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**“ANALYZING THE IMPROVEMENT OF BA LEI STUDENTS ENGLISH
PRONUNCIATION SUPPORTED BY NATIVE SPEAKERS”**

Presented by:

RAYMUNDO LUNA

Thesis Director:

DR. ELIPHELET RIVERA CUAYAHUTL

Asesor de Tesis

DR. ELIPHELET RIVERA CUAYAHUTL

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KEY TERMS

BA ELT

Bachelor English language teaching is the major which the participants are taking.

Receptive skills

The two skills used in English are reading and listening and these skills are the ones which we are learning.

Productive skills

The other two skills missing in English which are writing and speaking and as its name says are productive actions that we can notice.

Native speakers

Are the one whose mother tongue is English; In this study a native speaker can be a teacher or a friend.

Native-like pronunciation

Perfect pronunciation, just like if your mother tongue is English.

ABSTRACT

This project is about the analysis of BA ELT students' pronunciation supported by native speakers. This investigation aims to identify if students could improve their oral production. The participants were students from the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP between 19 to 22 years old, they were coursing their fourth or fifth semester in a meta 5 target language group, where their teacher was a native English speaker. The instrument used in this investigation was a questionnaire divided into three sections and every section was focused on a specific research question. The questionnaire was applied to 24 students. Once the information was recollected and analyzed showed surprising results different from the ones that I thought. This investigation shows that different factors make students improve their pronunciation and surprisingly this is not always related to their teacher being a native or non-native speaker.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Introduction

Nowadays speaking English is a very important deal. It is one of the most spoken languages in the world, everyone knows and has used it in some way, even just words. It is a very important language not just in the professional field, and we find it everywhere. Many people use English in their daily life without noticing it. It can be found in songs, movies, commercials, books, on the streets, in schools, and so on. The fact that we now use more English than before is amazing but we need to know how to use it properly.

There are a lot of people interested in the language and not just in it but also in the culture that English native speakers have. This incentivizes cultural exchange, and it's amazing how much you can learn from other people who live in another country. You can make friends all around the world.

We can find many people who need English for their professional lives because it's the principal communication source between companies. After all, they need to be on the same level and be competent. Also, the internet is one of the biggest media sources and there is a lot of information that is in English and this is a challenge for those who can't speak English.

On the other hand, some people have very good English pronunciation, and this could be for many reasons, they are very good at learning a second language, they had lived in the USA before, one of their parents could be a native English speaker, or they do everything they can to improve it. On the other hand, we also find people who have trouble with it. Maybe because they don't like it or they are not interested

or probably they don't have a proper teacher.

English teachers are the ones who must manage it very well because they will teach it in the future. They must have a very good level and be able to teach. On the Languages Faculty at Benemérita Universidad Autónoma De Puebla. The (Bachelor) BA (English language teaching) ELT students who are going to be the next English teachers already are familiar with the language and they are very good at not just receptive skills (Reading, Listening) but also productive skills (Writing, Speaking).

But it is true that some of them also have trouble with their pronunciation this doesn't mean that would affect their learners, but it is true that teachers with good pronunciation can also improve students' pronunciation as well.

In this work, we are going to find out if BA ELT students from the Languages Faculty can improve their English pronunciation with the native speaker's help.

1.1 Problem

The problem that grabs my attention is the fact that many students from the Language faculty speak and handle the English Language, but they still have problems with their pronunciation, we can hear the noticeable Mexican accent. That is a big problem for future teachers, the nowadays kids' generations who want to learn English are looking for schools or courses that have native English speakers because they could help them more than a non-native English teacher.

This is why, future English teachers from the Languages Faculty need to demonstrate that it doesn't matter if they are not native speakers because they also could have proper pronunciation, that is what most English learners are looking for.

1.2 Context and Participants

This research work is going to take place in the Languages Faculty from the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma De Puebla. This building is located in Puebla. This institution has at least 8 different buildings with classrooms where the ELT students take their classes, but not just the BA ELT students use the installations also different students take courses that are related to the acquisition of a second language could be English or some others like French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese (and so on).

Every classroom has the necessary material for a proper class like benches for all the students, a projector, and an electronic board, they have a computer with an internet connection, and of course, there are enough classrooms for all the students that attend the institution. The participants are going to be BA ELT students because this research work focuses on future English teachers and they have already taken subjects with native and not native English teachers, that is why they are the best participants to complete and have a good result on this research work.

1.3 General Research Question

How can English native speakers help BA ELT students to improve their pronunciation?

1.4 Specific Research Questions

What are BA ELT students' challenges while speaking?

How can BA ELT students improve their pronunciation?

Why native English speakers can improve BA ELT students' English pronunciation?

1.5 Justification

This research work is important because many BA ELT students need to know if they can improve their pronunciation. ELT students are going to be future teachers and need to realize that an English teacher with better pronunciation would have more and better opportunities to find a better job quickly.

This research is not just important for ELT students but also, is very useful for the public in general or for people who might be thinking of starting to learn English, and who might want to know how important is the pronunciation of this language. That is why this research is for people who have a relationship with this language.

BA ELT students have to be prepared for those challenges that they face while speaking, to improve they would need help and the best candidates are native English speakers, who can be a teacher from the BA or friends, the important thing is that they need to have more interaction with native speakers.

1.6 Purpose of the Study

This work is important to me because I want to know how much the participants can improve their pronunciation when they have constant interaction with a native English speaker and know if there is a big difference comparing and checking the point of view of the participant between a class with a native or a non-native English teacher. I think that good pronunciation it's like a good presentation for an English teacher. This work consists of revealing the advantages and disadvantages that the BA ELT students notice once they have been in both scenarios.

1.7 Conclusion

this work is related a little bit to globalization because the English language is a very used language around the world. Nowadays learning English is not for pleasure, is helpful in the academic and business fields. However, I will be focused on the academic field, to be more specific in the teaching and learning context, focused on pronunciation. During this work, we will be able to see and compare the different points of view methods, and thoughts about the participants related to their oral production on different aspects, and at the end of the investigations, I will realize if native English teachers can help the participants to improve their English pronunciation seen on a real context.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This research aims to discuss topics relevant to the research questions. These students are from the Faculty of Languages at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP). It is also important to say that native speakers can be either teachers or some foreign native friends; the reason for this study is a deep interest in discovering how new English learners can get proper pronunciation, also the reason for this, is related to their teachers' pronunciation or the English that they are learning. This study therefore focuses on native speakers because I think this will be the easiest way to find out, even though there are several non-native teachers with a nearly native pronunciation. This work also aims to analyze the improvement. To better understand this study, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of speaking.

2.1 Defining "Speaking"

Speaking is one of the two productive skills and probably one of the most difficult to master. "The mastery of speaking becomes the most important aspect in learning a foreign language compared with the other language skills" (Hanifa, 2018 p. 1). When students are learning, sometimes they do not have the confidence to speak in English, because most of the time "when learners have to produce actual language, they are likely to find gaps between what they know and what they need to know" (Swain, 1995 p. 139). This makes them feel insecure while speaking, and if they do not practice, they cannot see or hear their mistakes, the main goal of learning a new

language is what Hanifa says: "The main goal of learning a foreign language is to be able to speak it fluently." (2018 p. 2).

Nevertheless, if students can hear native speaker pronunciation, they would notice some mistakes by themselves and they can try to imitate the pronunciation to make it better. Also, they will "Take higher education to learn deeper about speaking to help them speak in a more proper way" (Suryani, Wayan, and Pratiwi, 2020 p. 1). For English learners, the most typical way to demonstrate the development of their new language is speaking, because it is the skill that they can use the most when they are in a real-life situation or outside of a classroom. English learners need to leave their shyness behind when they speak, and if he or she is taking a BA in English, that means that he or she is going to be future English teachers. They need to improve their language, "output-based learning is more effective and produces greater learning" Lim and Griffith, (as cited in Izumi 2002, p. 547). The perfect scenarios to achieve speaking skills are when can be used in different production activities. It is better if learners can have some real-life activities or activities to make students create scenarios that they have live or could be live in their context because "Production activities require students to produce language for the purpose of resolving some issue or problem." (Lim and Griffith, 2011, p. 5). Of course, when an English learner starts to speak a second language, he notices many challenges while he speaks.

