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Trabajo Fin de Máster

**THE TEACHING OF
INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH
PRONUNCIATION IN SPANISH
SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR
THE ELABORATION OF
STAND-UP COMEDY ACTS**

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Though English spelling be madness,
yet there is method in 't.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Master's Dissertation is to design a didactic project for Spanish-speaking students of 4th year of Compulsory Secondary Education (*ESO*) in which they would be taught International English (*Lingua Franca Core, LFC*) phonics and phonetics in order to improve their pronunciation of the target language. Alongside those contents, they will also be requested to develop a stand-up comedy act in small groups in which they are expected to express themselves accurately, while producing a few puns with the knowledge they have acquired throughout a three-month period.

To back up the thirty-one activities and eight extra exercises created for the didactic project, a theoretical framework has been included. In it, the benefits for international intelligibility of the *LFC* have been discussed, together with some possible modifications. Moreover, the difficulties of Spanish-speaking learners, and also those of students with communicative impairments, have been described in detail, as well as the instruction of English pronunciation and the use of humour in the classroom.

Key words: pronunciation, humour, comic monologues, Spanish English-speaking students, didactic project

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este Trabajo de Fin de Máster es diseñar un proyecto didáctico para alumnos de habla hispana de 4º de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (*ESO*) en el que se les enseñe la fónica y la fonética del Inglés Internacional (*Lingua Franca Core, LFC*) con el fin de mejorar su pronunciación de la lengua meta. Junto a estos contenidos, también se les pedirá que desarrollen, en pequeños grupos, un número cómico stand-up en el que se espera que se expresen con precisión, mientras producen algunos juegos de palabras con los conocimientos adquiridos a lo largo de tres meses.

Para respaldar las treinta y una actividades y los ocho ejercicios extra creados para el proyecto didáctico, se ha incluido un marco teórico. En él se han discutido los beneficios para la inteligibilidad internacional de la *LFC*, junto con algunas posibles modificaciones. Además, se han descrito en detalle las dificultades del alumnado de habla hispana, y también las del alumnado con problemas comunicativos, así como la enseñanza de la pronunciación del inglés y el uso del humor en el aula.

Palabras clave: pronunciación, humor, monólogos cómicos, estudiantes de inglés de habla española, proyecto didáctico

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, languages possess two main dimensions: spoken and written. Regarding the former in FL learning scenarios, we can attend to two further areas: fluency and accuracy. Then, taking into account that pronunciation can equal to, at least, a quarter part of the English language that has to be taught, it should be given a similar relevance. However, the Spanish legislation barely comments on it¹ or requires teachers to develop it; thus, the materials available for secondary education pay attention to phonology, at best, with one tip a unit. For that very reason, Spanish teenagers tend to have a hard time using, and often identifying, English-specific phonemes that mark significant differences between two words (Veiga Pérez, 2017: 282-285), an issue especially significant in the case of vowels. All of this happens despite their knowledge of the target language (TL) frequently being far above the stage where they should be able to tell and produce those nuances.

According to Mompean and Lintunen (2015: 21), around an 82% of the Finnish, French and Spanish EFL learners they conducted their research with agreed that phonetics/pronunciation was indeed useful for learning English. Most Finnish students already knew something about these two areas from lower levels of education; among the French, there were a little over a third; but in the case of the Spanish ones, it was only a 9% (p. 20). Curiously enough, out of the three nationalities, ours precisely had the learners who found phonetics easier to understand (p. 18) and more useful for autonomous learning (p. 17).

Taking these factors into consideration, it is reasonable to state that teaching students very basic notions of phonology could help them develop their oral skills. In fact, we could go as far as saying that, when speaking, pronunciation can be more important than fluency or even a pitch-perfect grammar. This is illustrated in Figure 1, a representation of the well-known principles of semiotic design proposed by Michael Halliday. The process by which we think, express ourselves and understand others has several levels of depth; it goes from the most superficial one, ideology, to the very core, phonology and graphology (Hamka, 2016: 350-351). Then, it can be said that the way we manipulate air with our organs to produce difference nuances is the concrete upon which language is built, together with its visual representation(s). In fact, the European Union deems it to be very important in language teaching:

The Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR, 2001) recommends teaching pronunciation right from the beginning of foreign language teaching. During early stages of learning, pupils should practice correct pronunciation. The emphasis within teaching pronunciation is to meet the communicative objective of the language. (Reid, 2016: 22).

¹ The only direct mentions are that students of all obligatory levels are expected to produce oral texts (Block 2) with “clarity of expression”, and that they should identify general phonologic and intonation patterns at fourth year of ESO (Order 15th Jan, 2021).

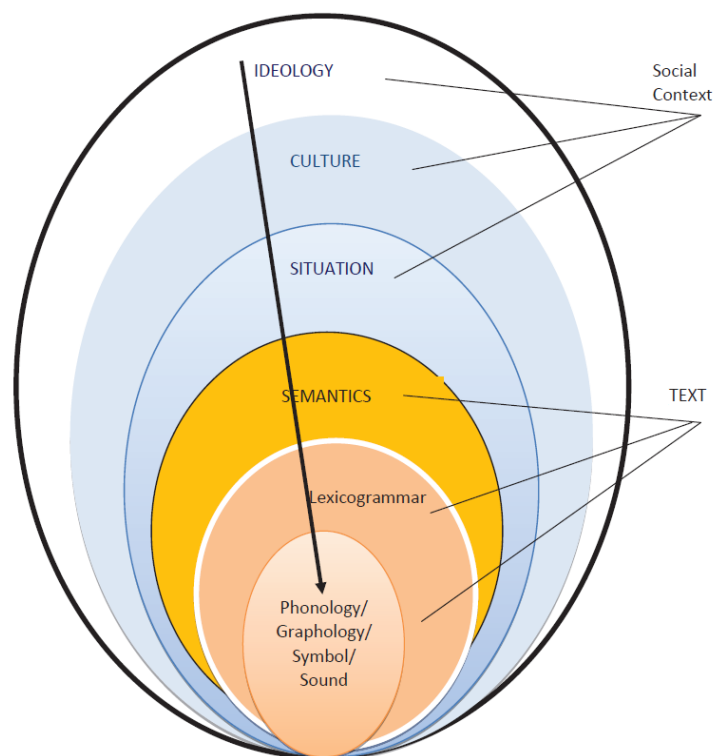


Figure 1. Halliday's semiotic principles (Hamka, 2016: 351).

Following that logic, a marked Spanish accent can cause poor intelligibility, leading to significant misunderstandings and even, to put it bluntly, being laughed at by native speakers or proficient users. Hence, not working on this aspect can be more detrimental than having a few flaws in others, as the speaker may not be taken seriously from the start. That does not imply that the aim is to achieve a native-like accent –since that would be unrealistic– or to teach learners how to transcribe texts phonologically; this will be commented on below in the theoretical framework.

The intention of this dissertation is to review bibliography and design a didactic project to help fourth-year ESO students develop their oral skills during a three-month period, presenting them the most basic features of English segmental sounds. Phonology would be directly worked on for thirty minutes a week, while explanatory materials and extra exercises would be available from the very first day on Google Classroom; in addition, some possible extra tips could be provided during the fulfilment of activities unrelated to the project. Though it may seem little time² to perform such a task, the researcher has noticed a great improvement of learners' pronunciation during his one-month work placement in a high school, where the time allotted to pronunciation was even shorter.

² Around six hours of direct teaching, in all.

In the didactic project, learners will be taught the correlation of sounds with their most common spelling patterns, helping them predict an approximate pronunciation of words they have never heard. By the end of the three-month term, they should be able to use that knowledge to make puns with words, which would be implemented within a three-minute monologue in small groups which they would start preparing at home from the beginning. This will put their new ability within a context where it cannot be overlooked, as it is essential to employ it. At the same time, memorizing an entertaining speech to be quickly delivered could also contribute to improving their fluency. Besides, the comedic and relaxed nature of this sort of spoken production could help them overcome their stage fright better than a more serious, inhibiting approach³. To put students in context, the classroom project would be presented to them as “Let’s Make Some Puncakes! (No Pan Intended)”.

Regarding the variety to be taught, it would be International English, based on Lingua Franca Core, with some sporadic mentions of Received Pronunciation, Estuary English and General American. The reason behind this is that any other variety could be too specific and would not help them as much in all situations, since two thirds of the speakers of English globally are not actually native.

2. STATE OF THE ART

The theoretical framework needed to contextualise the didactic project will be described in the following subsections.

First and foremost, an account of how English as a Foreign Language should be treated will be provided, briefly discussing the role of International English and the elements that should be given more relevance. Second, the main phonetic features of that variety will be described and compared to the most well known ones, being followed by a collection of analyses identifying the issues that most native speakers of Spanish have with those phonemes. Next, the teaching of pronunciation will be dealt with, exposing the suggestions by several authors and providing a list of common spelling patterns –and its exceptions– that represent the sounds of English; this will be accompanied by an account on how to apply the preceding with students that have any sort of oral problem. Finally, for the fulfilment of the final product on the students’ end, a brief study will be carried out on the relevance of humour and on how to implement monologues in a language classroom.

³ This statement is based on the research by Stroud (2013), which will be commented later on.

2.1. Intelligibility: English as a global language

As is widely known, English is the third living language –out of over 7000– with the highest number of native speakers; according to the Central Intelligence Agency (2022), these represent a 5.1% of the world's population as of 2018 data. However, if it is taken into account as a second or foreign tongue, around a 16.5% of humankind technically had a proficient command of it by 2020, which means that it is currently the most spoken one, in a globalised world. Interestingly, it was calculated over twenty years ago that around 80% of the verbal exchanges in English were actually carried out by non-native users (Gnutzman: 2000), a number that has probably increased.

In view of this, English is, as stated by David Crystal (2003: 1-6) in his homonymous book, a global language, one given a special status even in those places where there are no L1 speakers. This brings a series of phenomena to the table, but, above all, language variability. There is no longer an ownership by any individual country or culture; it is not British, North American, Anglo-Saxon, European nor Western. Thus, as years go by, the line between what is correct and what is wrong is becoming increasingly blurry. Politicians, business people, tourists and migrants all around the world use it to communicate when their mother tongue is not shared, but their linguistic features are unique and do not remotely match; this results from mentally creating distinct rules in their respective interlanguage⁴, due to both personal and cultural factors altering perception.

As these varieties, of course, differ from those of any inner circle⁵ user of English, a huge issue materialises: intelligibility. According to the *Cambridge Dictionary* (n.d.), it can be defined as “the quality of being possible to understand” in speech or writing; specifying further, when talking about the former in EFL, it would be appropriate to add “at a reasonable rate of speech in normal acoustic conditions”. As a matter of fact, the use of subtitles is becoming increasingly common among L1 English teenagers in cases where there is no hearing impairment, as pointed out in the article “Why more TV viewers are switching on subtitles” (2022). While in many cases it might be related to the learning of languages, poor audio mixing and teenagers' familiarity with video games' subtitles being switched on by default, one wonders if it is also related to an intelligibility problem arising from globalization; as there is more availability of media coming from every corner of the world, there are now English speakers of all sorts showcasing their own diverse way of understanding the language.

⁴ The idiolects (“the speech habits of an individual in a speech community, as distinct from those of a group of people” according to Wales, 2011: 211) of learners of a foreign language tend to be very inconsistent, even when two of them belong to the same exact background (Tarone, 2010: 135).

⁵ By inner, outer and expanding circles we refer to countries where English is widely used, respectively, in more traditional terms, as a first language, as a second language, and as a foreign language (Crystal, 2003: 77).

Then, how do we approach pronunciation teaching in the 21st century? As Wong (2018: 178) points out in her bibliography review, using a model based on specific native speakers is rather illogical for what is now a lingua franca, especially when checking the learners' competency in EFL examinations or university entrance exams. First, asking foreign students to get rid of their unique phonological features would be like asking someone to completely change the way they naturally walk when entering a specific building. Second, adopting one specific accent is not realistic either, as it differs from city to city and region to region in the inner circle. And third, even if you do manage to achieve such pronunciation, quoting Christophersen (1973, as cited in Scheuer, 2008: 112), the reaction of a L1 speaker would be that of "a host who sees an uninvited guest making free with his (*sic*) possessions".

Therefore, the best possible solution for these issues would be following a set of basic rules of an International English⁶, as suggested by Jenkins (2000, as cited in Wong, 2018) and several authors before her; this would help negotiate intelligibility among that wide variety of non-native users. Those rules proposed by Jenkins are called the 'Lingua Franca Core' (LFC), based on selecting the most indispensable phonological elements of RP and GenAm needed for comprehension between L2 and EFL users. According to Matsuda (2003, as cited in Wong, 2018: 178), this should be complemented by exposing the students to diverse materials to familiarise them with the increasing amount of World Englishes, instead of sticking to normative contents from big publishers.

Jenkins's LFC, in a way, would be an acoustic transposition of Basic⁷ English (Ogden, 1932: 21), an artificial variety from the 1930s where the lexicon was reduced to roughly 1000-2000 words, depending on the case. Just like with Basic, she commented that, if L1 users "wish to participate in international communication in the 21st century, they too will have to learn [...]" it in formal education (Jenkins, 2000, as cited in Trudgill, 2008: 96). Nonetheless, as it is argued by Scheuer (2008: 112-113), the concept of the LFC is biased from the very beginning, since it selects two umbrella varieties to represent all the existing ones, with some exceptions. For instance, it does not take into account that the fortis plosives aspiration is mostly irrelevant for speakers outside the inner circle (p. 113), whilst it underestimates the impact of removing weak forms (Trudgill, 2008: 81). Hence, it is rather prescriptive in some areas, while too open in others, plus it is not actually considering the expanding circle⁸.

Another factor to be taken into account would be the possible rejection due to its artificiality, for there is not a real cultural media background supporting it; this was the case of Esperanto, which largely failed. As Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008: 173) comments

⁶ Also called English as an International Language (EIL), or English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

⁷ British American Scientific International and Commercial English.

⁸ Maybe due to its current general lack of description.

in a study conducted with Polish students, only 13% of them preferred the LFC, as opposed to the European favourite RP, with a 40% of popularity, followed by General American, with a 33%. This highly contrasts, though, with the results from the Chinese students commented by Wong (2018: 178), out of which only 20% preferred using these two standard accents, even though they were not given this particular model to choose; this might be related to having a less direct influence of the Western culture, but there is no strong evidence yet. Back in 2000, Jenkins (135) claimed that the intention of LFC was to trigger “an almost complete reversal of current phonological orthodoxy”; unfortunately, as we can see, most materials are still rather prescriptive more than twenty years later.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the preceding criticism, its benefits are far more important than its constraints. The main reason is, essentially, that it can be considered a good basis to learn English pronunciation by prioritizing what everyone needs in order to understand it. As was the case with the grammar and vocabulary of Basic, this accent might be irritating for L1 speakers without specific formation, but unlike with EFL, L2 and FL users⁹ should understand each other more easily, which is the main purpose in the Spanish context. If its teaching were to be uniform, we would transition from EFL to EIL, instead of mixing the features of each language with those of the preferred target variety. This can always be built upon as years go by in order to teach learners more specific nuances and, if needed, to direct them towards one accent.

2.2. International English and the Lingua Franca Core

While there is a distinction between both models, since EIL originated in Basic English and it is an umbrella term, we can state that Jenkins’s LFC, combined with the constructive commentaries it has received, is the current best artificial variety for teaching purposes. It can be used to teach our learners in a more realistic way, as they are expected to be global citizens and be understood by other learners, rather than only by L1 speakers. Despite that, to really understand it, first we have to delve into the most important varieties of the inner circle, from which it is taking inspiration.

