

AN APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF PRONUNCIATION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SPAIN

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*A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of*

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June 2014

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research study is mainly to introduce me to the world of research in English classroom, the main components that a research must have and the most relevant research methods. This work also presents an overview of the different methodologies prevailing in the teaching of English as a foreign language throughout the last two centuries and a description of the methodology that is commonly followed nowadays. It will also attempt a description of the most typical pronunciation problems that Spanish learners present by the time they learn English language. Finally, with the aim of conclude which method is the best to teach pronunciation, a research will be implemented in two groups of students of the same age.

KEY WORDS:

“Audio-lingual method”, “communicative method”, “history of the teaching of pronunciation”, “phonetics”, “pronunciation”, “pronunciation problems”.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays one of the most difficult problems for English learners is learning pronunciation. It is commonly the biggest obstacle to overcome when trying to achieve fluency. It is not only important to study grammar and vocabulary but it is also essential to acquire a correct pronunciation. Moreover, knowing grammar and vocabulary is useless if someone is unable to pronounce them correctly. Pronunciation is the first thing that speakers notice during a conversation, and, speakers who make pronunciation mistakes are less likely to be understood than those who make grammatical mistakes. Even a single mispronounced word can keep you from an effective communication with another speaker.

It is obvious, then, that pronunciation is important and cannot be underestimated and it must be one of the most important priorities when learning English. English teachers must give the same time and attention to pronunciation as they do to pronunciation and vocabulary.

In teaching pronunciation the main goal is not acquiring a native-like pronunciation but it is to be comfortably intelligible, and this means that people understand what you are saying at the first time. The main goals related to pronunciation are:

-Consistency: Pronunciation should become fluent and natural.

-Intelligibility: Pronunciation should be understandable to the listeners.

-Communicative efficiency: Pronunciation should help convey the meaning intended by the speaker.

The common way Spanish people pronounce English is characterised as being one of the worst all over the world. There are many reasons why we are considered to be one of the countries with the poorest English pronunciation. First of all in the curriculum, pronunciation rarely appears, teachers are not well prepared to teach pronunciation, they have not got a good pronunciation of English and, most of the time, they conduct their lessons in Spanish. It is also remarkable the lack of materials to work pronunciation and the time that teachers have to work it, they are more interested in teaching grammar and vocabulary than in teaching pronunciation.

In this research work some solutions and strong points to work with pronunciation at school will be offered, and also a research study will be carried out with a 9-10 year old group of students to demonstrate which method is the best to teach pronunciation to young learners.

2. AN INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Second language learning is something that is all over the world because of a variety of reasons that Seliger and Shohamy (1989:22) comment: immigration, the demands of commerce and science, the requirements of the education, etc. This is the reason why the research in this field has become one of the most exciting frontiers of cognitive science. Research in second language must be carried out taking into account the following aspects:

- The circumstances under which the research is conducted. For example the context, age and characteristics of the learners.
- The methodology used in the research. The methodology depends on the philosophy of the researcher, the theory motivating the research, the conditions of the research and the question to be investigated.
- The tools used to study the second language, such as observation, testing, interviews and instrumentation.

Research in second language must be multifaced and multidisciplinary, it has to take into account knowledge and research methodologies from areas such as linguistics, anthropology, psychology, sociology, education, etc. Each of these areas provides the researcher with different perspectives, goals and tools for studying the phenomena of second language learning.

David Nunan (1992:2) comments that research involves rigour and the use of some determined knowledge and skills. In this book David Nunan presents the research that he undertook with some students. He asked them to explain the term “research”, and certain key terms related with research popped up: inquiry, knowledge, hypothesis, information, classification, analysis, interpretation, asking questions, structured investigation, problem, prove, theory, evaluation, demystify and solution. Taking all the terms together, research would mean “process of formulating questions, problems or hypotheses, collecting data or evidence relevant to these questions/problems/hypotheses, and analysing or interpreting these data”.

David Nunan (1992:3) points out that the minimal definition of research could be that research is a systematic process of inquiry consisting of three elements or components: a question/problem/hypothesis, data and analysis and interpretation of data.

Seliger and Shohamy (1989:2, 3) state that research is cyclical, it is an ongoing activity which has no end, it is never completed because each part of research makes additional questions for more research. Either the results take the investigator to related questions or the main question or hypothesis cannot be answered or confirmed and the research must begin again.

The basic components of research are pointed out by Seliger and Shohamy (1989:7). According to them, these components can be found in everyday experiences. Those components are:

-There is a form of behaviour that is not clearly understood.

-The behaviour is observed and found to be special for some reason. Questions start to be asked.

-Several possible explanations for the unusual behaviour are sought and related in some way to previous knowledge or past events.

-One of the possible explanations is considered to be the one that most probably explains the behaviour.

-In order to test the hypothesis or answer, more data is needed.

One important thing that research must deal with is how we know that we have found the correct answer to the questions. Seliger and Shohamy (1989:13) suggest that research findings in second language studies may be categorized according to four types of knowledge which these findings represent.

Type 1 is “Knowledge as a belief”. It means that we know something on the basis of belief, we want to believe something to be true but we have not demonstrated it by an empirical test. The conclusions reached through common sense can be found in this category.

Type 2 is “Knowledge as authority”. It is similar to type 1 because it is also accepted at face value. The source of this knowledge is a scientist who has a good reputation and whose opinions in a field are accepted from a respected researcher.

Type 3 is “A priori knowledge”. We arrive to this type of knowledge by starting with a set of axioms about a phenomenon and then, we develop our knowledge of it by using reason and logic working. This kind of knowledge is usually founded on some previous systematic empirical work or observation. It is very common starting with a priori knowledge in second language research.

Type 4 is “Empirical Knowledge”. The main point of this type is arriving to the knowledge of something by observation and/or experimentation. What characterises this type of knowledge is interacting with the real world, observing phenomena and drawing conclusions from experience. But before starting with this one, it is necessary to start with one of the three types described above. In second language research this type must be pursued by a careful observation and description, also it also can be reached by experimentation, isolating a single factor for study.

There is also a division that Daniel Madrid (2001:12) makes about different kinds of research according to the goal that we want to achieve:

-Basic or theoretical research: This kind of research tries to build abstract theoretical models that explain the process of teaching and learning languages.

-Applied research: It applies the different theoretical models that theoretical research provides to different fields of education.

-Practical research: It makes a practical use of theoretical and applied research, it mix up both researches mentioned before.

This distinction is also made by Seliger and Shohamy (1989:17). They explain that each kind of research contributes to our additional understanding and knowledge of second language phenomena. This division is like this on account of covering a wide variety of possible topics and questions such as explaining second language acquisition, investigating the applications of theoretical constructs in linguistics, etc.

Each of these categories can contribute to the revision of the content and structure of the other categories, in a positive relationship which is not unidirectional.

Seliger and Shohamy also argue that the lines that separate these categories are not always clear but, in general terms, we could say that basic research is interested in universal of relative clauses, applied research deals with the order of acquisition and practical research is focused on materials development. But this is an idealization, because practical research can also have theoretical implications. This division is useful in helping us to understand the limitations of the research product itself.

As Daniel Madrid (2001:15) says, the topics and questions that will be researched can be addressed from different views or perspectives. The research approach that researcher will choose must be consistent with the type of research that will be conducted.

There is a binary distinction on research. Writers talk about qualitative and quantitative research, but this distinction has been recently argued because it could be simplistic and naïve. Those who make this

distinction suggest that quantitative research is pragmatic, objective and generalizable and that there are some external facts that are independent of the observer or researcher. About qualitative research they comment that knowledge is relative, it is subjective, holistic and ungeneralisable.

