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Improving English as a Foreign Language Learners' pronunciation through the tongue twister technique

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Resumen:

Este proyecto de investigación, con un enfoque cualitativo y con un método de investigación acción se llevó a cabo con 41 estudiantes de segundo de bachillerato en un aula de inglés como lengua extranjera en Azogues. El objetivo de este estudio fue explorar las contribuciones del uso de trabalenguas para la práctica y desarrollo de las habilidades de pronunciación de los estudiantes. Por esta razón, se implementaron instrumentos de recolección de datos como hojas de observación, guías de discusión y pruebas diagnósticas y sumativas para recopilar evidencia a lo largo del proceso. Además, se diseñaron ocho intervenciones con el fin de implementar la técnica del trabalenguas para mejorar la pronunciación de los estudiantes en los sonidos de las vocales /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/ y /æ/. Los resultados revelaron que el uso de trabalenguas como técnica para la práctica de pronunciación arrojó información positiva después de su aplicación. Esto fue evidenciado por cambios perceptuales, mejoras en los resultados de las pruebas y un mayor compromiso en el aula. El estudio resalta el potencial de esta técnica en la competencia lingüística de la pronunciación.

Palabras claves: adolescentes, pronunciación, sonidos vocálicos, técnica del trabalenguas.

Abstract:

This qualitative action research project was carried out with 41 second baccalaureate students in an EFL classroom in Azogues. This study aimed to explore the contributions of using tongue twisters for pronunciation practice to the development of students' pronunciation skills. Consequently, data collection instruments such as observation sheets, discussion guides, and diagnostic and summative tests were implemented in order to gather evidence through the process. Additionally, eight interventions were designed in order to implement the tongue twister technique to improve the $/iː/$, $/ɪ/$, $/ʌ/$, and $/æ/$ vowel sounds pronunciation. The findings revealed that the use of tongue twisters as a pronunciation practice technique yielded positive outcomes, evidenced by perceptual changes, improved test results, and heightened classroom engagement. The study emphasizes the potential of this technique in enhancing pronunciation and language proficiency.

Keywords: pronunciation, teenagers, tongue twister technique, vowel sounds.

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1. Introduction

Pronunciation skills have often been one of the overlooked aspects of English learning in Ecuador. Nevertheless, they constitute a crucial element of effective oral communication in English and should be considered during the lessons; otherwise, wrong pronunciation could affect the message that students aim to transmit (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). According to Sevy-Biloon et al. (2020) and Paredes (2019), the lack of pronunciation practice in the classroom is a common problem in the Ecuadorian educational system, even though the Ecuadorian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum expects from the senior learners in its exit profile to demonstrate "generally intelligible pronunciation, although first language (L1) features may put a strain on the listener" (Ministerio de Educacion, 2016, p. 8), which according to the Common European Framework of References for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020) is associated with a B1 proficiency level.

Pronunciation problems faced by foreign language learners are caused by differences between the learners' language and the target language (Riadi & Novita, 2013). The Spanish and English phonological systems are very different. Quintero (2019) explained that English has twelve pure vowel sounds, which are divided into short and long, while Spanish language has five pure vowels, which are always short. Therefore, students could find difficulties when pronouncing those sound if they are not trained correctly due to the fact that they are second language learners.

In this regard, one effective way to enhance English pronunciation is through the tongue twister technique. This technique is useful because according to Lutfiani and Astutik (2017), it helps improve the EFL students' pronunciation. Furthermore, it allows students to remember

patterns of pronunciation of similar phrases and sounds since it combines alliteration and rhyme, making it valuable for teaching.

1.1. Problem statement

Drawing from the researchers' insights gained from prior teaching practice experiences at the high school level in Azogues, certain instances of students' vowel pronunciation discrepancies were observed during conversational activities. Students struggled to pronounce short and extended words correctly when dialoguing and mispronounced the vowel sounds that were in them. Research conducted by Munro and Derwing (2008) and Case (2012) showed that second language learners have more difficulties learning second language vowels than consonants. Hence, the biggest problem for Spanish speakers is that this language does not have a distinction between long and short vowels.

In addition, Quintero (2019) explained that in Spanish, there are only five pure vowel sounds, which are always short, while English has several more and are divided into long and short vowel sounds. Furthermore, García and Froud (2016) in their study called "Perception of American English vowels by sequential Spanish–English bilinguals" described that Spanish speakers may face difficulties when learning /i:/, /ɪ/, /æ/, /ʌ/ English vowel sounds because these sounds constitute common perceptual confusions for them. Consequently, the researchers have decided to focus their project specifically on improving the long vowel sound /i:/ and the short vowel sounds /æ/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/ pronunciation, using the tongue twisters' technique.

Considering the characteristics of the problem, the researchers have thought that action research is the most appropriate method to achieve the objectives for this investigation because the primary purpose of it is to address the problem with actions. To do so, researchers must plan,

act, observe, and reflect on the most suitable implementation they have decided to execute according to the nature of the problem. Additionally, this project follows a qualitative approach since it benefits the presentation of the results when giving profound descriptions mainly because the problem approaches multiple perspectives regarding the issue presented. Furthermore, the researchers propose tongue twisters as a possible solution because according to Rohman (2016) and Lutfiani and Astutik (2017), the application of tongue twisters is one of the alternatives in teaching pronunciation since they use a combination of alliteration and rhyme, therefore, this technique is useful to improve the EFL students' pronunciation and allow students to remember patterns of pronunciation of similar phrases and sounds.

1.2. Justification

The importance of this research is to provide other English teachers, whose educational settings exhibit resemblances to our own, with a clear understanding and a possible solution of how to address similar pronunciation issues in their classrooms using the tongue twisters' technique. Thus, the present research paper aims to demonstrate the contribution that this technique has in second baccalaureate students' pronunciation who study English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in a high school in Azogues.

On the other hand, researchers who have previously investigated or applied the tongue twisters' technique have found a link between young learners and enhanced English pronunciation. Nevertheless, there have been relatively few studies that have implemented this technique with high school students, and the existing ones were conducted in international settings. Consequently, there is a noticeable absence of local studies conducted for this specific group of students. Therefore, the researchers have considered this gap in literature in order to

contribute something meaningful to this research field by examining the impact of tongue twisters on pronunciation skills in adolescents. Consequently, researchers expected that this implementation can positively eradicate most of the problems encountered; thus, the students would be able to participate in oral activities without fear of making pronunciation mistakes.

In this regard, the use of the tongue twister's technique for practicing pronunciation has the potential to greatly benefit teachers, students, and researchers. This technique, although used in some classes, is not widely recognized for its effectiveness. By integrating tongue twisters into language education, teachers could offer an engaging way to improve pronunciation. Students would gain confidence in speaking activities and would enable them to express themselves more comfortably and effectively when interacting. Moreover, researchers could explore the technique's impact on language acquisition and teaching methods. In brief, using tongue twisters can make learning and teaching language better, helping people who are interested in languages.

To address this problem adequately, researchers propose the following research questions and objectives to achieve during the application of the Tongue Twister technique.

1.3 Main Research Question:

How is the tongue twister technique perceived in terms of its contributions to the development of students' pronunciation skills?

1.4. Sub-Questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions on the application of tongue twisters as a technique for improving their pronunciation skills?

2. How do tongue twisters impact the development of pronunciation skills in EFL students?

1.5. Objectives:

MO: To explore the contributions of using tongue twisters for pronunciation practice on the development of students' pronunciation skills.

O1: To describe students' perceptions regarding the use of tongue twisters as a technique in the classroom.

O2: To demonstrate the impact of the Tongue Twister technique in improving the pronunciation skills in EFL students

2. Literature Review

The current chapter presents and analyzes international and national studies that supported the initial idea of the researchers, who claim that the Tongue Twisters' technique can improve EFL students' pronunciation. Furthermore, the main theories and concepts that underpin this research topic are outlined in detail.

2.1 Previous Studies

The first study is a national scientific paper conducted by Ortega and Minchala (2019). The objective of their research was to find out how the teaching and learning of English is carried out within the framework of the current curriculum. The study involved students in the last year of the Unified General Baccalaureate (BGU) and eight teachers in Cañar, a province to which Azogues belongs. First, the level of English proficiency of the BGU students was determined. Then, direct observations were made to identify how English is taught in classrooms. Finally, focus groups and interviews were conducted to hear the views of students and eight teachers on key aspects of the English subject. The results indicated that the students

have a low level of proficiency. Hence, this study supports ours, because it provides a perspective of the students' English level in which pronunciation is included.

The second study is called "Perception of American English vowels by sequential Spanish–English bilinguals" which was conducted by García and Froud in 2016. This research aimed to examine neurophysiological responses of adult sequential Spanish-English bilinguals to American English (AE) vowel contrasts /ɑ/-/ʌ/ compared to monolingual English-speaking listeners. The participants in this study were 11 adult sequential bilingual Spanish-English listeners (bilingual group) and 14 monolingual AE listeners (monolingual group). The study consisted of two perceptual discrimination and identification under two listening conditions: natural and neutral vowel duration. This was carried out under two different testing conditions, by both Spanish-English bilingual and AE monolingual listeners. In general, the result indicated that adult sequential Spanish-English bilinguals are less accurate than English monolinguals in discriminating the AE vowel contrastive pair /ɑ/-/ʌ/. Therefore, this study was fundamental in deciding the vowel sounds based on the difficulty to learn them.

The third study is a national graduate thesis conducted by Paredes (2019). Her research aimed to analyze whether English songs can encourage 10th grade EGB students to improve their pronunciation. The study involved 60 students from Bilingual Intercultural schools of Santa Rosa Parish in Ecuador. The students participated in an intervention that followed a mixed method and quasi-experimental design using Classroom Action Research. The results indicated that using songs as an instructional tool had a positive impact on students' pronunciation and helped them develop the ability to emphasize words and sentences. In conclusion, students improved their

fluency and enhanced intelligibility. From this, it was decided to make a contribution on the pronunciation aspect.

Similarly, this fourth study is a national graduate thesis conducted by Contreras (2021). This study aimed to promote the proper usage of tongue twisters for the development of the English oral production. The participants in this project were first-year students of the Unified General Baccalaureate at the San Jacinto Educational Unit in the 2020-2021 School Year and one English teacher. The data collection was carried out through students' surveys and a teacher's interview. The results obtained from the students' survey showed that 65% of the students were receptive and enthusiastic about the application of the tongue twisters' technique for the development of oral expression in the classroom. Regarding the teacher's interview, she stated that a didactic guide to developing oral production in English for A.2 level students could be effective. Therefore, this study supports the researchers' idea of using this technique with teenagers.

The next supportive research was conducted by Sugiharto et al. (2022), aiming to know how tongue twisters can enhance students' pronunciation ability in the first semester of English Education Study Program STKIP Muhammadiyah Batang. The participants in this project were 35 students selected randomly by the researchers for a quantitative research. They were tested before and after the implementation, which allowed researchers to notice a significant difference in the students' pronunciation performance. From the analysis of the tests, the previous authors found that "the level of significance was 5%, the result of the computation of t-value is higher than the t-table that was 3.965>1.67. So, the hypothesis was accepted" (p. 195). From this, the

hypothesis is proved, and tongue twisters can be considered a good strategy for improving EFL learners' pronunciation.

The last study supporting this project was conducted by Yuniar et al. (2021), it aimed to explore about what the problems that students face while learning English speaking in a Tongue Twister aided context. The participants of this project were 30 tenth-grade students for the action research. Since this study followed an action research method two cycles were implemented to realize that students met the success criteria of the research and had an active participation in the teaching and learning processes during English-speaking class. In the first cycle, the percentage was 65.71%, and in cycle 2, the target percentage was 77.14%. Therefore, the conclusions claimed that using the tongue twister technique is useful to help the students to improve their speaking ability by practicing repeatedly pronouncing the word or phrases. In light of this, it was decided that the tongue twisters' technique is a good option for pronunciation improvement.

After analyzing these five studies, some important points were discovered. Firstly, it was determined that in the Cañar province, to which Azogues belongs, students have a low level of English proficiency. Secondly, it was found that adult sequential Spanish-English bilinguals are less accurate than English monolinguals in discriminating the American English vowels. Consequently, this study narrowed its focus to specific vowel sounds pronunciation, as this aspect aligns with the discrimination process. Regarding the third study, it was deduced that checking action research studies permitted to support the use of a diagnostic test and a summative test when having a qualitative study. Besides, developing oral production by implementing the tongue twister technique was found attractive for teenagers. Similarly, the two final studies being quantitative, permitted to support the use of this technique to improve

students' pronunciation skills, because both showed positive results after having implemented this technique. As a result, the analysis allowed the researchers to notice that implementing the tongue twister technique in teaching pronunciation of the English vowel sounds can have a positive impact that allows the students to improve in this area.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section outlines concepts, theories, and the support of the tongue twister technique to address the pronunciation problem found in a classroom. First, the impact of the behaviorist theory on education is defined and described. Second, the definition of pronunciation, the short and long vowel sounds within pronunciation, and a specific section to describe the selected sounds are presented. Finally, the Tongue Twister technique is explained along with the illustration of its benefits.

2.3 Behaviorism theory for Language Learning

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Watson (2017) and Skinner (1974), two behaviorists, explored people's behavior to determine how human beings could be exposed to new stimulus that led them to the acquisition of a new habit in their daily life. Since the new information has been processed many times, the brain reacts to it as something normal that needs a specific response.

At the time of proposing tongue twisters as a technique to help students with the improvement of their pronunciation skills, teacher-researchers had to base the teaching process on a learning theory, which guided them to apply it correctly. Regarding the field of education, Skinner (1974), employed the Behaviorist principles in it, particularly to assess its influence on the teaching-learning process of a language. The study conducted by the author mentioned

previously aimed to enhance effective teaching methods that promote successful language acquisition through positive reinforcement after the imitation of a behavior. He placed more emphasis upon that kind of learning, which is under the control of its consequences. To him, observable and measurable aspects of the environment and behavior of an organism were the reality.

Among the first experts on using the principles of behaviorism to teach a new language was Byram (1997), who explored the idea of having students immersed in a language community for them to truly realize and imitate behaviors of native speakers when producing the language. On the other hand, Widdowson (2010) and Reimann (2018) stated that the exact replication of native speakers' behaviors learned from a native context might be unnecessary since, in terms of education, each classroom constructs its behavior patterns connected to the culture that they build based on everyone's characteristics of personality and their first language.

Likewise, Reimann (2018) and Muhajirah (2020) expressed that the role of the behaviorist theory in the acquisition of a foreign language is to base activities on repetition, imitation, practice, and reinforcement in terms of language. Hence, EFL learners will acquire a new pronunciation habit, which will allow them to avoid any mispronunciation problems when communicating in this language. Additionally, these authors have suggested that this theory is strongly connected to repetition and drilling the chunks of the languages, which gave to the researchers a more comprehensive explanation of how it relates to a tongue twister. Behaviorists are more focused on the new behavior they normalize in place of analyzing the reasons behind the pronunciation of each word, in this case, students will receive teachers' stimulus when

presenting the correct pronunciation of words through tongue twisters and students produce the tongue twisters the same way their instructors pronounced.

In this regard, teaching pronunciation to students involves training them to acquire appropriate pronunciation behaviors (Richards, 2008). In this sense, the principles of this theory, along with the experiments conducted over the time, have highlighted the connection between behaviorism and the application of the tongue twister technique to improve pronunciation. Therefore, with the repetition of vowel sounds through six tongue twisters focused on the reinforcement of the vowel sounds, the teachers train students to present a superior performance in their class participation, reading, or real-life situations that imply verbal communication and a well-understood pronunciation. As a result, teachers expect the students' behavior to change when they perform those activities demonstrating that the theory described complies with the intention of its principles in education.

After the analysis of different perspectives, the researchers believe that the imitation of language customs, can take place based on the habits or patterns that individuals develop in their language usage. Through this imitation process, students can adopt language behaviors similar to those of native speakers, even if they are learning in a different context; since providing the appropriate stimulus can help them imitate and acquire certain language behaviors, like correct vowel sound pronunciation. Hence, teachers and students can create their own behavior patterns with the drilling of specific sounds through tongue twisters when pronouncing the sounds to be learned multiple times by reciting those and using them in different activities.

2.4 Speaking: Pronunciation's Skills

Many researchers have tried to define Speaking as a fundamental component of English language skills for non-native speakers. Their efforts aimed to offer these learners a comprehensive understanding of the proficiency they are trying to acquire. Bygate (1987) and Rao (2019) stated that such a skill allows people to express thoughts and feelings, and also requires attention to develop it correctly. Since English is widely used all over the world, good speaking skills are required for students and good teaching skills for teachers.

Saeed Al-Sobhi and Shakour (2018) claimed that of the four English language skills, speaking has a superior status because it is considered a foreign language not widely spoken in everyday interactions. Speaking is a productive skill that enables people to communicate ideas for different purposes and with different people. The previous authors mentioned that it needs to be practiced with confidence and patiently; otherwise, the person can be judged and might not establish strong bonds or relationships needed among people as others with great ability to use the language in such a way. However, Ahlquist (2019) claimed that productive skills turn out to be the most difficult ones to master, especially when learners are adolescents because of their greatest classroom fear of making mistakes and being laughed at. Consequently, some EFL learners may still lack the confidence to employ English both within and beyond the classroom, even after studying the language for an extended period.

When people talk about speaking, it is important to highlight that there are five components that build speaking as a skill, which are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension; nevertheless, this research paper would like to focus and describe just one: pronunciation.

