



UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades.

**The effects of explicit pronunciation teaching at
University of Quintana Roo.**

**TESIS
Para obtener el grado de
LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA**

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Chetumal, Quintana Roo, México, abril de 2013.

UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

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Tesis elaborada bajo la supervisión del comité de Tesis del programa de Licenciatura y aprobada como requisito para obtener el grado de:

LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA

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Dedicated to the Memory of My Father Manuel Puc Balam

And My Brother Luis Ariel Carrillo Medina.

&

To My Mother, Brother and Sisters.

Acknowledgements

This study was made possible through God allowance in first place and for that I want to say thank you. Secondly, I would like to thank my parents, Manuel Puc Balam and Isabel Medina Chi, for all their wholehearted support as well as my brothers and sisters'. Even though, my father, Manuel Puc Balam, is not here anymore, I am completely sure that he is by my side and he will always be. Thank you dad for all those life lessons and all that time invested in my education not only at school but at home too together with my lovely mother Isabel Medina Chi. I thank God for giving me such a great man as my father and such a wonderful woman as my mother on Earth.

I would also like to thank Ph.D. Edith Hernández Méndez for all her patience, support and advice during this research as well as to M.C. Alessio Zanier Visintin who was an important part of this research together with M.A. Magnolia Negrete Zetina. This study could have never been possible without your guidance and time given up in order to help me. It was a real pleasure to work with you Professors.

Finally, I would like to thank all the students who took part in this research and allowed me to carry it out.

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CHAPTER I

1 Introduction

During my studies in the English Language Program at Universidad de Quintana Roo (UQROO), I witnessed many cases of pronunciation mistakes and poor oral proficiency on behalf of my classmates even when we were students of the final semesters. It is important to bear in mind that the English Language Program at UQROO is training students to become future English language teachers and, as a consequence, these students must graduate from the program with a really high proficiency in all the language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening).

The limited number of techniques which are used, the reluctance to teach pronunciation, and to acknowledge pronunciation as a sub-skill can be affecting the oral proficiency of the students, as is suggested by Dalton (2000), and it seems to happen in the English Language Program at UQROO.

Most of the English teachers in the English Language Program at UQROO lack of techniques to teach this sub-skill and do not consider pronunciation as a very important part in their classes, as Hernandez (2009) shows. As a result we can observe students' poor performances during the major and after graduating.

Additionally, in order to get their degree, students have to take the CAE (Certificate in Advanced English) which is a Cambridge University examination. This exam includes British pronunciation with which most of the students are not familiar, as is shown in the research carried out by Borges, Heffington, Marín, and Macola (2009). In their study they worked with students from the same institution I'm working with, University of Quintana

Roo. The participants were from the first three semesters and they were given two different types of exam, the PET (Preliminary English Test) and the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). In this study the participants showed a poor performance in the PET examination which, as the CAE, is a Cambridge examination and it includes British English as well as British pronunciation. The participants showed a better performance in the TOEFL examination but the authors found out that “the fact that students are not exposed to the British accent during the first three courses could lead to poor comprehension in the listening section.” (p.655).

Therefore, due to the fact that in the English Language Program at Universidad de Quintana Roo the only subject matter to work on this sub-skill is Phonetics and Phonology in the seventh semester and students do not receive any input on that skill nor any well prepared class about pronunciation before, the English Language Program students at UQROO face serious problems to get to the CAE level and overall, this lack of exposure makes the listening part in the Cambridge examinations the hardest one for most of the students, which has led to a high rate of failure.

This research intends to investigate the effects of the use of strategies and techniques in pronunciation teaching in an English language teaching program. Teaching pronunciation affects students’ proficiency. However, this area has been abandoned and not explored for many years, as is stated by Couper (2006) and Morley (1991) notwithstanding its huge importance.

In this thesis I am focusing on pronunciation which, although some scholars do not consider it a skill but a sub-skill, is extremely important at the time of communicating

orally, so that when these new professors share their knowledge with children, adults or pupils in general, they could have the certainty of endowing their students with a very good quality tool.

A good pronunciation increases the recognition of having a good level of knowledge of English, including all the skills, and it also provides a higher rate of probability of being employed at the time of applying for a job: the most important point to remember and to always keep in mind is that teachers are models for children, or students in general, and they tend to imitate teachers.

In recent decades, there has been a debate about the most appropriate form of teaching a second or foreign language. The debate has been among several authors like (Chomsky, 1975; Gass, 1988, 1990, 1991; Krashen, 1982; Ellis, 1991; Schmidt, 1990, 1994; Larson and Smalley, 1984).

Some (Innatists) authors like Krashen (1982, 1985), Ellis (1991), Cook (1991) Schwartz (1993), and Carroll, (1996) follow Chomsky's theory which is about not correcting the learners and letting them correct themselves when learning their first language. In short, Chomsky advocates an implicit learning process theory which means to avoid explicit correction of the errors made by the learners, which the previously mentioned authors decided to transfer to second language acquisition.

On the other hand, some other authors (cognitivists) like Schmidt, 1990, 1994; Gass, 1988, 1990, 1991, Varonis, 1991; Bley-Vroman, 1986, 1989; Ohta, 2001) among others, disagree with this theory stated by Chomsky (1975) and they suggest that there must be explicit error correction in order to help the learners improve their skills in the language

acquisition process. Another good reason to explicitly correct the errors is to avoid fossilization, which usually appear in the long term as a result of the lack of corrective feedback since the beginning of learning a language.

The explicit teaching of pronunciation has been neglected for many years and it still is, although there is some research about this problem which suggests the importance of considering pronunciation as an essential part of the language learning process, just as grammar is.

These studies have been carried out mainly by foreign authors. Here in Mexico there is a complete lack of interest or at least a minimum interest to work on this problem compared with other countries, which reflects the need for increasing the researching, and what is more, the working on solutions for this problem.

Some authors like Carruthers (1987), Cuenca (1998), Chela-Flores (2001), consider pronunciation as an essential part of the teaching process and enhance the importance of teaching pronunciation just as the other skills, because these authors emphasize that pronunciation affects the message and not only that but also plays a part when reading, and writing.

For example: when reading, people tend to do it aloud or in silence, but in any case people recreate the situation in their minds and they give sense to it. This means that they apply the correct pronunciation to the story in order to understand it, which also happens in a similar way when writing. Usually, when people are writing and have problems to write a word, they say the word in order to remember the way it is written, but it is important to bear in mind that there are words which sound very similar, and a phoneme makes the

difference and here it is when people apply their skills and by using the correct pronunciation, they are able to find out the correct spelling of the word.

Listening and speaking are both involved during a conversation, and so is pronunciation, because the speaker has to pronounce correctly for the receiver to get the correct message. So if the speaker mispronounces a word, the meaning of the message can be modified and the listener can get confused or receive the message but with a rude meaning and that can create problems and misunderstandings.

Pronunciation takes part in all these areas and if it were taught as a high-priority subject, it would increase all the skills' proficiency of the students and at the same time would provide better teachers.

The above mentioned reasons made me decide to conduct this research in order to discuss the importance of pronunciation as an essential skill, and to make some suggestions regarding the teaching of pronunciation.

This research intends to provide a view of the importance of pronunciation and since the English Language Program students at UQROO will receive the appropriate instruction covering pronunciation while they study in this institution, there will be an improvement in the UQROO students' performances. Also, this research will offer some techniques and strategies to the teachers at UQROO in order to teach pronunciation and by making use of these techniques their classes will be enriched with the teaching of pronunciation; at the same time it will enrich the students' language learning process.

Enclosing all the facts mentioned before and with the intention of improving the syllabus of the English Language Program at Universidad de Quintana Roo I chose to work

on this topic “The Effects of Explicit Pronunciation Teaching at University of Quintana Roo” and the goal and purpose of this research is to prove the importance of this skill, and to offer some alternatives to complement the syllabus of the English Language Program at UQROO, which will bring about an improvement in the students’ learning process; furthermore, all their skills will improve considerably.

1.1 General Objective

- To demonstrate that the explicit teaching of pronunciation does have a positive effect on the oral production of EFL students.

1.2 Specific Objectives

- To apply teaching pronunciation techniques and strategies explicitly in one introductory level group of the English Language Program at UQROO (experimental group) during one semester and observe another introductory level group of the English Language Program (control group).
- To analyze the effects of the explicit pronunciation instruction throughout the learners' oral production in post-tests and compare the results with the control group to see the effects on both of them.

1.3 Hypothesis

- The explicit teaching of pronunciation affects categorically and positively the learner's oral production.

1.4 Literature Review

Recent research in English Language Teaching (ELT) has found that teaching pronunciation is a neglected aspect of English teaching in general. Pronunciation is not a high-priority goal and this carries a lot of consequences because, nowadays, people are not aware of the importance and the essential role that pronunciation plays in our daily lives and of course in second or foreign language learning. Larson and Smalley (1984), Gass and Schachter (1989), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Morley (1991), Dalton (1997), Munro and Derwing (1999), and Romero (2004) clearly state the important role that pronunciation plays at the time of communicating. The poor development of this skill can end up with a breakdown in communication. Additionally, these authors concur with the idea of pronunciation as the trigger for successful communication and grammar use.

Another researcher promoting the importance of pronunciation and its teaching is Schmidt (2006), who conducted a research with two high school German groups, one experimental and one control group. Schmidt expected to prove that the instructed teaching generates better results. The instrument to analyze the data recordings was a century concept digital speaker connected to a laptop. The recordings were not analyzed by the researcher but by some native German speakers. Among the activities developed were a read-aloud task and minimal pair exercises.

The researcher collected one writing per month per student, four months into the course the researcher recorded students' utterances, which would later be analyzed by native German speakers, and finally at the end of the course the researcher administered a minimal pair distinguish exercise. The utterances recordings were rated in a scale from 1 to

4 (being 1 native-like pronunciation, 2 close to native-like pronunciation, 3 not native like pronunciation and 4 definitely not native-like pronunciation). The results showed that in the first test the experimental group had a better performance than the control group in the utterance of four sentences containing several unfamiliar words for them. The results in the second test showed an equal oral performance of both groups. The third test showed a better oral performance of the experimental group than the control group. This test was about vowels and participants had to identify different body parts in singular and plural. The results obtained in the fourth and last test showed an average performance of the experimental group when reading an unknown text according to the scale rating but it showed a better performance of the experimental group as compared with the control one.

Schmidt (2006) concluded that instructional (explicit) teaching provides a better improvement in students' oral production, improving their pronunciation and perception of German as a second language, in this case.

McCracken (2009), following the same path of phonemic awareness and the importance of teaching pronunciation as Schmidt (2006), and Sardegna (2009), conducted a study about the effectiveness of exposing students to funny, motivational lessons and sounds and word construction classes in order to make students aware about pronunciation. McCracken's research (2009) was developed in kinder garden classrooms. The participants in this research were three English learners, two of them Chinese and the other one Arab.

The study was intended to explore the effectiveness of the use of sound blending, segmenting, and rhyming in a small group while teaching them literacy skills. This research showed that "phonemic awareness is an often overlooked but valuable tool in developing

early reading skills” as McCracken (2009) declares. This research demonstrates the positive effect produced on the children after the treatment. It was proved that they can distinguish the sound patterns and react according to it, and this, even though the research was carried out with children, clearly demonstrates that the explicit teaching of pronunciation or sound patterns, as in this case, enhances production accuracy. Now, considering this research, it can be applied to young or adult learners and still get positive results.

The research lasted three months and classes prepared for six weeks were developed implementing visual aids, interaction, as well as kinesthetic strategies. The class was arranged to be in a private room for a small group and, as they were very polite and gentle, during the classes they were asked to help each other when necessary.

In order to collect data, student work and achievement data, attitude data, and in-process data, a writer’s workshop, a parent survey, and observation notes were necessary as well as post interviews to the parents in order to find out the results of the phonemic awareness intervention what concluded in a significant improvement at the end of the course and the research.

The results showed the effectiveness of the strategies and techniques applied as well as the improvement of the three students and according to the researcher’s comments, the students showed an improvement in pronunciation and many other areas. Subject 1 and 2 showed improvements in phoneme pronunciation and blending and usage respectively. Subject 3 showed such improvement as the previous subjects but in a different way due to the fact that this subject showed problems with attitude, which resulted in a hard work process which in the end resulted to be the highest achievement as the researcher mentions.

The data presented above support the importance and positive effect of explicit pronunciation teaching; in this case the researcher worked with phonics and found out that the explicit teaching caused a considerable improvement in students' pronunciation skills as well as in their reading interests but this information also proves that explicit pronunciation teaching can be applied to very young learners and it does have a positive effect, concurs with previous research and supports the effectiveness of explicit pronunciation teaching.

Another study which confirms what Schmidt (2006) proved was carried out by Sardegna (2009) in order to find out if empowering students with pronunciation strategies could result in a better development in and outside the classroom. This researcher found that the effects were positive in the short and long terms.

The research was developed in an ESL group at an American university following an instructional model, Dickerson's, in order to improve students' performance in and outside the classroom. The purpose of this research was to find out the effects of the techniques applied during the experiment in the short and the long term according to the participants' progress.

It was a research with an experimental design and considered a longitudinal study due to the fact that data were collected more than three times during a period of time and those data were collected from eight ESL groups. The researcher carried out an eight-month course, this course lasted for three years and the number of participants was 39, aged 22-47 and 16 of them were females and 23 were males. These participants were evaluated before the treatment and during it for five months but also nine months after the course and during

three years; the purpose of doing it is to ratify her beliefs about the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation.

Sardegna (2009) selected her own evaluating material for the research and the recordings were carried out in an English lab. It is necessary to mention that this research was developed by working on eight ESL groups and the teaching methodology focused on becoming self-sufficient participants by providing some specific techniques like: Oral practice out of classes (Cognitive Strategies), Speech monitoring (Metacognitive Strategies), Comparing performances with other models (Cognitive Strategies), Making changes to match those models (Cognitive Strategies) and Practicing changes aloud (Cognitive Strategies).

It counted with one pre-test and three post tests applied after certain time after the course's end. The results were showed through tables and the basis line and the improvements were compared. Participants showed a better performance in primary stress, construction stress and word stress. This shows the effectiveness of the techniques and strategies applied.

Sardegna (2009) proved her long-term effectiveness instructions belief. The intensive instruction had a positive effect on students' development at the time of reading, getting results even after the treatment and always improving a little bit more through the years and according to the author's work it showed a significant progress, in a slow way at a certain stage compared with the previews results, but it did show the improvement in the performance of students at the time of reading, which after all ratifies the previous authors' statements.

The researcher concluded this study by making emphasis on the improvements which occurred significantly throughout the time of researching. In addition, the researcher explains that in the process of improvement, each area, such as primary stress, construction stress, and word stress, suffered positive changes which gave as a result a gradually better performance of the participants during the tests, and this could be observed at the end of the research in the result tables.

Another researcher that supports pronunciation instruction and concurs with the previous research presented above is Couper (2006), who developed a research about the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching with the intention of finding out the immediate effect of instruction on specific forms of second language pronunciation. This author aimed at providing evidence to support Courper's (2003) statements about the positive effectiveness of explicit pronunciation teaching. For this research there was a variety in language in the participants, due to the fact that some of them were Chinese, others Korean and some others spoke different non-East Asian languages.

This research intended to find out the effects of pronunciation instruction on two groups, the experimental and the baseline group, as the researcher decided to name the control group due to its convenience for this research, and it focused on just one aspect of pronunciation to make the pronunciation change measurement easier, that is epenthesis and absence.

This research included a general diagnostic test, which was given to the participants before any treatment in order to determine the most suitable area (Listening or Speaking) to work and focus on during the experiment, and at the end of the semester the participants sat

this test again. A test with specific purpose on epenthesis and absence was also given three times to the participants after short teaching sessions along the semester. It is worth mentioning that speaking tests provided the most reliable data, what caused that the research focused on them. Both the experimental and baseline (control group) groups sat the general diagnostic and speaking test but only the experimental group sat the specific purpose tests. The researcher based the data analysis only on the tests collected from those participants who sat all of them.

According to the author, the results show that the baseline data showed a slight error rate change of 0.7% in relation with the Specific Purpose Test, meanwhile the treatment group showed a huge error rate change of 14.4%, which means that the treatment group got more benefits and improved their oral production proficiency.

Additionally, the treatment group showed significant change in the General Diagnostic Test with a 6.4% difference which compared with the baseline error rate percentage is much better due to the fact that the baseline group showed a slight difference in percentage of 0.2%.

Couper (2006) found out that it was not easy to draw conclusions about instruction on perception due to the fact that the subjects showed more problems with the listening tasks. Couper (2006; 57) claims that “it may be that it is more difficult to change perception than to change production” and he also states that learners can apply the sound patterns acquired to the speaking skill but may be they will be not able to apply that knowledge to the listening skill.

Furthermore, Couper (2006), due to the deficiencies found in the teaching approach suggests that the explanations given about the syllables were not understood at all and the activities used for practicing did not involve communication, which led him to state that “in the future I would like to devise ways to make this more communicative and interesting” Couper (2006; 59).

To conclude, it can be mentioned that Couper (2006) ended up with some problems due to the fact that the focus of the research was on listening and the activities and explanations implemented were not successful as expected but in the end Couper (2006) realized that perception and production are completely different. He also found that pronunciation instruction does have a positive effect on the subjects but the learners were not able to apply their knowledge to the perception aspect (listening skill). Empirical evidence in the research, aiming at the creation of a framework looking for the integration of pronunciation instruction to the syllabus, is what Couper (2006) also provides with this research, what after all, supports the previous researchers’ assertions, that is the positive effect of explicit pronunciation teaching. He also provides evidence to suggest the inclusion of pronunciation teaching in the syllabus.