2.2 Challenges while Speaking.

Speaking is the most effective way that everyone uses to communicate with someone else to have an exchange of ideas or opinions, and when learners speak

in a second language. It becomes very difficult for them to have meaningful communication if they are just learning. As Asif, Bashir, and Zafar found out “students and teachers in the English language classroom tend to hold on to their first language and most of the time they have been observed speaking Urdu even in their English language classroom.” (Asif, Bashir, and Zafar, 2018 p. 67). This skill is not easy to improve for English learners because there are other factors that they face while speaking. The pronunciation is the most important just like Jorquera, Mendoza, and Diaz, mentions, “Learners study a second language because it is necessary to communicate with people from other countries and cultures.” (2017, p.102). Is important to make clear that speaking in a classroom is very different from speaking in real-life situations. School teachers need to follow a program and, in most cases, those programs are at school. These programs are different from the situations that learners could face if they visit a foreign country for example just as Lim and Griffith affirm:

A common reality among language learners is that no matter how much they practice some seem unable to communicate well in real situations. We all have experienced that problematic gap between “school English” and “real English.” While practice is clearly an important tool, it is an insufficient one to move toward proficiency. The proficient use of a language requires more authentic production of the language. (Lim and Griffith, 2011, p.7).

There are many challenges for English learners while speaking and most of them are related to the phonetic and phonology field. This is also known as the correct pronunciation and use of English. Anyway, this is just one of the different challenges that an English learner can face while they are learning the language. For English learners. It is important to identify the difference between English vowel sounds to make clearer the words sound to improve their pronunciation, also, “the ultimate goal

of learners studying for the BA in English is to be able to produce it with proficiency in both the written and spoken modes” (Tlazalo and Basurto, 2014, p. 152). Another important aspect that many learners have in common is that they do not like to speak in public. They have many different reasons even personal, but this is a negative point when someone is learning a new language because to improve the pronunciation we need to practice and be in constant use of the new idiom just like when we learn to speak our mother tongue.

“The teaching and learning of a second or foreign language are complex processes for both teachers and students alike” (Tlazalo and Basurto, 2014, p. 152). However, every student has his way of practicing and improving it, sometimes teachers help them to reinforce the process of learning and it is even better when students can use it in real-life situations because it is when they prove themselves if they understood.

“Learning English can be a great challenge for many students. Most of them consider speaking to be one of the most difficult abilities.” (Rengifo, 2009, p. 93). Principally foreign English learners face these challenges.

2.3 Foreigner English Learners

For a foreign English learner or a non-native teacher “Mispronunciation and bad intonation are fundamental problems in the speech of the non-native teachers of English in underdeveloped countries” (Cakir, 2011, p. 1801). Many learners face this common problem. “Even after years of studying the language, many English as a second language students have "severe difficulty" with English pronunciation” (Kumar, Rao. 2022. P. 117). For young learners it is helpful to have a teacher who helps them with meaningful learning, “Strategy research has led to a distinction

between strategies employed for different purposes such as communication, performing in the language, retrieving information and the processes of speaking, listening, reading and writing” Méndez (as cited in Cohen, 1998). For them is very important to learn the four skills at the same time. Later, they can improve all of them to develop a better language and better communication with a native speaker. If the learner can improve the skills, they probably have a good English Pronunciation.

2.4 English Pronunciation

English pronunciation is a big deal for English learners and even English teachers “It is highly admitted that pronunciation is the key factor that native speakers notice during a conversation” (Cakir, 2011, p. 1803). Good pronunciation allows communicating well and even a native speaker can understand without problem. This is why the basis of good pronunciation learning is talking all the time; it does not matter if you talk to yourself “Learning words without pronunciation is in vain as it leads to communication breakdown” (Cakir, 2011, p. 1803). Good pronunciation is not just the word sound. There exist other factors for good pronunciation like accuracy and fluency. The teacher plays an important role in pronunciation and according to what Kenworthy said:

Some sounds of English do not occur in other languages. Sometimes learners will be able to imitate the new sound, but if they can't then the teacher needs to be able to give some hints which may help them to make the new sound(s). (Kenworthy, 2022. P. 1)

Also, phonetic and phonology plays an important role when students are learning a new language. It is true that in many languages the word pronunciation is the same as their writing, but on the other hand, in English, this does not happen all the time.

Sometimes the words' spelling is not the same as their pronunciation; English learners can have a very difficult time because of this. To make this clearer, a simple letter can have different sounds depending on the word, all this is what we need to improve to master good communicative competence in a second language, English learners' pronunciation is a big deal for new learners.

2.5 English Learners' Pronunciation

For many English learners, pronunciation is a difficult topic. As it was mentioned before many students avoid this because they do not feel secure with themselves while speaking. When English learners are in a classroom, they hardly interact using English they prefer not to say anything until their teacher asks something to them, just like Jairo said: "It seemed pupils rejected English even though many times they understood what was said" (2011, p. 62). This occurs many times because they think that their classmates could make fun of their pronunciation and that is why learners do not practice enough this sub-skill.

"Teachers perceived their pupils as individuals who would only feel comfortable in class if they were taught in Spanish" (Jairo, 2011, p. 62). This happens most of the time to young English learners. However, senior learners have a different perspective on the English language. If they interact with native speakers, they have a new motivation to practice in public and they start practicing by themselves. They want to have good pronunciation for better communication with their native speakers' friends or if they want to travel, they probably need to know how they can improve their English pronunciation.

2.6 How to Improve English Pronunciation

There are many ways to achieve this goal, some people like to use more common methods that many learners use like listening to music in English. This is helpful to them to notice and know the correct pronunciation of some difficult words. They also can watch movies it is a good idea the use subtitles to differentiate the spelling words and the real sound. This is very helpful to students because later on they will not get confused with the word spelling. Another good tool that learners can use is to play video games and nowadays they can play with someone around the world and you can talk with them while you play.

To master good pronunciation, we can use many and different tools depending on which can be perfect for us, “Having a tool that enables students to become aware of their pronunciation patterns was perceived as beneficial and useful” (Wilches, 2014, p. 57). In addition, these tools are very easy to use; we can use them when we have time everywhere where we feel comfortable “Being at home also provides an extra level of comfort that enables students to pay more attention to their pronunciation” (Wilches, 2014, p. 57). A beginner English learner feels better practicing at home to improve their English pronunciation. Nowadays the use of technology is very helpful while practicing English pronunciation a good example of that is what Rifqiyah, Ardini, and Prabowo found:

English pronunciation Application (EPA) android-based is one of the application available in Google Play store. Through English Pronunciation Application (EPA), the students are able to hear and know the correct pronunciation based on the audio. The audio in the application is based on English-native speaker. In addition, the accent in the English Pronunciation Application (EPA) is British and American accent. (Rifqiyah, Ardini, Prabowo, 2021. P. 44)

2.7 Improving English Pronunciation

Nowadays, exist several options to improve English pronunciation. Also exist several institutions; most of them are private schools that focus on pronunciation. Some of this could show an improvement faster but all of them have the same goal. One option that students use is imitation but this is helpful just if they have a native teacher because when the teacher says a difficult word for the learners, they would imitate the pronunciation. Nevertheless, if they had a teacher who pronounces the word incorrectly, they would imitate the word and this will affect them in the future Lynch and Anderson mention.

A student who has just been corrected will probably be able to imitate the teacher's pronunciation of a word immediately afterwards. However, the chances are that the next time the student needs to use the word, they will produce it incorrectly, as they had done before. (2012, p. 2).

English learners face this problem when they have a native English teacher. To improve the pronunciation students, need to take into account many aspects like the way they move their mouth and lips because this also can affect the sound of the words in their tongue. The move of the tongue also helps to pronounce sound a simple move of the tongue can make the difference for a good sound. English is a stress language the stress of the words is very important you can pronounce a word that could have two different stress sounds and this word can have two different meanings. Students who know the difference between the words with both stress sounds could have a good improvement in their pronunciation. There is something important that Lynch and Anderson mention.

There is good news and bad news about pronunciation. The bad news first: with very few exceptions, adult speakers of a second language will not achieve a native-

like accent. The good news: you don't need to sound like a native speaker. What you should aim for, according to Joanne Kenworthy, is 'to be comfortably intelligible' (as mentioned in Kenworthy 1987 p. 3).

This can make someone think about the difference between a learner's pronunciation and a native speaker's pronunciation and let us explain what an English native speaker is.

2.8 English Native Speakers

An English speaker is one whose mother tongue is English so they know perfectly the language. Walkinshaw and Hoang mention: "Native-speaker teachers were viewed as good models for imitation; however, their speech could be difficult for L2 learners to comprehend" (2008. p. 4) probably many would think that only United States citizens are native speakers. But not always is that way, some people probably were not born in the United States but when they still were children, he/she and their families moved to the States and his/her first language was English. Therefore, this is a perfect example that someone could have another nationality but if the first language that he or she learns is English automatically makes English their first language. Walkinshaw and Hoang (as cited in Holliday, 2008) mention.

