is widely acknowledged across the globe. With the development of the world economy and the globalization of knowledge and culture, English, as the world's dominant language, is indispensable and takes a predominant position in terms of its communicative roles in the global flow and exchange of knowledge.

The significance of learning English globally is becoming increasingly apparent. The essence of English training therefore requires international students to some degree. At the same time, international students are vulnerable in English study, as the learning and using function of English is not yet adapted to effectively implement social functions, despite having already studied the language for over a decade. Thus, further English support is needed. First, English training programs require that the English level of the students is stabilized. Second, the international students' vocabulary training can be regarded as extra words to reinforce English vocabulary learning. The third category is the learning and using function of English.

In teaching content, special treatment is required, and also for the very first-time slight differences arise. In a training system, these individuals can benefit from pre-course preparation. Under normal conditions, foreign students will participate in an English learning environment before starting specialist courses. Graded and streamlined Chinese high schools

require the least time to study. In order to better adapt to language situations, students choosing inferior language products require four months to use. Under central planning system conditions, initially, disabled students must undergo very intense, focused English training to overcome the language barrier, both for increasingly complex language and for increasingly difficult writing tasks.

1.2 English significance in Latin America

In Latin America, English influences fields such as education, business and international relations. The biggest impact occurs in education, as most educational institutions teach English to young children from an early age. Therefore, it is particularly important that these teachers are fully knowledgeable in the language and even more so in how to teach it, depending on the age. English proficiency relevance relies on economic and professional opportunities available to those who possess this valuable skill. Latin countries are required to participate in a globalized context due to interdependence and where establishing interactions with others becomes essential (Rojas & Hernández-Fernández, 2018, p. 19). In the educational field, it is necessary that teachers as well as students develop the proper skills of the language to improve competitiveness on a global scale.

Starting with the educators, are the people who will guide the student's learning process, so it is crucial that they are fully trained in the different language skills. Another important point is the training that teachers have to understand and implement a variety of strategies depending on the group of students and the activity to be carried out. On the other hand, learners are also a key component in this teaching-learning process. For educators to be able to carry out various strategies, it is important that the pupils pay interest and attention to what is being said. In this way, meaningful learning outcomes will be achieved which will be of great relevance for the learners' learning process.

It is important for both learners and professionals to know the English language. According to Ilyosovna (2020) English functions as the principal common language allowing foreigners to receive assistance more easily in many regions of the world (p. 23). For researchers seeking to delve deeper for more information about a specific topic, they will find that most

of the information is written in English. So, knowing the language will allow you to access and enjoy a number of online resources depending on the need. If you can understand the language, you will also have ample opportunity to meet people around the world and communicate with them. This will also allow you to have these contacts and have a better chance of getting a job that best suits you.

1.3 English importance in Ecuador

English has been seen as important in Ecuador as some policy documents mention. Recognizing the cruciality of English around the world has led to curricular reforms designed to establish a strong basis for genuine and meaningful language use (Orosz et al., 2021, p. 230). However, Education First (EF) shows the reality of English proficiency in Ecuador in a study which assessed the development of English speakers in terms of both their competitive level and their proficiency. Despite the growing recognition of its importance nationwide, the most recent report from EF Education First (2024) indicates that Ecuador holds the 19th position out of 21 Latin American countries, showing a relatively low level of English proficiency.

Knowing and mastering English can greatly benefit students, who seek higher education such as the tertiary level, by providing access to a wide range of academic resources available in English. which can deepen their understanding of their chosen field. For students in areas like pedagogy or business, a firm English vocabulary is crucial, as it not only enhances their learning but also their job opportunities. English proficiency can facilitate their change to the professional world.

1.4 English proficiency and career opportunities

Individuals around the world communicate in different languages, however in today's competitive world, possessing and mastering strong communication skills is a fundamental requirement (Malokani et al., 2023). In most highly-paid positions and large organizations, individuals with a strong English proficiency are valued for their ability to enhance work

and productivity when communication is required. The ability to communicate effectively in English is critical in determining success and various opportunities for professional growth or advancement.

According to Malokani et al. (2023), proficiency in English has become a crucial element for working life around the world. In many professional environments, those with a high level of English skills can secure a favorable job position, allowing them to grow and be more successful. English is a means of communication that serves to connect with various countries and industries, making it an important tool for working internationally. For this reason, it is considered significant to master the language in order to perform better at the workplace.

It is also beneficial to achieve proficiency in English, as it allows for maintaining a positive relationship with clients and consumers, which also leads to other outcomes that strengthen personal and professional life. These clients could be from diverse cultural backgrounds and effective communication becomes crucial. For that reason, English language skills allow professionals to work in a cross-cultural way to collaborate with international consumers.

1.5 The Input Hypothesis

Understanding messages in a clear and accessible way is fundamental to acquiring new language, making comprehensible input a crucial part of the learning environment (Krashen, 1992). The theory states that the acquisition of linguistic structures occurs through the passing of messages one can understand, which contain language structures just above the current language competence level of the receiver. In order to acquire and understand a new language, it is necessary that the complexity of the learning is easy enough for the one who receives it, thus explaining that the most effective approach to learning is when applying a slightly more advanced topic than the last one known. The input should contain elements (i+1) that go slightly beyond the learner's current level, these are structures that they have not mastered yet but are prepared to understand (Krashen, 1992). The "i" refers to the learner's current linguistic ability, meaning all the knowledge that has been acquired up to that point, while the "+1" represents new linguistic structures or vocabulary that the learner

is ready to acquire with the appropriate contextual support, whether from the educator, resources or various materials.

The Input Hypothesis should be known by all educators teaching English, especially those working with young learners. This is a theory of second language learning that suggests that people will learn best when they receive input that is one step beyond their current stage of linguistic competence. The theory indicates the necessity of knowing the child's current level of English language development in order to offer a slightly higher level of complexity, so this ensures that the learner is challenged within an acceptable range of his or her limits for acquiring new knowledge, facilitating effective skills development without overwhelming them.

1.6 The Sociocultural Theory

Another important theory for language learning is the Sociocultural theory developed by Lev Vygotsky which focuses on children's cognitive development which highlights a particular attention to the integration of various factors such as social, cultural and biological. Vygotsky emphasizes in this socio-cultural conditions as they play a crucial role in shaping human cognitive growth (Rahmatirad, 2020, p. 23). People's cognitive, learning and sociocultural functions are influenced and developed by close people such as family members, friends and neighbors. This theory emphasizes the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition, particularly in learning processes. Everything that surrounds an individual is somehow transmitting certain knowledge that at first may not be very noticeable but as time passes it becomes apparent how these factors have changed the individual, either positively or negatively. One of the main factors that can influence this would be the people you interact with, e.g., parents, siblings, neighbors or friends and the way they communicate. If they are familiar with the English language and use it on a daily basis, it is most likely that the individual is unconsciously learning it over time.

Additionally, Vygotsky believed that there is a zone of proximal development (ZPD). He explains that in order to reach the ZPD, a guide or a more knowledgeable person is needed who can help the learner develop his or her potential, applying different strategies according

to his or her needs. This highlights the importance of having an experienced mentor who can provide guidance and answer any question within their area of expertise during continuous communication with a learner. The learner, who is still acquiring skills, has the ability to successfully perform tasks or activities of high complexity as long as he/she is with a guide. Otherwise, without such guidance, he/she would struggle to do it independently.

1.7 Importance of pronunciation

The pronunciation of words is a crucial aspect of any language that allows for accurate understanding between speakers. Pronunciation is a key aspect of English communication, as it enables speakers to clearly express their ideas. For this reason, using accurate pronunciation is essential for every language learner (Kobilova, 2022). It is vital to be aware of the correct pronunciation of words when communicating, as otherwise misunderstandings may arise due to this issue. Even within the same country, there may be several accents, and sometimes a completely different idea from the one initially expressed may be understood. For this reason, it is essential that teachers focus on pronunciation to help students express their ideas correctly and avoid misunderstandings. On the other hand, if students do not practice their pronunciation, this can cause some insecurity when speaking, as the listener will not understand them, especially if they are a native speaker.

During classes, teachers can help by showing them the correct pronunciation of words, and if students make a mistake when repeating, the teacher should offer support. There are also some basic activities, such as repeating words or listening to authentic material. Doing this can make a significant difference, as students will learn how accent and intonation work, allowing them to speak more naturally. If teachers include activities or exercises to practice pronunciation, this will help students speak clearly and adopt English similar to that of native speakers.

If one does so without proper pronunciation instruction, one will find that when speaking as if in conversation, others will not understand. However, if you can pronounce words clearly, this will allow others to understand what you want to express and will also reinforce your confidence and enthusiasm for learning this language. The constant practice of word

pronunciation in real context is a crucial step toward improving daily and achieving natural speech.

1.8 English vowel and consonant sounds

The English language has a wide variety of sounds, especially vowel sounds, which can be challenging for beginning learners. Between the most-known vowel sounds, the schwa sound is a distinctive and intriguing feature that is frequently unnoticed in everyday speech, however it is fundamental to maintain the rhythm and natural flow of English pronunciation (Mirzayev, 2024, p. 19). Due to their lack of knowledge, students often have difficulty perceiving and producing the schwa correctly, especially if their native language does not include reduced vowel sounds. Mirzayev also explains that the schwa sound is an unstressed and weakened vowel sound present in numerous English words, for that reason it plays a vital role in giving the language its rhythmic pattern (p. 22). Furthermore, there are more vowel sounds as Garita et al. (2019) mentions, and among these sounds, eleven are either simple phonemes which occur without a glide (/ɪ/, /ɛ/, /æ/, /ɑ/, /ɔ/, /ʊ/ and /ʌ/), or vowels accompanied by an adjacent glide /y/ or /w/ such as (/iy/, /ey/, /ow/, /uw/). The remaining three phonemes are diphthongs, consisting of a vowel followed by a non-adjacent glide within the same syllable (/ay/, /aw/ and /ɔy/) (p. 4).

Vowel sounds are produced by the continuous vibration of the vocal cords, which classifies them as voiced sounds. Unlike consonant sounds, which may involve obstruction or friction, vowels are also considered continuous, as air flows smoothly through the mouth. This free flow of air allows vowels to be sustained for longer without any articulatory obstruction. Students can distinguish these vowel sounds through continuous learning and practice guided by teachers or tools. Only then will there be an improvement in pronunciation skills.

In addition, another group of sounds in English are consonant sounds, which are essential to understand how these sounds are produced, especially when analyzing pronunciation challenges. According to Koutchadé and Adjibi (2020) mention the following:

Consonants are those sounds which are produced by the interference of the airflow through the mouth (oral) and/or the nose (nasal). Consonants are created when that airflow is impeded so that the air cannot escape without creating friction that can be heard. (p. 139)

This suggests that there is a specific articulatory process involved in the production of consonant sounds. For students who are learning, this can be a challenge they already face, especially when their native language does not use the same sounds as consonants or includes them differently. A deeper understanding of consonant production can help teachers and students identify pronunciation problems and deal with them effectively through phonetic training exercises or activities.

1.8.1 Minimal pairs

One of the essential components in the study of pronunciation is the analysis of how individual sounds influence meaning in a language. A study by Afifah and Lubis (2023) emphasizes that minimal pairs are sets of words that vary in meaning due to a single sound segment, making them important instruments for analyzing phonetic differences within a language (p. 45). This concept is relevant in the context of language teaching, as it indicates the role of phonology in helping students recognize similar sounds. Constant practice of these minimal sounds allows students to recognize and produce these slight differences between phonemes, contributing to better pronunciation and language learning. These activities are particularly useful in classes where students have trouble producing certain sounds that are not present in their native language.

1.9 Mispronunciation

Mispronunciation is a universal struggle that creates problems of understanding when interacting with other people. Such an issue can prove quite debilitating especially when trying to use oral communication in formal presentations. In some cases, it results in unkind social blunders, or worse, reckless cultural faux pas. It has been established that mispronunciation is an issue that should be dealt with in order to enhance understanding of a speaker's discourse and its ideas.