Reichardt and Cook (1979) made this distinction between these kinds of research:

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Advocates use of qualitative methods -Concerned with understanding human behaviour from the actors' own frame of reference. - Naturalistic and uncontrolled observation. - Subjective. - Close to the data: the 'insider' perspective. - Grounded, discovery-oriented, exploratory, expansionist, descriptive and inductive. - Process-oriented. - Valid: 'real', 'rich', and 'deep' data. - Ungeneralisable: single case studies. - Assumes a dynamic reality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Advocates use of quantitative methods. -Seeks facts or causes of social phenomena without regard to the subjective states of the individuals. - Obtrusive and controlled measurement. - Objective. - Removed from the data: the "outsider" perspective. -Ungrounded, verification-oriented, confirmatory, reductionist, inferential and hypothetical-deductive. - Outcome-oriented. - Reliable: 'hard' and replicable data. -Generalizable: multiple case studies. - Assumes a stable reality.

Figure 1.1 Terms commonly associated with quantitative and qualitative research.

Daniel Madrid (2001:16) explains that quantitative research is used to collect numerical data about the variables that we are controlling. These data are subject to certain statistical calculations. The instruments that are used in this kind of research are the tests, objective proofs, questionnaires that use Likert scales, etc. On the other hand, the qualitative research or ethnographic, does not use numeric quantification of reality, but tries to interpret and describe in detail through the word. A few examples of this type of research are the field notes, diaries, reports based on classroom observation, etc. Sometimes, quantitative and qualitative research are combined adopting an eclectic approach.

Leaving aside this binary division and focusing in the English classroom research, it is noted that nowadays, despite the development of technology and the variety of paradigms in all disciplines, education is still focused on a transmissive and rudimentary way of understanding the process of knowledge acquisition. This situation does not change because teachers do not try to study the educative reality in their classroom, they do not even try to build and discover their own way to teach, their own knowledge. They just follow what experts and researchers tell them to do.

When teachers research, they improve not only their own formation but also their work inside the classroom.

Research in the classroom has two parts: One is focussed on the pupil who learns by researching. The other is based on the teacher who teaches, reflects, analyses and research. In this research work we will focus only in the second aspect.

Teachers in the current society must train their capacity of researching by developing important attitudes and aptitudes while the academic training.

Gimeno (1983: 63-64) claims that research in the classroom is very useful for teachers because it develops a wide variety of competences:

-A cultural capacity and a knowledge basis about the education.

-An ability to investigate and to diagnose the educational situations.

-A technical ability with the methodological resources.

-It helps to detect implicit theories underlying teaching practice, take awareness processes prior to making decisions.

-It contributes to develop action strategies for making decisions.

-It aids to practice control, storing information to comment on it.

-It favours critical evaluation and reflection.

There is a lot of benefit that researching in the classroom can give to the educative system, but it is not an easy task to carry out as a result of several factors, including that many teachers do not like doing research and being researched, situations in the classroom are very complex and these situations are very varied and unsystematic.

Stenhouse, who is one of the most active researchers in the field of education, asserts that research in the classroom is a systematic, planned and self-critical inquiry, that is subject to public review and empirical findings that allow replication.

In order to go beyond the binary distinction between qualitative and quantitative research, Chaudron (1988) claims that there are four research traditions in applied linguistics:

-Psychometric investigations: They seek to determine language gains from different methods and materials through the use of experimental method.

-Interaction analysis: It investigates the relationships as the extent to which learner behaviour is a function of teacher-determined interactions, and utilises various observation systems and schedules for coding classroom interactions.

-Discourse analysis: They analyse classroom discourse in linguistic terms through the study of classroom transcripts which typically assign utterances to predetermined categories.

-Ethnography: It seeks to obtain insights into the classroom as a cultural system through naturalistic, uncontrolled observation and description.

Grotjahn (1987) provides another analysis of research in applied linguistics. He explains that in analysing actual research studies, it is necessary to take into consideration the method of data collection (experimentally or non-experimentally), the type of data produced by the

investigation (qualitative or quantitative) and the type of analysis conducted on the data (statistical or interpretive). With all these variables Grotjahn provides us two research paradigms. The first one is the exploratory-interpretive, it utilises a non-experimental method, uses qualitative data and gives an interpretive analysis of that data. The second one is the analytical-nomological, with this paradigm the data is collected through an experiment, and gives quantitative data which are subjected to statistical analysis.

Van Lier (1988; 1990) also comments and outlines a model for characterising applied linguistic research. Van Lier explains that applied linguistic research can be analysed in terms of two parameters: an interventionist parameter and a selectivity parameter. Research is placed according to two parameters, one is the extent to which the researcher intervenes in the environment and the other parameter places research according to the degree to which researcher prespecifies the phenomena to be investigated. When these two parameters intersect they create four “spaces”: The controlling space involves high degree of intervention and a high degree of control. The measuring space is characterised by a high degree of selection but a low degree of control, the researcher is very selective in what he or she chooses to look at or for. The asking/doing space contains studies in which there is a high degree of intervention, but a low degree of control. This research is about probing, trying out minor changes, asking participants their views and concerns, etc. After a while it will be possible to create a controlled environment in order to conduct an experiment. And finally, the semantic space is characterised by a lack

of selectivity and intervention. The researcher observes and records what happens without attempting to interfere with the environment.

Brown (1988) makes another analysis for characterising applied linguistic research. He is concerned with quantitative research and draws a distinction between primary and secondary research. Primary research is divided into case studies, which are centred on a single individual or limited number of individuals, documenting some aspect of their language development, usually over a period of time, and statistical studies, which consider a group of people as a cross section of possible behaviours at a particular point or at several distinct points in time. Brown also divides statistical studies into survey studies, investigate a group's attitudes, opinions or characteristics through questionnaires, and experimental studies, control the conditions under which the behaviour under investigation is observed.

As a conclusion, in this research work will be focused on the study of the pronunciation in Primary Education and following the ideas of Brown I will go through the lines of the statistical research focusing on the experimental one. My research work will be characterised by the practice, it will contain theoretical and applied research.

Furthermore, the research work will have the purpose of describing some phenomena and behaviours that occur in the English classroom as a main resource of data which will be analysed in its contextual framework. Following the ethnographic research I will start formulating a hypothesis, developing a field work and analysing the data collected, to finishing by proving that the hypothesis was true or reformulating the initial proposal.

Always trying that the research work will keep the main conditions that Nunan claims, internal and external reliability, and internal and external validity.

3. METHODS OF TEACHING PRONUNCIATION. A HISTORICAL APPROACH

In this part of this research work we will be consider a historical overview of how pronunciation has been dealt with in language teaching over the past one hundred years, and therefore the most meaningful teaching approaches and techniques that have been used will be examined.

Kelly (2000:13) claims that vocabulary and grammar haven been studied much longer than pronunciation, that is why the teaching of grammar and vocabulary have been much better understood by most language teachers than the teaching of pronunciation, which began to be studied only a short time before the twentieth century began.

Before the nineteenth century only the “Intuitive-Imitative Approach” was used, and sometimes this approach was supplemented by the teacher’s impressionistic observations about the sounds of the words written in the textbooks, and this impressions were mainly based on orthography. This approach depends on the learner’s ability to listen to and imitate the rhythms and sound of the target language without the intervention of any explicit information.