I have heard influential employers [in the English language teaching industry] in Britain say that while they would abolish the discriminatory differentiation between 'native speakers' and 'non-native speakers' tomorrow, they can't because their 'customers demand it'. (p. 121)

For an English teacher, this subject is important because if they were non-native speakers probably would have fewer opportunities to find a job. Even the students could have doubts if taking an English class with a non-native speaker is a good idea. Gutierrez (as cited in Bluter, 2007) mentions, "Interestingly, in some countries

NS teachers are paid more just for the mere reason of being NS or there is a tendency to hire NS teacher” (p. 2). This happens because students as mentioned before are interested in the perfection of their spoken ability. They think that having a native speaker as a model could help them master the ability they focus on repetition if they have a non-native speaker. They could find some difficulties while speaking. “It is noticed that a gap is found in students’ beliefs and preferences towards the nativeness of their English teachers in terms of language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the components of grammar and vocabulary, and target culture-related information.” (Gutierrez, 2014. p. 4). Resuming the cite before the case that a native speaker could be working as a teacher even if he/she has not had a BA as an English teacher, but just because is a native speaker he/has more opportunities to move to another country and start to teach English. “The spread of English throughout the world has had major influences in several countries” (Mermelstein, 2015. p. 2). Therefore, any Native speaker could work as a teacher.

2.9 Native English Speaker as a Teacher

A native English speaker as a teacher is the best option for new English learners nowadays. Some courses offer significant learning with native English teachers, and the new generations have in mind that is the best option, “Even if teachers are highly proficient in the target language and if the target language is not their first language, they are NNS.” (Gutierrez, 2014. p. 2). This could be a problem or can make doubts to students if taking a class with a non-native speaker is a good idea. Nevertheless, now are many teachers that have native-like accents which make them as good as native speakers, Mermelstein (as cited in Maum 2002)

The term nonnative-English-speaking teachers has created a division among professionals in the ELT profession. Supporters of the term believe that it is necessary to distinguish between native- and nonnative-English-speaking teachers because their differences are, in fact, their strengths and should be recognized. Those who oppose the dichotomy feel that differentiating among teachers based on their status as native or nonnative speakers perpetuates the dominance of the native speaker in the ELT profession. (p.1)

This, as mentioned before, happens because of the students' beliefs. English native teachers could guarantee better teaching. This is a big problem between native and non-native teachers that affects more to non-native teachers. Nevertheless, several students do not care if their teacher is native or not, they will be okay if the teacher knows how to teach the language. "English teachers should know the language as well as how to teach the language." (Gutierrez, 2014. p. 11).

Teachers' abilities are important for students who are learning English. They focus more on the way the teacher teaches and do not care if the teacher is or have a native-like pronunciation, "maybe the most important factor regarding language teachers' abilities is not whether or not they are native speaker." (Mermelstein, 2015. p. 14). Also, nowadays several students' goal while learning English is to have good pronunciation. So, it is important to know how students can have a native-like pronunciation.

2.10 Native-like Pronunciation

Some English learners' main goal while learning the language is to have good pronunciation to communicate better in English. Something important in second language acquisition is the motivation that learners have. "Motivation is considered and immutable personality trait of the language learner." (Dean. 2016, p. 77). They

use different methods to achieve their goal some of these methods could work or not. Dean mentions “The languages we speak and how we speak them serve to define our linguistic and cultural identity.” (2016, p. 76). However, having good pronunciation is not a big deal for many other learners, they prefer to have good language knowledge than good pronunciation. This depends on the student’s point of view or necessities. Learning a new language is always difficult when the pronunciation comes, is the hardest part to achieve, and “every time language learners interact in a foreign language, whether in the oral or written mode, they are engaged in identity construction and negotiation.” (Dean, 2016. p. 76). But if a learner cannot have good pronunciation does not mean that he or she is bad at the language. If a learner knows how to communicate and if a native speaker can understand him or her that is a great achievement. “language acquisition is also a process of identify construction and how a person sees him/herself in relation to the language being acquired and in relation to the speakers of that language along with their culture.” (Dean, 2016. p. 76). English native-like pronunciation can be achievable in different ways like spending significant time in a place where English is the language spoken. The time learning it is also important to master native pronunciation, a learner who has been learning for a long time has a better pronunciation than one who has a short time learning it. Practice is another important factor in achieving good pronunciation. If someone just practices when he/she needs to and does not practice when he/she has the opportunity their improvement will be slow. Wieling, Bloem, Harald, and Nerbonne state that age is also an important factor in mastering a native-like pronunciation he mentions:

For younger speakers a longer length of residence has the strongest effect (e.g., for

a speaker aged 20, the contour lines are only a short distance apart), whereas the effect is smaller for older speakers (e.g., for a 50-year-old speaker the lines are further apart). (2015, p.6)

A native-like pronunciation actually can be achievable by different methods or strategies. But there exists another factor that helps this process like the ones mentioned before. Until here and after all the information mention above, will make many people think what kind of pronunciation will be better to learn. During Wieling, Bloem, Harald, and Nerbonne's study they found some important information to make clearer why some learner has better pronunciation. He mentions the following.

The strongest effect was found to be associated with age of English onset. Earlier learners had a more nativelike performance than later learners. Furthermore, we observed a significant effect of the number of languages spoken besides English. The more languages spoken, the more nativelike the pronunciation of the speaker. (2015, p.6)

Two different ways of pronouncing the English language came out after all the mentioned before. So, what is better a native-like pronunciation or a good pronunciation?

2.11 Native-like Pronunciation or Good Pronunciation

A native-like pronunciation for a learner in a country where English is not the first language is difficult to achieve. The most help that a learner in this condition can have is a native speaker as a model. "One argument in favor of using a native-speaker model is that it facilitates teaching and learning. It enables future teachers of English to teach their students pronunciation." (Smakman, 2017. p.99). What pronunciation will take a future English teacher? For future English teachers probably having a native-like pronunciation would be better because he/she

eventually will share his/her knowledge with other people. “Future teachers need to know what it is like to learn pronunciation and become aware of cognitive restrictions and possibilities.” (Smakman, 2017. p.99). This means that having plenty of knowledge of the language will help in the future in many aspects. On the other hand, having good pronunciation is something really good, it will not make anybody feel less than the other. Good pronunciation means that a native English speaker can understand and does not need to hear a native-like accent. Many learners do not care if they have a native-like pronunciation and even do not imitate their native teacher because “Students often struggle with them, and some are highly embarrassed imitating native speakers.” (Smakman, 2017. p.100). Somehow, nowadays students learn English because they have more opportunities in the labor field but do not take seriously their pronunciation Smakman mentions in his study “Teaching in accordance with a native-speaker norm is somewhat old-fashioned in today’s globalizing world. Students may be aware of this obsolescence and struggle to do the exercises because of their hesitation.” (2017. p.100). The pronunciation depends on the learner’s goal in the Smakman study he can identify a very true conclusion when a learner is taking English lessons he mentions.

So, what to teach? This may depend on the circumstances in which the learner is and what their professional goals and identity aspirations are. Learners who in their future job will not need a nativelike pronunciation will benefit less from a native-speaker model than students who wish to become teachers of English. (2017. p.101).

With this citation, make clear that depends on what English is used for because the use of it is different for everybody. An example is a student who is studying to be a teacher and a student who is learning English because he wants to go visit some places where English is the first language. Nevertheless, learning a second

language is a huge step for everybody and every learner can choose how to learn it. Nowadays, learners' necessities can make them think about what English they need or if they need to have a native-like pronunciation or just have a good pronunciation. This is a decision that in this and future decades' students will take into account and not make bad or good English learning.

2.12 Research in the Field

During the recollection of the information, I was able to find and understand different points of view of several authors regarding the student's English pronunciation supported by native speakers, and also several findings related to the topic for example, in Indonesia there was an important investigation work on English learners' students. "The participants were provided with special practices on pronunciation, including watching video or listening to English expressions containing elements of English pronunciation difficult to them, drillings the elements, recording and transcribing their utterances, and comparing the transcriptions with those of native speakers'. Data were collected through tests and questionnaires. The results revealed that the explicit teaching approach enhanced the participants' English pronunciation skills, as shown by the increase of their average scores in the four tests administered during the actions implementation". (Pardede, 2018 P. 142).