The errors committed by students have been analyzed and discussed lately. Individuals may struggle with accurate pronunciation due to the lack of access to quality education or specialized language programs. When these individuals become teachers, any mispronunciations they make can be unintentionally passed on to students, who almost always mimic their teachers' pronunciation. One of the primary sources of students' mistakes stems from errors that are transferred from their teachers (Febrianto, 2021, p. 1526). In such cases, teachers can seek support from colleagues or reliable resources, including trustworthy translation tools that provide accurate pronunciation. This would work even with limited financial resources to minimize errors committed in class and ensure that students are learning the right pronunciation, which eventually supports their linguistic development more effectively.

1.10 British and American accents

Around the world, there are two recognized standard accents which are British and American accent. Both are used for teaching English pronunciation worldwide as well as used in some proficiency test like Cambridge B2 (FCE). Therefore, it is crucial to analyze each accent and its variations in pronunciation. According to Liu (2015), the differences between British and American accents can cause certain challenges for language learners when it comes to understanding the language (pp. 492-493). Between these two accents, there are variations in vowel sounds, intonation, and stress patterns, which affect comprehension, especially when listening. For example, in British English there are usually some differences in the sound of vowels and also in some words ending in r, in which case this sound is pronounced compared to American English. These types of differences cause some confusion for students when listening to the language.

In countries such as Ecuador, English language teaching is mainly based on American English, and when working with other materials, especially those that use British English, learners tend to become confused. This is also due to the lack of use of these materials by teachers, which leads to a lack of broader understanding of English accents and makes it

difficult for students to deal with real-world communication situations where both accents are relevant for professional development.

1.11 Spelling importance

The teaching of spelling in the language teaching process continues to be a major issue, as the number of students with different problems is still growing. There is a general lack of motivation, and the use of incorrect strategies for memorizing words affects the vocabulary and orthographic development of a person at an age below the chronological age. Limited spelling competence can negatively impact reading and writing fluency, hinder language comprehension, and contribute to lack of motivation. The development of strong spelling skills is highly reliant on the use of appropriate and effective teaching methods. These challenges have brought increased attention to improving spelling instruction.

Beginners in pronunciation and, specifically, spelling, may not have a complete understanding of phonology. However, constant practice contributes to the memorization of spelling patterns for specific words, which is beneficial for subsequent processes. Spelling competence plays a key aspect in both reading and writing skills, as it promotes word analysis skills, facilitating better reading and writing fluency. Effective spelling instruction involves teaching phoneme-grapheme relationships and the comprehension of linguistic patterns, which enhances vocabulary development and spelling accuracy. Without specific and organized approaches, learners may have difficulty assimilating these fundamental skills.

To address these problems, innovative pedagogical strategies have been explored, including the application of interdisciplinary methods, such as the integration of mathematical principles to improve comprehension in language learning. Phonological structures, essential for spelling and vocabulary acquisition, are fundamental for a child to be able to write and read effectively.

In recent years, the importance of spelling skills has been questioned, leading to a growing debate about their place in modern education. Over the past ten years, doubts regarding the

importance of spelling skills have grown, not only among students but also among teachers, school administrators, commentators and the general public (Pan, Rickard, & Bjork, 2021, p. 1525).

Several factors influence this shift in perspective, including the widespread availability of technology that automatically corrects spelling and the changing nature of digital communication. As educators delve deeper into these changes, it becomes crucial to reevaluate the role of spelling in the curriculum and explore the most effective ways to prepare students for an increasingly changing world in which English language skills are necessary for success.

1.11.1 Early spelling development

According to Kemp and Treiman (2023) spelling constitutes a fundamental aspect of writing and demands the coordination of various skills (p. 107). Throughout the world, the most used system for spelling is the alphabet. A letter or combination of letters represent each sound or phoneme. Nevertheless, young children might try to draw before writing as they are not yet at the stage of actual writing.

The field of spelling development is dominated by the study of English, which has a complex and unpredictable orthography. Although some languages are very consistent in terms of spelling-sound correspondences, few are as difficult to spell as English. Indeed, more than 90 percent of English words of more than one syllable are affected by at least one of a number of allowable inflectional and derivational suffixes, each with its own spelling rule, and these word structures are learned increasingly as children move through their schooling. In addition to suffixes, there is a range of prefixes and rules for the formation of compound words, which compound the difficulty of mastering English orthography. Despite this high level of complexity, English children learn to spell largely through exposure and practice, and only a minority have ongoing difficulty with spelling. While learning to read in languages such as German, Dutch, and Finnish can also be difficult, learning to spell is less so, with children in these countries exhibiting high levels of accuracy by mid-primary school.

A large body of research has investigated the development of young children's phoneme awareness and letter knowledge, investigating questions around whether or not they are important precursors for learning to read. To learn to spell, children need both, and a range of studies indicate that spelling development is a longer-term and more complex process than is commonly acknowledged. Given that most research focuses on the reading or spelling of monosyllabic words, learners' written vocabulary grows rapidly from the time they enter school, and their spelling develops in response to this growth. With its exceptional number of allowable sounds for any one letter or group of letters and large number of exceptions to letter-sound relationships, even very frequent words such as "the" can be challenging for young spellers.

1.12 Factors affecting English pronunciation

Pronunciation plays an increasingly vital role in mastering English as it directly influences effective communication and understanding. However, in order to achieve accurate pronunciation, there are a variety of factors that can influence the teaching-learning process. Understanding these factors is essential for educators and learners to overcome this situation by implementing a variety of strategies to improve the pronunciation proficiency level.

1.12.1 Supportive learning environment

When teachers establish clear rules and promote respectful interactions, they create a space in which students feel safe and motivated to keep learning. This type of environment allows students to focus on their tasks, as it reduces anxiety and encourages them to express their ideas freely and actively participate in class. As Hasnanto (2024) emphasizes that effective classroom management plays a crucial role in establishing a positive learning environment, allowing students to grow optimally in both academic and social dimensions (p. 258). This indicates that, in an appropriate learning environment, not only is knowledge transmitted to enhance students' academic performance, but their emotional well-being must also be considered.

A classroom that is well managed by the teacher also fosters responsibility and cooperation, which promotes improved academic performance and interpersonal skills. When students feel respected and valued, they feel more confident to participate without fear of making mistakes and to collaborate with their peers. For this reason, teachers play a crucial role in presenting a class, especially when providing feedback, which should be constructive and recognize students' efforts.

1.12.2 Motivation

Motivation has always been a decisive factor when learning a new skill or performing a new activity that we are not used to doing. Motivation helps to push yourself forward and even if the goal you want to achieve is quite challenging and tough, you will keep trying and you will keep in mind that it is not impossible. Motivation acts as a key driver that encourages learners to take action, initiate the learning process and sustain their progress. When learners are highly motivated, they are more likely to independently work on improving their skills (Pourhosein et al., 2020, p. 105). When learning a second language, motivation becomes an essential trait that helps to overcome all obstacles and always seek to do the best to learn more. Specifically, motivation encourages the learner to actively look for or analyze the correct pronunciation of any word, fostering self-confidence.

Learners will be giving their best effort to keep improving and to be faced with challenges, even if it requires investing time and energy to do so. Motivation also encourages them to practice and learn more despite mistakes, which will lead to significant progress over time. Furthermore, if they see learning a new language as a motivation to achieve personal goals, they are more likely to energetically find various ways to improve their pronunciation, either by watching native speakers or just by watching their own pronunciation.

1.12.3 Pronunciation instruction

Another significant factor in the development of pronunciation is the way in which teachers provide instructions for learners to perform a particular task. According to Pourhosein Gilakjani et al. (2020), there are several teaching methods that emphasize segmental aspects

and some others that emphasize suprasegmental aspects (p. 106). However, the method that has had the most impact in more recent years is the one that combines both aspects into a single one. According to Sharma (2021) segmental features encompass all consonant and vowel phonemes in a language. In addition, Sharma mentions that these features can be recognized either visually or by hearing within the continuous flow of speech in any language (p. 64). Additionally, Sharma explains that supra-segmental features are those that extend over more than a single sound in an utterance, for instance, length, stress, intonation, juncture and pitch/tone (p. 67). All these features are of crucial importance and must be taken into account by the educator when he/she wants to explain something or give an instruction.

1.12.4 Learners' Social Identity

There is a relation between language and society. Pourhosein et al. (2020) explain that identity relates to how an individual views themselves as belonging to or differing from a group and pronunciation is closely linked to this sense of identity (p. 107). It is also mentioned that social identity involves an individual's perception of belonging to specific groups. When you feel like you fit in with a group, it fosters this sense of belonging. In this way, this feeling helps you feel comfortable and confident when you are speaking the language you are learning, especially when interacting with native speakers. In such moments, you are motivated to improve your pronunciation in order to be understood and to understand what others want to express.

1.12.5 Error correction

Error correction refers to those times when teachers provide feedback on students' pronunciation errors. In the context of teaching, this idea is important because such corrections are always considered to be beneficial to the student. However, Nushi et al. (2019) mentions that error correction provided by the teacher for pronunciation mistakes is largely external and can shape learners' attitudes toward learning pronunciation (p. 227). This indicates that, while it helps them improve their knowledge, it can also influence their emotional response and attitude toward learning pronunciation itself.

For the same reason, it is crucial to take this into account during classes, as students may react differently to corrective comments depending on how they are conveyed. If a teacher corrects a student in a rude or disrespectful manner, this can cause embarrassment or anxiety, and in future classes, the student will simply refrain from participating in any activities. On the other hand, if feedback is given constructively with respect for the students, it can encourage them to be more aware of their mistakes and motivate them to improve. Therefore, the role of the teacher goes beyond correcting mistakes. Despite wanting students to improve every day, teachers must also know how to manage the learning environment in the classroom.

1.12.6 Native language

Native language has a great impact for those who want to acquire a new language and want to perfect their pronunciation. When learners have a good understanding of the sound system of their native language, they are better at recognizing their own pronunciation difficulties (Pourhosein et al., 2020, p. 107). In the English language we can find a large number of sounds that are unfamiliar to Spanish speakers and that are not normally introduced or analyzed during early stages of language learning. This lack of exposure often results in difficulties and it is why many students fail to achieve correct and accurate pronunciation in English and keep repeating the same mistakes over time until they continue with their academic development and become more aware of the differences between the two languages, so they realize it for themselves. The process of improvement is slow but must be continuous in order to achieve real improvement. However, most of the time it depends on the learners and their interest in learning and mastering their pronunciation.

1.12.7 Age

Many studies show that age is a key role in learning pronunciation. Teachers should introduce pronunciation instruction at the early stages of learning a second language as this allows children to achieve more easily a pronunciation near to native (Pourhosein et al., 2020, p.108). It is important for teachers to prioritize pronunciation from the beginning of

language learning to help students form speech habits and prevent the reinforcement of pronunciation mistakes early on. Teachers can support children in establishing a base by integrating pronunciation exercises into their lessons so that they can sound more authentic when communicating in the language.

Older learners may find it a bit challenging to enhance their pronunciation compared to individuals since their brains are less flexible when it comes to picking up sounds; nevertheless, with specific approaches and consistent practice, they are still able to advance in this area of language learning. Giving importance to pronunciation right from the beginning helps students, in achieving confident speech successfully.

1.12.8 Attitude

According to Pourhosein et al. (2020) another crucial factor when learning is an individual's perspective or disposition toward speakers of the target language (p. 108). Learner's motivation and enthusiasm can be affected due to attitude when learning a new language. When students have a positive attitude, their minds will allow them to understand more about the patterns and features of native speakers' pronunciation. This mindset goes beyond pronunciation itself, as it also stems from how students relate to the cultural identity behind the language.

One way this is expressed is through the imitation of native speakers' accents and intonation patterns. In fact, different accents can reflect attitudes toward people. When individuals imitate the accents of speakers from another country, they demonstrate a positive connection to that language and culture while at the same time shows respect and appreciation (Pourhosein et al., 2020, p. 109). When learners attempt to communicate words using a distinct accent, they are also respecting and valuing the norms of the language. This effort can create a connection between both cultures, allowing for a sense of awareness and empathy with native speakers. Furthermore, adopting a positive attitude toward the accents of the language one wishes to learn can enable better performance and meaningful learning in relation to pronunciation.