O’Brien (2004) mentions that motivation and personal interest in improving pronunciation, coming from the student, result in a significant improvement. In his research carried out with learners of German, a great improvement was achieved and the learners could notice that. The evaluators focused more on prosody than on isolated phonemes in order to identify if the students’ pronunciation could be considered as a native-like pronunciation or at least as near to the native-like as possible. The goal was achieved and it

was proved that a non-native speaker can acquire an almost native speaker pronunciation and in a conversation the difference between native and non-native pronunciation is practically not perceived.

So, as proved in the research carried out by O'Brien (2004), teachers must focus on prosody more than on isolated phonemes due to the fact that when speaking the process developed is a conjunction of those isolated phonemes which can get a different pronunciation because of the context and the words in it.

Ueno (1995) conducted a research with Japanese English major students implementing the American English pronunciation. This research was developed with the intention of finding out which is more effective, the Suprasegmental Oriented Pronunciation Teaching Approach or the Segmental Oriented Pronunciation Teaching Approach. This author also supports the above authors' proposal of including pronunciation into a language curriculum because as Ueno (1995) mentions, pronunciation "facilitates listening comprehension ability."

Ueno (1995) compares the two approaches and tries to identify which one can generate the most positive effect on the subjects' pronunciation as well as on their listening comprehension in English. The first approach is the Suprasegmental Oriented Pronunciation Teaching approach or Supra-OPT as is abbreviated by the researcher. In this case the researchers intends to expose the subjects to suprasegmental aspects which means that the learners must be aware of the stress, intonation and rhythm contained not in isolated phonemes but in complete sentences. Moreover, Ueno (1995) expected the subjects to be able to identify the number of syllables contained in the words as well as the meaning

of the sentence, and in order to do the latter, subjects would have to be aware and pay attention to the stress, rhythm and intonation of the sentences.

The second approach is the Segmental Oriented Pronunciation Teaching approach or Seg-OPT as is abbreviated by the researcher. In this case Ueno's (1995: 6) intention is "to enable the students to articulate and discriminate individual sounds of English" (vowels and consonant sounds).

In order to measure the subjects' development and improvement during the experiment, six tests were needed. These tests were linked to the approach and area to be evaluated as Ueno (1995; 45, 46) explains.

All the second semester groups were administered the six tests on two occasions, at the beginning and at the end of the experiment. To grade the tests number 2, 4 and 6 two native speakers of American English took part in the research. Also for the test number 4 the grading native speaker had to write the word that was heard. For tests 2 and 6 two different Pronunciation thermometers were implemented.

For the analysis of the data a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was needed and to reanalyse the data, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was needed too, as well as a Scheffé test which was applied at the end. This analysis showed very few significant differences between the two groups; however, the Suprasegmental Oriented Pronunciation Teaching group improved more in reception than the Segmental Oriented Pronunciation Teaching group. Ueno (1995) declares two possible reasons for the poor statistical difference identified in the research. Firstly, the accent of the American native speaker could have affected the results (considering geographical place accents). Secondly,

the fact that some students could be more familiarized with a British accent than with an American accent, which would not be a surprise if it is considered that in Shion Junior College English classes with a British accent are much more common.

To conclude, it is important to mention that the slight or lack of difference between the two approaches do not allow the researcher to find out which one could benefit learners the most in the pronunciation skills; however, Ueno (1995) suggests the application of the two approaches together. "A combination of these two approaches must be preferable" Ueno (1995; preface, vi)

With all the studies presented above, the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching can now be understood. In some of the previous studies an obvious positive effect was found; in others, it was not that significant but it still caused a positive effect, so as a conclusion we can state that pronunciation teaching is becoming popular among the researchers due to the fact that they consider this skill as an essential part in the communicative process. The oral message can be positively or negatively affected in the transmission, depending on the oral proficiency of the speaker, but certainly the listener will have to pay attention and be aware of the sounds' patterns in order to get the message too.

Results from the studies previously presented let us know the benefits that could be experienced by present students who are seeking to master their English if we could consider pronunciation teaching in language classes and even more if we make it part of the syllabus.

Many studies related to the effectiveness of pronunciation and sound patterns have been developed around the world showing in many ways the necessity to work on this area

and the positive effectiveness that explicit pronunciation teaching causes on English learners' oral proficiency; however, Mexico is lagging behind due to the fact that this area has not been exploited, as was observed during the development of the literature review.

In this chapter, the importance of pronunciation teaching was presented and supported by some authors. In the following chapter, the theories and theorists that promote the teaching of pronunciation in an integral way as well as the importance and positive effect that it has in English learners' communicative proficiency are presented.

CHAPTER II

2 Method

This experiment is considered quasi experimental due to the fact that it covered the characteristics of a quasi-experimental research. First of all, the groups had already been set with the subjects before they were selected for the research. This means that the researcher had no idea about the number of the subjects or any information about the group until they were chosen and met for the first time. For this research two groups were randomly chosen but the subjects had already been assigned without the researcher participation. Both groups, the experimental and the control ones, shared characteristics. Both of them were of the same generation, the same area (English Language Teaching Program) and both of them were beginners. These characteristics named this experiment as a quasi-experimental research according to Sampieri (1991).

Moreover, this research involved a pre-test and a post-test. The former one allowed the researcher to have evidence about the initial state or level of the subjects in both the experimental and control groups. The post-test allowed the researcher to know its effects on the students' development throughout the experiment and see if the techniques applied had a positive or negative effect on the subjects.

The classification of longitudinal design was attached to this quasi-experimental research for having determined the experimental and control group randomly and not having interfered in the subjects' assignation to the groups. The subjects' evolution or change was analysed in order to determine if there is a positive or negative effect on the subjects' evolution all along the experiment. The data analysed were collected after a

specific time of treatment. These are the reason why the experiment is considered longitudinal and quasi experimental according to Sampieri (1991)

2.1 Subjects

In order to develop this longitudinal, experimental research the first semester groups were selected for being at the introductory level of English in the English Language Program at UQROO. Two groups were selected randomly, one of them was the experimental group and the other one was the control group. Introductory level of English (or first semester groups) were decided to work with because as beginners it would be easier to eradicate those pronunciation problems, work with them appropriately and to show that pronunciation can be taught since starting to learn a foreign language.

2.2 Procedures

One of the very first steps, and a very important one, was to select the material I was going to need. Firstly, I needed to use some exercises from Kelly (2000). It was an excellent idea to use this book because it provided me with the necessary tools (exercises, explanations and definitions of certain words with examples) as well as Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994).

Also, after checking and considering other books I decided to make use of Fry (1997). This book provided a large amount of phonics patterns to teach the participants the clear difference among words that can be pronounced almost or totally equally.

The sessions were divided in two hours once a week. During these hours the participants were in a normal class and the teacher (the researcher) taught the topic. The exercises and units of the book in question were covered as planned but I applied the

selected techniques and exercises to teach pronunciation according to the topic of the day. The participants were tested every three and four sessions (as explained later) during their partial and final exam.

2.3 Teaching

By researching and considering some books I decided to select those which would help me to provide students with a clear idea of what pronunciation is, as well as to make them practice with some exercises about word stress, intonation (in an isolated way and in context, that is in sentences), also I chose some exercises about minimal pairs and, of course, discrimination which definitely helped them to identify the different sounds patterns, the similar sounds of certain words and to use those sounds recognition to improve their oral production through a mix of both Top-Down and Bottom-Up approaches.

The very first class, all the participants recorded themselves reading the “Abortion Pill” text: this was the pre-test, before any treatment. After that, I analysed those recordings in order to find out the existing problems in the group and to consider them at the time of planning my sessions. During three weeks I treated the participants by giving them some basic concepts like what a phoneme is as well as an allophone, word stress, intonation, pitch, minimal pairs and sound patterns. All these activities were done while giving a normal class, teaching the topic in turn but integrating pronunciation to it.

The next step was to expose the participants to sounds and explain to them the way they must be pronounced, so that the participants could receive that input, firstly, using a CD player and some listening exercises with American accent but showing the difference between American and British accents. This means that I taught the participants the way

words were pronounced with a British accent too, and then worked with them using handouts with minimal pair and discrimination exercises, with the purpose of making them start identifying the sound patterns.

2.4 Tests

In order to collect data and evaluate participants I made use of a recorder and a reading titled “Abortion Pill” and the recording of their partial and final exam so that, those results could be analysed with the purpose of measuring participants’ improvement.

The process of exposure and techniques application was carried out for one semester but after the three sessions, the participants were tested and after it, they were tested in three sessions again. The teacher continued with the exposition and treatment for four weeks and then participants were tested once again. Three sessions later they were tested again and finally at the end of the semester, which was three sessions after the last test. The participants’ improvement was tested through recordings, as mentioned before, to store their oral productions and analyse them, also through dictation and discrimination exercises. During those tests the participants were exposed to exercises made up of conversations, handouts and listening exercises, everything always linked to the topic in question according to the syllabus. Both the experimental and control group were tested the same day, using the same exercises.

At the end of the semester, I had stored five recordings per each participant and the analysis of those recordings showed the effectiveness of the strategies and techniques used as well as their progress.

2.5 Data Analysis

To continue with the research the recordings of the two groups were analysed, and the results were compared in a chart, showing the way they were at the beginning, the errors they made and the progress of each group through the course. It is necessary to mention that the errors I focused on were the phonemes /ð/, /θ/, /v/ and /p/. The mistakes that were considered as true mistakes were those which the participants made without noticing them. If the participants made a mistake and immediately corrected themselves it was not considered as an error but as a kind of improvement for gaining consciousness of their problem. Noticing the wrong pronunciation and correcting it consciously displayed some improvement due to the fact that the participants were aware of their pronunciation errors they had since the beginning and made use of the exercises done in classes about pronunciation to fix those mistakes.

By doing this, the improvements in pronunciation proficiency in their oral production were found out at the end of the semester: there was a change between the very first recording, which was before any treatment, and the last one, after the whole treatment, and I presented that improvement through a visual result, the chart, and audio results, through their recordings.

CHAPTER III

3 Theoretical Framework

In former chapters, studies about Second and Foreign Language Teaching were presented to provide evidence about the existing problems and to show how neglected pronunciation is, in order to be aware of it and look for solutions. This chapter complements the former information presented by defining pronunciation and describing the role of pronunciation through the history of English as a Second Language (ESL). These topics are the main points covered in this chapter as well as correction of pronunciation, the affecting factors in pronunciation teaching, some approaches and techniques that provide an idea about how to teach pronunciation and the importance of teaching it. At the end of this chapter there is a summarising list of very useful sample exercises as well as some techniques to teach pronunciation.

3.1 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is defined by Poch (2006) as all about the sounds patterns and the errors or changes suffered due to the context in a language. It means that each phoneme can be affected in context and changed, and it could add a different meaning, in certain cases, to the message if it were not appropriately pronounced, and this could cause unintelligibility during a communicative process. This definition highlights the importance of pronunciation in an utterance and as a result in the message itself. The term *pronunciation* can differ among people's conceptions about pronunciation, for example some people think that teaching pronunciation is just a matter of correcting a wrongly pronounced word spontaneously. For this thesis, the definition by Poch's (2006) will be considered as it

concur with the definition of pronunciation, which is not merely casual correction but the inclusion of it and making it part of the daily class in order to allow learners realise about their mistakes and work on them so that they enhance their oral proficiency level and, most importantly, avoid fossilization.

3.2 Pronunciation through the History of ESL Methodology

This chapter presents the different methods of teaching English as a second language (ESL) and foreign language (EFL) at the time in which they appeared and were implemented and also how these ESL and EFL acquisition theories came up through the years as well as the methods that were needed to use those theories.

It was in the 40's when many theorists came up with different proposals about the ESL teaching method. According to T. Roger, theory can be understood as “the notion of a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning...” (Roger, paragraph 1) as it is mentioned in Taber (2006).

3.2.1 Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is the very first and the most ancient method. This method appeared in the nineteenth century more precisely in the 40's. It became very popular and lasted for many years due to its simplicity. The reason is that the target language was taught using the learners' mother tongue, so this avoided possible misconceptions or problems due to the code in use. Another reason to keep using this method is that it included the lowest speaking process and students were not exposed to any kind of speaking interaction, they focused on learning lists of isolated vocabulary words and not taking into account other skills like speaking, listening and of course pronunciation.

According to Taber (2006), the only problem in a GTM classroom is boredom, as it included no interaction at all and no activities where movements were needed.

The structure of a typical GTM class may start by the instructor presenting the new verbs, continuing with the explanation of a grammatical structure related to the topic and then the instructor would hand in some exercises so that students could practice the new vocabulary and grammar structure through fill in exercises. Other characteristics of the GTM are the translation of literary passages into the mother tongue as well as identifying antonyms and synonyms, carrying out vocabulary drills, memorizing vocabulary lists, creating sentences with the new vocabulary words, and writing compositions in the target language. As can be seen most of the above mentioned work is written, not including drills.

According to Taber (2006), the GTM is still used nowadays not only in Americas' classrooms but also throughout Europe and Asia. Certainly this method exposes the learner to a very large number of vocabulary and structures in context. This can absolutely help the learner to enhance his or her vocabulary resources and also improve his or her translation skills. However, learners tend to base their knowledge on memorizing words and fill in the blank exercises, which results in a clash when they face a different method or a more creative one where they are expected to work and find out the grammar structures by themselves and search throughout the learning process. This results in uncertainty because this method is very antique and not only that, this method is very simple and does not offer an opportunity for the learners to interact with real people in real life situations.

To sum up this method, Taber (2006) states that the base for GTM is "habit formation via repetition and reinforcement" (Paragraph 6). In other words this is a

behaviorist method according to this author. This means that the learners' knowledge is totally based on receiving the information given by an instructor and reinforced throughout drillings or fill in the blank exercises but not through personal analysis or research. As we can notice, in this method, pronunciation was not encountered at all. The GTM gave no place to pronunciation or any other skill but grammar, due to the fact that pronunciation was not considered a skill and as a consequence it was put aside, rejecting one of the most important skills at the time of communicating. This clearly shows us how limited GTM is, and how questionable it is to be used nowadays, if the main objective is to prepare people to face daily life situation for communication, not only in a written way but also developing the other skills: reading, listening and speaking at an equal proficiency level, which of course includes a high level of pronunciation.

3.2.2 Direct Method (DM)

Almost getting to the end of the 1800's a revolution of language learning and theorists took place due to the limits of the GTM and this revolution gave as a result the Direct Method (DM) appearance. According to Taber (2006), DM became very popular in Europe and the United States, during the first quarter of the twentieth century. This method goes the other way around with respect to the GTM. This DM was based on language oral exposure. In this method the learner received the greatest possible exposure to the target oral language as the priority was to communicate (interact with other people). The learner was intended to learn in the same way as a child acquires the mother tongue. Gouin (1880) tried to learn German throughout a GTM method during the nineteenth century, as Taber (2006) mentions, but after his failure and return home he found in his three year old

nephew that it is better to expose the subject to the target language in a natural environment and in this way the learner will receive instructions in a natural way, like, for example, opening a window and expressing the action not only by doing it but also by saying it. Berlitz (1906), a nineteenth century linguist too, following the steps of Gouin (1880), decided to immerse the subjects in the target language as much as possible avoiding any grammar explanation and only using the target language as was seen in the child's first language acquisition.

A reading aloud, maybe a dialog, is a common starting for a DM class. In this activity learners take turns to learn and in this way they practice their speaking and not only that but also it will be a very good exercise to work on comprehension. To continue, the instructor can come to read aloud the dialog for the students but this time the students will have three opportunities to write it all down and, after that, read what they wrote. This was done with the intention of integrating the listening, reading and writing skills and even comprehension. This method makes the learners work on their own to improve their oral skills and at the same time provides confidence to talk, which means, to interact in a set conversation in a near future.

It was during the first part of the twentieth century when the DM became very popular in Europe and the United States. Its proposals of techniques for ESL got a very good recognition and it was implemented in private schools with small groups showing a favorable result in learners' development; however, due to the size of the groups it was a problem to implement this method in public schools, and this can be considered as a disadvantage. This group size problem as well as the reliance on the teachers' ability and

fluency in the target language for the classes gave as a result a breakdown and this allowed the GTM to arise once again.

The prevailing certainty of the techniques as well as the poor reliance on the teacher's abilities and fluency in the target language resulted in The Grammar Translation Method resurrection. GTM, as was said before, was considered simple and no problems were found if it had to be taught in the learners' native language as Taber (2006) mentions.

That is why we can see how GTM survived and took power again. Its simplicity is what made people rely on it but DM was not totally at fault. First of all the DM provided a more complete use of the skills in class, which would allow a wider improvement in the learners' skills, besides, if we look at the Language Teaching Process (LTP) at length we can realize that the purpose of teaching a language in the English Language Teaching Major at the University of Quintana Roo is to allow the learners to perform successfully in a conversation and more than that in any daily communicative life situation they could face in the real world. The DM provided students with the opportunity to be in a set conversation, but it was based on real life and that interaction made students speak, listen, understand and through all this carry out the communicative process. In this way students could also work on their pronunciation, due to the fact that the teacher, with a very good proficiency in the language in question, was there to correct them if needed. That is why DM had close resemblance to what appeared in the 80's and is known as communicative approach; nevertheless, even when this method provides learners with a wide exposure to the oral language it is still missing something very important, that makes this DM incomplete. The problem is that those pronunciation mistakes were corrected in a

spontaneous way. Pronunciation was not taught explicitly, which means that no DM class was prepared to take into account the pronunciation part.