The “Analytic-Linguistic approach” was developed to complement the “Intuitive-Imitative” method, and it was based on the idea that using information and tools such as phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, charts of the vocal apparatus, contrastive information and so on would be enough to make students acquire a perfect pronunciation. It focuses the attention on the sounds and rhythms of the target language.

Throughout the twentieth century there were a few methods in which the teaching of pronunciation was irrelevant. In this regard, Celce-Murcia (2010:3) highlights the Grammar Translation and Reading-Based Approaches. In these methods grammar or text comprehension was taught through the medium of the learner's native language, and oral communication was not the principal goal, and therefore it was not dealt with appropriately.

There were, however, other methods which, according to Celce-Murcia (2010:3) paid a proper attention to the teaching and learning of pronunciation: the direct method, the audio-lingual method, the oral approach, the cognitive approach, the silent way, community language learning and the communicative approach. As Celce-Murcia (2010:6) explains, the language teaching has changed positions many times with respect to the teaching of pronunciation.

The “Direct Method” gained popularity between the 1800s and 1900s, in this method the pronunciation is taught through intuition and imitation, that is, the students imitate a model. It was based on observation: The students imitated what the teachers did. The successors of this approach called it “Naturalistic Method” and maintained the main initial methodology, which basically consisted in listening without much pressure to speak and imitating what the teachers said. The main idea behind this approach was that it gives the learners the opportunity to internalize the target sound system.

In the 1890s a “Reform Movement” in language teaching, which contributed to the teaching of pronunciation, began. It was influenced by

phoneticians such as Henry Sweet and Paul Passy, who developed the “International Phonetic Alphabet”. The International Phonetic Alphabet resulted from the establishment of phonetics as a science dedicated to describe and analyse the sound systems of languages. This alphabet made possible to represent the sounds of any language visually and accurately. These phoneticians influenced modern language teaching by advocating some notions and practices:

- The spoken form of a language is primary and should be taught first.
- The findings of phonetics should be applied to language teaching.
- Teachers must have solid training in phonetics.
- Learners should be given phonetic training to establish good speech habits.

This “Reform Movement” played a role in the development of “Audiolingualism” in the United States and of the “Oral Approach” in Britain during the 1940s and 1950s. In both of them pronunciation is very important and is taught from the beginning. Students also imitate and repeat what teachers say, but teachers also make use of information from phonetics such as visual transcription system or charts that demonstrate the articulation of sounds. One of the most common techniques used by teachers is the technique called “minimal-pair drill” which works with words that differ only by a single sound in the same place in both words.

This technique can be used for both listening practice and guided oral production.

In the 1960s the “Cognitive Approach” appeared. This approach was influenced by transformational-generative grammar and cognitive psychology. In this approach grammar and vocabulary were considered to be more important than pronunciation mainly because of two principal reasons. The first was that a native pronunciation was an unrealistic objective to be reach and could not be achieved, and the second was that they preferred to teach more learnable objectives so that time would be better spent on teaching grammatical structures and words which were more reachable.

In the 1970s the “Silent Way” and “Community Language Learning” were the methods that appeared and were important and relevant. The “Silent Way” method is characterised by the attention paid to accuracy of production of both the sounds and structures of the target language from the initial stage of instruction. Not only it is important the accuracy of individual sounds and how they are stressed, but also the way they combine phrases, how they blend, stress and how intonation is produced. The “Silent Way” approach let learners sharpen their own inner criteria for accurate production.

Community Language Learning (CLL) was developed by Charles A. Curran (1976) for teaching second and foreign languages. CLL lessons start with the students sitting around a table with a tape recorder, the teacher asks one student to say something in his or her native language that the student wishes to be able to say in the target language. The teacher

translates it and provides the phrase, then the student repeats it a few times until the sentence can be produced fluently and it is recorded. Then the teacher writes a transcription of the student's utterance and a translation. Following that the teacher plays again what he had recorded before and learners match the new language with the word-for-word translation provided by the teacher. Next, the teacher asks the students to make further practice. If they want to practice more, the teacher starts in the same way than before but engaging in a technique known as human computer (the teacher can be turned on or off when the student wants, and can request the correct pronunciation of a given phrase), and this lets the student repeat sentences until he or she is satisfied with the pronunciation.

In the 1980s appeared a new method which was the dominant in language teaching, it is called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) but it is also known as Communicative Approach. In this method the principal aim is the communication, it should be central in all classroom language instruction. This focus on communication claims renewed urgency to the teaching of pronunciation and avoiding oral communication problems.

Intelligible pronunciation is one of the necessary components of oral communication, other component is the methodology, teachers ask themselves how they can improve the pronunciation of unintelligible speakers of English. Teachers answer this question by reviewing the kinds of techniques and practice materials that have traditionally been used and are still being used to teach pronunciation. The list of techniques is the following: Listen and imitate, phonetic training, minimal-pair drills,

contextualized minimal pairs, visual aids, tongue twister, developmental approximation drills, practise of vowel shifts and stress shifts related by affixation, reading aloud/recitation, recording of learners' pronunciation.

Before the appearance of the Communicative Language Teaching method, in the 1970s the Communicative approach began to take over most of the materials for teaching pronunciation were rejected because researchers thought they were incompatible with teaching language as communication. Then, materials developers and teachers began to search for more appropriate ways to teach pronunciation. They conclude that the optimal way to organize a pronunciation course for non-native speakers was teaching suprasegmental features of language for instance the rhythm, stress and intonation.

Nowadays, the pronunciation instruction is moving away from the suprasegmental debate to a more balanced view. Today's pronunciation curriculum tries to identify the most important aspects of both features (suprasegmentals and segmentals) and integrate them in courses that meet the need of any group of learners.

In addition, there is also the issue of voice quality setting that is a certain number of stereotypical features such as pitch level, vowel space, neutral tongue position and degree of muscular activity which contribute to the overall sound quality associated with the language.

Once one has to decide which accent to adopt to teach pronunciation, it is difficult to choose one of them because of the large number of varieties of English that can be found in the world. The standard for

teaching British English has been for a long time RP (it is the accent of British English commonly used in textbooks, it is called Received Pronunciation), but the goal should be an accent that is comprehensible by non-native speakers, leaving apart the native speakers. Jenny Jenkins (2000, 2002) proposed a syllabus for English pronunciation based on what the needs of non-native speakers of English are.

Before choosing a model for teaching English, teachers must take into account a few aspects that Celce-Murcia (2010:279) highlights. One of the most important aspect is the learner's speaking needs. As Wennerstrom (1992) said, learners are best motivated by pronunciation materials taken from their own personal situations. The more that learners can rehearse real-life language and situations, the more confident and motivated they will be. Another important aspect is the teaching context, and in this respect the teacher's preparation is essential. Celce-Murcia (2010:280) writes that Murphy (1997) claims in his research that it is very important to make teachers be in contact with real teaching or tutoring while studying phonology, developing and making use of narratives written by teachers and learners of pronunciation. It is also important to receive training with technology related with teaching pronunciation, and being conscious of the current advances in language-teaching methodology and, finally, being prepared to investigate their learners' actual speech intelligibility needs.

English teachers must follow the official curriculum where they will find the importance of the pronunciation in English teaching, which is

different in each country and region. Pronunciation is not always included in the curriculum so teachers need to find ways to integrate it.

The choice of textbooks is another aspect that must be taken into account. It can be determinative to the appearance of the pronunciation in the teaching situations.