1.12.9 Exposure to the foreign language

Being constantly surrounded by the foreign language is crucial for improving pronunciation. The country where learners reside is not as important as the amount of English they use in a daily life. The more time they dedicate to listening and speaking in English, the better their pronunciation will become (Pourhosein et al., 2020, p. 108). Frequent exposure allows students to recognize how words are pronounced depending on the context and helps them to refine their speech so that it is more understandable and accurate. Another important point to perfect pronunciation is to listen to audios of native speakers speaking through different channels such as movies, series or conversations. In this way, the more time they spend listening to natural, fluent speech, the better they will be able to replicate the sounds and intonation of the language.

However, exposure is not just about receiving this information from the target language or simply listening. Another key element is interaction with native speakers of the language, as it is challenging to understand and express what one thinks. In addition, students find themselves in a more authentic language environment, which makes learning more meaningful. According to Al-Zoubi (2018) within the classroom, a key role of the teacher is to offer learners various opportunities to practice the target language across diverse contexts and with input from various speakers (p. 152). Interaction with authentic material and native speakers is essential for developing fluency and understanding the characteristics of the language, especially those related to pronunciation. Without regular contact, students may encounter difficulties when presenting with real-life situations.

In Ecuador, learners and a few educators encounter these challenges in achieving the same level of language proficiency as a native speaker due to limited opportunities for meaningful interaction with native speakers. These issues affect the ability to understand authentic communication in the language. Al-Zoubi (2018) also states the importance of highlighting that exposure can directly enhance a learner's proficiency in the target language as language skills often develop through social interactions with its speakers (p. 153). Therefore, interaction with authentic materials or, even better, with native English speakers, can be a powerful aid to language classes, promoting correct pronunciation.

1.12.10 Teacher training

When teachers have proper professional training, whether with authentic materials or through constant communication with native English speakers, they can provide their students with a good education. However, if this does not happen, students' development and learning may be affected in the long term. According to Tomchesson (2021), teachers who have not received sufficient training in teaching English learners often lack knowledge of essential pedagogical theories related to second language acquisition (p. 7). This limitation can cause many students to have gaps in their knowledge of the characteristics of the language and fail to acquire native pronunciation.

As a result, learners may develop long-term fossilized errors that will require a lot of practice and effort to correct. In addition, they may also be influenced by an outdated English teaching model that can hinder their progress and cause them to dislike learning a new language. The lack of opportunities and preparation as language teaching professionals will be reflected in students' learning ability, making it insignificant and useless in real-life situations.

1.13 Technological tools

In recent years, there have been many technological advances that have enabled people in rural areas to access the Internet. As a result, today we can find many people who already understand how to use electronic devices such as computers and mobile phones. This familiarity with digital devices has allowed children to develop remarkable skills in recognizing and executing complex actions on a computer. While they are using these devices, they are not only learning how to use them but they can also gain experience and learn from them. The use of these devices has been increasingly used for educational purposes as it allows students to learn concepts or terms through the use of these technologies. Games are also helpful as many of these can provide a variety of vocabulary that students may acquire without realizing it while playing. Yacob & Yunus (2019) stated that learning grammar through interactive games in various communicate settings is more engaging than practicing exercises in workbooks. ESL learners show greater interest in

acquiring specific grammar structures when they are taught through authentic language games that offer a wide range of tasks connected to real-life situations (p. 212).

Understanding the vocabulary of a game is very crucial as it will allow the player to advance in the game as well as enhancing the learning experience. For children, games serve as an enjoyable and engaging distraction, offering a meaningful and interesting way to acquire knowledge. Games usually present specific vocabulary, thus allowing children to learn how those words are used in real contexts. This contextual exposure helps children understand not only the meaning of the word but also its practical use.

Furthermore, in many of these games, children can listen to the characters' dialogue or to concepts that may appear in the game. In this way, they not only learn the written words but also reinforce their language learning while listening. This auditory component reinforces language learning by providing an immersive experience in which children hear the correct pronunciation, intonation, and context of words. Continuous use of the spoken word allows children to develop their vocabulary retention and comprehension of the text. When it comes to vocabulary acquisition, games play an important role in language proficiency, as many of them include dialogues between characters and instructions with native-like pronunciation. If students spend time on them, they will be able to easily recognize sounds and words and then pronounce them. The consistent repetition of a word can help children develop vocabulary retention and text comprehension skills. Furthermore, with the teachers' guidance, these experiences can foster an immersive learning environment that encourages language acquisition.

1.13.1 Nearpod

Nearpod is an educational tool that helps teachers create and share interactive lesson ideas for students. These tools can be used in both face-to-face and virtual environments. According to Nearpod (n.d.) the platform offers various tools, among the most important of which are presentations, activities such as games, and surveys, all of which facilitate language learning and provide feedback when necessary. For instance, it allows teachers to design and share ideas for presentations with students, including multimedia elements and

interactive activities such as surveys, open-ended questions, quizzes, drawings, and group activities that are fun, enjoyable, and pleasant for students, helping them to learn in an entertaining and enjoyable way. In addition, the platform supports continuous assessment of students, which has different types of curricular activities and gives the option to generate information about any questions according to individual and group progress. Moreover, this tool encourages individual and group participation of students in real time with the possibility of answering questions, conducting surveys, participating in debates, and performing activities. Finally, it provides students with lessons that allow them to learn at their own pace, which generates individualized learning and provides flexibility. Additionally, Nearpod is supported by platforms such as Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams, which facilitates access to lessons.

1.13.2 LyricsTraining

LyricsTraining is an innovative platform that teachers can use as an educational tool to improve learning through music. This tool allows users to improve their listening comprehension, vocabulary, and pronunciation skills by filling in the missing words of songs in various languages. The platform offers several levels of difficulty and also an option to fill in manually by selecting words. According to LyricsTraining (n.d.) this educative platform helps users in the acquisition of new vocabulary and expressions as well as reinforcing grammar concepts through songs in which users practice continuously by writing the missing words. This approach not only aids language comprehension but also makes learning more interactive and interesting for students in the educational process. Users can select a variety of songs from different genres and languages, which also allows for a diverse learning experience.

1.13.3 ELSA Speak

Elsa Speak is an AI-based website and mobile application developed for students to improve their English language skills including pronunciation (ELSA Speak, n.d.). With the help of advanced speech recognition technology, it can provide personalized comments on various aspects of English language skills for instance intonation, pronunciation, fluency or

vocabulary utilization. It can be accessed from any portable or mobile device and the app offers a variety of lessons on many subjects so that learners can study at their own pace. The intelligent training system modifies the material to adapt it according to one's level, allowing for more effective progress. The platform also offers tracking tools, personalized daily sessions and a pronunciation dictionary to enhance the learning experience. The constant use of this dictionary in particular can enable students to acquire better pronunciation and overall mastery of all skills.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Introduction

This section describes the materials and methods used in the research along with the data collection techniques and procedures used for data analysis. A mixed approach has been adopted combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies to obtain a comprehensive view of the importance of pronunciation related to other English skills as well as some issues related to the teaching-learning process. This part details the general objective that is to analyze the data collection for understanding the relevance of pronunciation as well as a matrix of variables to identify the indicators for the application of techniques and instruments. The research methods are also detailed along with the applied techniques and instruments and the general population of the study.

2.2 Objective

2.2.1 General objective

To analyze the data collection applied through the research techniques for knowing the relevance of pronunciation in the teaching-learning process.

2.3 Variable Matrix

Chart 1. Variable matrix

TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	VARIABLE		INDICATORS	RESOURCES
		DEPENDENT	INDEPENDENT		
The Importance of Pronunciation in the English Teaching and Learning process in the first-year UGB	To review the current literature on the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process through analytical reading in different scientific sources.	English pronunciation	Teaching and Learning Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pronunciation level in 1st UGB ● Importance of English as a Second Language pronunciation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interview -Observation -Survey
	To identify the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria” through information collection.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Didactic resources ● Methodology ● Internal factors ● External factors ● Teachers’ feedback ● Classroom environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interview -Observation -Survey
	To provide recommendations for improving the pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”, based on the findings of the study.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers’ information ● Students’ information ● Qualitative information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interview -Observation -Survey

2.4 Population

The study focuses mainly on students between 15 and 16 years of age corresponding to the first year of UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”. The total sample size is estimated to be around 17 students. Additionally, English teachers are selected as participants for the qualitative interviews. This sample size has been selected to capture a representative sample of students at various stages of language learning, where the importance of pronunciation may be most noticeable.

2.5 Techniques and instruments

The application for an interview with the English teachers was applied with a question log consisting of 5 open-ended questions. These questions provided relevant information about the strategies that teachers apply and their perception of the importance of pronunciation in the teaching and learning process. In addition, data will be collected on the importance of teaching pronunciation at a critical age and why most students have difficulty mastering proper pronunciation. Student survey was conducted with a closed-ended question bank of 10 questions. These questions helped to analyze students' perception of the importance of pronunciation in their English language learning using multiple-choice questions. Finally, a non-participant observation was carried out in the first year of UGB during three days in order to objectively analyze the teaching-learning process and the importance of pronunciation in this crucial aspect.

2.6 Methodological organization

First of all, the interview for teacher, non-participant observation and survey for students were validated for two experts. Then, those techniques were applied in a face-to-face modality. The purpose of this research is to analyze the importance of pronunciation in the teaching-learning process in the first level of Higher Basic Education of Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”, through a mixed analysis of the information obtained. In addition to students and teachers' perspectives, an observation was applied in which both the teaching strategies and students' participation were analyzed with particular attention to pronunciation management withing the class. The observation allowed to identify how

pronunciation was addressed by the teacher, how students attempted to apply it and the role it played in achieving communicative goals.

The consultation was held with the Academic Coordination authority, Mgs. Guissela Guerrero, in which the topic and the techniques and instruments to be applied were discussed. After that, a document was submitted to the secretary's office detailing the subject of the project and the steps to be followed for data collection. After the approval of the first document, another document was submitted detailing how the application of techniques will be carried out, attaching the formats of the same. Finally, once this document was also approved, the days and times for the application of each technique were agreed together.

2.7 Methods of the research

A mixed methodology is being used because both qualitative and quantitative approaches are taken into account. A quantitative methodology is used because of the need to analyze numerical data on students' perception of English pronunciation through surveys. On the other hand, qualitative methodology is also being used since deep opinions about teachers' perceptions and knowledge about the importance of pronunciation are needed. As well as the strategies applied specially to focus on pronunciation issues.

This research employs both inductive and analytical methods to understand the importance of English pronunciation in the teaching and learning process. The inductive method allows us to carry out a specific exploration of the importance of pronunciation in order to go from a particular to a more general vision. Consequently, the analytical method facilitates the decomposition of complex components of pronunciation and its importance and also allows us to perform an analysis of the collected information in order to obtain meaningful findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

This section presents and analyzes the findings obtained from the application of three research techniques: a survey of first-level high school students, an interview with the English teacher in charge of the course, and non-participant observation in the classroom. These techniques allowed us to obtain a comprehensive vision of the role that pronunciation plays in the teaching and learning process of the English language, as well as the perceptions, difficulties and strategies of both the students and the teacher. Firstly, the results of the surveys reflect that a significant proportion of students perceive pronunciation as a challenging but fundamental aspect for effective communication in English.

3.1.1 Interview applied to the English teacher in charge of the first-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”

1. What do you think about teaching pronunciation to teenagers while learning English?

The interviewee strongly emphasizes the importance of being accurate in speaking, especially in a higher education context where more developed skills are required. This is due to the fact that students try to imitate the teacher’s pronunciation since this is usually their first reference in the language. In addition, it points out the importance of offering spaces for them to practice their pronunciation in different ways, with intonations, sounds and other language characteristics. This idea is also supported by the literature, since the teacher is the one with whom most of the interactions take place, and they will try to learn from him. However, the educator should also use other authentic materials or consider having conversations with native speakers when possible. While it depends on the skills of the teacher, these resources can be of great help in providing more meaningful instruction.