3.2.3 Audio Lingual Method (ALM).

According to Taber (2006), this method was, at the beginning, known as the Army Method because it was adopted by the military after realizing that most of the Americans were monolingual in World War II years. As the purpose of teaching a language is to provide the learners tools to communicate effectively, and after realizing that the GTM was not intended to achieve that goal, a new method came up, the Audio Lingual Method (ALM). This method was intended, according to Taber (2006) as a “purely behaviorist approach to language teaching” (Paragraph 14) and, just like the DM, this method was concerned about preparing the learners to face real life situations and be able to make use of the language in question, the target language (TL). The difference between the DM and the ALM is that the latter one implemented more speaking practice. The learners were exposed to extensive conversation sessions, which provided much more confidence to the students and of course developed more fluency and comprehension at the time of speaking.

A common class for this method included a ten minutes drill periods including exercises like reading a dialog and memorizing it. The following step in the class was that the instructor compared a grammar point in both the native and the target language, so that students analyzed and processed the information and understood it.

One very important point in here is that even when the instructions and explanations were given by the instructor in the learners’ native language, they were not allowed to use it, instead of that, they could only use the target language to communicate among them and

this was followed by more drilling exercises like: repetition, substitution and chains; however, it is necessary to mention that in the ALM all the TL vocabulary was presented and learnt in context which is a characteristic that both DM and ALM share. In this method pronunciation was practiced more than in the DM, because the students practiced more and for longer periods the speaking part. The ALM allowed the learners to develop their pronunciation skills too, since the purpose of this method was to generate the highest proficiency in students to carry out a conversation in real life situations successfully.

Taber (2006) adds that “ALM focuses on the surface forms of language and rote learning” (Paragraph 16). This statement tells us that even those learners who are very good at memorizing, and actually do great memorizing in the class, may not necessary have a good performance in the practice, which affects their TL proficiency. This would lead them to a limited performance in an oral communicative life situation, and that is why we must endow learners with the sufficient skill development to have a great performance in real life situations. Pronunciation would facilitate communication and allow them to avoid misunderstandings while communicating.

As we saw above, having a good performance in a GTM class does not implies a good performance when facing a real life conversation, what clearly shows that pronunciation is a fundamental part to be certainly considered in the syllabus of a Language Teaching programme, even more if we refer to the English Language Teaching Programme at the University of Quintana Roo. Additionally, it is necessary to mention that most of the time the language learning process faces some difficulties, for example: the method used in the current teacher’s formation comes to take part in the present, which means that if the

teacher was instructed with a GTM, the very GTM is now being implemented by him or her in his or her way of teaching. This comes to be the prevalence of that method of the past even when the teacher lives now in an era of communicative approaches. As was mentioned previously, there is a high probability that the current way of instruction that learners receive today remain in the future, and so we must provide the learners with the most accurate instruction and tools to have an excellent performance in the future when they come to be in the role of a teacher and hold in their hands the education of a group of people who rely on them.

3.3 Interpretation of Pronunciation

As it was mentioned above, and as we can see in Taber (2006), sometimes the language teaching process faces some problems like the prevalence of a method used in the past to teach, which has already been displaced somehow by a recent method or approach. As a result difficulties also appear in the teaching process of pronunciation. There exist some misconceptions about pronunciation teaching. For example, people tend to believe that a simple spontaneous error correction in the class can be considered as teaching pronunciation. Others differ with this concept. Listerri (2003) provides a clearer view of what teaching pronunciation means and the three common interpretations that people tend to have in relation to teaching pronunciation. These three interpretations are explained in the following lines.

The first interpretation that Listerri (2003) declares is *teaching phonetics*. According to this author, sometimes it is believed that when we talk about teaching pronunciation we refer to a specialized course which includes definitions and a detailed

knowledge about the segmental and suprasegmental elements of the target language; however, this type of teaching specially occurs in a language teaching program where the students must be exposed to as many language aspects as possible, since the purpose of the program is to create future language teachers.

On the other hand, there is another interpretation: *phonetic correction*. This interpretation is all about correcting spontaneous pronunciation errors detected while students speak. What Listerri explains is that it is wrongly believed that teaching pronunciation is just a matter of correcting casually identified oral errors. This misconception leads people to lose interest about the importance of teaching pronunciation because by attaching this false meaning to pronunciation teaching it comes to be considered as worthless. This interpretation just sees pronunciation teaching as a matter of detecting oral errors and correcting them, what in the end comes to become into another error.

Finally we run into the third interpretation according to Listerri. This interpretation is known as *pronunciation teaching*, and it is referred to the explicit teaching of pronunciation. It would include a well prepared and organized course making use of exercises to practice and leading students to master their pronunciation skills. A course of this kind must definitely include the theoretical part too; this means concepts about pronunciation and what it refers to, but not in a formal way as is expected in a phonetics course. It should also include aspects stated by the program syllabus which definitely lead to develop the students' skills.

That is why pronunciation teaching must be considered at the time of teaching an English lesson, considering the practice of intonation, stress and rhythm that could be faced

in the class. Making it part of the teaching process does not necessarily include the concepts and the whole theory but the practice of it. This would definitely enhance the learners' oral proficiency gradually if it is implemented from the beginning.

3.4 Correction in Foreign Language Teaching

In the following lines the discussion of a topic with the closest relation to the explicit teaching of pronunciation, Corrective Feedback, is developed. We will understand corrective feedback as it is defined by Lightbown and Spada (1999), that is "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect" and since pronunciation teaching is closely related to corrective feedback we are going to follow this definition.

Pronunciation must go hand in hand with correction because by correcting we provide learners with the opportunity to see their weaknesses and work on them. This will definitely lead us to a reduction in fossilization rates and provide a gradual improvement in oral proficiency. Over the last decades, there has been an increasing interest in highlighting the importance of feedback during the process of language acquisition that resulted in a clash between Innatists and Cognitivists. On one hand, the innatists' statements about first language acquisition were taken by methodologists as Krashen (1982, 1985) Ellis (1991), among others, and applied to the second language teaching process. These ideas maintain that a second language must be taught the same way the mother tongue was acquired, following Chomsky's statements (1975) about L1 acquisition; on the other hand, cognitivists agreed with this statement but suggest that L2 must also be taught providing corrective feedback. They propose an explicit way of teaching.

3.4.1 Innatists' Theory

After analyzing Chomsky's suggestions (1975) about the L1 acquisition process, authors like Krashen (1982, 1985), Ellis (1991), Cook (1991) Schwartz (1993), and Carroll (1996) decided to adopt and follow those principles. Chomsky (1975) states that first language acquisition (L1) occurs in a natural way, where correction does not take any part at all. Innatism followers took Chomsky's proposals and implemented them in second language learning (L2). In this process learners are encouraged to correct themselves, find out and analyze L2 structural differences with L1. The learning process will be developed through steps and these steps will naturally appear since it is a natural capability that humans have.

3.4.2 Cognitivists' Theory

Cognitivists authors agree about the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) process, which follows the principles of the First Language Acquisition (L1) that Chomsky (1975) suggests. They also propose explicit teaching and correction. That would cause a better impact in learners' learning. Authors like Schmidt (1990, 1994), Gass (1988, 1990, 1991), Varonis (1991), Bley-Vroman (1986, 1989), and Ohta (2010), realised that there is a world of difference between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) processes of learning and disagree with the innatists' previous assertion and propose that an explicit teaching can lead to a faster improvement in oral proficiency and provide tools to boost the learners' confidence in a conversation.

Hernández, Gómez & Jiménez (2010, p. 257) rephrase Long (1996), as follows "referring to SLA, Long claims that negative evidence is essential for L2 acquisition,

especially among adolescent and adult L2 learners.” This supports the cognitivists’ statement about the efficiency of corrective feedback. Also, it is important to mention that during the 1990’s many hypothesis and models were developed and one of the most salient, according to Hernández et al (2010), is the Interactionist Model, which was advanced by Long (1996, 1998). Long declares in this model, that noticing is very important in the L2 acquisition process due to the fact that in order to understand the message or instruction, the learner has to pay attention and be aware of what is going on. By noticing, the learner is being conscious about the process and it means that corrective feedback works efficiently as a facilitator of the L2 learning process.

This is supported by Schmidt (1990) who argues that attention is essential in the learning process because it will allow consciousness to occur and let new items come about in the learning process. “Subliminal language learning is impossible, and that intake is what learners consciously notice. This requirement of noticing is meant to apply equally to all aspects of language” Schmidt (1990: 149).

Schmidt (1994) also mentions that during the learning process it is not necessary to have a positive attitude to learn but to pay attention and process the materials and explanations that will guide the learner to develop the comprehensive skills so that afterwards the learner figures it out and understands the information.

Ellis (1991) states that the acquisition process occurs in three steps: noticing, comparing, and integrating. What is supported by Schmidt & Frota (1986), Gass (1988, 1990, 1991), Gass & Varonis (1991) Schmidt (1990, 1994). What is more, they add that it is impossible to acquire an L2 implicitly. In addition, in order for learners to acquire a new

language it is necessary a certain level of consciousness. Learners must pay attention to the explanation and by doing this they will be able to notice the differences between their L1 and their L2.

Ohta (2001) agrees with Bley-Vroman (1986, 1989) when stating that consciousness will allow learners to be in a position to generate hypotheses about the learning process and at the same time reformulate those hypothesis if it were the case and corrective feedback is what makes it happen. Hernández et al (2010, p. 260) mentions “counter evidence to the effectiveness of solely meaning-focused instruction as the learner’s interlanguage is grammatically inaccurate even after years of exposure to the L2.” These statements provide us with a clearer view of the importance of the corrective feedback in Second Language Acquisition as well as in Foreign Language Acquisition process, which not many authors agree with, but the importance of corrective feedback is evident.

Definitely, there is a disagreement between the innatists and cognitivists scholars, but all the information presented above let us appreciate how these authors provide evidence about the importance of pronunciation teaching and moreover, this evidence endorses the need for teaching pronunciation to those future teachers that are now receiving training to become, in a near future, English language teachers, as is the case of the students in the English Language Program at the Universidad de Quintana Roo.

3.5 Why Teaching Pronunciation?

The authors mentioned above maintain and support the importance of pronunciation teaching and its consideration as a skill to be included in the class; however, as previously stated, pronunciation teaching does play an important role in the language learning process

and of course, it must be included and taught in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs, especially if we are talking about a program that trains future teachers, who will be at the front of a class and will be language users models to their students.

Students in Mexico, most of the time, consider their teachers as the boss in the classroom and a model. They tend to imitate the language teacher in order to be like him, in certain aspects like their way of speaking, and very important of course, the teacher is the first model they have to listen to, which will cause an impact due to the fact that the first impressions are never forgotten as Hernández and Murrieta (2009) and Listerri (2003) state.

By including pronunciation teaching in the classroom, teachers do not only reinforce the other skills but also ensure that those students will expand their knowledge enhancing their language knowledge with a high level of proficiency in pronunciation what will definitely improve the communication, because it will reduce the possibility of misunderstandings at the time of conveying a message and this will absolutely increase the rate of proficiency in language orally and in all the other skills.

Pronunciation is a skill which must be part of the fundamental and essential skills to be developed during the learning process, although some authors do not consider it a skill, not even a sub skill. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) consider perception of comprehension and production as intimately linked. This means, for example, that the intonation speakers give to the utterances produced is the meaning the listener is going to attach to the information received, which supports the claim that pronunciation is very important at the

time of speaking: sometimes speaking can look limited due to the poor proficiency acquired and as a result of this the communication process breaks down and does not work.

González (2004) shares the same ideas of the authors above, since he states that pronunciation is of extreme importance to communicate and sees it as the trigger for a good communication, because in the communicative process the correct pronunciation could allow or not to transmit the message accurately and of course it will also determine if the receiver gets the correct message or not. That is why pronunciation must be taught as the other skills and not put aside as if it were not a matter of importance.

With all the authors' assertions above, the role of pronunciation in the communicative process and also the importance of its teaching are now clear. It is clear now that there is a vast collection of researches and that people around the world are interested and aware of the pronunciation importance; however, pronunciation is still overlooked and not given the importance it deserves.

3.6 Factors that Affect Pronunciation Teaching

Hernández and Murrieta (2009) in their work provide an extensive and well sustained list of very important factors that affect pronunciation teaching, which must be taken into consideration at the time of teaching, and due to their relevance I decided to make a brief explanation about what they refer to in their work.

It is easy to come to mistakes and failure while preparing a pronunciation course if the general and particular objectives of that course are not clear for the teacher or instructor. It is extremely important to always bear in mind that the interests of a group of students in

the field of tourism or environment are not the same as those of a group of people that are just seeking to learn the language to get a job in the tourist sector.

That is why having the course objectives and the objectives of teaching pronunciation clear allows the teacher or instructor to develop the course in an appropriate way so that in the end the pronunciation teaching can be integrated into the language learning process.

Another very important factor these authors highlight is the accent or model of language to be taught. Most of the time the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) program is based on one particular accent and so is the instructional material used in the course. That is why it is important to reflect about the accent that is going to be used all along the course so that there is a bond between the EFL course book, all the material that is going to be used and the pronunciation teaching patterns. According to Hernández and Murrieta (2009) most of the time American and British dialects are used as well as a standard language.

Astonishingly, most of the time the majority of the students tend to rely enormously on a native speaker rather than on a non native speaker to be corrected in their speech, grammar, pronunciation or any linguistic aspect, and this mistaken belief prevents teaching pronunciation. Others believe that even a non native speaker can acquire a native like pronunciation, the only things not to forget are the affecting factors but those affecting factors are just restrictive at a certain point due to the fact that learners face them differently.

Now, this misconception occurs due to the fact that many people think that native speakers can distinguish the minimum differences of pronunciation while speaking and also

that because of being native speakers they have a better accent or intonation when pronouncing words. However, Gass and Schachter (1989: 248) mention “phonemes alone do not account for the perception of native speakers. Likewise, there is no reason to assume that a learner base his or her perception on phonemes alone.” This means that a language is not only based on phonemes but also on suprasegmental aspects as Hernández and Murrieta (2009) suggest too, and it does not matter if we are not native speakers of English, we can acquire a native-like pronunciation of the language in question but we have to be exposed to an explicit pronunciation teaching so that we get the basis and tools to improve this skill and , what is more, non native speakers’ abilities cannot be brought into discredit just for not being native.

According to Hernández and Murrieta (2009), generally, at the time of choosing a language model, social and cultural aspects intervene. In Mexico, particularly, American English accent would be expected as the one chosen for the EFL programmes due to the influence in culture and the close relations between the two countries; nevertheless, as Hernández and Murrieta (2009) mention, the British accent has gained a lot of prestige and value through the years, mainly because of the support generated by the British Council in Mexico, through the international certifications of English levels, and all over the world. This prestige provides British accent popularity and preference in certain cases.

Another affective factor mentioned by Hernández and Murrieta (2009) is something that seems to be forgotten in certain cases. They state that it is a fact that students do not take part at the time of selecting a language model, which could not be a problem in itself, but the problem is that the responsible or people in charge for doing it do not analyze the

language model contained in the material selected and, to make the matter worse, sometimes the requirements and examinations do not match with the language model taught all along the course, and this is definitely one very important problem due to the fact that if there is not a sequence and continuation with the selected language model, there would be definitely a bad result.

Carrying the same importance as the previous affecting factors, students' age is not a topic to be put aside. In fact, students' age is one of the most important factors to be considered at the time of planning a course or a daily class. Students' age as well as their interests and social background are important because they affect the students' development and also the class development, as Hernández and Murrieta (2009) claim.

Lenneberg (1964) claims that the language learning process has a deadline and if the language learning process is not carried out before that time then it would be impossible or definitely would present serious imperfections in language. This Critical Period hypothesis became a topic for discussion since its presentation by Lenneberg in the 60's. The Critical Period Hypothesis was firstly proposed by Montreal neurologist Wilder Penfield and Lamar Roberts (1959) but it was popularized during the 60's by Lenneberg. This hypothesis remains controversial due to the fact that this author maintains in his theory that a child must acquire a language before the puberty and if it does not happen, then, the child will certainly present language restrictions and definitely show some language imperfections affecting, of course, the fluency and pronunciation proficiency.

As evidence of this hypothesis, there is the case *Genie*, best known as "The Wild Child". This particular case is well known because this little girl had been isolated since she

was born. Her father, who had judged her as retarded since she was born, took the decision to put her in an isolated room, depriving her of any language contact. This caused that the girl had no way to communicate, since she had no language contact at all at least not for thirteen years, which was her age when she was found in her home.

Genie's case provided the opportunity to test Lenneberg hypothesis. And during the learning process, after the natural period for learning mentioned by Lenneberg, although Genie was not able to acquire a language completely, she did show improvements but carrying a lot of imperfections.

In English as a Second Language (ESL) area, this has also been discussed and in this area we can find the explicit problems that occur in adult students that cannot seek to master their skills due to their age; however, we can find in Moyer (1999); Bongaerts et al., (1995) and Young-Scholten, (2002) that motivation and personal interests do affect students' development and as a consequence it can lead to a higher level of proficiency in their skills including pronunciation, making it closer to a native's one.

Age can certainly be an affecting factor in learners' development but it also shows that encouragement and motivation can cause the opposite and lead students' to a greater development as well as a better personal satisfaction that will, at the same time, provide students with self motivation. Certainly it is not the same to teach children than to teach adolescents or adults, but it is also true that motivation plays an important role in the learning process.