This investigation shows that different ways can help LEI students practice their pronunciation with native English speakers and also with the use of TIC's. However, the most important information finding in this investigation was about the LEI learners' thoughts and opinions about this approach. It was interesting for them and they felt confident and increased their pronunciation development. Some other

information found about improving the English learner's pronunciation was regarding the use of TIC's. Other investigation work related to the English learner's pronunciation was done at a university in Jakarta. "This research tries to measure the output of learning pronunciation with pronunciation practice module which is designed according to Tergujeff's pronunciation teaching materials: namely phonetic training, reading aloud, listen and repeat, rhyme and verse, rules and instructions, awareness-raising activities, spelling and dictation and ear training; and Celce Murcia's Pronunciation teaching materials. This confirms that the creative and dynamic use of current pronunciation teaching materials enable the students not only to undergo accuracy-oriented exercises but also fluency-based activities" (Purwanto, 2019 P. 81). Even though, these new practices do not require a native speaker as a support, is what learners are using when they do not have the opportunity to work or practice with a native speaker, this is one of many alternatives tools that learners have access to use with the past of the years and the use of technology.

Just to clarify this information acquired has changed over the years and the ways learners can use different methods to improve their pronunciation if they do not have the opportunity to interact with native English speakers. This leads the English learners to find other ways to improve their pronunciation other important research work that took place in Thailand demonstrates that there are other ways to improve English learners' pronunciation. "The research identified Thai English learners' specific English pronunciation problems. It also designed and facilitated a new self-directed learning process for learners to improve their English pronunciation, which is based on a combination of a community of practice (CoP) and self-directed

learning. There were 15 participants selected purposively involved in this study. This study demonstrated how to use new learning process to identify specific problems and shares how to solve problems by practicing among participants so that the objectives can be reached. The new learning process was useful in helping users to improve their English pronunciation to communicate effectively in real life. The new learning process also can be used for other language learners". (Yang and Kongjit 2022 P. 995) At the end of the day, English learners' students feel very comfortable having good pronunciation and nowadays if they do not have the opportunity to practice it with a native speaker either a teacher or a friend, they can find several options to keep mastering the English Pronunciation.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter's purpose was to discuss topics relevant to the investigation. Information from other authors was written as a complement to the new information, every subtopic has a close relation with the research questions, and the intention is to make the topics as clear as possible for the readers. This chapter recollects different ideas points of view and thoughts from other investigations and authors.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter aims to identify how BA ELT students can improve their English pronunciation with native speakers' help. These students are from the Faculty of Languages at Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP). In this chapter the research questions are presented, this is the general research question and three specific research questions. The participants are also described in this chapter as well as the context of the investigation. The instrument is explained and detailed. After this, the data collection, the results, and the conclusion are also discussed.

3.1 Research Questions

As a reminder to the reader, I would display my research questions.

General Research Question

How can English native speakers help BA ELT students to improve their pronunciation?

Specific Research Questions

What are BA ELT students' challenges while speaking?

How can BA ELT students improve their pronunciation?

How can native English speakers help improve BA ELT students' English pronunciation?

3.2 Participants

The participants were BA ELT undergraduate students from the Faculty of Languages at BUAP. These participants were students who are or have already taken a class with a native speaker teacher, also included students who have an English native speaker friend or students who have had contact with native speakers. The reason why I chose these participants is because are students that I see all the time at the faculty so it was easier for me to apply my instrument.

3.3 Research Context

This study was developed with undergraduate students from a public university. The building is a faculty of language where the learning of language is the main purpose. The bachelor's is called "Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Ingles" Nowadays the major has different subjects. The academic schedule period is every six months. The principal subjects that the students are taking or were taking include: Language Acquisition, Discourse Analysis, Bilingualism, Development of reading and writing skills, Phonetics and Phonology, Grammar I and Grammar II. Some students have already taken this subject, and some others do not.

3.4 Instrument Design

The instrument was a questionnaire named "Opinions about students' pronunciation improvement". In the questionnaire two personal information questions were required that were age and the semester that students were taking. The questionnaire was divided into subtopics related to the specific research questions the first subtopic was named challenges in English speaking. The following part was

the instructions required to the students, “choosing the option that expressed better their opinion”. Then in a square, there were the options that the students could choose. The options were chosen according to the Likert scales of frequency, number one was always, number two was frequently, number three was occasionally, number four was rarely and number five was never. Then there were seven questions related to the first topic. In addition, question number eight was an open question that required to the students name other problems that students had faced while speaking.

The second topic in the questionnaire was students’ pronunciation. The first part of this section was also the instructions, which were the same as the first one. In the next section, there were also the options that the students could choose. In this case, the scale of agreement was used, also in a separate square, number one was strongly agree, number two was agree, number three was undecided, number four was disagree and number five was strongly disagree. Then in this case listed seven statements related to the topic.

Finally, the last part of the topic was native speakers’ help to improve English pronunciation. The following part as the previous ones were the instructions. The following parts were the options that students could choose and were according to the frequency Likert scale. In a square, the number one was always, the number two was frequently, the number three was occasionally, the number four was rarely and the number five was never. The last part was seven questions related to the topic.

3.5 Data Collection

The questionnaire was applied to a “Meta 5” group at Facultad de Lenguas. I asked

for permission from the teacher in charge and he permitted me to apply the questionnaire. The application of the questionnaire was a Tuesday. I arrived at the class I introduced my thesis topic and myself. Then I handed the questionnaires to the students. I waited until they finished the questionnaire and they returned it to me. I thanked the students and the teacher for letting me apply the questionnaire.

3.6 Data Analysis

There were 24 questionnaires handed to the students, every questionnaire was numbered from 1 to 22. The information collected was concentrated on a table for a better analysis. I used some graphics to help me analyze the information. Then I described the problems that I faced on the day of the application. That was not much deal, just one student did not want to answer the questionnaire. The students understood the questionnaire perfectly, no one had doubts about it. Some students took their time answering the instrument, some others were faster. The application time of the questionnaire was twenty minutes. On average not all the students answered question number 2.8. That was the open question in the first section.

3.7 Obtaining Results

Once the graphics were designed, analyzed, and discussed, the results of the investigation emerged. The data were intended to be analyzed section by section but in the end, I decided to analyze it by items. I took three items by section and then I graphic them to a better appreciation of the obtained results. These were concentrated in a table of findings and were presented in the closing chapter.

3.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter's purpose was to explain the procedure for the recollection of the data. The data collection was collected at the "Facultad de Lenguas" from Buap. The participants were BA LEI students from a "Meta 5" course. The instrument was a questionnaire applied to the students. The students' cooperation was excellent and very professional. This chapter describes the procedure and the implementation of the questionnaire, and the collection of the data. In general words the information that I obtained after the application of the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the data analysis and reveals findings emerging from the study. The issues discussed in this chapter are related to students' challenges while speaking, students' pronunciation, and native speakers' help to improve English pronunciation. The analysis and discussion started once the instrument was applied and the data were concentrated.

4.1 Discussion Procedure

The questionnaire used was divided into three sections: (Challenges while speaking English, Students' pronunciation, and Native speakers help to improve English pronunciation.) each section focused on a specific research question. Every section was analyzed individually following the sequence in which they appeared in the questionnaire. The items of the first section aim to respond to the first research question which explores BA LEI students' challenges while speaking. The second section analyzes the second research question about how BA ELT students can improve their pronunciation. And finally, the third section analyzes the third research question which is about how native English speakers can help improve BA ELT students' English pronunciation. Also, in the instrument, there is an open question that is analyzed individually, apart from the three previously mentioned sections. This open question helps answer the first research question nevertheless the analysis is apart from the first section.

4.2 Analysis

Question 2.1, explored the students' frequency of speaking in English. (Figure 4.1) shows that the majority of the Meta 5 students. This is 13 out of 24 occasionally speak in English, while one-third of the participants frequently use the target language in class.