2. Do you consider that age influences the ease with which teenagers learn English pronunciation?

The interviewee agrees that age influences the ease of learning pronunciation. He points out that very young learners have greater cognitive plasticity and better absorption of information, so learning would be almost effortless. On the other hand, as they are older learners, learning can sometimes become difficult for them due to various aspects. However, regardless of age, the best way will be with constant exposure and practice to the language. Moreover, if the teacher starts working on the students' pronunciation from the very beginning of learning a second language, they can achieve a native-like pronunciation with great ease.

3. How important is teaching pronunciation compared to other language skills (grammar, vocabulary, etc.)?

The teacher believes that pronunciation should be treated as a separate subject, even though it is one of the skills of English, just like grammar or writing. Pronunciation requires auditory and phonetic participation, which can be carried out in the laboratory. This is extremely important, as English contains sounds that are not found in Spanish, and if not practiced properly, students tend to maintain incorrect pronunciation. Furthermore, it is essential to provide opportunities to practice pronunciation in real-life contexts, as this will help students understand the need to know the language correctly, as well as recognize sounds and apply phonological rules.

4. How often do you involve your students through games or songs to teach pronunciation?

The interviewee indicates that students enjoy learning using a variety of strategies such as games or songs, as well as listening or singing. He emphasizes that these types of participatory activities should be implemented at least once a week to strengthen learning and listening skills. He also indicates that students enjoy participating in collaborative activities because they feel more confident when interacting with their peers, which promotes language acquisition.

5. Why do teenagers have difficulty mastering the correct pronunciation of English?

It is noted that the pronunciation difficulties faced by students are due to outdated teaching methods in which the teacher played an authoritative role and was the main figure in the classroom. In most cases, these methods caused students to lose interest in learning and affected their emotional state. However, there are now modern methods that focus specifically on communication. Teachers should try to connect with their students, whether to explain a class activity or to ask them about their emotions and emotional barriers. This indicates that teachers must constantly practice effective methods to connect with students and that it is not only about imparting content but also about getting to know them and interacting with them, allowing for a favorable environment for language acquisition.

3.1.2 Non-participant observation of the English class at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”

According to observations applied during the teaching-learning process in the first- year BGU classroom, pronunciation plays a fundamental role in the English learning process for students. Teachers, through the use of modern methods such as repeating words through games or songs or providing feedback, help students to acquire the language more effectively. These strategies promote effective learning by creating a safe and trusting environment for students. This is demonstrated by students when they are guided by the teacher, as they feel more comfortable and perform better.

In addition, most prefer to learn pronunciation through direct interaction with the tutor. Their comments on student motivation and emotional aspects are crucial to learning, as students feel more confident and less anxious in environments that provide emotional support. These factors could be observed in the classes, as some students participated actively when they felt confident, even if their answers were not entirely correct, they tried to participate and learn more.

The observation also coincided with the survey results, which indicated that students benefited from a supportive environment with teachers. Most students stated that they felt

more confident in this type of environment and had better learning development. In addition, regular pronunciation practice, along with teacher support, significantly helped reduce their anxiety and reinforce their language skills. Although the teacher occasionally used engaging methods, pronunciation teaching could be improved with more varied use, such as games, songs, or peer collaboration.

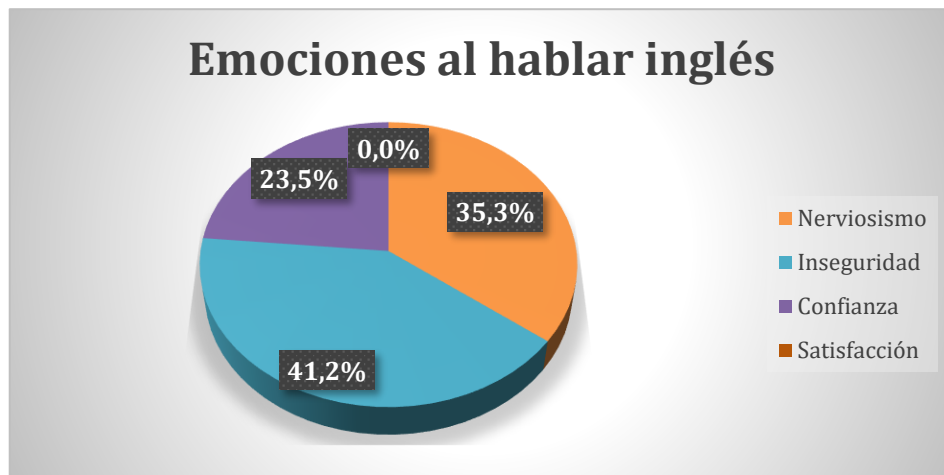
In conclusion, all qualitative and quantitative data indicate that pronunciation is not only essential for intelligible communication, but also for motivation, confidence, and good classroom dynamics among students. To achieve better results, we must focus on diverse methods integrated into the student that treat pronunciation teaching as a skill more important than others, provided that they offer emotional support and interactive practices tailored to the needs of the students.

3.1.3 Survey applied to students at Unidad Educativa Católica “La Victoria”

1. Which of the following emotions do you experience most often when speaking English in the classroom?

Chart 2. Emotions they experience when speaking English

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Nerviosismo	6	35,3 %
Inseguridad	7	41,2 %
Confianza	4	23,5 %
Satisfacción	0	0 %
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.

Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

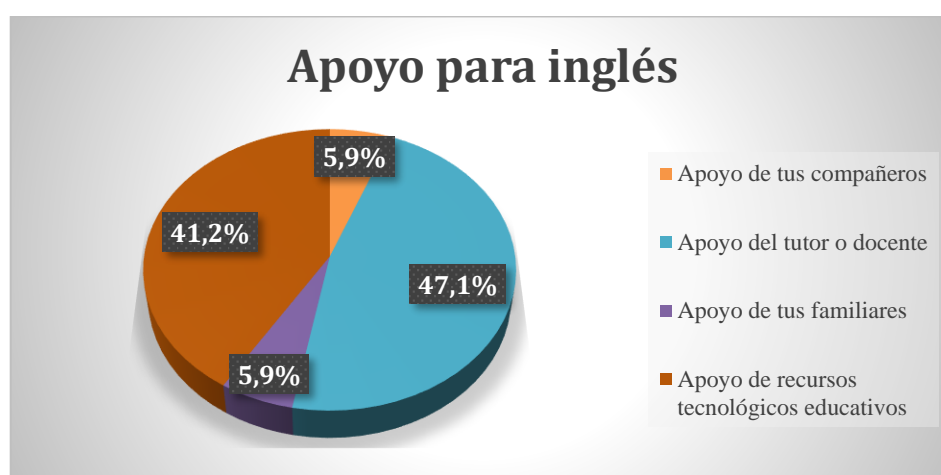
Analysis:

Most students experience nervousness or insecurity when speaking in English. This reflects a lack of self-confidence that may be caused by teacher methods that hinder their ability to pronounce correctly. These emotional barriers can prevent students from actively participating, which hinders their language learning performance. This may be due to negative perceptions about themselves that could lead to a long-term lack of interest. It is important to have good communication and a good relationship between the teacher and the student to reinforce language learning and also the emotional aspect of the students. In environments where students feel safe to interact or participate in class, even if they make a mistake, their language skills and personal growth will be reinforced.

2. What type of support do you think is most beneficial for your English pronunciation?

Chart 3. Support for English pronunciation

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Apoyo de tus compañeros	1	5,9 %
Apoyo del tutor o docente	8	47,1 %
Apoyo de tus familiares	1	5,9 %
Apoyo de recursos tecnológicos educativos	7	41,2 %
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
 Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

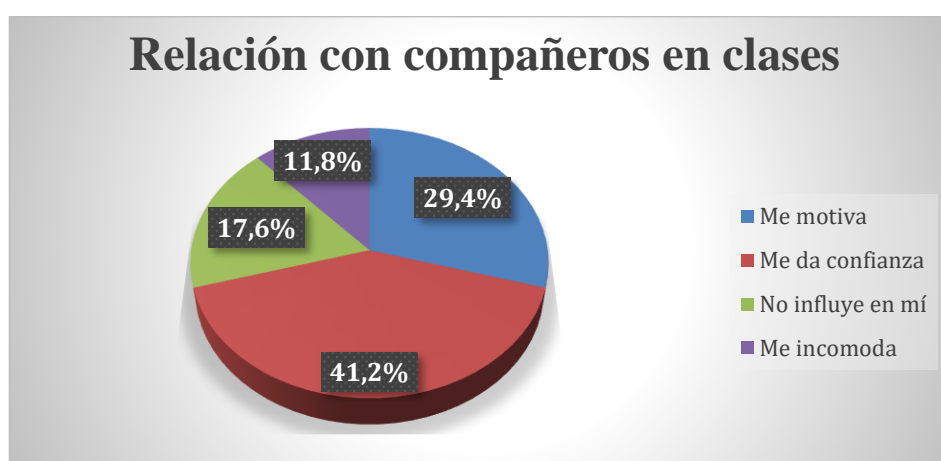
Analysis:

Students clearly recognize that the best support for learning is guidance from a teacher. This is because educators play a fundamental role in providing correct pronunciation and are able to identify specific difficulties that students may have, offering appropriate feedback when necessary. In addition, teachers can do this in a suitable environment, providing students with the motivation and confidence they need to continue learning. Furthermore, the use of technological tools is very valuable in reinforcing students' pronunciation skills and promoting more interactive practices. In addition, there are certain applications or tools that allow students to work at their own pace and receive instant feedback. These tools can promote repetition and language learning. In addition to the fact that there are a variety of authentic speech models and accents, these tools can also be guided by the teacher, which would complement teaching and effectively promote better learning for the student.

3. How does having a good relationship with your classmates influence you when participating in pronunciation activities in class?

Chart 4. Relationship with classmates during class activities

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Me motiva	5	29,4 %
Me da confianza	7	41,2 %
No influye en mí	3	17,6 %
Me incomoda	2	11,8 %
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
 Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

Analysis:

The data indicates that a positive relationship with classmates influences student participation. Most students say that it motivates them or gives them confidence to participate in pronunciation activities, as this supportive environment increases their willingness and interest in learning. This is because, in an environment where there is a good relationship with both the teacher and classmates, students feel comfortable and confident when participating. On the other hand, only a small number of students feel uncomfortable or indifferent about their relationships with their classmates. However, when students feel accepted and encouraged by their classmates, they are more likely to actively participate in improving their language acquisition. This indicates the importance of fostering a collaborative environment so that students feel safe and supported and contribute to more effective pronunciation development.

4. What activities help improve your pronunciation?

Chart 5. Activities to improve pronunciation

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Actividades individuales	3	17,6 %
Actividades grupales	2	11,8 %
Actividades en pareja	4	23,5 %
Interacción con el docente	8	47,1 %
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.

Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

Analysis:

The results show that interacting with the teacher is one of the most effective and important activities for improving pronunciation. This emphasizes the role of the teacher as a guide who can offer accurate interactions and immediate correction. These activities also make students feel safe in a constantly supportive environment. Pair and group activities also have some value indicating that these activities can provide greater comfort when interacting, but they lack the precision and feedback necessary to improve pronunciation. There is also a low preference for individual activities, which indicates that students do not feel confident or cannot get the corrections they need to improve their learning. For this reason, direct interaction with teachers will always be the most important, providing meaningful and supportive interaction for students.