2.5 Pronunciation: Long and short vowels

Pronunciation plays an important role in English language learning. According to Mulatsih (2015) and Amar et al. (2019), pronunciation is the speech sounds production for communication; it is how a language is usually spoken. In this sense, pronunciation is one of the most essential skills in helping students to communicate in English since it is the main component to transmit messages accurately. With acceptable pronunciation, speakers' speech can be understood despite having other mistakes, while with incorrect pronunciation, their speech becomes difficult to understand, despite being accurate in other areas (Miller, 2012). Although pronunciation is essential, Rohman (2016) claimed that people rarely use English as a means of communication because they find many difficulties in pronouncing words correctly.

The importance of pronunciation is further underscored by the evaluations applied by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education in 2017, where it is shown that the low English level has not changed in schools during the last decade; consequently, students' pronunciation is at the same level as it was ten years ago (Catillo, 2021). Such a fact is supported by Ortega and Minchala (2019) study, which states that the participants had serious problems communicating orally in the English language, which includes pronunciation. Plus, they stated that fifty teachers over two thousand possess a B2 level while the others do not go over the B1; thus, many students do not consider pronunciation as an essential skill either. As a supportive claim, Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2016) mentioned that teachers tend to defend the poor pronunciation skills of their students; their arguments could be described as a cop-out with respect to their inability to teach their students proper pronunciation.

Consequently, pronunciation can be considered one of the most difficult parts for a language learner to master and one of the least favorite topics for teachers to address in the classroom (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011), especially in public schools. Lastly, it must be considered that teaching pronunciation involves the broad division of two categories: segmental and suprasegmental features (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). Due to the nature of the problem, this paper will describe the segmental features, also called phonemes, with a focus on the American English long and short vowel sounds and the Spanish vowels, which are displayed in Table 1.

2.5.1 Long and Short Vowel Sounds

Table 1

American English and Spanish vowels sounds.

English Short vowels	ɪ	ʊ	ə	e	ɒ	ʌ	æ
English Long vowels	iː	uː	aː	ɔː	ɜː		
Spanish vowels	a	e	i	o	u		

Note: Table 1 displays the short and long English vowels as well as Spanish vowels sounds.

Based on the composition of the English language, phonology takes on an important role in pronunciation, so students find this language more challenging. According to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), in English, there are twelve vowels which are divided into five long vowels and seven short vowels (Simarmata & Pardede, 2018). The long vowels are /iː/ /uː/ /ɑː/ /ɔː/ /ɜː/ and the short vowels are /ɪ/ /ʊ/ /ə/ /e/ /ɒ/ /ʌ/ /æ/. Each one of the English vowels is pronounced differently, while the Spanish vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/ are pronounced the same way they are written. With these differences, students often get confused and mispronounced them. They generally doubt when pronouncing them and even do not realize their mistake (Arevi

& Ratmanida , 2020). Contrasting English with Spanish sounds, there is a difference between them; consequently, the articulation of English sounds might seem more difficult considering that a single vowel or even consonants can have many different sounds.

The distinction between short and long vowel sounds amplifies the complexity of English pronunciation. Short vowel sounds are the basic unaltered vowels. They usually occur when a single vowel is followed by a single consonant, while long vowel sounds can be formed in a massive variety of spellings (Simarmata & Pardede, 2018). Therefore, the contrast between both long and short vowels is not only due to length but also involves a different place of articulation (Maulina & Wennyta, 2021). Regarding English vowels, there are three main characteristics. They are distinguished by tongue position (front, central, and back), tongue and jaw height (high, mid, and low), degree of lip rounding, and the relative tension of the muscles involved. In view of the previous statements, developing an intelligible and proper pronunciation of English words for a non-native speaker is challenging. For this reason, it is necessary to implement motivated, engaging, and varied didactic activities in the classroom as part of the process of teaching and learning (De la Cruz & Intriago, 2022), which in this case is the tongue twister technique.

2.6 Tongue Twister for developing pronunciation in EFL learners

As with many other techniques, tongue twisters were first invented in the Ancient Rome. People from that era used to create games where they had to use words and the main purpose was to learn, develop, or improve areas of the language. Nowadays, educators have maintained the same objective with the slight difference that, now, this is considered a technique, which is capable to help people to acquire new linguistic abilities and improve the pronunciation of words due to their characteristics (Maulida, 2018). Considering the antiquity of tongue twisters, their

usefulness is unquestionable; however, the key to their success lies in their characteristics, which have remained largely unchanged over time.

Yuniar et al. (2021) in agreement with González and Cedeño (2021) mentioned that tongue twisters are small paragraphs whose sentences rhyme with each other. Although these compositions have a rhythm, the message in their sentences does not make sense since the primary function is to use words that have similar pronunciations, stress, and intonation closed in a short text. Therefore, the most difficult part when reading tongue twisters is pronouncing correctly throughout their sentences while increasing the speed.

Despite the lines that compound tongue twisters, which are not logical among them, each line is based on a single thematic group. The different tongue twisters have sentences on the most common topics such as clothes, food, agriculture, professions, and so on (Tzakosta & Sfiraki, 2016). Such a characteristic supports EFL students to grab vocabulary of the main topics of conversation while giving rhythm and rhyme to the sentences. They might lack logic since the main aim of its usage is not to teach coherent sentences but pronunciation at the moment of reading them at different speeds or avoiding mispronunciation mistakes while communicating with people. Therefore, tongue twisters are also characterized by having funny lines that must be repeated to articulate the sounds of similar phonemes correctly and not confusing them (Yuniar et al., 2021).

In agreement with Rohman (2016), the application of tongue twisters is one of the alternatives in teaching pronunciation since those use a combination of alliteration and rhyme. Regarding the previous information, tongue twisters can also be characterized for its humorous and amusing value where students are hoped to easily imitate and remember English phonemes. With this, the tongue twister technique has demonstrated to be effective when improving English

pronunciation of their students. Additionally, the mechanism of this technique is based on the repetition and reinforcement of mispronounced words to enhance students' behavior when using those challenging words in real life situations.

Therefore, the researchers of this study applied such a technique for an extended period of time to evaluate its effectiveness and examine its potential in addressing the objectives and responding to the research questions. On the other hand, it is important to note that the context presented in this study differs from many research articles, particularly in relation to the age of the population. For this reason, the next section highlights tongue twisters for adolescents.

2.6.1 Tongue Twisters for Teenagers

In many studies, such as Amar et al. (2019), Cahyani and Panjaitan (2020), González and Cedeño (2021), and Sitoresmi (2016), which were done in international contexts, pronunciation was improved through the application of Tongue Twisters as a technique since the problem in those contexts appeared in children. On the other hand, there is not much research where the same technique has been applied to teenagers. Nevertheless, studies done by Lutfiani and Astutik (2017) and Rohman (2016) demonstrated the opposite since their population was teenagers. Regarding adults, Sugiharto et al. (2022), Yuniar et al. (2021) and Yates and Zielinski (2009) applied the technique with students belonging to English programs at international universities. Therefore, this section aims to explore the reasons for using tongue twisters mostly with children and the justification for not applying them that much with teenagers.

In this sense, the stages of development suggested by Piaget (1972) were considered. Teenagers, by the age of seventeen, have acquired a set of characteristics and capacities in each one of the stages, from the sensorimotor to the formal operation. The stages in the first years of a

human being start with realizing what things are and who the people that surround them. Over time, this concept becomes more complex, allowing them to recognize abstract ideas regardless of being able to use the senses to understand the discoveries they made day by day. Considering this fact, teenagers are capable of accepting techniques that present abstract ideas because their stage of development permits them to see the benefits of it beyond the practice.

Nonetheless, that is not the only predominant characteristic of the stages but also imagination. Conversely, the lack of complete abstract or hypothetical thinking development allows children to naturally enjoy tongue twisters, given their attributes that align with young learners' inclinations, as indicated by the findings in this research field. Thus, the relation that researchers are implying in the application of tongue twisters with teenagers relates to the previous characteristics.

Considering the previous concepts, the researchers concluded that the main reason that inclined the different authors previously mentioned, to choose tongue twisters as a technique to improve students' pronunciation was the high level of imagination that children discover during their stages of development. On the other hand, when they become adolescents, complex characteristics appear in their personalities and reciting tongue twisters might not be seen as attractive as it is for children. This claim is supported by Gevalnosky (2002) who expressed that adolescents have hard feelings towards pronunciation since they feel foolish when pronouncing sounds that are weird and do not usually exist in their native language. Nonetheless, those perspectives might vary according to each learner attitude to the English language. Furthermore, there is no suggestion or rule that prohibits people who are proximate to becoming young adults from appreciating and taking advantage of resources that seem to suit better with children, on the

contrary those resources help them to understand better the culture of the language they are learning (Brown, 2006).

According to a national study done by Toro et al. (2019) regarding the teaching-learning process in English as a foreign language (L2), the possibility of getting positive results when using a variety of active strategies is elevated regardless of the age of the EFL learners. For most learners who decide to learn a new language, the principal factor is to maintain interest in the language during the entire process. Correspondingly, they do not focus too much on the means used to reach their focal goal as long as those can boost their intrinsic motivation.

Analyzing the frequency in which the usefulness of applying active techniques and methodologies, as well as considering the stages of cognitive development proposed by Piaget (1972) in English lessons in Ecuador, there is a poor consideration of both regarding its use to correct pronunciation issues. In Ecuador, the lack of appropriate methods, techniques, and strategies for teaching English is providing poor results in the oral production of the language (Toro et al., 2019). The realities of schools and the hours dedicated to English as a subject have prevented this from being conducted as planned. On the other hand, when pronunciation is practiced with a delay within the skills EFL students are supposed to develop, students are likely to consolidate erroneous pronunciations that will be difficult to change in the future.

After doing the literature review for this research, it is possible to understand the purpose of using the tongue twister technique to improve students' pronunciation, identify and analyze the advantages, disadvantages that the implementation of the tongue twister technique could have in class. Besides, it seems that the application of this technique has contributed to

increasing students' confidence, resulting in more participative students in the teaching-learning process.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this section is to present the methodological part of the study, which includes the type of research and paradigm, the method, techniques and instruments for the data collection, the participants of the investigation, and the research procedures regarding the nature of the study. These elements aimed to guide the study to achieve successfully the main objective, which is to explore the perceptions of using tongue twisters for pronunciation practice on the development of students' pronunciation skills.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The present study was guided by the constructivist paradigm. According to Larochelle et al. (1998), knowledge is constructed through didactic situations where the teachers and students interact. Therefore, both students and pre-service teachers were the ones who constructed their own understanding regarding pronunciation through the eight interventions of the tongue twister technique, and they are the responsible of what is produce as result from that. In this sense, the report of their experiences was analyzed to obtain results and conclusions. Lastly, this paradigm allowed the pre-service teachers to expand results during the process of the research since those were examined stage by stage until the last step before concluding the study.

3.2 Type of research

To begin with, the researchers considered the nature of the problem to select qualitative as the approach that guided the research. This approach presents reality as a construction of multiple perspectives provided by people and their interaction among themselves. In relation to

language education, the qualitative approach plays an essential role since it permits profound emotions induced during the teaching-learning process of English. According to Mirhosseini (2020), qualitative research in language education aids researchers in deeply analyzing the features of the language, in this case, English pronunciation. Therefore, achieving the main objective was easily through this approach. Secondly, this approach had the purpose of understanding in-depth emotions that go beyond what can be perceived at first sight or in numbers and still is reliable. In this sense, the first specific objective could be reached because of the direct demonstration of the impact of tongue twisters' usage in classes on students' perceptions.

3.3 Research Method

Since the nucleus of the problem is at the high school level and the intention of the researchers is to solve it through interventions in the classroom, and then assess and reflect on the results; this study is guided by the action research method. According to Efron and Ravid (2013), having action research as a method provides the researchers the opportunity to work on an educational improvement by planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In addition, this method allowed the researchers to contribute meaningful results to the EFL area, considering that this application affirmed that other English teachers could apply this technique whenever they have similar situations in their classrooms. Hence, the process is mainly about contribution among the different stakeholders of education, which means, that even though researchers-teachers are the leaders of the improvement in the school, the intervention might be useful in different contexts.

3.4 Techniques and instruments for data collection

In this regard, Figure 1 illustrates the data collection techniques and instruments used for this research.

Figure 1

Techniques and instruments

```
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │ Observations │
                    │ (Observation │
                    │    sheets)   │
                    └─────────────┘
            ↗                         ↖
┌─────────────────┐         ┌──────────────────┐
│  Focus Group    │         │  Assessment Data  │
│  Discussions    │ ←─────→ │  (Diagnostic and  │
│  (Discussion    │         │  Summative test)  │
│     guide)      │         │                   │
└─────────────────┘         └──────────────────┘
```
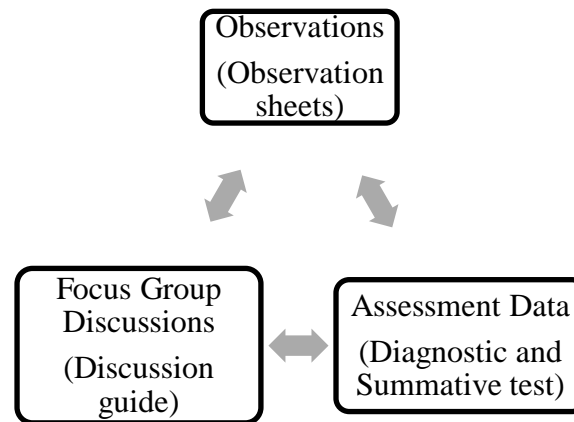
Note. The figure shows the techniques and instruments used to collect data.

To better address the problem, the type of research considered by the researchers to develop this project was qualitative with a constructivist paradigm due to the nature of the problem. Therefore, the researchers used three data collection techniques such as observations, focus group discussions (FGD), and assessment data (diagnostic and summative test).

In order to apply them, the researchers created one instrument per technique, which was validated by three experts in the research field (see Appendix A, B, and C). The validation of the instruments proved reliability on the results after their application, and clarity on the interpretation of the research questions. As stated by Straub (1989), this process of validating instruments benefits the study because it demonstrates that there is a connection between the purpose of the instruments and the objectives of the research. Hence, the researchers had the

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opportunity to strength their instruments, which consequently affects the results positively. Having them validated, the researchers will support the importance of each one in the following section.

3.4.1 Observations

The observations were the first technique enabled the verification of pronunciation activities, students' participation and pronunciation, among other aspects. The usefulness of the observation sheets as instrument to collect data is supported by Efron and Ravid (2013), who expressed that it "provides an authentic view of what is taking place, mostly within a natural context" (p. 68). In this regard, the results from the observations made before and during the implementation provided important insights about the activities, the technique's implementation, and the students' participation and worriedness on their pronunciation.

3.4.2 Focus group discussion

The focus group discussion was another technique that helped the researchers to achieve the second objective, which aims to express the students' perspectives regarding the usage of tongue twisters to improve students' pronunciation. Hennink (2014) argued that "the essential purpose of focus group research is to identify a range of perspectives on a research topic, and to gain an understanding of the issues from the perspective of the participants themselves" (p. 2). That is why this technique was implemented twice; before implementing the tongue twisters and at the end of the implementation through the use of a discussion guide. The participants were ten students selected with the convenience sampling technique, which is based on criteria such as accessibility, availability, or enthusiasm to participate (Etikan et al., 2015).

3.4.3 Assessment Data

This technique was used in two moments, before and after the implementation of the tongue twister technique. The utility of it was stated by Efron & Ravid (2013), who claimed that assessment data "allows monitoring of student progress and evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching strategies, curriculum, or programs" (p. 68). Thus, the instruments used were a diagnostic and a summative test. These tests were divided into two parts, in the first part they had to identify the sounds from pyramids, while in the second section they had to read a short paragraph with the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, and /æ/ vowel sounds.

It is important to highlighted that in the diagnostic test, the first part had two pyramids, while in the summative test, it was reduced to one. This was because the intention of the researchers was to avoid bias, however, once it was notice that the students struggled in differentiating the sounds, it was decided to use just one pyramid in that section of the test.

 The diagnostic test permitted the researchers to realize the students' pronunciation level, weaknesses, and strengths. Such results guided the implementation of the tongue twister technique during English classes. On the other hand, the summative test informed the pre-service teachers about the pronunciation level of students after the application of the technique. Hence, the diagnostic and summative tests as instruments are related to the second specific objective which is to demonstrate the development of the Tongue Twister technique in improving the pronunciation skills on EFL students through the analysis of tests results.

The mentioned techniques helped researchers to demonstrate whether there was an improvement in students' pronunciation skills or not. Nevertheless, before starting with the

development of the action research sections, it is important to explain more about the participants of the study.

3.5 Participants

The researchers developed their pre-professional practicums in a public school in Azogues. From the classes that they were assigned to them, 2° Baccalaureate level, parallel "A" was selected to implement the tongue twisters' technique. This class was formed by forty-one students where the average age was sixteen to eighteen years old. They were selected because they were the ones closer to finish their academic studies in high school; meaning that, they should be working on complying with the characteristics of the exit profile and the competencies of the B1 English level.

Furthermore, in the first days of observation, the researchers noticed some weaknesses in students' pronunciation quickly and easily, since one of the most common activities they developed in the English class was reading. This activity helped the pre-service teachers to confirm the problem at pronouncing some words containing the following sounds: /i:/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, /æ/. Therefore, to start with the implementation, parents had to sign a consent letter allowing them to be photographed, interviewed, or video recorded during the Tongue Twister technique interventions (See Appendix D).