3.7 The Importance of Teaching Pronunciation.

There are many reasons to take pronunciation to the classroom as well as experimental evidence provided by well-known authors. These reasons are basically the effectiveness of communication, the several theories proposed, the students' attitudes and interests and the beliefs or perceptions about a foreign language learning-teaching process, according to Hernández and Murrieta (2009). The students' willingness is the most important, although it is not the only aspect to take into account. Kelly (2000) suggests that the pronunciation mistakes and errors occurred in the classroom have an impact on the communication process and it is important to see those pronunciation errors and the effects they cause as the way to achieve a successful communication process.

It is astonishing how neglected pronunciation teaching is, even though its importance is recognized by many people. Celce-Murcia (1996) suggests that a group of people which must definitely receive the pronunciation instruction is that of the future teachers of language. This group of people must acquire as high proficiency as possible due to the fact that these people's knowledge and skill will one day be shared and this process will take place in an oral way, what means that those learners that are nowadays in the English Language Teaching Program must receive pronunciation teaching.

In a similar vein, González (2004) states that pronunciation is of extreme importance to communicate and sees it as the trigger for a good communication, because the correct pronunciation could allow or not to transmit the message accurately and, of course, it will also determine if the receiver gets the correct message or not. That is why

pronunciation must be taught as the other skills and not put aside as if it were not a matter of importance.

3.8 Approaches and Techniques for Teaching Pronunciation

After having a look at the affecting factors, it is time to go throughout the ways of teaching. In the following lines information about the approaches and techniques for teaching pronunciation is presented.

The noticeable lack of knowledge coming from the teachers or instructors of an ESL or EFL programme gives as a result a neglected pronunciation teaching, as it is mentioned by Dalton, 2000; Wei, 2006; Jenkins & Setter, 2005; Kelly, 2000 cited by Hernández and Murrieta (2009). The material design used in the classroom also affects pronunciation teaching. There must be a link between the material, (books, recordings, and exams) and the instructor's accent in order to achieve the goal. This means that if the final test includes British accent, the instructors must keep in mind that information and instruct the learners with the same accent all along the major. Even more if at the end of the major, the participants have a test requiring British accent knowledge as it is the case in the English Language Program at UQROO.

Hernández and Murrieta (2009) also suggest that the difficulty rate, the techniques used and the approach selection is what makes English teachers or instructors not to provide teaching pronunciation the appropriate importance even though they do believe in its importance for communication. In addition, some of those English teachers or instructors tend to pay attention to just some isolated words and correct occasionally, some others work on suprasegmental aspects but not in a deep way. Learning second language

phonology requires more than just accurate segmental aspects production. The learner does have to focus on segmental aspects, but also on suprasegmental aspects because the learning process of pronunciation embraces isolated and in context sound patterns, intonation, rhythm, and the accent, as we can see in Gass and Schachter (1989). Learning pronunciation means that “One must also gain knowledge of allowable and disallowable sequences, phonetic detail of and so forth” (Gass and Schachter, 1989: 239)

3.8.1 Top –Down and Bottom –Up Approaches

The approaches for teaching pronunciation at a classroom setting can be generally classified as the Top-Down and Bottom–Up perspectives. The former endows priority to suprasegmental aspects. This means that the intonation, stress and rhythm are taught firstly, as it is stated by Levis (2005). Hernández and Murrieta (2009) mention that the Top-down perspective is preferred in many schools due to fact that it goes hand in hand with an integrated approach since both of them are oriented to the communicative approach.

The Bottom-Up perspective is more oriented to the segmental aspects. In this approach it is considered that the priority must lay on isolated word pronunciation, as in isolated phonemes and phonetic concepts more than on intonation, stress or words in context. This approach comes to prove and support O’Brien’s (2004) results and to teach students how the intonation and stress in a statement can abruptly change the meaning of it. Instead of giving a sense of apology, suggestion or request, among others, it could be considered as a command, for example. That is why the intonation, rhythm and stress take a very important role when speaking.

3.8.2 Segregated-Skills Approach

A segregated-skill instruction can easily be observed in a traditional ESL or EFL program. The segregated approach works with all the abilities but in a separate way as we can see in Oxford (2001). Working with the skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, separately will lead the learner to master all the skills, as Oxford (2001) rephrases Mohan (1986). Apparently the best way to master all the skills and to successfully acquire knowledge is through this segregated approach.

The reason to work on the skills separately is the belief of focusing on one skill at a time in order to pay attention exclusively to the skill in question and to develop it accurately. Oxford (2001) mentions that the best way to accurately develop all the skills is throughout the segregated-skills approach since it could be easy for the learner to get distracted if the skills were taught in an integrated way.

So, if pronunciation were taught under this approach, it would be, for sure, in an isolated way as the rest of the skills. This means that pronunciation would not be taught together with reading, writing or listening because these skills could be a distractor for the learners, as Hernández and Murrieta (2009) mention.

Oxford (2001) suggests that even in a class based on a segregated approach, the instructor has to give instructions and all the directions in the target language, what will end up with the implementation of another skill like listening and speaking even though the focus is on one particular skill. For example, if the focus skill is reading, before the activity starts, the teacher has to give the instructions of what he or she wants the students to do, and those instructions are given in the target language. As a result, the students have to

listen, understand and carry out the instructions, this means that listening would be included even when it was not planned to do so. The author also suggests that the same situation happens with the text books. It does not matter if the focus of attention is on one particular skill; it includes other skills without noticing.

3.8.3 Integrated Approach

As it was mentioned above, the segregated approach focuses on just one skill at a time in order to not create a confusing situation for the learners. Now, the integrated approach goes the other way around. This approach suggests an integration of all the skills in order to enhance the skills involved with communication, which are: reading, writing, listening and speaking. All those skills take part in a communicative situation and that is the best reason to link them at the time of learning.

Pronunciation is a skill too, and it must be integrated and taught with the same enthusiasm as the other skills. We must not forget that in the language learning process, teaching pronunciation interlinked with grammar and vocabulary gives as a result the reinforcement of the language as Chela-Flores (2001) mentions.

Hernández and Murrieta (2009) suggest that the implementation of this approach, including pronunciation, in a beginner's class should not represent a problem if it were taught since the beginning of the course and using the vocabulary seen in class in order to follow the context and grammar structures too.

Oxford (2001) agrees with this conception and suggests that pronunciation, in this integral method, becomes a way to use the language, which definitely guarantees success in the communicative process.

To sum up, it is not easy to select one approach to apply. It definitely affects the whole course and the results in the students' progress at the end of this course but after presenting and analysing the information above, it can be stated that the integrated approach would be the most appropriate one due to the fact that this approach includes all the skills when teaching a lesson and does not make differences among them. The integrated approach allows to include pronunciation and make it part of the language as well as to prevent the English teacher or instructor from not having enough time to cover all the skills, focus the lessons just on advanced or intermediate students, or not being conscious about the close relation between pronunciation and the successful oral- auditory communication, as stated by Hernández and Murrieta (2009).

Keys (2000) proposes an integral development of the classes, that means that pronunciation must be taught together with the rest of the normal class, linking the vocabulary and grammatical structures seen with pronunciation, not separately. Therefore there is the need of teaching pronunciation and an integral approach seems a suitable one due to the link among all the skills and the goals in an EFL teaching training program.

3.9 Techniques and Exercises.

A proposal of some very interesting techniques about teaching pronunciation is made by Dalton (1997). This author proposes two types of exercises. In the first one he refers to expose the subjects to a discrimination exercise where the subjects have to show their ability to recognise, to retain and to discriminate which words contain long vowel sounds and which ones contain short vowel sounds as follows.

PORT	PIT	PAT	PERT	PET	POT	PUTT	PUT	PART	PEAT
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Dalton (1997)

The purpose of this exercise is that the subjects have to identify the numbers 0-3-8 and 9 as those which contain long vowel sounds and the rest contain short vowel sounds.

The second exercise proposed by this author involves giving and carrying out instructions what, at the same time, involves a more natural environment than the first exercise but it is important to mention that this exercise was designed for a multilingual class although it can still be applied to a monolingual class as Dalton (1997) states.

In this exercise the teacher or instructor must firstly make a list of the problems found in the class and then focus the instructions on those problems. The list example proposed by Dalton (1997) comes next.

1. *Draw a sheep on the board. (Spanish speakers often draw a ship).*
2. *Write the letter "P" above the sheep. (Arabic speakers often write "B").*
3. *Use the "P" as the start of the word "pleasant" and write the word (Japanese speakers often write "present").*
4. *Write "light" next to pleasant. (Japanese speakers often write "right").*
5. *Draw a mouse next to the word "light". (Spanish and Japanese speakers often draw a mouth)*
6. *Draw a pear next to the mouse. (Arabic speakers often draw a bear)*

Other examples can be added.

Dalton (1997)

The purpose of this exercise is to expose students to their own problems so that they can start figuring them out little by little and start correcting themselves throughout the practice. This exercise implies a more natural environment due to the fact that in real life the learners do give instructions as well as they carry them out and this practice comes together with the communicative approach in a natural way suggested by the author.

Hernández and Murrieta (2009) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) summarise some techniques for teaching pronunciation as follows.

Production Activities

- Pronunciation of isolated words and sounds.
- Listening and writing the word in question on the board or notebook
- Explanation of the production of sounds.
- Listening and repeating the word with the sound in question. *For example: bean, heel, meal, peel, sheep, cheap.*
- Pronouncing minimal pair sentences (with context) for example: *Please SIT in this SEAT. These shoes should FIT your FEET. Do you STILL STEAL?. He lost the LEAD/LID. FEEL/ FILL this bag.*
- Tongue twisters. For example: *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers? If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?*
- *Minimal pairs*

Minimal pairs are referred to those pair of words that just differ in one phoneme. For example: *ship / sheep or /peɪpə/ y /pepə/*, according to Larsen-Freeman (2000). This

technique is very helpful for students and the use of this technique lets the instructor realise and work on those sounds problems that the students are facing as it is suggested by Hernández and Murrieta (2009).

Some of the activities would be:

1. Phoneme Discrimination: Ex.

Tick the words which have the sound /p/:

receipt pet photo psychology cap

2. Sound Discrimination: Ex:

How many times do you hear /ei/? Underline each one you hear:

Pepper paper letter later pen pain we wait get gate
late let

3. Sound contrast and repetition (coral or individual): Ex.

Pass me the pepper and the paper. I'll post the letter later. They won't let us in if we're late.

4. Odd one sound Discrimination: ex.

Cart class heart learn smart part

The instrument which will help this research to find out the pronunciation problems that the students are facing will be the *recording*. According to Seidlhofer (2001), recording students in the target language comes to be very beneficial and appropriate either individually or in groups.

CHAPTER IV

4 Findings and Discussion

In the previous chapters the scholars that highlight the lack of attention paid to pronunciation teaching were presented as well as the importance of teaching pronunciation. In addition, studies that support and show the efficiency and positive effects that explicit teaching of pronunciation has on the learners' oral proficiency, supports the intention of this research, which is to provide evidence of the importance and positive effect that explicit pronunciation teaching has on the learners.

4.1 Findings

In this chapter the results obtained from explicit pronunciation teaching techniques and strategies used in this research are presented as well as how those techniques affected the subjects and the differences of the initial level and the level at the end of the experiment carried out with the subjects' oral proficiency. It is important to highlight that the target sounds for this study were the phonemes /ð/, /θ/, /v/ and /p/. I listened to every recording looking for errors made by the participants at the time of pronouncing words like: *this, that, with, people, is, has, because, think*, just to mention some of them. By doing this I realized if the participants were benefited in their oral proficiency or not at the end of the course and the rate of that progress. It is also necessary to point out that grammar was not taken into account, which means that if the participants showed grammatical errors, these errors were not considered for the analysis as well as those mistakes corrected immediately. What is more, that correction would mean an improvement coming from the participants as an example of awareness of the errors they made, as Kelly (2000) maintains.

In order to get a percentage of positive or negative incidences, it was necessary to firstly get the total of possible attempts for the words, which was represented as Incidence Rate for each positive and negative, separately. N is considered as the sum of both, positive and negative, incidences and Global Percentage comes to be the results presented in a percentage unit. In order to get the incidence rate, the N and of course the global percentage, those participants who did not present any positive or negative attempts were simply not considered for the numbers and are presented as (-).

Firstly, the pre-test's results obtained are shown in table 1 in a percentage chart. The chart shows the number of attempts for each participant as well as the corresponding percentage the very first time they were recorded without any treatment. This information is found in every single table presented.

Secondly, the changes observed in the participants' oral proficiency in each of the four different tests administered during the treatment after every two weeks are presented in separated charts. This allows us to see the gradual improvement obtained during this research and to compare the initial oral proficiency level of the subjects and the final level obtained after the whole treatment.

4.2 Pre-Test /ð/and /θ/.

The pre-test was administered the very first time I met the subjects and both, the experimental and control group were told what my purpose on this research was and what I planned to do with them all along the semester. The subjects were handed in a reading called "Abortion Pill", which contains words with the target phonemes /ð/and /θ/, /v/ and /p/ sounds. Results of this Pre-test are broken down into "Good" and "Bad" for the control

group, which means that every single participant showed good and bad pronunciation errors; however, some others did not show any of the possible attempts.

Table 1: Control Group /ð/ Pre-Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1 st	0	0%	21	100%
2 nd	7	28%	18	72%
3 rd	1	4.7%	20	95.2%
4 th	8	38%	13	61.9%
5 th	6	28.5%	15	71.4%
6 th	9	42.8%	12	57.1%
7 th	3	14.2%	18	85.7%
8 th	5	23.8%	16	76.1%
9 th	0	0%	21	100%
10 th	0	0%	21	100%
11 th	7	33.3%	14	66.6%
12 th	2	9.5%	19	90.4%
13 th	0	0%	21	100%
14 th	0	0%	21	100%
15 th	8	38%	13	61.9%
16 th	5	23.8%	16	76.1%
Incidence rate	61		279	
N	340			
Global percentage	17.9%		82%	

As we can observe in the first table, it is clear that the participants of the Control Group do not have the awareness of the existing English phonemes or the participants know about the phonemes but a misconception is taking place at the time of speaking and as a result they do not pronounce the phoneme /ð/ correctly in words like *that*, *this*, *the*, *they*, *without* and *another*.

Even though the participants seem to do not have consciousness or certainty about these phonemes pronunciation, they, occasionally, apply the correct pronunciation to some words like: *the, this, that*, due to the fact that in Spanish there is an allophone of the phoneme /d/, which is an interdental voiced /ð/ and can occurs mainly in intervocalic position or at the end of words, but never in initial position. This could lead to positive transfer in words such as mother, father, and brother, where /ð/ is in intervocalic position; what is more, the participants could be having a problem to internalize the knowledge, this means that the participants may be producing effectively during the practice but during the tests they seem to have a lack of automation to utter the phonemes correctly. Eventually the participants would show the expected automation at the time of speaking but for now it could be a little bit harder for them.

Additionally, there is a noticeable difference among the participants. Some of them seem to have certain level of awareness and accuracy at the time of uttering the /ð/ sound. Participant number 6 showed a 42.8% for good pronunciation what is considerably good, even more, due to the fact that this was just the pre-test. Some other participants showed accuracy around 30%. This means that some of the participants from the control group could have been endowed with the appropriate instruction in another English course they could have taken or could be coursing.

On the other hand, we have the following table showing the results of the experimental group pre-test.

Table 2: Experimental Group /ð/ Pre-Test Results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1 st	1	4.7%	20	95.2%
2 nd	1	4.7%	20	95.2%
3 rd	4	19.0%	17	80.9%
4 th	1	4.7%	20	95.2%
5 th	2	9.5%	19	90.4%
6 th	3	14.2%	18	85.7%
7 th	1	4.7%	20	95.2%
8 th	2	9.5%	19	90.4%
9 th	0	0%	21	100%
10 th	0	0%	21	100%
11 th	0	0%	21	100%
12 th	0	0%	21	100%
13 th	0	0%	21	100%
14 th	4	19.0%	17	80.9%
15 th	2	9.5%	19	90.4%
16 th	0	0%	21	100%
17 th	0	0%	21	100%
18 th	0	0%	21	100%
19 th	0	0%	21	100%
20 th	1	4.7%	20	95.2%
Incidence rate	22		398	
N	420			
Global Percentage	5.2%		94.7%	

In table 2, the experimental group participants seem to have problems at the time of uttering the phoneme /ð/ in this pre-test. as this was the first time they were recorded and they did not received any previous treatment, it was not surprising that they had a poor development; however, as the phoneme /ð/ should be familiar for the participants, they were expected to show a better performance due to the fact that in their first language repertoire (L1) there is the allophone /d/ which is similar to the /ð/ phoneme. That is the

reason why some of the participants showed a slight percentage of good pronunciation. This could be, once again, attributed to the positive transfer from Spanish, their L1.

Comparing the results, it is evident that at the beginning of the research the control group presented a better performance with the /ð/ phoneme with a difference of 13% in contrast with the experimental group, as we can observe in figure I.

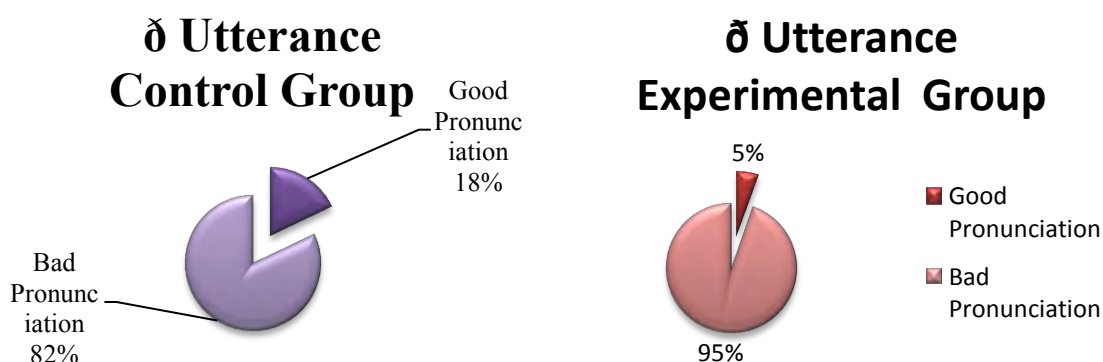


Figure I: Pre-test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme.