5. What level of importance does pronunciation in English have for you?

Chart 6. Importance of English pronunciation

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Muy importante	16	94,1 %
Poco importante	1	5.9 %
Nada importante	0	0 %
Total	17	100 %



*Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres*

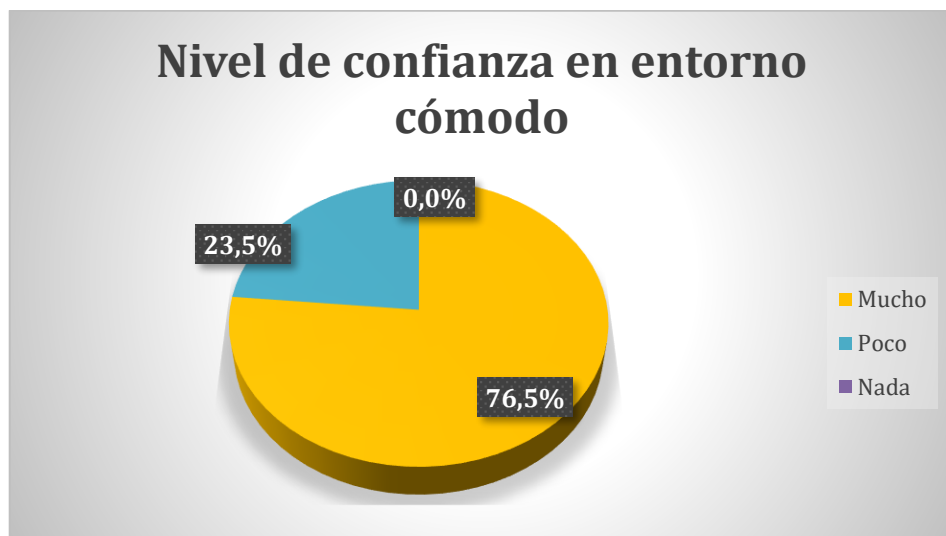
Analysis:

The vast majority of students recognize that pronunciation is a very important skill for learning English, and only a small group of students indicate that pronunciation is not that important. This highlights the importance of this skill in effective communication, which also indicates that students not only see pronunciation as a skill but as a fundamental component for speaking confidently and being understood. The results suggest that students are motivated to improve in this area, which could increase their commitment and interest in practicing pronunciation. This indicates that it is important to emphasize pronunciation within the lesson plan using modern teaching methods. This will result in an improvement in students' overall linguistic competence and motivation when communicating in English.

6. Does your confidence level improve when speaking English in an environment where you feel emotionally comfortable?

Chart 7. Level of confidence in a comfortable environment

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Mucho	13	76,5 %
Poco	4	23,5 %
Nada	0	0 %
Total	17	100 %



*Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres*

Analysis:

The data indicates that most students feel more confident when speaking English in a comfortable environment. This tells us that it is important to work on the classroom environment to prevent students from feeling anxious or afraid of making mistakes, which can lead to poor performance and language learning. Furthermore, when students feel secure, they are more willing to participate in oral activities and accept feedback constructively, which is essential for developing clear and accurate speech.

7. Is it important to you that teachers conduct pronunciation activities for learning the English language?

Chart 8. Importance of pronunciation activities

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Mucho	17	100 %
Poco	0	0 %
Nada	0	0 %
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

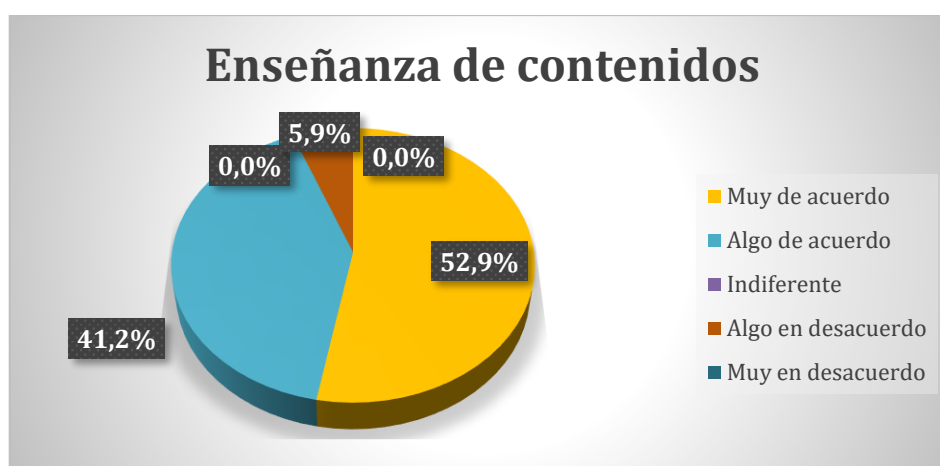
Analysis:

The unanimous agreement among students that pronunciation activities guided by the teacher are important indicates that the role played by the teacher is essential in providing structured teaching. This result indicates that teacher support is relevant in order to obtain guidance and correction in the development of clear and accurate speech. It also reflects those students recognize that pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of effective communication. For this reason, it is important that educators integrate consistently incorporate varied exercises to practice pronunciation. In this way, they can strengthen oral performance and provide a more engaging classroom environment that promotes language learning.

8. Do you think the teacher's teaching of content is appropriate for your level?

Chart 9. Teaching of content by the teacher

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Muy de acuerdo	9	52,9 %
Algo de acuerdo	7	41,2 %
Indiferente	0	0
Algo en desacuerdo	1	5,9 %
Muy en desacuerdo	0	0
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
 Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

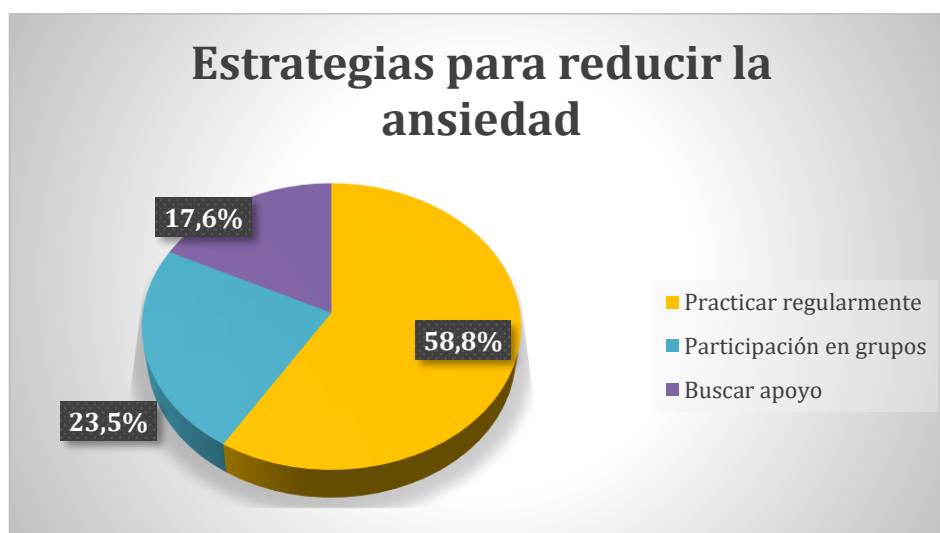
Analysis:

Most students agree that the teacher's approach is appropriate for their level, with only a small group indicating a negative response. This suggests that the majority of students consider the content they receive to be relevant and accessible to their current abilities. This is important to know, as effective language acquisition requires a properly structured teaching approach. When students perceive the content to be appropriate for their level, they tend to be more interested and actively participate in pronunciation activities, leading to more significant progress and strengthening their confidence in oral communication. interested and actively participate in pronunciation activities, leading to more significant progress and stronger confidence in oral communication. It is also important that the methods and techniques used by the teacher are aligned with the students' current linguistic competence so that they can progress continuously.

9. Which of these strategies do you use to reduce anxiety when speaking English?

Chart 10. Strategies for reducing anxiety

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Practicar regularmente	10	58,82 %
Participación en grupos	4	23,53 %
Buscar apoyo	3	17,65 %
Total	17	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.

Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

Analysis:

The data show that constant practice is one of the best strategies used by learners to reduce English pronunciation anxiety. This indicates that they are aware that repetition and exposure are key to overcoming anxiety and better controlling their pronunciation. Consistent practice strengthens muscle memory and aural accuracy, as well as increasing confidence in speaking. Group participation and support seeking are less commonly used but equally important strategies, as learners feel safe in collaborative learning along with emotional support from made-up peers, indicating the importance of providing opportunities to practice pronunciation in a supportive classroom environment by allowing learners to actively participate.

10. How often do you practice pronunciation in English class?

Chart 11. Frequency of pronunciation practice

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Siempre	4	23,5 %
Frecuentemente	8	47,1 %
A veces	4	23,5 %
Rara vez	1	5,9 %
Nunca	0	0 %
Total	19	100 %



Source: First-year UGB at Unidad Educativa Católica "La Victoria" Ibarra.
Author: Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

Analysis:

The data reveal that the majority of students consistently practice pronunciation during English classes indicating that it has become a regular practice to improve their language learning. This constant engagement indicates that it is essential for developing fluency and confidence in spoken English. Frequent exposure to pronunciation activities also acknowledges the importance on the part of the students and the preference for teacher guidance. On the other hand, some students indicate that they only practice occasionally or rarely, which indicates that they perceive pronunciation differently. However, a more continuous integration of pronunciation exercises is important to ensure that all students have adequate opportunities to practice in a more equitable and effective environment for all students.

3.2 Discussion

The analysis of English pronunciation shows that its importance is widely recognized by teachers and students as well as its relevance as a component of proper communication. It is also detailed that teacher support plays an important role in the development of students' pronunciation and this along with feedback and a current model of accurate pronunciation are two ways in which students can learn better. In addition, there is also the teacher's perspective that emphasizes the possibility of teaching pronunciation as a different subject so that there is a better emphasis and diverse methods or dynamics are sought for student learning.

Although students depend on benefiting from the use of technological resources or help from peers, the results indicate that guidance from an expert instructor continues to play a fundamental role in learning. On the other hand, students also recognize that the material and explanation by the teacher is appropriate for their level, which is supported by the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1992), which indicates that learning should be slightly more difficult than the current one but still understandable. This can be done through teacher modeling in conjunction with feedback to provide comments that can enable learners to progress towards improved pronunciation. Furthermore, socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) supports the relevance that relationships whether as family friends or adolescents influence our learning. Within the classroom, when students feel emotionally comfortable, they tend to be more confident and willing to practice pronunciation activities.

The emotional part of learning pronunciation is another crucial aspect. Many students say that they feel nervous or insecure when they speak English. However, they also mention that when the teacher is supportive and the classroom atmosphere is positive, they feel more confident. This shows that having a safe and friendly environment helps students take risks and practice more, even if they make mistakes. Students also explained that having good relationships with their peers gave them confidence to participate in pronunciation activities. Most students felt more comfortable when working in a friendly group. Although this type of teamwork is not used as a main strategy, it clearly has a positive effect on learner motivation and participation.

An interesting finding of this study is that students reported feeling nervous or insecure when speaking in English. However, they were always willing to actively participate in the teacher's activities, as this also provided them with emotional support and created a positive atmosphere in the classroom. This willingness to take risks despite anxiety is valuable data, as it shows that students are open to improving even when they do not feel completely confident. It also confirms the importance of creating a space in which students feel emotionally secure.

Another important aspect is that despite the fact that some learners recognize a level of relevance of regularly practicing pronunciation in class or at home, not all have good strategies or consistent practice habits to continue improving over time. This points to an area where teachers can provide assistance to their students by showing activities or technological tools that they can use at home to encourage independent learning so that they can improve on their own.

This research has some limitations. First, it was conducted on a small group of students from a single educational institution, so the results cannot be presented in other schools or contexts. Furthermore, no analysis was made of other factors, such as the students' experience with English or the availability of teaching and technological resources. These aspects could have influenced the results and could be relevant for future studies.

Although this study focuses on a specific group, future research is possible. For example, it would be interesting to learn about more frequent and current pronunciation activities that allow for greater student interaction and participation, which could help improve speaking confidence. It would also be useful to study how students develop their pronunciation skills over the long term, as long as this is done in the initial stages.

In summary, this study shows that pronunciation is not only about learning to pronounce words correctly, but also includes the learning process and the relationships that students have with their classmates and teacher. The activities carried out in the classroom are also very important, as they can create a positive environment by promoting good interaction and

constant improvement with the help and feedback of the teacher. For this reason, pronunciation should be considered a key component in teaching English, especially when students have to face real-life situations.