3.6 Research Procedures

Once the paradigm, the type of research, the data collection methods, and the participants have been explained, it is time to present the procedure of the implementation which was divided into seven categories.

Figure 2

Action Research Process
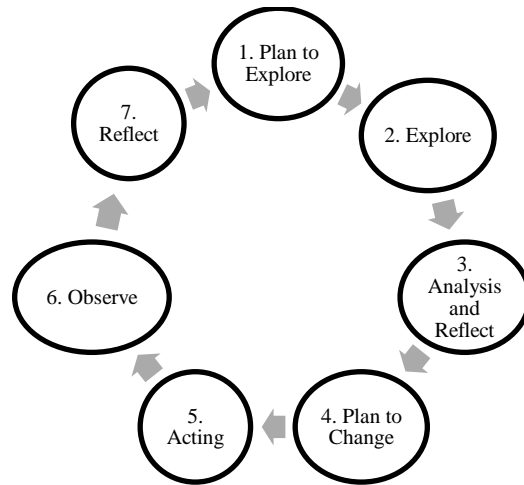
Note: Adapted from 2015 Mrs. Devaney's Education Blog, 2023

(https://mrsdevaneyblog.weebly.com/blog/a-step-by-step-process-to-action-research).

3.6.1 Plan to explore

In this section, the researchers formulated reflective questions that helped them validate

the assumptions of the problem observed. The questions that guided this process were the

following:

1.- How much attention does the teacher pay to students' pronunciation?

2.- How does the teacher react when students make pronunciation mistakes in class?

3.- What are the techniques used to improve students' pronunciation?

Primarily, the researchers started to take notes separately of each class, which enabled

them to observe the class from a different perspective. Regarding to the students, the researchers

conducted a focus group discussion where ten students out of forty-one participated. Eventually,

the researchers designed a diagnostic test to display the quality of students' pronunciation.

3.6.2 Explore

Since the observation sheet, discussion guides, and the diagnostic and summative tests were designed in the previous stage, the researchers used all of them to explore the features related to the problem. The first step was to work with the observation sheets during the first weeks where the group selected developed their English classes as usual. After making some observations, the researchers conducted the FGDs with the purpose of confirm that the activities observed were the ones usually used for practicing pronunciation. In addition, they took a diagnostic test to determine the quality of their pronunciation when producing words with the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, /æ/ vowel sounds, which resulted useful to support why was decided to focus this study on these vowel sounds.

3.6.3 Analysis and Reflect

Once all the procedures to collect the data have been developed, the researchers moved forward to the next section of analyzing and reflecting. Firstly, the researchers identified similar patterns among the notes gathered from the observations and the focus group discussion; they provided a broad overview of the problem, informing about the quality of students' pronunciation. On the other hand, the data gathered through the test permitted us to have consolidated data to support the outcomes from the focus group discussions. Besides, the results suggested the most appropriate treatment for the situation according to students' preferences, which enabled us to conduct an accurate plan that involved the use of the tongue twister technique as an alternative to provide successful results in their pronunciation skills.

3.6.4 Plan to change

Planning the change after analyzing the students' responses and observations is a crucial phase for preparing all the activities needed in the following section: acting. First of all, researchers looked for six tongue twisters, where three aimed to rehearse the /iː/ and /ɪ/ sounds and the other three the /ʌ/ and /æ/ sounds. Considering the results of previous stages, it was decided to implement the tongue twister technique during the practice stage of the eight lessons of one hour each. At the end of each lesson, students had an activity to demonstrate their understanding and analyze whether the tongue twister technique was helping students with their pronunciation skills.

3.6.5 Acting

The eight interventions follow a pre-established pattern. The researchers started teaching the ʌ/ and /æ/ sounds together. The first three lessons aimed to identify, differentiate and develop the sounds as accurate as possible while using the tongue twister technique in the practice stage twice. In the first part, students had to recite it and in the second part the tongue twister was practiced in another activity which usually was a game. As it for the last lesson, its aim was to reinforce the knowledge and clear doubts regarding the pronunciation of the sounds. This process was the same when there was time to practice the /iː/and /ɪ/ sounds.

3.6.6 Observing

After applying the tongue twister technique, the researchers observed the students' improvement regarding pronunciation and interpreted their behavior, performance and perceptions with the tools mentioned at the beginning of the chapter such as focus group discussions, observations, and the summative test. In the observation part, both teacher-

researchers provided feedback to each other in each lesson; thus, recommendations were accepted day by day during the acting phase to obtain a great improvement on their pronunciation of the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, and /æ/ sounds. On the other hand, in this phase, researchers conducted a post-focus group discussion to describe the students' perceptions after the application of the tongue twisters' technique and a summative test to support the results obtained from the FGD and observations.

3.6.7 Reflecting

The researchers reflected on the results obtained from each tool. Through summative data, the researchers could notice whether there was a difference before and after the implementation of the tongue twister, which strength the results from the rest of the tools. In the case of observations, it was noticeable that the development of students' pronunciation was not linear, but still demonstrated an improvement. In addition, this specific tool allowed researchers to reflect on the intervention day by day to have a positive result at the end. Regarding the focus group discussion, it permitted us to know students' perceptions before and after the implementation, which, according to the researchers' reflection, was the most powerful one because the results were specifically based on students' words. Although this intervention had good results in only one cycle, researchers recommend using the tongue twister technique in more than one stage of the lesson for the next intervention and see if the improvement is more noticeable.

The cycle of action research has been described; however, the following section provides more detail of the implementation of the tongue twister technique, so more teacher-researchers can benefit from it.

4. Data Analysis

This section of the study aims to present the procedure that the researchers followed to analyze the data gathered through assessment data, focus group discussions and observations. Therefore, prior to that explanation, the approach that guided the data analysis is explained.

Being this a study in which the researchers have drawn conclusions from the data revealed by specific instruments, they have considered working with an inductive research approach, moving from the specific to the general (Soiferman, 2010). Hence, the data analysis started with the explanation of the procedure followed for each research instrument, which aided researchers to conclude about the use of the tongue twister technique to improve pronunciation.

4.1 Procedures for Data Analysis

The first data collection technique that the researchers applied was assessment data. This technique had two instruments, the diagnostic and summative test, which were analyzed using the same criteria. The first part of the test aimed to recognize students' abilities at identifying and differentiating words with the /æ/, /ʌ/, /i:/, /ɪ/ sounds. The words were selected according to the minimal pair sounds of the vowels and the students' level of English that was B1. Thus, the researchers started the analysis by listing the words from the pyramid in a different document according to their sounds. Then, they counted the number of mistakes that each student had with the respective words. This helped to identify the sounds in which students struggled the most before the implementation and to noticed whether they improved after it.

For the second part of the test, the researchers created a short reading using words with the following sounds /æ/, /ʌ/, /i:/, /ɪ/. To analyze their pronunciation skills before and after the implementation, students had to send an audio reading the whole paragraph. Consequently, every

word that was mispronounced by them was being accumulated so the researchers could affirm which were the most difficult words for them when it comes to pronunciation. Since the same procedure was followed to analyze the summative test 'results, the researchers perceived all the four vowels were optimized due to the tongue twister technique implementation.

The second data collection technique, which was observations, was applied before the intervention planned by the researchers and during it. Both helped to obtain valuable information to justify the differences found between the students' participation, behavior and performance before the implementation and later. This data was firstly codified according to similar categories detected on the observation sheets transcripts. Lastly, the researchers used both the assessment data analysis and observation analysis to acquire new insights regarding the use of the tongue twister technique´s impact on students' pronunciation.

To respond to the second research question of the study, the raw data gathered through the online FGDs was transcribed. Once the information was transcribed, the researchers had to code the information, which was easily constructed since the majority of them agreed with the comments regarding their perceptions on the implementation of tongue twisters. As a final step, each code was explained in a theme created based on the content that they code represented. Although the first focus group discussion focused more on the activities they used to do at their English classes before the teaching proposal, the combination and contrast with codes gathered from the post-focus group discussion indicates that the analysis was effective.

5. Designing Teaching Proposal

The present proposal aimed to describe the impact of the tongue twister technique on students' pronunciation. During the interventions, the researchers assumed the role of teachers;

therefore, they will be mentioned as "the teacher" during the explanation of each intervention in the following paragraphs. Besides, they analyzed the students' ability to recognize, differentiate and produce the /æ/, /ʌ/, /iː/ and /ɪ/ sounds through the use of this technique; therefore, it is worth starting with the definition of it. Tongue twisters are short paragraphs whose sentences rhyme with each other, and their primary function is to use words that have similar pronunciations, stress, and intonation enclosed in a short text. The most difficult part when reading tongue twisters is reading it correctly throughout their sentences while increasing the speed (Yuniar et al., 2021). Due to their characteristics, students are capable of practicing the sound through repetition over and over again.

This proposal was carried out in a public school in Azogues with students from the second baccalaureate grade. This class was formed by a group of forty-one students who actively participated in the intervention from May 4th until June 28th. The participants were exposed to eight interventions that lasted eighty-minute each. The interventions aimed to explore the perceptions of using tongue twisters for the development of their pronunciation skills. Unfortunately, the intervention could not be developed for a longer period of time due to the class hours dedicated to the English subject at the school, which were five per week and lasted forty minutes each. As researchers, this limitation of the study must be considered in further interventions, for now, the present interventions are described one by one in the following section.

5.1 Execution of the proposal: Use of the tongue twister technique

The implementation of the proposal went through a meticulous process guided by the research method selected: action research. After analyzing the findings from the "Explore"

phase, the researchers could identify that students struggled to pronounce words with the following short and long vowel sounds /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, /æ/. In order to address the problem presented, the researchers thought on using the tongue twister technique, whose application followed an order explained below.

Firstly, the researchers decided to create and adapt six tongue twisters where three of them focused on the /ʌ/ and /æ/ sound and the other three on the /iː/ and /ɪ/ sounds. Since the proposed intervention was guided by the Behaviorist theory, the researchers adopted the pattern of repeating, imitating, practicing and reinforcing as characteristics of the activities developed under the theory presented when teaching a language (Reiman, 2018 & Muhajirah, 2020; Reiman, 2018). Therefore, although the researchers dedicated four interventions to each pair of sounds, the last one did not include a tongue twister, on the contrary, the general aim of the final lesson in both cases was to reinforce the practice of the tongue twisters previously taught. This division of the lessons enabled students to acquire this new routine as a habit to correct their pronunciation while repeating and reinforcing the practice of the tongue twister technique. In addition, these tongue twisters had to be based on sounds previously mentioned and match the students' proficiency level (B1); however, it was difficult to find tongue twisters with such characteristics. For that reason, the majority were created using ChatGPT and others were adapted from online sources.

Secondly, the lesson plans were created following the Presentation Practice Production model (PPP) (See Appendix L). According to Maftoon and Sarem (2015), "PPP is a three-part teaching paradigm: Presentation, Practice and Production; based on behaviorist theory which states that learning a language is just like learning any other skill" (p. 1). With this model, the

researchers presented the sounds with different activities where students could easily identify the /iː/, /ɪ/ , /ʌ/, /æ/ sounds in context. As for the practice phase, it was decided to place the tongue twister technique in that part of the lesson to help students with the rehearsal of the sounds. Lastly, in the production phase of the lessons, students demonstrated their abilities based on the objective of each lesson, which were from identifying to producing the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, /æ/ sounds correctly. This part was key for the researchers since their final performance allowed us to confirm the effectiveness of the tongue twister technique on the students' pronunciation. In addition, the majority of the activities that used this technique were mostly developed in pairs and groups, so besides receiving feedback from the teacher, students could also receive feedback from their classmate (See Appendix K). With the purpose of presenting clearness on the proposal, the next section outlines in detail the process of each phase of the eight intervention and the dates in which those were developed.

5.1.1 Intervention 1: May 4th, 2023

In the first lesson implemented, the main objective was that students could recognize the differences between the /ʌ/ and /æ/ sounds by practicing them with the tongue twister technique. In this lesson, the researchers presented the first tongue twister:

"The black cat sat on the mat,

but the fat rat ran and sat

on the rug instead."

Students had their first contact with the technique in the presentation phase of the lesson. Firstly, the tongue twister was projected on the board to permit students read it on their minds, aloud or comment about it among classmates. The researchers could perceive a high level of curiosity since almost all the class had surprised expressions when looking to the board. Nevertheless, there were also some worried faces at the moment of noticing that reading it quickly was challenging. Secondly, the teachers modelled the correct recitation of the tongue twister emphasizing the pronunciation of the words containing the /ʌ/ and /æ/ sounds. At first, the demonstration had a slow speed, which was repeated several times; then, the speed at reciting started to increase on each recitation for students to follow her.

Moving forward, the practice phase was composed by two parts. In part number one, students were asked to practice the tongue twister individually as many times as possible to prepare themselves, with help of teachers' feedback, for a competition to see who recited the tongue twister faster. Researchers could observe that a great number of students were commenting they did not want to be part of it because they felt unprepared to develop the task in front of the class. Nonetheless, there were other students who were willing and eager to be part of the competition regardless of the nervousness caused by the activity. On the contrary, they limited themselves to just ask for more preparation time before reciting it in front of the class.

In the second part of the practice phase, students were grouped using the sitting arrangement of the class. Considering there were four columns of ten students each and one with eleven, there were four groups of students for this competition game called *Chinese whisper*. The dynamic of the game was the following. In the beginning, the teacher had to whisper a line of the tongue twister to all of the first members of the columns; then, they had to whisper it to the next

member in the column until the end. The message understood from the last member had to match with the one that the teacher gave them at first to win the game. During this activity, students looked happy, interested and excited on playing this game with the tongue twister. Also, the room was full of laughs and murmuring about the technique, meaning that this practice was positive accepted by the students.

Lastly, students at the production phase had to complete a worksheet where they demonstrated their abilities to differentiate between words with the /ʌ/ and /æ/ sound. The results from this phase and the observations carried out during the whole lesson, enabled researchers to conclude that the tongue twister technique was embraced with enthusiasm by the students, which was demonstrated with the keen fervor appreciated in the activities and excitement during the practice stage of the lesson. Plus, the researchers could appreciate the technique's effectiveness in the moment of evaluating their last task. Although there were some doubts during the course of the worksheet, the results displayed that the objective of the lesson was achieved meaning that the practice with the tongue twister technique certainly impact the students' ability on differentiating sounds.

5.1.2 Intervention 2: May 10th, 2023

The second intervention aimed to develop students' pronunciation skills by facilitating their ability to accurately distinguish and produce the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds through the use of the tongue twister technique. The tongue twister presented this time was the following:

"*In the summer, Sam and Max passed a black cat*

with luck in a shack, and a duck in a truck,

but finally found the track back to their shack".

Due to the confusion students experienced with the first tongue twister, this time it was determined to use colors. Words with the /ʌ/ sound were colored blue and the ones with the /æ/ sound were in red.

This time, when students looked at the tongue twister, they could easily differentiate the words that had each sound due to the use of both colors. With regard to the practice phase, it followed the same procedure as in intervention one. Initially, the tongue twister was first recited by the teacher to have the students imitating the rhythm and the correct pronunciation of the colored words. Even though colors help to identify the words with the /ʌ/ and /æ/ sound, the tongue twister seemed to be hard for students to recite and some of them commented that it did not make much sense. Later, the researchers asked for volunteers to participate on a short competition that implied having students reciting it as fast as possible, but this time lollipops were offered to the students who wanted to be part of the game as a reward. Though this compensation motivated a lot of students, they had issues with the tongue twister despite they tried to do it slow.

Following the same procedure as in intervention one, students were paired up to develop the second practice with the tongue twister. This time, the tongue twister was practice using a Tic Tac Toe table. Figure 3 presents one of the tables used.

Figure 3

Tongue twisters in a Tic Tac Toe table

Note. The figure shows one of the Tic Tac Toe tables used to practice the tongue twister on intervention 2.

The tool presented in figure 3 was played with the dynamic of a regular Tic Tac Toe game, but instead of having empty squares those were filled by sections of the tongue twister requiring students' recitation of it to win. Judging by what researchers could perceive this time, students maintain an active participation and an enthusiasm to work with the technique. They were keen to participate in the activities although the tongue twister presented this time seemed complicated for them. At the final phase, the teacher played an audio where students classified minimal pairs according to the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds. The students' performance on this phase reported that students slightly fulfilled the objectives and there was even a pronunciation performance declined in contrast with the previous one.

5.1.3 Intervention 3: May 17th, 2023

For the third lesson, the objective was to distinguish between /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds through the practice of tongue twisters. Based on the good comments that students gave to the use of

colors and the disfavor expressed about the length of the previous tongue twister, the researchers created this one:

"Pat the cat sat on a mat,

but the mutt must run

from the sun."

By this time, students knew the routine of the implementation and were anxiously expecting to see the tongue twister the teachers prepared for them this time. Once it was recited by the teacher and feedback was delivered in the first practice, students said this was the easiest tongue twister they had recited since words with the /æ/ sound were before the comma and words with the /ʌ/ were after. This gave clearness for students to recite it with less problems enabling them to pronounce the sounds with more accuracy than ever.

As a second practice, teachers paired up students to develop the "mirror activity" where one student read a part of the tongue twister to the other without emitting any sound; in that way, the partner read his/her partner's lips to understand what was said. Students had the freedom to choose as many partners as they could to receive feedback from different classmates. For students, this was a funny activity because their faces look weird when moving their mouths without producing sounds. In addition, they were constantly asking teachers for feedback to make the most out of the practice. To conclude the lesson, students had to complete some sentences with minimal pair words using the two sounds showed previously by listening to an audio. Although their performance was not better than in the first intervention, the lesson's

objective was reached, and the final outcomes demonstrated a superior pronunciation ability than in the previous implementation.