Another aspect that teachers must think about is the need to find ways to record learners' voices and provide listening models, so it is important that teachers have a variety of instructional technologies.

Finally, two of the most important and determinative aspects are the number of learners per class (the more students in a class the less attention they will receive) and the time per week that is programmed to teach pronunciation. Teachers must try to work it by integrating it into every lesson.

Celce Murcia (2010:283) mentions the priorities that Gilbert targeted for beginning learners in pronunciation. She emphasizes that pronunciation instruction should be integrated right from the start in order to avoid the kind of wrong pronunciation that will become harder to modify later on. Gilbert highlights seven priorities:

-To work the basic vowels focusing on the sounds correspondences.

-Consonants that serve as grammatical signals.

-Linking between words.

-The number of syllables.

-Word stress.

-Prominence.

Celce-Murcia (2010:284) comments that once teachers have clear the real goal of the English lessons (which is being able to communicate and interact successfully in English), they will be able to design a proper pronunciation classroom. Here are the most important steps to guide the teaching of pronunciation:

-Step 1: Find out what learners need: It is recommended to find out more about learners' background and goals by doing needs analysis before starting the instruction. As Celce-Murcia (2010:284) claims, "the more we know about our learners, the better we can address their needs".

-Step 2: Find meaningful language for learners: Learners are motivated by practicing with language that is useful or meaningful to them.

-Step 3: Use samples with authentic language in pronunciation lessons: Teachers must find samples of authentic language. Teachers must try to work pronunciation using situations related with pupils' world.

-Step 4: Make repetitions with body movement: With choral repetition automacity is worked. It would be ideally to accompany this choral practice with some gesture or body movement (stepping, clapping, tapping or clapping on each stressed syllable).

-Step 5: Let learners practice: After repetitions, teachers can let learners make less controlled activities such as dialogues and role playing activities.

-Step 6: Record learners' speech for feedback and review: Recording learners' speech is a good way to let them evaluate on their own and make self-reflections. Learners can also realise of their progress over time.

4. PRONUNCIATION PROBLEMS IN SPANISH-SPEAKERS

As it is widely known, the native language is an important factor to be taken into account in learning to pronounce English. This is demonstrated by the fact that a foreign accent has some of the sound characteristics of the learner's native language. Due to these sound characteristics it is easy to recognise the person's origin just listening to them. Kenworthy (1987:4) suggests a few factors that affect pronunciation learning:

-The native language: There are many kinds of problems and difficulties for English learners which stem from their native language. There are a variety of problems with the sound system of English which have been studied in many research studies. These problems are for example rhythm, intonation, etc. Kenworthy says that the more differences there are between the native language and English, the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English.

-The age factor: There are lots of research studies about the fact that, on the one hand, starting to learn a second language as a child will facilitate making you pronounce it like a native, and on the other hand, if someone begins studying it in adulthood it will be very difficult to have a native accent. Most of the studies seem to suggest that the younger a person is, the better she or he will be at acquiring an accurate perception of the sounds of new languages and having achieving a good pronunciation, but it is important to

continue with the exposure to the new language during adulthood to prevent it from deteriorating. However, there are some contradictory studies in this regard and there are many interpretations and possibilities, so there is not a clear link between age and ability to pronounce a new language.

-The amount of exposure: The amount of exposure deals with the quantity of English that learners receive. Learners can live in an English speaking country or in a non-English speaking country and using English most of the time. Many studies seem to suggest that that great deal of amount of exposure is not a necessary factor for the development of pronunciation skills, though it is an important factor.

-Phonetic ability: Some people are better for foreign languages than others. This skill is composed of a mixture of aptitude for oral mimicry and phonetic coding ability (also known as auditory ability). Many research studies demonstrate that some people are able to discriminate between two sounds and mimic sounds better than others. But every human being has the basic ability to learn a language, this is an innate ability, and therefore everybody has some phonetic ability.

-Attitude and identity: Factors like the sense of identity and feelings of group affiliation are very important for the acquisition of an accurate pronunciation of a foreign language. Research studies show that when people adopt and imitate the way that a partner

speaks, he or she shows positive and friendly feelings towards that person.

-Motivation and concern for good pronunciation: It is well known that learners have different degrees of concern about their pronunciation, some of them are concerned about how bad they pronounce and during the speech they stop and ask for comments about their accuracy of pronunciation. Some learners have a desire to do well, and this is a kind of motivation.

Kenworthy (1987:8-9), after explaining all of the factors that may affect pronunciation, argues that we cannot change the age of the learners and teachers can only increase exposure to a certain level. The factor that can be worked most by teachers is motivation and the concern for good pronunciation, for example by means of persuading learners of the importance of good pronunciation or explaining that a native accent is not the most important goal but intelligibility and communicative efficiency. Teachers can also demonstrate concern about the learners' pronunciation and their progress with it.

Kenworthy (1987:9) also analyses some problematic aspects of pronunciation for English learners. One of the most common is the combination of sounds: the English language sounds are sometimes pronounced in groups such as, for example, in the case of "consonant clusters" that occur when two consonants appear at the end of a word. The linkage of words is also very common in the English language. It happens when people do not make pauses between words. The word stress is another important aspect: when an English word has more than one

syllable one of these is pronounced louder than the rest, holding it a little longer and trying to pronounce the consonants very clearly. English speech is very musical, it has a beat, a rhythm, within each group there are strong and weaker beats. Words with only one syllable are unstressed and in this case the vowel sounds usually adopt the sound called weak forms, and their pronunciation is quite different from the times in which the words are stressed. In conversations it is important to think about the sentence stress, the speakers must decide which word is going to have more or less prominence. Finally, the speaker must also consider the changes in pitch that he or she makes, that is, the intonation: as the speaker is talking the pitch of his or her voice can change, making it higher or lower. With intonation, the speaker can send messages to the listener transmitting feelings or moods.

Kenworthy (1987:11-12) explains that the way that a person speaks is a sign of their origin, it is a part of their identity, all the languages have varieties and different accents. It is not a problem to speak English with a foreign accent, there are many advantages in being identifiable as a foreigner such as avoiding misunderstandings and adjusting the way that they listen. Kenworthy highlights that learners must forget that speaking with a foreign accent is a problem.

Walker (2010:30) comments that the pronunciation of Spanish is very predictable from its spelling. Beginners will have problems with pronunciation because they will read each letter as they would do in Spanish, so this will lead to problems of intelligibility.

Walker (2010:130) explains that there are numerous accents of Spanish, in Spain and also in South America. This situation has two advantages: First, English learners from Spanish countries are already aware of accent variation. Secondly, some English sounds do not exist in Castilian Spanish but can be found in regional accents, so they will be able to imitate specific sounds that they will need for learning English.

Intelligibility is claimed by Kenworthy (1987:13) to be as the most important goal when pronunciation is taught. The definition that Kenworthy gives of this term is as follows: “Intelligibility is being understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation”. According to Kenworthy, teachers must set intelligibility as a goal, it is more important than having a native pronunciation. The aim of the foreign speakers should be being intelligible so that they can communicate a message (Kenworthy 1987:15).

This term has also been used by others authors such as Smith and Nelson (1985) who affirms that intelligibility is the listener’s ability to recognize words or utterances, and use comprehensibility to the ability to understand those words or utterances in their given context.

There are many aspects that can affect a person’s intelligibility. Kenworthy (1987:14) points out several of them. To start with, he listeners will have problems to follow the speaker if they make self-corrections, hesitations and grammatical restructurings. Another factor will be the speed of the speech, although this is not a vital factor in intelligibility, because even if the speaker speaks fast you can pick up half of the words

in the message and get the meaning. Idiosyncratic speech habits can also affect intelligibility, since these habits can confuse a native listener.