Based on these results, a proposal was developed to improve teaching through meaningful and dynamic activities. This proposal is centered on the use of technological tools that encourage individual and group participation to reduce anxiety and make pronunciation practice more effective. The details of the proposal are explained in the following section.

Proposal for Designing Activities to Practice and Improve Students' Pronunciation

1. Title of the Proposal

Mastering pronunciation through interactive Nearpod activities

2. Introduction

Pronunciation is a crucial aspect of language learning that influences student's ability to communicate clearly and be understood by others. Good pronunciation improves speaking fluency particularly when real-life communication is needed, as well as improving listening comprehension. When students experience difficulties in pronunciation, they may feel frustrated and with lack of confidence due to misunderstandings leading to a low overall learning process. Therefore, mastering pronunciation skills requires a process where it is taught in early stages to help students acquire natural communication skills.

Three powerful tools such as Nearpod, LyricsTraining and ELSA Speak are used in this proposal for improving students' pronunciation skills in which, through interactive games, they understand about the English sounds and word stress patterns. The Nearpod platform offers various dynamic and engaging activities that supports pronunciation development through interactive lessons. LyricsTraining makes pronunciation and listening more enjoyable and meaningful to reinforce sound recognition and stress patterns. Finally, ELSA Speak is a crucial tool for both teacher and students to analyze pronunciation of English words which helps them to identify errors and correct them. Therefore, by applying these

tools, students of the first-year UGB acquire and develop clear pronunciation and accurate listening comprehension particularly beneficial for real-life contexts.

Note: To use Nearpod, teachers must have an account already created on this platform. Once they access the link, they can add the activity to their library and from there they can show it or adapt it for their students. Otherwise, if they do not have a registered account, they must follow these steps:

First, they will be asked to create an account, which can be done with Google or other platforms. Then, they will have to accept Nearpod's terms and conditions. Next, it will ask for basic information such as your name and the institution you belong to (the last one is not mandatory). Finally, once you have created your Nearpod account, you will need to click on the link again to add the activity to your activity library. To log in, students simply need a code provided by the teacher and a name that will be used for the duration of the activity.

In addition, no login or account is required to use LyricsTraining or ELSA Speak.

3. Objectives

General objective

To improve students' pronunciation by enhancing their understanding and production of English sounds and word stress through interactive activities using the Nearpod and LyricsTraining platform.

Specific objectives

To guide students to recognize and correctly pronounce English sounds through interactive and meaningful activities.

To develop students' awareness and correct use of stress in multisyllabic words.

To increase students' confidence and fluency in speaking English through technological tools.

4. Target Group

The activities are designed for first-year UGB students (typically between 15-16 years) with an intermediate level of English.

5. Methodology

The methodology is based on interactive, student-centered learning using the Nearpod platform. These activities are designed to enhance both segmental features and suprasegmental features. Activities include visual and auditory elements to help students internalize and produce accurate pronunciation. The proposal includes a total of seven structured lesson plans: four focused on minimal pairs, two on syllable stress patterns and one final integrative lesson where students can apply both English features.

A) Segmental features (sounds)

Segmental features refer to the individual sounds or phonemes that a word contains. One effective method for practicing segmental pronunciation is through the use of minimal pairs which refers to a pair of words that differ by only one sound. These pairs help learners to achieve a greater awareness of the English sounds.

The following four lesson plans are designed to guide students through the recognition and production of minimal pairs. It includes one teaching and one evaluation class.

a) Class 1: Minimal pairs

Objective: To recognize and practice minimal pairs contrasting the sounds /ɪ/ vs /i:/ and /æ/ vs /ʌ/ through listening activities and oral practice in pairs for improving students' pronunciation of English words.

Time: 40 minutes

Procedure:

1. Can you hear the difference? (5 min)

The teacher writes two words on the board: ship / sheep. Then, he asks students to pronounce each one and say if they sound the same or different. After that, the teacher introduces the idea of minimal pairs.

2. Minimal pair /ɪ/ vs /i:/ (5 min)

The teacher writes /ɪ/ vs /i:/ on the board and explains about them with mouth movement. After that, he provides examples such as ship/sheep, bin/bean, fit/feet. Then, students repeat each word.

3. Minimal pair /æ/ vs /ʌ/ (5 min)

The teacher writes /æ/ vs /ʌ/ on the board and explain about the sounds. Next, the teacher gives examples such as cap/cup, bat/but, cat/cut. Finally, students repeat the words aloud.

4. Listening and repetition (10 min)

The teacher uses printed list of 4 minimal pairs to show students. Later, the teacher says each word and students repeat in chorus.

5. Game time (10 min)

Teacher says one word at a time and students show which word they heard.

6. Pair activity (5 min)

In pairs, one student reads a word from the list and the other guesses which one it was. After that, they switch roles after a few rounds.

Options:

- Use flashcards with Word pairs.
- Use the technological tool “ELSA Speak” to check pronunciation.
- Use the mobile app of “English Pronunciation IPA” to check sounds.

b) Class 2: Practice and evaluation

Objective: To evaluate students' learning and pronunciation of minimal pairs using a Nearpod game and an oral game.

Time: 30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Review (5 min)

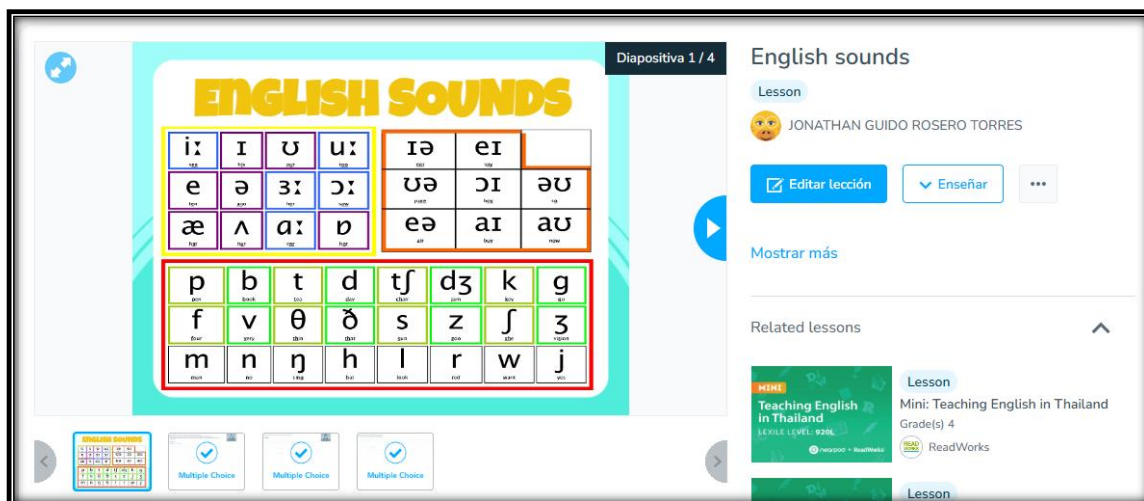
The teacher and students go to a laboratory. Later, they remember the minimal pairs taught in the last class.

2. Practice (10 min)

Students practice again the minimal pairs.

3. Quiz time (10 min)

The teacher shares the Nearpod activity to students. Then, he explains the steps to follow to complete that activity. Each student listens and answers individually.



The Nearpod activity for this class can be accessed using the next link:

https://np1.nearpod.com/sharePresentation.php?code=9dbfe3078610383b5dc17f99010d7861-1&oc=user-created&utm_source=link

4. Reflection (5 min)

Students analyze about the easiest and hardest sound to hear. After that, the teacher corrects common pronunciation errors with the class.

Options:

- Practice again using the technological tools.
- If there is no laboratory available, the teacher presents the Nearpod activity in the class and students answer in a sheet of paper.

c) Class 3: Minimal pairs

Objective: To recognize and practice minimal pairs contrasting the sounds /f/ vs /tʃ/ and /k/ vs /g/ through listening activities and oral practice in pairs for improving students' pronunciation of English words.

Time: 40 minutes

Procedure:

1. Can you hear the difference? (5 min)

First, the teacher writes the pair of words on the board: sheep / cheap or coat / goat. After that, he asks students to pronounce each one and say if they sound the same or different. Finally, he introduces the idea of minimal pairs.

2. Minimal pair /f/ vs /tʃ/ (5 min)

The teacher writes /f/ vs /tʃ/ on the board and explain about them with mouth movement. Next, he provides examples such as shop/chop, shell/check. After that, students repeat each word.

3. Minimal pair /k/ vs /g/ (5 min)

The teacher writes /k/ vs /g/ on the board and explain about the sounds. Later, he gives examples such as curl/girl, cap/gap. Finally, students repeat the words aloud.

4. Listening and repetition (10 min)

The teacher uses printed list of 4 minimal pairs and says each word and students repeat in chorus.

5. Game time (10 min)

The teacher says one word at a time and students show which word they heard by raising their left hand if the sound is /f/ or /k/, and their right hand if the sound is /tʃ/ or /g/

6. Pair activity (5 min)

In pairs, one student reads a word from the list and the other guesses which one it was. Then, they switch roles after a few rounds.

Options:

- Use flashcards with Word pairs.
- Use the technological tool “ELSA Speak” to check pronunciation.
- Use the mobile app of “English Pronunciation IPA” to check sounds.

d) Class 4: Practice and evaluation

Objective: To evaluate students’ learning and pronunciation of minimal pairs using a Nearpod game and an oral game.

Time: 30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Review (5 min)

The teacher and students go to a laboratory and they remember the minimal pairs taught in the last class.

2. Practice (10 min)

Students practice again the minimal pairs.

3. Quiz time (10 min)

The teacher shares the Nearpod activity and explains the steps to follow to complete it. Then, each student listens and answers individually.

The screenshot shows a Nearpod presentation slide titled "ENGLISH SOUNDS 2". The slide content is as follows:

i:	ɪ	ʊ	u:	ɪə	eɪ	
e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:	ʊə	ɔɪ	əʊ
æ	ʌ	ɑ:	ɒ	eə	aɪ	aʊ

p	b	t	d	tʃ	dʒ	k	g
f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ
m	n	ŋ	h	l	r	w	j

The interface includes a navigation bar at the top right with "Diapositiva 1 / 3" and "English sounds 2". The sidebar on the right shows lesson controls: "Editar lección", "Enseñar", and "Mostrar más". Below that, it lists "Related lessons" with a "Teaching English in Thailand" lesson.

The Nearpod activity is accessible to the teacher through the next link:

[:https://np1.nearpod.com/sharePresentation.php?code=50de4fe5657b45aa08d765f7f432739f-1&oc=user-created&utm_source=link](https://np1.nearpod.com/sharePresentation.php?code=50de4fe5657b45aa08d765f7f432739f-1&oc=user-created&utm_source=link)

4. Reflection (5 min)

Students analyze about the easiest and hardest sound to hear. Then, the teacher corrects common pronunciation errors with the class.

Options:

- Practice again using the technological tools.

- If there is no laboratory available, the teacher presents the Nearpod activity in the class and students answer in a sheet of paper.

B) Suprasegmental features (word stress)

Suprasegmental features refer to elements of speech like length, intonation, rhythm and stress. One of the most crucial suprasegmental elements in English pronunciation is word stress which is the emphasis on one syllable within a word. Stress patterns can influence rhythm and meaning. For that reason, it is important to analyze multisyllabic word to speak more naturally and fluent. This section contains four lesson plans designed to build awareness and reinforcement of word stress patterns.

a) Class 1: Word Stress in 2-3 syllable words

Objective: To understand the concept of word stress in English by identifying stressed syllables in 2 to 3 syllable words.

Time: 40 minutes

Procedure:

1. Say it loud (5 min)

The teacher writes words like happy, banana or computer on the board and pronounce them slowly with a clap in the louder syllable to show stress.