5.1.4 Intervention 4: May 25th, 2023

During the last intervention, the previously used tongue twisters used were revised and practiced once again. The main objective of the lesson was to reinforce students' pronunciation of the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds through the revision of these tongue twisters and to evaluate their final pronunciation skills. In the beginning, learners remembered the sounds through a simple game that required them to go one step forward when listening the /æ/ sound and a step back for the /ʌ/ sound. Being this the first activity of the day, students seemed to be more relaxed and motivated to participate actively.

In the presentation stage, the three tongue twisters were presented to the students for them to practice each of them individually. Most of them, started to do that immediately, while other did not seem interested on repeating something they learned before. After the brief practice, teachers explained the second activity, which consisted of pairing up students to recite one of the three tongue twisters to each other. In order to assure that students provide quality feedback on their classmates' pronunciation, teachers required them to take notes of the mistakes they listened and share every comment with their partner. In this part of the lesson, students were concentrated on producing the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds correctly on the recitation of the tongue twister.

Last but not least, students had to record their voices while reading four sentences presented by the teacher, which contained words with the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds. Students remained silent and practiced reading the sentences multiple times before sending the audio. This demonstrated their dedication to improving their pronunciation skills. At the end of the day,

when checking and analyzing the distinction of the sounds on the learners' audios, it was evident that the quality had improved due to the usage of the tongue twister technique to practice the sounds.

5.1.5 Intervention 5: June 7th, 2023

From this point until the eighth intervention, the focus shifted to the /i:/ and /ɪ/ vowel sounds. In line with the previous interventions, the objectives of the lessons intensify progressively on each lesson. Therefore, the main objective here was to recognize the differences between the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds, but also demonstrate accurate production of these sounds in various word contexts. Achieving the goal presented required the creation of tongue twister number four exhibited below.

"The sheep on the ship were terribly sick,

It's as if the ship were thick with sick,

Turn the wheel if you will, I won't spill.

Just don't steal the thick sick ship's wheel"

Following the Presentation, Practice, Production lesson model, to introduce the new sounds teachers presented audios of both pronunciations at the very beginning along with examples. Then, many words were displayed with both sounds for learners to classify them whether those contained /i:/ or /ɪ/ sound. Comparing students' participation level and reactions to the first presentation to the sounds, in this instance, they were less nervous to get involved and had fewer problems at identifying the sounds.

Afterward, the teacher showed the tongue twister and for the class' first practice with it, they demonstrated domain when reciting the whole tongue twister, especially the vowel sounds. Nevertheless, in the middle of the practice, students were still engaged in the lesson, but the ones at the back were having troubles at listening, so they were not participating much. Therefore, it was noticed that they were having difficulties, so she tried to involved them more in the class, by calling his names when she needed a participant. Plus, she planned some competition games that helped them to be involved again. On the other hand, regarding pronunciation abilities, the practice proves that pronouncing the /i:/ or /ɪ/ sounds resulted easier than the first-time students were asked to do it with the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds.

Finally, the teacher grouped the students by columns to do a competition game where each student had to recite the tongue twister. The winner column was the one whose members took less time to read it. A similar game was conducted in the first intervention, but this time feelings of nervousness decreased.

5.1.6 Intervention 6: June 14th, 2023

This intervention aimed to help students not only recognize the differences between the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds, but also demonstrate accurate production of these sounds in various word contexts. With the purpose of achieving the objective, this tongue twister was presented at the practice phase of the lesson.

"It's been the thing to sing unseen,

For that's the life of a human being,

But if you sing unseen as a being,

How will you know it's not a dream that you're dreaming?"

The opening exercise of the lesson used the same audio recordings than before to reinforce both sounds, followed by a word classification activity. There were a lot of volunteers who were willing to participate. Then, the tongue twister was presented, and students identified the sounds in the words by using different colors before practicing its pronunciation. During the recitation, students rarely ever demonstrated expressions of boredom, they were trying to read without committing mistakes, which maintain the discipline although there was a lot of enthusiasm.

As a final task in the production phase, students were part of a game where they had to ask their classmates' cellphone number by reading words with the two vowel sounds. The worksheet used is illustrated in Figure 4 underneath.

Figure 4

Pit Pat Put activity

Note. The figure shows the worksheet completed by one out of forty-one students who

participated in the activity.

During the final task, the teacher could realize that students enjoyed the activity and

move around the class to collect as many cellphones' numbers as possible while practicing the

/iː/ and /ɪ/ sound. Furthermore, when the activity concluded, the results proved that the practice

with the tongue twister was highly effective due to the students' performance went beyond the

identification of the target sounds when exhibiting an accurate production of the two vowel

sounds.

5.1.7 Intervention 7: June 21st, 2023

Being this intervention the last in where a new tongue twister was used, the aim was to help students identify and distinguish between the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds and improve their pronunciation in spoken English. The lesson began with a competitive word-list activity where the teacher grouped students into four teams to identify the corresponding sound for each word. The learners' performance on this activity permitted the researchers to came up to the conclusion that was easier to acquire the correct pronunciation of the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds. In this third lesson applying the tongue twister technique for the practice of the two vowel sounds mentioned, it was already very difficult to find mistakes on their pronunciation and their identification skills of the sounds were almost totally accurate.

Next, the tongue twister challenge involved memorization, dictation, and pronunciation practice.

> *"Sheep seek heat, ship bit sick.*
>
> *Lip leapt, beat hit quick.*
>
> *Sick ship sought sheep's heat.*
>
> *Leap, seek, hit, bit—what a feat!"*

This tongue twister was modeled by the teacher and practiced by the students. At this stage, students produced it individually while receiving feedback to improve the pronunciation of the two vowel sounds there. Regarding their performance, they improved their pronunciation skills, which was simple to realize and compare since there was almost no error to correct in this area.

5.1.8 Intervention 8: June 21st, 2023

As it was mentioned at the beginning of this section, the last intervention in both pairs of sounds, the first developed with the /æ/ and /ʌ/ and the second the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sound, the last intervention had the purpose of reinforcing the tongue twister previously taught and provide the last feedback before the summative test. Hence, the aim of this intervention was to help students achieve a comprehensive understanding and proficient usage of the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds in their pronunciation by reinforcing the practice with the tongue twisters seen before.

The lesson began with an engaging activity using the song "We Will Rock You" by Queen, where students had to distinguish between the sounds and find the rhythm. This dynamic was favorable received by the students since some of them who knew the song and enjoyed having it in the class. Later, a recap of previous tongue twisters was conducted in teams, emphasizing the learned sounds. As in most of the lessons, this was a competition game that needed students to be concentrated on remembering the three tongue twisters despite that, they enjoyed working as a team and being able to rely on their classmates to win. During the development of this activity, the researchers realized that their initial pronunciation when it comes to the production of the /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds improved significantly from the first intervention.

Finally, students read a short text and recorded themselves to demonstrate their mastery of the vowel sounds. Most of the students improved it, heightened their pronunciation awareness, enjoyed the language learning, and increased their confidence in speaking. This intervention was helpful for the students to achieve a comprehensive understanding and proficient usage of the /i:/

and /ɪ/ sounds. Besides, they increased their confidence in speaking using the tongue twister technique.

6. Results

This chapter presents the results obtained from the diagnostic and summative test, observation sheets, and the pre- and post-focus group discussion. The information gathered aims to respond the main research question by answering the two sub-questions from which the study's objectives arose.

6.1 Sub-research Question 1: Students' perceptions of the tongue twister technique for improving pronunciation.

In order to respond to the first research question, the researchers conducted a pre-focus group discussion before the implementation of the tongue twister's technique and a post-focus group discussion after having implemented it (See Appendix I and J). In this sense, the researchers coded the students' responses, resulting in two main codes from the pre-FGD and three from the post-FGD, which were relevant for answering the present research question. Regarding this, Figure 5 shows the codes used to present the essential information.

Figure 5

Students' perspectives on the application of the tongue twister's technique.
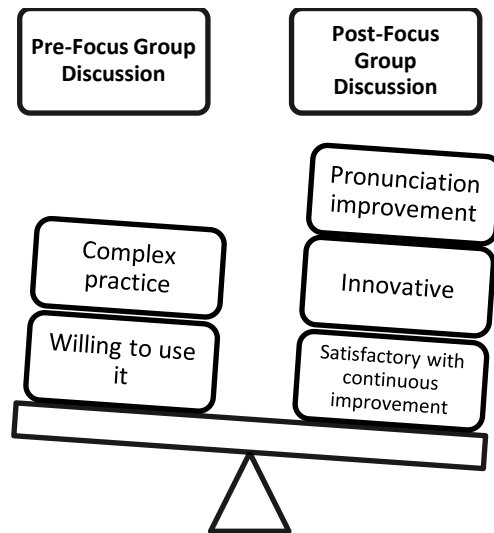
Note. The figure shows the students' perspectives before and after the use of the tongue twister technique and their comments on its usefulness regarding pronunciation improvement.

During the initial phase of the pre-focus group discussion, some students shared a common belief, which was that tongue twisters were complex. For instance, participant 2 conveyed skepticism mentioning, "I wouldn't really like the idea of implementing this technique since it would confuse me a lot". Similarly, participants 3 and 10 mentioned that they perceived the technique as "something complicated". Nonetheless, the majority of the students expressed agreement about the potential benefits of incorporating the tongue twister technique into their English lessons. Their willingness to start practicing pronunciation through this technique was marked by enthusiasm, because they perceived the technique as something "innovative".

In contrast to the previous answers, during the post-FGD, the belief that the technique was "complicated and confusing" was still mentioned, but the participants who expressed that

reduced. In this sense, participant 1 said "It was a bit complicated the first time" while participant 7 claimed "It was complicated and confusing at the beginning but we were adapting and it helped us with our pronunciation" With this, there is a notable decline of students who perceived tongue twisters as if they were going to be difficult to practice with. Besides, learners' opinions shift to positives once they started to have more contact with the technique. The majority of them affirmed that their pronunciation has improved even though the application had not finished. Moreover, participants 2,5,8 agreed on calling the technique "an innovative practice" since they have not worked with techniques like this previously as mentioned by all the participants in the pre-focus group discussion.

Furthermore, once the implementation finished, they expressed that their pronunciation improved compared to how it was before the implementation of the technique. Participant 8 said "I feel that I have been able to improve a lot with the help of tongue twisters since it has made it easier for me to pronounce words that were complicated before". Likewise, the technique was considered "exciting". Although they stated that they felt good practicing pronunciation with routine activities, this hooked them much more than usual.

6.2 Sub-research question 2: Tongue twisters' technique impact into students' pronunciation.

In response to this research question, the results of the diagnostic and summative tests are presented along with the observations. Previously, it was mentioned that the total of participants was 41, however, the diagnostic assessment was taken by 40 students, and the summative test for 41. This was because the absence of the students was something that the researchers could not

control. Since the test was composed of two parts (See Appendix E and F) the results of those were analyzed by parts.

6.2.1 First part: Identification of the sounds on the pyramids

This first part of the test aimed to provide a comprehensive view of the difficulties faced by the students in differentiating the words' pronunciation with the vowels mentioned in this study before and after the application of the tongue twister technique. The words used in the pyramids for this part were minimal pairs (See Appendix E and F). The results of the first part of both tests are presented in the following Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2

Identification struggles: /iː/ and /ɪ/ vowel sounds identification

Diagnostic test					Summative Test			
/iː/	#students	/ɪ/	#students		/iː/	#students	/ɪ/	#students
Seek	37	sick	25		Seek	20	sick	27
Seal	19	sill	31		Wheel	23	will	28
Heat	23	hit	30		Eat	31	it	19
Sleep	17	slip	21					
Reason	28	risen	18					
Beat	32	bit	15					

Note. This table shows the results obtained from the first part of the diagnostic and summative tests in recognizing the /iː/, /ɪ/ vowel sounds.

Table 3

Identification struggles: /ʌ/ and /æ vowel sounds identification

Diagnostic Test					Summative Test			
/ʌ/	**#students**	**/æ/**	**#students**		**/ʌ/**	**#students**	**/æ/**	**#students**
Mud	18	mad	29		mud	2	mad	39
Fun	23	fan	15		luck	30	lack	18
Crush	11	crash	32					
Bun	26	ban	21					

Note. This table shows the results obtained from first part of the diagnostic and summative tests in recognizing the /ʌ/ and /æ/ vowel sounds.

Understanding that the words applied were minimal pairs, the results from Table 2 show that during the diagnostic test, students encountered most difficulty with words such as "seek" (/i:/), "beat" (/i:/), "sill" (/ɪ/), and "hit" (/ɪ/). In contrast, the minimal pair that posed the highest level of difficulty and was present in both tests was seek (/i:/) and sick (/ɪ/). Notably, after having applied the tongue twister technique and having reduced one pyramid in the summative test; students demonstrated improvement in identifying the /i:/ sound in the word seek. Analysis of the diagnostic test outcomes indicates that 37 students struggled in recognizing the /i:/ sound, while in the summative test, 20 of them still found difficulties. Conversely, the minimal pair sick (/ɪ/), saw an increase from 25 to 27 struggling students.

Likewise, in Table 3 the minimal pair with the highest level of identifying these sounds and that was present in both tests was "mad" (/æ/) and "mud" (/ʌ/). Furthermore, the words "crash" (/æ/), "mad" (/æ/), and "bun" (/ʌ/) were the ones which students faced challenges before implementing the tongue twister technique. Remarkably, the word that had an improvement was

"mud" (/ʌ/). Analysis of the diagnostic test outcomes indicates that 18 students faced challenges in recognizing the /ʌ/ sound in this word, while in the summative test, 2 of them still found difficulties. However, like with the previous sounds, the minimal pair mad" (/æ/), saw an increase from 29 to 39 struggling students.

6.2.2 Second part: Pronunciation of the sounds

The second part of the tests aimed to identify the most difficult sounds to pronounce by listening to the students' pronunciation through a recording of them reading a paragraph the researchers included in the test (See Appendix E and F). The results of this part are illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Students' pronunciation struggles

Vowel Sounds	Diagnostic Test Pronunciation	Summative Test Pronunciation	Difference between scores
/iː/	28	17	11
/ɪ/	11	5	6
/ʌ/	37	10	27
/æ/	34	24	10

Note. This table shows the number of students over 41 who struggled to pronounce the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, /æ/ vowel sounds, plus the contrast between the diagnostic and the summative test results.

The results obtained in this second part showed that after the implementation of the tongue twister technique, the level of the students' pronunciation of the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, and /æ/ vowel sound improved. The /ʌ/ sound had the highest level of improvement with a difference of 27 students from the diagnostic to the summative test. Likewise, the /iː/ sound achieved a difference of 11 students. On the other hand, the sound /æ/ had a difference of 10 students who improved in

pronouncing this sound, while the sound /ɪ/ obtained an improvement of 6 students. In light of this, the results highlighted the positive influence of the tongue twister technique on students' pronunciation even if the improvement varied across the four vowel sounds.

6.2.3 Observations

In order to strengthen the outcomes provided by the tests, the researchers present the observations' findings conducted before and during the implementation of the tongue twister technique in Table 5.

Table 5

Researchers' findings

	BEFORE	DURING
PASSIVE LEARNING	Doing other activities Distracted most of the time	Less frequency distraction
PASSIVE TEACHING	Teacher-Read Students-Repeat	Varied activities
STUDENTS PARTICIPATION	Not voluntary participation There was not engagement	Engagement into the activities Paying attention to the pronunciation

Note. This table shows key information gathered from the observations conducted.

Upon observing the classes, it became evident that a prominent activity employed was repetition and imitation. This method involved the teacher reading passages from the English textbook, followed by students repeating the text aloud (See Appendix G).

"The classroom teacher has focused the pronunciation practice on reading the text presented in the textbook. Students were not careful with their pronunciation" (Observation 1, May 5, 2023).

Furthermore, it was noteworthy that no immediate corrective feedback was provided when students mispronounced certain words. As for the students' behavior, they were distracted in other activities and seemed little interested in the activities.

On the contrary, based on the observations completed during the eight interventions (See Appendix H) and the formal assessment conducted at the end of each class, the researchers conclude that using the tongue twister technique during the interventions helped students to develop a better pronunciation of the /æ/, /ʌ/, /i:/, /ɪ/ vowel sounds. Even though there were a few interventions in which achieving the lesson objective was difficult or the tongue twister was misunderstood, students never lost curiosity when reciting or using it in different activities. Varying activities with the same tongue twister were key because they helped to get students engaged, meaning a fully concentrated class on pronunciation practice. Nevertheless, non-general conclusions cannot be presented.

7. Discussion

This research was guided by a main research question, which was answered with the guidance of two sub-questions that aimed to explore the perceptions of using tongue twisters for pronunciation practice on the development of students' pronunciation skills. The answers to these questions are presented in the following section through analysis and interpretation of the obtained results.

Regarding sub-research question 1, the results after implementing the tongue twister technique indicated that the technique was positively accepted as a pronunciation practice. The insights obtained from the pre-focus group discussion conducted revealed that there was a lack of innovative techniques to practice pronunciation during English classes. This is aligned with a

research study Ortega and Minchala (2019) have done, they claimed that the teaching practices of the English language in Cañar are based on traditional methodologies, which can be consider obsolete nowadays.