The tables and figures already presented lead us to a clear deficiency in the pronunciation matter coming from the participants, who were in a basic level of English in the English Language Teaching Major. This is, as a matter of fact, a crucial aspect to consider so that these participants are expected to be teachers in a near future and as authors like O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Gonzalez (2004) support the statement that pronunciation is to be considered as a skill and must be inducted in every day classes, even more if the subjects in question are being prepared to actually teach. These authors support the idea of including pronunciation in daily classes since the beginning of the program in

order to provide the subjects tools which will definitely affect positively and gradually their oral production proficiency.

Another target phoneme in the treatment was /θ/, which in this case showed a 100% percent of deficiency in the participants' oral production. Both groups, control and experimental, failed at the time of uttering the phoneme /θ/. The participants from the control group had an N of 96 and 6 attempts individually; however, none of the participants had a good performance pronouncing theta.

If we compare the /θ/ results with the ones of the /ð/ phoneme from both the control and experimental group, we can see how participants of both groups had a better performance with the /ð/ sound than with /θ/. This is basically the result of a slight advantage with the familiar to some extent eth phoneme and the apparently strange /θ/ phoneme for the participants. This comes up in a severe problem for the participants because it would require a lot of practice in order to have some improvement with the phoneme in question.

4.3 First Test /ð/ and /θ/.

The first test took place after two weeks of treatment. During this first test, the subjects were recorded during their oral exam which is part of the course. In this exam, topics like weather vocabulary and present continuous tense were evaluated and for this research the target phonemes /ð/ and /θ/, sounds in words like *their – the – this – that – they – other and there*, were considered. There was a total of sixteen subjects for this first test in the control group. Table 3 shows the results for this group.

Table 3: control group /ð/ Fist Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
1	1	25%	3	75%
2	1	16.6%	5	83.3%
3	0	0%	4	100%
4	1	20%	4	80%
5	0	0%	10	100%
6	2	14.2%	12	85.7%
7	0	0%	4	100%
8	2	25%	6	75%
9	0	0%	5	100%
10	-		-	
11	0	0%	3	100%
12	1	11.1%	8	88.8%
13	0	0%	4	100%
14	0	0%	11	100%
15	1	10%	9	90%
16	6	60%	4	40%
Incidence rate	15		92	
N	107			
Global Percentage	14%		85.9%	

In this table (table 3) it is noticeable that there is a decrease of a 4% in the good production of the /ð/ phoneme for the control group which comes to be interesting due to the fact that this group is not taking any treatment and the result displayed in table 3 could be the lack of instruction in the pronunciation area.

Before administering the first test to the experimental group, some exercises were implemented to make the participants practice and become aware of the correct pronunciation of the phonemes in question. Exercises about discrimination and giving and carrying out instructions helped a lot the subjects to realize that there are some differences between words that seem to be equal and they start getting conscious about that.

In some exercises the participants had to identify the odd words, those words which contained a different sound to the rest of the words, for example: *go-so-no-do*. Also the

participants worked with many discrimination exercises, choosing from a list of different words the ones containing the phoneme /p/ and /r:/ without putting aside the /ð/ or /θ/ sounds. (*ex. ship – sheep, paper – pepper, this – think, those - with*).

In table 4 we can see how the participants showed certain improvement with relation to the pre-test administered at the beginning.

Table 4: Experimental Group /ð/ First Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
	1	3	75%	1
2	3	37.5%	5	62.5%
3	3	42.8%	4	57.1%
4	0	0%	1	100%
5	2	25%	6	75%
6	0	0%	9	100%
7	1	11.1%	8	88.8%
8	0	0%	11	100%
9	2	10.5%	17	89.4%
10	0	0%	5	100%
11	0	0%	5	100%
12	0	0%	7	100%
13	0	0%	3	100%
14	0	0%	5	100%
15	2	15.3%	11	84.6%
16	0	0%	1	100%
17	0	0%	3	100%
18	0	0%	9	100%
19	0	0%	7	100%
20	1	16.6%	5	83.3%
Incidence rate	17		123	
N	140			
Global Percentage	12.1%		87.8%	

As we can see in table 4 there is an improvement of a 6.91% which basically doubles of percentage reached for the experimental group in the pre-test. The relevance of the effectiveness of the exercises implemented during the past two weeks comes to show the expected results and confirm the positive effect that teaching pronunciation causes to

the participants' oral production throughout error correction in those past weeks as it is stated by Kelly (2000). This author states the importance of the errors in the classroom. Kelly highlights how errors come to turn into a progress after a certain period of time and that progress will lead the subjects to enhance their oral production what at the same time confirms the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation in an explicit way.

Notwithstanding the 6.9% of improvement achieved in this test, there is still a huge gap to fill in between the good and bad pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme. We can clearly observe a 76% of difference over the good pronunciation of the /ð/ sound for the experimental group. The wide range deficiency in relation to the good pronunciation is evident and this could mean that the techniques and exercises implemented were not as suitable as expected or, what is more, the time implemented between the pre-test and the first test was not enough.

In figure II we can see the percentage differences between the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme in both groups

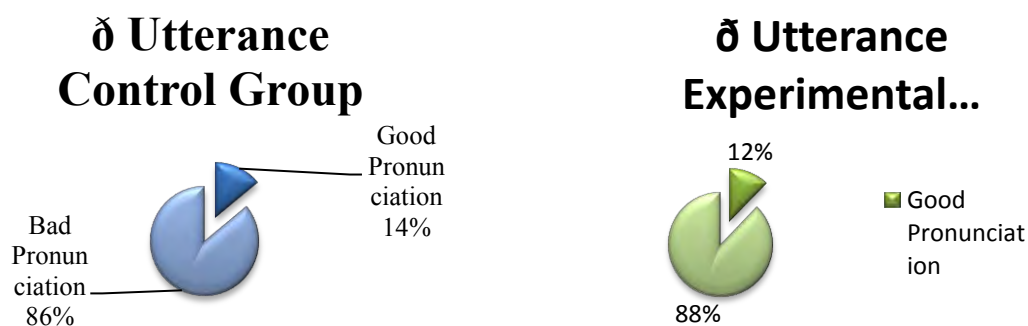


Figure II: First Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme.

As it is observable in figure II, the control group shows a slight advantage in percentage with a 14% of good pronunciation against a 12% from the experimental group. The latter showed an 88% corresponding to the bad pronunciation of the eth phoneme; meanwhile the control group displayed an 86% in bad pronunciation. However, the control group experienced a decrease of a 4% with relation to the pre-test; meanwhile the experimental group showed a betterment of a 7% with relation to the pre-test. Although this is not a considerable improvement, it is relevant to mention that the experimental group is gaining accuracy with a long treatment, perhaps the poor betterment could have been the result of the lack of time to implement the techniques and exercises in order to provide the participants much more practice.

The existing difference between the control and experimental group attaches a better performance for the control group after this first test.

Now, regarding the theta sound, the positive results obtained from the control group seem to be rising up. In the first test, the control group participants showed a slight improvement from a 0%, in the pre-test, to a 5%, in this first test, which is good for the participants because it proves that even though I was not working with them, they were being prompted to work on the pronunciation area as we can see in table 5.

Table 5: Control Group /θ/ First Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%	2	100%
2	0	0%	1	100%
3	0	0%	4	100%
4	0	0%	1	100%
5	-		-	
6	0	0%	3	100%
7	0	0%	2	100%

8	1	25%	3	75%
9	-		-	
10	-		-	
11	-		-	
12	0	0%	3	100%
13	-		-	
14	-		-	
15	-		-	
16	-		-	
Incidence rate	1		19	
N			20	
Global Percentage	5%		95%	

In table 5 we can observe a minimum betterment. Actually, this result could have been the consequence of the avoidance of the /θ/ phoneme for 8 out of 16 participants at the time of speaking. These omissions could probably have contributed with a positive percentage for the good pronunciation part; however, the fact that half of the participants who did have the corresponding test, had no attempts in relation to the /θ/ sound ended up with the poor result observed in table 5.

On the other hand, the experimental group also had a slight improvement in the first test as we can observe in table 6. This means that the exercises implemented during the past two weeks had a positive impact on the subjects' oral production.

Table 6: Experimental Group /θ/ First Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound	
1	-		-	
2	-		-	
3	-		-	
4	0	0%	1	100%
5	0	0%	1	100%
6	-		-	
7	-		-	
8	0	0%	1	100%
9	0	0%	2	100%
10	-		-	
11	0	0%	1	100%

12	-		-	
13	-		-	
14	0	0%	1	100%
15	-		-	
16	-		-	
17	-		-	
18	0	0%	2	100%
19	-		-	
20	1	100%	0	0%
Incidence rate	1		9	
N	10			
Global Percentage	10%		90%	

According to these results, the experimental group is presenting more progress than the control group with a 10% of improvement in good pronunciation. It is true that even in the experimental group there are some participants who did not register words containing the /θ/ sound; however, if we pay attention to table 6, the number of participants who did not use the /θ/ sound during the test is 12 out of 20 participants.

These numbers let us see that only the 30% of the participants used the /θ/ sound and even with these numbers, the experimental group had a better performance than the control group as we can see in figure III.

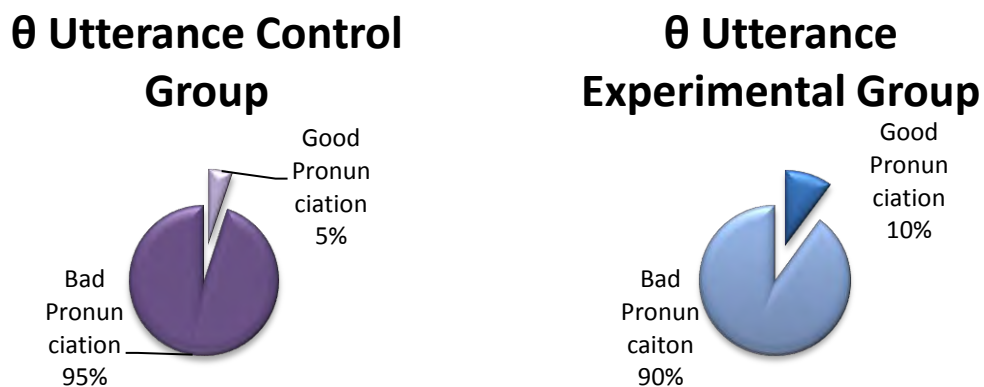


Figure III: First Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /θ/ phoneme.

Figure III shows that the experimental group had a better performance in the /θ/ first test in comparison with the control group. The two week time could be playing a critical role for the slight improvement, in the case of the experimental group. For the control group, the slight improvement seems to be the result of the absence of an explicit pronunciation instruction. As it was mentioned before, both groups present a problem because the majority of the participants are not using the /θ/ phoneme at all; nevertheless, the experimental group participants had a better performance considering that there were 9 attempts in bad pronunciation, plus 1 attempt in good pronunciation for the experimental group; meanwhile there were 19 attempts in bad pronunciation, plus 1 attempt in good pronunciation for the control group.

This clearly shows a less number of incidences for the experimental group, what can be taken as an improvement considering that in the pre-test there was a total of 100% in bad pronunciation and 120 attempts.

4.4 Second Test /ð/ and /θ/.

After two more weeks both groups were tested again. The procedure was the same. The subjects sat the second exam corresponding to the course. This time the number of participants in the control group was twenty. It is important to mention that some of the participants did not take the first tests, which can cause variations in the results.

Table 7: Control group /ð/ Second Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%	9	100%
2	1	6.2%	15	93.7%
3	1	50%	1	50%
4	0	0%	12	100%
5	3	37.5%	5	62.5%

6	1	9%	10	90.9%
7	0	0%	4	100%
8	0	0%	13	100%
9	0	0%	8	100%
10	0	0%	13	100%
11	0	0%	9	100%
12	0	0%	6	100%
13	0	0%	8	100%
14	0	0%	11	100%
15	0	0%	9	100%
16	1	6.2%	15	93.7%
17	0	0%	3	100%
18	0	0%	15	100%
19	0	0%	17	100%
20	0	0%	1	100%
Incidence rate	7		184	
N			191	
Global Percentage	3.6%		96.3%	

In table 7, the increase in the incidence rate is noticeable; however, as we can see, the rate of improvement was affected and fell to a 3.6% when in the previous test the group gave a 14% of good pronunciation.

Rarely the percentage rate fell down even though the participant number 5, who was recorded for the first time, had a better performance than the rest of the participants achieving 3 good attempts and 5 bad attempts; meanwhile, some of the other participants only got one good attempt and some others got zero but for the bad attempts the majority did over 10.

On the contrary, after other two weeks of training, working with coral repetition exercises, listening, discrimination, reading and acting out and including practice in class with peer correction, the experimental group was able to certainly identify and use correctly the /ð/ sound, including the two new subjects who had not been recorded previously. Findings about this group are shown in table 8.

Table 8: Experimental group /ð/ Second Test results.

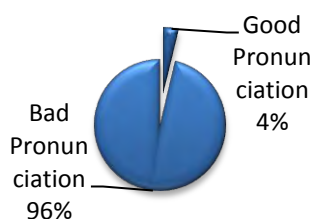
Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
	1	1	20%	4
2	1	100%	0	0%
3	2	100%	0	0%
4	4	100%	0	0%
5	3	100%	0	0%
6	1	100%	0	0%
7	0	0%	1	100%
8	1	100%	0	0%
9	-		-	
10	-		-	
11	2	25%	6	75%
12	2	66.6%	1	33.3%
13	-		-	
14	-		-	
15	2	100%	0	0%
16	1	100%	0	0%
17	-		-	
18	1	100%	0	0%
19	-		-	
20	1	100%	0	0%
21	2	50%	2	50%
22	4	100%	0	0%
Incidence rate	28		14	
N	42			
Global Percentage	66.6%		33.3%	

In table 8, it is observable the change in progress, having 28 incidence rates for good pronunciation and only 14 incidences for bad pronunciation. This definitely entails a positive impact as a result of the exercises carried on the classes on the subjects' oral production. Furthermore, the contrast in the good and bad pronunciation global percentage is evident, although that there still are some participants who are not using the /ð/ phoneme at all; despite the very good oral production of the /ð/ sound provided by the two first time recorded participants.

After analyzing both, control and experimental, groups, the evidence suggest that the explicit work on exercises of repetition and some others like sound discrimination but

more than anything the practice eventually have a positive effect on the subjects' oral production proficiency because the numbers ratify its effectiveness as we can observe in figure IV.

ð Utterance Control Group



ð Utterance Experimental Group

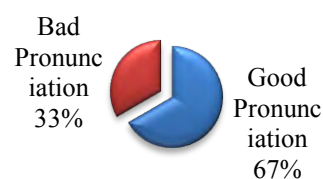


Figure IV: Second Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme.

The results in table IV let us see, clearly, the changes occurred. There is a remarkable reduction in the bad pronunciation of the /ð/ sound for the experimental group. We can observe the rising to a practically 67% in this second test which, considering the results in the first test, shows an improvement of a 53% in good pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme for the experimental group; meanwhile it is observed a decrease of a 29% corresponding to the control group for the good pronunciation of the /ð/ sound which barely reached a 4% in good production. The possible reason for the decrease registered in the control group is that the teacher in question could not be working this phoneme or not in a continuous way. Additionally, the students could not be practicing as indicated being outside the classroom or there is not enough language exposure.

Next in order we have the results corresponding to the /θ/ phoneme. In this case we have a very significant variation in both groups, what basically indicates a clear and positive effect on the participants' oral production, not taking into account the rate but the simple fact that it does affect positively.

In table 9 we have the results of the control group with relation to the /θ/ sound and the corresponding numbers for each subject. It indicates that even when the group does not receive any treatment, it is showing improvement as well as the experimental group but in a very low rate and slower than the experimental group.

Table 9: Control group /θ/ Second Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	-		-	
2	0	0%	3	100%
3	-		-	
4	2	66.6%	1	33.3%
5	1	100%	0	0%
6	1	33.3%	2	66.6%
7	0	0%	1	100%
8	0	0%	2	100%
9	0	0%	1	100%
10	0	0%	6	100%
11	-		-	
12	-		-	
13	-		-	
14	0	0%	4	100%
15	-		-	
16	2	28.5%	5	71.4%
17	3	42.8%	4	57.1%
18	0	0%	4	100%
19	2	40%	3	60%
20	0	0%	2	100%
Incidence rate	11		38	
N	49			
Global Percentage	22.4%		77.5%	

The results observed in table 9 definitely show a significant advancement in the oral production of the /θ/ sound. The subjects of the control group are now presenting a 22.4%

of good pronunciation after getting a poor 5% development in test number one what discerns a more than three times improvement in relation to the previous one.

On the other hand, the experimental group keeps getting better and better every time. The results in table 10 confirm this. The techniques and exercises applied are being effective and endow the participants with the necessary tools to enrich their pronunciation.