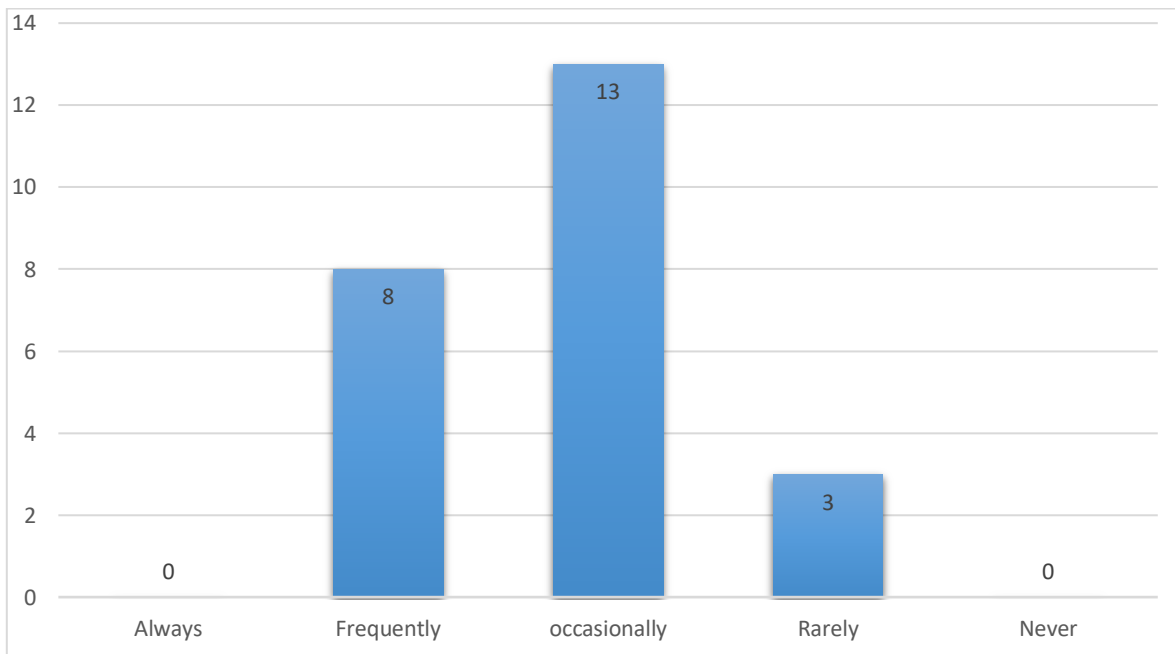


Figure 4.1 Students' Frequency of Speaking in English

The findings (Figure 4.1) also show that not even one student speaks all the time in English in the classroom, nevertheless, the results also show that every student from Meta 5 speaks in English not all the time but they speak to some extent.

In my experience as a student of those courses, I can affirm that most Meta 5 lessons concentrate on grammar issues, and very little practice is devoted to speaking. This may explain why students' proficiency is low. At this point, language teachers may

devote more time to practice oral production. This scenario, however, is a bit different when native-speaker teachers are in charge of the language courses because most of the time they devote most of the class time to interact with the students using the target language.

Item 2.5 in the questionnaire asked about students' confidence while speaking English. (Figure 4.2), illustrates that. A third of the Meta 5 students rarely feel confident while speaking English. Also shows that at least one student does not have any confidence in him/herself when he/she speaks English and almost half of the meta 5 group students frequently have confidence in themselves.

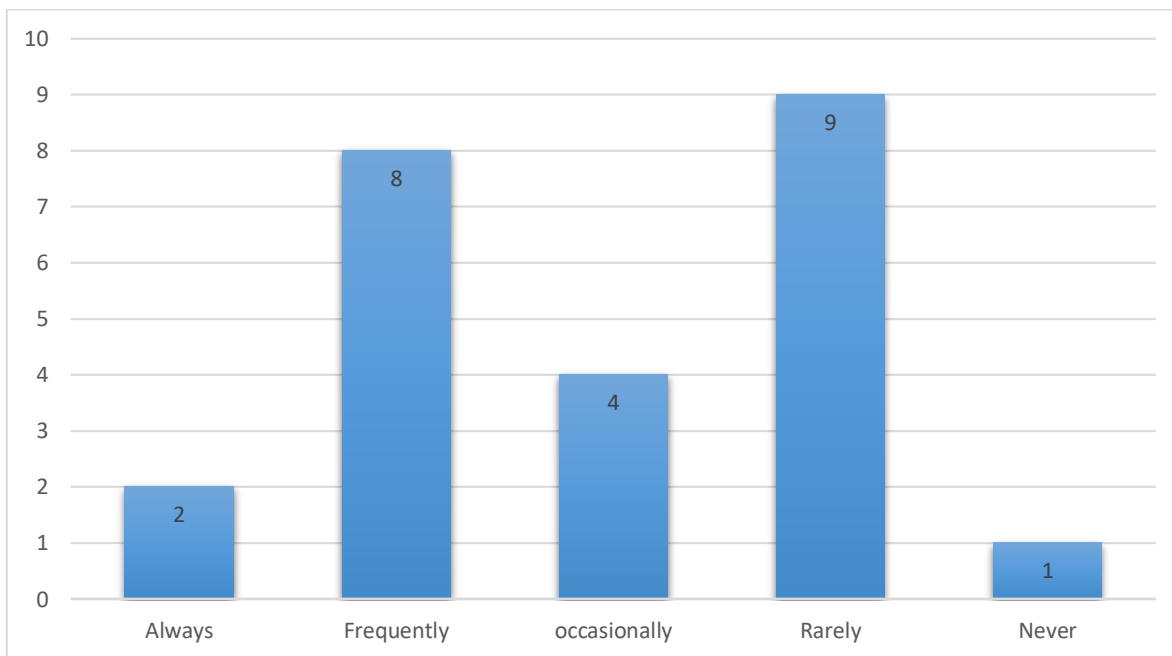


Figure 4.2 Students' Confidence While Speaking English

In my previous experience, I can affirm that speaking English in the classroom is a

little bit intimidating. The problem with confidence while speaking English in my opinion is because we do not feel prepared, maybe because of the lack of vocabulary, bad pronunciation, or even shyness. This may explain why students' confidence while speaking is not high.

Question number 2.6, explored students' shyness while speaking English. The graphic (4.3), manifests that, almost half of the meta 5 students frequently feel shy while speaking English. Findings also show that half of the rest of the students rarely speak in English because of their shyness. It is also demonstrated that a couple of students are always shy while speaking English.

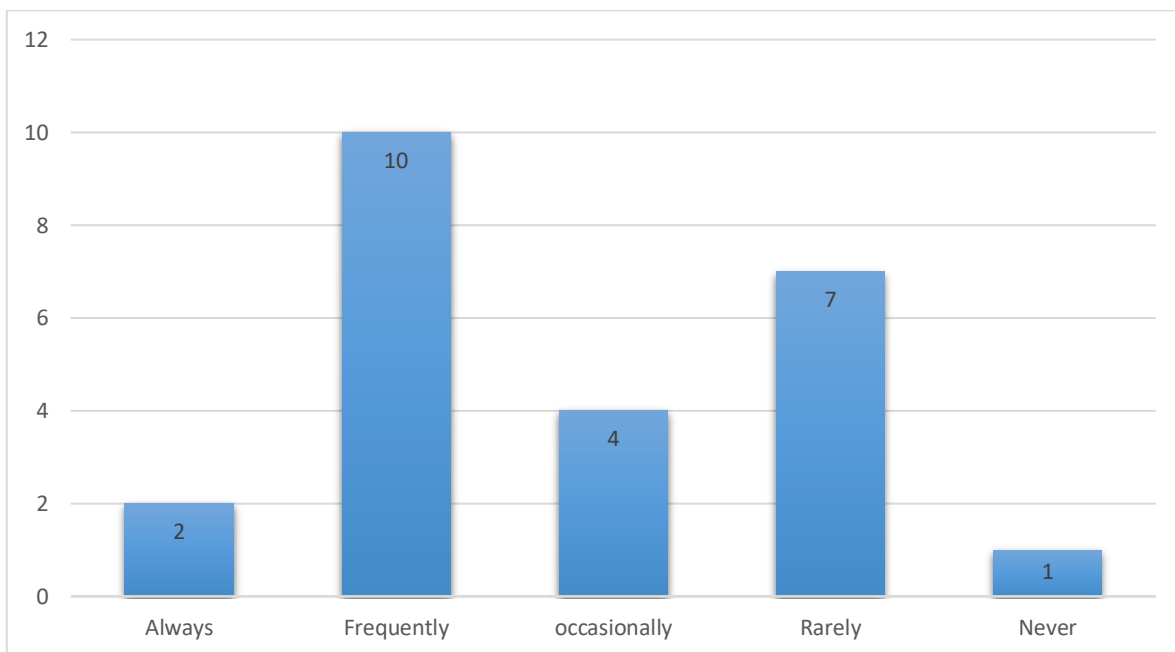


Figure 4.3, Students' Shyness While Speaking English.

Results demonstrate that in the Meta 5 group, one student never feels shy while speaking in English. Concerning these results, it can be affirmed that students' shyness may affect their oral production and why they may have trouble with their

pronunciation. In my experience speaking English shyness influences oral production in different ways.