The students' perceptions before the application of the technique were that it would be confusing and complex. Nevertheless, knowing that it was something new and innovative for them, students claimed that they were excited and willing to discover how the technique works in English classes. Once they were exposed to the tongue twister technique, this captured their attention, causing an increase on their participation and pronunciation performance, which is aligned accordance with Lutfiani and Astutik (2017), who stated that learners enjoy practicing pronunciation with this technique regardless of the mistakes they can commit.

Relating to students' perceptions after the implementation of the tongue twister technique, they stated that the technique was perceived as "complicated and confusing" at the beginning, however, they were adapting with each intervention, which is aligned with the Behaviorist theory and supported by Richards (2008), who claimed that teaching pronunciation to students involves training them to acquire appropriate pronunciation behaviors. Additionally, the students' interest and recognition of the effectiveness of the tongue twister technique allowed researchers to contradict to what was stated by Gevalnosky (2002). This author claimed that teenagers prefer not to participate on pronunciation activities that can make them feel silly for producing sounds that do not normally appear in their native language. Nevertheless, after the implementation phase, the FGD participants expressed that their pronunciation improved in comparison to their state before the technique was applied.

Although this technique can be considered a too childish activity, teenagers seemed to feel comfortable practicing pronunciation with it. According to Brown (2006), there are some activities such as nursery rhythms, songs, or tongue twister that are considered made for children. Despite that, taking into account to Piaget (1972) who stated that teenagers at the formal operation stage have already reinforced characteristics that permit them to understand abstract concepts and have a better idea of every new notion presented to them by deeply analyzing its advantages and disadvantages; students can benefit of this sort of techniques because regarding education those tend to be effective. This was supported when students stated they enjoyed practiced pronunciation through tongue twisters and it was noticed how their pronunciaiton skills were improving day by day with the usage of the tongue technique.

Concerning to sub-research question 2, results from the first part of the diagnostic and summative tests are aligned to García and Froud (2016) study where stated that Spanish speakers may face difficulties when learning the /i:/, /ɪ/, /æ/, and /ʌ/ English vowel sounds because they constitute common perceptual confusions for them, which was noted in Table 2 and Table 3. With respect to differentiating the vowel sounds, from the results obtained in this part, after having applied the tongue twister technique, both improvements and limitations can be inferred. The minimal pairs that were present in both tests confirmed this insight. Regarding Table 2, the words that were present in both tests were "seek" (/i:/) and "sick" (/ɪ/), while in Table 3, the words were "mad" (/æ/) and "mud" (/ʌ/). There was a noticeable improvement in identifying the vowel pronunciation in the words "seek" and "mud". Nevertheless, there were some unexpected results: the words "sick" and "mad" represented still a challenge.

In regards to the second part of the tests, where the students had to record themselves reading a paragraph, the results after the application of the tongue twister technique were positive. Concerning to the results obtained from the diagnostic test, the number of students who faced challenges in pronouncing the vowel sound while reading the text were high. These results correlate with Ortega and Minchala (2019), which revealed that "in the Cañar province have serious problems in orally communication" (p.10). Furthermore, Paredes (2019) and Sevy-Biloon et al. (2020) stated that the lack of pronunciation practice in the classroom is a common problem in the Ecuadorian educational system.

In a similar vein, for students who are learning a new language, the principal factor is conserve the interest on it during the learning process, however, during the observation phase, before the implementation of the tongue twister technique, it was noticed that the prominent activity was reading texts from the English book. Consequently, it was observed that students were distracted most of the time or they were doing other activities (Observation 1, May 5, 2023) due to the fact that they were not engaged. However, during the technique implementation, the distractions occurred in less frequency because the tongue twister technique engaged them (Observation 6, May 18, 2023). It could be noticed the students' active participation and enthusiasm, which is aligned to Toro et al. (2019), who stated that the possibility of getting positive results when using a variety of active strategies is elevated.

The positive results obtained in the summative test further substantiated the effectiveness of the technique, allowing to confirm what Rohman (2016) and Lutfiani and Astutik (2017) said that the application of tongue twisters is one of the alternatives in teaching pronunciation, since this technique is useful to improve the EFL students' pronunciation and allows students to

remember patterns of pronunciation of similar phrases and sounds. Even if there was not a high level of improvement in all vowels sounds, it indicates that regular practice with this technique led to measurable improvements in pronunciation.

This final section of the study aims to present the conclusions the researches have generated through the analysis and discussion of the results obtain through the three data collection techniques: observations, assessment data and focus group discussion. Each of them aids to achieve the objectives formulated at the beginning of the research study.

8. Conclusions

This qualitative study was conducted within the method of action research. The purpose of this study was to explore the contributions of using tongue twisters for pronunciation practice on the development of students' pronunciation skills. In this section, there is a synthesis of the content and the purpose of the present study. The main conclusions are posed in logical order in regard to the two sub-research questions, which guide us to answer the main one. Furthermore, limitations for the study, implications, and recommendations for future research are also present.

As it was stated in this project, the vowel sounds proposed to improve their pronunciation during the implementation of the tongue twister technique were /i:/, /ɪ/, /æ/, and /ʌ/. This project proved the contributions that the implementation of the technique can exert on pronunciation practice among teenagers. In addition, the technique that helped the researchers to answer the first sub-research question was the focus group discussions, which in this study were used in two moments, before and after the tongue twister technique implementation. Based on the results of the focus group discussions, the tongue twister technique proved to be effective in improving students' pronunciation. Even though they were confused with this technique at the beginning,

they ended up understanding and adapting to it. It was proved through the answers that the participants provided after experiencing the implementation of the technique.

Students stated that practicing pronunciation is important since it can help them to transmit a message correctly and avoid confusion with other people when having a conversation. However, they also mentioned that there was a lack of variation in activities used to practice pronunciation. In their English classes, they practiced pronunciation through reading texts and repeating them after the teacher; and sometimes it was replaced by practicing with songs that appeared on their textbooks. They expressed that it could be nice to have another activity that can help them with their pronunciation skills. Consequently, once the tongue twister technique was exposed, students showed curiosity and they were willing to practice their pronunciation with it. Even though this technique was new for them, it was positively accepted, due to the fact that this technique also involves repetition; hence, students were already familiarized with the process. In light of this, it can be interpreted that the tongue twister technique is a good alternative in teaching pronunciation skills.

Regarding the answer, the second sub-research question, the instruments that helped the researchers to answer it were the pre and post tests and observations made during the technique implementation. The results lead us to conclude that the level of the students' pronunciation of the /iː/, /ɪ/, /ʌ/, and /æ/ vowel sounds improved after the implementation of the tongue twisters. As it was stated in Table 4, the /ʌ/ sound had the highest level of improvement from the diagnostic test in where 37 students over 41 struggled pronouncing words with this sound in comparison with 10 students in the post test. There was a difference of 27 students after having implemented the tongue twister technique. Likewise, the /iː/, /æ/, and /ɪ/ displayed an

improvement but with less impact. In consequence, the data lead us to conclude that even if there was not a high level of improvement in all vowels sounds proposed in this study, it indicates that regular practice with the tongue twister technique led to measurable improvements in pronunciation. Notably, the implementation of the technique demonstrates its capacity to engage students and enhance their participation, which addressed the previous lack of engagement in traditional reading activities. Hence, the positive outcomes post-technique implementation provides further affirmation of the technique's effectiveness in students' pronunciation. Despite not yielding uniformly high improvements across the vowel sounds, the study underscores the measurable benefits of continuous practice with this technique.

9. Limitations

In this section, it is explained the challenges that the researchers faced when this study was implemented. The first limitation that was found in the development of this study was time since the researchers had planned to carry out the tongue twister technique intervention for at least three months. However, it was not taken into account that some unanticipated disruption such as administrative procedures or the fact that researchers had to change the initial group selected, which was senior students, occurred due to this level finished the school year early. Therefore, researchers had to choose a new group and start again with the process and finish the implementation phase in less time than it was planned.

Another important limitation was related to the amount of vowel sounds that researchers intended to improve. Clearly, having four different sounds led the researchers to reduce the number of interventions for each pair of sounds. For this reason, it was challenging to achieve substantial outcomes in the improvement of vowel sounds pronunciation.

Finally, another limitation was that unfortunately, there have been relatively few studies that have implemented the tongue twister technique with high school students, and the existing ones were conducted in an international setting. Consequently, due to the research gap regarding local studies, involving the use of this technique with this specific group of participants, it was not possible to contrast these results with previous studies. Nevertheless, this study significantly contributes to the literature by providing a new insight into the impact of the tongue twister technique on teenagers' pronunciation.

10. Implications

Many implications emerged in the development of this research study. First, the focus was directed at teaching English as a foreign language in Azogues' school and in the general Ecuadorian context. Firstly, the pedagogical implications are presented. Secondly, the contribution of the study to the school in which this research was developed. In the third place, the implications for the students who were part of the intervention. Finally, the ones that have impacted the researchers who acted as pre-service teachers during the whole study.

To begin with, we must draw attention to the significant difference made through the intervention of the tongue twister technique on the students 'pronunciation skills due to the fact that this technique has the ability to present the words learners need to improve in a precise, collaborative and evolving manner. In contrast with what the researchers found, students, before the application of the technique, used to practice pronunciation with activities such as songs, imitation, or reading; then, the dynamic proposed with the tongue twister enabled students to have more interaction with their classmates, and practice it while using other dynamic activities, which ends up being an advantage for their pronunciation improvement. This is because English

teachers who might want to address students' pronunciation issues differently, can rely on the effectiveness of the technique presented in this study.

Secondly, the school's related implications are outlined. Considering the teacher had to give points for volunteers who participated in the activities previously mentioned, this can be changed thanks to the results of the study. To change this reward and avoid students getting points on every activity to engage them in the practice, this study demonstrates that by presenting an interesting technique for students, they volunteered themselves to be part of every activity. In this way, the students' performance will improve, teachers will be following teaching practices suggested by the EFL Ecuadorian curriculum and the prestige of the school in the English area increases.

As for students' implications of the study, they were the most benefited from this intervention since they were able to practice their pronunciation with a different technique that allowed them to get out of the routine to which they were accustomed. Plus, they were capable of identifying benefits that went beyond pronunciation improvement. For instance, students' vocabulary increased since at the moment of reciting tongue twisters for several times, the words that were part of them remained imprinted on their minds. Besides, they became more fluent when speaking in English.

Last but not least, the authors of the project who have acted as researchers and pre-service teachers, realized how important it is for teachers and students to use various techniques to the improvement of one skills. Many times, we think that establishing a routine with our students is the most efficient and comfortable way to teach in terms of learning and discipline; nonetheless, this decision generally affects students negatively since this deprives them of demonstrating their

potential to the fullest, which can be appreciated by presenting different activities such as the tongue twister technique. Even though teachers use the same technique for a long period of time, the key on its application is to adapt it to different dynamics or other games. So, students still might feel interested to participate on the activities presented.

As researchers, the project has taught us to be patient with the results of our practices; to adapt a class as many times as necessary so that in this way the intervention can respond to the needs of the students and to understand that despite some results might not be positive, it does not mean that the research is less valid than other. Hence, in light of the identified implications, our recommendations are exposed in the next section.

11. Recommendations

Once the project was being developed, some ideas were emerging for future researchers who want to conduct similar studies. First, future researchers should strategically narrow down the selection of targeted sounds for improvement. If the intention is to achieve substantial outcomes, focusing on fewer sounds will allow the researchers to maximize the time and attention devoted to each sound, promoting a more focused and effective pronunciation learning. The sounds can be vowels or consonants, so the researcher can design or look for tongue twisters focused on those areas. Furthermore, considering the use of colors to help students differentiate and remember the sounds can be an effective alternative that complements the use of tongue twisters.

On the other hand, future researchers should explore ways to integrate the tongue twister technique into their lesson plans. In this way they will be fostering an interest in pronunciation practice. Additionally, they should explore variations in the application of the technique to

address specific challenging sounds pronunciation more effectively, because the advantage of this technique is that it could be tailor according to students' pronunciation needs. Also, the variety of activities using tongue twisters will catch students' attention and keep them engage during the class.

Finally, future local researchers should consider complementing the findings by conducting quantitative research in order to obtain more specific data. The quantitative data will serve to enrich the existing findings by providing a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of the tongue twister technique on learners' pronunciation skills. Furthermore, having quantitative data will also serve as a valuable contribution to the existing literature, due to the quantitative approach that can offer a more structured and measurable assessment of the effectiveness of the tongue twister technique in pronunciation improvement.

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13. Appendixes

Appendix A

Template: Validation of the Instrument by Experts.

Evaluator´s name: Jenny Ximena Montaño González

Specialty: Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE)
Academic degree: 8th semester

- **Authors of the Final Integrated Project:**
Mishell Valeria Mendez Crespo
Yerika Naydelim Tacuri Zavala

- **Title of the research:**
Improving English as a Foreign Language learners' pronunciation through the tongue twister technique.

- **General objective:**
To demonstrate the improvement of students' pronunciation skills through the usage of tongue twisters' technique.

- **Specific objective**
O1: To describe students' feelings towards the usage of tongue twisters in the classroom through Focus Group Discussions.
O2: To recognize the improvement in pronunciation after the application of the Tongue Twisters technique through the results of a pronunciation test.

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Classroom Observation Protocol for Thesis Project

District_____ Teacher_____

School_____Observer_____ Date_____

# of Students_____ Start Time_____End Time_____ Observation #_____

Rating:			
3- Evident	2- Some evident	1-Few evident	0-No evident

CLASSROOM PRACTICE		
Set of practice pronunciation	Rating	Evidence/ Description
Drill and practice		
Lecture or recitation		
Reading texts		
Tongue twisters		

TEACHER'S ROLE		
Prepare activities for practice pronunciation		
Teacher demonstration		
Feedback		
Passive teaching		
STUDENTS' ROLE		
Participate actively		
Pay attention to the details of pronunciation		
Passive learning		

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INSTRUMENT TO VALIDATE THE RATING SCALE

Instruction: Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement on the statements provided below by encircling the number which corresponds to your best to your judgment.

1 – Strongly Disagree   2 – Disagree   3 – Undecided   4 – Agree

5 – Strongly Agree

Criteria

The items in the instrument are relevant to answer the objectives of the study.	1	2	3	④	5
The items in the instrument can obtain depth to constructs being Measured/studied.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The instrument has an appropriate sample of items for the construct being measured/studied.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The items and their alternatives are neither too narrow nor limited in its content.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The items in the instrument are stated clearly.	1	2	3	④	5
The items on the instrument can elicit responses which are stable, definite, consistent and not conflicting.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The terms adapted in the scale are culturally appropriate.	1	2	3	4	⑤

The layout or format of the instrument is technically sound.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The instrument is not too short or long enough that the participants will be able to answer it within a given time.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The instrument is interesting such that participants will be induced to respond to it and accomplish it fully.	1	2	3	4	⑤
The instrument as a whole could answer the basic purpose for which it is designed.	1	2	3	4	⑤

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS SECTION

1. Do you consider that the proposed items correspond to categories, unit of analysis or variables of the study?

Yes_____ ⌣ _____   NO_____

What items would you add or erase?

You could change this item: Teacher demonstration

Suggestion: Teacher modeling

You could change this item: Participate actively

Suggestion: Active participation

You could change this item: Pay attention to the details of pronunciation

Suggestion: Paying attention to the details of pronunciation

Check grammar of this item: Prepare activities for practice pronunciation.

You could rewrite it again.

**What other suggestions would you make to improve this instrument?**

It might be better if the items start with "nouns" instead of "verbs". In other words, use parallelism, which is that the items have the same grammatical form.

Evaluator's Names: Jenny Ximena Montaño González

ID: 1104859598

Academic Degree: Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Signature:

JENNY XIMENA MONTANO GONZALEZ

Appendix B
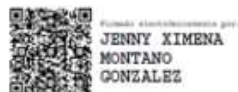
Template: Validation of the Instrument by Experts.

Evaluator´s name: Juan Carlos Ortega Carrera
Specialty: Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE)
Academic degree: 8th semester

- **Authors of the Final Integrated Project:**
Mishell Valeria Mendez Crespo
Yerika Naydelim Tacuri Zavala

- **Title of the research:**
Improving English as a Foreign Language learners' pronunciation through the tongue twister technique.

- **General objective:**
To demonstrate the improvement of students' pronunciation skills through the usage of tongue twisters' technique.

- **Specific objective**
O1: To describe students' feelings towards the usage of tongue twisters in the classroom through Focus Group Discussions.
O2: To recognize the improvement in pronunciation after the application of the Tongue Twisters technique through the results of a pronunciation test.

Pre Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion protocol - 2023 1st academic period - phase 1: Exploration

Dear students,
Please let us introduce ourselves. My name is Mishell Mendez. She is Yerika Tacuri. Thank you for participating in this study. Before we begin with the focus group discussion, we would like to say that we highly value your time and information you can share with us to complete our Thesis Project. Also, we want to highlight that your participation is totally voluntary and that you can decide whether or not to answer any of the questions we are going to ask you. The purpose of our Thesis Project is to describe students' feelings towards the usage of tongue twisters in the classroom through this Focus Group Discussions. We want to remind you that this is an activity in which we listen to each other, dialogue, and it is essential that we all give our point of view. The discussion will last from 30-40 minutes.