2. Introduction (10 min)

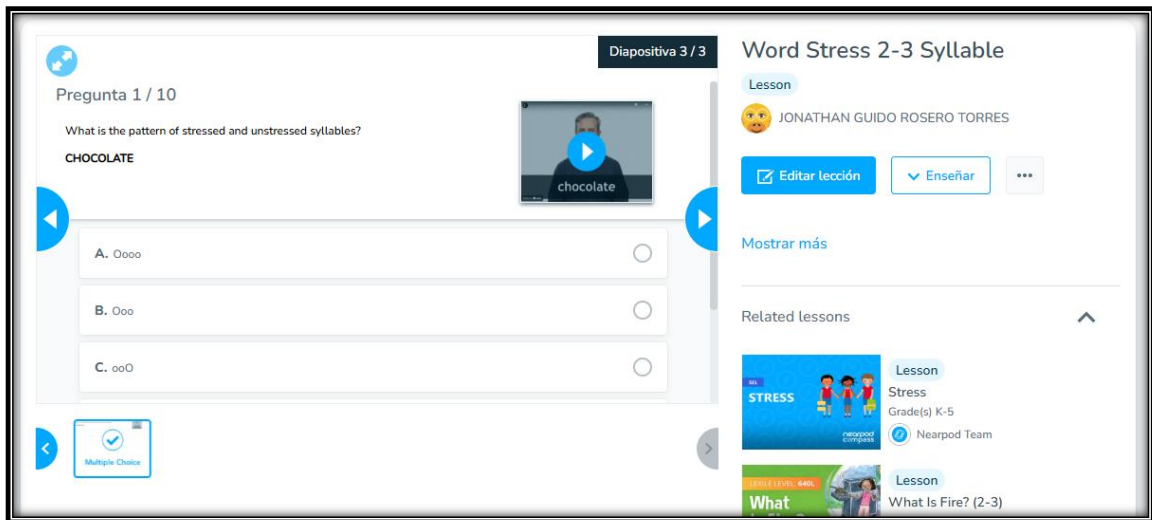
The teacher explains syllables and stress with a strong clap in the stressed syllable. After that, students repeat the words after the teacher.

3. Pair work (10 min)

In pairs, students read a word list and mark the stressed syllable.

4. Quiz (15 min)

Students identify stress in 10 words using a Nearpod activity.



The Nearpod activity is accessible to the teacher using this link:

https://np1.nearpod.com/sharePresentation.php?code=361ed034700b81ae4cc0cd6f14be7a2a-1&oc=user-created&utm_source=link

Options:

- Use word stress flashcards or worksheets.
- Use the app of English Pronunciation IPA.

b) Class 2: Word Stress in more than 3 syllables

Objective: To identify word stress patterns in words with three or more syllables by using an interactive Nearpod activity for enhancing students' English pronunciation.

Time: 40 minutes

Procedure:

1. Reinforcement (5 min)

Students practice the word stress in two-to-three-word syllable.

2. Short game (10 min)

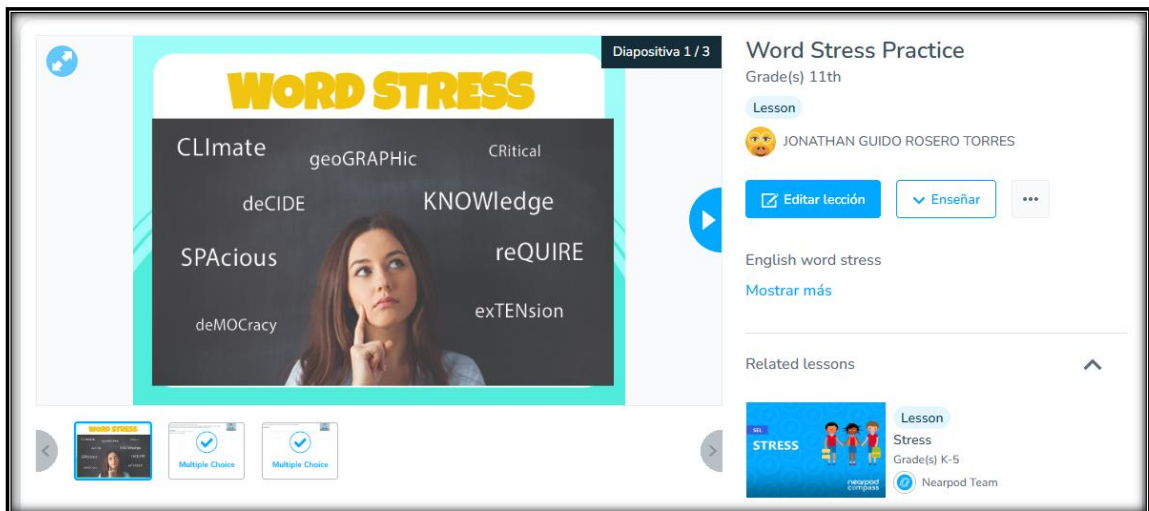
The teacher explains the word stress in word of more than 3 syllables. Then, students follow the stress by tapping the table when it is unstressed syllable and clapping when it is a stressed syllable.

3. Group activity (10 min)

In groups of three, students think of three-syllable words and underline the stressed syllable. Then, it is presented in front of the class.

4. Nearpod quiz (15 min)

Students identify the word stress pattern in a Nearpod activity.



The Nearpod activity can be accessed through the next link:

https://np1.nearpod.com/sharePresentation.php?code=54af2e42649f6de1f1206846b3b1d6db-1&oc=user-created&utm_source=link

C) Integrative activity

Music is a powerful tool to reinforce pronunciation skills and listening comprehension. The seventh lesson provides an integrative activity where students apply what they have learned in last classes in a real-world context using the interactive platform LyricsTraining. Through listening to music, students will master their ability to identify stressed syllables and English

sounds. The chosen song is “Tom’s Diner (Cover)” which has a slow pace that works perfect for a fun and interesting activity that motivates students to participate.

LyricsTraining activity

Objective: To reinforce word stress and pronunciation skills through a interactive LyricsTraining game using a song.

Time: 35 minutes

Procedure:

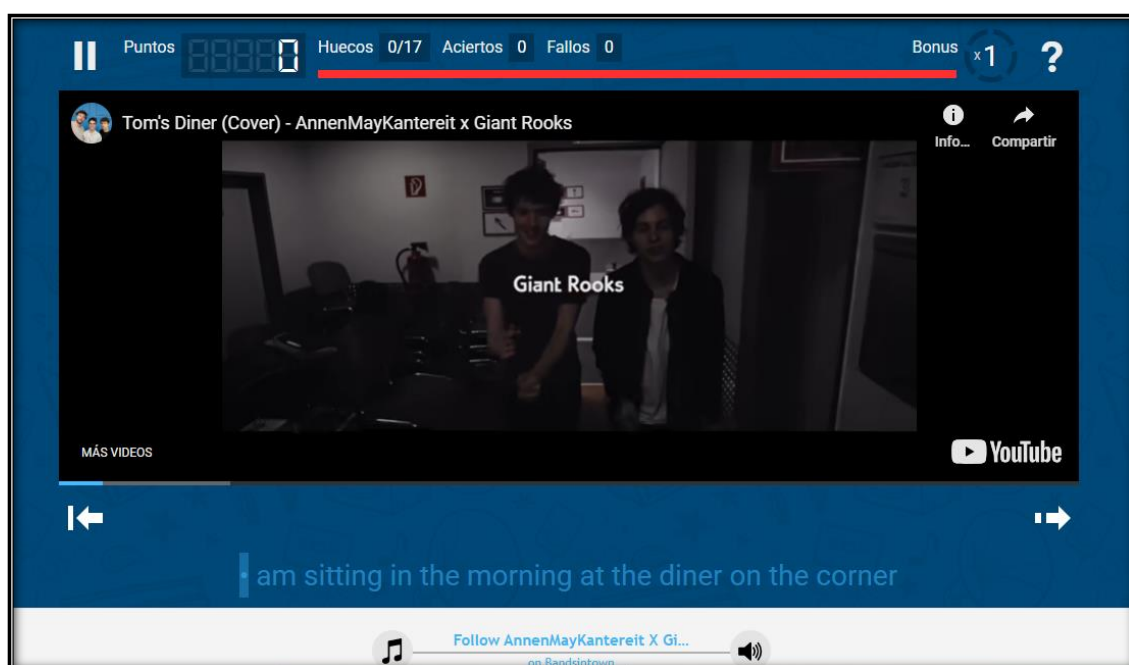
1. Warm up (5 min)

First, the teacher asks students about their favorite genre and song. Then, they have a discussion about the most-known songs.

2. LyricsTraining Game (10 min)

Initially, the teacher presents the LyricsTraining activity in the class through the next link:

<https://es.lyricstraining.com/play/annenmaykantereit-x-giant-rooks/toms-diner-cover-annenmaykantereit-x-giant-rooks/geCaJ3msVe#!JonathanRosero>



Subsequently, the teacher explains the steps to follow in this activity. Finally, students participate actively in the activity by choosing or writing the correct word

3. Brief discussion (10 min)

The teacher asks for words that were hard to understand. Then, The teacher chooses a few words of the hardest and explains about the stressed syllables and words pronunciation.

4. Pair work (10 min)

Teacher prints out the lyrics and students underline stressed syllables of their favorite lines and then they present it in front of the class.

Homework

In groups of two or three students, they choose a favorite song. Then, they select some lines and they record a video reading or singing those lines. After that, in a separate piece of paper, they look for some words with the sounds taught by using the ELSA Speak website and point out the stressed syllables in words of two, three, four and five syllables. This activity will be evaluated in a written and oral way in the next class.

Options:

Use another song from LyricsTraining with clear syllable stress or slower pace and rhythm.

6. Materials and Resources

- Audio recordings and videos of native speakers pronouncing words.
- Printed lists and flashcards
- Interactive games in Nearpod platform
- ELSA Speak website and English Pronunciation IPA app for individual pronunciation practice.
- LyricsTraining platform for real-time listening
- Computer
- Speakers or individual headphones.
- Teacher feedback

7. Assessment and Evaluation

Students' improvement in pronunciation skills will be assessed using various tools such as:

- Pre- and post-tests focusing on students' awareness about English sounds with minimal pairs and word stress patterns.
- Nearpod activities
- LyricsTraining activity
- Self-assessment rubric
- Reflection activities at the end of some lesson where students identify which sounds or stress patterns were most difficult.
- Video recordings.
- ELSA Speak website

8. Timeline

Provide an estimated schedule for the implementation of the activities. The implementation of the activities will take around four weeks following the next order:

Week 1: Segmental features (sounds)

- Class 1: Minimal pairs /ɪ/ vs /i:/, /æ/ vs /ʌ/
- Class 2: Practice and evaluation

Week 2: Segmental features (sounds)

- Class 3: Minimal pairs /f/ vs /tʃ/, /k/ vs /g/.
- Class 4: Practice and evaluation

Week 3: Suprasegmental features (word stress)

- Class 5: Word stress in 2-3 syllables
- Class 6: Word stress in more than 3 syllables

Week 4: Integrative activity

- Class 7: LyricsTraining platform
- Class 8: Video review

9. Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes students will achieve are the following:

- Noticeable improvement in contrasting similar English sounds (minimal pairs) and suprasegmental pronunciation in analyzing word stress patterns.
- Increased confidence in speaking English and awareness of the language features.
- Improved listening comprehension of audios, videos or songs.
- Greater student engagement with pronunciation practice using Nearpod and LyricsTraining.

10. Conclusion

This proposal provides a structured and engaging approach to teach English pronunciation related to segmental and suprasegmental features through interactive activities. The integration of various tools such as Nearpod, ELSA Speak and LyricsTraining enhances students' pronunciation skills while maintaining a dynamic and meaningful learning process. In addition, by combining these activities, students will improve their confidence and awareness about the importance of the English language and its impact in real-life contexts.

Recommendations for improving the pronunciation in the teaching-learning process

1. Teachers can use apps or online platforms that provide immediate feedback on pronunciation. This will allow students to benefit from interactive exercises and personalized practice to reinforce correct pronunciation and intonation.
2. Organizing structured sessions where students practice pronunciation with their peers can increase their confidence when speaking. It also allows them to exchange feedback with each other and encourages collaborative learning.
3. Teachers should use authentic materials such as songs, videos, or dialogues. This allows students to analyze pronunciation characteristics and thus improve their listening comprehension and speaking skills.
4. A practice routine with daily 5- to 10-minute exercises based on previous lessons allows students to put the rules they have learned into practice, thereby reducing anxiety compared to long sessions.
5. Students can record a video in which they read texts and speak naturally, and then identify mistakes by reviewing the process. In addition, teachers can suggest strategies for analyzing their recordings with the aim of improving pronunciation.