Table 10: Experimental group /θ/ Second Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound	
1	0	0%	1	100%
2	0	0%	1	100%
3	0	0%	3	100%
4	-		-	
5	0	0%	2	100%
6	2	100%	0	0%
7	2	100%	0	0%
8	2	100%	0	0%
9	0	0%	1	100%
10	1	100%	0	0%
11	0	0%	1	100%
12	4	100%	0	0%
13	0	0%	4	100%
14	1	100%	0	0%
15	5	100%	0	0%
16	0	0%	4	100%
17	0	0%	3	100%
18	0	0%	2	100%
19	0	0%	2	100%
20	0	0%	5	100%
21	0	0%	9	100%
22	3	100%	0	0%
Incidence rate	20		38	
N	58			
Global Percentage	34.4%		65.5%	

All the work comes to be rewarded by the results obtained and presented in the table, which shows a 34% of good pronunciation of the /θ/ sound after t two more weeks of treatment. The incidence rate increased to 20 for good pronunciation and 38 for the bad pronunciation, this gives an N of 58 as a total which, compared with the previous test, gives

us an increase of 48 incidences. It is clear that the bad pronunciation percentage is still over the good pronunciation; however, the pace of improvement is upward and the increase is evident.

To conclude the findings for this test, we have the comparison between the control and experimental group results in a graphical way. Figure V comes to show the results already broken down.

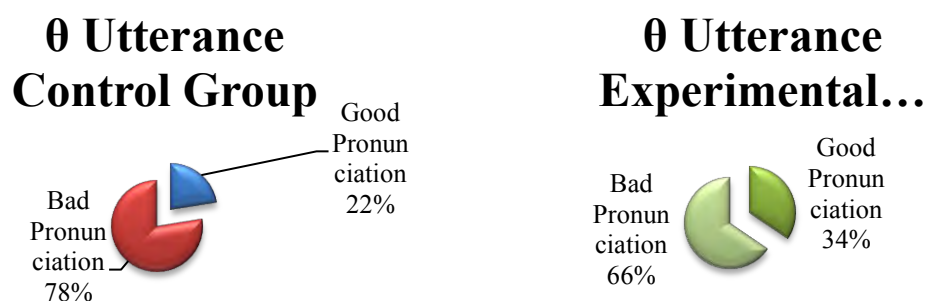


Figure V: Second Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /θ/ phoneme.

Figure V shows that the work carried out by the control group teacher is productive. It seems that the teacher is teaching some pronunciation aspects like the phoneme /θ/ because a steady increase is observable; however, maybe the work carried out was not enough or in less intensity as the work carried out with the experimental group. This group received explicit teaching of pronunciation and its productivity is the result of the techniques implemented in the treatment, like “carrying out instructions”, exercises where the researcher gave the instructions as well as some of the participants gave some other instructions like for example: “draw a sheep” or “write the letters P and V next to a three”. The instructions were getting more complex every time. Additionally, some production activities were implemented as well. For example, pronunciation of isolated words sounds,

listening and repeating the words with the sound in question (sit, ship, hit, kick), of course with the prior explanation of the sounds production as it is recommended by Hernandez and Murrieta (2009).

Minimal pair exercises and tongue twisters were also part of the treatment. The minimal pair exercises let the participants develop their listening skills as well as awareness of the target sounds. The tongue twisters helped the participants to develop their reading skills by gaining fluency and at the same time identify and manage an accurate pronunciation of the words and sentences in a fun way.

4.5 Post Test /ð/ and /θ/.

After the whole treatment, which lasted 4 months, the participants were tested one last time. This test took place at the end of the semester and with this post-test we can have a better picture of their oral proficiency level at the end of the course. For the post test the results were the expected despite the reduction in the number of participants for the control group as we can observe in table 11.

Table 11: Control group /ð/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
1	1	16.6%	5	83.3%
2	0	0%	5	100%
3	0	0%	8	100%
4	1	10%	9	90%
5	0	0%	4	100%
6	0	0%	7	100%
7	0	0%	4	100%
8	0	0%	6	100%
9	-		-	
10	0	0%	6	100%
11	0	0%	7	100%
12	2	12.5%	14	87.5%
13	0	0%	6	100%
14	0	0%	3	100%

15	0	0%	5	100%
16	0	0%	2	100%
17	0	0%	4	100%
18	0	0%	3	100%
Incidence rate	4		98	
N	102			
Global Percentage	3.9%		96%	

For the Pos-test we can observe a decrease in the number of participants. The total number of participants in this test was twenty and the percentage of good pronunciation reached was 3.9%. The participants showed a very slight improvement in relation to the previous test in which they reached a 3.6%, what leads to a minimum difference of .26%. Additionally, the results show a decrease of .26% in bad pronunciation, going from a 96.3%, registered in the previous test, to a 96%, registered in the post test, observable in table 11.

The two participants who were absent for this test were not considered as the cause of the variation despite the decrease in the incidence rate (Good pronunciation 4 and Bad pronunciation 98) which gives an N of 102, because the participants who did not have the test, did not have a good performance in the previous tests.

On the other hand, the experimental group displayed a remarkable enhance. The conditions for the post test were just as the previous ones. This means that the environment was the same for the participants as well as the thoroughness during the treatment. The results obtained can be observed in table 12.

Table 12: Experimental group /ð/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /ð/ sound	
1	4	100%	0	0%
2	4	100%	0	0%
3	2	50%	2	50%

4	2	100%	0	0%
5	9	100%	0	0%
6	5	83.3%	1	16.6%
7	5	100%	0	0%
8	1	100%	0	0%
9	2	50%	2	50%
10	1	100%	0	0%
11	6	100%	0	0%
12	0	0%	1	100%
13	-		-	
14	3	75%	1	25%
15	3	100%	0	0%
16	-		-	
17	7	77.7%	2	22.2%
18	9	100%	0	0%
19	2	100%	0	0%
20	4	80%	1	20%
21	2	100%	0	0%
22	3	100%	0	0%
Incidence rate	74		10	
N		84		
Global Percentage	88%		11.9%	

In table 12 the result of the continuous and explicit pronunciation teaching is observable. In this table the experimental group showed a meaningful enhance, reaching an 88% which, compared with the previous test, leads to a difference of a 22.4% and clearly this displays a better performance of the participants with the /ð/ sound.

The data presented in tables 11 and 12 suggest that the experimental group is displaying an enormous and noteworthy betterment, the result of the techniques and exercises applied during the treatment in order to reach the goal, which was to endow the subjects with the necessary tools to enrich their oral production proficiency with regard to pronunciation and at the same time provide evidence of the positive effects of those. Evidence is observable in figure VI.

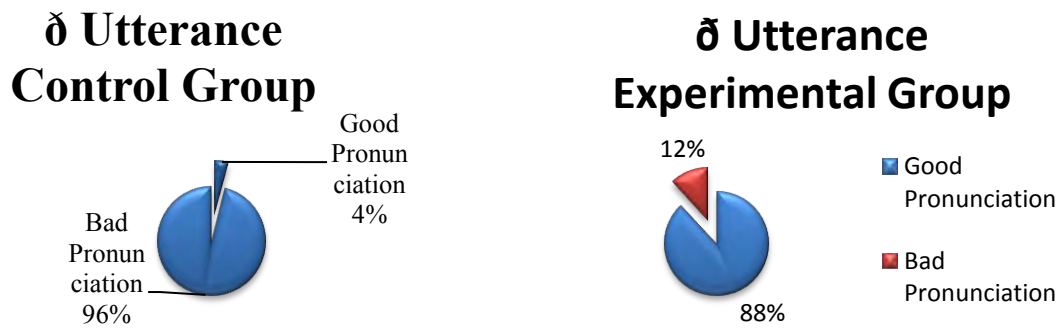


Figure VI: Post Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /ð/ phoneme.

Figure VI shows the clear advantage of the experimental group over the control group with a better accuracy in pronunciation of this phoneme of 88% of the experimental group over a 4% of the control group.

In table 13, we have the results corresponding to the /θ/ sound for the control group. In this table we can observe the results obtained in the post-test recorded at the end of the semester. For the control group, a fall in /θ/ good oral production with respect to the previous test was registered, as it can be observed in table 13.

Table 13: Control group /θ/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%	6	100%
2	2	66.6%	1	33.3%
3	0	0%	4	100%
4	0	0%	7	100%
5	0	0%	8	100%
6	0	0%	10	100%
7	0	0%	6	100%
8	0	0%	3	100%
9	1	25%	3	75%
10	0	0%	5	100%
11	1	16.6%	5	83.3%
12	3	50%	3	50%
13	0	0%	8	100%
14	1	20%	4	80%
15	0	0%	5	100%

16	1	20%	4	80%
17	5	55.5%	4	44.4%
18	0	0%	7	100%
Incidence rate	14		93	
N	107			
Global Percentage	13%		86.9%	

It is necessary to mention that in the previous test, this group showed a 22.4% in good pronunciation for the phoneme in question; however, in the post-test that percentage fell to 13%. This decrease is reasonable due to the fact that the post-test was carried out at the end of the semester and it could be the result of a lack of concentration from the subjects as classes were over.

On the contrary, the experimental group showed a better performance in /θ/ good pronunciation. The number of the subjects remains in twenty two and the performance of the majority gets better and better as it is observed in table 14.

Table 14: Experimental group /θ/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound		Bad Pronunciation of the /θ/ sound	
1	1	50%	1	50%
2	1	25%	3	75%
3	2	100%	0	0%
4	1	100%	0	0%
5	2	66.6%	1	33.3%
6	1	50%	1	50%
7	2	66.6%	1	33.3%
8	0	0%	3	100%
9	0	0%	7	100%
10	0	0%	2	100%
11	1	50%	1	50%
12	0	0%	2	100%
13	-		-	
14	0	0%	1	100%
15	2	100%	0	0%
16	1	50%	1	50%
17	2	66.6%	1	33.3%
18	2	40%	3	60%
19	0	0%	3	100%
20	4	80%	1	20%

21	1	100%	0	0%
22	1	100%	0	0%
Incidence rate	24		32	
N	56			
Global Percentage	42.8%		57.1%	

In table 14, the good performance of the experimental group is observable. What is more, the majority of the participants were having a better and better performance. That is why the results displayed in table 14 show an increase to 42.8% for good pronunciation.

Additionally, 13 out of 22 participants are showing a gradual improvement despite of the fact that the bad pronunciation percentage still is over the good pronunciation with 57.1%. The bad pronunciation registered showed a decrease of a 14% with relation to the previous test. The data presented confirms once again the effect that teaching pronunciation provides to the participants' oral production proficiency.

In figure VII, we can observe the difference in percentage about the performance of both groups corresponding to the /θ/ phoneme.

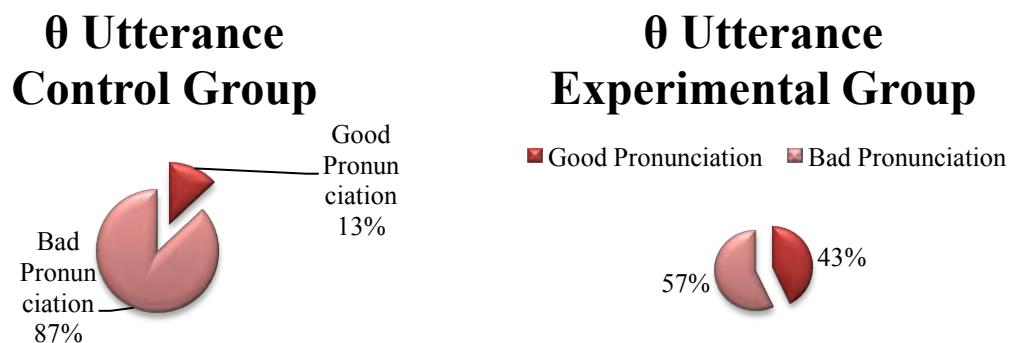


Figure VII: Post Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /θ/ phoneme.

Figure VII displays the results corresponding to the /θ/ sound in the post-test. The improvement in both groups is evident; however, despite the good performance of the control group, the experimental group showed an outstanding improvement of 43%, getting very close to a balanced percentage of 50%. The treatment, after all, is making the difference between the groups and figure VII confirms the effects of the treatment.

To sum up we can state that the explicit teaching of pronunciation does have a positive impact on the learners' pronunciation accuracy as it was proved by all the data presented. Even though, the data presented was only corresponding to /ð/ and /θ/ phonemes. The following data widens the explicit pronunciation teaching effectiveness. In the following lines, information and results obtained from the analysis of the /v/ and /p/ phonemes is presented.

4.6 Pre-Test /v/.

The findings for this research were not only focused on the /ð/ and /θ/ phonemes but also on the /v/ and /p/ phonemes. The tests considered for the /v/ and /p/ phonemes were only three. The results obtained from the control group participants in relation to the Pre-test /v/ phoneme revealed to be meager. There were only 15 participants and all of them were recorded for the very first time without any practice or advice in the pre-test.

The performance of the control group participants was completely poor. There was an N of 105 and 7 individual attempts for the participants. All the attempts in pronouncing the phoneme /v/ became errors. These difficulties in the pronunciation of the /v/ phoneme can be associated with transfer from Spanish, the learners' mother tongue, as they pronounced it as a /b/ (stop bilabial) or its allophone /β/ (an approximant bilabial) instead of

a /v/ (fricative labio-dental) and the control group produced 100% bad pronunciation for all the possibilities of /v/ in the pre-test.

Furthermore, this phenomenon was perceived in the experimental group too. It seems that both groups presented this transference problem from their mother tongue. For the experimental group, there were nineteen participants and they were also recorded for the very first time without any advice or treatment. There was an N of 133 and 7 individual attempts for the participants.

Here we can realize that there was not even one good attempt out of the 133 made for the participants in the pre-test.

These results lead to the conclusion that both, the control and the experimental group, are having the same problem with the /v/ phoneme and, eventually they are presenting the same transfer problem, which in this case, would be the transference of the /b/ (stop bilabial) or the allophone /β/ (an approximant bilabial) from their mother tongue (Spanish) to the target language (English).

The fact that both groups may be presenting the transference problem from their mother tongue is a severe problem because this mispronunciation could be fossilized if it is not eradicated immediately.

4.7 Test /v/

As the research continued, six weeks were needed before the groups were tested again. In the test the control group registered the production of nineteen participants, four participants more than in the pre-test. This number could cause a variety in the result due to

the fact that there were more participants than in the pre-test. The result registered from the test can be observed in table 15.

Table 15: Control group /v/ Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /v/		Bad pronunciation of /v/	
1	0	0%	8	100%
2	0	0%	7	100%
3	0	0%	8	100%
4	1	9%	10	91%
5	0	0%	3	100%
6	0	0%	5	100%
7	0	0%	9	100%
8	0	0%	6	100%
9	0	0%	5	100%
10	0	0%	5	100%
11	1	14%	6	86%
12	0	0%	5	100%
13	0	0%	7	100%
14	3	33%	6	67%
15	0	0%	5	100%
16	1	17%	5	83%
17	0	0%	5	100%
18	0	0%	5	100%
19	2	33%	4	67%
Incidence rate	8		114	
N	122			
Global Percentage	7%		93%	

In table 15, we can observe a slight but significant improvement. In the test, there was a total number of attempts (N) of 122, from which, only 8 were for good pronunciation and 114 were for bad pronunciation. These numbers show the wide range between the good

and bad pronunciation. A 7% of accuracy is not as good as it should be and something should be done about it.

On the other hand, the participants from the experimental group had six weeks of treatment, after which, they were tested for the second time but with the difference that, they received treatment with pronunciation teaching techniques and discrimination exercises, as well as some others about minimal pair.

For this test, the experimental group only had nineteen participants, one less than in the pre-test. This could be considered as a possible variation factor; nevertheless, the difference in, participants is minimum. The results are shown on table 16.

Table 16: Experimental group /v/ Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /v/		Bad pronunciation of /v/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%	2	100%
2	1	33%	2	67%
3	0	0%	6	100%
4	0	0%	1	100%
5	0	0%	1	100%
6	2	29%	5	71%
7	0	0%	1	100%
8	1	11%	8	89%
9	4	100%	0	0%
10	2	40%	3	60%
11	1	17%	5	83%
12	1	33%	2	67%
13	0	0%	2	100%
14	1	25%	3	75%
15	0	0%	5	100%
16	3	50%	3	50%
17	1	14%	6	86%
18	0	0%	3	100%

19	1	25%	3	75%
Incidence rate	18		61	
N	79			
Global Percentage	23%		77%	

On table 16, it is observable that the experimental group had a significant enhance, considering that in the pre-test they displayed a completely lack of awareness about the pronunciation of the /v/ sound. Rising from 0% (pre-test) to 23% (test) is considerably meaningful. There is still a wide range of improvement to cover; however, it is worthy to mention that the participants' effort is being rewarded.

All the exercises implemented during the six week treatment and all the practice carried out in class were useful for them as we can notice. Despite their lack of confidence on me at the beginning, because of my age, they realized about their improvement all along the six weeks and that lack of confidence was eradicated little by little and the result of that is reflected on the test. As we can see, most of the participants show certain rise in their individual oral production and as a group, all that make the global percentage rich a 23% of right trials.

To sum up, there was clear advantage for the experimental group gained at the end of a six week treatment. This definitely entails the expected improvement, which was reached after the test. The techniques and exercises implemented seem to be the most suitable for the treatment.