Estimados alumnos,

Por favor, permítanos presentarnos. Mi nombre es Mishell Méndez. Ella es Yerika Tacuri. Gracias por participar en este estudio. Antes de comenzar con la discusión del grupo focal, nos gustaría decir que valoramos mucho su tiempo y la información que puede compartir con nosotros para completar nuestro Proyecto de Tesis. Además, queremos destacar que tu participación es totalmente voluntaria y que puedes decidir si respondes o no a alguna de las preguntas que te vamos a hacer. El propósito de nuestro Proyecto de Tesis es describir los sentimientos de los estudiantes hacia el uso de trabalenguas en el aula a través de las Discusiones de Grupo Focal. Queremos recordarles que esta es una actividad en la que nos

USUARIO
I would say appreciation.

USUARIO
I would say demostrate.

USUARIO
I dont see which is the educational level of your target.

escuchamos, dialogamos y es fundamental que todos demos nuestro punto de vista. La discusión tendrá una duración de 30-40 minutos.

1.- ¿Cuál es la importancia que tiene la pronunciación al momento que una persona se comunica en inglés?

2.- Para practicar la pronunciación en inglés, hay muchas actividades que se pueden implementar en clases.

Por ejemplo: Repetición e imitación, shadowing, canciones, etc.

¿Cuáles son las actividades de pronunciación más comunes que ustedes han practicado en clases de inglés y cómo se sintieron mientras desarrollaban esas actividades?

3.- Una de las técnicas que se utilizan para practicar la pronunciación es los trabalenguas. Los trabalenguas son una secuencia de palabras o sonidos, generalmente de tipo aliterado, que son difíciles de pronunciar rápida y correctamente.

Ejemplo: *Tres tristes tigres comen trigo en un trigal*

¿En su clase de inglés, su profesor ha usado la técnica de los trabalenguas para practicar la pronunciación? Por favor, explicar tu respuesta.

4.- ¿Cómo ha sido su experiencia con el uso de trabalenguas en clases de inglés? Describe tu experiencia con sentimientos negativos o positivos que hayas tenido con esta actividad previamente. *(esta pregunta va solamente si los estudiantes responden SI)*

5.- En caso de no haber practicado la pronunciación con trabalenguas en clases de inglés, ¿Qué piensas de que tus profesores implementen esta técnica de trabalenguas para ayudarte a mejorar tu pronunciación de inglés? *(esta pregunta va solamente si los estudiantes responden NO)*

Post Focus Group Discussion

Post-Focus Group Discussion protocol - 2023 1st academic period - phase 4: Reflecting

1.- ¿Cuáles fueron los sentimientos que experimentaron la primera vez que se implementó la técnica de los trabalenguas en la clase?

2.- ¿Luego de haber practicado su pronunciación con trabalenguas, como se sintieron durante la implementación de esta técnica en las clases de inglés?

3.- Después de haber practicado sus habilidades de pronunciación con los trabalenguas ¿cómo esta técnica le ha ayudado a mejorar su pronunciación?

4.- ¿En comparación con tu pronunciación inicial, crees que actualmente ésta ha mejorado? Por favor, explica en qué manera mejoró.

INSTRUMENT TO VALIDATE THE RATING SCALE (Pre and post Focus group discussion)

Instruction: Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement on the statements provided below by encircling the number which corresponds to your best to your judgment.

1 – Strongly Disagree   2 – Disagree   3 – Undecided   4 – Agree

5 – Strongly Agree

Criteria

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
The items in the instrument are relevant to answer the objectives of the study.				4	
The items in the instrument can obtain depth to constructs being Measured/studied.			3		
The instrument has an appropriate sample of items for the construct being measured/studied.				4	
The items and their alternatives are neither too narrow nor limited in its content.				4	
The items in the instrument are stated clearly.				4	
The items on the instrument can elicit responses which are stable, definite, consistent and not conflicting.				4	
The terms adapted in the scale are culturally appropriate.				4	
The layout or format of the instrument is technically sound.				4	
The instrument is not too short or long enough that the participants will be able to answer it within a given time.				4	
The instrument is interesting such that participants will be induced to respond to it and accomplish it fully.			3		
The instrument as a whole could answer the basic purpose for which it is designed.				4	

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COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS SECTION

Do you consider that the proposed items correspond to categories, unit of analysis or variables of the study?

Yes____X_____   NO_____

What items would you add or erase?

The items in the instrument can obtain depth to constructs being

Measured/studied. I think that you get just a general perspective of things with this kind of study.

What other suggestions would you make to improve this instrument?

Questions used for disscusion can be more specific. Or maybe you can give then any kind of template , so they they can start the small taking easily. Sometimes they don't understand what is a tecnique or strategy. You must give them examples or explain what it is about.

Evaluator's Names: _____Juan Ortega_____

ID: ___1718307836_____

Academic Degree: _____Magíster_____

Signature:

Appendix C

Template: Validation of the Instrument by Experts.

Evaluator´s name: Luz María Parra Manchay
Specialty: Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE)
Academic degree: 8th semester

- **Authors of the Final Integrated Project:**
Mishell Valeria Mendez Crespo
Yerika Naydelim Tacuri Zavala

- **Title of the research:**
Improving English as a Foreign Language learners' pronunciation through the tongue twister technique.

- **General objective:**
To demonstrate the improvement of students' pronunciation skills through the usage of tongue twisters' technique.

- **Specific objective**
O1: To describe students' feelings towards the usage of tongue twisters in the classroom through Focus Group Discussions.
O2: To recognize the improvement in pronunciation after the application of the Tongue Twisters technique through the results of a pronunciation test.

Pre-test

Part 1: Pronunciation Pyramid

Circle the words you will listen in the audios that your teachers will play. Please, remember to be in silence for you to listen clearly the audio.

E.g.

Pyramid

A

```
                    START
              sleep        slip
           fan      fun        fan
        reason   risen    reason    risen
      mad    mud      mad      mud      mad
    ban    bun    ban    bun    ban    bun
```

Pyramid

B

```
                    START
              beat        bit
           seek     sick       seek
        heat     hit      heat     hit
      crash   crush   crash   crush   crash
    seal    sill   seal    sill   seal    sill
```

Source: https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/grammar-topic/homonyms-homophones-homographs/listening-pyramid-listening-tree-game/133512

Part 2: Read the short story twice. The first time, read it in your mind and in the second time record your reading with your cellphone. After you have the recording, send it to our WhatsApp group.

Mark had always been fascinated by the sea. Ever since he was a little boy, he dreamed of one day becoming a sailor and exploring the world. His parents were always supportive of his dreams and encouraged him to pursue his passion.So after finishing school, Mark decided to enroll in a maritime academy to learn everything he could about ships and navigation. It was a challenging course, but Mark was determined to succeed.

One day, as he was practicing his knots on the deck, he noticed a seagull perched on the mast. The seagull looked at him curiously and let out a loud squawk. Mark couldn't help but smile at the sight of the bird. Over time, the seagull became a regular visitor to the ship. Mark would often feed it bits of fish and talk to it as if it were a friend. The seagull seemed to enjoy the attention and would even follow Mark around as he worked.

As the ship set sail on its long journey, Mark realized that he had found a true companion in the seagull. It reminded him of the beauty and mystery of the sea, and he felt grateful to have such a loyal friend by his side. In the end, Mark's dreams of sailing the world had come true, but it was the unexpected friendship with a seagull that made his journey truly unforgettable.

<center>Post-test</center>

Part 1: Pronunciation Pyramid

Circle the words you will listen in the audios that your teachers will play. Please, remember to be in silence for you to listen clearly the audio.
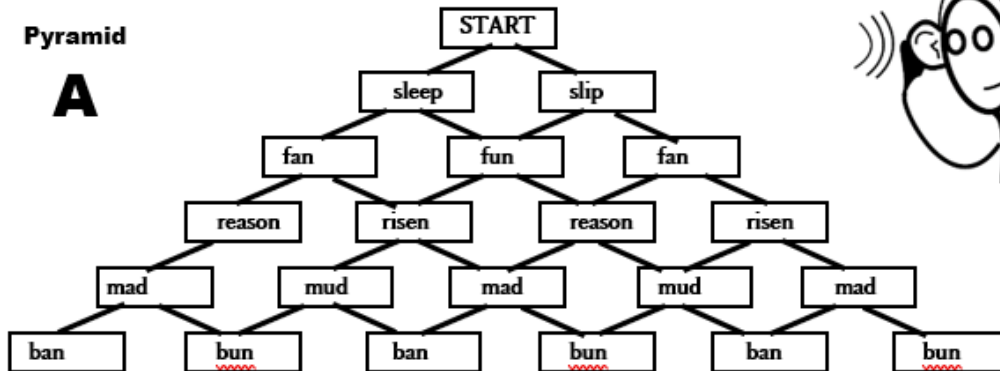
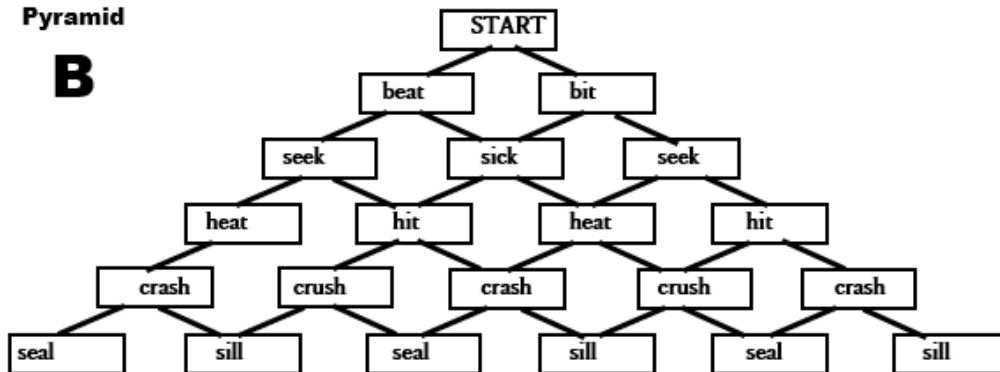**Part 2:   Read the short story twice. The first time, read it in your mind and in the second time record your reading with your cellphone. After you have the recording, send it to our WhatsApp group.**

Mark had always been fascinated by the sea. Ever since he was a little boy, he dreamed of one day becoming a sailor and exploring the world. His parents were always supportive of his dreams and encouraged him to pursue his passion.So after finishing school, Mark decided to enroll in a maritime academy to learn everything he could about ships and navigation. It was a challenging course, but Mark was determined to succeed.
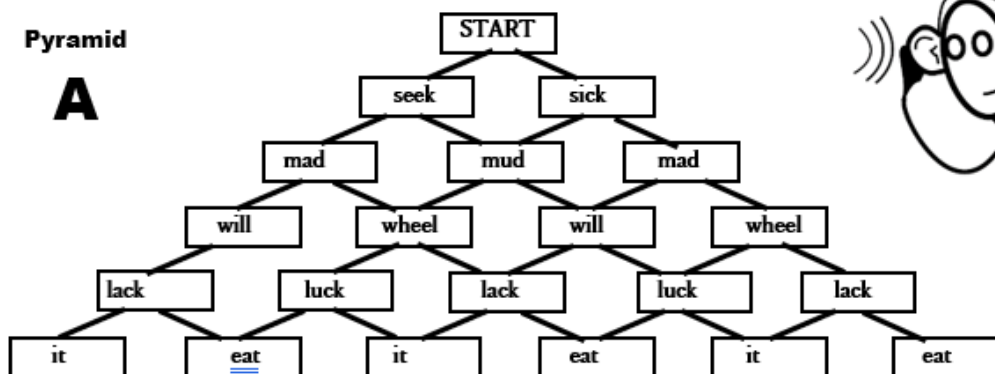
One day, as he was practicing his knots on the deck, he noticed a seagull perched on the mast. The seagull looked at him curiously and let out a loud squawk. Mark couldn't help but smile at the sight of the bird. Over time, the seagull became a regular visitor to the ship. Mark would often feed it bits of fish and talk to it as if it were a friend. The seagull seemed to enjoy the attention and would even follow Mark around as he worked.

As the ship set sail on its long journey, Mark realized that he had found a true companion in the seagull. It reminded him of the beauty and mystery of the sea, and he felt grateful to have such a loyal friend by his side. In the end, Mark's dreams of sailing the world had come true, but it was the unexpected friendship with a seagull that made his journey truly unforgettable.

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INSTRUMENT TO VALIDATE THE RATING SCALE

Instruction: Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement on the statements provided below by encircling the number which corresponds to your best to your judgment.

1 – Strongly Disagree   2 – Disagree   3 – Undecided   4 – Agree

5 – Strongly Agree

Criteria

The items in the instrument are relevant to answer the objectives of the study.	1	2	3	4	(5)
The items in the instrument can obtain depth to constructs being Measured/studied.	1	2	3	4	(5)
The instrument has an appropriate sample of items for the construct being measured/studied.	1	2	3	(4)	5
The items and their alternatives are neither too narrow nor limited in its content.	1	2	3	4	(5)
The items in the instrument are stated clearly.	1	2	3	(4)	5
The items on the instrument can elicit responses which are stable, definite, consistent and not conflicting.	1	2	3	(4)	5
The terms adapted in the scale are culturally appropriate.	1	2	3	(4)	5
The layout or format of the instrument is technically sound.	1	2	3	(4)	5

The instrument is not too short or long enough that the participants will be able to answer it within a given time.	1	2	(3)	4	5
The instrument is interesting such that participants will be induced to respond to it and accomplish it fully.	1	2	3	(4)	5
The instrument as a whole could answer the basic purpose for which it is designed.	1	2	3	4	(5)

5. COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS SECTION

1. Do you consider that the proposed items correspond to categories, unit of analysis or variables of the study?

Yes_____X_____   NO_____

What items would you add or erase?

For question one, I suggest writing the number as an example.

What other suggestions would you make to improve this instrument?
When giving the tests, you should be sure that all students should have a cell phone, Internet access to record and deliver the recording to the WhatsApp group.

Evaluator's Names: Luz María Parra Manchay

ID: 1103332548

Academic Degree: Master in Teaching as a Foreign Language

Signature:

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Appendix D

Estimado padre/madre o representante legal:

Me dirijo a usted para solicitar su autorización para que los practicantes de la Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE), de la carrera **Pedagogía de los Idiomas Extranjeros y Nacionales, 9no ciclo, paralelo 1** que realizan sus prácticas preprofesionales en la institución **Unidad Educativa Luis Rogelio González** tomen fotografías, videos y entrevistas de su representado/a dentro del aula, así como también durante las actividades escolares, únicamente con fines educativos y de investigación.

Si da su autorización, la UNAE podría publicar con fines académicos y de investigación en diversos formatos las fotografías, videos, muestras del trabajo que haya realizado su representado/a. Las publicaciones podrían ser: boletines (en línea y forma impresa), Internet, sitios web intranet, revistas, periódicos locales y en el Repositorio de la Biblioteca de la UNAE

A continuación, detallamos nuestro estudio educativo:

Este estudio está enfocado en el área de inglés, con el fin de que los estudiantes mejoren su pronunciación en inglés a través del uso de trabalenguas. Durante este tiempo, los estudiantes de Segundo de Bachillerato paralelo A deberán colaborar con ciertas actividades como pruebas, entrevistas y tareas extras con la finalidad de que los estudiantes puedan practicar y mejorar el inglés de manera efectiva. Cabe recalcar que después de los resultados obtenidos en las primeras pruebas, se seleccionará a un grupo pequeño de estudiantes, quienes serán los que participen activamente en el proceso. El estudio se realizará durante las horas de inglés, por lo cual ya nos hemos comunicado con el docente de inglés de este curso para pedir su debida autorización.
De igual manera se dará a conocer a los representantes de cada estudiante acerca de las actividades que se van a realizar con ellos por medio de una corta reunión por Zoom.

Al firmar el presente consentimiento usted estaría de acuerdo con lo siguiente:

Se puede reproducir la fotografía de su representado/a ya sea en color o en blanco y negro.

1. La UNAE no usará los videos o fotografías para ningún fin que no sea la educación de los practicantes, la promoción general de la educación pública o de la UNAE, en los trabajos realizados en las prácticas preprofesionales y de investigación, es decir, no lo utilizará con fines comerciales y publicitarios.
2. Todas las fotografías tomadas se conservarán sólo por el tiempo que sea necesario para los fines anteriormente mencionados y serán guardadas y desechadas en forma segura.
3. La UNAE actuará con la normativa ecuatoriana vigente relacionada a protección de derechos de niños, niñas y adolescentes.
4. La UNAE puede garantizar que no se le podrá identificar por su fotografía o trabajo al representado/a.

5. Aún en los casos permitidos por la ley, no se podrá utilizar públicamente la imagen de un adolescente mayor de quince años, ¡sin su autorización expresa; ni la de un niño/a o adolescente menor de dicha edad, sin la autorización de su representante legal, quien sólo la dará si no lesiona los derechos de su representado.

Si está de acuerdo en permitir que los estudiantes de la UNAE tomen fotografías - videos de su representado/a y las publique de la manera detallada anteriormente, sírvase completar el formulario de consentimiento y devuélvalo a la escuela.

Este consentimiento, si está firmado, estará vigente hasta el momento que usted informe a la escuela de lo contrario.

Formulario de Consentimiento para Publicación de Trabajos o Fotografías del Alumno

De conformidad a lo dispuesto en el inciso final del articulado 52 del Código de la Niñez y Adolescencia, estoy de acuerdo, sujeto a las condiciones establecidas antes expuestas, en que se tomen fotografías o videos de mi representado durante actividades escolares, para ser usadas por la UNAE en la educación de los alumnos y promoción de la UNAE y educación pública. Así mismo estoy de acuerdo en la publicación de fotografías y muestras de trabajos de mi representado/a. Por lo que no exigiré retribución alguna por su uso.