In English there are some consonants that can create confusion and affect intelligibility. Walker (2010:130) points out some of them, for example the confusion between /s/, /z/, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/, another example occurs with the sounds /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʒ/ and /j/.

There are also a couple of factors that affect the listeners, because intelligibility presupposes a certain degree of linguistic competence on the participants. The first one is the familiarity with the foreign accent, this is the ability to understand a particular type of accent, and the second is the listener's ability to use contextual clues when listening: this means that listeners can use clues from the others parts of the sentence to figure out a particular word.

It must also be pointed out that there are some strategies that are commonly used when learning English, and there are a few problems that can appear when learners try these strategies. Kenworthy (1987:17) makes some comments the most typical pronunciation strategies which can lead to intelligibility problems:

-Sounds substitutions: Difficulties can be found when the speaker substitutes one sound for another. There are a few substitutions that can be identified by the listener because the substituted sound it is close to the real one. It is also important for the listener the context in which it happens so that it will be easier to understand the meaning and avoid unintelligibility.

-Sounds deletions: These kind of problems appear when the speaker leaves out a sound at the beginning, middle or end of a word.

-Sound insertions: Learners often tend to add sounds at the beginning or at the end of the words.

-Links between words: It is also possible to find problems at the beginning and end of the words when one word follows another. In English there are several types of links between words. One of them is linking a sound: in English it is common to insert a letter between two words which makes it sound as only one. A sound merger is another kind of link: it happens when the final consonant of a word merges with the first consonant of the second one. And finally, a composite sound, which is what happens when a different consonant is used between two words to pronounce the two words faster.

As Kenworthy (1987:18) says, if learners do not use these English features or if they use different ways of linking words, it will be really difficult for English listeners to properly identify the phrases.

-The use of stress: In English syllables are perceived in a different way depending on, for example, the loudness and the length of the vowel. The learner must be aware of stressing one syllable more than another and trying not to stress the wrong syllable, because the listener may have problems to understand the word.

-The use of rhythm: The English language has a characteristic rhythm and listeners expect to hear it. Learners must take into account that English needs an alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables, with the stressed syllables occurring on a regular beat.

-The use of intonation: In English, listeners receive information from the pitch of the voice that the speaker produces. Intonation is an important weapon for intelligibility, because it is used to transmit intentions.

Kenworthy (1987:98) comments that it is useful for teachers to know the sources and the causes of the spelling and pronunciation problems. Kenworthy summarises several possible causes of spelling difficulties among non-native learners:

-Learners whose native language is based on the Roman alphabet: the problems may be caused by confusion between the sound of a particular letter in the native language and its value in English.

-Learners whose native language uses a non-alphabetic system will have to adjust to alphabetic conventions. This is the case of Japanese and Arabic systems.

-The English spelling system is another source of difficulties. English is an alphabetic system, it means that it is necessary to sort out which letter corresponds to which sound, but English is not a strictly regular alphabetic system where a letter always corresponds to only one sound. Learners from Spain and Italy find this more

difficult because their written language is mostly phonetic, which means that each letter stands for one sound and almost always for the same sound.

-The last one is the pronunciation of the learner. It is possible that the learner has difficulties in distinguishing English sounds, spelling in a correct way, misspelling of letters, etc.

Kenworthy (1987:99) provides a list of spelling and pronunciation errors with the possible cause. In its list it is also possible to find out some of the mistakes that Spanish learners usually make:

-Learners often insert a short vowel before (-st) clusters. For example Spanish learners pronounce /ʌndərəstænd/ instead of /əndəstænd/.

-The Spanish language has a /b/ sound which is written as “b” or “v” at the beginning of words and another sound which only occurs in the middle of words also written as “b” or “v”. For example Spanish learners tend to pronounce /və'kævjələri/ instead of /və'kæbjələri/.

-Spanish learners often confuse the sound /æ/ with the sound /ɛ/. For example they pronounce /lɛŋgwɪdʒ/ instead of /læŋgwɪdʒ/.

Kenworthy (1987:153) focuses on the differences between the pronunciation of English and the pronunciation of Spanish, and describe the problems that learners tend to have.

Each language uses a certain number of sounds called phonemes which let people distinguish words and morphemes from one another (Cook (2001:69)). A phoneme is a sound which is used to distinguish meanings in a particular language. The problem for second language acquisition is that each language has its own set of phonemes, and the English system is not easy at all because there are more sounds than letters and this makes it quite difficult to learn.

Wilfried Wieden and William Nemser (1991) carried out a research which showed the importance of transference from one language to another in acquiring pronunciation. It is not about transferring a single phoneme from Spanish language to English, learners must notice that each language has its own phonemic characteristics. It has been demonstrated that some of the learners' pronunciation rules are related to their first language, which makes a unique temporary system.

Spanish learners have several problems with:

-Consonants:

-The confusion between /b/ and /v/ that I have explained above.

-/d/ may be too close to /ð/. The word “day” /deɪ/ can sound like “they” /ðeɪ/.

-/θ/ is absent in some varieties of Spanish, it happens for example with the word “thin” /θɪn/. Sometimes it is replaced for /f/ or /s/.

-/ʃ/ it does not occur in many varieties. For example with the word “shoe” /ʃu:/.

-/dʒ/ and /ʒ/ are unfamiliar sounds, and learners will tend to substitute them by the letter “y” in Spanish. The same will happen with /j/, it will be replaced by the letter “y”.

-/w/ learners will pronounce it as a /b/ or they may put a /g/ before the sound. As happens with the word “wet” /wet/.

-/h/ learners will delete it or pronounce it with a whistle. There could be some confusion between /h/ and /dʒ/. Sometimes the word “ham” /hæm/ sounds like “jam” /dʒæm/.

-/r/ Spanish learners will replace it for a drill or /d/ it is acceptable but it sounds foreign.

-/ŋ/ it will only make problems when it appears at the end of words, the learner will end with a consonant cluster or will disappear the sound /ŋ/ of the end of the word (which will make more problems to recognise the word).

-Consonant clusters and sequences: Spanish and English share many clusters, so learners cope quite well but when the English cluster contains an unfamiliar sound:

-Two and three element clusters beginning with /s/. Learners may insert a vowel before the /s/. With the word “small” learners may add a vowel before “a-small”.

-Learners will tend to add /s/ for plural, even when the /z/ is required.

-Final consonant clusters with /s/ do not usually create problem. But sometimes speakers may delete the final /s/.

-Final consonant clusters with /t/ and /d/ are problematic. Learners may delete them or insert a vowel between the last two consonants.

-The combination /s/ plus consonant plus /s/ is a difficult one. Normally, speakers delete one of the two /s/’s. Like the words “nests” /nests/ and “risks” /isks/.

-Word stress: One difficulty that Spanish speakers usually find is placing the stress on the right syllable in compound words and in the adjective plus noun combination. The Spanish language have no equivalent structures. Word order is used in Spanish to achieve what is accomplished by stress placement in English.

-Sentence stress: There is a difference between English and Spanish speech with regard to sentence stress, and because of this many meanings which are conveyed in English through sentence stress are conveyed in Spanish through particular words.

-Intonation: There are three areas that need attention:

-Pitch range: Spanish speakers use a too narrow pitch range, they keep a very restricted pitch movement over a phrase or clause.