2.2.1. Features of the main inner circle varieties

What we consider the standard, or normative, varieties depends primarily on the number of speakers and prestige within the two main areas where historically English has been spoken natively; that is, the British Isles and North America. The role of the English spoken in New Zealand and Australia, although less recognised in academic

⁹ Who, let us not forget, represent around two thirds of the actual speakers.

works and educational materials, is also important; the amount of L1 speakers from these varieties is considerable, plus they have many unique features, some of which are shared with other non-standard dialects¹⁰. Going back to the previous statement, whilst it was mostly true for General American¹¹, as regional varieties are progressively losing their distinctive features in urban areas (Wells, 1982: 529), it is not the case, however, with Received Pronunciation. There is only around a 2% of actual speakers of RP left in the United Kingdom (Barton, 2018), and while it is still considered the BBC English, even that entity began dropping it many years ago; now it is claimed to sound artificially “posh”, rather than an educated person’s English used for intelligibility, so it has acquired a high status that might be, in fact, too high. There is no denying that it is the richest variety, at least, in number of phonemes; many variations have arisen from it, and EFL materials are usually based on it, so that is why it is still worth taking it into consideration.

The current British variety receiving the spotlight is Estuary English (EE), often called the London Regional General English¹². It shares many features with the stigmatized Cockney –or Popular London– accent, but its deviations from RP are not so “aggressive”. David Crystal pointed out (as cited in Hilmarsdóttirs, 2006: 6) that it is essentially “a continuum of pronunciation possibilities, with Cockney at one end and Received Pronunciation at the other”, emerging as a natural evolution of the London area accents. Back in the 1990’s, RP was already being regarded as exclusive and formal, while EE was the bridging accent that sounded natural but not extremely informal¹³ (p. 15-19). Apparently, both RP and Cockney users began modifying their speech to fit into this, as Hilmarsdóttirs puts it, “classless” or mobility accent. However, Wells titles his article from 2016 (p. 167) as “EE: RIP” because, according to him, “media interest in the EE phenomenon has now died down and it is many years since I have had anything to add to the website”. Besides, EE has always been far from being a uniform accent, as it has been adapted to the features of other cities, and RP might have been reinvigorated by everything surrounding the Brexit event. Nonetheless, as it has become relatively common in media and new accents are branching from it, British English cannot be understood without EE anymore, and EFL will eventually find it, so that is why it will be mentioned in the following sections.

¹⁰ Some of which will be briefly commented later on.

¹¹ Both in the United States and Canada.

¹² This statement is taken from “London Regional GB and Popular London” (n.d.).

¹³ Even though some people considered it lazy speaking.

2.2.1.1. Consonants

In terms of consonants, we shall begin by mentioning the less common –but more relevant– instances of consonant variability that possibly affect intelligibility (Trudgill, 2008: 213-214).

At least from Birmingham to Liverpool, words ending in <ng> tend not to drop the /g/ sound, so *going* would be pronounced as [ˈgəʊŋg]. Although this is not an extreme change, it could possibly lead EFL learners into thinking that it is normal, and thereby, they could sound odd to other speakers. This feature would be aggravated in contrast with Estuary English, where the phoneme /ŋ/ is simply reduced to /n/ (Wells, 2016), in the same way a Spanish student would normally produce it.

In most of England and Wales (excluding some areas towards the north), the phoneme /h/ tends to be dropped in initial position for function words (Collins & Mees, 2013: 127) and, commonly, in other cases¹⁴; meanwhile, it is kept in Estuary English and GenAm. There also exists the phenomenon of TH-fronting in the British Isles, Australia and New Zealand, where /θ/ and /ð/ transform into /f/ and /v/, having *think* as [fɪŋk] and *brother* as [ˈbrʌvə]; this happens in Cockney, but less frequently in EE¹⁵. In initial position, though, where TH-fronting happens only and rarely in Cockney, these two previous accents tend to remove the frication of /ð/, thus having /d/ in words such as *this* or *that* (Wells, 1982: 329); this resembles the typical English accent of a Spanish speaker as well.

Regarding allophones, there are some phenomena worth commenting. The first one is related to the **L consonant**. While British English tends to contrast /l/ and its allophone [ɫ] very commonly¹⁶, the latter is found with much more frequency in North America (Wells, 1982: 550); in the expanding circle, though, it is not considered essential. Further, there is a certain effect in the south of the United States and in Estuary English called L Vocalisation (p. 258); in words ending like *little* or *bottle*, where the consonant is not usually velarised, it blends with the schwa and transforms into [ɫ̩] or [ɣ], a syllabic consonant. Apart from that, the dark allophone [ɫ] can suffer a stigmatized L Dropping in the Southern dialect of GenAm (Wells, 1982: 550-551), where *help* can become [hɛəp]. In the same vein, EE has high chances of vocalising a final dark [ɫ] into an /o/, and thus, *girl* can become [gɛo] (Ashby, 2011); this striking change is starting to be common in RP too, according to Collins *et al.* (2019: 73).

The feature known as **Tapping** tends to happen in intervocalic position in GenAm with the phonemes /t/ and /d/. These turn into [ɾ] when they are produced between a

¹⁴ For instance, *hat* would be [æɪt], a more rare H-dropping than the common *let her* [ˈlet əɾ].

¹⁵ Wells (1982: 96-97).

¹⁶ /l/ being used in initial and intervocalic position, while the velarised –or dark– [ɫ] is used in final or pre-consonantal position.

vowel (or a sonorant consonant) and another vocalic sound to the right; further, in contexts such as in *thirty*, it evolves into a retroflex flap [ɾ] (Wells, 1982: 244-251). As a result, this widespread American trait causes a massive intelligibility issue, as any speaker, native or not, might think that they are hearing either a /t/ or a /d/, making *bitter* homophonous with *bidder*, for instance. In the same environment, we can find a **glottal stop** [ʔ]¹⁷, which is very common in Britain, and in words like *Manhattan* in GenAm; this sound might be problematic for comprehension, as can happen with /p/ and /k/ as well. In EE, it is likely to be found when a /t/ is in final position and in an unstressed syllable (Wells, 1982: 261), such as with *great* or *bought* being [greɪʔ] and [boʊʔ]. In EE, there is a strong chance of initial **Yod coalescence**¹⁸, making *Tuesday* be [tʃuːzdeɪ], and *dune* [dʒuːn]; conversely, in GA, we are likely to find Yod dropping (Collins & Mees, 2013: 158). The combination /nt/ in intervocalic position can also drop the /t/ in multiple accents, like GA, having *wanted* as [wanɪd] (p. 158).

It is of paramount importance to mention the **rhoticity** factor of the English language. It is based on pronouncing /r/ after a vowel when it is not followed by another vowel¹⁹; however, with affixes, there exists r-tensing, such as in *starring* [stɑːrɪŋ]. The lack of rhoticity –or R Dropping– is found in most of England and Wales, and in a few places of North America such as the East Coast and, less commonly each year²⁰, some sociolects in the South. It marks, probably, the biggest consonantal difference among accents, as /r/ tends to affect the surrounding vowels. In rhotic accents, there is a tendency towards deleting the schwa in centring glides and shortening long vowels²¹ (Wells, 1982: 482), or even turning an /ər/ combination into an r-coloured [ə̃].

Before turning to vowels, it must be noted that the variety with the most extreme lack of consonants is the Tristan da Cunha one, where /θ, ð, v, ʒ, z/ are missing. Therefore, out of the complete inventory of twenty-four normative consonants of RP, it could be said that a learner of English should at least be taught nineteen of them to be understood anywhere: /m, n, ŋ, p, t, k, b, d, g, tʃ, dʒ, f, s, ʃ, h, w, r, j, l/. Fortunately, Spanish students are familiarized with all of them plus /θ/²². Despite this, the LFC is more conservative with these sounds, and only a few of them will be omitted; that is the reason why this dissertation will rather be focused on vowels.

¹⁷ It is produced by obstructing the airflow with the glottis and releasing the air abruptly.

¹⁸ With phoneme combinations /tj/ and /dj/.

¹⁹ I.e. *START* being /stɑːt/ in RP but /start/ in GA, or *north* [nɔːθ] vs. [nɔrθ].

²⁰ Labov *et al.* (2006: 47).

²¹ E.g.: in the lexical set *NEAR* changes to /ɪr/, and in *NORTH* to /ɔr/.

²² With the exceptions of /ʃ/, which is only used for hushing, with /ŋ/, which is a Spanish allophone, and with /dʒ/, which is realized in a similar way but with /j/. /θ/ is present, at least, in most varieties of Peninsular Spanish.

2.2.1.2. Vowels

Among segmentals (phonemes and allophones), vowels are the most varying element that can be found in English, and thereby, they need to be paid special attention. The **lexical sets** typology shall be described first, as it showcases the many environments in which English vowels and glides tend to appear and differ.

Wells's (1982: 168-177) sets, including the R-coloured vowels from GenAm (p. 120), updated with information from Trudgill (2008: 214-215) for RP, and with data for Estuary English from Hilmarisdóttir (2006: 23-24, 30-33), Przedlacka (2001) and the online article "London Regional GB and Popular London" (n.d.), are as follows:

VOWELS	RP	GA	EE	GLIDES	RP	GA	EE
KIT	ɪ	ɪ	ɪ, i	FACE	eɪ	eɪ	ɛi
DRESS	e	ɛ	e, eɪ	PRICE	aɪ	aɪ	ɑɪ, ɹɪ
TRAP	æ	æ	æ	GOAT	əʊ	oʊ	ɒʊ, ɹʊ
LOT	ɒ	ɑ, ɔ	ɒ	CHOICE	ɔɪ	ɔɪ, oɪ	ɔɪ
STRUT	ʌ	ʌ, ɜ	e, ʌ, ɒ	MOUTH	aʊ	aʊ	æʊ, ɑʊ
FOOT	ʊ	ʊ	ʊ	NEAR	ɪə	ɪr	ɪə, ɪɒ
BATH	ɑ:	æ	ɑ:	SQUARE	eə	ɛr	eə, e
CLOTH	ɒ	ɔ	ɒ	CURE	ʊə, ɔ:	ʊr	uə, ɔ:
NURSE	ɜ:	ɜ, ʌr	ɜ:	Table 1. Lexical sets typology for Received Pronunciation, General American and Estuary English.			
FLEECE	i:	i	i, əi				
PALM	ɑ:	ɑ	ɑ:				
THOUGHT	ɔ:	ɔ	ɔʊ, ɔɒ				
GOOSE	u:	u	ʊ:, ʊɹ				
START	ɑ:	ɑr	ɑ:				
NORTH	ɔ:	ɔr	ɔ:				
FORCE	ɔ:ʳ	or	ɔ:ʳ				
happy	ɪ	ɪ	i				
lettER	ə	ər, ə	ə				
commA	ə	ə	ə				

As can be easily seen, contrasts in pure vowels between RP and GenAm are not extreme outside the latter giving less relevance to length (due to common rhoticity on most occasions) and generally producing slightly fronter phonemes. Meanwhile, there is a relevant difference in glides, as GenAm has given up three of them in favour of /r/ through the processes known as Laxing and Pre-R schwa deletion (Wells, 1982: 481).

Estuary English, however, suffers from Diphthong Shift (Hilmarsdóttir, 2006: 23), a feature that modifies the existing glides and also creates new ones out of pure vowels; for instance, it would be possible to find *tech* and *take* being almost homonymous, using RP's FACE. Unlike in Cockney, this accent maintains the glide MOUTH instead of simplifying it to /ɑ:/, even though it varies from RP and might be similar to the USA Midlands area's [æʊ]. The schwa is lowered [ə̃] as well, affecting some of its combinations, and the same happens to the starting vowels of FACE, GOAT and PRICE. In fact, it can cause FACE to sound very similar to RP's PRICE, whilst in the latter, as we have /ɑ/ in EE now, the shift may round it, thus having /ɒɪ/ and causing a possible confusion with CHOICE (Przedlacka, 2001: 42). As a final remark, EE experiments happy Tensing, where -y suffixes are raised to a short FLEECE (Hilmarsdóttir, 2006: 25).

In order to better illustrate the sounds of RP and GenAm, these are the vowel charts reflecting their qualities: openness, frontedness and roundedness. Unfortunately, the writer could not find any for EE and does not consider himself qualified to draw one from scratch, especially given its wide range of variability.

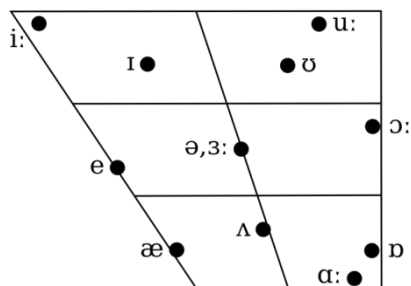


Figure 2. RP vowels (Roach, 2004: 242)

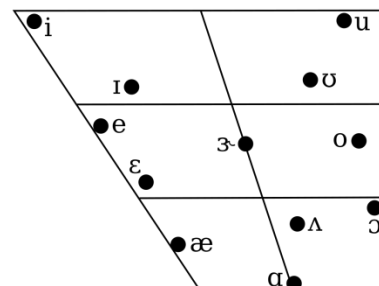


Figure 3. GenAm vowels (Wells, 1982: 486)

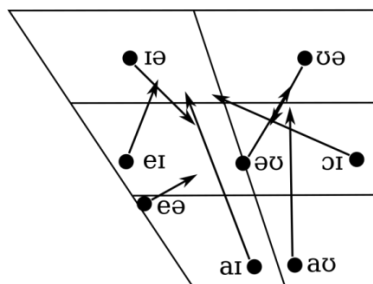


Figure 4. RP glides (Roach, 2004: 242)

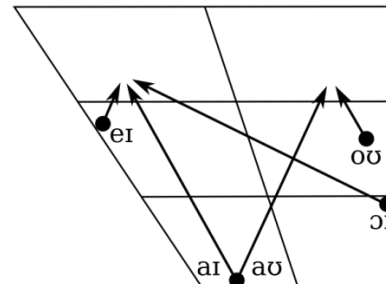


Figure 5. GenAm glides (Wells, 1982: 486)

Now, we shall see some extra deviations from the norm(s) to show possible intelligibility issues that learners might run into.

In the north of England and Northern Ireland, probably influenced by Scottish, STRUT is completely replaced by FOOT, normally as a centralized [ʊ]; consequently, the former pure vowel is almost inexistent for the majority of speakers. In the meantime, STRUT is frequently produced as LOT in Ireland (Wells, 1982: 400), which can also happen in EE before /ŋ/, such as in *drunk* (Przedlacka, 2001: 43). It is worth commenting that this STRUT phoneme is, actually, relatively uncommon in the United States outside the East Coast, where it is usually found as [ɜ] unless it is followed by /p, m, b, w/; nevertheless, there is a tendency of using it to produce NURSE, which might be even transcribed as a schwa in some cases (Wells, 1982: 480).

Another significant change is CURE now being NORTH in the south of the UK, as it is the case with *poor* and *sure*, which had already shifted in RP for the most part; in spite of this, this seems not to affect EE to an important degree, at least from the sources checked. In rhotic accents within the Isles, especially in Scotland and Northern Ireland, SQUARE and NURSE have been reduced to /ɛr/ and /ɜr/, as the American counterpart²³, and their distinction can even disappear in favour of the first.

In the British south, START, BATH and PALM have all turned into TRAP, which is a common phenomenon in GenAm too (p. 470); in the former, though, it may develop a centring offglide, transcribed as [æə], or it may even turn into a stigmatized [ɛ-ə] except for the verb 'to have' and its inflections (p. 478). The triphthong /aɪə/ found in words ending in -ire can become a monophthong in GenAm, replacing PRICE by START, and being transcribed as [ɑr], which would make *fire* homophonous with *far*.

There are some glide variations related to consonants that can take place in GenAm as well (Wells, 1982: 485-487). The consonants /ʒ/ and /ʃ/ tend to cause the insertion of an /ɪ/ offglide in the word, while there are some exceptions in which an /r/ is added; some examples would be: *measure* [mɛɪʒə], *push* [pʊɪʃ] and *wash* [wɔɪʃ]. Moreover, the combinations /ɪt/ and /uɪt/ may transform into glides through the intrusion of a schwa, such as in *feel* [fiət] and *rule* [ruət].