Comunicaré a la UNAE si decido retirar esta autorización:

Nombre del/la estudiante:

...... Erick Ismael Alvarado Lema ....

Nombre completo padre/madre/representante legal:

...... Carmen Amelia Lema Andrade ....

Cédula de ciudadanía: .0301519466...........

Firma del padre/madre/representante legal: ....

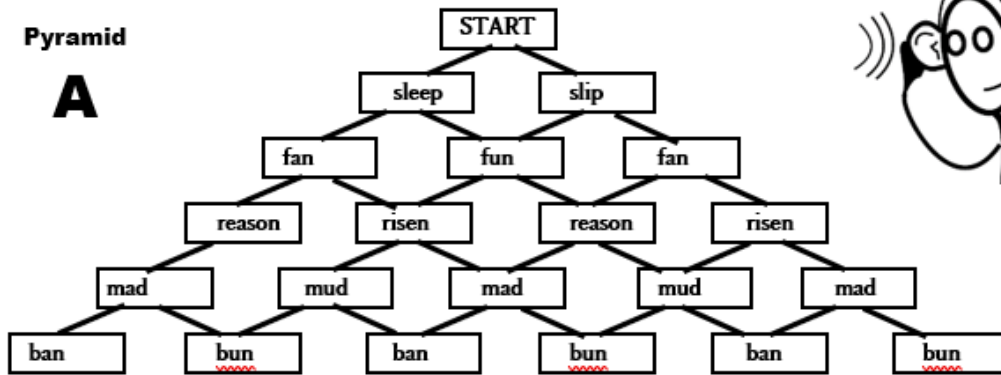Fecha: .27/04/2023....

Appendix E

Pre-test

Part 1: Pronunciation Pyramid

Circle the words you will listen in the audios that your teachers will play. Please, remember to be in silence for you to listen clearly the audio.

E.g.

```
                          START
                   sleep          slip
              fan         fun          fan
          reason    risen      reason      risen
        mad      mud      mad       mud      mad
      ban    bun     ban     bun     ban    bun
```

Pyramid A

```
                          START
                   sleep          slip
              fan         fun          fan
          reason    risen      reason      risen
        mad      mud      mad       mud      mad
      ban    bun     ban     bun     ban    bun
```

Pyramid B

```
                          START
                   beat          bit
              seek         sick         seek
          heat       hit        heat        hit
       crash    crush     crash     crush     crash
     seal    sill     seal     sill     seal    sill
```

93

Part 2:   Read the short story twice. The first time, read it in your mind and in the second time record your reading with your cellphone. After you have the recording, send it to our WhatsApp group.

Mark had always been fascinated by the sea. Ever since he was a little boy, he dreamed of one day becoming a sailor and exploring the world. His parents were always supportive of his dreams and encouraged him to pursue his passion.So after finishing school, Mark decided to enroll in a maritime academy to learn everything he could about ships and navigation. It was a challenging course, but Mark was determined to succeed.

One day, as he was practicing his knots on the deck, he noticed a seagull perched on the mast. The seagull looked at him curiously and let out a loud squawk. Mark couldn't help but smile at the sight of the bird. Over time, the seagull became a regular visitor to the ship. Mark would often feed it bits of fish and talk to it as if it were a friend. The seagull seemed to enjoy the attention and would even follow Mark around as he worked.

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Appendix F

Post-test

Part 1: Pronunciation Pyramid

Circle the words you will listen in the audios that your teachers will play. Please, remember to be in silence for you to listen clearly the audio.
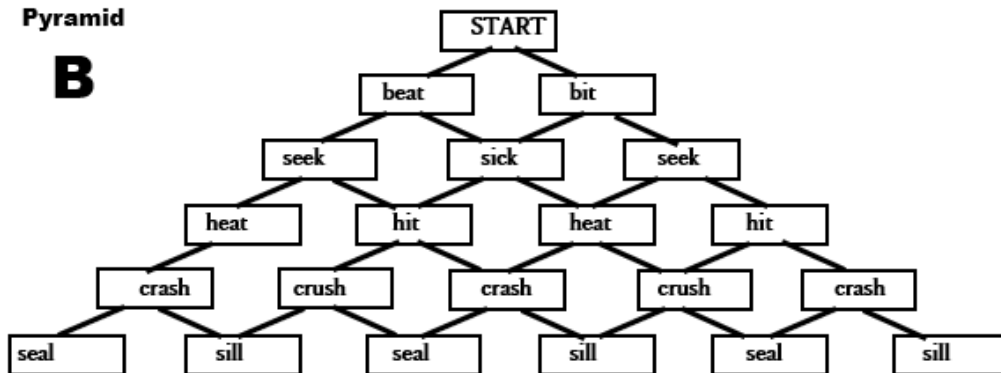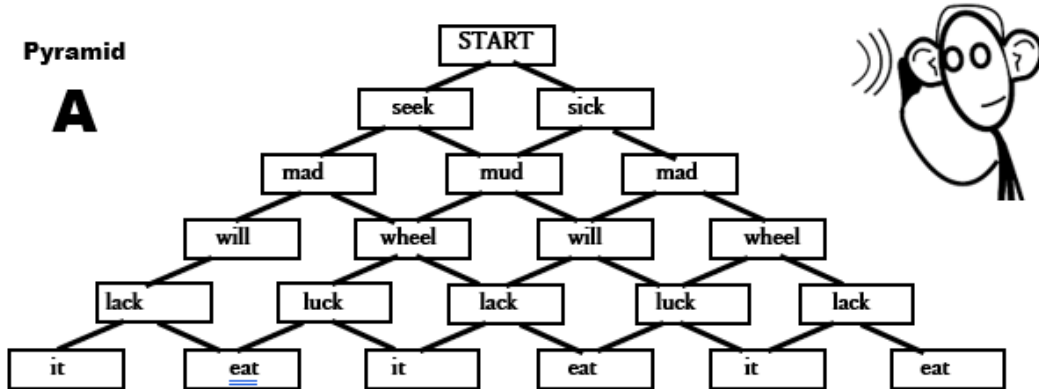

Part 2: Read the short story twice. The first time, read it in your mind and in the second time record your reading with your cellphone. After you have the recording, send it to our WhatsApp group.

Mark had always been fascinated by the sea. Ever since he was a little boy, he dreamed of one day becoming a sailor and exploring the world. His parents were always supportive of his dreams and encouraged him to pursue his passion.So after finishing school, Mark decided to enroll in a maritime academy to learn everything he could about ships and navigation. It was a challenging course, but Mark was determined to succeed.

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Appendix G

Classroom Observation Protocol for Thesis Project

Teacher:_____Nube González_____ Students' level:_____2 BGU_____

School: U. E. "Luis Rogerio González" Observer: Mishell Méndez and Yerika Tacuri

 Date: 05/05/2023 # of Students__41__ Start Time_____End Time_____ Observation #_____

Rating:			
3- Evident	**2**- Some evident	**1**-Few evident	**0**-No evident

CLASSROOM PRACTICE		
Set of practice pronunciation	**Rating**	**Evidence/ Description**
Drill and practice	3	✓ Students repeat the sentences read from the text after the teacher. ✓ The practice was evident.
Lecture or recitation	1	✓ Students read just following what the teacher read.
Reading texts	3	✓ Most of the pronunciation activities the teacher did was reading texts.
Tongue twisters	0	
TEACHER'S ROLE		
Activities focus on practice pronunciation	1	✓ The teacher focused the pronunciation practice on reading the text presented in the book.
Teacher modeling	3	✓ The teacher modeled by reading before the student.
Feedback	2	✓ There was feedback when the teacher heard the student mispronounce a word correctly.
Passive teaching	2	✓ The teacher focus the activities on reading and repeat after her, and also the

		activities on the book related with the text.
STUDENTS' ROLE		
Active participation	2	✓ The majority of the students were distracted most of the time. ✓ The students who were paying attention were the ones sitting in front of the class.
Paying attention to the details of pronunciation	1	✓ Students pronounced the words the way they believe they have to pronounce.
Passive learning	2	✓ Most of the students did not participate voluntarily, the teacher had to ask for it. ✓ Some of them were doing other activities.

Appendix H

Classroom Observation Protocol for Thesis Project

Teacher:_____Mishell Mendez_____ Students' level:_____2 BGU_____

School: U. E. "Luis Rogerio González" Observer: Yerika Tacuri Date: 23/05/2023

# of Students__41__ Start Time_____End Time_____ Observation # 5_____

Rating:			
3- Evident	**2**- Some evident	**1**-Few evident	**0**-No evident

CLASSROOM PRACTICE		
Set of practice pronunciation	**Rating**	**Evidence/ Description**
Drill and practice	3	✓ Students repeated /i:/ and /I/ sounds individually following the teacher because it was the first time that they heard them. ✓ Students came up with as many words containing those sounds as they could. Later, they drill and practice the correct pronunciation of the words they wrote on the board by emphasizing the difference between one sound and the other. ✓ There was drill and practice with the tongue twister were the majority of the students participated in the activity. On the other hand, students at the back were having trouble on getting the correct pronunciation of the words in the tongue twister.
Lecture or recitation	3	✓ The teacher clearly explains the difference between /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds; however, the lecture time is not that long

			since the teacher prioritizes the drilling and practice.
Reading texts	0	✓	The teacher did not use a reading text.
Tongue twisters	3	✓	There was a tongue twister containing the sounds.
		✓	It was short
		✓	Students practice with it in different activities.
TEACHER'S ROLE			
Activities focus on practice pronunciation	3	✓	The teacher focuses her activities on practicing pronunciation since the very beginning until the end
		✓	The teacher practiced pronunciation in the following order:
			- Sounds /iː/ and /ɪ/
			- Words with those sounds
			- The sounds in the tongue twister
Teacher modeling	3	✓	The presentation included an audio of the /iː/ and /ɪ/ sounds for students to practice the sounds, but the teacher also used her voice to do it.
		✓	The teacher demonstrated how to recite the tongue twister fast and accuretaly.
		✓	The teacher modeled the activity as many times as students needed. Even it was just another type of activity, the teacher never forgot to show the right way to develop an activity.
Feedback	0	✓	There was not feedback during the implementation. It needs to be improved in the next sessions.
Passive teaching	0	✓	The teacher was enthusiastic and active during the whole teaching process.
		✓	She was asking questions, and was attentive to the students' doubts.

STUDENTS' ROLE		
Active participation	2	✓ At the beginning of the class, there were students who volunteered participated in the activities of the lesson. The teacher did not have to ask for volunteers because they were willing to do it. ✓ In the middle of the lesson, students were still engaged in the lesson, but the students at the back were having troubles at listening, so they were not participating ✓ The teacher noticed they had difficulties, so she tried to involved them more in the class, by calling his names when she needed a participant. Plus, she planned some competition games that helped them to be involved again.
Paying attention to the details of pronunciation	3	✓ Students felt weird noticing the differences between the sounds at the beginning, nevertheless, they got used to it very quickly. ✓ If they had doubts about how to pronounce a word they did not hesitate on asking the teacher.
Passive learning	2	✓ Although the majority of students participate volunteered, there were few students at the back who were playing on his cellphone.

Appendix I

PRE-FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Date: May 3rd, 2023

FGD Group 1

Researcher: Buenas noches queridos estudiantes, vamos a empezar con el Focus group discusión. Este Focus Group Discussion es para, es una herramienta que nos va a servir para conocer sus perspectivas acerca de la aplicación de los tongue twisters, el objetivo general de la investigación de nuestra tesis es el siguiente:

Las preguntas que les voy a realizar nos van a ayudar para saber sus perspectivas como estudiantes antes de iniciar con la aplicación de los tongue twisters. Ok, vamos a empezar

Pregunta 1: ¿Cúal es la importancia que tiene la pronunciación al momento que una persona se comunica en inglés?

Student 1: La importancia que tiene la pronunciación en una comunicación en inglés es que las personas nos puedan entender de una mejor manera para poder tener una conversación fluida y que nos entiendan en el momento de una pregunta o alguna cosa

R: Mjum Claro, muy bien

Student 2: Yo creo que es importante la pronunciación ya que se puede confundir con alguna otra palabra.

R: Sobre todo

Student 3: Para mi es importante la pronunciación ya que se logra entender de mejor manera entre estudiantes y docentes

R: Y si fuera con alguna otra persona que habla inglés, no solamente con el profesor?

Student 3: Eh también seria de mucha importancia ya que el entendimiento e s la clave para todo

R: Muchas gracias

Student 4: Eh bueno par a mi es importante ya que te das a entender como persona ya que el ingles e s un idioma que se habla por todo el mundo y tenemos que mejorar nuestra pronunciación para poder comunicarnos de una mejor manera

R: Exacto, en conclusión es para tener una mejor comunicación y no confundirnos con palabras que son iguales. Ok, siguiente pregunta.

PREGUNTA 2: Cuáles son las actividades de pronunciación más comunes que ustedes han practicado en clases de inglés y cómo se sintieron mientras desarrollaban esas actividades?

Student 1: Eh pues principalmente las actividades de pronunciación que hicimos en clases fueron lo que es copiar el vocabulario y como empezar a practicar las palabras para saber cual era el significado y la pronunciación como takes, talvez como fue en algunas ocasiones practicar algunas canciones en ingles y en clase cantarlas con bastantes compañeros o en base de cada una. En algunas actividades me sentía bastante bien ya que me ayudaba bastante aprenderme algunas palabras

R: Y le ayudaba también en la pronunciación específicamente

Student 1: Si mayormente ya que siempre era un vocabulario como tal para aprender

Student 2: Las actividades que comúnmente se realizaban era la repetición y también se realizaba asi redacción de textos y canciones esto es muy esencial ya que con la repetición de estas palabras que no entendemos podemos mejorar lo que vendría siendo la pronunciación en si eso fue muy bueno para mí, me sentí muy bien.

R: ¡Excelente!

Student 3: Para mi fue el verbo tobe y los verbos en pasado había mucho mucho enfoque en esto y si si me gustó

R: Gracias, cómo practicaban lo del verbo tobe ¿cuál era la actividad para practicar la pronunciación?

Student 3: Eh repetición y o sea nos enseñaba y repetir, repetir y repetir

Student 4: Las actividades que comúnmente hacemos es la repetición, y las canciones para mejorar nuestra pronunciación y yo me sentí bien ya que así pude aprenderme nuevas palabras y saber cómo pronunciarlas correctamente

R: Parece que han tenido buenas experiencias, que bueno. Siguiente pregunta

PREGUNTA 3: en su clase de inglés su profesora ha utilizado la técnica de los trabalenguas para practicar la pronunciación?

Student 1: Eh en las clases de inglés no hemos usado lo que es esa técnica sino que más es, la licenciada escogió un texto en específico o un párrafo seleccionado y nos hace leer lo más rápido que podamos para ver que tan bien es nuestra fluidez en el vocabulario.

R: Ok, interesante.

Student 2: Usualmente nos daba a escoger textos y esos textos teníamos que leerlos lo más rápido posible lo que podamos y eso nos mejoraba más o menos a mejorar nuestra fluidez.

Student 3: en mi caso jamás eh usado esa técnica del trabalenguas, entonces no podría decir nada al respecto.

Student 4: Eh en clases de inglés la licen usualmente intenta hacer que leamos un teto en el menor tiempo posible y con la menor cantidad de palabras en la pronunciación y entonces eso es algo similar a los…supongo.

R: Mjuum tiene ciertas características como decirlo rápido y con la menora cantidad de errores posible.

Pregunta 4: Qué piensan ustedes de que sus profesores implementen esta técnica de los trabalenguas para ayudarles a mejorar su pronunciación en inglés?

Student 1: Eh creo yo que simplemente lo que es la técnica de los trabalenguas seria una buena técnica para mejorar nuestra pronunciación como tal y para saber que tan avanzados estamos con el inglés y sus palabras en su totalidad con el vocabulario.

R: Gracias.

Student 2: A mí la verdad no me gustaría mucho la idea de que se implemente esta técnica ya que me confundiría mucho con las palabras de hecho.

Student 3: A mi si me gustaría, fuera genial, pero fuera algo complicado

R: que el trabalenguas sea complicado o que no sea complicado?

Student 3: No o sea… eh o sea esa practica resultaría confusa, complicada.

Student 4: Bueno para mi que implementen los trabalenguas está bien ya que nos ayudaría a saber mas como pronunciar bien las palabras y a pronunciarlas más rápido.

R: Muchas gracias

SEGUNDO GRUPO FGD

Pregunta 1: ¿Cúal es la importancia que tiene la pronunciación al momento que una persona se comunica en inglés?

Student 5: Bueno, para mí la importancia sería que algunas palabras en inglés se escuchan igual pero no tienen el mismo significado y para eso es bueno tener una correcta pronunciación

Student 6: Para mí seria, digamos que en una conversación compleja esto si nos confundimos podría llegar a dar otro significado y no cumpliría con el objetivo que nosotros estamos tratando de lograr.

Student 7: Para mi seria, para nosotros poder corregir nuestra pronunciación, porque asi de repente pronunciamos alguna palabra mal y seria escuchado en otro tono para una persona que ya sepa hablar bien el idioma

Student 8: Para mí sería que nos ayudaría a tener mayor fluidez al momento de comunicarnos y asi poder mejorar mas.

Student 9: para mi la importancia seria, como decirlo, la comunicación que puede verse afectada tanto como la pronunciación para una persona que ya es nativa, que habla inglés.