CONCLUSIONS

- The data found in scientific sources explain that pronunciation is a crucial process in the acquisition and mastery of the English language. Various studies emphasize that accurate pronunciation improves learner's confidence and reduces anxiety and communication issues. Poor pronunciation can also hinder oral communication, even though student's knowledge of vocabulary or grammar were advanced.
- Based on the data collected through various techniques, it was found that both teacher and students value pronunciation in the learning process. Students are aware of the importance of speaking accurately and clearly, as well as it being a must for effective communication. The teacher also emphasize that pronunciation should be taught in a different way from other language skills as it is a fundamental part of the English learning process.
- The findings indicate that student's comfort strongly influences their progress in pronunciation. The techniques results showed that learners feel more confident and motivated when they stay in a supportive environment, especially where the teacher acts as a guide and keeps helping them to improve. Activities led by the teacher have the most important impact in student's pronunciation. This aligns with the Sociocultural Theory, which explains the importance of interacting and positive environment in language acquisition.
- According to the survey results, 52.9% of students strongly agree and 41.2% somewhat agree that the teacher's teaching of the content is appropriate for their level. In addition, 5.9% somewhat disagree. This indicates that teachers must continue to adapt their teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students since teachers play an important role in guiding students and improving their learning process, particularly in pronunciation, as it requires specific attention to ensure effective communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continuing to further the review of literature related to English pronunciation in second language acquisition requires a broader understanding of the topic focusing on how pronunciation affects learners' confidence, fluency, and communicative competence. Phonetic and educational perspectives should be investigated in future studies since it would help to reinforce the theoretical foundations and provide educators with a more complete understanding of the impact of pronunciation training.
- Designing of specific pronunciation programs or classroom modules would separate pronunciation instruction from other language skills. Therefore, it would allow a more focused practice and evaluation. Teacher should venture into different innovative and engaging pronunciation strategies. These strategies could include phonetic exercises, visual aids and specific pronunciation activities that allow learners to achieve and progress in their pronunciation.
- It is recommended to create a classroom environment encouraging safe and supportive learning. Teachers should use collaborative pronunciation tasks, peer feedback and guidance for every student rather than acting as evaluator. Fostering learner participation in a warming environment can reduce anxiety and improve their pronunciation performance. Teachers should also consider professional development to create inclusive environments based on sociocultural principles.
- Based on the findings of this study, the implementation of digital tools such as Nearpod, LyricsTraining, and ELSA Speak is suggested to improve pronunciation skills, since these platforms offer engaging activities that focus on aspects of pronunciation such as sound recognition, stress patterns and intonation. In addition, these tools provide immediate feedback so that learners can improve their pronunciation in a dynamic way.

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ANNEXES

ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES

Topic: The Importance of Pronunciation in the English Teaching and Learning Process in the First-Year UGB

Objective: To identify the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at the San Francisco Educational Unit through information collection.

Researcher: Jonathan Rosero

Interview for teachers

1. What do you think about teaching pronunciation to teenagers while learning English?
2. Do you consider that age influences the ease with which teenagers learn English pronunciation?
3. How important is teaching pronunciation compared to other language skills (grammar, vocabulary, etc.)?
4. How often do you involve your students through games or songs to teach pronunciation?
5. Why do teenagers have difficulty mastering the correct pronunciation of English?

Thank you very much for your answers

Chart 12. English teacher interview responses

	Answers
Question 1	For me, I think that pronunciation is very important. Why? Because you know in high school, like my job, you have to be very accurate at the moment that you speak. And almost learners try to imitate you in pronunciation. So, giving you or giving your students the chance to practice how to pronounce well how to practice with different intonations how to practice with a phonetics alphabet it's also important because they recognize sounds and they know how to pronounce well, right? Not just the teacher pronunciation.
Question 2	I think yes because when we have different learners here in the school right, we have teenagers we have the little ones, kids I think that the kids are better at the moment of learning English or languages because they learn without effort so they just get the input and practice it in a context.
Question 3	I think that pronunciation has to be given in high schools as a different subject because it differs from the other skills for example we have grammar okay we know that grammar is about the structures okay we have writing okay writing we have to write emails we have to post something we have reading okay we have a scanning skimming but pronunciation is different because it's like the use of laboratories for English for example go to the laboratory recognize each sound try to pronounce this word well past symbols future forms and it is different from learning just structures, how to write how to read or maybe how to listen something for me that's great.
Question 4	I think that most of the times could be once per week because they learn through different arts. So, they like to sing. They like to... We are in a certification process. So, they like to practice with doing exercises. For example, the listening exercises that they did, most of the times they already did for their classmates. So, for example, we are in listening part one, so you have to make a conversation for your students and bring out questions. So, in this case, yeah, once per week.
Question 5	I think this is because of the traditional methods. Okay, so remember many times ago we have to see the teacher like the authority like I'm here and you have to do what I'm saying, right? So now with the new methods we got we have the needs of communication we have the communicative methods now so our students need to communicate. I think it is difficult because now the students have a very hard lack of motivation, the confidence also. The confidence plays an important role because if we are talking about teenagers, we have to play always and most of the time with the feelings, with emotions. They have to be happy to try to speak. If they are shy, if they are sad, if they are angry you need to try to express your method to them because if you have a confidence to speak, if you are accurate at the moment to speak, if you... I think that if you are not the serious one you can get good results.

ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
RESEARCH PROJECT

Topic: The Importance of Pronunciation in the English Teaching and Learning Process in the First-Year UGB

Objective: To identify the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at the San Francisco Educational Unit through information collection.

Researcher: Jonathan Rosero

Non-participant observation

Grade:	Professor:	Subject:
Date of the observation:		

INSTRUCTIONS Rate the following indicators using the following Likert scale.

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neither agree nor disagree

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5
Indicators						
Motivation	The teacher stimulates motivation in the whole class					
	Students appear motivated and enthusiastic about learning pronunciation.					
Participation	Students engage in training pronunciation through some didactic activities.					
	Students volunteer to practice pronunciation.					

Classroom environment	Teacher establishes proper and smooth relationships with students motivating them to interact in speaking activities					
Methodologies and didactic activities	There is a space in the class for giving feedback related to pronunciation.					
	The teacher uses diverse methodological strategies in the English pronunciation teaching-learning process.					
Use of didactic resources	The educational media and materials used are according to the level of the students.					
	The teacher uses assessment instruments to verify learning achievement in pronunciation.					
	The students are allowed to use digital tools to listen and verify or check their English words pronunciation.					
Number of students	The number of students in the class allows the teacher to ensure the students' progress in pronunciation.					

ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANAS
RESEARCH PROJECT

Topic: The importance of pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in the first-year UGB

Objective: To identify the importance of Pronunciation in the teaching and learning process in first-year UGB students at the Catholic Educational Unit “La Victoria” through information collection.

Researcher: Jonathan Rosero

Survey for students

Instrucciones:

Estimado estudiante necesitamos una respuesta honesta de su parte para ayudarnos con nuestra investigación acerca de la importancia de la pronunciación en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del primer año BGU.

Por favor lea detenidamente cada pregunta y conteste con la respuesta que usted crea sea la correcta.

1. ¿Cuál de las siguientes emociones experimentas con más frecuencia al hablar inglés en el aula de clase?

- Nerviosismo
- Inseguridad
- Confianza
- Satisfacción

2. ¿Qué tipo de apoyo consideras que es el más beneficioso para tu pronunciación del inglés?

- Apoyo de tus compañeros
- Apoyo del tutor o docente
- Apoyo de tus familiares
- Apoyo de recursos tecnológicos educativos

3. ¿Cómo influye en usted la buena relación con tus compañeros al momento de participar en actividades de pronunciación en clases?

- Me motiva
- Me da confianza
- No influye en mí
- Me incomoda

4. ¿Qué actividades favorecen la mejora de tu pronunciación?

- Actividades individuales
- Actividades grupales
- Actividades en pareja
- Interacción con el docente

5. ¿Qué nivel de importancia tiene la pronunciación en inglés para usted?

- Muy importante
- Poco importante
- Nada importante

6. ¿Mejora tu nivel de confianza al hablar inglés cuando te encuentras en un entorno donde te sientes cómodo emocionalmente?

- Mucho
- Poco
- Nada

7. ¿Para usted es importante que el docente realice actividades de pronunciación para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés?

- Mucho
- Poco
- Nada

8. ¿Para usted la enseñanza de contenidos por parte del docente le parece adecuada para su nivel?

- Muy de acuerdo
- Algo de acuerdo
- Indiferente
- Algo en desacuerdo
- Muy en desacuerdo

9. ¿Cuál de estas estrategias usas para reducir la ansiedad al pronunciar en el idioma inglés?

- Practicar regularmente

- Participación en grupos
- Buscar apoyo

10. ¿Con qué frecuencia practicas pronunciación en las clases de inglés?

- Siempre
- Frecuentemente
- A veces
- Rara vez
- Nunca

Ibarra, 6 de marzo de 2025

Mgs.

Norma Yáñez

RECTORA DE LA UNIDAD EDUCATIVA CATÓLICA "LA VICTORIA"

Presente:

De mi consideración:

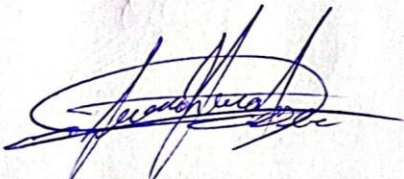
Reciba un atento y cordial saludo a la vez auguro éxitos en las funciones que Ud. desempeña al frente de tan prestigiosa Institución.

El motivo del presente es solicitar, me permita hacer el trabajo de investigación de mi tesis en el 1ro BGU con el tema: "THE IMPORTANCE OF PRONUNCIATION IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS IN THE FIRST-YEAR UGB".

El mismo que ira en beneficio de la Asignatura de Inglés, apoyando así a los estudiantes de la Institución que Usted dirige.

Seguro de contar con su aprobación, anticipo mi sincero agradecimiento.

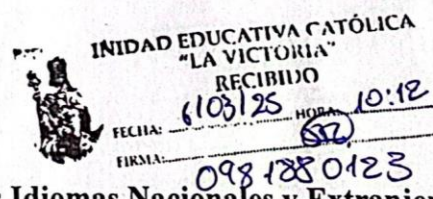
Atentamente;



Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres

Estudiante de la PUCE-SI – Pedagogía en los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros

CI. 1720920626



Ibarra, 10 de marzo de 2025

Mgs.
Norma Yáñez
RECTORA DE LA UNIDAD EDUCATIVA CATÓLICA "LA VICTORIA"
Presente:

De mi consideración:


Reciba un atento y cordial saludo a la vez auguro éxitos en las funciones que Ud. desempeña al frente de tan prestigiosa Institución.

El motivo del presente es presentar las Técnicas de Investigación que se aplicará para realizar el Proyecto Final de Investigación denominado "THE IMPORTANCE OF PRONUNCIATION IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS IN THE FIRST-YEAR UGB", las cuáles son encuesta dirigidas a estudiantes, entrevista dirigida a docentes y finalmente observación aplicada a estudiantes y docentes en el desarrollo de la clase, las mismas que servirán como referente para mejorar las destrezas necesarias para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés en la Institución.

Particular que comunico para los fines pertinentes.

Adj. Formato de entrevista, formato de encuesta y formato de observación.

Atentamente,


Jonathan Guido Rosero Torres
Estudiante de la PUCE-SI



Autorizado por:

**Daniel
Díaz**
Firmado digitalmente
por Daniel Díaz
Fecha: 2025.03.10
12:59:03 -05'00'

Mtr. Daniel Díaz
**DIRECTOR DE LA ESCUELA DE
CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANAS**