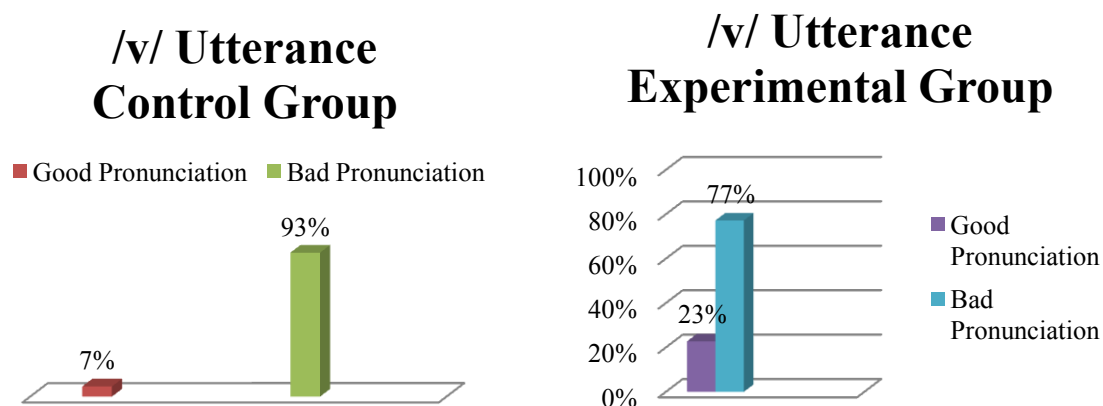


Figure VIII: First Test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /v/ phoneme.

In figure VIII, the comparison of the groups' oral production is shown in percentage. This figure provides us a clear view of the improvement of both groups; however, it is evident that the group which received explicit pronunciation teaching instruction had a better performance than the other group. With this result the assertion made by Celce-Murcia (1996) comes to support the importance and effectiveness of explicit pronunciation teaching.

4.8 Post-Test /v/

We have already shown some tables and figures which represent the starting level of the participants of both groups. The experimental group showed a better performance than the control group after six weeks of treatment. Nevertheless, the control group did show improvement but in a lower percentage of successful trials.

Now, after the whole semester, the participants had a post-test after the whole treatment to rate their oral production proficiency level. This time the control group had eighteen participants and the results corresponding to the post-test are presented in table 17.

Table 17: Control group /v/ Post-Test result.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /v/		Bad pronunciation of /v/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%	4	100%
2	0	0%	4	100%
3	0	0%	4	100%
4	0	0%	2	100%
5	0	0%	2	100%
6	2	33%	4	67%
7	0	0%	7	100%
8	0	0%	5	100%
9	1	25%	3	75%
10	0	0%	4	100%
11	0	0%	7	100%
12	2	29%	5	71%
13	2	100%	0	0%
14	0	0%	3	100%
15	0	0%	3	100%
16	1	20%	4	80%
17	0	0%	6	100%
18	0	0%	2	100%
Incidence rate	8		69	
N	77			
Global Percentage	10%		90%	

Table 17 shows an increase in good production for /v/ for the control group. Although the bad pronunciation rate is 90%, the group reflects a steady improvement, slight but significant. This can be interpreted as an effect of the regular instruction carried out

commonly in the English Language Program at UQROO which could include some doses of pronunciation teaching, or by the effect of the input that learners are exposed to and have helped them to improve their perception and production of the different English phonemes. However, that impact is barely significant and the results presented on this table proves the urgently need to work on that problem even more, because the participants who took part in this research are expected to become teachers in a near future.

On the other hand, the experimental group suffered a decrease in good production of the /v/ sound even though for the post-test there were twenty two participants tested, one more than in the previous test. The reason for this unexpected decrease could be attributed to the fact that the semester had already finished and the participants could have felt some relief in pressure and got a little bit over confident. Or that after sometime, what they had learned and kept in their short term memory was not available anymore, or that only part of this learning became part of the long term memory, but the rest was forgotten. The result of the post-test is presented in table 18.

Table 18: Experimental group /v/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /v/		Bad pronunciation of /v/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	1	33%	2	67%
2	-		-	
3	3	60%	2	40%
4	1	13%	7	88%
5	0	0%	5	100%
6	-		-	
7	3	50%	3	50%
8	0	0%	3	100%
9	0	0%	1	100%

10	1	33%	2	67%
11	0	0%	3	100%
12	-		-	
13	1	50%	1	50%
14	0	0%	5	100%
15	1	50%	1	50%
16	0	0%	2	100%
17	0	0%	3	100%
18	2	67%	1	33%
19	0	0%	10	100%
20	0	0%	11	100%
21	0	0%	6	100%
22	0	0%	6	100%
Incidence rate	13		74	
N	87			
Global Percentage	15%		85%	

As it was mentioned before, the experimental group /v/ production fell to 15%. This means a fall of 35% in relation to the previous test. This was not expected but could actually be interpreted as the consequence of certain overconfidence from the participants whereas they showed a higher enhance in the previous test and fell, yes, but maintain certain improvement level over the control group, and this is good because it proves once again the impact that the explicit pronunciation teaching causes on the participants oral production.

In conclusion, the experimental group showed to have reached a better performance than the control group at the end of the semester in relation to the good production of the /v/ sound; however, the unexpected decrease could be the result of a lack of internalization. This means that the participants are receiving treatment, they are practicing but there is still missing the part where they adopt and make part of their language what they already know

about pronunciation. Additionally, the time of the research could have not been enough, but the effectiveness of the explicit pronunciation teaching is supported by the data already presented and to provide a better view we present the final data in figure IX.

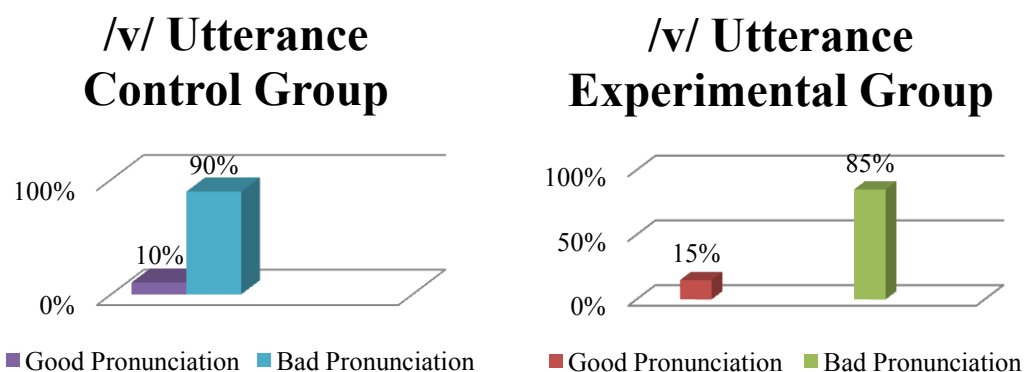


Figure IX: Post-test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /v/ phoneme.

Figure IX clearly shows a slight difference between the control and the experimental group at the end of the treatment. Basically it means that there was not a relevant superiority from any of the groups; notwithstanding, it is worthy to mention that the group which showed a better performance during the whole treatment was the experimental one. What is more, the difference in goal achievement, what is to have a better performance in oral production of the sound in question, was much more significant for the experimental group which increased from 0% to 23% basically in the middle of the treatment.

4.9 Pre-Test /p/.

Finally, we have the last target phoneme which was considered for this research, /p/. This phoneme was expected to not present any problem at all for the participants; however,

it did. Some of the participants in both, the control and the experimental groups, presented certain level of complication at the time of uttering it. The reason for such situation could be the fact that in Spanish this phoneme is not aspirated. This misperception could have led the participants to not aspirate the /p/ in some contexts in English.

In table 19 we can appreciate the performance of the control group for the very first time. This group had a total of 15 participants for this test, and the result obtained is presented in table 19.

Table 19: Control group /p/ Pre-Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /p/		Bad pronunciation of /p/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	2	14%	12	86%
2	1	7%	13	93%
3	1	7%	13	93%
4	0	0%	14	100%
5	0	0%	14	100%
6	0	0%	14	100%
7	1	7%	13	93%
8	0	0%	14	100%
9	0	0%	14	100%
10	2	14%	12	86%
11	1	7%	13	93%
12	0	0%	14	100%
13	2	14%	12	86%
14	0	0%	14	100%
15	0	0%	14	100%
Incidence rate	10		200	
N	210			
Global Percentage	4.76%		95.24%	

In table 19, it is noticeable how participants had some problems at the time of uttering this aspirated /p/ sound. There were a total of 210 incidences, out of which, only 10 were for good pronunciation and the other 200 were for bad pronunciation. The N is very high, but the result was not expected for this group. After this pre-test the control group reached a 4.7% of good pronunciation of the /p/ sound. This was a very poor result but as the semester and of course, the research was starting, it was not considered as such problem.

For the experimental group, the expectations were to show a striking performance with the /p/ production; however, it was not that way. There were 19 participants for the pre-test and they did better than the control group in the same test, but not as expected. The results for the pre-test corresponding to the experimental group are presented in table 20.

Table 20: Experimental group /p/ Pre-Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /p/		Bad pronunciation of /p/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	3	21%	11	79%
2	2	14%	12	86%
3	0	0%	14	100%
4	0	0%	14	100%
5	3	21%	11	79%
6	1	7%	13	93%
7	0	0%	14	100%
8	0	0%	14	100%
9	0	0%	14	100%
10	0	0%	14	100%
11	0	0%	14	100%
12	2	14%	12	86%
13	0	0%	14	100%
14	2	14%	12	86%

15	3	21%	11	79%
16	3	21%	11	79%
17	0	0%	14	100%
18	1	7%	13	93%
19	0	0%	14	100%
Incidence rate	20		246	
N	266			
Global Percentage	8%		92%	

In table 20, it is noticeable the poor performance of the experimental group in relation to the production of the /p/ sound. This group showed a good production level of 8%, which correspond to 20 good attempts out of 266. This numbers demand work on this topic because it was unbearable the fact that both groups displayed a poor performance with the /p^h/ phoneme. Regarding to the experimental group, the same situation could be happening. There is the possibility that the participants mispronounced the /p^h/ phoneme because of their misperception. If it were the matter in question, immediate solutions are being requested and they would be carried out during the treatment.

After analyzing the results from control and experimental groups, the same poor performance is evident; additionally, in figure X we can appreciate the comparison of the results from both groups in percentage.

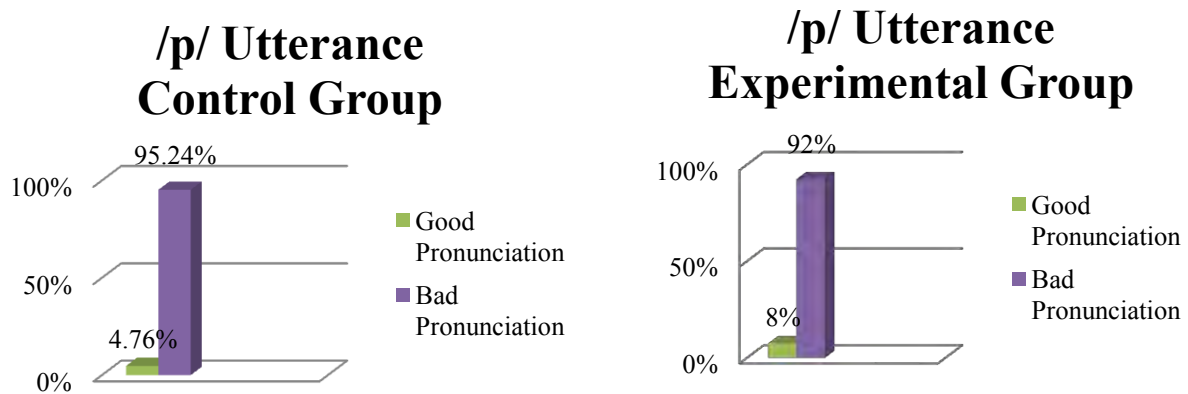


Figure X: Pre-test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /p/ phoneme.

The comparison in figure X confirms the slight difference between the control and experimental group. There is not a big difference but what the comparison really shows is the importance of working on the situation immediately.

4.10 Test /p/.

After six weeks, the control group was tested again as well as the experimental group. In this case the participants for the control group were 19. This could lead the group to a variation in the results. The results from the test are presented in table 21.

Table 21: Control group /p/ Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /p/		Bad pronunciation of /p/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	0	0%	2	100%
2	0	0%	1	100%
3	3	75%	1	25%
4	5	71%	2	29%
5	1	33%	2	67%
6	2	67%	1	33%
7	4	67%	2	33%

8	6	86%	1	14%
9	2	50%	2	50%
10	2	33%	4	67%
11	5	71%	2	29%
12	3	100%	0	0%
13	2	40%	3	60%
14	5	63%	3	38%
15	1	33%	2	67%
16	1	100%	0	0%
17	0	0%	4	100%
18	4	67%	2	33%
19	2	50%	2	50%
Incidence rate	48		36	
N	84			
Global Percentage	57%		43%	

In table 21 we can see, as it was expected, that the control group had a rise in good pronunciation of the /p/ sound. In this test and after six weeks, the participants displayed an outstanding improvement, which led them to a 57% of good pronunciation. In comparison to their last results in the pre-test, we can observe a 91% of improvement since the pre-test.

The suggested interpretation of this exceptional enhance is that, as it was predicted at the beginning, the participants' misconception of the pronunciation of the /p/ sound led them to the poor performance in the pre-test; however, it did not represent an issue but a matter to take into account. As a result we can observe the completely different result in table 21.

Furthermore, the experimental group also changed the depleted panorama from the pre-test. For this test the number of participants remains in 19. This group worked hard for six weeks before they were tested again. Exercises about minimal pair, listening and

carrying out instructions, as well as discrimination exercises¹ were implemented during the treatment without mentioning the coral and individual repetition. The result for the experimental group after a six week treatment is presented in table 22.

Table 22: Experimental /p/ Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /p/		Bad pronunciation of /p/	
1	2	67%	1	33%
2	2	100%	0	0%
3	2	100%	0	0%
4	1	100%	0	0%
5	1	100%	0	0%
6	2	100%	0	0%
7	1	100%	0	0%
8	2	50%	2	50%
9	1	100%	0	0%
10	2	29%	5	71%
11	4	80%	1	20%
12	-		-	
13	2	100%	0	0%
14	2	100%	0	0%
15	-		-	
16	1	100%	0	0%
17	8	80%	2	20%
18	3	50%	3	50%
19	0	0%	1	100%
Incidence rate	36		15	
N	51			
Global Percentage	71%		29%	

A striking performance can be observed in table 22. The result of the participants from the experimental group showed a magnificent improvement considering that in the

¹ See samples in Appendix.

pre-test they displayed a depleted result of 8%. Now that percentage is opaque for the remarkable 71% reached in this test after six weeks of treatment. Despite the fact that two of the participants did not present any attempt, the result is still striking.

The misconception and transference of their mispronunciation from Spanish brought to English was the cause of the poor performance showed in the pre-test. Fortunately, the little problem was effectively solved during the six weeks treatment with the exercises and practice repetition carried out in class. That is why there was an increase of an 89% in good production of the /p/ sound.

To sum up, the results from the control an experimental group are presented in figure XI. This figure contains a comparison between of the result between the control and experimental group. It is worthy to highlight the surprisingly results obtained for both groups.

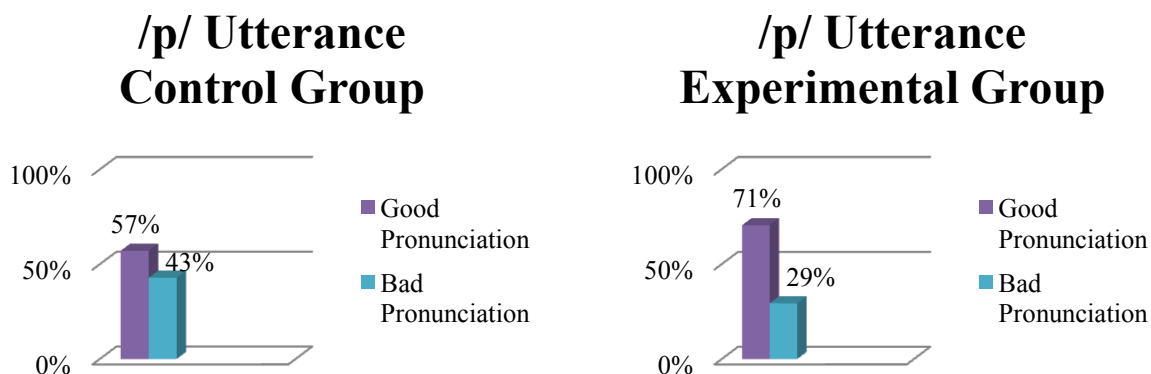


Figure XI: First test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /p/ phoneme.

We can observe a remarkable improvement from both groups in figure XI. Both groups showed a poor performance in the pre-test, but after six weeks they were tested

again and the view is completely different. Definitely the improvement is attached to the fact that the /p/ phoneme is very familiar for the participants, although its allophone [p^h] is inexistent in Spanish. It was just a matter of practice to get used to aspirate at the time of pronouncing this allophone on its corresponding phonetic context. Indisputable, the goal was achieved and what is more, the experimental group is ahead with a 71% over the 57% of the control group in good production of the /p^h/ sound.

Once again, it was proved how the explicit teaching of pronunciation impacts positively the oral production of the subjects and it is clearly showed in figure XI. It is important to bear in mind that the participants in this research are from the English Language undergraduate Program at UQROO and what is more, they are being instructed to be future teachers, to be at the front of a class and share their knowledge, and be models for their students; however, they are not being endowed with the complete set of tools as we can observe in figure XIII, just to mention one.

4.11 Post Test /p/.

Finally, the participants were administered the post-test after the treatment was done, in the case of the experimental group. It is imperative to mention that as the test was administered at the end of the semester, the participants tended to relax too much and it could make some variations in the results as well as the fact that there were eighteen participants for this test, one less than in the Test. The results from the participants of the control group in the post-test are presented in table 23.