Finally, even though it is not the topic of this dissertation, it is important to mention as well that, in Scottish English²⁴, there are multiple intelligibility issues not only for native speakers, but even for people of the same dialect (Roach, 2009: 164-165). For instance, vowel length is even less relevant than in GenAm, so the lexical sets LOT and THOUGHT, or FOOT and GOOSE, are equal; FACE is monophthongised to /e/ too, and GOAT to the allophone [o]. Hence, students should be trained for this likely situation.

²³ Unless where NURSE is already STRUT.

²⁴ Which is rhotic.

After having reviewed the features and variations of these three main inner circle varieties, next we shall comment on Jennifer Jenkins's LFC proposal, together with some of its criticisms. These are mostly taken from Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008: 152-161) throughout subsections 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4.

2.2.2. LFC consonants

According to Jenkins herself (2008: 201), in English as a Foreign Language (to be understood by L1 speakers), the target for consonants in the syllabus is to learn the twenty-four of them, while also learning how to adapt rhoticity and tapping depending on whether you are in a British or American context. Since that would be an unrealistic task –unless the learner in question is an actor, a singer or a spy–, and it can lead to intelligibility issues as well (as commented above), an English as a Lingua Franca user, instead, should have a reduced consonantal syllabus.

LFC proposes that rhoticity should always be used, for it resembles better the written form of English that the learner is using to learn, and, let us not forget, it can be found in most of North America and parts of the British Isles. Therefore, SQUARE, CURE, NORTH and many other sets should all include the /r/ sound²⁵, which would possibly lead to dropping the schwa, as in GenAm; this is intentional by Jenkins, as she proposes the deletion of weak forms, which shall be commented later on. Apart from that, the LFC suggests ignoring intervocalic tapping too, because, as we have seen above, it can lead to multiple confusions with /t/ and /d/; in addition, it would be another extra allophone for students to learn, which is the opposite of what we want.

Regarding consonants themselves, the LFC is based on the assumption that every sound should be respected except for /θ, ð, ɾ/. The reason is that, with /ð/ and /ɾ/, which tend not to exist as phonemes in many languages, such as in Spanish, there is no possibility of confusion with other words; hence, /d/ and /l/ are almost universal and work as intelligible substitutions, although L Vocalisation is another (less recommended) option for the dark L. With /θ/, the reason is that it can be replaced by the phonemes /z/, /f/ and /t/; the first two are fricative as well, and they are the natural substitutes in some languages²⁶ where it does not exist; /t/ would also be valid, as it is dental and it resembles the written form TH. Additionally, as LFC students will have to learn those three phonemes in any case, then that would fill the void for those who have none of the sounds. Fortunately, we do have it in peninsular Spanish, so it would be better to only stick to the /ð/ and /ɾ/ omission. What matters, at the end of the day, is having a consistent substitution for those sounds so that the listener gets easily adapted to the accent.

²⁵ Or more specifically, [ɹ].

²⁶ Or in English accents with TH-Fronting, with /f/ such as in Cockney, Australian or New Zealand speech.

When focusing on consonant clusters of two or more sounds, while EFL tends to ask for the inclusion of them all, LFC decides to ignore or transform the ones in final position. Intelligibility would be severely affected in English if at least initial clusters were not kept, as most words tend to put nuclear stress either in the first or second syllables. For instance, as Jenkins (2000: 142) puts it, if we heard [pə'rodekuto] or ['podek], it would take a few seconds to realize that a Japanese and a Taiwanese speaker interacting are referring to the word *product*. With medial clusters, whilst they are not as relevant, it would be advisable to produce them in order not to sound awkward; however, the T dropping in /nt/ combinations typical of GenAm and London accents should be avoided. On the contrary, in the case of final clusters, LFC learners are free to modify them, since they are usually unstressed; nonetheless, they should follow the same elision –or glottaling– patterns that native speakers do, e.g. /t/ in *contact* or /d/ in *almond*.

Despite this, there is an issue with the phoneme /ŋ/ and the G dropping. This phoneme is hard to pronounce for Spanish and Polish learners (among others), but plausible in final position or before a /k/; notwithstanding, when any <ng> ending is inflected, there exists the necessity of keeping the final /g/, and thus, *singer* might be ['sɪŋgə]. Since this is inconsistent, even though Jenkins and Patsko (2013) insist on the relevance of teaching /ŋ/, Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008: 161) argues that it can be omitted, because, as we have seen above, Estuary English uses [n] in final position²⁷. Then, those speakers having issues with /ŋ/ would be more consistent with the G dropping by using [n]; while it would simplify pronunciation teaching in LFC, it might also lead to misinterpretations such as [*going* - *go in*] or [*singer* - *sinner*], but there are not many of these possible confusions.

Another instance where LFC is not as flexible would be with the glottal fricative /h/, which should always be present, unlike in some accents, such as Cockney. In Jenkins's view, the velar counterpart [x], found in multiple European countries, or the uvular fricative [χ], present in Greek, Hebrew and Spanish (especially in Jaén), should be softened²⁸ to avoid possible misunderstandings with phonemes from other languages. This is especially understandable in the case of [χ], as it may sound really "foreign" for most speakers; however, there are critics that suggest that, as there is no other fricative in such a back position, either /h/ or [x] should be perfectly acceptable, with the former being preferable²⁹. Summing up, the -h- spelling should be respected, but the learner should try to avoid an excessively back sound.

Furthermore, Jenkins proposes that the aspiration of /p, t, k/ in stressed syllables should be respected as well, a statement that has received multiple criticisms,

²⁷ Not to mention that it is common in American speech too, represented as *goin'*, *comin'*, etc.

²⁸ Moved to a fronter position.

²⁹ Unless the language in question has an opposing articulatory setting.

especially given that she herself argues that LFC should only approximate sounds. The reasoning behind this is that aspiration is not even present in all of the British Isles; as Wells (1982: 74) notes, it is not a feature in the north of England nor in Scottish, and it is more of a scalar phenomenon. A native speaker could mistake these three sounds with /b, d, g/ in some scenarios, since aspiration is more relevant than voice in English; in the end, though, the LFC is meant for the outer and the expanding circle. Patsko (2013) proposes that /p^h/ should be taught just in case, as it has a high chance of leading to a confusion with /b/, while /t^h/ and /k^h/ would be optional. In short, aspiration would be a useful feature to sound more native-like, but it would have absolutely no effect on international communication, as misunderstandings are very unlikely to appear; therefore, removing this requirement from the syllabus would reduce the workload for students, even if it can still be mentioned in class.

Related to this preceding factor is the *fortis-lenis* distinction, which Jenkins also argues to be of paramount importance, in spite of it being barely mentioned in EFL contexts (Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2008: 158-159). It essentially consists in the use of, respectively, strong and weak consonants, since voice is not a determining quality in English; for instance, in order to avoid the tapping phenomenon typical of GenAm, (Tik)*tok* and *dock* would have to be pronounced with different tension/strength, which is manifested through the aspiration of /t^h/; meanwhile, in *nod* and *knot*, the vowel preceding /t/ should be pronounced with more strength. This is the main reason why Jenkins suggested keeping the aspiration in initial position, and why she comments on the importance of not altering the original length of vowels preceding these sounds, for they have to be clear. But then again, Roach and Laver (as cited in Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2008: 162) state that this extreme nuance would only be noticed in a language with that consonant system, and those are not common, so it is useless in EIL. Patsko (2013) suggests “shortening long vowels before unvoiced consonants” as a possible solution to make their quality more obvious, which is what many native speakers do; e.g. *back* should be shorter than *bag*, which would make the /k/ sound stand out.

2.2.3. LFC Vowels

Jenkins’s approach to vowels is mainly based on keeping their original length, as the contrast they produce is obvious and relevant for intelligibility. For instance, the word *ship* may be pronounced either with /ɪ/ or [i], which would be probably understood in either of the cases, but altering the quantity to /i:/ would instantly lead to a misunderstanding with the word *sheep*, and vice versa. Apart from that, as mentioned above, clipping the length of vowels (i.e. using an allophone) right before fortis consonants would also be an important feature according to her. Szpyra-Kozłowska

(2008: 162) argues that, for students who do not have this distinction in their L1, these would be tough learning, especially the latter, which is only useful for native speakers. In fact, according to the study carried out by Khalili (2021: 94), Iranian upper-intermediate and advanced teachers of English, some with a PhD in English, considered that the vowel clipping phenomenon was something unnecessary in class. The writer of this dissertation also agrees with this, so it will not be dealt with in this paper. In terms of quantity in normal conditions, given that the LFC is rhotic and that the R-dropping in Britain is essentially made up for with the use of long vowels, then, NORTH, CURE and START should be replaced by the American counterparts, as it is uncommon to find an /r/ preceded by a long vowel; however, it should be kept in NURSE to avoid confusions with a DRESS vowel located in a backer and/or lower position.

In terms of vowel quality, here is where Jenkins is far more permissive, as opposed to traditional EFL teaching. As we have seen in the previous sections, the pure vowels and glides of English differ massively depending on the accent, with London itself having dramatic differences between RP, EE and Cockney; hence, it would be unrealistic to teach students how they “should” be pronounced, as L1 users themselves do not have a consensus. This is related to the (varying) articulatory setting of English, whose teaching is rather doubtful after the childhood period, especially for LFC purposes (Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2008: 170). Just like in the case of consonants /p/, /t/ and /k/ in initial position, an approximate production of vowels should be enough; that is, of course, provided that there is consistency, similar to the G dropping instance. As Szpyra-Kozłowska puts it (p. 163), Polish learners (among others) may pronounce some words containing the TRAP vowel with the sounds [ɛ] or [a], depending on the consonants surrounding it³⁰; therefore, *flash* and *fan* would differ and might lead other LFC users to confusion. This would not be acceptable, and learners should either learn the TRAP vowel (with a more open or close quality) or be taught to consistently use one of the allophones, even if this causes homophony in pairs such as *rack-reck*.

It is important to mention, too, that Jenkins asks for the obligatory inclusion of the NURSE vowel, an uncommon sound that may avoid threats to intelligibility; for instance, it helps distinguish *bed* from *bird*, as rhoticity may not be enough in view of the fact that some speakers tend to add an /r/ sound in some contexts³¹. Whilst this phoneme does not exist in many languages (Jenkins, 2000: 145), thus being hard to teach, students would only have to imitate the sound produced by the teacher in a few words, and these tend to have very specific spelling patterns.

Also related to quality and length is the matter of weak forms in English. While they are essential for native speakers, they are undoubtedly a source of possible

³⁰ Which is also common for Spanish speakers.

³¹ Or the other way around; if the LFC user has a tendency of dropping the R due to their L1, then *bed* and *bird* could become too similar even with a slightly longer DRESS sound.

intelligibility issues for foreigners, since they might be interpreted as many different sounds. Therefore, the LFC proposes their deletion from the syllabus, something which should technically make English teaching far easier, as learners would not have to learn the schwa sound and could simply use surrounding phonemes such as /e/, [a] or [o]. Nonetheless, this is problematic, since it would be really hard to keep the original vowel quality in function words such as *but* or *at* because, according to Jenkins, these should clip their length due to the fortis consonant; as commented above, though, it is not an essential point, which would further justify the omission. Despite that, whilst international communication is the main objective, it is argued both by her and her critics that teaching weak forms is of the utmost importance to understand inner circle speakers. For this reason, it is quite advisable to learn about the schwa sound in a perceptive way, but its production³² should only be performed in L1 contexts, which differentiates EFL from EIL. Besides, the target public for this didactic proposal, in its specific context, probably does not really have the level to understand when to use weak forms.

2.2.3.1 *The writer's proposal*

Seeing the features discussed in the previous paragraphs, I shall propose next what I consider to be a set of appropriate qualities that would make LFC English teaching far easier without affecting intelligibility. Although this is only a personal opinion, it will be justified. For instance, as weak forms are less relevant, RP glides with schwa could be monophthongised by dropping the offglide, or their weak form could be replaced by a strong form³³. The KIT vowel could be tensed just like in Estuary English to become [i], so learners would only have to learn how to lengthen the sound for FLEECE. In the case of DRESS, both the British and American sounds would be acceptable; however, as Jenkins asks for the obligatory inclusion of NURSE, the phoneme /e/ would be more appropriate since its quality is fronter and closer, leading to lower chances of mishearing the phoneme in case that /ɜ:/ is shortened to [ə] due to rhoticity³⁴.

Regarding the TRAP vowel, even though it is not required by Jenkins, it would be better to keep it, as it is further away from the other three 'a' phonemes and easier to identify. Speaking of which, those could all be simplified to, ideally, an intermediary [ɐ] central-open allophone in STRUT and START, similarly to what EE users do; the reason is that rhoticity [ɐr] would mark the distinction, while using a long version [ɐ:] for PALM and BATH; thus, students would only have to learn one quality instead of two, which they would just have to lengthen in some cases and distinguish from TRAP.

³² While recommended by teachers from Khalili's study (2021: 95).

³³ E.g. the NEAR combination could be left as /ɪr/, or optionally as /ier/ or /iar/.

³⁴ Just like it was the case in rhotic accents, SQUARE and NURSE might become homophonous due to the proximity of /ɛr/ to the second.

Nevertheless, they should be aware that STRUT might differ much more (as an ‘o’ sound) in specific accents, which can be identified with the spellings *u* and *o* in words they pronounce with that suggested [ɐ̃].

The LOT phoneme should be kept round as in Britain to avoid confusion with the previous merger proposed, whilst it could be combined with THOUGHT, in a similar fashion to what happens in Ireland, Scotland and some North American regions (Wells, 1982: 479-484); this could range from /ɔ/ to /ɒ/, a back vowel halfway through the mid-open and mid-close regions. The difference between the two lexical sets would be made again by means of vowel quantity. This quality should be shared with NORTH, FORCE, and the starting points of GOAT and CHOICE to reduce the syllabus, clipping the first one due to rhoticity, while keeping the second long, since it already had a higher rhotic tendency in Britain; likewise, it would help maintain the distinction between *sauce* and *source*. Finally, moving on to the FOOT-GOOSE vowels, and following the previous logic –plus the fact that GOOSE is more consistent in its quality across accents–, it would probably be better to keep the latter sound, either in a back position or in a central one, just like [ʊ] in Estuary English. The difference would be maintained on a length basis, even though GenAm tends to shorten it. Thus, FOOT-GOOSE-CURE would only need one quality, while all of them would still be different thanks to their length and surrounding sounds.

Summing up, we would have eleven pure vowels /i, iː, e, ɜː, æ, ɐ̃, ɐ̃ː, ɒ, ɒː, u, uː/ instead of twelve, but with only seven (approximate) qualities, instead of having one each. Then, we would have the five glides from GenAm but adapted, /ei, ɐ̃i, ou, oi, ɐ̃u/, with SQUARE, NEAR and CURE optionally having a vowel substituting the schwa, even though CURE could be pronounced with an [ɒ] as in informal British English. Meanwhile, weak forms could be taught perceptively in case they listen to a native speaker, but it would be better to always use [e], [ɒ] or [ɐ̃] in international contexts, depending on the spelling of the word and the position of schwa within the word. This should be complemented with the consonantal omission of /θ/, /ð/ and [t̬] for those who do not have them in their L1, followed by imitating the initial and medial clusters; then, the aspiration of /p, t, k/ can be taught optionally, just like [ŋ]. The sound [χ] should always be moved to a fronter position of articulation.

2.2.4. Other considerations

Outside of consonant clusters, the features typical of fast-paced connected speech, such as assimilations, elisions, linking and epenthesis, are completely omitted in the LFC, for they suppose a threat to intelligibility; moreover, an EIL user is not expected to speak at the high speed that a native user may have in an informal context. To support

this, Khalili's research (2021: 96) reflects that only a small minority of the surveyed teachers considers it important, either for an EFL or EIL context.

In terms of word stress³⁵, whilst that feature is considerably important for the correct understanding of utterances, Jenkins (2000: 150) classifies it as “unteachable”, at least for languages that are syllable-timed. This brings us to the concept of the nuclear stress, which is what teachers should be able to help learners predict. Several combinations of letters, such as *-que* in *unique* or *technique*, or Greco-roman prefixes such as *re-*, *pre-*, *de-*, tend to put prominence in fixed syllables, and hence, it should be taught to learners; this is essential for mutual understanding, as they help maintain the division of speech into word groups. In the meantime, secondary stresses, such as in the words *Japanese* or *incomprehensibilities*, are more unpredictable and not really an unskippable feature for EIL students, especially due to the omission of weak forms in production.