-Final falling pitch movement: It may not sound low enough. This is because Spanish speakers rarely use a slight rise before the final falling pitch, which makes the final pitch movement sound too flat.

-The rise-fall seems difficult: This is because the pitch-reversal by itself is hard for learners to do, especially on short phrases or one syllable or because of shyness or self-consciousness.

-Problems with vowels:

-/ei/-/ɛ/ there is often a confusion between these two sounds. Teachers must encourage learners to use lip spreading for /ei/. For example with “ages” /eɪdʒs/ and “edges” /ɛdʒs/.

-/ʌ/ it does not exist in Spanish but it is similar to the sound “a” in Spanish. Like in “must” /mʌst/ or “but” /bʌt/.

-/ɪ/-/i/ there is also a confusion between these sounds. Learners will tend to use the latter for both vowels. For example with the words “bit” /bɪt/ and “beat” /bɪt/.

-/u/-/ʊ/ learners will not difference them and they will tend to use more the first sound than the second one. One example of this confusion is “boot” /but/ and “book“/bʊk/.

-/ə/ it does not occur in Spanish. English learners will substitute the vowel suggested by the spelling.

-In Spanish vowels there is no variation in length, so learners will tend to make vowels equally long, which will be too short for the English native listener. Teacher must try to give learners a general recommendation to lengthen vowels.

5. WORKING HYPOTHESIS

Iñigo (2005:1) states that by the time children start acquiring a first language, they develop a proper phonological competence. This is because they start being in contact with the language since they are babies (first the baby starts listening the sounds of his or her parents and imitating them), at the beginning they start with the perception of the language, which later will affect production. Before babies are six months old they babble no matter what language they hear, but after the six months they start babbling the language that they hear, which is an innate ability.

Spanish speakers have a problem by the time they want to learn a second language, this problem is called “interference”. It happens when the native language affects the learning of a new language. Carroll (1968:114) states that “interference” appears when someone who has already learned one language to a high degree of competence starts learning another language in which his or her competence is initially nil. Iñigo (2005:2) claims that the phonological acquisition of first and second language is very different. As Major (2001:56) explains, having experience in a particular language is related with a decrease of ability to percept contrasts in other languages, this means that the older a person is the more difficulties he or she will have learning a second language, mainly because of the interference of the native language.

Carroll (1968:115) also comments that difficulties in pronunciation of sounds in a foreign language may have a perceptual component, which is discrimination and identification of sounds, and a motor component,

which is shaping of articulatory performances. Most of pronunciation difficulties are apparently the result of interference from native language habits with respect to pronunciation of particular graphemic symbols.

O'Connor (1980) asserts that the reason why people cannot acquire new sounds is because of their native language sounds. This problem affects more to adults than children. The sound-units from the native language dominate people as they grow, so that is the reason why adults have more problems to get the correct pronunciation of a new language than children.

Iñigo (2005:3) comments that when a Spanish speaker has to pronounce a sound that does not exist in Spanish, he or she will look for a similar sound in Spanish. But this is a wrong way to pronounce, Iñigo (2005:3) states that the only way to pronounce English properly is building a new group of English sounds and forget using every time the native sounds.

Carroll (1968:117) also provides some factors involved in interfering. One factor is age: young children are less subject to interfering than older people. Another factor is the intelligence and the flexibility of people with the new language. Motivation, training methods and materials are other important factors.

The main reason why interference appears in English learners is because of some of the training methods commonly used by teachers, which can be collectively labelled as “Guided Methods” since they are carried out with a teacher, a methodology, a programme, etc. Researchers

call this way to teach “to learn” a second language, but it has been demonstrated that people learn better with non-guided ways, which are based on learning a second language in a natural context without a teacher or pedagogical orientation, and it is similar to the acquisition of the native language.

The aim of this research work is to solve the pronunciation problems that learners from fourth year of Primary Education have for recognising and pronouncing some sounds in English. The research study will be carried out in this way: I will use an Audio Linguist approach in one class and a Communicative approach in the other one, and in this way I want to show that a Communicative approach is more useful and helps learners better to get a good pronunciation than the Audio Linguistic approach.

The phonemes that I will focus on in this research work on will be: /æ/, /ʌ/, /e/ and /ɜ:/. The reason why I have chosen these phonemes is that they are some the phonemes that pose some difficulties to pupils by the time they have to pronounce them in a list of minimal pairs. They have problems to differentiate how to pronounce the sounds /æ/ (as in “cat”) and /ʌ/ (as in “cut”), also they have problems with the sound /e/ (as in bed) and /ɜ:/ (as in bird).

Celce-Murcia (2010:115) states that vowels sounds can be distinguished from each other by which part of the tongue is involved, whether front, central or back, and by how high the tongue is when the sound is produced, whether high, mid or low.

Roach (1983:14) explains the main characteristics of these phonemes:

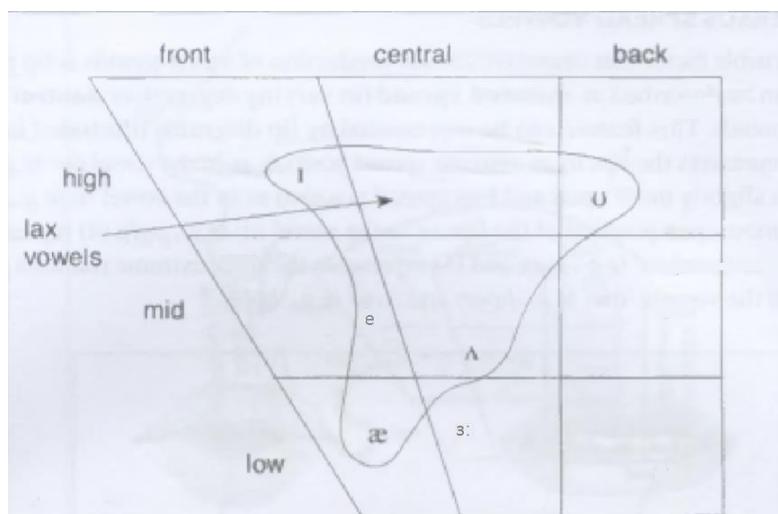
-The first phoneme which is /æ/, it is a short low front vowel. To produce it the tongue and the jaw are low and drop slightly during the articulation. There is also some lip spreading.

-The second one is /ʌ/, it is a low mid-central vowel. It is characterised by a relaxed and neutral position of the jaw, lips and tongue.

-The phoneme /e/ is a mid-front vowel. It is slightly low and relaxed, there is no glide and the tongue is in a central position. In this vowel there is less spreading of the lips.

These three phonemes have one similar characteristic, they are lax vowels, Celce-Murcia (2010:118) explains the characteristics of the lax vowels: the muscles are more relaxed by the time of pronouncing them, there is less tendency to glide and they occur only in closed syllables when they are stressed.

-The last phoneme is /ɜ:/, it is a long central vowel. It is well known as a hesitation sound, the position of the lips is neutral.



The Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT) is based on the theory that the primary function of language use is communication. Its primary goal is to develop a communicative competence and make use of real-life situations that need communication between people. The principles of this method are the following:

- Using tasks as an Organization Principle, it means using tasks as central units that form the basis of daily and long-term lesson plans.
- To promote learning by doing.
- To enhance the input needs. The more time students are exposure to language the more language they learn and store in their brains.
- The input needs must be meaningful, comprehensible and elaborated.
- To promote cooperative and collaborative learning.
- To focus on form. It means to teach grammar with a form-meaning connection and also in a context and through communicative tasks.
- To provide feedback, whether it is positive or negative.

Brown (1994:57) states that the Audio-lingual Approach also has the goal of creating communicative competences learners, but in a different

way. It attempts the learning of a new language by making repetitions and elaborating a huge variety of drills, the aim was to make learners to response in an automatic way. The main principles are:

-New material is presented in dialogue form.

-Mimicry, memorization and overlearning are the base of the method.

-Structural patterns are taught by using repetitive drills.

-No explanation of grammar, is taught by inductive analogy.

-Tapes, language labs and visual aids are very used.

-Only teachers use the mother tongue.

-Positive feedback is used.

The school in which I will make the research promotes the study of English language since the first year of Primary Education. The pupils' English level is correct, there are individual differences between pupils, some of them are above average and others are below it. Pupils are motivated to study English because they know that it is a powerful weapon for the future, so families also promote its study at home. This research work will be carried out with pupils of eight or nine years old and they have been studying English four years and every week they have three hours of English lessons. The book that is used in the English class is

“Bugs World”, this book shows the English language contextualised in engaging stories taken from the pupils’ world and interests. The book also offers many opportunities for children to communicate in English. It also works on pronunciation, in each unit a phoneme is worked upon by showing a few words that contain it and a sentence with that words, pupils listen to it and repeat the words and the sentence.

6. DESIGN OF ACTIVITIES

6.1 Communicative method:

Words introduction:

The lesson with this group will start showing a few words in the board (which contain the target sounds) that they will use later in different activities. I will point out the differences between the sounds and I will also explain how to make the sound with the mouth and voice. Pupils will have a few minutes to practice these sounds.

Phonemic bingo:

Each pupil will receive a bingo card with 6 words that contains the target phonemes. Then, pupils will listen to words with the target sounds. Pupils will have to recognise them and cross out the words that they have in their cards.

Memory game:

In this game the class will be divided in groups of four pupils. Each group will receive a set of cards to play memory game. They will have to look for the word and its pronunciation. They will play in turns, if one pupil find out a pair he or she will keep both cards and will continue looking for more. The pupil that at the end of the game will have more pairs of cards will be the winner.

Stand up:

Each pupil will receive a list with four words containing the same sound. Teacher will pronounce one word and pupils will have to recognise the sound and guess if they have it in their list, if they have it they will have to stand up.

Phonemic crossword:

Teacher will display a crossword in the screen with words hidden, they will have as a help the words written with the phonemes that they are learning.

Hands up game:

The classroom will be divided in two teams, then teacher will say a word and they will have some time to think how to write it, then one of the team will stand up and will write it on the board, if they do it well the team will receive a point.

Tongue-Twister:

Each pupil will receive one tongue-twister which contains one target sound, teacher will let some time to read it, and then the pupil will stand up and read it with a good pronunciation. After reading it, pupils have to guess the sound that they have heard.

Which sound am I?

Each pupil will receive one posit with a sound. Pupils will have to discover which sound they have by asking to others “which sound am I?”.

Pupils will answer using the words that they have been working during the lesson.

6.2 Audio-lingual method:

Pupils will receive a sheet of paper with a number of activities that they will do during the class. First teacher will make a short introduction writing words with the four phonemes that they will work later. Then teacher will start doing the same exercises that are showed below for both pairs of phonemes:

-Pupils will listen to the different sounds and they will repeat them a couple of times to interiorise which is the way to make the sound properly.

-Pupils will listen to some words and sentences that contain these sound and then they will have to repeat it one by one.

-Pupils will make a few activities in order to distinguish each phoneme of the minimal pair.

-Pupils will have to fill a chart with the four phonemes with a list of words that contain the sounds worked before.

7. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

This research study has been developed in two different classrooms of 4th year of Primary Education. One group was taught the target phonemes with an “Audio-lingual” approach and the other group through a “Communicative method”. Once both groups were taught the target phonemes, they took a dictation which included words with the phonemes worked in class. The results of the dictation were the following:

	AUDIO-LINGUAL GROUP MISTAKES	COMMUNICATIVE GROUP MISTAKES
/ʌ/	46	25
/æ/	14	8
/ɔ:/	8	2
/e/	3	1

In this grid we can see the number of mistakes that each group made with the words of the dictation. The results show that with the sound /ʌ/ pupils of the “Audio-lingual” group made 46 mistakes as a whole. This sound was the most problematic for pupils, most of the pupils had problems with the words “truck” and “hut”, and they wrote instead “track” and “hat”. There is a difference between the mistakes made by the two groups: it can be observed that the “Communicative” group made less mistakes than the “Audio-lingual” group.

It has been observed how effective the “communicative method” is in Primary Education classrooms through the results achieved with the

programming and implementation of a couple of lessons with a group of pupils, which were better than the ones obtained in the group that received these lessons following an audio-linguistic approach.

The results obtained with the “communicative method” are determined by the motivation and participation of pupils to develop the proposed activities related with the pronunciation of the problematic phonemes.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Along this research study the more relevant methods of the teaching of pronunciation through history have been studied and analysed in order to demonstrate the reasons why English pronunciation of Spanish people has always been worse than in other countries. Due to this situation a new approach to teaching pronunciation is appearing and gaining in importance, it is called “communicative method”. This approach is based on a change in the way of teaching pronunciation which aims a developing a communicative competence of pupils by making use of real-life situations and learning by doing.

Furthermore, teaching English by using this method will make pupils receive an instruction that satisfies their needs. It provides pupils with a wide range of abilities such as a linguistic competence, a sociolinguistic competence, a discourse competence and a strategic competence, all of them highly important to live in the current society.

These abilities that the “Communicative method” provides pupils are the reason why it is necessary to remove and fix the weaknesses of the other methods of teaching English which are based on aspects that at present are not useful for pupils.

Thereby, it can be assumed that teaching English pronunciation through the “Communicative method” is not only beneficial for aspects related with the pronunciation of sounds, but it is also important to encourage pupils’ motivation to participate in English lessons and practice the target sounds through games and interactive tasks.

It must also be highlighted that there are difficulties and barriers that imply, for teachers and also learners that they have to change and modify an established methodology and a way to work in class which have been common in schools for many decades now. Teachers must acknowledge the need of reflect, upgrade and act in order to improve the language teaching for future pupils, adapting this methodology to the needs of every moment. It can be asserted that teachers must be constantly researching about how they can adapt the methodology of teaching languages to the pupils' needs and level, which are continually changing.

Finally, this research study has demonstrated that the “communicative method” is effective and viable to be implemented in Primary Education. Teachers must take into account the benefits that this method brings in teaching English in Primary Education and take steps to ensure that all English teachers start considering this method as the main one in the process of teaching the English language in Primary Education.

9. ANNEXES

1. Diagnostic test:

1. Fit-feet
2. Did-deed
3. Dead-did
4. Desk-disk
5. Get-gate
6. Wet-wait
7. Cat-cut
8. Cap-cup
9. Bowl-ball
10. Know-nor
11. Not-note
12. Want-won't
13. Can-ken
14. Bag-beg
15. Fast-first
16. Guard-gird

2. Audio-lingual lesson:

Name: _____

Class: _____

1. Listen and practise the sound /æ/.
2. Listen and practise the sound /ʌ/.
3. Listen and repeat both sounds /æ/ y /ʌ/.
4. Look at the screen, listen and repeat the words.
5. Listen and write 1 (if you hear sound /æ/) or 2 (if you hear sound /ʌ/).

a.	d.
b.	e.
c.	f.