Statement 3.2, about speaking Spanish influences English pronunciation is displayed in (Figure 4.4), demonstrates that. The majority of the Meta 5 students agreed that their mother tongue influenced their pronunciation. However, a low percentage of Meta 5 students disagreed with the statement.

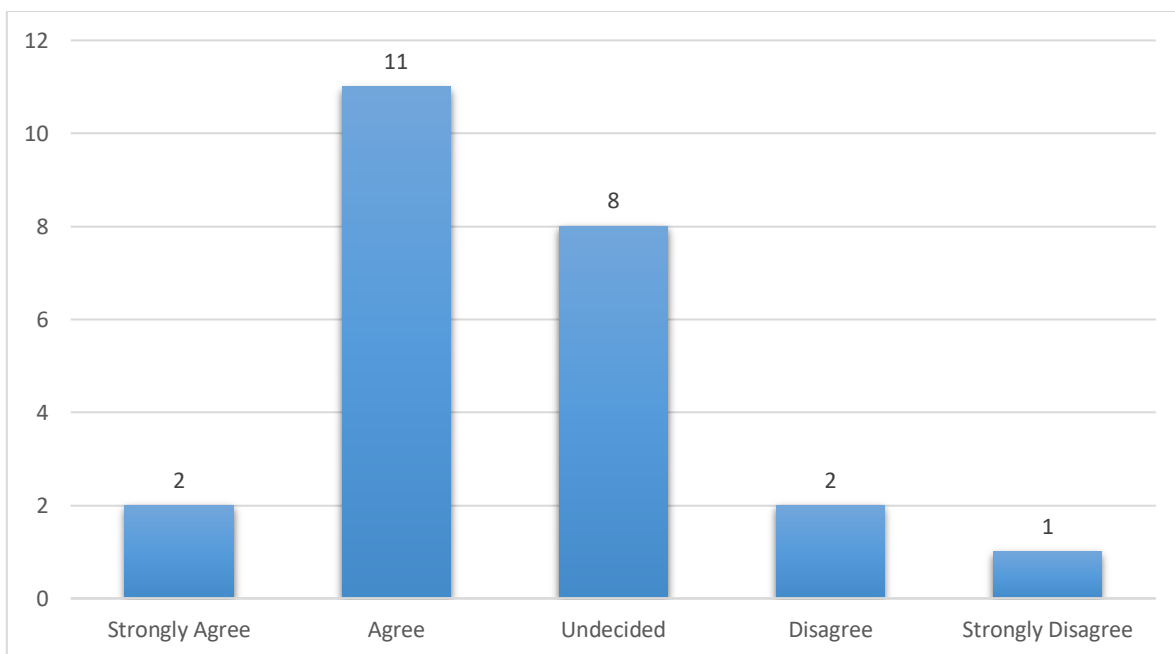


Figure 4.4 Speaking Spanish Affects English Pronunciation

Findings (Figure 4.4) also show that a significant percentage of the students are not sure about this statement.

regarding these outcomes, it is important to say that speaking Spanish does affect English production not in everything, but in some cases, the major difficulty is on the vowel sound and this is because a Spanish there are only five vowels. In English,

there are over 20 and there are three types, short vowels, long vowels, and double vowels. This can affect the pronunciation of some words or sentences.

Item 3.4 in the questionnaire about learners' difficulty pronouncing English. The graphic (4.5), reveals that. Almost half of the Meta 5 students were not sure if for an English learner being a native Spanish speaker makes it difficult to improve their English pronunciation.

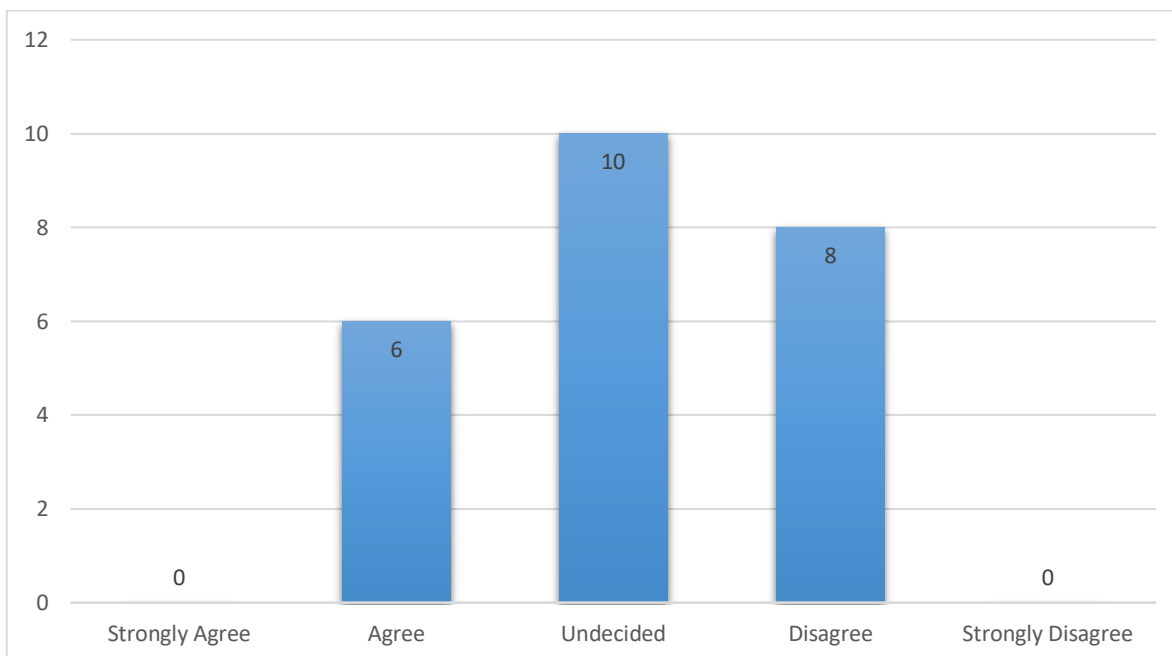


Figure 4.5 Learners' Difficulty Pronouncing English

Results also show that a third of the students disagreed with the statement, this may indicate that for them being a Spanish native speaker does not influence their oral production and they can improve it. Findings also show that almost another third percentage of the students agreed with the statement, this may indicate that for them, is difficult to improve their pronunciation and a factor is because they are Spanish native speakers.

The following statement 3.7, which refers to Non-native speakers' pronunciation would never be like a native speaker, displayed in Figure 4.6, demonstrates that. The majority of the Meta 5 students were undecided if they would have a pronunciation like a native speaker. Also shows that 4 out of 24 students strongly agreed with the statement and thought that they would never have a native pronunciation.

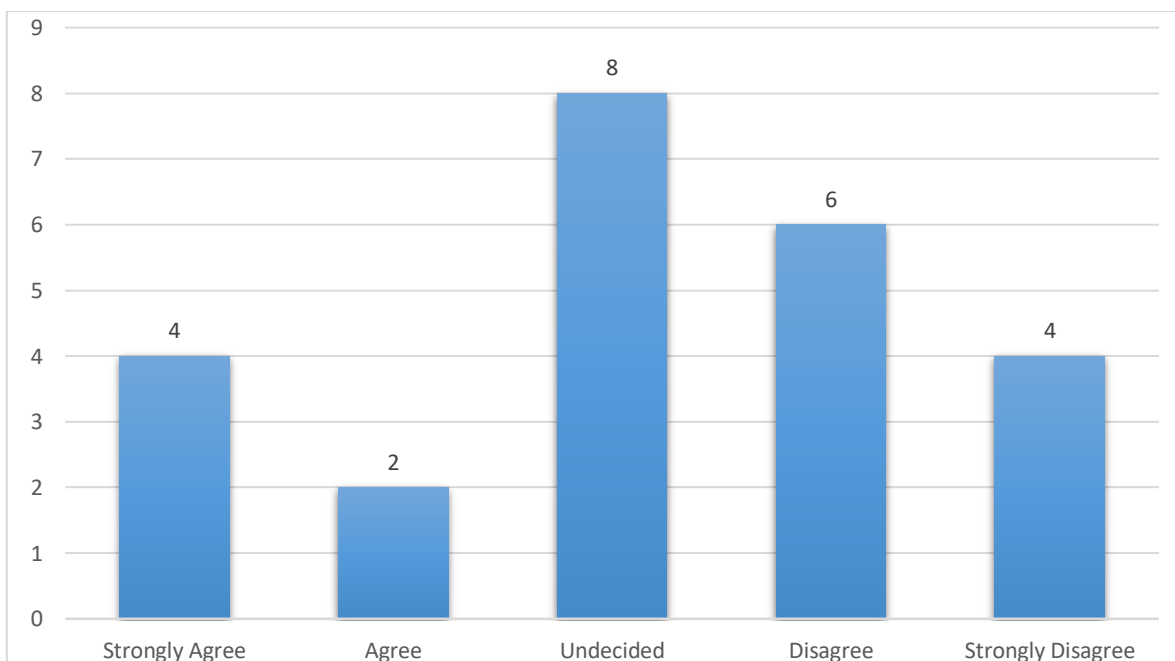


Figure 4.6 Non-native Speakers' Pronunciation would Never be like a Native Speaker

This may explain why some students do not take into account their oral production. In my experience, I can affirm that English learners can have native pronunciation if they work on their oral production. The most common way that helps to improve the English pronunciation is being in a real context with native speakers, this is how many students or people learned and improved their pronunciation. Question 4.1,

explored students' frequency of talking with native speakers, (Figure 4.7) reveal that. Surprisingly a third of the students rarely speak with native speakers, and almost another third of students frequently talk with native speakers. It is important to mention that when I talk about native speakers can be either teachers or friends.