Regarding intonation patterns, while they can clearly lead to misunderstandings for the listeners, given that those pitch nuances vary from culture to culture, Jenkins does not consider them something that should –or could– be taught; she does point out, though, that function words must not be accentuated, like ‘one’ in *a tough one*, or that stress should be avoided in repeated lexical terms. Her general claim has led to multiple criticisms, and as Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008: 169) cites from the phonetician Jenner, some even consider intonation more important for communication than vowel quality, as the message might be interpreted in a wrong way. Taking a look at Khalili's survey (2021: 96), the conclusion that can be drawn is that the falling or rising intonation in questions is considered to be crucial. Therefore, the reasonable middle ground in this matter would be to include intonation patterns, but mostly focusing on making questions understandable for everyone, and on not stressing function words; otherwise, if teachers devote too much time to intonation, the results may not be worth that time.

2.3. Difficulties for speakers of Spanish

The information below is a collection of features from different authors, namely, Kenworthy (1987: 153-156), Wells (2008: 108-109), Yavaş (2011: 185-190), Collins & Mees (2013: 216-224), Veiga Pérez (2017) and Put (2021). I have omitted some contents that seemed to be partially wrong³⁶.

³⁵ Referring to the whole set of stresses in words with two or more syllables.

³⁶ For instance, Yavaş (2011: 187) affirms that /θ/ does not exist in Spanish and that we use /t/, just like in Finnish; this might be true in the case of students who read the spelling <th> as in their native language, where <h> is mute, but the sound does exist in Peninsular Spanish; meanwhile, in other accents, it is naturally replaced by /s/, not by /t/.

Collins and Mees (2013) comment on the fact that Spanish spelling is consistent with vowels, which are essentially equal across dialects, but not with consonants, which do vary depending on the accent; for example, the spellings and <v> stand for the same sound, <h> is silent, <qu> stands for /k/ and, finally, <c> can be used for two sounds, although we shall discuss this below. This graphical difference between both languages³⁷ is a common source of errors. Apart from that, another major feature is that the intonation range is also much more reduced than in English.

2.3.1. Consonants

As pointed out by all the authors, there is a lack of contrast between /b/ and /v/, for the latter sound does not exist in Spanish. Learners will tend to use either /b/ for both, or an intermediary [β] allophone³⁸ in intervocalic position, in many cases substituting both instead of simply using /v/. This is a relevant problem that should be dealt with, as their contrast is determinant for minimal pairs. Similarly to this, Collins & Mees (2013) and Put (2021) mention that, in intervocalic position, /g/ is a fricative [ɣ] for Spanish speakers; e.g. *gato* uses the English phoneme, but *toga* uses the allophone. It will sound foreign, but it is mostly an irrelevant feature.

In the case of the phonemes /d/ and /ð/, the latter is an intervocalic allophone in many Spanish accents rather than a full phoneme; e.g. *dato* /dato/ and *toda* [toða]. For this reason, students unconsciously use their native rule for these two sounds instead of focusing on the English spelling; thus, the fricative phoneme might be incorrectly used in English words like *adore* (Yavaş, 2011: 187). While this is not requested in the LFC, the latter case might be confusing, so they can be taught to notice that sound and use it with <th> and never with <d>. In the study carried out by Veiga Pérez (2017), Spanish learners could perceive the fricative sound in about half of the cases in a listening activity, whilst in the production stage, it was almost always produced correctly, but it derived into overcorrection and /d/ was replaced even in initial position.

The aspiration of /p/ is barely employed, and when it is, it is too soft; in the cases of /t/ and /k/, they are simply unaspirated. Nevertheless, taking into account the opinions of critics, we consider it an optional feature of the LFC, even though it is a nuance that can be quickly taught, as Collins and Mees (2013: 217) state that the fortis-lenis feature is not extremely hard for Spanish learners.

In some accents, like in some parts of Andalusia, the consonant /h/ may be directly dropped, while in most of Spain, the sound /x/ is used instead; besides, as

³⁷ As English spelling is pattern-based rather than letter-based.

³⁸ Voiced bilabial fricative.

mentioned previously, it may be moved to a backer position in some areas, leading to [χ]. In addition to this, due to the Spanish spelling, some learners may pronounce words containing <j> with this sound, turning *ham* and *jam* homophonous. The distinction between /h/ and /x/ can be overlooked in LFC, while the uvular allophone and the issue with <j> should be corrected as soon as possible.

Dealing with liquid phonemes, the /l/ consonant is always clear in Spanish, which highly contrasts with GenAm, where it is very frequently velarized (Yavaş, 2011: 187). In the case of the /r/ phoneme, Spanish has the alveolar tap /r/, the tongue-trill /r/, and the alveolar trill /r/ (double), as opposed to the approximant sound that we find in English³⁹. Whilst the latter two are acceptable substitutions, the foreign accent will be very noticeable, especially for an American speaker or learner, for it is very frequently a retroflex approximant /ɻ/ (Yavaş, 2011: 188).

Now, we shall comment on the spellings <s>, <z> and <c> (Put, 2021). The phoneme /z/ only exists in Spanish as a rare allophone and, normally, the spellings <z> and <c> are pronounced with /θ/, the latter only in the combinations <ce> and <ci>. Notwithstanding, in Latin America, the Canary Islands and some parts of Andalusia, the three phonemes merge into /s/; on the bright side, this phenomenon is slightly beneficial in EFL, given that English also uses /s/ for <ce> and <ci> and the voiced counterpart /z/ for <z>. While /θ/ is optional in the LFC, the phoneme /z/ is compulsory and can replace the former thanks to being fricative, and thereby, it has to be worked on in the Spanish classroom. Aside from that, Kenworthy (1987: 153) states that, in some varieties, the /s/ and /z/ phonemes can be both pronounced with an allophone of /h/, which would make the teaching of these contrasts even harder. In Veiga Pérez (2017), students could easily understand and produce /z/ in initial position, whilst less than half of them produced it in medial position, and none did in the final one, despite some of them noticing it in listening activities.

The palatal /j/ is not present in many varieties, and it is often replaced by /tʃ/ or /s/; e.g. *Sherry* ['tʃeri] or ['seri]. When it does exist, like in some parts of Andalusia or in Galicia, it is overused, normally replacing /tʃ/ instances; e.g. *cherry* ['feri]. This is considered to be a problem in the LFC, so it should be worked on. Overcorrection can occur during the learning process, making *city* be ['ɪti], which should be avoided too.

Collins & Mees (2013) and Put (2021) point out that the spellings <y> or <ll> are usually produced as /j/ in Spanish, and the latter can be /ʎ/ in some accents. Kenworthy adds that the phoneme /j/ will normally substitute the English phonemes /dʒ/, /ʒ/ and /j/. In the first two, even though it will sound foreign, it will be intelligible; however, the replacement of the yod by a full consonant will be harmful, so students should be taught that the letter <y> should be pronounced more like a

³⁹ With some English varieties having the tap, too.

“vowel” always that there is not an assimilation phenomenon (which they would not have to learn, in any case). In words such as *million*, the double L will make Spanish students employ their phoneme instead of a single clear /l/, but, in addition, the yod will be assimilated; thus, where we have the English /'mɪliən/, in Spanish it will be /mi'jjon/, or we could even have *smellier* [es'mejjer].

Collins & Mees (2013) and Kenworthy also identify some problems with the semi-consonant /w/. In initial position, it normally develops a preceding /g/ sound, ending up with *way* pronounced as [gwei]. Because of this, the initial spelling <wr> becomes [gr], turning into an unnecessary cluster. In some instances, the phoneme can even be replaced by /b/, such as in ‘*water*’ *closet* deriving into *váter* /'bater/. Apart from that, the spelling <qu>, which stands for /kw/ in English, will normally lead Spanish speakers to use their L1 rule, where that spelling represents the first sound only. These three possibilities should be avoided at all costs if intelligibility is to be kept and, just like with /j/, they should be taught to produce it like a single “vowel”.

Regarding word endings, Spanish only allows the consonants /s, n, r, l/, with some rare exceptions (Yavaş, 2011: 187). Furthermore, in some varieties, such as in the Andalusian one, only /n/ might be kept out of those four (when preceded by a vowel). This is really harmful for comprehension, as English allows any consonant except /h/ to be in this position; e.g., as /n/ is the only nasal allowed in the ending of Spanish words, then, words like *from* might be pronounced with /n/. Related to this, the phoneme /ŋ/ is almost non-existent in Spanish, unless it is followed by a velar consonant such as in *tengo* [tengo]; hence, just like with the /m/ assimilation, there is a clear issue with this sound in final position. Kenworthy (1987) comments on the solution of never dropping the G in <ng> combinations, just like some British speakers do; but, as we have discussed in the previous sections, teaching this phoneme should be mostly optional, as they may have confusing inconsistencies in its use, not to mention that EE omits it.

Turning to clusters, Yavaş offers a comparison between the phonotactics of Spanish and English to help understand the common errors in this area, as can be seen in Figure 6. Not only does English have more possible consonants per onset, but also more combinations.

Syllable structure

(L1) Spanish	(L2) English
(C) (C) V (C) (C*)	(C) (C) (C) V (C) (C) (C) (C**)

* possible only if syllable-final within word as stop/sonorant + /s/

** possible only if an affix

Figure 6. Sequential Patterning of Spanish vs. English (Yavaş, 2011: 189).

When /s/ is in an initial cluster, a possibility unavailable in Spanish and some Asian languages (Wells, 2008: 108), speakers tend to add an initial /e/, such as in *strong* [es'tron]; as a matter of fact, this phenomenon is a common source of mockery from other countries. Some other clusters, such as /ns/, tend to delete the first sound, leading to *instead* being pronounced [is'ted] (Hewings, 2004: 238). Given that initial consonant clusters are important in the LFC, these instances should be practiced and corrected.

Kenworthy points out that /t/ and /d/ are usually dropped in final clusters, or sometimes they are broken through the insertion of an epenthetic vowel, which may also exchange both consonants, as in *laughed* ['la:f,ɪd]. The final cluster /s/ + consonant + /s/ tends to result in the deletion of one of the sibilant sounds, normally the final one; for instance, *tests* may be referred to as *test* in plural form, which is, in fact, the official plural of this word in Spanish dictionaries. Apart from that, even when there is only one /s/, some varieties like the Andalusian one may tend to drop it, such as in *bets* [bet], due to the dialectal tendency aforementioned. The consonant /k/ in final position is frequently dropped too, a feature that is even more prominent in South America, and sometimes it is not even related to clusters. According to the LFC rules, the problems mentioned in this paragraph should not concern us for international communication, except for the latter case, which is unrelated to clusters.

2.3.2. Vowels

In terms of vocalic sounds, Yavaş (2011) comments that there should not be issues with glides, as there are many in Spanish and they include, at least, all of the GenAm ones, plus approximate variations of RP (and EE). Nevertheless, Collins and Mees (2013) point out that Spanish has no central vowels, and there is not a checked-free distribution either. This vowel system is illustrated in Figures 7 and 8.

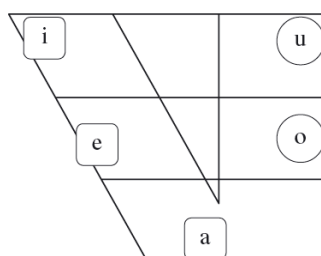


Figure 7.
Spanish Pure Vowels (Collins & Mees, 2013: 222).

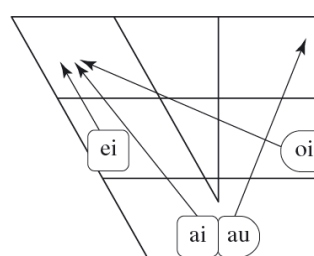


Figure 8.
Spanish Glides (Collins & Mees, 2013: 223).

According to Kenworthy (1987), the FACE glide may be misunderstood, as Spanish speakers tend not to spread the lips enough in this combination, thus producing the American DRESS variant instead of the British one.

The STRUT phoneme does not exist at all in Spanish. According to the study from Veiga Pérez (2017), students can perceive it in most of the cases, but it is usually replaced by /a/ in production. However, if the speaker has been exposed to some accents where it is rounded, or simply due to the spelling of the word (e.g. *done*, *month*), it would be pronounced as /o/. The latter would probably be more detrimental than the former, as could be seen above in the mergers this writer proposed.

The TRAP vowel does not exist in Spanish either; in Veiga Pérez (2017), students could identify it a bit less frequently than the STRUT sound, while they failed to produce it in above 80% of cases. It is replaced with the possibilities /a/ and /e/, such as in *bat* and *thanks*, respectively. While the LFC does not specify anything about this phoneme, both Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008: 164) and this writer consider that it should be taught; although its difficulty is high and would require a considerable amount of time, it would avoid misunderstandings with the rest of open/mid-open vowels, plus it would also prevent them from making *flash* sound like *flesh*, which would be terrible for intelligibility.

The distinction between the qualities of KIT and FLEECE is non-existent, in favour of the latter; whilst it is not an overly important issue, it becomes aggravated by the fact that Spanish does not have a varying vowel length, and thereby, they would become homophonous. In Veiga Pérez (2017), students demonstrated noticing the nuance of KIT in about half of the instances, while in production, they showed to be accurate in a bit less than half of the cases where it was spelled <i>, but only a 15% of times when it was written with <e>; in terms of vowel quantity for FLEECE, it was successfully achieved in a bit over half of the cases.

The same happens with FOOT and GOOSE, where the latter is preferred, but there is not distinction of quantity. In the case of NURSE, the phoneme does not exist either; the vowel produced will be short and it will most likely vary along with the spelling, so *earth*, *birth* and *Murphy* would all be pronounced differently in normal conditions. Collins & Mees (2013) also point out the issue with GOAT, LOT and THOUGHT, as all of them acquire the GenAm quality of the first, [o]; despite the glide helping differentiate the first two, there is a problem with THOUGHT and FORCE, since they should be distinguished from LOT and NORTH mainly thanks to their length. This could be fixed with the vowel quality proposal made previously: lowering the quality of [o] so it is more similar to LOT and THOUGHT, whilst keeping the RP length to make a difference, with the exception of NORTH, which should be shorter. Finally, it is worth commenting that the

lack of quantity also applies to the contrast between rhotic START and BATH. Consequently, Spanish students should be intensively trained to lengthen vowels, for this is a must in Jenkins's LFC and, essentially, there are no critics against it. As there are no weak forms either, the schwa sound does not occur in Spanish; since this is not contemplated in LFC for production purposes, learners should simply use a vowel similar to what the spelling suggests, no matter if they alter or not the quantity in the process.

As a summary, Figure 9 represents the possible confusions that a general Spanish learner would have with RP pure vowels, which are very similar to the rest of varieties.

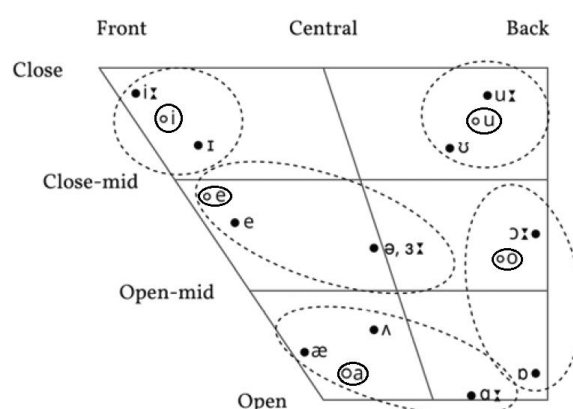


Figure 9. Phonological Simplification Processes (Gómez González & Sánchez Roura, 2016: 91)

2.3.3. Suprasegmentals

Connected speech brings some issues to the table (Collins & Mees, 2013). Spanish rhythm is syllable-based and there is no reduction of unstressed syllables, so all prosodic units have basically the same length. This is opposed to English, which is stress-based; in Spanish, instead, stress is used to mark differences across words containing the same phonemes, e.g., *término*, *termino* and *terminó*. Hence, these features have a negative effect when teaching the English division of speech into word groups, for in Spanish it is not that clear where a syllable belongs. Hewings (2004: 230) gives the example with the possible confusion of “No new taxes” with “No newt axes”, produced by George Bush in a speech.