Student 10: La pronunciación es muy importante porque al momento de hablar algunas palabras pueden sonar mal interpretadas, entonces eso afectaría la comunicación entre las personas.

PREGUNTA 2: Cuáles son las actividades de pronunciación más comunes que ustedes han practicado en clases de inglés y cómo se sintieron mientras desarrollaban esas actividades?

Student 5: La mayoría de veces y los más comunes es la repetición e imitación y también un poco

las canciones…no sé… y bueno también, no se bueno de mi parte me sentía como un poco contenta al practicar el inglés.

Student 6: la actividades de repetición e imitación y también en algunas ocasiones es de las canciones y cómo me sentí fue digamos contento porque ahorita sabemos la pronunciación correcta

Student 7: para mí sería, como le digo…que las canciones, repitiendo y también tratando de mejorar cada vez y memorizando las canciones también porque ayuda a practicar cada vez más el inglés. Y me sentí muy bien la verdad, contento porque ya vamos mejorando cada vez la pronunciación al hablar este idioma

Student 8: para mí también sería lo de repetición y la imitación y canciones y con estas actividades me he sentido cómodo y feliz porque me ayudaron a mejorar mucho muy pronto

Student 9: Bueno como ya dijeron pues los demás, las principales actividades que realizamos fueron la repetición y la imitación y también algunos casos las canciones y me sentí pues contenta ya que pudimos mejorar más nuestra pronunciación en algunas palabras que obviamente no estaban pronunciadas correctamente

Student 10: bueno, la en las clases la licenciada siempre pronuncia las palabras correctas y luego nosotros lo hacemos y también a veces nos dice que tenemos que necesitar la ayuda del traductor entonces esto hace que sea más fácil. Y si me sentí bien de poder aprender a pronunciar mejor las palabras.

PREGUNTA 3: en su clase de inglés su profesora ha utilizado la técnica de los trabalenguas para practicar la pronunciación?

S5: Bueno hasta ahorita la licenciada en las clases que hemos tenido todavía no nos ha hecho practicar mediante trabalenguas

S6: como dijo mi compañera... la licenciada no nos ha hecho a practicar con trabalenguas

S7: igual como dijo mi compañero la licenciada todavía no nos hace practicar en lo que es de los trabalenguas

S8: como están explicando mis compañeros la licenciada aun no nos ha enseñado mediante trabalenguas para la pronunciación

S9: como ya dijeron también mis compañeros la licenciada no ha implementado todavía lo que es los trabalenguas para la para mejorar la pronunciación

S10: sí la licenciada aún no ha implementado eso pero creo que sí sería un poco complicado

Pregunta 4: Qué piensan ustedes de que sus profesores implementen esta técnica de los trabalenguas para ayudarles a mejorar su pronunciación en inglés?

S5: mi opinión sería... mi opinión es que esto Sí sería bueno ya que nos ayudaría para mejorar nuestra pronunciación en el inglés

S6: también opino que serían algo bueno y nos beneficiaría de una manera positiva ya que los trabalenguas nos ayudarían a tener una mejor fluidez mientras hablamos

S7: yo también pienso que sería bueno para nosotros para poder mejorar nuestra pronunciación y…y cada vez tener un poco más de énfasis al momento de pronunciar este idioma

S8: Opino que sí sería una herramienta muy útil y eficaz ya que ayudaría a mejorar la fluidez en la pronunciación

S9: Bueno yo opino que es una técnica muy buena para poder mejorar tanto nuestra pronunciación como para poder comunicarnos más.

S10: Yo opino que sería una técnica buena pero sí va a ser medio complicada aprender a pronunciar las palabras correctamente en trabalenguas

Appendix J

Post-FGD

Date: June 10th, 2023

GRUPO 1

Pregunta 1: Cuales fueron las percepciones que experimentó la primera vez que se implementó la técnica de los trabalenguas en la clase?

S1: Eh…como que se me hizo un poco complicado la primera vez, pero después ya mientras repasábamos se me hizo un poco más fácil la pronunciación de algunas palabras.

A simple vista pensé que no me iba a gustar porque no…como que no se mucho el inglés, pero después ya poco a poco si me iba llamando la atención.

S2: Pues, como fue algo nuevo, fue algo realmente muy dinámico, no sé, puede ser que…fue extraño, pero a la vez se acogió bien.

S3: Yo la verdad me sentí un poco…como le digo, emocionado, porque íbamos a tener mas practica para poder mejorar mi pronunciación.

S4: También me sentí emocionado, aunque ya sabía que era difícil, pero…me gustó.

S5: La primera vez que implementaron, fue chévere porque así pudimos aprender más a pronunciar bien ciertas palabras y aprendimos a diferenciarlas.

Pregunta 2: Luego de haber practicado la pronunciación con los trabalenguas, ¿cómo se sintió durante la implementación de esta técnica en las clases de inglés?

S1: Mmm…cada implementación iba mejorando

S2: Pues, primero un poco de confusión, pero ya luego me fui acostumbrando al ritmo del trabalenguas, de la pronunciación en sí. Así que sí, me sentí bien.

S3: Si mejoró un poco mas la pronunciación, uno se concentraba mas al momento de reconocer nuevas palabras

S4: Sí, me parece que…mejoró mi pronunciación, y mi velocidad para leer.

Pregunta 3: Después de haber practicado sus habilidades de pronunciación con los trabalenguas, ¿cómo esta técnica le ha ayudado a mejorar su pronunciación?

S1: Me ha ayudado de una manera positiva, ya que en los trabalenguas hay como identificar palabras y sonidos que diferencian una palabra de otra y pueden ser lo mismo, pero tienen distinto significado.

S2: Pues me ha ayudado mas en la velocidad en la que se dice las palabras mas que en otra cosa. También me ha ayudado en la pronunciación, pero más en la velocidad.

S3: Tenía mejor…eh, para reconocer mejor las palabras, cada una…eh, y diferenciar el sonido de las palabras.

S4: Para mí mejoró mi velocidad lectora y la manera en la que…puedo leer más rápido y fluido.

Pregunta 4: En comparación con su pronunciación inicial, ¿cree que actualmente ésta ha mejorado? Por favor, explique de qué manera mejoró.

S1: Sí…Mmm, como que si ha mejorado la pronunciación en los sonidos del i: y del ɪ y lo del æ y …como que si hubo ahí un poco de mejora.

S2: Ah, pues…inicialmente era mi pronunciación como muy lenta, un poco…ya con esto fue como mas dinámico y pues pude mejorar mas mi rapidez y la fluidez en la que digo las palabras.

S3: Para mí la verdad, antes se me hacía un poco difícil reconocer las palabras, eh…porque era que algunas palabras no las entendía muy bien, y después de los trabalenguas mejoró la fluidez de la lengua, pude hablar más claramente para la pronunciación, para la lectura. Sí mejoró bastante.

S4: Sí, siento que mejoró mi velocidad y las palabras las entendí mejor y leía de mejor manera y pronuncié mejor.
GRUPO 2

Pregunta 1: Cuales fueron las percepciones que experimentó la primera vez que se implementó la técnica de los trabalenguas en la clase?

S6: Principalmente lo que sentí fue bastante curiosidad por saber y hacer lo que era los distintos trabalenguas

S7: Fue una experiencia pues…complicada al principio y confuso, pero pues fuimos adaptándonos y si fue pues ayudando con la pronunciación que nos daban antes de los trabalenguas.

S8: Las percepciones que tuve fueron de manera positiva, ya que fue una manera nueva para practicar nuestra pronunciación.

S9: La primera vez que intentamos los trabalenguas en clase, me sentí un poco perdido. Pero después, cuando empecé a practicar y vi cómo mis amigos y yo nos enredábamos con las palabras, me pareció bastante divertido.

S10: Me pareció algo raro al inicio, me sentí un poco perdido. Fue un desafío, pero al final me ayudó a hablar más claramente y me divirtió ver a todos intentando pronunciar las palabras complicadas.

Pregunta 2: Luego de haber practicado la pronunciación con los trabalenguas, ¿cómo se sintió durante la implementación de esta técnica en las clases de inglés?

S5: Se sintió bien, porque ya podía hablar mas fluido, podía ya diferenciar entre unos sonidos y otros y a hablar más fluido el inglés.

S6: Me sentí bastante bien ya que era una nueva técnica que se estaba usando para poder decir mejor las palabras.

S7: Pues me sentí bastante bien porque pues aprendí a poder diferenciar entre la pronunciación de varios sonidos y palabras.

S8: Yo durante la implementación sentí que pude mejorar en saber diferenciar los sonidos en las palabras y eso ayudaba a que sepa pronunciar mejor.

S9: Al principio, me parecía bastante confuso, pero cada clase sentía que mi pronunciación se mejoraba en palabras que antes me parecían complicadas. Fue genial sentir ese progreso.

S10: Al implementar esta técnica en nuestras clases, noté cómo mi forma de pronunciar mejoraba y ganaba confianza para leer en voz alta. Fue un cambio positivo para mí.

Pregunta 3: Después de haber practicado sus habilidades de pronunciación con los trabalenguas, ¿cómo esta técnica le ha ayudado a mejorar su pronunciación?

S5: Me ayudó porque…a parte de que aprendí a diferenciar pude pronunciar mas rápido, vocalizar mas rápido algunas palabras que se me dificultaban.

S6: Si me ayudó bastante a mejorar la pronunciación, ya que esta nueva técnica me ayudaba a pronunciar de mejor manera y mas rápido las palabras que no me sabía

S7: Me ayudó a aprender a pronunciar mejor las palabras y a expresarme mejor para poder comunicarme mejor porque esta técnica nos ayudaba a conocer el contexto.

S8: Si, personalmente siento que si he podido mejorar bastante con la ayuda de los trabalenguas ya que me ha facilitado la pronunciación de palabras que me parecían complicadas al momento de pronunciar.

S9: He notado que mi pronunciación ha mejorado bastante… La esta técnica me hizo prestar atención a cada sonido.

S10: Me ayudó bastante a poder diferenciar entre los sonidos y también a producir mejor las palabras.

Pregunta 4: En comparación con su pronunciación inicial, ¿cree que actualmente ésta ha mejorado? Por favor, explique de qué manera mejoró.

S5: Sí, eh…como ya dije, los trabalenguas ayudaron a mejorar mi pronunciación en las palabras y aprendí a diferenciarlas también. Y también nos dejó habilidades vocales para la pronunciación de algunas palabras.

S6: Luego de utilizar esta técnica que nos comenzaron a enseñar, mi pronunciación comenzó a mejorar en el ámbito de la pronunciación mas rápida y de mejor manera ya que se podía pronunciar en menos tiempo algún párrafo o algún tipo de texto en general.

S7: La implementación de estos trabalenguas si nos ayudó bastante en lo que es pronunciación y la pronunciación rápida de los textos y mejorar la fluidez para decir las palabras.

S8: Actualmente si, si siento que he mejorado con la ayuda de los trabalenguas ya que como explico mi compañero, me ha ayudado a mejorar la pronunciación de algunas palabras y también he podido aprender a diferenciar los sonidos
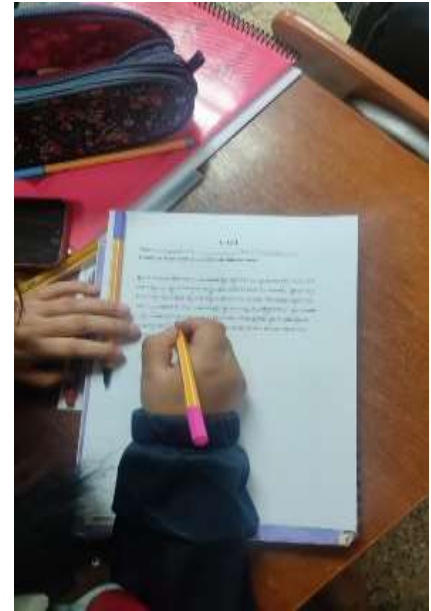
S9: Sí, como dije anteriormente…eh, siento que ha mejorado bastante. Antes algunas palabras me parecían difíciles, pero ahora ya puedo diferenciar los sonidos para pronunciar.

S10: Comparado con mi pronunciación de antes, si veo una mejora. Ahora puedo articular mejor los sonidos difíciles y hablar con más fluidez en inglés.

Appendix K

Appendix L

Student Name:	Mishell Mendez and Yerika Tacuri	Time:	7:40-8:40
Date:	May 4th,2023	Duration:	80 min
Level:	B1	# of Students:	41

Topic:	/æ/ vs /ʌ/ sound
Skill:	Pronunciation
Aims:	To help students distinguish between the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds and improve their pronunciation through the use of tongue twisters.
Objectives (Expected Learning Outcomes):	By the end of the lesson, students will be able to recognize the differences between the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds understanding through the successful recitation of tongue twisters containing these sounds.
Teaching Strategy/ Model/Approach	Tongue Twister
Assessment Methods:	Tongue Twister Recitation: The teacher provides students with a tongue twister that contains /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds, and ask them to recite them aloud in front of the class. The teacher evaluates their pronunciation and provide feedback for improvement. Worksheet: Students will work on a worksheet throughout the lesson where students will demonstrate their abilities to differentiate between the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds and their ability to produce them correctly.
Teaching / Learning Materials: (Throughout the entire class)	- Projector - Power Point presentation - A reading - A worksheet - A tongue twister
Feedback Methods:	- Ongoing feedback and reinforcement throughout the lesson through questioning - Individual feedback on completed activities.

Anticipated Problems and Solutions:	**Problems**	**Solutions**
	- Students might not like to practice the sounds with the tongue twister.	- Present the tongue twister within an interactive game such as the broken telephone.

		- Lack of vocabulary to understand the reading activity. - Background noise that prevent students to listen clearly to the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds	- Include pictures that can guide students during the reading. - Use speakers and an appropriate tone of voice in the whole lesson.		
Ti mi ng	**Stage Aim**	**Teacher activity (Procedure)**	**Student activity (Procedure)**	**Resource s**	**Foc us**
10 mi n	To activate prior knowled ge and introduce /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds.	The teacher will start by presenting a set of pictures related to a story to the students. Then, the teacher will ask the students to make guesses about the story based on the pictures. The teacher will encourage the students to use English vocabulary words to describe the pictures, and will explain the meaning of any words the students do not know.	The students will be actively engaged in looking at the pictures presented by the teacher and making guesses about the story based on the pictures. They will also be using English vocabulary words to describe the pictures, and asking the teacher to explain the meaning of any words they do not know.	Pictures in a power point presentati on	T-SS
15 mi n	To introduce the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds through the reading of words that contain those sounds in the story.	The teacher will start by showing the students the original story and then reading it aloud, emphasizing the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds. The teacher will then present the sounds to the students and ask them to reproduce them, drilling the sounds over and over again until the students can produce them accurately.	The students will read the original story with the teacher, listen to the emphasized sounds, and try to reproduce them themselves. They will then drill the sounds with the teacher until they are able to produce them accurately.	Speakers to reproduce the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds.	T-SS
20 mi n	To identify the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds by listening to those in a lecture.	Provides the students with a worksheet containing the story and explain to them that they will need to circle the words with the /æ/ sound and put a rectangle around the words with the /ʌ/ sound. The teacher will then read the story aloud one final time with the	Work on a worksheet and listen to the teacher read the story aloud one final time before circling the words with the /æ/ sound and putting a rectangle around the words with the /ʌ/ sound. This activity will help the students reinforce their understanding of the	Worksheet Story	S-S

		students before they start working on the worksheet.	/æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds and the corresponding vocabulary words.		
20 min	To practice the production of the /æ/ and /ʌ/	The teacher will present a tongue twister for the students to practice the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds. The teacher will recite the tongue twister by herself, then do it with the students, and then students will do it by themselves. The teacher will ask for some volunteers to recite it for the whole class. After that, the teacher will divide the class into groups, with each row of students forming a group. The teacher will then whisper a line of the tongue twister to the last person in each row, and the students will have to pass the message to the first person without changing the words or the sounds.	The students will recite a tongue twister with their teacher and then by themselves. Some of them will say it aloud to the whole class. Then, they will play the broken telephone game where each row will be a group and they will compete among them. The student in the last column will receive a message from the teacher, which will be a line from the tongue twister. That student has to pass the message until the first person without changing the sounds or the words that the teacher told at first.	A Tongue Twister A speaker	S-S
15 min	To demonstrate their abilities to differentiate the /æ/ and /ʌ/ sounds.	In the second part of the worksheet, the students have a reading to complete with a word bank. To complete the reading, the teacher will reproduce the reading for the whole class twice.	The students will have to complete the second part of the worksheet by completing the blank spaces of a reading that the teachers will play in a speaker.	A speaker A worksheet	T-SS

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C.I.: 0302614326

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Yo, Fernanda Elizabeth Sarango Solano, tutor del Trabajo de Integración Curricular de Carreras de Grado de Modalidad Presencial denominado "Improving English as a Foreign Language Learners' pronunciation through the tongue twister technique" perteneciente a los estudiantes: Mishell Valeria Mendez Crespo con C.I. 0302614326, Yerika Naydelim Tacuri Zavala con C.I. 0706591617. Doy fe de haber guiado y aprobado el Trabajo de Integración Curricular. También informo que el trabajo fue revisado con la herramienta de prevención de plagio donde reportó el 3 % de coincidencia en fuentes de internet, apegándose a la normativa académica vigente de la Universidad.

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FERNANDA ELIZABETH
SARANGO SOLANO

(firma del tutor)
Fernanda Elizabeth Sarango Solano

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