Table 23: Control group /p/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /p/		Bad pronunciation of /p/	
1	0	0%	3	100%
2	-		-	
3	0	0%	3	100%
4	4	50%	4	50%
5	1	25%	3	75%
6	0	0%	4	100%
7	0	0%	5	100%
8	0	0%	2	100%
9	0	0%	1	100%
10	0	0%	1	100%
11	2	67%	1	33%
12	2	100%	0	0%
13	0	0%	1	100%
14	1	100%	0	0%
15	1	50%	1	50%
16	1	50%	1	50%
17	0	0%	2	100%
18	0	0%	1	100%
Incidence rate	12		33	
N	45			
Global Percentage	27%		73%	

Unexpectedly, the participants of the control group present a fall to a 27% in good production after getting a 57% in the previous test. It was expected to present certain decrease but not as much as a 53% as it is observed in table 23; however, it was said before that the fact of administering the test at the end of the semester could cause some variations as well as the absence of one participant, and even more, the fact that another participant, one who did take the test, did not present any attempt of /p/ pronunciation during the test.

All those factors could have caused the enormous variation and fall to 27%; nonetheless, it is worthy to mention the outstanding enhanced showed in the middle of the semester. With all this, it can be stated that the participants are quite familiar with the phoneme /p/, it is just a matter of practice to awake the knowledge that they have already acquired.

On the other hand, the experimental group was expected to present the same difficulties but there was also an advantage because the post-test was administered to 22 participants of the experimental group. This means that three participants, who did not take the previous test, took the post-test and the results can be observed in table 24.

Table 24: Experimental group /p/ Post-Test results.

Participants	Good pronunciation of /p/		Bad pronunciation of /p/	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	5	63%	3	38%
2	2	33%	4	67%
3	11	100%	0	0%
4	2	67%	1	33%
5	2	40%	3	60%
6	0	0%	4	100%
7	2	100%	0	0%
8	2	50%	2	50%
9	4	67%	2	33%
10	2	100%	0	0%
11	2	50%	2	50%
12	2	50%	2	50%
13	3	60%	2	40%
14	1	50%	1	50%
15	3	60%	2	40%
16	3	43%	4	57%
17	4	57%	3	43%
18	2	50%	2	50%

19	0	0%	1	100%
20	3	38%	5	63%
21	2	40%	3	60%
22	1	20%	4	80%
Incidence rate	58		50	
N	108			
Global Percentage	54%		46%	

In table 24, we can observe a fall in good pronunciation for the experimental group too. As it was expected the post-test revealed a fall to 54% meanwhile in the first test, there was an achievement of 71%. This fall represents a decrease of 24% in relation to the previous test. Actually, this decrease in good production of /p/ can be acceptable as it does not exceed the 50% and remains over the bad pronunciation percentage.

It is important to mention again that the fact of administering the test at the end of the semester involved the possible decrease of the good production of /p/ due to the fact that the attention and interest of the participants could have been lost at that time; on the other hand, it is imperative to highlight the fact that the majority of the participants showed a good production and remain on 50% or over, which definitely reflects the satisfactory enhance at the end of the treatment.

To finish up this chapter there is one last comparison figure containing the results obtained from the control and experimental groups corresponding to the post-test in a final view. This information is presented in figure XII.

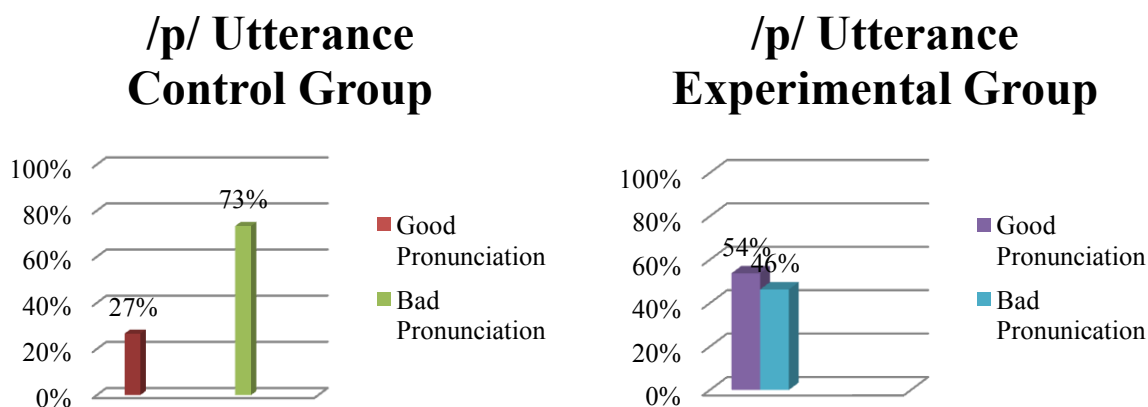


Figure XII: Post-test comparison of error rate (percentage) between the control and experimental group with baseline data on the Good and Bad pronunciation of the /p/ phoneme.

In figure XII, it is observable the prevalence of the experimental group over the control group in relation to good production of the /p/ sound. In the post-test, both groups presented a decrease in good production; however, the experimental group remained over the 50% of good pronunciation, meanwhile the control group fell up to 27%. This decrease was expected but not in such magnitude.

It is important to mention that some of the subjects did not take the test. This fact occurred in both groups, control and experimental. That is a reason to consider for the variations found in the tests' results.

CHAPTER V

5 Conclusions

The findings in this research evidenced the importance of teaching pronunciation in the English Language undergraduate Program Students at Universidad de Quintana Roo. The effectiveness of the techniques and exercises implemented during the whole treatment gave as a result the improvement of the participants' oral production proficiency at a considerable high level in comparison to those participants in the control group, who did present improvement but in a very low level.

As evidenced by the treatment, it is important to start working with this type of learners-future language teachers from the very beginning of the program, on such important skill as it is pronunciation; what is more, we must wonder whether the way the students are being instructed in the English Language Program is suitable and whether all the skills, including pronunciation, are being covered appropriately.

Pronunciation is a skill to be worked on during daily lessons, and not to be put aside. It is to be taken into account and taught in a holistic way as it is stated by Chela-Flores (2001) in Hernandez and Murrieta (2009). Explicit pronunciation teaching is a beneficial way to provide students with the necessary tools and knowledge to produce and utter sounds properly. Explicit teaching involves explicit error correction and this is what will lead the students to avoid mispronunciation of words as well as fossilization of pronunciation errors as it is suggested by Schmidt, 1990, 1994; Gass, 1988, 1990, 1991, Varonis, 1991; Bley-Vroman, 1986, 1989; and Ohta, 2001.

All these authors support explicit error correction as it is a way to prevent future problems like mispronunciation, which could take place.

It is clear now, that pronunciation plays an essential role in communication and not only through speaking but also in listening, reading and writing as it plays an important role in every one of them. At the time of writing the pronunciation help to spell correctly the words and in a conversation the pronunciation can prevent the receiver from getting the correct message of vice-versa, the speaker could mispronounce a word or a sentence and cause a misunderstanding between the listener and the speaker. That is the way pronunciation takes part in all the skills development as it was shown. Pronunciation teaching is a matter of extreme importance and as a result its consideration to be included in the syllabus and integrated to the classes with the same importance as the other skills must be taken into account.

This research showed how the participants became aware about their pronunciation errors and tried to correct them; even more, some of the participants did eradicate some of those mispronunciation problems and started to articulate in a better way and with much more confidence at the time of speaking than at the beginning of the research. All these changes and enhance was thanks to the trusting environment developed through the treatment, because at the beginning the participants were not that sure if I was serious about the project because of my age; nevertheless, that mistrust disappeared as they were witnesses of their own progress and enhance with the exercises and all the practice carried out.

All along the research, evidence shows that explicit pronunciation teaching does affect positively and directly the subjects' oral production proficiency; however, the same results showed that time was not enough, for the participants, to consolidate all the new knowledge acquired. It is imperative to mention that the continuous, explicit teaching and practice of pronunciation since the very beginning of the English Language Program at UQROO will definitely bring a lot of benefits to the learners. That is why Pronunciation Teaching must be included in the syllabus because of its importance in language and communication.

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Appendix

Pre-test (Reading)

Abortion pill

Women living in France can have an abortion with a pill. The pill is called RU486. It makes having an abortion easy and without surgery. Women in America do not have access to this pill.

A congresswoman sent a letter. She thinks that women should be able to get the pill in the United States. Another person thinks that American women should not have it.

Some people worry about the new pill. They think it might teach people that abortion is no big deal. It will be harder to understand abortion if it is done with a pill.

Some doctors think that this pill is safe. A group of California doctors is working to get the pill approved.

Another doctor said that abortion is legal in California. He said science can make it safer for women. He wants to study the pill in California.

No one knows when the pill will be available to women in the United States. It is clear that many women want the choice.

Sample of Discrimination Exercises

What is a phoneme?

A phoneme is the smallest contrastive unit in the sound system of a language.

First exercise:

4. Discriminación del sonido extraño o diferente escuchando una lista de palabras: *cart class heart learn smart part*

Choose the odd word

- Go-so-no-**do**
- cleared-**heard**-beard-feared
- **shoes**-goes-nose-toes
- great-**seat**-wait-gate
- load-road-showed-**board**

- Discriminación de un fonema en particular en una lista de palabras. Ejemplo: *Tick the words which have the sound /p/: receipt pet photo psychology cap*
- 2. Discriminación de sonidos escuchando palabras consecutivas y subrayando las veces que escuchan determinado fonema. Ejemplo: How many times do you hear /eɪ/? Underline each one you hear:
Pepper paper letter later pen pain we wait get gate late let
- 3. Contraste de sonidos en cierta proximidad. Puede haber repetición coral individual. Ejemplo: *Pass me the pepper and the paper. I'll post the letter later. They won't let us in if we're late.*

Sample of Intonation Exercises

By Gerald Kelly (how to teach pronunciation)

1. Identify the intonation in the following questions.

Where do you live?

Where do you live?

How long have you been in London?

2. Underline the stress word in the following sentences.

I'd like a cup of herbal tea.

I'd like a cup of herbal tea.

I'd like a cup of herbal tea.

3. Which is the stressed word in this sentence and how does the intonation go?

Do you mind if I open ~~the~~^{the} window?

4. Now, listen to this question and identify the intonation's fall or rise.

Why don't you come to my party?

Why don't you come to my party?

Sample of Intonation Exercises

Ordering food

- Are you ready to order Sir?
- Yes, I'd like the chicken, please.
- The chicken. Certainly, Sir.
- And one vegetable lasagne as well, please.
- And vegetable lasagne. And to drink?
- Have you got white wine?
- We have. Would you like to see the wine list?
- Just give us two glasses of house white, please.
- Thank you, Sir.

Weather Forecast

- ⇒ Hasn't the weather been strange this year?
- ⇒ Yeah really...the summer was so hot.
- ⇒ Do you think this rain will let up today?
- ⇒ It might clear up in the afternoon. If it does, I'm going to do some shopping.

Rainy Day

- ❖ Wow, it certainly is an awful day.
- ❖ Yeah, I'm really fed up with all this rain.
- ❖ Well, it was only drizzle when I got up at 7, but this is too much!

Wrong Number

- Could I speak to John, please?
- John? There's no one by that name here. I'm afraid you've got the wrong number.
- Wrong number? Is this the English Department?
- No, I'm sorry, it isn't. This is the English Language Center.
- Oh I'm sorry to have bothered you. Could you tell me how to get the operator?
- Yeah just dial '0' if you're on the campus. Otherwise phone in again.
- Thank you very much.

Sample of Reading for Practicing Intonation, stress and rhythm

Hardened travellers

A history of turmoil has not stopped other countries affected by war, such as Vietnam, Cambodia and Croatia, becoming popular tourist spots. But it can take years after the last hostilities end to become part of the mainstream tourist trail.

"People who go to Iraq are adventurers. They will come back to their country of origin and they will tell the truth about what is going on there and this will encourage people to come," says Mr Yaqoubi.

But for many, tourists are not going to be rushing there any time soon.

"It wouldn't be attracting large numbers of package holiday-makers like Croatia has done. It would be a different market," says Mr Tipton.

"Certainly from our perspective until the situation improves there shouldn't really be any tourists going to Iraq at all."

Sample of Stress and Intonation Exercises

By Judy B. Gilbert (CLEAR SPEECH)

13

Numbers Checking and correcting mistakes

Did you say “ninety”? No, “nineteen.”
What does Shane sell?



A Saying numbers and years

1 Listen. Say each number two times.

1. 30


thirty

13


thirteen

2. 40


forty

14


fourteen

3. 50


fifty

15


fifteen

4. 60



sixty

16



sixteen

2 Listen. Say each year two times.


1. 1999


nineteen ninety-n̄ne


3. 2010


two thousand ten

2. 2005


two thousand f̄ve

4. 2029


two thousand twenty-n̄ne

Sample of Practice Exercises

By Judy B. Gilbert (CLEAR SPEECH)

H Pair work: What's a bath for?

- 1 Student A, ask question a or b.
- 2 Student B, answer.
- 3 Student A, if the answer is correct, say "Right." If it is wrong, ask again.
- 4 Take turns asking questions.

Examples

Student A: How do you spell "bat"?
 Student B: B - A - T - H.
 Student A: No. How do you spell "bat"?
 Student B: What's a bath for?
 Student A: To get clean.
 Student B: Right.

1. a. How do you spell "bath"? B - A - T - H.
 b. How do you spell "bat"? B - A - T.
2. a. What's a bath for? To get clean.
 b. What's a bat for? To play baseball.
3. a. What does "both" mean? Two things. Not just one of them.
 b. What does "boat" mean? A small ship.
4. a. What does "bath" mean? A tub, in the bathroom.
 b. What does "bass" mean? A kind of fish.
5. a. How do you spell "faith"? F - A - I - T - H.
 b. How do you spell "face"? F - A - C - E.
6. a. What does "math" mean? Work with numbers.
 b. What does "mat" mean? A small rug.
7. a. How do you spell "math"? M - A - T - H.
 b. How do you spell "mass"? M - A - S - S.
8. a. What does "mouse" mean? A small animal.
 b. What does "mouth" mean? It's used for eating and speaking.



Sample of Minimal Pair Exercises for Practice

Minimal pairs:

Boat – Both Four – Thor Sink – Think Filled – Thrilled Moss – Moth Sin – Thin

Brought – broth Tree – Three

Dan – Than breeding – breathing day – they ether – either doze – those teasing –
teething closing – clothing fodder – father

*Called-women-think-teach-done-approved-available-easy-able-harder-group-legal-the-surgery-
abortion-an-america-should-worry-science-clear-this-able-study-this-congresswoman-united-
pill.*

My father is a thin man.

I love trees.

Those toes aren't these toes.

These teas aren't those teas.

Sample of Carrying out Instructions Exercises

Stage I

Having identified some problem areas for the class, the teacher makes a list of instructions containing these. Below is such a list.

1. Draw a sheep on the board. (Spanish speakers often draw a ship).
2. Write the letter "P" above the sheep. (Arabic speakers often write "B").
3. Use the "P" as the start of the word "pleasant" and write the word (Japanese speakers often write "present").
4. Write "light" next to pleasant. (Japanese speakers often write "right").
5. Draw a mouse next to the word "light". (Spanish and Japanese speakers often draw a mouth)
6. Draw a pear next to the mouse. (Arabic speakers often draw a bear)

Sample of Tongue Twisters for Pronunciation Practice

By Sally Jennings

Twisters Pronunciation Practice

by Sally Jennings

Twisters with "t" and "th"

Those toes aren't these toes.

These teas aren't those teas.

This tike ties threads together twice.

That tike ties together three threads.

Those threads the two tikes tied are tight.

Twist twice to tie tightly.

Thirty tee-shirts are tan, and thirteen tee-shirts are tie-dyed teal green.

The teal tee-shirts total thirteen, the tan tee-shirts total thirty.

Twisters with "r" and "l"

The rickety ladder rattled right and left before it crashed through the glass.

Rotten lettuce really reeks.

Loose, leafy lettuce reminds me of really pretty, green trees.

Real lemon, real lime, which would you pick every time?

Ribbons rolled, ribbons loose, hair untied, what's your excuse?

Tip and tap, rip and rap, lip and lap. Tip, rip, lip, tap, rap, lap.

Twisters with "s" and "sh"

She's so sick, and she's so sore, I wish her well forevermore.

A shout from the south woke the sleeping sherriff.

Something sure is fishy in this city.

Silver slivers shimmer softly in the sunlight.

Twisters with "i" and "ee"

Bumblebees briefly buzzed beneath the bins of beans.

Feeling ill or feeling well, Phil will hardly ever tell.

Feeling full, Phyllis didn't eat a bit of the beets.

Treena tripped on the tree root, and really ripped her raincoat.

Tins of tiny sardines filled the field.

She sells slippers, sleepers, and tiny little creepers.

Twisters with Nonsense Words

Snickety snackety snuck, trickety trackety truck, clickety clackety cluck.

Feely filly fay, freely frilly fray, reapy rippy ray, leapy lippy lay.

Sample of the Oral Quiz Scoring Sheet

By Jack C. Richards (INTERCHANGE INTRO)

Oral quiz scoring sheet

Name: _____
 Date: _____
 Score: _____

		<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
Comprehension	0	1	2	3	4	5
Fluency	0	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar	0	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	0	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	0	1	2	3	4	5
General comments						
Suggestions for improvement						

Comprehension = ability to understand questions and respond appropriately

Fluency = ability to speak quickly, naturally, and without many pauses

Grammar = ability to use correct grammar and sentence structures

Vocabulary = ability to understand and use vocabulary words and phrases

Pronunciation = ability to use correct stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns