

Enhancing Intelligibility Awareness by means of a Didactic Sequence on the Minimal Pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/ in a group of EFL beginner students at a Public Institution in Cali

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ABSTRACT

This study provides an analysis on how a group of EFL beginner students improved their pronunciation taking into account an intelligibility-based approach by means of a didactic sequence on the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/. The results were analyzed with a pre and post-test. The purpose of the analysis was to enhance intelligibility awareness on oral speech instead of native-like pronunciation. Moreover, this report prepared students to notice English as a Lingua Franca over the Native-Standard model. The results indicated that students improved pronunciation over the target sounds, although more rehearsal was necessary to achieve accurate pronunciation and to produce intelligible speech.

Key words: Pronunciation, intelligibility, Lingua Franca, perceptions, native-like pronunciation, intelligible speech.

Dedication

This Master's report is dedicated to my son Juan Nicolás who has encouraged me to fulfill this amazing journey; to my wife Maria Isabel for her unconditional support and tolerance; to all my family who have always been there for the most important decisions of my daily life. Finally, to both of my parents who have been my role model; you instilled in me in this wonderful world of teaching and set up very high standards in my life: My father Nicolás Delgado Betancourt and my mother Libia Solarte.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English context has changed to Lingua Franca setting which focuses teaching pronunciation through other considerations as enabling communication thorough intelligibility “learners simply need to be understandable” (Levis 2005). This last statement gives the idea that pronunciation should be taught through segmental (consonants and vowels) or suprasegmentals (rhythm, accent and intonation); spontaneous speech that allows better patterns of no-native articulation (Reed & Michaud (2011) rather than native-like speech.

Davis, R in Kirkpatrick (2010), insist that English is functioning as circles; the inner circle, which refers to the origin and spread of the language, as well as the outer circle, which refers to the geographical expansion of the language. The depth circle refers to the social penetration of the English language that permeates various domains as education, political discourses, literacy creativity and media. Since English is expanding, pronunciation patterns and the aim of native-like pronunciation are shifting; Docherty G in Kirkpatrick (2010:84) affirm that “the social and demographic factors which have delivered substantial levelling in recent decades continue to evolve and in doing so create conditions conducive to new patterns of phonological innovation and change”. In one of his studies about British English, especially in the UK context he concluded that individual identity is the driver for the adoption of innovative sociophonetic properties and that the ethnic mix continues to evolve leading to have strong shapes of social speech interactions without interfering in the final message of the oral interaction.

According to what has been stated above, English pronunciation also moves in the inner circles as the research mentioned in the UK, therefore in the outer circles can happen the same or even more. In this research, English plays a role as foreign language (expanding circle) whereas the oral interaction in L2 is not highly used for this reason. Developing awareness in accurate pronunciation is not an easy task since this skill is most of the times isolated in the L2 teaching process. The fact that its integration is difficult, teachers tend to think that it is an unnecessary practice (Levis 2018). My Teaching experience has shown that students, especially beginners, present issues the moment they face new phonemes in English as /θ/, /z/, /v/. When students start to produce oral discourse in L2 but do not reach native-like pronunciation; they feel overwhelmed and reject the L2 learning process. Avoiding students to enhance intelligible speech is frustrating them to communicate in L2. For that reason, those wrong practices of native-like articulation must change; instead foster oral intelligibility.

The aim of this research is to implement a intelligibility-based approach through an implementation of a didactic strategy with the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/ to achieve better pronunciation therefore to enhance oral intelligibility and make students realize that native-like pronunciation is not a requirement when speaking L2 rather to “encourage students to focus and understand the differences between what they are saying and the target language forms they intend to use (language gaps)” (Segura, 2015). Segura adds that it is necessary to make students notice since “[pronunciation] errors can cause breakdowns in meaning in oral production” therefore “Swain (1998), Schmidt (2001) and Ellis (2005) believe that teachers

must execute effective strategies to make students notice their [pronunciation] mistakes and monitor their language performance to trigger language learning” (in Segura 2015).

Through a didactic sequence, it is intent to make students notice that by achieving better pronunciation, their oral production will carry better characteristics of intelligibility thus more comprehensibility for listeners when uttering in L2. Other main point of this research is to boost the speaking skill to foster pronunciation and make their oral productions more intelligible.

Pronunciation in English is one of the most difficult skill to develop for Spanish speaking students (in this case); they tend to pronounce the same way as they read in Spanish. Furthermore pronunciation has been isolated from the teaching practice for this reason is necessary to find activities to integrate more this skill thus to raise awareness that standard pronunciation leads to intelligibility therefore better communication. English as a Lingua Franca has presented that pronouncing some sounds refers to “particular English” is particular difficult, for instance the /th/ sound is one of them but according to Seidhofer (2005) is not necessary for international intelligibility.

As I have stated before, the importance is to reach standards of pronunciation but not native-like because strong point of this research is to see English as an outer and expanding circle (varieties of English, Moran & Thomson 2018), since in these settings intelligibility plays an important role. More over the place where the research will be carried out does not integrate any particular

program of pronunciation neither the teachers know how to aim this practice. Through the didactic sequence, the objective is to help students acknowledge that their intelligibility plays an important part in the communication process; also to help teachers integrate better the pronunciation instruction by Lingua Franca settings rather than segmental instruction.

This research promotes the use of an intelligibility-based approach (improve skills of pronunciation rather than native speech), Levis (2018). Through a didactic sequence using the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/; learners will notice that accurate pronunciation will increase their oral intelligibility thus their oral performance.

1. CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

SENA is a public national education institution in Colombia that offers free training to millions of Colombians who benefit from technical, technological and complementary programs that focus on the economic, technological and social development of the country. Its objective is to provide comprehensive professional training to the workers of all economic activities, and to those who, without being so, require such training, in order to increase national productivity and to promote expansion, harmonious economic and social development of Colombia. Because of this, it is important for the institution to strengthen the processes of integral professional training, through instructors trained with teaching strategies that allow them to improve and fulfill with greater effectiveness the duty to provide essential knowledge such as English to its students.

The research was carried out in one “Regional” of Valle del Cauca. This branch focuses on preparing learners on everything related to construction; for that reason, its name is “Centro de la Construcción”.

“Centro de la Construcción” is located in Santa Fe neighborhood, in the municipality of Cali. The audience of majority of the courses comes from low strata; to learn second language is not relevant for them; for this reason, the moment they face L2 learning they feel overwhelmed and several times, they reject to learn it. This implies that whenever they need to learn pronunciation they do not engage with it because they still think that this skill is related to the nativeness which

means native-like pronunciation, (Levis 2005). The didactic sequence in this study aimed at the practice of the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/ to raise awareness that is not necessary to produce perfect or native pronunciation, instead to show that accurate pronunciation raises intelligibility and this will better communication practices among NNS(nonnative speakers). In the didactic sequence, students will be able to notice their own mistakes and monitor their language process. As well, this study aims to help teacher engaged more the pronunciation practice through Lingua Franca settings, by making them aware of the fact that intelligibility plays an important part in their learning process and to link the teaching process over segmental ways.

2. RESEARCH QUESTION:

How to raise students' awareness of the importance of improving their pronunciation in order to produce more intelligible speech, using English as a Lingua Franca?

3. GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To raise students' awareness on the importance of improving their pronunciation in order to produce more intelligible speech, through the implementation of pronunciation tasks with minimal pair /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/.

3.1 Specific objectives

- a. To implement a didactic sequence focus on the instruction of the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/.
- b. To identify if there is any improvement in the pronunciation of the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/ after the didactic sequence.
- c. To identify students' perception on the role of intelligibility in the oral production before and after the didactic sequence.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Nowadays the tendencies of learning a second language have increased due to various factors, for instance many people want to achieve a L2 since they need it for job issues, traveling, business, etc. Learning a language requires that the apprentice not only focus on grammar, reading or writing but also the culture and even its pronunciation. This last one has been isolated from the L2 learning process which explains why students, when learning L2, fear pronunciation “foreign-accented speech is the overwhelming norm among learners of foreign languages” (Levis 2018:7). This is caused because of the conception students have about pronunciation.

Many students assert that articulating sounds in English must feature nativeness, this means utter as native speakers do, which nowadays is considered unnecessary, because English has taken the position as Lingua Franca “English as an international language” (Seidlholfer, 2005:1). Seidlholfer states that “English is being shaped at least as much by its nonnative speakers as by its native speakers; and the vast majority of verbal exchanges in English do not involve any native speakers of the language at all” (2005:1). Learners should be aware of this principle, which could reduce their fears to learn English, particularly, pronunciation, since what they have to notice is their intelligibility “learners simply need to be understandable” (Levis, 2005). The main objective of this research is to improve pronunciation and oral interaction. This aiming to the role that English as Lingua Franca has. As personal viewpoint, it is important to remark that pronunciation should be integrated in the L2 classroom to engage communication

however instruction should be lead through strategies that can lead students to utter L2 without fearing not achieving native-like speech.

4.1 Pronunciation and intelligibility in second language teaching

Pronunciation in the second language teaching has had many issues in our context. First, some teachers do not count of the knowledge, academic background, nor with guidelines in the curriculums designed in their institutions. Second, other teachers do not incorporate the instruction of pronunciation through segmental sounds (pronunciation of vowels and consonants) nor suprasegmentals (rhythm, intonation and accent) which in Lingua Franca settings are relevant and necessary. I conducted a research in a language institute located in the city of Cali (Colombia) with thirteen beginner students. I took into account three minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/ and designed a didactic sequence to improve their pronunciation in context. The results demonstrated that after applying the didactic sequence, most of the students improved their pronunciation in the target sounds, but only when they used the specific exercises; in other context as practicing other oral tasks, they seemed to forget accurate pronunciation of the target sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/, making their utterances “unintelligible”. The research intended to produce native-like pronunciation over the target sounds, thus any slight mistake they had was considered a break down in their speech. For instance, the word /three/ mostly pronounced /tree/ in the sentence: “[aɪ hæv tri dɔgz]” was considered unintelligible. This meant that Intelligibility was not considered; the aim of the study was only to achieve native-like speech over the target sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/ and aim high standards of nativeness to consider their speech “proper English”. By

that moment, I did not know the implications of English as Lingua Franca, neither the benefits of enhancing intelligibility awareness on students' speech. Nonetheless this study gives valid information to this new research because with the same sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/, it is planned to promote accurate pronunciation integrating intelligibility on students' utterances.

Munro (2011) positions intelligibility as one of the most important aspects in communication because without it, communication will not be successful. He insists that is better to foster intelligible patterns in EFL students so they can aim for a "comfortable intelligible pronunciation" instead of a native-like accent. There are some aspects taken into account when studying pronunciation: *accentedness* (how different someone's speech seems, often from the listener's variety), *comprehensibility* (the listener's experience of how difficult the speech is to understand), and *intelligibility* (how much of the speech is actually understood by interlocutors). He highlights that is imperative to focus on the latter ones since those ones leading to communication success rather than changes in *accentedness* that would not make any significant improvements in the oral interaction. With this valid information, it is crucial to focus more on what EFL learners really need to focus on and try to implement better strategies to fulfill their prior needs.

Moreover, Levis (2005) gives another view over intelligibility. He explains about two contexts that have to be analyzed whenever pronunciation is taught since L2 instructors are rather attached to native-like instruction. First, he gives the notion of inner circle and outer circle. The first one refers to those who are related

ties to academic environments (e.g., those ones that are pursuing any high study of language instruction) are the ones that should have native-like articulation because their environments are closely related to native circles. On the other hand, the outer circles (e.g., those ones that do not pursue any kind of language instruction) are those ones that only need the language to communicate and usually interact in non-native circles. One of the main aspects Levis (2005:3) remarks, is that, it is crucial to change the way pronunciation is being addressed in the pedagogical practices since the procedures are old instead new instruction should be applied in our new reality. Up until now, the information provided by has been relevant to understand how the practices of pronunciation have been addressed and that is necessary to make changes in the practice to encourage more participation in EFL students.

To continue understanding the topic of how pronunciation is being established in the pedagogical practices is essential to see some researches in the area.

Algethami, Ingram & Nguyen (2010) studied listeners' performance. They argue that non-native listeners have an intelligibility advantage over native listeners when they listen to accented English, in this case Arabic English. They measured pronunciation through a group of ten students divided in two groups: Low pronunciation proficiency and high pronunciation proficiency. They concluded that non-native listeners have a slight intelligibility advantage over native students when listening to accented English because the first ones can identify better phonetic properties when uttering L2. This study case prompts the strong idea that intelligibility plays an important role in the L2 learning process as well as

pronunciation matter. Furthermore, Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid (2005) agreed that pronunciation accuracy is highly related to group affiliation this means that belonging to an ethnic group, pronunciation is easier to perceive. They studied this case with two groups Francophones and Chinese in Quebec. The results demonstrate that the use of intelligibility helped students to recognize any of the accented English uttered in L2 but students felt more comfortable and easier to distinguish the one that belong to their ethnic group. This paper brought relevant knowledge because this gives a broad idea to take into account if whenever teaching pronunciation in our context students feel better to listen to native-like articulation or they feel more affiliated to other non-native accents. Related to this topic Golombek and Jordan (2005) pointed out that identity is also a point to be considered to enhance intelligibility. They explained that their preservice teachers to use native-like English in their educational practices because they did not consider identity as an important part of their learning process for this matter intelligibility was left behind conducted two Taiwanese students of a Master's program. After the misunderstanding and analyzing the case of study suggested that, there are other alternatives to native-like instruction as aspects of multicompetence to engage learners in a better teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, Hahn and Watts (2011) aimed their research to develop intelligibility through narratives (storytelling). The study was directed to non-native students and the objective was to observe how this population managed their intelligibility issues. The findings were interesting as seeing how these non-native learners brought out their L2 background, knowledge and social awareness to find

ways of solving events of miscommunication. Other important aspect was that the storytelling helped learners to face ways to understand what was wrong and interpret the situation. The authors came up with a conclusion stating that intelligibility is an analytical skill development since it helps learners to lower their anxiety about not being able to utter in L2 in this particular exchanges.

On the other hand, Kang and Thomson (2018) analyzed the effects of incorporating different English accents (Mexico, Nigeria, India, South Korea) into a TOEFL mock exam. They combined these accents to produce speech samples for the TOEFL listening test. The results asserted that intelligibility played an important role because English with a specific accent was as highly comprehensible for students when listening to native-like accents (United States, Australia, and Britain). With this perception, it is important to infer that it is crucial to continue permeating the idea of Lingua Franca concept in the EFL classroom.

Finally, Reed and Michaud (2011) acknowledged that there is an important relation between speaking and listening. They argue that this relation facilitates perception therefore more intelligible spontaneous speech thus allows better listening comprehension. The aspects analyzed by the authors were connected speech features, suprasegmental features, inflectional morphology, and segmental. To validate this integrated model, the researcher decided to give auditory feedback because with this method, learners perceive better speech production as well as listening comprehension. They finally established that it is necessary to prompt learners output through different aides such as spoken models, visual aids, and oral or written descriptions. This effective information was

notable to consider that it is relevant not only consider speech when pronunciation is instructed but listening as well and to take into account other aspects help students produce output in order to obtain intelligible utterances.

In conclusion, there is a lot to say about pronunciation and its role in the teaching practice. Through this literature review, it was possible to evidence that the instruction has changed and new techniques have arisen. For instance, raise awareness at Lingua Franca settings in which nowadays is the main target thus intelligibility plays an important role in the L2 learning process. Seidlholfer (2005:1) states that “English is being shaped at least as much by its non-native speakers as by its native speakers; and the vast majority of verbal exchanges in English do not involve any native speakers of the language at all”. For this reason, the aims of how the skill of pronunciation is being adapted to the L2 environments have to change for that reason the research that I carry out, is to widen the idea that pronunciation has to be instructed in the L2 class. With this view of integrating pronunciation and intelligibility the possibilities to have better oral production can increase in the L2 classroom, moreover to highlight the importance of English as Lingua Franca and make students aware that native-like pronunciation is not as important as learners think it is. Levis (2018:3) insists that “not only is pronunciation central to the success of NS–NNS interactions, it also appears to be the central factor in the intelligibility of NNS–NNS spoken communication”.

To aim better the research, it is necessary to conceptualize some of the most important aspects taken into account, for this reason, pronunciation, oral intelligibility and its features.

Seidlhofer (1994:4) defines pronunciation as “the production of receptions of sounds of speech.” She states that “sound is significant because it is used as a part of a code of a particular language.” Moreover, Levis (2018) highlights that English learners must have a control over their pronunciation if they want their speech to be completely understood, yet he argues that foreign language learners may not be able to achieve native-like pronunciation but progress in pronunciation is possible and needed. The author insists that pronunciation is important for speaking but it is not the only element for proper speech, “not all of the elements (grammar, vocabulary, fluency) of speech need to be perfectly native-like, but they all need to be good enough” (Levis 2018:14).

In addition, intelligibility (oral intelligibility) as Munro and Derwing (in Levis 2018) point out is the “the extent to which a speaker’s message is actually understood by a listener, therefore, Levis (2018:15) remarks that, intelligibility is “the most important goal for spoken language development in a second language – both for listening and speaking – no matter the context of communication” (Levis 2018:15). Seidlhofer (1994:5) asserts that “in speech communication, intelligibility is a measure of how comprehensible speech is in given conditions.” In other words, it is how much of the speech is actually understood by interlocutors. Nevertheless, Levis affirms that the definition about what Munro and Derwing give to intelligibility is just a broad concept; intelligibility goes beyond, Smith and Nelson (in Levis 2018:16) declare that “intelligibility presumes that listeners understand speech in a variety of ways: that they can identify the words that are spoken, that they understand the message, and that they understand the intent behind the

message”. Furthermore, Munro and Derwing (1995 in Levis 2018:17) also proposed three types of spoken language understanding: Intelligibility, comprehensibility and accentedness. (See figure 1).

They explain that the first type of understanding; “Intelligibility means both the extent to which a speaker is understandable, and whether the particular words used by a speaker are successfully decoded (the lexical level of intelligibility)” (1995 in Levis 2018:17). This means that listeners should understand when they are asked to answer comprehension questions or deliver any kind of summaries of what they understood; this reveals intelligibility in a semantic level. The second type of understanding; comprehensibility relates about “the amount of work that listeners need to do in understanding a speaker”. This is related on how listeners perceive the speech whether is easy or difficult to listen to the speaker. Accentedness the third type is considered to be “the degree of difference between speech and a local or reference accent” Munro and Derwing (in Levis 2018:17).

Figure 1

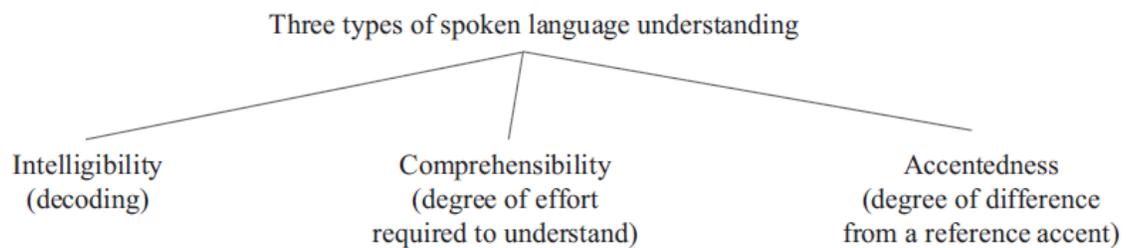


Figure 1.1 Three types of spoken language understanding (Munro & Derwing, 1995)

Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that the accent is individual; each person performs and accents different even if they belong to a country, area or social class (Oviedo 2017).

These terms will be addressed through the research therefore it is important to consider them in each analysis.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research implemented an intelligibility-based approach to make learners improve their pronunciation skills rather than the native speech-like skills. For this reason, a didactic sequence based on the instruction of the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/ was held. This to acknowledge intelligibility in SENA basic learners' speech as a result to foster better speaking practices.

In my English classes at SENA, I have noticed learners struggled with the learning process of the L2, especially, with pronunciation. I realized that learners needed some help to overcome this issue. Their concern with pronunciation constantly addressed by my students in class. This is evident in some comments: *“teacher, no quiero hacer el ejercicio porque no puedo pronunciar bien en inglés. “Mi pronunciación es mala; la pronunciación de los gringos es difícil”*. After listening that, first, it made me realize that they did not know about Lingua Franca settings. Second, that they hardly ever had been put through oral exercises, and third, that they had always emphasized that pronunciation needed to be native-like. Because of these main issues, I decided to design activities to enhance

pronunciation and, mostly importantly, raise awareness of the use of English as a Lingua Franca, because they needed to reject the idea of native-like speech, yet to notice that “make themselves understand” enhancing oral intelligibility was more important.

A qualitative approach seemed more appropriated for this study, since it describes learners perceptions and the practice originated through the implementation of a sequence of exercises focused on minimal pairs to foster intelligibility; thus, an Action Research design seemed pertinent since the purpose was to analyze how a class strategy (didactic sequence of the minimal pairs /θ/, /ð/; /s/, /z/; /b/, /v/) can enhance students’ awareness of the importance of developing intelligible speech to be able to communicate in English without seeking for native-like performance. Through this method, it was possible to observe, reflect, plan and act. With this method, I was able to observe and take a close look to the issues students presented; reflect on students’ misconceptions about pronunciation, then plan a strategy; a didactic sequence about the minimal pairs /θ/, /ð/; /s/, /z/; /b/, /v/ and, finally act; implement the sequence and collect the necessary data. Farrel, (2007:1) highlights important aspects of Action-Research, he states the next:

“Within second language education, action research has usually been associated with the study of classroom actions rather than addressing social problems associated with language teaching. Bailey (2001: 490) maintains that action research for language teachers is “an approach to collection and interpreting data which involves a clear, repeated cycle of procedures”. Action research is

conducted by practicing language teachers because they themselves are valuable sources of knowledge regarding their own classroom situations and as a result change can be implemented more credibly because practicing teachers will find the results more credible and valid for their needs.”

5.1 PARTICIPANTS

The group was made up for 30 students between the ages of 18 to 25. It was a convenient sample and the criteria of selections were: a) lack of exposure to the target language in class or through interactions, b) without knowledge of the IPA or pronunciation exercises in SENA. Bruthiaux in Castro (2018:15) argues, “80% of learners are immersed in contexts where English is neither used nor required and students have very low levels of proficiency”. Therefore, they are not engaged to the L2 learning process, not willing to perform oral presentations and having a bad concept about their pronunciation in L2.

5.2 TOOLS AND DATA ANALYSIS

To analyze the effectiveness of the didactic sequence, a pre-test and a post-test were implemented. A pre-test to diagnose students’ background in oral production and pronunciation of the sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/. Three activities were proposed to enhance oral speech. A post-test containing an oral production task of the sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/ to evidence students’ improvement in pronunciation.

Focus groups were a valid tool, before and after the tests, which fully covered the information required to identify students' perceptions and beliefs about pronunciation. On part of the pre-test opened students view over the status of Lingua Franca, mostly having them notice variations in accents and intelligibility, on the pre-test how they perceived their improvement on their utterances and their opinions over the exercises done in class.

5.3 PROCEDURES

The English class took place only once a week (only on Fridays) for a period of 4 hours (8:00 am to 12:00 pm). To engage them in the process it was necessary to introduce some topics as Lingua Franca, why English is a Lingua Franca, what implication has pronunciation in Lingua Franca settings and what intelligibility is.

TOPICS OF LINGUA FRANCA		
What is Lingua Franca	Brief explanation (Jekins 2000, Mar, 2019)	Examples: traveling, commerce, internet, etc.
Why English is a Lingua Franca	Simplification of the language (Oviedo 2017)	Examples: "The" one word for (el, la, los, las)
Pronunciation in Lingua Franca settings	Variety of accents (levis 2018)	Examples: "water" (American, British and Colombian pronunciation)
Intelligibility	Comprehensible speech (Levis 2018)	Examples: "dentre" in Colombian Spanish is intelligible because it does not affect the meaning of the utterance.

This process was presented through PowerPoint presentation, where it was able to see the concepts and examples in a broader way. The practice of the concepts was done with a Kahoot. This tool engaged them in understanding and

paying more attention to the role of learning pronunciation in promoting intelligibility in language learning. To continue the process of raising awareness about English as la lingua Franca and analyzing other factors of production of speech an activity of accentedness, it was necessary to identify students' beliefs and perceptions about variations of English. Castro (2018) carried an activity with a group of public school teachers, where she played two TedTalk audios; one from an American teacher and other a Brazilian writer. Castro asked the teachers not focus on what they were saying rather to think who were the people speaking; where they were from and what they thought about their English. Castro highlighted that teachers did not recognize the native-speaker accent and agreed that the second audio was a native-speaker accent as well. When teachers were asked if accent could interfere in communication, their answers were divided:

“Some of them felt that accent is innate and does not affect what you are trying to say. On the other hand, others mentioned that the accent could even interfere the teaching of the language and that one must possess the pronunciation ability in English to be able to speak it adequately and one teacher even asserted that to be able to have that ability you must be in constant contact with Native speakers”.

The author pointed out that those teachers did not have any awareness towards any other intelligible nonnatives of English by the opposite they marked the Native-speaker only to have the “perfect English”. Castro concluded that teachers from that public area are not exposed to nonnative English by the opposite; teachers' practices are focused only in the traditional Native-Standard model and do not engage Lingua Franca settings. She recommends more

exposure to other nonnative English so their perception can change see English as the usage of an international scene.

Taking into account Castro's activity of awareness in the feature of accentedness, the activity proposed for the SENA students had a similar objective. The activity I planned was focused on something more attractive to the students. Two audios were taken from 4 movie clips; one of them with a Chicano accent and the other with an African one, the other from a native Afro-American and the last one from a Colombian Instagramer who posts content in English and Spanish.

Sequence of the activity

WORLD ENGLISH		
1. Listen to the audios	2. Questions asked to students based on the audios	3. Students perceptions about the audios
4. Presenting the clips through a power point	5. Students reactions when seeing the audios and how they described the characters	6. Discussion about different accents in English and concluding that "variation in accent is acceptable as long as intelligibility and conversation flow will be secured" (Majanen, 2008, p.1)

After listening to the audios, many assumptions came up. Students were not able to distinguish any of the three first accents. All of them said that the two first ones were native speakers. Although, Chicano is a dialect of American English spoken by Mexican-American (known as Chicanos), it is a native accent, though students did not imagine that there were variations of American English. They all thought Americans had the same accent. For the second audio (the African speaker), participants also believed the speaker was native; some said American

and others British. They never distinguished an African accent. In the third audio (Afro-American with a strong Black English accent), participants stated that the person speaking was Asian. It caught my attention since Black English (native variation of American English accent), is one of the most they are usually exposed to, since they listen to rap songs, follow rappers on Social media, etc. The last audio was easy for them (Colombian Instagramer); they stated with no hesitation that it was an American accent, because had a good pronunciation and they were able to understand some her utterances.

Similar to the result Castro mentioned in her report, SENA students did not have any awareness to nonnative intelligible accents or dialects of the American English. They just had an idea of the Native-Standard model. Nevertheless, this activity was a mind opening for them, because they were able to notice the usage of English beyond the two common models they have been exposed to: American and British. This enabled them to understand that intelligible speech is the aim to have better communication skills and that the accent does not impede oral production in L2.

After engaging students in the discussion about the role of pronunciation to promote intelligibility in oral communication, a pre-test was designed to assess their oral production and analyze their pronunciation, comprehensibility (in this case, I as the listener) and how intelligible were their utterances. The pre-test activities were recorded to keep a record of the students and, then, contrast them with the post-test. The post-test was applied in order to explore how effective the

didactic sequence was in making students notice and use some segmental sounds they had problem with and that could impede intelligibility.

PRE-TEST		
Genre of the oral production	Type of activity	Grammar use and vocabulary
1. Conversation	Personal introduction	Use of verb to be/ greetings Name, last name, age, occupation and hobby
2. Monologue	Introduction of a character	Use of possessive adjectives/name, last name, age, occupation, date of birth and hobby
3. Conversation	Utter different words containing key sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/	Use of simple present tense/new vocabulary/ wh-questions.

The three activities of the pre-test were assessed with the next rubric

Rubric	Understandable (100-85%)	Somewhat understandable (84-60%)	Not understandable (59% and less)
Pronunciation	The pronunciation is accurate. Articulates well sounds of vowels and consonants.	Pronunciation is average. Integrates some vowel sounds from L1.	Pronunciation is not good. Does not differentiate sounds of L2.
Comprehensibility	Easy to understand	Understandable	Impossible to understand
Intelligibility	The oral speech is totally intelligible.	The oral speech has some break downs but is intelligible.	The oral speech is unintelligible.
Vocabulary	Integrates all the vocabulary necessary to make the speech intelligible.	Integrates some vocabulary but misses some key words to make the speech totally intelligible.	Does not integrate key vocabulary to the speech making it unintelligible.

Nation (2002 in Levis 2018:18) suggested that “nonnative listeners need to understand at least 95 percent (nineteen of every twenty words) or perhaps 98 percent (forty-nine of fifty words) of the content words in running speech in order to have excellent comprehension and be able to guess the meanings of unknown

words". For this reason, the percentage 80-100% was considered for understandable speech.

The first activity left the next results. According to the rubric twenty-six (26) out of the thirty (30) students performed understandable speech. Some minor issues came across; not pronouncing the last "m" in the word "name". They uttered [neɪ]; this does not affect the speech, it is easy to decode, and it was comprehensible for the listeners and the teacher, thus intelligible. Five (5) students uttered: "I have 19 years" this is most an issue of transference of knowledge from L1 to L2 (interlanguage); it was necessary to recast "I have or I am". It was necessary to acknowledge that "I have 19 years" is semantically unintelligible; the age must be expressed using "to be". For students is hard to believe but this could be other discussion aimed of the usage of "to be".

For the second exercise and since it was a monologue and more personal work was required, other issues appeared. Twelve (12) students had issues with the possessive pronoun "my" [maɪ] they pronounced [mi] in the sentence "my mother/father"; the pronoun "I" [aɪ] and possessive adjective "my" [maɪ]; they pronounced [ɪ] and [mi] in the sentence "I love my mother/father/sister, etc; and the noun "name" [neɪm] they pronounced [name] in the sentence "his/her name is... Correction of pronunciation was needed. After a brief feedback on the oral presentations and emphasizing on the pronunciation issues, students noticed that well pronunciation avoids break downs in the speech; not achieving correct patters of pronunciation directs to unintelligibility. The use of the third person singular in present tense was a common mistake in all the 30 students avoided the use. In the

sentence “he/she works” they simple uttered [hi/ ʃi wɜrk]. This does not cause a break down when uttering considering comprehensible and intelligible in oral production. Seidlhofer (2005:31) argues “its omission by EFL users is unproblematic”. “One EFL user with regard to the omission of the third person singular –s that what really matters is that they are sort of basically understood.

For the third exercise, students encountered a new conversation with the target sounds and some new vocabulary. Students worked in pairs to perform the conversation:

A: Hello **Martha**, excuse me, is today **Thursday**, June **third**?
B: Hi, Camilo, no it isn't! Today is Wednesday, June **Second**.
A: Oh, **thanks Martha**. I am happy because tomorrow I will go to a school trip.
B: Great! Where are you going?
A: First we are going on a **boat** trip and later we will go to the **zoo**!
B: That sounds fantastic! Are your friends **Sue** and **Ruth** going with you?
A: I don't know. They are sometimes **lazy**. They start **vacation** today, so let me ask **their mother**.
B: Ok, have a good time, **best** wishes! And don't forget your life **vest** for the **boat** trip.
A: No problem I already put it inside the **van**.

The main characteristic was that having target sounds; the comprehensibility was difficult and their oral production was not highly intelligible. Students showed difficulty with the next words:

Mispronounced words	Target sound	Sound articulated by the students
Martha	[marθa]	28 Ss [marta]
Thursday	[θɜrzdeɪ]	15 Ss [tursdi] 4 Ss [tersdeɪ] 11 Ss [tersdai]
Third	[θɜrd]	15 Ss [fird] 15 Ss [tir]
Wednesday	[wɛnzdeɪ]	20 Ss [wɛdnɛsdai]
Thanks	[θæŋks]	15 Ss [tenks] 15 Ss [tanks]
Boat	[boʊt]	28 Ss [boat]
Later	[leɪtə]	17 Ss [later]
Zoo	[zu]	30 Ss [su]
Sometimes	[səmtaɪmz]	23 Ss [sɒmtimes] 7 Ss [sometimes]
Ruth	[ruθ]	13 Ss [rut] 17 Ss [ru]
Lazy	[leɪzi]	18 Ss [laisi] 12 Ss [lasi]
Vacation	[veɪkeɪʃən]	20 Ss [baketion] 10 Ss [bakation]
Because	[brɪ'koz]	18 Ss [bicause]
Great	[greɪt]	25 Ss [great]
With	[wɪθ]	10 Ss [wɪf] 5 Ss [wɪt]
Vest	[vɛst]	30 Ss [bɛst]
Van	[væn]	20 Ss [ban] 10 Ss [vɛn]

The conversation was aimed to practice the English target sounds /θ/, /z/ and /v/ which Delgado (2016 not published) considered are difficult for beginners. The results showed that there is need to practice a well pronunciation to incorporate intelligibility in oral interactions. Nevertheless, there were other words that cause trouble to the students; it may be related to many factors as: not

recognizing new vocabulary, not identifying target sounds, transfer or phonological errors. The chart demonstrated always half or more than half of the course has issues with pronunciation; for this specific reason, an implementation of a didactic strategy was necessary.

To improve the pronunciation skills rather than native like speech; the intelligibility-based approach shows that there are ways to develop a strategy. Segmental (vowels, consonants) instruction or Suprasegmental (rhythm, accent and intonation) are methods to rehearse these practices. "Vowel and consonant sounds are the heart of traditional pronunciation teaching, and they remain unavoidably important in an intelligibility-based approach to L2 pronunciation" (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1998 in Levis 2018 p.61). This research aims at segmental instruction since the problematic sounds /θ/, /z/ and /v/ were presented through a minimal pair practice /θ/,/ð/;/s/,/z/;/b/,/v/. The didactic sequence presented the next model:

DIDACTIC SEQUENCE MODEL

GENERAL INFORMATION				
Title: pronunciation booklet for the minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/				
Institution: SENA	Branch: SENA- Centro de la Construcción			
City: Cali-Valle	Address: Calle 34 # 17B-23 Barrio Santafe			
Teacher: Nicolás Delgado	Topic: pronunciation of minimal pairs			
Subject: English	Grade: English 1	Time :10 session of 4 hours each		
OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT				
Moments of the sequence	Learning objectives	Actions of the teacher	Actions of the students	Resources
<p>1. Acknowledging previous information</p> <p>1.1 Short discussion about pronunciation, intelligibility and effective oral communication.</p>	<p>Make Ss practice minimal pairs /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/ to make oral production more intelligible.</p>	<p>Present the different IPA symbols to make Ss aware of the sound, model the sound for the correct articulation.</p>	<p>Pronounce the different sounds proposed in class. Notice how their speech becomes more intelligible.</p>	<p>Pronunciation booklet Video beam, Computer.</p> <p>Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yROIWICH3rY</p>
<p>2. Activities of the sequence.</p> <p>2.1 Present each IPA symbol of the sound. Phonetic transcription help learners to comprehend better the English sounds</p>	<p>Make Ss notice how the sounds are articulated. How the phonetic apparatus works?</p>	<p>Model each sound to the Ss with words containing the sounds</p>	<p>Identify each sound and articulate them, each time the teacher displays the IPA symbol.</p>	<p>IPA alphabet Video beam Computer.</p>

<p>2.2 Pronunciation of the sounds in isolated words to notice the target sounds.</p> <p>2.3 Pronunciation of words in context to rehearse the target sounds.</p>	<p>Make Ss achieve accurate pronunciation with the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/ with specific words.</p> <p>Make Ss achieve pronunciation in short readings and tongue twisters to enhance better pronunciation with the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/.</p>	<p>Guide Ss to achieve accurate pronunciation in isolated words.</p> <p>Participate through recast when wrong pronunciation is uttered.</p>	<p>Practice the different sounds to adapt their phonetic apparatus to the target sounds.</p> <p>Identify the correct pronunciation during the exercises practice of the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/.</p>	<p>Pronunciation booklet</p> <p>Pronunciation booklet. Video beam Computer Voice recorder Videos https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCkONOV2JJM https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0W5PcWptfYY https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jhEYQI1954</p>
<p>2.4 Listening to key sounds to discriminate the target sounds in short utterances.</p> <p>2.5 Correct wrong pronunciation of words that do not contain target sounds</p>	<p>Make Ss listen to short audios with the target sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/ and choose the correct sound in the different exercises proposed in the pronunciation booklet.</p> <p>Make Ss notice correct pronunciation of words that do not contain the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /b/, /v/.</p>	<p>Play the audios and help Ss recognize sounds by modeling when necessary.</p> <p>Model the correct pronunciation for other words different from the target sounds.</p>	<p>Identify the correct sound and match it with the correct picture presented.</p> <p>Identify the correct pronunciation of words not containing the target sounds but practicing through repetition.</p>	<p>Pronunciation booklet. Speakers. Video beam. Computer.</p> <p>Board Markers Speakers Computer.</p>

6. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

As previously mentioned a post-test was applied, to evidence any students' improvement on their speech, particularly in the problematic segmental sounds identified. The post-test was done using the third exercise of the pre-test: Conversation containing target sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/.

A: Hello **Martha**, excuse me, is today **Thursday**, June **third**?
B: Hi, Camilo, no it isn't! Today is Wednesday, June **Second**.
A: Oh, **thanks Martha**. I am happy because tomorrow I will go to a school trip.
B: Great! Where are you going?
A: First we are going on a **boat** trip and later we will go to the **zoo**!
B: That sounds fantastic! Are your friends **Sue** and **Ruth** going with you?
A: I don't know. They are sometimes **lazy**. They start **vacation** today, so let me ask **their mother**.
B: Ok, have a good time, **best** wishes! and don't forget your life **vest** for the **boat** trip.
A: No problem I already put it inside the **van**.

The findings of the post-test showed the next results:

Post-test results		# of Students	
<i>Words pronounced after post-test</i>	<i>Target sound</i>	<i>Well-pronounced</i>	<i>Mispronounced</i>
Martha	[marθə]	10	20
Thursday	[θɜrzdeɪ]	15	15
Third	[θɜrd]	9	21
Wednesday	[wenzdeɪ]	18	12
Thanks	[θæŋks]	15	15
Boat	[bəʊt]	12	16
Later	[leɪtə]	21	9
Zoo	[zu]	8	22
Sometimes	[səmtaɪmz]	23	7
Ruth	[ruθ]	13	17
Lazy	[leɪzi]	12	18

Vacation	[veɪkeɪʃən]	17	13
Because	[bɪˈkɔːz]	25	5
Great	[ɡreɪt]	16	14
With	[wɪθ]	18	12
Vest	[vest]	7	23
Van	[væn]	8	22

The post-test showed any improvement over some specific sounds. Nonetheless, this was evidenced that in the pre-test there many sounds did not achieve an accurate pronunciation thus the utterance became unintelligible. For instance, the sound /z/ caused difficulty to pronounce it. In the word: /lazy/ the majority of the students pronounced [laisi]; the sound /th/ in the word: /thursday/ most of them pronounced [tursdi]; the sound /v/ in the word: /vacation/ a great number of students pronounced [baketion]. These particular cases with the three target sounds foster break downs in their speech, they are not comprehensible thus, and they do not have accurate pronunciation, consequently, causing unintelligible speech. After applying the didactic sequence and later the pre-test, some positive results arose from the practice. Below the two tests are contrasted to show the improvement students had.

Pre-test vs post-test

		Pretest		Post test	
Comparison pre-test and post test results		# of Students		# of Students	
<i>Words pronounced after post-test</i>	<i>Target sound</i>	<i>Well-pronounced</i>	<i>Mispronounced</i>	<i>Well-pronounced</i>	<i>Mispronounced</i>
Martha	[mɑrθɑ]	2	28	10	20
Thursday	[θɜrzdeɪ]	0	30	15	15
Third	[θɜrd]	0	30	9	21
Wednesday	[wenzdeɪ]	10	20	18	12
Thanks	[θæŋks]	0	30	15	15
Boat	[bəʊt]	2	28	12	16
Later	[leɪtər]	13	17	21	9
Zoo	[zu]	0	30	8	22
Sometimes	[səmtaɪmz]	0	30	23	7
Ruth	[ruθ]	0	30	13	17
Lazy	[leɪzi]	0	30	12	18
Vacation	[veɪkeɪʃən]	0	30	17	13
Because	[bi'kɔz]	12	18	25	5
Great	[greɪt]	5	25	16	14
With	[wɪθ]	15	15	18	12
Vest	[vest]	0	30	7	23
Van	[væn]	0	30	8	22

These results showed that there was an improvement using the key sounds /θ/, /z/ and /v/ but as shown in the chart above it is necessary to rehearse more to gain better pronunciation accuracy the moment to produce speech. The sounds /ð/, /s/ and /b/ did not present any complication since they are sounds that are articulated in L1. Students were able to see their improvement once they

performed the conversation again and listen to the former one. Once they noticed their advance in their oral production, they were aware of intelligibility since in the pre-test some words and utterances that were not intelligible. Anyhow, there is more rehearse to be done since still more than half of the class still presents complication achieving accurate pronunciation thus their oral performances were still unintelligible. Levis (2018) agrees that segmental errors are common in L2 speech and can cause loss of intelligibly (i.e., *watched* pronounced as *wat*) or as heard as a different word (i.e., *watched* heard as *washed*). In the case of the production of the participants, there are words that did not achieve accurate pronunciation, but continue to be intelligible as the case or the noun: /Martha/; thirty students pronounced /marta/ in the pre-test and in the post-test ten achieved the accurate pronunciation. This particular case does not affect the message therefore is completely intelligible using both pronunciations. However, words as /van/ pronounced /ven/ can have a difficult understanding therefore breakdowns in the message causing unintelligible speech. The contrast between the pre-test and the post-test demonstrated that segmental instruction helped out to improve some pronunciation problems; once the conversation was read again, it was more comprehensible, in consequence intelligible speech was acquired.

As stated before, having the students the conception of English pronunciation a native-like one, feared the moment they had to produce any oral interaction since they thought that they could not pronounce thus being not able to produce intelligible speech. For this reason, this study implemented several exercises about the role of English as a Lingua Franca and a didactic sequence

regarding the sounds /θ/,/ð/;/s/;/z/;/b/;/v/ that Delgado (2016) encounters being the most problematic with beginner courses of English, therefore intelligible speech was not achieved in the L2 learning process.

Three perceptions that were identified in this study about how students perceive the English instruction and changes they noticed after the implementation of the activities. In the focus groups and class discussion, the following perceptions emerged.

1. Students low self-concept in oral interactions as EFL learners.

During the workshops, in the focus groups, students were asked to describe how they would define their English instruction during their years of school. As mention in the participants; all of them had studied in public schools were their perception of the English classes were unsatisfied. They did not have any oral activities and no pronunciation instruction. Their perception about the English class was only grammar focused on the “verb to be”. There was no exposure to English as an international language; on the contrary, they have been exposed to the native standard models

With the didactic sequence based on the target sounds mentioned before, students were able to distinguish some changes in their learning process of L2. Before starting the process of understanding the use of English as a Lingua Franca, they had a narrow view about how oral interactions function in a non-native environment. For instance, most of them insisted that English was more related to exploit grammar skills rather than to any other one, especially pronunciation. One students' opinion highlights the first perceptions about their former experiences.

¹“School teachers never gave us oral activities; there were only grammar exercises and translation. They never taught us pronunciation because teachers said that we were not able to pronounce well in Spanish, how we will able to pronounce in English.”

Moreover, students did not feel that they were able to produce any kind of oral communication, since school teachers had instilled in them that proper English was only spoken by natives; therefore Native-like pronunciation was necessary to communicate successfully. Other students' former points of view:

²“Teacher, in my school, my english teacher said that British and American English were the best Englishes in the world, that if we wanted to travel to those countries, we had to have a native pronunciation; if not they would not understand us. He insisted that achieve native pronunciation was difficult.

³“Oral activities never had a space in the classroom teacher, only expressions like “hi”, “hello” and “bye”. The rest of the class teacher just gave us some material to work like grammar workshops. Sometimes teacher showed some YouTube videos about grammar explanations. The people in the videos were native I guess, because they were blond and had that American accent”. The teacher said, “listen carefully if you want to speak english, that is the correct way”

Those perceptions were the most common among all the participants; for those reasons, they perceived that; first: Speaking English could be something complicated or impossible; second: that native-like speech was their target, if not; communication was unsuccessful; third: that the most important skill was grammar;

¹“Los profesores del colegio nunca nos hicieron actividades orales, solo era ejercicios de gramática y traducción. Nunca nos enseñaron pronunciación porque los profesores nos decían que no éramos capaces de pronunciar bien en Español menos íbamos a hacer capaces de pronunciar en inglés”. Author's own translation.

² “Profe, en mi colegio, mi profesor de Inglés decía que el Inglés Americano y Británico eran los mejores del mundo, que si nosotros queríamos viajar a esos países debíamos tener pronunciación como la de ellos; si no, no nos iban a entender. Él recalaba que aprender la pronunciación de los nativos era difícil”. Author's own translation.

³ “Nunca hubo espacio para actividades orales en el salón, solo expresiones como “hola” y “chao”. El resto de la clase el profesor nos dama material para trabajar como talleres gramaticales. Algunas veces el profesor mostraba vídeos de YouTube de explicaciones gramaticales. Las personas del vídeo era nativas, creo, porque eran rubios y tenían ese acento americano”. El profesor decía “escuchen con atención, si quieren aprender a hablar inglés esa es la manera adecuada”. Author's own translation.

thus its constantly rehearse in class but with no oral activity purpose. For those main reasons students arrived with low expectations towards the L2 learning enabling students to have a low and negative perception about being English speakers. Learners are highly influenced by teachers; therefore it is important to encourage students with the best information to avoid negative attitudes towards the L2 learning. Majanen (2008:28) affirms that “Teachers are naturally those who influence English learners most. Consequently, it is important to know what exactly is the information they are passing to the future users of English”.

On the other hand the use of the different resources applied with the didactic sequence, the topics used to involve students in the learning of English as a Lingua Franca had a positive impact over the students. Also the use of the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) helped to ensure students’ knowledge over the target sounds. The minimal pair exercises raised awareness that accurate pronunciation leads to intelligible speech, thus facilitates the communication. I would state that their perceptions over the L2 learning improved since they felt more comfortable once they had to participate in oral productions, they demonstrated that achieving Native-like speech was not the target but to be able to communicate uttering intelligible language. The participants agreed that these kinds of exercises are the ones they should have practiced during their time in school.

⁴“Teacher, the exercises helped me distinguish between what is written and what is oral... I mean I do not pronounce how is written... before I use to say: [tersdai] and I

⁴ “Profe, los ejercicios me ayudaron a distinguir entre lo que está escrito y lo oral... Es decir, ya no pronuncio como está escrito... antes decía: [tersdai] y pensaba que estaba bien porque nadie me corregía; ahora es

thought it was correct because no one corrected me; now is different, when I see the sound /th/ I know that I have to pronounce [θ]; is still a bit tricky to pronounce: [θɜrsdeɪ]; did I say it correct, teacher?... Yes you did... It was completely comprehensible thus intelligible. Now I am aware speak better. For example teacher; I had a short oral interaction with the other english teacher and he told me that he understood me better... I have improved... you see!”

⁵“The minimal pair exercise made me aware that there are sounds that need to be pronounced correctly, for example teacher, I was able to distinguish between /van/ and /ban/; in spanish we do not use the [v] teacher, that is why for me pronounce the [v] is somewhat difficult. Teacher, I say [beri gʊd] but you say that is intelligible, but the activities done with the minimal pair made me improve my pronunciation, so now I prefer to say [vəri gʊd]. If I see words as /berry/ and /very/ now I know how to distinguish them with appropriate pronunciation.

⁶“Teacher, after the activities we did in class, I found out that I feel more comfortable the moment I have to interact orally in class. I understood that what is important is to be understood, of course with accurate pronunciation, not like a native teacher but understandable. For example, before I used to say “I fink” o “I sink” which as you have remarked teacher, is not intelligible; now I have noticed that well pronunciation helps to understand better. Now, I understand my classmates because they have also improved their speech. Although I have practice the /th/ sound I feel that I still mispronounce; [aɪ tɪŋk]; it is still incorrect teacher but is more intelligible [laughs].

2. Students noticing the role of English as a Lingua Franca

diferente, cuando veo el sonido /th/ yo sé que tengo que pronunciar [θ]; es todavía un poco difícil para pronunciar: [θɜrsdeɪ]; lo dije bien, profe?... Si... fue completamente comprensible por ende inteligible... Ahora estoy pendiente de hablar un poco mejor. Por ejemplo profe; tuve una pequeña charla con el otro profe de inglés y me dijo que me había entendido mejor... he mejorado.... Si ve!” Author’s own traslation.

⁵ “El ejercicio de los pares mínimos me hicieron dar cuenta que hay sonidos en el Inglés que deben ser pronunciados correctamente, por ejemplo profe, me pude distinguir entre palabras como /van/ y /ban/; en el español no se usa la [v], por eso para mí pronunciar la [v] es un poco difícil. Profe yo digo [beri gʊd] per usted dice que inteligible pero los ejercicios que hicimos con los pares mínimos, mejoraron mi pronunciación, por lo que ahora prefiero decir [vəri gʊd]. Si veo palabras como /berry/ y /very/ ahora ya se como diferenciarlas con pronunciación adecuada.” Author’s own traslation.

⁶ Profe, después de las actividades que hicimos en clase, encontré que ahora me siento más cómoda al interactuar oralmente en clase. Entendí que lo importante es hacerse entender, claramente con pronunciación adecuada, no como nativo pero si entendible. Por ejemplo, antes decía “I fink” o “I sink” lo cual usted ha enfatizado profe, no es inteligible; ahora he notado que buena pronunciación ayuda a entender mejor. Ahora, entiendo mejor lo que mis compañeros de clase dicen, ellos también han mejorado. Aunque he practicado el sonido /th/, todavía siento que no lo pronuncio adecuadamente; ; [aɪ tɪŋk]; sigue siendo incorrecto pero es más inteligible [risas]. Author’s own traslation.

As mentioned before, students did not have any awareness about the role of English as a Lingua Franca. Once the activities were over, most of the students had the idea that English was only spoken in English speaking countries. They understood that we belong to the expanding circle, hence being nonnative speakers permits to interact among other expanding circles; and that nonnative speakers share the same prestige of the language as the native speakers. For this reason, they started visualizing English as an international language. One student gave a point of view about this topic:

⁷“I have always thought that English was only spoken in United States and England. Now I realize that is a global language; or as you say teacher; is a Lingua Franca. I have noticed that in people that I follow in the social networks; for example, I like K-pop, the groups that I follow, everything that they post is in English and also make videos speaking in English... They speak funny English but it is comprehensible and that is way many people around the world follow them”.

Graddol (2006 in Castro 2018:35), states that NNS now outnumber native English speakers by 3 to one. For that reason, the majority of encounters in English take place between NNS. Students had a broader view of how the interactions of nonnative speakers are carried out nowadays therefore the opinion given.

Students were able to analyze that in Lingua Franca settings has as principle to convey meaning and rather than following grammar rules. Marr and English

⁷ “Siempre había pensado que el inglés solo se hablaba en Estados Unidos y en Inglaterra. Ahora me doy cuenta que es una Lengua global; o como dice usted profe; es un Lengua Franca. Me he dado cuenta en gente que sigo en las redes; por ejemplo, un a mí me gusta el K-pop, el grupo que sigo, todo lo postean en inglés y hacen vídeos hablando en inglés... Hablan un inglés chistoso pero se entiende y por eso muchas personas alrededor el mundo los sigue”. Author’s own translation.

(2019:34) propose that “The users of the English today are viewed as makers of meaning rather than the learners of the language”. For this reason the didactic sequence made them view that English is not only grammar but using intelligible English will enable them to become part of an International English community speaking. For instance; learner’s opinion about Lingua Franca and its features:

⁸“Teacher, after the pronunciation activities I understood that having well pronunciation helps to speak more intelligible speech. I follow sports and I like to watch MMA (mix martial arts). The Brazilians, always speak in English before and after the fight. They have their Brazilian accent but their pronunciation is accurate therefore it is possible to understand all. Teacher, but not only Brazilians, there are Russians, Africans, French, etc. They all have different accents anyhow their english is good, that is Lingua Franca, right teacher? Indeed it is!

Moreover, learner’s felt that detaching grammar activities and prime communication features through pronunciation exercises was an opportunity to experience new concepts about English. They felt more enthusiastic about exploring other skills as: short readings, tongue twisters, listening exercises, pronunciation and oral interaction exercises. With this, they recognized that they belong to an expanding circle of English and that their non-nativeness is not an issue the moment they have to interact in L2, by the opposite, they visualized that English as Lingua Franca gives them tools to utter with not many restrictions as they thought, having clear that accurate pronunciation leads to comprehensible communication. One participant’s opinion remarked the next:

⁸ “Profe, después de los ejercicios de pronunciación entendí que tener un buena pronunciación te ayuda a tener un discurso más inteligible. A mí me gustan los deportes y me gusta ver MMA (artes marciales mixtas). Los Brasileños siempre hablan en inglés antes y después de las peleas. Tienen acento brasilero pero su pronunciación es precisa por eso es posible entenderles todo lo que dicen. Profe, pero no solo los Brasileños, hay Rusos, Africanos, Franceses, etc. Todos tienen diferentes acentos de todas maneras su inglés es bueno, eso es Lengua Franca, ¿verdad profe? ¡Ciertamente lo es! Author’s own translation.

⁹“What I liked about all the activities in class was that we never focused on grammar exercises. I liked the fact that all the exercises were ludic and helped us to improve our oral production. Before I felt that I was not going to be able to say any statement in English, because in school they told me that I pronounced wrong. Now I have come aware that I do not pronounce wrong, I just needed practice to have better pronunciation and produce intelligible speech. I do not need to sound like a “gringo”; I just need to make myself understand like many people that use English around the world do.”

3. Students raising awareness about pronunciation and intelligibility

Once students performed the pronunciation exercises, they noticed that pronunciation is not a matter of nativeness rather to have accurate pronunciation to enhance intelligible speech. By this point, students understood that unintelligible speech causes break downs in the communication consequently, misunderstandings or even not understanding at all. For this reason, I would state that the majority of the class was appealing with the topics since the moment of participating in any oral activity they did not fear and looked more confident.

¹⁰“Teacher, you did understand what I say, didn’t you? I do not pronounce [are] anymore, and I did not say [you]; teacher... I said “[wɛr ɔr ju frʌm?” so; they understand me because I pronounce better (right?) so is intelligible”.

¹¹“Teacher I see “the big bang theory” and Raj, the indian guy, speaks with an Indian accent. Although his English is weird, I noticed that everything that he

⁹ “Lo que me gustó de las actividades fue que nunca fueron enfocadas en ejercicios gramaticales. Me gustó que todos los ejercicios fueron lúdicos y nos ayudaron a mejorar nuestra producción oral. Antes sentía que no iba a ser capaz de producir ninguna oración en inglés, porque en el colegio me decían que pronunciaba mal; solo necesitaba práctica para mejorar la pronunciación y producir lenguaje inteligible. No necesito sonar como un “gringo”, solo necesito hacerme entender como lo hace mucha gente que usa el Inglés alrededor del mundo.” Author’s own translation.

¹⁰ “¿Profe, verdad que lo que dije ahora lo entendió? Ya no pronuncio [are] ni tampoco dije [you]; profe... yo dije: “[wɛr ɔr ju frʌm?” o sea que ya me entienden mejor porque pronuncio bien (¿o no?) entonces es inteligible”. Author’s own translation.

¹¹ “Profe yo veo “the big bang theory” y Raj el indio habla un inglés con acento de la India. Aunque es raro su inglés, me di cuenta que todo lo que dice es inteligible porque sus amigos le entienden y se ríen de lo que

says is intelligible because his friends understand him and laugh about what he says. That series is very funny! Now I try to understand him more because he pronounces well for being a nonnative person”.

There is clear evidence through students' comments, that the intelligibility-based approach did enhanced intelligibility knowledge on students. Rehearsing the sounds and practicing through oral activities made students noticed that not only is important to pronounce well but to raise awareness that accent is not an impede to produce intelligible speech. As Munro and Derwing (1995 in Levis 2018) proposed the three elements of spoken language understanding: Intelligibility (decoding), Comprehensibility (degree of effort required to understand) and Accentedness (degree of difference from a reference accent); students showed to have understand the use of each one.

To sum up, the activities proposed for this study seemed to have a positive effect on the students. They are now aware of the implications of Lingua Franca and how applicable they are in the EFL class. Yet there is more instruction to be done in class since this was just a 10 session class with a big gap between classes. The majority of the students have been more interested in the learning process, having in mind that English is not impossible to learn, by the opposite, achievable and friendly to practice among their peers.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATIONS

dice. ¡Esa serie es muy chistosa! Yo ahora trato de entenderle un poco más porque el pronuncia bien siendo una persona no nativa”. Author's own translation.

Pursing an L2 means to learn different aspects of the language. Sadly, in the instruction the main emphasis is grammar, leaving aside other important aspects as pronunciation. Levis (2018:217) analyses: “pronunciation has been denied its proper and equal place in the language-teaching household, made instead to labor unseen while other skills receive adulation and recognition” in addition, having students avoiding the role of English as Lingua Franca made that their idea of the Nativeness Principle: “learners have to completely match a native speaker’s production of all pronunciation targets, segmental and suprasegmental, in order to have achieved the target pronunciation in a foreign language” Levis (2018:33).

Neglecting students from oral activities during their L2 learning made them fear when oral speech production. Adding the overuse of grammar especially the verb “to be” did not enhance them to the L2 learning process. To overcome this issues, this study proposed an Intelligibility-based approach to open doors that learning pronunciation is not attach to native-like speech by the contrary to practice and rehearse segmental use over some difficult sounds; to make their speeches intelligible. This approach highlights the use of English as the usage of an international scene. For this reason, intelligibility primes in oral production over the Native-Standard model.

Although this research was small, the results showed improvement in students’ pronunciation therefore intelligible speech was brought up in their oral activities. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that this research can be explored in a broader way emphasizing in other minimal pairs to raise awareness

even more on intelligibility, for instance the use of the long and short /i/, /i:/; thirteen vs thirty. Not achieving the correct sound will produce intelligibility issues.

This study helped students to notice that English works as a global language therefore, that varieties of English are just as fine as native-like ones; even to overview their non-nativeness as an advantage and a source of confidence not insecurity (Seidlhofer, 1999 in Catro's 2018:30). That is why they had more confidence the moment they needed to produce any oral activity. They felt that they are user of English in an international scene, the reason why, they do not need to achieve native-like pronunciation. Notwithstanding, being part of the expanding circle of English, they understood that accurate pronunciation was necessary to prime intelligible communication.

Nonetheless, it is necessary to continue implementing the didactic sequence at least 2 or 3 times more to ensure the results and make students fear less oral production. In terms of noticing students were able to contrast their own improvement thus their learning process towards L2 became more enthusiastic, evidenced through some perceptions of students in the former chapter.

As far as EFL implications, there are many things to change in terms of implementing ELF. Students need to be exposure to different kind of Englishes to broaden their perception about English as a Lingua Franca. This perception will put them in the context of the expanding circle, meaning that they can also be user of English as nonnative learners but sharing the same status as native ones.

It would be proper to add to SENA curriculum ELF and change some old fashioned English teaching practices to new ones and have similar teaching practices among co-workers. English teacher at SENA centro de la construcción will enhancement over this topic since the majority of them are attached to Native-Standard models, in addition that all of them do not incorporate pronunciation practices in their classrooms. Castros' (2018) research on making teachers perceive on English as Lingua Franca gave strong recommendations to this research and highlighted many important aspects as noticing exercises in ELF settings.

I would like to think that English in SENA could have a better position thus have better practices and better acceptance to learn a L2. Since design curriculums are not into my concern, but I hope sometime further they will; make many changes to regards as the teaching of English is something that catches my attention very much. Meanwhile I will continue to improve the practices from my expertise taken from this M.A.

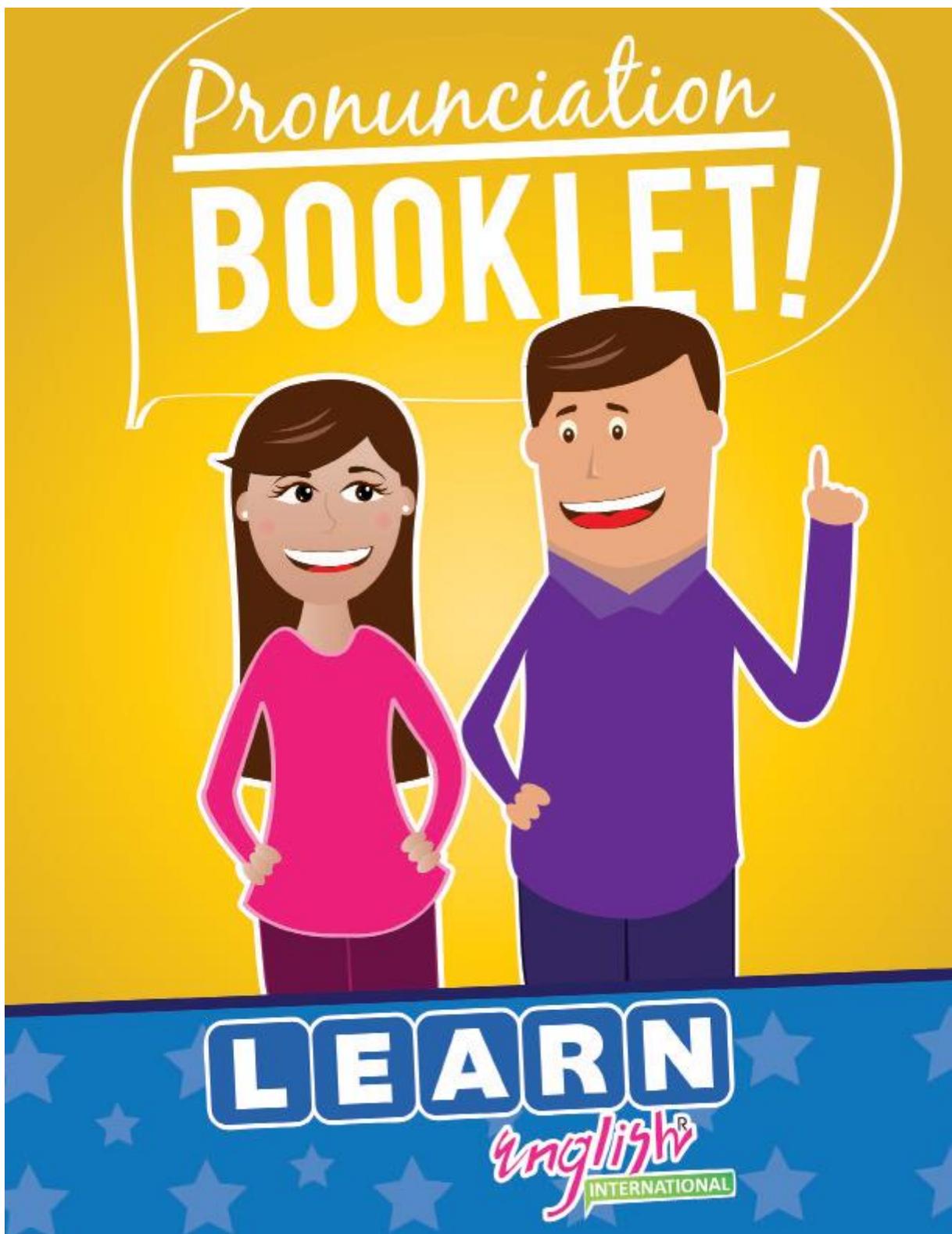
To conclude, it is important to point out that the implications mention before arose some questions. What other activities related to ELF can enhance SENA learners to view English as an important key in their learning process as technics or technicians? How to encourage teachers to use the IPA as a fundamental tool for pronunciation practices?

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Attachments



Pronunciation BOOKLET!

Design by Nicolas Delgado

Contents

1. M inimal pairs th/ð
 - 1.1 I solated words pronunciation exercises
 - 1.2 Words in context pronunciation exercises
 - 1.3 Sound discrimination exercises
2. M inimal pairs s/z
 - 2.1 I solated words pronunciation exercises
 - 2.2 Words in context pronunciation exercises
 - 2.3 Sound discrimination exercises
3. M inimal pairs b/v
 - 3.1 I solated words pronunciation exercises
 - 3.2 Words in context pronunciation exercises
 - 3.3 Sound discrimination exercises

/TH/ SOUND UNVOICED



EXERCISE #1

WATCH THE VIDEO, THEN LISTEN AND REPEAT THE WORDS
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9Cdgo5W0I>

THANKS, THURSDAY, THIN, THICK, ATHLETIC, THINK, THREE, THUNDER,
THEATER, THOUSAND, TEETH

EXERCISE #2

READ AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /TH/

My birthday's on Thursday

★ It's my birthday on Thursday. My sixth birthday, my seventh birthday's on the 13th next month, so I'm - let me think - 333 days older than you, Ruth. Do you always put your thumb in your mouth when you're doing arithmetic, Arthur? My tooth's loose, Ruth. See? I like math. I came fourth out of 33. My father's a mathematician.

★ My father's an author. He writes for the theatre. We're very wealthy. When I'm thirty I'll have a thousand pounds. I'm going to be an Olympic athlete. I may be thin but Mr. Smith says I've got the strength of three. Watch me. I'll throw this thing the length of the path. Oh Arthur! You've thrown earth all over us both. I'm filthy! Now they'll make me have a bath!

EXERCISE #3

LISTEN TO THE WORDS WITH SOUND /TH/ VOICED



/TH/ SOUND VOICED



EXERCISE #1

LISTEN AND REPEAT THE WORDS
THIS, THESE, THEN, THAT, THOSE, THUS, THE, WORTHY, THY, OTHER, BROTHER

EXERCISE #2

READ AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /TH/ VOICED

★ Where are the others? They've gone bathing. Heather and her brother called for them. Heather Feather? No, the other Heather, heather Mather. I told them to stay together, and not to go further than Northern Cove. Why didn't you go with them? I'd rather get on with the ironing without them.

★ In this weather? There's a southerly breeze. One can hardly breathe indoors. Go and have a bathe then. Another bathe? I can't be bothered. I'll go with you, though. But all these clothes..... Who'd be a mother! I'd rather be a mother than a father! All those hungry mouths!\

EXERCISE #3

LISTEN TO THE WORDS WITH SOUND /TH/ VOICED

EXERCISE #4

SOUND /TH/VOICED vs SOUND /TH/UNVOICED
 READ AND PRONOUNCE THE TONGUE TWISTER
 "I thought of using these Lily of the Valleys rather than those thorny roses"

/S/SOUND



EXERCISE #1

WATCH THE VIDEO, THEN LISTEN AND REPEAT THE WORDS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5iL_pu5CNs
 SAY, SEE, SINK, SING, SNAKE, SILK, SNOW, SONG, SELL, SURPRISE, SAND, SPACE

EXERCISE #2

READ AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /S/

- ★ Some spinsters several mice, saw a saucer seven sausages
- ★ Sue and Cecily are sisters.
- ★ Sue is sixteen this summer. Cecily was seventeen last Sunday
- ★ Sue is sowing grass seed.
- ★ She sees Cecily asleep with a glass of cider and a nice sixpenny ice by her side.
- ★ Sue slips across, sips the glass of cider and eats the ice.

EXERCISE #3

LISTEN TO THE WORDS WITH SOUND /S/

/Z/ SOUND**EXERCISE #1**

LISTEN AND REPEAT THE WORDS
ZOO, ZINC, ZEBRA, ZERO, ZIPPER, ZOMBIE, ZOOM, ZAMBO, ZEUS, PUZZLE, ZAMBIA.

EXERCISE #2

READ AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /Z/

- ★ A zoo cages prison bars a zebra a zebu daisies Zoe is visiting the zoo.
- ★ A lazy zebra called Desmond is dozing at the zoo.
- ★ He feels flies buzzing round his eyes, ears and nose.
- ★ He rouses, opens his eyes, rises and goes to Zoe.
- ★ Zoe is wearing a rose on her blouse. Zoe gives Desmond these buns.

EXERCISE #3

LISTEN AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /Z/

EXERCISE #4

SOUND /s/ vs SOUND /z/ PRACTICE THE TONGUE TWISTER
Denise /s/ sees /s/ the fleece /z/, Denise /s/ sees /s/ the fleas /s/, at least /s/ Denise /s/ could sneeze /z/ and feed and freeze /z/ the fleas /s/

EXERCISE #5

LISTEN AND CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

PLAY WORD

A	B
<p>Zinc</p>	<p>Sink</p>
<p>Lays</p>	<p>Lace</p>
<p>Buzz</p>	<p>Bus</p>
<p>Seize</p>	<p>Cease</p>
<p>Muzzle</p>	<p>Muscle</p>

Pronunciation
BOOKLET!

/V/ SOUND**EXERCISE #1**

LISTEN AND REPEAT THE WORDS

VASE, VACATION, VACCINE, VALUE, VANDAL, VANILLA, VANISH, VANITY, VAPOR, VEGETABLE.

EXERCISE #2

READ AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /V/

- ★ A visit to Vladivostok Victor, have you ever visited Vladivostok? Never, in fact, I haven't traveled further than Liverpool. I've had an invitation from the University of Vladivostok to give a survey of my own creative verse. How marvelous!
- ★ Will my navy overcoat be heavy enough, I wonder? It's long-sleeved and reversible. And I've got a pair of velvet Levis - rather a vivid violet! Do you think the professors will view violet Levis with violent disapproval?

- ★ When do you leave? On the 7th of November? I don't advise you to travel on the seventh. It's the anniversary of the Valentine Invasion. And for heaven's sake, Oliver, don't overdo the caviar. Or the vodka. Viktor, I do believe you're envious!

EXERCISE #3

LISTEN AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /V/

/B/ SOUND**EXERCISE #1**

LISTEN AND REPEAT THE WORDS

BASE, BIG, BOMB, BUY, BACK, BEHIND, BORN, BEE, BETTER, BAG, BOAT

EXERCISE #2

LISTEN AND PRACTICE THE SOUND /B/

<http://www.pronunciation.com/MinimalPairs.aspx>

EXERCISE #3

READ AND PRACTICE SOUND /B/ AND SOUND /V/

- ★ Vanessa loves badminton and prefers it to volleyball.
- ★ The vagabond begs for a vacant room in the backyard.
- ★ Why was the voracious detective banished from the observatory?
- ★ It's everybody's business to avoid extravagant banquets.
- ★ Every year, a big blivial festival is held in our town.

EXERCISE #4

LISTEN AND CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD /B/ OR /V/

http://www.educaplay.com/es/recursoseducativos/621052/case_6_v_b_minimal_pairs.htm

EXERCISE #5

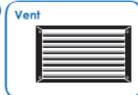
LISTEN TO THE TEACHER AND CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

Pronunciation
BOOKLET!

PLAY WORD

PLAY WORD

 Bat <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	 Vat <input type="radio"/>
 Boat <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	 Vote <input type="radio"/>
 Bile <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	 Vile <input type="radio"/>
 Ban <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	 Van <input type="radio"/>
 Bane <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	 Vain <input type="radio"/>

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
 Banish <input type="radio"/>	 Vanish <input type="radio"/>
 Boil <input type="radio"/>	 Vail <input type="radio"/>
 Bent <input type="radio"/>	 Vent <input type="radio"/>