6. Look at the screen and listen to the sentences.
7. Listen and write 1 (if you hear sound /æ/) or 2 (if you hear sound /ʌ/).

 - a. d.
 - b. e.
 - c. f.

8. Circle the word that you hear in the sentences:

1. Cap-Cup	4. Mad-Mud
2. Hat-Hut	5. Hang-Hung
3. Bag-Bug	6. Ran-run

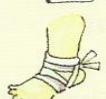
9. Listen and repeat the words (sounds /e/ and /ɜ:/).
10. Listen and write 1 (if you hear sound /e/) or 2 (if you hear sound /ɜ:/).

a.	c.
b.	d.

11. Look at the screen and listen to the sentences.
12. Listen to the sentences and write which sound you hear (/e/ or /ɜ:/).

 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

3. Minimal pairs:

Sound 1 /æ/	Sound 2 /ʌ/
 cap Where's my cap?	 cup Where's my cup?
 hat There's a hat in the garden.	 hut There's a hut in the garden.
 track See the tracks on the road.	 truck See the trucks on the road.
 ban There's a ban on it.	 bun There's a bun on it.
 bag She's got a bag.	 bug She's got a bug.
 ankle My ankle was injured.	 uncle My uncle was injured.

Sound 1 /e/	Sound 2 /ɜ:/
 ten The sign says ten.	 turn The sign says turn.
 Ben Look at it, Ben.	 burn Look at it burn.
 bed It's a colourful bed.	 bird It's a colourful bird.
 west It's the west wind.	 worst It's the worst wind.

4. Audio-lingual activity:

Write the words in the correct place:

/ʌ/	/æ/	/e/	/ɜ:/

Ten	burn	track	bun	cup	West	truck	bug	uncle	Ben
Turn	cap	bird	ankle	hat	Bed	hut	ban	bag	worst

5. Phonemic Bingo (samples):

butter	gird	west
ten	cap	bird

cap	butter	cut
first	bed	match

cup	match	batter
bread	herd	cut

cat	west	ten
gird	butter	herd

cat	herd	first
bird	much	butter

bed	ten	Cut
match	bread	Cup

cut	butter	first
herd	cap	ten

match	gird	much
batter	first	cat

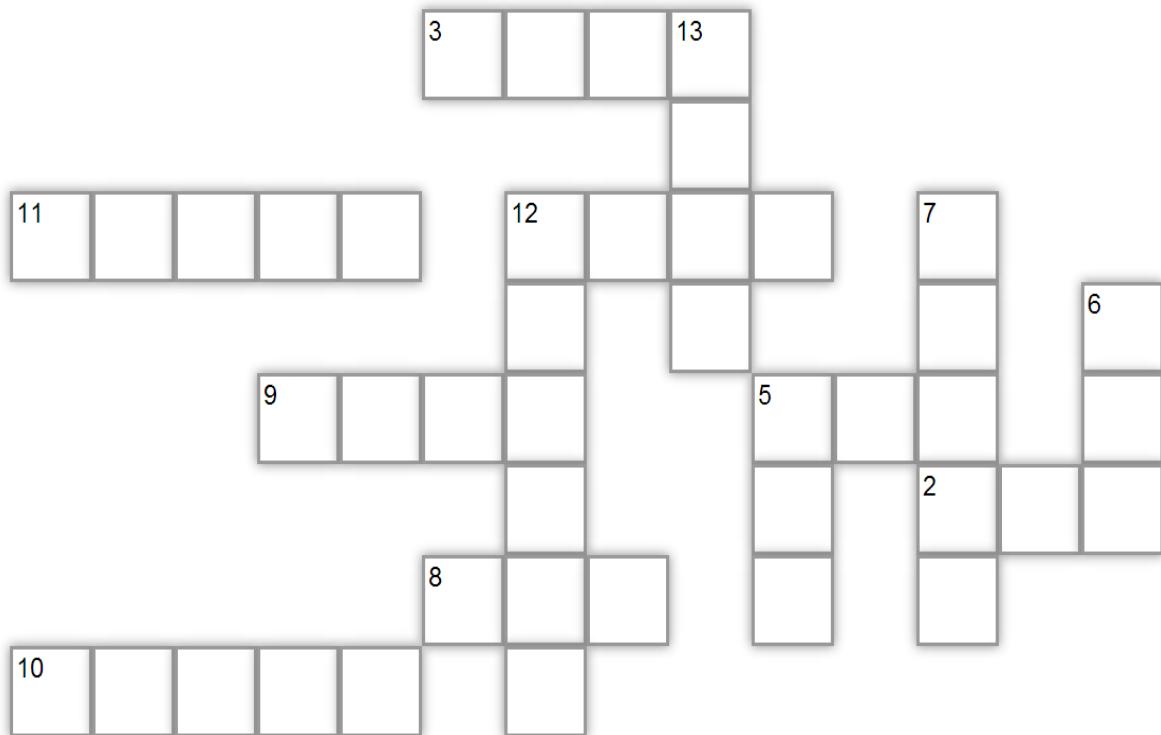
west	butter	cup
cap	much	bird

6. Memory game:

Blood	/blʌd/
Was	/wʌz/
Dumb	/dʌm/
Cap	/kæp/
Half	/hæf/
Ask	/æsk/
Ten	/ten/
Bed	/bed/
West	/west/
Skirt	/skɜ:t/
Heard	/hɜ:d/
Burn	/bɜ:n/



7. Phonetic crossword:



2. /cʌp/ 3. /mʌch/ 5. Down: /cʌt/ Cross: /cæt/ 6. /cæp/ 7. /mætch/ 8. /ten/ 9. /west/

10. /bred/ 11. /fɜːrst/ 12. Down: /bʌtter/ Cross: /bɜːrd/ 13. /hɜːrd/

8. Tongue twisters:

With the sound /ʌ/:

That much luck must suck (that mʌch lʌk mʌst sʌk)

Hug a duck but mug a buck (hʌg a dʌk bʌt mʌg a bʌk)

I love my pug's rug (I lʌv my pʌg's rʌg)

My truck is stuck in a rut (My trʌk is stʌk in a rʌt)

With the sound /ɔ:/:

He's worse than the nurse in the hearse (He's wɔ:rs than the nɔ:rs in the hɔ:rs)

First, nerds burn worst (Fɔ:rst, nɔ:rdz bɔ:rn wɔ:rst)

A bird heard the curse burst (A bɔ:rd hɔ:rd the cɔ:rs bɔ:rst)

Servants learn work irks (sɔ:rvants lɔ:rn wɔ:rk ɔ:rks)

With the sound /æ/:

That's actually Andy's Aunt (Thæts æctually ændy's ænt)

The damn band hanged the gang (The dæm bænd hænged the gæng)

Thank the banks for the angst (Thænk the bænks for the ængst)

Don't bash ash in a flash (dont bæsh æsh in a flæsh)

With the sound /e/:

Wet led, let wed, wet led wed.

Meg met Ted, Ted met Meg.

Set wet pets on the wet red deck.

Wet well, wet net, sell ten wet nets.

9. Dictation exam:

Ben is a man, he is ten years old. He lives in a hut in the west of Canada. His father is Brad and he has a truck. Ben and Brad have a bird in their hut and it only eats bread. Bert is Ben's uncle and he has a black hat and he also has a big cup in a bag. Next to the hut there is a track with a lot of cats. One of the cats plays with the sand and finds some worms. Now Bert, Brad and Ben are working in the hut and later they will clean the truck.

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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