When dealing with nuclear stress patterns, there is another threat to intelligibility worth mentioning. In cognates coming from Latin and Greek, Spanish learners have the tendency of applying the same stress as in their native word counterpart, especially word-finally, which is a position that English tends to avoid (Yavaş, 2011: 190). This can be seen in words like *action-acción*, *honour-honor*, *fatal*, *animal*, *natural*, *cultural*, *artificial*, *horizontal*, *education-educación*, etc. Therefore, as nuclear stress is essential in the LFC, this should be corrected as soon as possible too.

Regarding word (or phrase) stress, Spanish speakers fail to notice the difference present in English where combinations of words such as *blackbird* or *white house* alter the meaning⁴⁰ depending on which element is stressed; on the contrary, this is achieved in Spanish by means of word order. For instance, where *old friend* would have a different interpretation depending on word stress, it would be differentiated in Spanish as *amigo viejo* or *viejo amigo* (Kenworthy: 1987). Another example would be that of “He took a gun from Joan Catchpole, who frequently shoots herself”, in which *shoots* being stressed would mean that she herself shoots that weapon, as opposed to *herself* receiving prominence, meaning self-damage (Hewings, 2004: 230). While these examples are clearly bad for comprehension, it should not be given much relevance in the LFC, as we have commented previously.

Similarly, in sentence stress, where *I have some DVDs* may vary its implications on a stress basis, in Spanish we convey that meaning through the modification or insertion of words; e.g. “tengo unos DVDs”, “tengo algunos DVDs” and “yo tengo unos DVDs” would respectively correspond to *DVDs*, *some* and *I* receiving prominence in English. Another example would be “he CAN do that” as “Sí que puede hacerlo”. As there is basically no possibility of imitating this in Spanish, a learner would probably use sentence stress unconsciously in some cases, whilst failing in many others. Wells (2008: 109) comments on the problem with repeated lexical terms, too; e.g. the answer to “We’re late” would be “I don’t care if we are late”, with the underlined elements being stressed; however, a Spanish learner would keep the stress in *late*, which would sound strange. Jenkins commented that this previous suprasegmental problem should be specifically worked on in the LFC if possible.

In terms of intonation, Spanish has a very ‘flat’ pitch range, meaning that the highest highs and the lowest lows of English are hard to imitate in a normal flow of speech, which tends to keep one tone for the whole sentence (Kenworthy: 2017). The rise-fall intonation, while it tends to be well produced once the learner has a certain level of English, fails to be accomplished in short sentences, mainly exclamations; for example, a Spanish speaker saying *oh!* or *wonderful idea!* would convey a lack of interest or involvement in the conversation because of this. This is not specifically required in the LFC, but the study by Khalili (2021: 96) shows that teachers are concerned with it for intelligibility purposes, so it can be practiced optionally.

2.4. The teaching of pronunciation

After having reviewed the most relevant English varieties, together with the elements that the LFC guide consists of (plus its criticisms), and the many pronunciation

⁴⁰ And spelling, in the first case.

problems that Spanish students have in EFL, it is time to see how to deal with all of it in a language classroom. First, we shall see the main suggestions by authors on how to proceed with pronunciation teaching; then, we will take a look at how to treat (some) students with communicative impairments, followed by a summary of the phonics of English; and finally, we will see a series of recommendations on how to apply humour.

2.4.1. Suggestions by authors

In this section, the most important sources of information will be the excellent book by Gómez González & Sánchez Roura (2016), who focuses on Spanish students and uses RP as the target accent, the one by Kenworthy (2017), which deals with GenAm, and the manual by Hewings (2004), following a more general approach.

Gómez González & Sánchez Roura (2016: 36) comment that the RP variety of English, the one with more phonemes, has up to forty-nine sounds, while Peninsular Spanish has seven less. That 11% difference may not seem like a huge problem initially, but as we have commented in the previous section, most phonemes in English contrast with others in multiple minimal pairs, whilst a great many Spanish sounds are simply allophones, making it hard for us to comprehend the complexity of English. This is made even worse by the fact that spelling represents individual sounds in Spanish (with the exceptions already mentioned), while English has long departed from that custom and has become pattern-based instead.

Even though pronunciation obviously belongs to an oral dimension, present-day learners of any language have almost unlimited written resources at their disposal; for instance, automated captioning for videos and movies is available everywhere, so there is not even need of human work to transcribe speech. It is thanks to that abundance that teaching how the English spelling patterns work is one of the first steps that we should follow; this is supported by the fact pointed out by Crystal (as cited in Hewings, 2004: 10), who stated that English pronunciation follows a set of patterns in 75% of the cases. While the most common words of the language are usually irregular, learners should be familiar with most of them by 4th year of ESO, and thus, teaching spelling at this level will involve less chances of wrong overuse, giving better results. Once they have mastered the relationship between phonemes and their graphic representation, they should even be able to write down an accurate depiction of how an unknown regular word is spelled. Although there might be too many patterns to be taught in three months, important combinations such the 'Magic E', or endings in <age> indicating word stress, would quickly help students improve their pronunciation, something the writer has tested in his work placement period.

However, how do we actually teach pronunciation? Which elements should we teach first? Which steps should we follow? And how do we test learners? Hewings's (2004) manual contains most of the answers to these questions.

According to him (p. 15), the hierarchy of priorities⁴¹ is crowned by consonants; as we have seen, sounds like /r/ may end up causing changes of vowels, and they vary less frequently across dialects or inside fast-paced speech; we could even say that vowels are the glue that keeps English consonants stuck together, which, if altered, may cause more intelligibility issues than vowels. Next, he stated we should pay special attention to consonant clusters; as seen previously, Spanish learners have more issues with these than with individual sounds; despite this, the LFC does not require respecting those of final position, so this aspect is simplified. In the third place, we find vowel length, which is essential for mutual understanding either in the LFC or any other accent, and Spanish learners have a hard time using it. This is followed by nuclear stress, which may make it difficult to understand words that otherwise have perfect quality and quantity. In fifth and final position, as opposed to what the LFC states, Hewings affirms that word stress in sentences is more relevant than any other intonation matter, for it can change the meaning conveyed by the speaker and the perception of feelings on the listener's end.

Out of that main hierarchy, Hewings also comments that the falling-rising intonation patterns should be taught; moreover, vowel quality should be kept in cases where there might be confusions with other words, which can be solved, at least in Spanish, with the proposed mergers this writer made in the previous sections. Afterwards, the author mentions that weak forms should be taught at least perceptively, as they vary from the written form, just like what we saw in the LFC's criticisms.

Moving on to the steps that we should follow when teaching pronunciation, first, we have the preliminaries. Teachers should take into account the recurrent errors that their students' L1 tends to have; then, they should diagnose the problems of each individual class and select which contents should be given priority; finally, they should use the coursebook to complement their personal pronunciation contents, or the other way around, since it can be practiced even with writing exercises.

Once the actual teaching begins, the author suggests that, before pronouncing phonemes, learners will need to be trained to perceive their contrasts. Therefore, teachers should ask how they think a sound is pronounced, and when pronounced incorrectly, they have to give them a model (either orally or through recordings), together with lots of input; after this, and only when students understand the concept, teachers should ask them to repeat chorally to stereotype the phonetic skill, and

⁴¹ Which may vary depending on how close the L1 is to English.

finally, individual repetition would be advisable. When correcting them, the same pattern would be applied, but there should be multiple chances of pronouncing the sound in order not to discourage them; ergo, the teacher should act like a monitor. Ungarovna (2021: 13) further expands these steps as follows:

· Comprehension

1. Perception of a new sound in phrases, words, in isolation.
2. Isolation from a number of listened words those that contain a new sound (by raising a signal card or hand).
3. Explanation of the articulation of the input sound (comparison with the native language).
4. Performing exercises for articulatory gymnastics (fixation and exaggeration of articulation).
5. Multiple listening to samples (choose the correct answer, add a symbol, etc). (Ungarovna, 2021: 13)

· Production

1. Repeat after the sample a sound, word, phrase with a new sound.
2. Repeat a new sound in oppositions (voiceless-voiced; long-short; palatalized-unpalatalized).
3. Repetition after the standard of gradually becoming more complex speech patterns.
4. Independent pronunciation of the studied sound by students.
5. Improvement of auditory-pronunciation skills in the process of learning poetry, rhymes, tongue twisters, dialogues, phonetic games. (Ungarovna, 2021: 14)

Regarding materials, the teacher should always have some quick activities ready for frequent errors that take special effort and time allotment to learn. A good variety of activities is, of course, advised, and these should focus on different matters, such as developing awareness, information transfer, games, analysis, prediction, reflection and using reference sources (p. 21); hence, Bloomfield's taxonomy should be followed. The latter type of skill will, in fact, be worked on in the final sessions of the didactic transposition, based on teaching learners to use dictionaries and Thesauri to find rhyming or almost rhyming words. The author also points out the benefits of using authentic materials in class, such as jokes and puns, which clearly highlight contrasts in pronunciation; for that reason, those will be dealt with in the later exercises.

To fulfil these steps, Reid (2016: 23-27) comments on the types of exercises proposed by the Common European Framework for Languages that can be carried out by learners, especially for those older than thirteen. Apart from the "listening and repeating" examples that we have seen above, Ear Training is deemed very important,

which is an activity similar to that of identifying musical notes, and it serves for the input phase about learning contrasts. Drilling is really useful for production, including repetition, transformation, substitution, Jazz chants and minimal pairs; once these have been carried out, tongue twisters are recommended to further improve the results. This can be followed by reading aloud, which, although not very popular anymore, it may feel less exhausting than drilling in some instances. Songs and rhymes (and therefore, puns) are really powerful tools both for input and output, as they have a stronger motivational factor than any other type of exercise; besides, they are appropriate for teaching suprasegmentals. Once students have learnt enough contents, it would be advisable to record their pronunciation and making them analyse it afterwards, which will motivate them when they realize their success. Visual aids include phonics, sound-colour charts and phonetic training; regarding the first two, showing the places of articulation is rather important for students to understand how to make foreign sounds, and teaching them the relation between letters and spelling patterns is essential as well (rhyming crosswords, odd one out, etc); in the meantime, the latter two are interchangeable, although using colours for sounds instead of symbols may not be necessary for this age group.

Now that it has been mentioned, whilst phonetic training can be deemed unnecessary by critics and teachers alike, according to Hewings (2004: 217-218), phonetic symbols might be effective at any level when asking students to match them with words, plus they are rather relevant when checking dictionaries. However, only B2 learners and beyond should be asked to carry out text transcriptions due to their complexity. This is supported by two Japanese studies⁴², whose learners have very similar difficulties to the Spanish ones, in which using phonetics proved to be more beneficial than sticking to an extensive employment of the Audio-lingual Method or the Communicative Approach (Hanazaki *et al.*, 2017, and Ma-Ka-Wah, 2016). In addition, the research groups were preschoolers and primary students, who probably have less advantage than those of high school, given that, according to Reid (2016: 26-27), older learners do better in this regard. In China, a study conducted by Xiao and Luo (2015) with college students, related to learning phonetics through mobile applications, put students to record their speech to later be analysed by the program, resulting in 78% of them improving their pronunciation autonomously; this could easily be employed in Spain as homework, repeating sentences which also contain recent grammar and vocabulary points. Meanwhile, in the study on phonetics instruction by Kissling (2013), it proved to be effective for specific reading and listening tasks rather than for spontaneous speech; the latter seemed to be more benefited by focused listening with dictations. She states that “one might conclude that the most valuable component of pronunciation instruction is drawing learners' attention repeatedly to

⁴² Apart from Mompean & Lintunen (2015) in the Spanish context, as we saw in the introduction.

the target phones and thereby helping students orient their attention towards relevant features of the L2 speech” (Kissling, 2013). In the end, even though phonetics is not necessarily the best tool available, it should be provided at this level to complement pronunciation teaching, as it will put the learners’ focus on specific sounds one by one, which will help them in the long term.

Apart from the role of the teacher, the one of the class should be commented as well, especially given the nature of the current project. In Chen and Goswami’s EFL research with Spanish-speakers (2011: 26), it is pointed out that students will help each other even outside anything related to the subject, as practising “strange” sounds is considered entertaining, especially for young learners. As these authors mention, while the mechanic nature of pronunciation teaching and correction is not interesting and may negatively affect their (Krashen’s) affection filter, leading to resistant behaviours, making students work together will rebalance the filter. In their study, although the time limit did not allow for more depth, there was a consistent, yet rather small, improvement of learners’ pronunciation (pp. 29-30). Then, a Cooperative Learning (CL) approach to pronunciation would undoubtedly be positive for students, and that is why the final project will be carried out in groups. This method consists in achieving five main goals: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing (Johnson & Johnson, as cited in Chen & Goswami, 2011). For those purposes, students should be placed physically close, allowing both for individual and group activities. Moreover, groups, apart from being heterogeneous to avoid discrimination and distractions, should build their own identity⁴³ and be competitive with the others to achieve a common goal⁴⁴.

When it comes to periodical testing⁴⁵ (Hewings, 2004), it is important to keep a record of students’ progress, who might be encouraged if they get good results. Here, there are problems that do not arise in other areas, for pronunciation is fully present from the very first moment learners enter in contact with the language, instead of being fractioned. For this reason, only the recent aspects dealt with in class should be evaluated, especially in order to reinforce them; this is usually done either with an impression or with a checklist. There also exist issues with time constraints, though; it is quicker to test phonetic contrast knowledge through a listening activity than by asking every student to speak individually. Production tests usually involve reading texts aloud or small speaking activities related to telling stories and the like; since it is too controlled and it may lead to imitation from other students, it might not be very

⁴³ Through names, slogans, logos, etc.

⁴⁴ In the didactic transposition, this will be translated into a higher mark for those who come up with the better pun in the project, and for whoever invents one during class time.

⁴⁵ Not counting the final project.

beneficial; for that reason, both approaches should be used: asking the student something informal, and then proceeding with a small reading.

2.4.2. Students with communicative impairments

Now, we shall talk about a matter that cannot be overlooked when dealing with oral skills, and it is problems related to comprehension and/or production. Among the many instances we may find, the two most common ones probably are, first, learners with hearing impairment, and secondly, those who are affected by the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs).

Starting with the former, the sources used include Benwell (n.d.-b) and *National Deaf Children's Society* (n.d.). In our classrooms, we may find students with no hearing capacity in any of the ears, whilst others may have some issues but can still hear something, either due to a lesser degree of disability or thanks to hearing aids or amplifiers. This, of course, makes pronunciation teaching far more complex, as these students cannot usually communicate in the same exact conditions as the rest of the class, and some do not even dominate L1 lip reading to the fullest extent. For this reason, special attention must be paid to them to make sure they are following the contents⁴⁶ and that they do not feel frustrated, and expectations should be adapted depending on their capacities. However, that does not mean that they should receive an extremely different treatment to the rest of students, as that might be detrimental as well. Teachers should also rely on the help from other students and reinforcement teachers if there are any, and extra preparation and special resources are to be expected from their end. These learners should be facing and sitting close to teachers (and far away from noisy peers) in order to hear or read lips more easily, and any sort of alarm with lights or vibration would be appropriate. Visual materials are of the utmost importance, and instructions, notes and examples should be shown to them as much as possible; additionally, handing them out the notes one class in advance may be beneficial. If the teacher is trained up to some degree in sign language, this could be employed too. Regarding listening activities, they should only be carried out in class if the teacher disposes of a script, captions or similar resources, which should be handed out or taken away in a similar way to turning on or off the audio; otherwise, the student will not feel comfortable and the lack of interest will exponentially grow. If the sanitary conditions allow it, teachers should either put off the mask or wear transparent ones so that their lips can be easily read, as that will probably be the main source of information between the written contents and what they will experience when masks are no longer necessary; to maximize the effectiveness of this, showing them visual representations of articulatory positions would be recommended.

⁴⁶ Repeating classmates' questions is also recommended.

Apart from all of this, and related to this dissertation, one of the most recommended techniques for helping these students is the teaching of phonics, which, as viewed above, is the correlation between spelling and sound. Since this is equally helpful for the rest of the class, and it is taught at the same time as phonology, then, these correlations will be shown below.

Regarding the other type of students, the ASDs, the main source employed has been Wahyuningrum (2018), which precisely deals with the Lingua Franca Core. According to the author, autistic children seem to be increasingly having more problems in a world that every day becomes more multilingual; this is due to their language deficits, socialization issues and difficulties for understanding abstract/figurative contents. Wahyuningrum cites several authors that prove wrong the common assumption that learning a L2 may interfere with the acquisition of their L1, and this is the same case with other students suffering from language disorders; nevertheless, echolalia, the compulsive repetition of words and sentences without context, is more likely to happen when using the foreign language. Apart from that, their intonation is rather flat, and vowel quantity seems to be affected by their tendency of keeping words as short as possible, not to mention that these students have problems producing long sentences and giving information. Therefore, for Spanish ASDs students, whose L1 issues are also similar to the ones aforementioned, these might turn even harder to overcome.

On the bright side, the LFC supposes the deletion of many of these difficulties, for autistic pupils need to produce very clear sounds in a few words, rather than a connected speech with its implications. This is exactly what Jenkins promotes, as the workload of consonants, of final clusters and, especially, of vowels (if my adaptation is taken into account) is reduced; besides, there is a lesser relevance of intonation patterns and weak forms. What matters is a really clear production of approximate sounds for international communication, rather than a native-like accent full of allophones that even a L1 English neighbour has a hard time understanding.

Wahyuningrum's (2018: 254) results in a research with two autistic children revealed that they tended to quickly delete or replace sounds that meant an obstacle for them. Although the nationality of these students is not mentioned (probably Indonesian), the results are very similar to the Spanish issues mentioned in the previous sections⁴⁷, with the exception of /d/ turning into /t/, the simplification of a few clusters, and the deletion of initial consonants in isolation. Nuclear stress was also placed correctly in all two-syllable words. Then, this might simply be related to their

⁴⁷ And they even managed to produce aspirated consonants and a correct vowel quantity, with the author mentioning the lack of these features in their L1. These results are actually better than those of older Spanish students, as can be seen in Veiga-Pérez (2017).

L1, and they do not experiment much worse errors than learners without that condition.

Therefore, after viewing these results, it can be determined that the LFC is also the appropriate tool for teaching English pronunciation to these students, only needing to pay special attention to consonants and, probably, intonation. Using phonics, just like with students with hearing impairment, might be the key to success, as ASDs learners often memorize the correlation between written and spoken form more quickly than their classmates (Benwell, n.d.-a). Visual supports, providing clear instructions, and placing them in a good spot in the classroom are some other recommendations.

2.4.3. Spelling Patterns

After having reviewed all the previous bibliography, the most clear aspect that can be drawn is that phonics instruction is the best way of teaching pronunciation to students, as English spelling is pattern-based, with many exceptions arising as solutions for homophones. Since this will be the main aspect worked on in the didactic transposition, a brief collection of the most relevant spelling patterns and its main exceptions will be shown below. As we are working with the LFC and it is directed towards speakers of Spanish, some contents (like weak forms) have been simplified to match that; these have been taken mostly from Kenworthy (1987), Hewings (2004) and Gómez González & Sánchez Roura (2016).

2.4.3.1. Consonants

- <p> Usually the /p/ phoneme. *Parachute, hop, moped*.
 - It is /f/ in <ph>. *Photograph, phoenix, phrase*. But /v/ in *Stephen*.
 - In <pn> & <ps> it is always mute. *Pneumonia, psychology*.
 - It is mute in a few words with <pt> and <pb>. *Receipt, cupboard, raspberry*.
- Almost always the /b/ phoneme. *Bye, blank, albeit, snob*.
 - It is mute in <bt> and <mb> combinations. *Debt, doubt, subtle, bomb*.
- <k> Almost always pronounced as /k/.
 - It is mute at the beginning if followed by <n>. *know, knob, knife, knave*.
- <qu> Practically always pronounced as /kw/ in initial and medial position. *Quality, quantity, question, squid*, but *antique, critique*.
- <x> An unvoiced combination of sounds: /ks/. *Maximum, wax, flex, Texas*.

- If it is followed by a tensed vowel, it would become /gz/ as in *example, exact*.
- <c> Always an unvoiced sound: /s/ if followed by <i> and <e>. Otherwise, it is /k/. *Cereal, city, advice* vs. *cathedral, coach, culture*.
 - The combination <sc> can represent the same single sound with <i> and <e>. *Scientific, scene, scimitar, muscle, corpuscle*.
 - Endings <cious> and <cial> are pronounced with /j/ due to assimilation. *Special*.
- <sh> It is always /ʃ/, except in some compounds, such as *mishap. Shampoo, hush, show, crash*. It is used in *ocean* too.
 - The combination <sch> also represents the sound in *schwa, schlock...*, unless it comes from Greek and is /sk/, which is the most common case, such as *school*.
 - Endings in <tion>, <tial>, <tio>, <tia> employ it as well. *Station, vacation, spatial, ratio, militia*.
- <ch> represents /tʃ/ in initial and final position, but /k/ in medial position or in words from Greek. *Cherry, chant, match, such* vs. *archive, Michael*, - (Greek: *character, chaos, monarchy, scheme, chronic, stomach, echo...*).
 - It can be pronounced /ʃ/ in foreign words. *Chef, nonchalant, machine*.
 - The ending <stion> uses this sound too: /stʃən/. *Question, suggestion*.
- <z> It is always voiced, /z/. *Zoo, realize, seize*.
 - /z/ in the ending <zure>. *Seizure, azure*.
- <s> It can be voiced or unvoiced. If followed by consonants, normally /s/.
 - Between vowels, many final positions and plurals after a voiced sound, normally /z/. *Erase, advise, mouses, countries, cities*. Unless it is a verb-substantive/adverb distinction.
 - In <rse>, <ns>, <ls> and <ss> combinations, normally /s/. *Course, horse, worse, tense, else, mass*.
 - /z/ in endings <sion>, <sual>, <sure>. It does not apply to <ssion>, <nsion>, <lsion>, which is /ʃ/.
 - It is mute in *island, isle, aisle, debris, bourgeois*.
- <r> In the LFC it is always pronounced /r/ when written. *Car, rat, north*.
 - In Britain, it is mute unless an affix is added to the word (*care-caring*) or if the spelling is <rr>.
- <h> Normally pronounced as /h/ in isolation. *Alcohol, ham, comprehend*.

- Exceptions are combinations with <ch>, <sh>, <gh>, <kh>, <th> and some initial positions such as: *heir, honour, hour, honest*. <xh> is mute: *exhausted, exhale*.
- <d> Normally /d/. *Daedalus, deer, squid, tendency*.
 - Exceptions in combinations such as <nd> or <nk> plus another consonant, where it is mute: *handkerchief, grandson*. Other cases: *soldier, dual* with /ʒ/.
- <t> Normally a /t/ if it is in isolation or double: *times, date, kit, pretty*.
 - It is mute in <stl>, <stm>, <stn>. *Castle, Christmas, listen*.
 - It is replaced by /ɪ/ or omitted in foreign words in final position. *Ballet* vs. *debut*.
- <th> This combination can be either /θ/ or /ð/. The former is likely to be found with pure vowels at the beginning, or in final position; the latter tends to be in intervocalic position and with diphthongs, or in short common words. *Thoroughly, twelfth, bath, theft* vs. *them, brother, though, bathe*.
 - Exceptions as /t/, especially in proper names. *Thomas, Thames, thyme*.
- <v> It is always the phoneme /v/. *Voice, motive, reveal*.
- <f> It is almost always /f/, but it is usually changed to /v/ in *of*.
- <g> Always /g/ when followed by <a>, <o> and <u>. With <i> and <e>, it may be pronounced as /dʒ/, especially with Latin words or when followed by <n> and <s>, and <ger>. With <gy>, it is always the latter sound. *Garrison, gourd, guttural* vs. *geography, gist, gesture, germ, gym, gyro, general, ginger* vs. *get, Gideon*.
 - <ge> in final position is normally /dʒ/, but also /ʒ/. *Orange* vs. *garage, mirage*.
 - <ng> In final position, always /ŋ/ and the <g> should be dropped. *Sing, king, going*. Do not confuse with <gn>, which is only /n/, *gnome, foreigner, design*; or with <gm>, where the /g/ is mute too: *diaphragm, paradigm*.
 - <gh> Only the /g/ is pronounced in initial and medial position. *Ghost, ghastly, ghoul, ghetto*. It is usually mute in final position with glides (*high, dough, though*), but sounds like /f/ with pure vowels *laugh, tough, rough*.
- <l> Almost always the /l/ phoneme. *Lamb, call, alveolar*.
 - It is frequently mute in <lk>, <lf> and <lm>. *Walk, half, calm*.
- <mb> & <mn> These are commonly pronounced as /m/ in final position or when a suffix is added: *climb, lamb, bomb, autumn, column*.
- <j> It is always /dʒ/, or reduced to /ʒ/ in final position. *Jedi, jam, June, raj*.
- <y> In initial position, it is normally the semi-consonant /j/. *Yesterday, yell, yellow*.
- <w> It is the semi-consonant /w/ in initial and medial position. *War, wit, twenty*.

- In final positions <aw>, <ew> and <ow>, it is mute in the first, while /u:/ and /ʊ/, respectively, in the possible combinations of the second and third. *Law, raw* vs. *crew, few* vs. *cow, low*.
- It is mute with <wr> and <who>. ~~Wrap~~, ~~wreck~~, ~~whose~~, ~~whom~~.
- Sometimes mute in second or third position. *Two, sword, answer*.
- It is also worth mentioning that double consonants such as <ss>, <ll>, <gg>, <tt>, <ck>, among others, do not represent a double sound; one of them is simply mute.

2.4.3.2. The 'Magic E' rule

While this could be incorporated into the vowel section, its easiness of use and effectiveness is unmatched in terms of English patterns, and thus, it deserves its own subsection.

According to *The Free Dictionary* (n.d.), an aggregator of dictionaries, there are at least 80,000 words in the English language that end with <e>. Out of those, the most common exceptions where the rule is not applied include 5400 with <se>, 2800 with <ve>, 4200 with <ce>, 1300 with <vowel + ge>, 9000 with <le>, 6400 with <ae>, 400 with <que>, 7000 with <ate/ite> and 9000 with <ne>; in total, these make around 46,000 words, whilst many of them actually follow the rule. Consequently, it is guaranteed that the pronunciation of over 35,000 words of the English language, not counting all their inflections and derivations (such as *muse-music* or *globe-global*), is likely to be learnt in about two-three weeks of training thanks to this rule.

The 'silent E', 'magic E' or 'bossy E' rule essentially consists in making a vowel have its full alphabetic pronunciation in the context: **(c) + v + (c) + <e>**. That is, if the vowel is not preceded by another vowel, if it is only followed by one single consonant⁴⁸, and if it ends in <e>. Therefore, if we find *mouse* the rule is not met due to having a second vowel, but it is applied in *muse*; likewise, it is used in *hoped* but not in *hopped*, as the context is not the same as the one in the formula.

When the rule is applied, we have the RP pronunciations 'a' /eɪ/ as in *make*, 'e' /i:/ as in *complete*, 'i' /aɪ/ as in *life*, 'o' /əʊ/ as in *home* and 'u' /ju:/ as in *cube*. In the final case, with <u>, the yod is dropped if it is preceded by a liquid consonant or by /tʃ/, such as in *rule*, *brute* and *virtue*. The 'Magic E' is also applied to words without that intervocalic consonant, such as in *Gael*, *free*, *tie*, *Joe*, *due*, but not with Latin endings <ae>, said as /i:/ in *algae*. Apart from that, the rule keeps being applied even when <e> is removed in inflections, such as the verb *plane-planing*, as opposed to *plan-planning*.

⁴⁸ With the exceptions of -ange and -aste, in which the rule is also applied, and others like *Hughes*.

The main exception to the formula is in the case of finding <re> or even <er> in that final position. In those instances, there is also a common pronunciation pattern. For instance, in RP, 'are' is pronounced with /eə/ in *care*; 'ere' or 'eer' with /ɪə/ in *here* and *beer*, but exceptionally /ɛə/ in *where* and *there*; 'ire' or 'yre' with /aɪə/ such as in *fire* or *tyre*; 'ore' and 'oer' with /ɔ:/ in *more* and *Boer*; and 'ure' with /jʊə/ like in *cure*; however, the latter can be simplified to /ə/ in long words and, in short ones, we may find the phoneme /ɔ:/ in, at least, the British Isles.

Among the many other irregular exceptions, we may find <se>, in which the vowel is added to avoid confusion with plurals; <ve>, probably so that it is not interpreted as /f/ or due to aesthetic reasons; <ce>, either because it comes from a foreign tongue or simply to indicate that it is a /s/ and not a /z/; many endings with <ge>, normally because these words are foreign, such as *garage*, *mirage*; <le> in combinations such as *battle*, *subtle*, *needle* and the like, to indicate that the /l/ sound is vocalic or that a schwa should be pronounced right before it; <ate> and <ite> are often simplified to the first half of the glide due to being in unstressed positions, such as *alternate*, *favourite*; and finally <ne> in words coming from other languages with nuclear stress at the end, such as *machine*, *routine*, etc.

2.4.3.3. Vocalic sounds and other glides

Due to the sheer complexity of vowel spelling, only the most prominent ones will be included, and weak forms have been omitted due to the LFC. Sounds have been classified according to the points of articulation previously suggested in 2.2.3.1., and glides have been grouped with them as well; this includes those with initial /j/ and /w/, classified as 'u' and 'o' sounds, as it is easier for learners to understand them that way. Long vowels before /r/ have been considered short except for FORCE and NURSE. As the 'Magic E' has been explained above, those instances are omitted as well.

'A' sounds

a	<ar> <i>start, far, sharp, farm, Barney,</i>
	< u urr > <i>must, hut, cut, but, culture, difficult, hurry, curry, current</i>
	< ove on oth+V > <i>love, glove, dove, done, won, month, mother, other</i>
	<ou> <i>touch, young, country, enough</i>
	All of these, except <ar>, can be heard as /o/ in some accents.

	Other words: <i>some, come, company, <u>does</u>, <u>worry</u>, <u>heart</u>, blood, flood</i>
a:	< ath alm alf ance ast ass > <i>bath, calm, half, dance, last, grass</i> < au + pronounced gh > <i>laugh, draught</i> Other words: <i>aunt</i>
æ	<a> <i>cat, tract, mat, Harry, <u>a</u>nimal, <u>c</u>amera, <u>m</u>athematics</i> Other words: <i>plaid, plait</i> Its syllable has to be the nuclear stress in most cases, not followed by liquid or sibilant sounds. Sometimes almost a long sound in words like <i>mad, rag, ham, sand</i>.
ai	<y> <i>try, shy, bye, lying</i> – normally in final position < C+ ind ild igh ign > <i>find, grind, child, high, might, sign, align</i>. Unless <ld> is followed by an affix such as in <i>children</i>, or <i>wind</i> as a noun. <ei> <i>either, neither, eye</i> Plurals from Latin: <i>alumni, termini</i> Other words: <i>buy, guy, <u>i</u>dle, <u>i</u>dol, <u>i</u>dea, <u>i</u>dentify, <u>i</u>sland</i> Extended as /aiə/ or /aie/ in the words <i>via</i> and <i><u>v</u>irus</i>
au	< ou ow > <i>mouth, house, count, cow, now, browse</i> Extended as /auə/ or /aue/ in the words <i>flour, hour</i> and <i>our</i>.

Table 2. 'A' sounds.

'E' sounds

e	<e> <i>pet, met, flesh, bed, led</i> < C + ea > <i>breath, death, dread, bread, health, head</i> Other words: <i><u>b</u>ury, <u>b</u>urial, <u>l</u>eopard, <u>a</u>ny, <u>m</u>any, <u>s</u>aid, <u>a</u>gain, <u>s</u>ays, <u>a</u>gainst</i>
	< ear + C> <i>earth, dearth, search, heard</i>

ɜ:r	< ir irr yrr er ur > <i>birth, stirred, myrrh, perk, herd, purple, nurse</i> <w + or > <i>worth, work, word, world</i> Other words: <i>were, <u>j</u>ourney, att<u>or</u>ney</i>
ei	< ai ay > <i>may, day, say, play, way, brain, aid, complain</i> < eigh ey > <i>weight, sleigh, grey, obey, hey</i> Other words: <i><u>g</u>reat, <u>st</u>eak, <u>café</u>, <u>ma</u>tin<u>ee</u>, <u>ga</u>ol, <u>ga</u>uge</i>
e (+)	< ar aer air > <i>Mary, aerobic, hair</i>. Pronounced as /eər/ or /e:r/. < ear eir > <i>wear, pear, tear (verb), heir, their</i>. Said as /eər/ or /e:r/.

Table 3. 'E' sounds.

'I' sounds

i	<i> <i>interior, lit, wit, cling, mist</i> <ui> <i>biscuit, building, guilty, Guillermo</i> <e> <i>he, she, <u>e</u>vent, deconstruct, reconstruct, <u>pre</u>amble, <u>con</u>duct<u>e</u>d</i>. Affixes and first syllables usually employ this sound, although –ed is variable. <y> in <syl>, <sym>, <syn>, and final <ly> or <y> if there are more syllables before. <i>Syllabus, symbol, synchronize, happy, easily</i> < ey > <i>Money, honey, alley</i>. Only if there are two syllables or more. Other words: <i><u>b</u>usy, <u>lett</u>uce, <u>or</u>ange, <u>pal</u>ace</i>
i:	<ea> <i>tea, read, weak, leak, each, real, deal, heal</i>. Combinations with <l> at the ending may also be heard as /iel/ or /iəl/ instead. < ie ei > <i>believe, field, receipt, ceiling</i>. Not with foreign /ɪ/, friend /e/ Other words: <i><u>key</u>, <u>alg</u>ae</i>
ie	< ier eir yer > <i>weird, weir, chandelier, terrier, buyer, lawyer</i>. It can be said as /ier/ or /iər/. < ear > <i>beard, hear, near, year</i>. /ier/ or /iər/

	Other words: <i>bacteria</i>
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Table 4. 'I' sounds.

'O' sounds

o	<o> <i>robot, plot, short, born, north, for</i> Other words: <i>because, cauliflower, cough, knowledge, wrath, yacht, bureaucracy.</i>
o:	< au aw(e) > <i>autumn, awesome, awful, raw, law, cauldron</i> < al alk > <i>always, already, call, fall, tall, talk, walk, stalk</i> (not: <i>shall</i>) <oa + R sound nearby> <i>board, broad, abroad, aboard, roar, soar</i> < or our > <i>story, sport, porch, morsel, course, court, pour</i> Other words: <i>thought, bought, sure, door, floor</i>
ou	<oa> <i>coach, boat, road, toast, load, coat</i> < ou ow > <i>shoulder, though, row, flow, glow</i> <old> <i>old, hold, gold, mold, cold, bold, told</i> <o> <i>go, no, so, only, vocal, won't, most, host</i>
oi	< oi oy > <i>Moisture, choice, enjoy, boy.</i> Exception: <i>choir</i> /'kwaɪər/ Extended as /oie/ or /oiə/ in works like <i>enjoyable, royal, deployable</i>
wo	< ua wa > <i>quality, quantity, quarrel, was, what, warranty</i>
wo:	<wa> <i>war, warm, ward, swath</i>

Table 5. 'O' sounds.

'U' sounds

u	<u> <i>put, push, full, pull, rubric, sugar, bull (bullet, bull, bulletin, bully, bullseye), actual, February, mortuary, usually, sure.</i> <oo> <i>look, book, good, hood, foot, wool</i> Other words: <i>woman, wolf, would, could, should.</i>
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u:	<oo> <i>goose, loop, shoot, hoot, shampoo, loose, fool</i> <ew u> when preceded by /l, r, tj/: <i>Lewis, crew, crucial, chew, Peru</i> <ou> <i>group, wound, through, coupon, soup, route, youth</i> <o> <i>who, do, move, improve, tomb, womb, lose</i> <ui> <i>suit, juice, fruit, bruise, cruise</i>
uer	<our> <i>tour, gourd, gourmet</i>. Either /uer/ or /uər/. <ury> <i>jury, fury</i> /fjuəri/ Other words: <u>sewer</u>
ju:	<eu ew> <i>Europe, Eugene, euphoria, new, few, dew</i> <u> <i>usually, university, uniform, casual, insinuate, situation</i>

Table 6. 'U' sounds.

2.5. The use of humour and stand-up comedy

Given that the objective of the final classroom project would be making students perform a group "monologue" in turns, it is impossible to finish the theoretical framework without exposing any research, though brief.

Although there does not seem to exist much information about the topic in particular, Bustos-Rivas (2015) and Stroud (2013) provide some insight. First of all, the benefits of humour in language teaching, or even teaching in general, are undeniable: it lowers anxiety, raises attention and retention, and increases participation; that is to say, it lowers the affective filter through enjoyment and socialization. Moreover, humour forms part of human culture, and hence, it is a means of expressing oneself and understanding others, being useful for approaching foreign people; this is, precisely, the context of Spanish students, for the aim is boosting interculturality. As all these factors are gathered together, the learning is improved, as contents feel "memorable" rather than mechanic exercises to be quickly forgotten. It is only affected by a few setbacks (Stroud, 2013: 72-74), namely, those related to shyness, lack of enough knowledge of the L2 to be humorous and, above all, loss of discipline, which may lead to inappropriate mockery. The basic means of avoiding the latter problems would be providing doses of humour during instruction so that seriousness is not completely lost and students put effort, but it should not go beyond that (p. 75); in addition, student-produced humour should be much less frequent (pp. 79-80).

On the one hand, there exists universal humour (p. 73), which is that related to typical human flaws like being clumsy, forgetful or silly, and also to impossible scenarios or strange situations. But on the other hand, we find the hardest element to get right, which, as Bustos-Rivas (2015: 5) comments, might be understanding the verbal humour from different cultures, as there is a need to slightly relate to what is being told for it to be funny. The varying sets of customs and values is probably the biggest obstacle, as many of them cannot be seen from a surface level. For that reason, students should receive abundant input beforehand as well⁴⁹, and stand-up comedy is the most appropriate genre, thanks to it being popular and usually describing the ups and downs of said cultures. Therefore, showing both native and foreign use of English in these would be recommendable.

Stroud also mentions the fact that individual humour, when putting the focus of attention on one single student, is probably harmful for many. For that reason, while the stand-up act is meant to help them fight their stage fright as well, leaving them in isolation is not advisable either; thus, a pairs or small groups dynamic would be better. Besides, given that coming up with humorous ideas and puns requires great effort, it would reduce the workload, especially for learners with communicative impairments. The teacher has to make sure, though, that they are heterogeneous, but also that they get on well with each other. Fostering a good atmosphere in the classroom is of paramount importance for the previous point, as it lessens the negative impact of some students' interrelations, for they may affect their confidence when trying to be humorous. Finally, since making use of the L2 for this context may be more complex than usual, the teacher should give a helping hand with the students' production, be it their scripts or something else; in the end, what matters is that they understand the content and that they improve their pronunciation (and fluency) in the process.

For the elaboration of stand-up comedy acts, the research by Desi (2020) and Priyono & Rofiq (2021) on the matter will be used, both analysing the comedian Trevor Noah as well. First and foremost, a thoughtful writing process is required, and for that reason, students should be asked to begin working on it from the very first day. Secondly, apart from having puns and interesting ideas, there need to be some figures of speech and discourse markers for the content to acquire more comedic strength.

In Desi's (2020) paper, the analysis showed that similes, metaphors and personifications are usually the most effective (and therefore, more common) figures of speech, closely followed by hyperbole and irony; then, these should be made explicitly clear to students when providing them with input. Regarding the research by Priyono and Rofiq (2021), the comedian Trevor Noah uses the topic switches "well" and "and then", employs an emphatic "and" to connect something with previous jokes,

⁴⁹ Even though puns do not usually need much context.

and the word “like” is followed by pauses to show perplexity or as a repair marker (to correct something apparently unintentional). Apart from that, cooperation markers are really important so that the audience feels involved in the story; these include *right, alright, man, I know, yeah, oh, no, huh, hmm*. They also cite Laurel J. Brinton (p. 3), stating that *actually, after all, anyway, basically, I mean, mind you, you see and sort/kind of* can be powerful when used by other comedians. As Desi (2020) comments, all these factors make possible that a comedian can talk in a rude or offensive manner without triggering a bad reaction from the audience, but the contrary.

Finally, in Bruner’s article (2002), he comments that stand-up comedy, be it in class or outside, needs the following key elements: having a good preparation beforehand, to avoid hesitation and breaking the suspension of disbelief; being brief so that the content or the tone does not become repetitive; tailoring the contents for the audience, taking into account recent events, places and people they might be familiar with, etc; finding new perspectives on daily matters, which is related to the previous point; briefly using self-deprecating humour in order to highlight flaws and open the audience to you; avoiding hostile humour towards people or institutions; using supporting media; and finally, not laughing at one’s own jokes, as it shows that the speaker is focused inward instead of trying to share a story.

3. DIDACTIC TRANSPOSITION

In the following sections, the possible application of the previous contents into a didactic project shall be described, including the contextualization of the centre, all the legal references and contents, the activities and reinforcement materials in detail, and the evaluation tools for the latter.

3.1. Justification

Under the title “Let’s Make Some Puncakes! (No Pan Intended)”, the aim of this didactic project proposal is to teach English phonetics to 4th year of ESO Spanish students through the weekly use of (mostly) comedic content, including puns, rhymes and other materials, both authentic and created by the writer. It will follow Jennifer Jenkins’s Lingua Franca Core rules for International English, with some modifications.

There would be half a session (thirty minutes) devoted to this project each week during a three-month period, apart from the reinforcement of these materials through the fulfilment of other activities; thus, there would be twelve half sessions in total. The

ultimate goal is that, at the end of this span of time, they use this knowledge to prepare a script (previously revised by the teacher) for a stand-up comedy act in pairs or small groups; in it, they have to demonstrate that they understand International English pronunciation through their oral production and, if possible, the use of several self-produced puns. Thanks to this, apart from improving their oral skills and having a better learning experience, students would be exposed to intercultural humour and values, whilst their imagination would be fostered and their exposition skills enhanced; moreover, they might overcome their stage fright more easily than with a serious approach. All these aspects are contemplated in objectives a, g, i and j from Royal Decree 1105/2014, according to what is established in the Order of January 15th 2021 and in the Cross Curricular Elements in Decree 110/2016 (Art. 6).

3.2. Contextualization

The I.E.S. La Pandera, located in Los Villares (Jaén), is the only secondary education centre of this agricultural town, whose population is around 6000 people as of 2021 data (Instituto de Estadística y Cartografía de Andalucía, 2022). It is considered a dormitory town, and hence, most of the population who do not work in olive cultivation, wicker crafting or the local water packaging plant commute to nearby localities; this includes the region's capital, Jaén, which is only ten kilometres away. For this reason, the vast majority of the students' families are quite modest, and many of them do not consider non-obligatory education levels as a possibility.

The centre, which is relatively new (from 1990), approximately counts with 350 students and around 40 teachers (I.E.S. La Pandera, n.d.). Right now it is in the early stages of turning into a bilingual centre, and Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects are being carried out. It has most of the facilities necessary for a good quality secondary education, including a laboratory, technology classrooms, a sports hall, a music classroom with some instruments, and a library with a good catalogue, where chess competitions are promoted too. Almost every room counts with an independent computer and a projector, and many of them have a smart board available. Heating and AV devices are also properly implemented, recently accompanied by ecologic windows and solar panels.

The classroom in which the project would be carried out would belong to the fourth year of Obligatory Secondary Education, with 13 girls and 12 boys. Some of them attend private academies for extra training in English, while a few do not have great interest in the subject. A couple of them are gifted learners, while two are slow learners, plus there is one student with hearing impairment. As a whole, the level of English reaches A2+, according to the CEFR Companion Volume (2020), whereas the main aim is to achieve a B1 by the end of the year.

3.3. Key Competences & Objectives

According to the RD 1105/14, the key competences are “those needed for personal fulfilment, as well as for active citizenship, social inclusion and employment”. The present lesson plan favours mainly three **key competences**: linguistic communication (CLC), learning to learn (L2L) and cultural expressions and artistic awareness (CEAA).

Students will be able to communicate in terms of understanding and expressing themselves in a different language; English, in this case. By focusing on interculturality and international intelligibility, alongside interactive and cooperative work, students will be provided with the opportunity to develop their critical thinking, contributing to raising their awareness towards cultural values and creating attitudes of tolerance concerning others.

As for **Didactic Objectives**, the present didactic project mainly aims at achieving the following ones:

- 1) To teach International English phonics and phonetics, and thus, to improve students’ listening and pronunciation skills in the English language.
- 2) To promote creativity and the ability to write a stand-up comedy script or similar texts.
- 3) To make students reflect on different social values and, as a consequence, encourage them to express their critical points of view.
- 4) To foster interculturality and to show the different varieties of English.

Referring to the **Stage Objectives** (RD 115/14), these are the most favoured ones in this lesson plan:

- (a) To assume their duties, know and exercise their rights with respect for others, practice tolerance, cooperation and solidarity between people and groups. Exercise in dialogue strengthening human rights and equal treatment and opportunities between women and men, as common values of a plural society and prepare for the exercise of democratic citizenship.
- (g) To develop the entrepreneurial spirit and self-confidence, participation, critical sense, personal initiative and the ability to learn to learn, plan, make decisions and assume responsibilities.
- (i) To understand and express themselves in one or more foreign languages appropriately.

- (j) To know, value and respect the basic aspects of their own culture and history and that of others, as well as the artistic and cultural heritage.

Finally, in terms of Foreign Language Objectives (Order 15th January, 2021):

- (2) To express themselves and interact orally in everyday communication situations in an understandable and appropriate way, practising dialogue as a means of peacefully resolving conflicts.
- (3) To read and understand various texts at a level appropriate to the abilities and interests of the students, in order to extract general and specific information, complementing this information with other sources to acquire new knowledge.
- (8) To develop the ability to work as a team, reject discrimination against people based on sex, or for any other personal or social condition or circumstance. Strengthen social skills and affective capacities necessary to resolve conflicts peacefully, and reject stereotypes and prejudices of any type.
- (9) To properly use learning strategies, including information and communication technologies and audiovisual media, to obtain, select and present information orally and in writing in the foreign language.
- (10) To value and appreciate the foreign language as a means of communication, cooperation and understanding between people of diverse origins and cultures, promoting solidarity and respect for human rights, within the democratic exercise of citizenship.
- (11) To appreciate the foreign language as an instrument of access to information and a learning tool for diverse contents, as a means of artistic expression and for the development of the ability to learn to learn.

3.4. Contents

To fulfil the objectives and key competences that we have proposed, the following contents have been spread across the activities of the twelve sessions of the didactic project.

Comprehension & Production Strategies

Block 1: Oral Texts Comprehension

- Distinguishing and understanding the basic information of oral texts, transmitted orally or by audio-visual means on specific common topics.

- Understanding instructions for the correct resolution of activities.
- Distinguishing types of comprehension (general meaning, essential information, main points, relevant details).

Block 2: Oral Production

- Mobilising and coordinating one's general and communicative skills in order to perform the tasks effectively (reviewing what one knows about the topic, what one can or wants to say, etc).
- Supporting and making the most of prior knowledge (using "ready-made" language, etc).
- Adapting the text to the recipient, context and channel, applying the register and structure of discourse appropriate to each case.