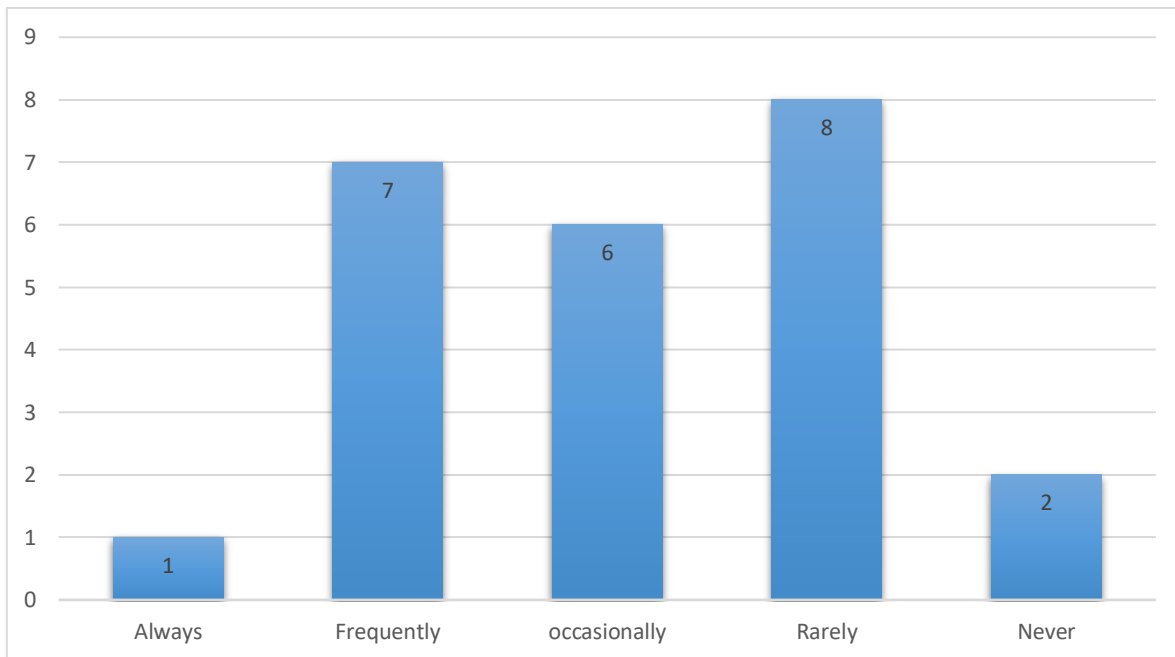


Figure 4.7 Students' Frequency of Talking to Native Speakers

The results also demonstrate that at least one student is always having interaction with native speakers, this would help him/her to improve his/her oral production.

Question 4.4, about Native speakers' help to improve English speaking production.

The following Figure (4.8) demonstrates that. Surprisingly some students rarely ask for help from an English native speaker to improve their oral production. Also, the results demonstrate that most of the Meta 5 students have different perspectives about the frequency with which they ask for help from a English native speaker.

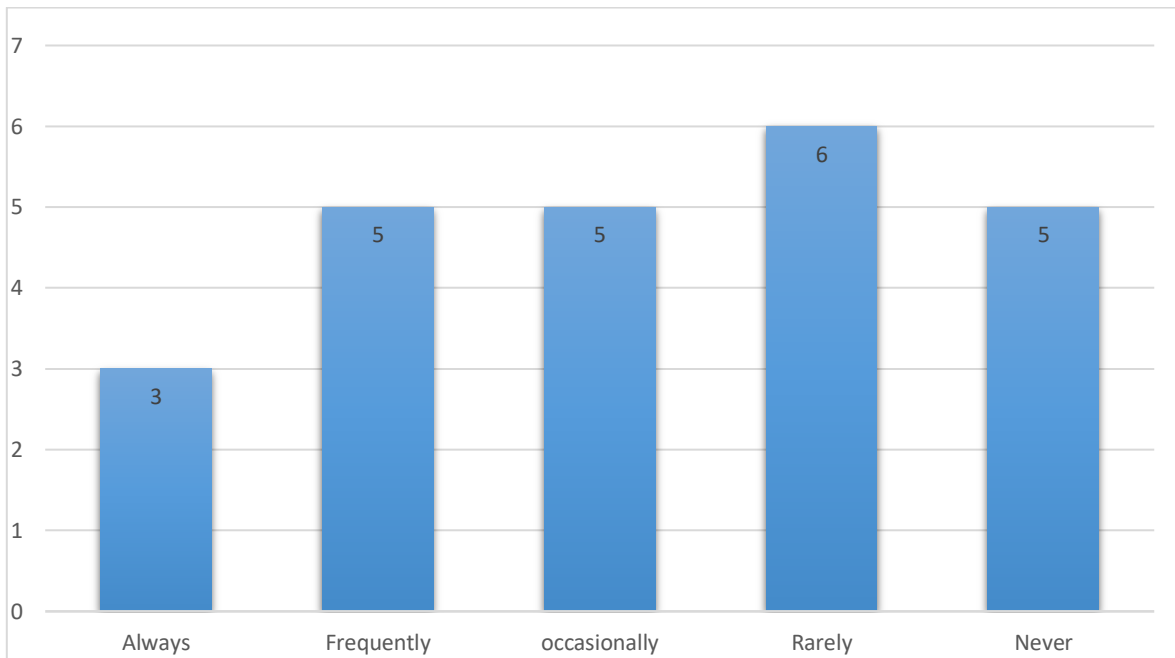


Figure 4.8 Native Speakers' Help to Improve English Speaking Production

The same number of students have three different perspectives on this question, some of them Frequently ask for help, the same number of students occasionally ask for help and the same number of students never ask for help. This may indicate that some students have more interest in their oral production than others, and also that for some other students, their oral production is not their principal objective.

Item 4.7 in the questionnaire asked about. Fully understand a conversation with a native speaker. The Figure (4.9) illustrates that. almost half of the Meta 5 students frequently understand a conversation with native speakers. Findings also show that almost a third of the students occasionally understand a conversation with native speakers and results surprisingly show that a low percentage of the students always understand and at the same time at least one student never understands a native

speaker.

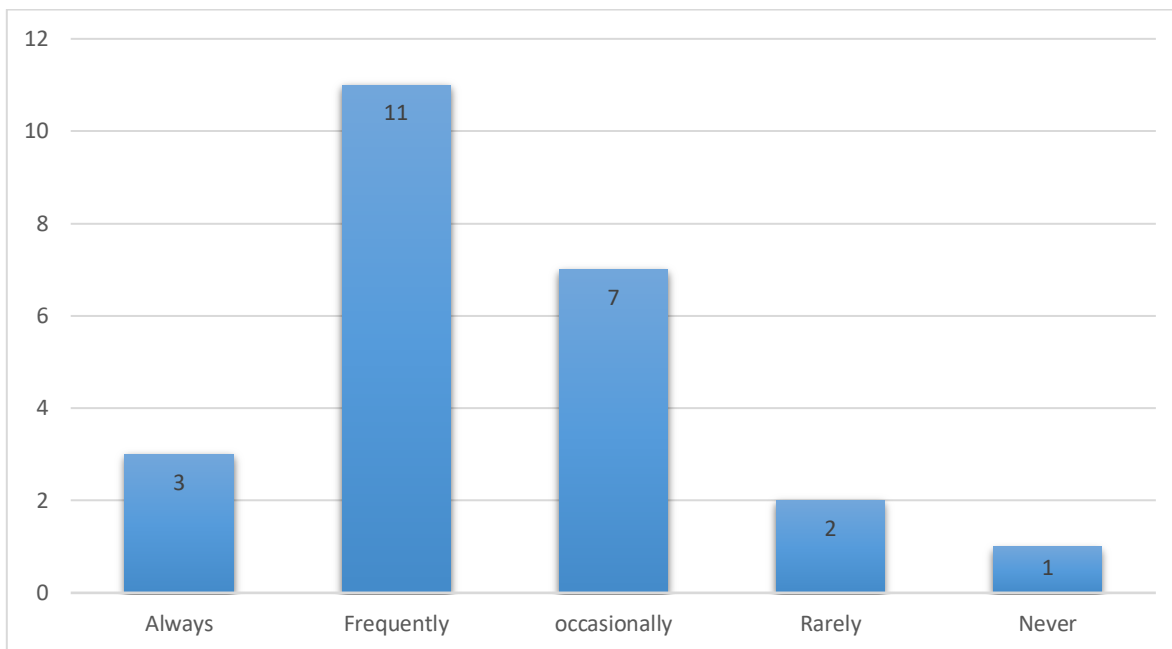


Figure 4.9 Fully Understand of a Conversation with a Native Speaker

This may indicate that some students' comprehension is low and this may affect also their oral production because if they do not fully understand a conversation hardly understand new words, and further production, they will not pronounce it correctly

4.3 Conclusion

Concerning this chapter results obtained by the analysis and discussion of the questionnaire applied to a Meta 5 group. It can be concluded that every student has different thoughts about their English pronunciation improvement. Some students are working on their oral production improvement, meanwhile, some others have different interests in their classes or they focus on other skills. It is also concluded that the majority of the students from the Meta 5 course have done something or

have worked with native speakers to improve their pronunciation.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

Introduction

In this final chapter the RQs were answered also the findings emerging from the study were presented. Also, in this chapter, the implications were discussed, and the limitations that I found during the study. Some recommendations for further research were given in this chapter and finally a conclusion about personal thoughts about the investigations, the findings exposed in this chapter are based on the result of the previous chapter and explained in general.

5.1 Findings

As mentioned before the findings in this section were based on the previous chapter. The instrument used also gave some interesting results, the majority of the participants did not answer an open question in the first section. Probably they did not notice the questions or maybe they did not want to answer it. For this reason, I decided not to use this question when I was analyzing the information. once the questionnaire was analyzed three questions from each section of the questionnaire were taken and the research questions were answered next.

5.1.1 What are BA ELT Students' Challenges while Speaking?

According to the data analysis obtained by the questionnaire, the students' challenges identified are: Students do have not enough time to practice their oral production, their classes focused on other skills and their speaking skills have little time to improve. Another challenge identified is the students' confidence while

speaking in English, they do not feel prepared to practice their oral production because they do not feel prepared. Another important challenge is their shyness, their shyness influences their oral production, and this is another challenge that students face in their BA ELT major.

5.1.2 How can BA ELT Students Improve their Pronunciation?

In this research question students' perception of their pronunciation improvement is that they can stay behind the fact that they as English learners can overcome their mother tongue and improve their pronunciation. Also, students have in mind that they can achieve good pronunciation and this helps them and gives them confidence to start improving their pronunciation. Also, the fact that they have non-native English speakers is not a difficulty to improve their English pronunciation so they can keep improving it.

5.1.3 How can English Native Speakers Help Improve BA ELT Students' English Pronunciation?

According to the data obtained English native speakers can help students with their pronunciation by having more interaction with them to practice and at the same time improving their oral production. Also, some students do have not the same interest in their speaking, so other help that native speakers can give them is making them have an interest so they can focus on their pronunciation. Native speakers can help students with them as well, this may be a simple way to improve the pronunciation but is a big help that native speakers can give and students can improve their pronunciation.

Table of Findings	
Research Question	Analysis
2.1 How Often do you speak in English?	Students do have very little practice in their language lessons.
2.5 How often do you feel confident while speaking in your classes?	Students do not feel prepared to speak in English in their classes
2.6 How often are you shy while speaking English?	Students' shyness may affect their oral production.
3.2 Speaking Spanish influences your English pronunciation	Students' perceptions about their mother tongue affect their oral production.
3.4 For an English learner English is difficult to pronounce	Students may think that being a Spanish native speaker is a factor against them in improving their English pronunciation.
3.7 A non-native speaker of English cannot speak like a native speaker	Students do not prioritize their oral production.
4.1 How often do you talk to native speakers?	Students rarely talk or interact with English native speakers.
4.4 How often do you ask your native speaker teachers help to improve your pronunciation?	Students have different interests in their English skills and how to improve them.
4.7 How often do you fully understand a conversation with a native speaker?	Students' low comprehension influences their oral production.

Table 5.1 Table of findings.

The table of findings (table 5.1) Shows an analysis of the research questions taken

to the investigation from a general perspective.

5.2 Implications

The result obtained by this study can help a lot, and the next generations of BA ELT students' major can find more ways to improve their oral production and put into practice new things to develop their oral production. Also, the faculty can implement new methods to develop the four skills equally inside and outside the classrooms.

5.3 Limitations

The principal limitation was my lack of experience doing research, this was the first time that I faced a situation like this in which a lot of time, concentration, and dedication were required. The time was a big limitation as well because this research work was not the only thing that I had to do. More subjects did not let me have enough time to work on this study.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

The principal recommendation that I can give to further investigators interested in this topic is probably to make a comparison between English native speakers and non-native English speakers. This is a topic that I cannot do because of the purpose of this study but is interesting as well. Both native and non-native English speakers can contribute some interesting ways to develop an English learner's oral production both with a significant meaning that would be my recommendation for further research.

5.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion of this study, I would like to share that even though it was my first research work It was very interesting, and surprisingly a lot of information was new for me and some other things were surprisingly different than I was expecting. But now I know more about the topics and this can help me as well to improve my oral production. This study was worth it to me and I am satisfied with the process and the results obtained.

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APPENDIX

Opinions about Students' Pronunciation Improvement

This questionnaire explores students' perceptions of their pronunciation supported by native speakers. The information will be used for research purposes only. Thank you for your cooperation.

1.0 Personal information

1.1 Age _____

1.2 What semester are you in? _____

2.0 Challenges while Speaking English

Instructions: In the following questions, choose the option that best expresses your opinion (X).

		1	2	3	4	5
		Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
		Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
2.1	How often do you speak in English?	1	2	3	4	5
2.2	How often do you reflect on your speaking skills?	1	2	3	4	5
2.3	How often do you have difficulties speaking in English?	1	2	3	4	5
2.4	How often do you practice your fluency while speaking?	1	2	3	4	5
2.5	How often do you feel confident while speaking in your classes?	1	2	3	4	5
2.6	How often are you shy while speaking in English?	1	2	3	4	5
2.7	How often do you think that teachers with non-native pronunciation affect your speaking improvement?	1	2	3	4	5

2.8 Name other problems that you have identified while speaking.

3.0 Students' Pronunciation

Instructions: In the following statements choose the option that best expresses your opinion (X)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.1	Bad pronunciation affects meaning in conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
3.2	Speaking Spanish influences your English pronunciation.	1	2	3	4	5
3.3	I only practice pronunciation in my classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
3.4	For an English learner, English is difficult to pronounce.	1	2	3	4	5
3.5	The improvement of pronunciation of the English language takes a lot of time.	1	2	3	4	5
3.6	A teacher's wrong pronunciation affects students' pronunciation.	1	2	3	4	5
3.7	A non-native speaker of English cannot speak like a native speaker.	1	2	3	4	5

4.0 Native speakers help to improve English pronunciation.

Instructions: In the following questions, choose the option that best expresses your opinion (X).

1	2	3	4	5
Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never

		Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
3.1	How often do you talk to native speakers?	1	2	3	4	5
3.2	How often do you choose native-speaker teachers in your LEI courses?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3	How often do you listen to native speakers to improve your pronunciation?	1	2	3	4	5
3.4	How often do you ask your native speaker teachers help to improve your pronunciation?	1	2	3	4	5
3.5	How often do you practice your pronunciation with a native-speaker teacher?	1	2	3	4	5
3.6	How often do you improve your English pronunciation with a native speaker's help?	1	2	3	4	5
3.7	How often do you fully understand a conversation with a native-speaker?	1	2	3	4	5