Block 3: Written Comprehension

- Distinguishing types of comprehension (general meaning, essential information, main points) in different adapted texts appropriate to their age and related to contents of other subjects in the curriculum.

Block 4: Written Production

- Graphic patterns and spelling conventions.
- Creating short written texts on paper and digital support.
- Expressing the message with sufficient clarity and coherence, structuring it adequately and adjusting, if necessary, to the models and formulas of each type of text, using frequently used phrases and expressions.
- Searching for words of similar meaning, defining or paraphrasing a term or expression.

Communicative functions

- Narrating punctual past events.
- Describing present states and situations.
- Describing physical and abstract qualities of people.
- Expressing knowledge, certainty, doubt and conjecture.

- Initiating and maintaining personal and social relationships (agreement and disagreement).
- Expressing interest, liking, ability, feeling, approval, appreciation, sympathy, hope and their opposites.

Syntactic-discursive structures

- Expressing time: present, past and future (*affirmation, negation and interrogation*), indications of time (*ago; early; late*), duration (*from...to*), anteriority (*before*), posteriority (*after*), sequence (*first, next, then, finally...*), temporal relations (*when, then...*).
- Expressing the modality: factuality, capacity/possibility.
- Expressing existence in the past (*There was/There were*).
- Vocabulary of common usage: personal identification; activities of daily life; family and friends; free time, leisure and sports; education and study.

Sociocultural & Sociolinguistic aspects

- Social conventions.
- Participating in short and simple conversations in the classroom and in simulations related to personal experiences, interests and social issues.
- Knowledge of some historical features of the countries where English is spoken.

3.5. Cross-curricular elements

Following the Decree 110/2016 and the Royal Decree 1005/2014, Article 6, the lesson plan will cover the following elements that should be present in all subjects:

- Reading comprehension
- Oral and written production
- Audiovisual communication
- Civic and constitutional education

Apart from the general ones, the following elements will be treated as well:

- ❖ Use of the foreign language in class.

- ❖ The prevention of any form of violence, racism or xenophobia will be encouraged.
- ❖ Sexist behaviour and content and stereotypes that involve discrimination will be avoided.
- ❖ Interest and respect for the opinions of colleagues, their mother tongue, accent, origin, etc.

3.6. Interdisciplinarity

Given the nature of the didactic unit, it has been designed to touch topics that were previously taught in core subjects of the same course.

The most prominent one will be Spanish Language and Literature, for there are activities where literary texts are used, which are distributed throughout the unit, and contents related to discourse markers. It is followed by History and Geography, which also plays a certain role, given that some of the activities will deal with the past and present of the English language. And finally, Civic and Human Rights Education, and Biology and Geology, for there is a very sporadic focus on ethical matters and science.

3.7. Methodology

The methodology selected for the project could be considered to be a mixed one. Due to its comic nature, it will be quite communicative, for learners need as much input as possible from the teacher, and they also need to practice pronunciation and should try to be funny whenever they can (to a reasonable extent). On the contrary, due to the lack of a longer span of time, many activities will be approached in a similar manner to the Audio-Lingual method, that is, in a more mechanical way; on the bright side, students will be grouped together in many occasions, so Cooperative Learning is fostered up to certain degree.

3.8. Sequencing

Even though the recommended steps for teaching state that consonants should be introduced first, learners will need input with vowels so that they can begin thinking about possible puns, and they need time to improve the vocalic pronunciation of many common words. Besides, from the writer's experience, consonants do not seem to be that problematic at their level –possibly because they have been introduced previously, in an overt or covert way–, so an intermittent teaching of them will be enough. The stand-up act and evaluation would be carried out in a thirteenth session

devoted to it. The abbreviations for classroom dynamics will be the following: individual work (IW), group work (GP) and whole class (WC).

	Activity	Type	Dynamics	Materials	Time
SESSION 1	1. Monologue input	Listening	WC	Audiovisual devices	7'
	2. Monologue input and discussion	Listening & Speaking	WC		23'
SESSION 2	1. Magic E introduction	Listening & Reading	WC	Audiovisual devices Sheets of paper	17'
	2. Reading puns	Reading	IW		5'
	3. Pronunciation Practice	Speaking	GW		8'
SESSION 3	1. Reading puns	Reading	IW	Audiovisual devices	3'
	2. Introducing <j>, <w>, <y> and mute <l>	Listening & Speaking	WC		15'
	3. Pronunciation Practice	Speaking	GW		12'
SESSION 4	1. Magic E reminder	Speaking	IW	Audiovisual devices Sheets of paper Copies of the puzzle	4'
	2. Introducing –RE exceptions	Reading, listening	WC		10'
	3. Puzzle with –RE words	Reading	GW		8'
	4. Other exceptions	Reading & Speaking	GW		8'
SESSION 5	1. Monologue and comedy input	Listening & Speaking	WC	Audiovisual devices	30'
SESSION 6	1. Puns with 'A' sounds	Reading	WC	Audiovisual devices Sheets of paper	4'
	2. Song with 'A' sounds	Listening & Speaking	WC		16'
	3. Chinese Whispers	Writing & Speaking	GW		10'
SESSION 7	1. Reading puns with /s, ʃ, z/	Reading & Speaking	WC	Audiovisual devices Sheets of	8'
	2. 'S' sounds and comedy	Listening	WC		14'

	input 3. Practice with the sounds. Tongue twisters	Reading & Speaking	GW	paper	8'
SESSION 8	1. Reading puns with 'E' and 'I' sounds 2. Text with different sounds 3. Identifying sounds	Reading Listening & Reading Reading & Speaking	WC IW GW	Audiovisual devices Sheets of paper	4' 18' 8'
SESSION 9	1. Finding Rhymes online 2. Creating new rhymes for Limericks	Reading Reading & Writing	IW GW	Smart devices and paper	10' 20'
SESSION 10	1. Text with different sounds for 'O' 2. Looking for 'U' sounds and practising them	Listening & Reading Reading & Speaking	IW GW	Audiovisual devices Sheets of paper	18' 12'
SESSION 11	1. Listening and comedy input for /b/, /v/ & <th> 2. Text for <gh> 3. Tongue twisters	Listening & Reading Listening & Reading Speaking	WC IW GW	Audiovisual devices Sheets of paper	12' 12' 6'
SESSION 12	1. Dictation 2. Telling jokes in front of an audience	Listening & Writing Speaking	IW WC	Sheets of paper	12' 18'

3.9. Activities step by step

The spelling sheets mentioned across the sessions would be the contents from Section 2.4.3., and the script of the videos that did not have captions or that had issues have been added to the Appendix. The texts and sentences employed are quite complex in many cases, but they could be used for grammar and vocabulary points outside the

project; for instance, many are useful for direct-indirect speech, time tenses, vocabulary, etc. Most of these activities could be transformed into online exercises too, but they have been presented in paper for practical purposes.

SESSION 1: Project Training (1)

ACTIVITY 1.1. Listening. 7'. By the end of this term, you have to write a stand-up comedy act of about 3 minutes to be performed in pairs or small groups of no more than four people. For that reason, you should start writing the script now. You have to send an initial draft/scheme in two months from now. In order for you to achieve this, today we shall see the basic principles that these monologues consist of.

Watch the following Australian comedian and answer the questions below.

Guardian Australia (2020): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ah1g0_O_sw8

How does she introduce jokes? Fill/circle the correct answers.

- ☐ 1) Out of nowhere.
- ☐ 2) At the end of sequences and deep reflections.
- ☐ 3) Speaking as seriously as a news reporter.
- ☐ 4) Finding the irony of daily/cultural things.
- ☐ 5) Exaggerating/with a strange behaviour
- ☐ 6) Laughing at her own jokes.
- ☐ 7) Referencing something unexpected.
- ☐ 8) Being slightly cruel with no bad intention.

Answer key: all of them except for 1, 3 and 6. You should try to use all these features to narrate a story and make it funny, but remember that it also has to be a bit punny in our case. You should not laugh at your own jokes, but you should not be too serious either; try to have fun on the stage.

ACTIVITY 1.2. Listening & Speaking. 23'. **Listen to the following monologues from French, Scottish and Canadian comedians and try to see if there are any more resources employed by them. After the end of each video, you have two minutes to discuss in groups.**

1) Just for Laughs (2019-a): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXR1PRbSfoA>

Which features are more prominent in his monologue? Select only 2.

- Exaggeration/strange behaviour.
- Finding the irony of daily/cultural things.
- Referencing something unexpected.
- Being slightly cruel with no bad intention.
- Jokes at the end of sequences and deep reflections.

2) Just for Laughs (2021): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1btmMHbojEA>

Which features are more prominent in her monologue? Select only 2.

- Exaggeration/strange behaviour.
- Finding the irony of daily/cultural things.
- Referencing something unexpected.
- Being slightly cruel with no bad intention.
- Jokes at the end of sequences and deep reflections.

What did you notice about the flow of these stand-up acts?

Answer key: just like in *The Simpsons*, a comedic story should begin by a little thing that then leads to the main story and jokes. It can be an introduction, or simply an unrelated tiny story. On top of that, exaggerated body and facial gestures will normally help you give your message more strength. Repetition of situations with the same words, like in the first monologue (texting), can work as well.

3) Just for Laughs (2019-b): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UjKx1cxTeM>

What was different about this final monologue?

Answer key: You can use self-deprecating humour to make the audience connect with you, but you can turn it around to outsmart them, with no bad intention.

SESSION 2: Magic E (1)

ACTIVITY 2.1. Listening & Speaking. 17'. Listen to the following song and pay attention to the lyrics. Luna (2017): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-4SLeBR73o>

How does the Japanese singer pronounce the words in the first column?

· Came, face/facing, shape,		
masquerade, take, place, cage.		please
· Been, free, need, see.		else, where, there
· hiding (hide), inside, disguise.	sign, mind, find	chained
· Poe's, moments, bones.	told	core
· Clue, truth (true).		

Following that logic, try to predict the pronunciation of the following words: nale, lede, kise, snoke, bume.

All of these are made up words, but they follow a pronunciation pattern called Magic E. In these combinations, when you have a final mute <e>, the previous vowel will normally sound as in the alphabet when there is (optionally) a **SINGLE consonant** between them, and if there AREN'T **any vowels** before:

a → /eɪ/ e → /i:/ i → /aɪ/ o → /ou/ u → /ju:/

With <u>, it will lose the initial sound in words such as *lute*, *rule*, *parachute*.

Can you now explain what happens in the third column and why they are different?

- Please, else, chained. Answer: they do not fulfil the rule + <ed> of the past tense.
- Core, where, there. Answer: exceptions because of the <r> in between.

The second column keeps the alphabet pronunciation. What makes it different?

Answer key: due to the special combinations that you have in your sheets.

ACTIVITY 2.2. Reading. 5'. Read the following puns. Pay attention to the final 'E' spellings and other cases.



Figure 10. "Waist of money" (n.d.)



Figure 11. "On the NiFe's Edge" (n.d.)

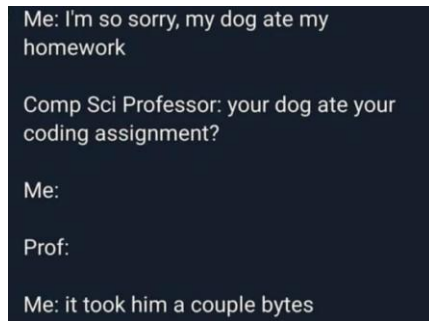


Figure 12. "A couple of bites" (n.d.)



Figure 13. "Mic and the guest speaker" (n.d.)



Figure 14. "I'm not Joe King" (n.d.)

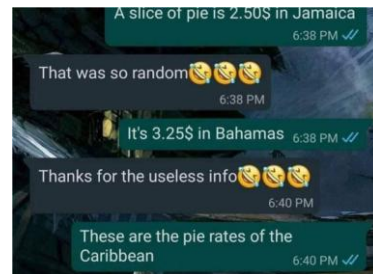


Figure 15. "Pie rates of the Caribbean" (n.d.)

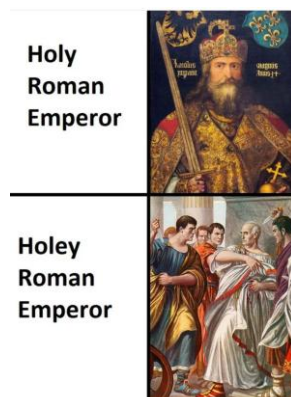


Figure 16. "Holey Roman Emperor" (n.d.)

Have you noticed that ‘come’ in ‘welcome’ ignores the rule? And what about ‘bytes’?

ACTIVITY 2.3. Reading & Speaking. 8’. Group yourselves and choose the odd ones out in the following rows (those which do not sound like in the alphabet). A representative will read all the correct ones aloud.

- late, plane, making, space, software, lake, James, caring.
- speed, Jesse, Peter, complete, these, there, Eileen, centipede.
- life, fire, lied, tie, noise, hiking, since, slice.
- global, voted, hoping, smoker, horse, hopping, code, before.
- useful, YouTube, music, mouse, absolute, cube, mute, rubber.

As you could see, even if we do not have the final E in words with –ed or –ing, or even with changes such as *globe* → *global*, the rule keeps being applied. Sometimes, an <r> at the end does not break the rule, like *smoke* → *smoker* or *Pete* → *Peter*.

SESSION 3: <j>, <w>, <y> and <l>

ACTIVITY 3.1. Reading & Speaking. 2’. Why do you think these two pictures are puns?



Figure 17. “Vertical axis” (n.d.).

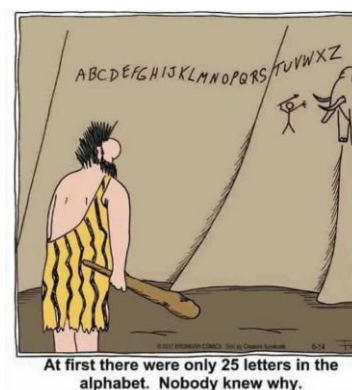


Figure 18. “Nobody knew Y” (n.d.).

ACTIVITY 3.2. Listening. 16’. Trevor Noah is an American TV show host and comedian of South African origin. Watch the “911 in South Africa” excerpt of the video (13:14-15:30). You can use the captions or the x0.75 speed if needed. The Daily Show with Trevor Noah (2021). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWI61kpFEAA>

Now, listen again and pay attention to these words. How did you hear them?

- When, was, watch, what, would, wow, will, whereas, wrong.
- Yeah, if you, your, thank you, away, stay, very, everything.
- Just, emergency.
- Talk, walk, really, call, they'll, will.

After listening to how Trevor pronounces them, and checking your pronunciation sheets, can you then answer these questions? Discuss them with your classmates for three minutes and share your answers.

- 1) If you say /u/ in the second <w> of “wow”, why do you change it to /gu/ in the first one? Is it because English is weird, or maybe you are mishearing things? Have you ever heard a word beginning by “wr” being pronounced as /gr/?
- 2) If you say /'θenkiu/ in “thank you”, why do you use the Spanish “ll” for the other words beginning with <Y>? Have you ever thought about it?
- 3) When you find the combination <ll>, have you ever heard it as the Spanish “ll”? And what about the letter <j> in English? And <g>?
- 4) Have you ever heard anyone in a listening say “talk” or “walk” with the L? And what about the words “listen” and “often”, what usually happens to them?

ACTIVITY 3.3. Reading & Speaking. 12'. **Practice pronunciation in groups with these sentences applying the rules we have seen today; check your spelling pattern sheets if you have any doubts. Then, a representative has to read one aloud for the rest of the classroom. If there is any pun, try to track them down as well. (Material created by the writer.)**

Mute /l/ and /t/

- During the calm before the storm, the palm trees were listening to the people that often walked by; half of them were talking or whistling as they fastened the buttons of their shirts, while the other half were being stalked by suspicious calves (calf).

<j>, <ge/gi> and <ll>

- The Javanese jury has just come to a jarring conclusion, by which Julia has been sentenced to refill ham jars during the month of July!
- Jordan and Llewellyn were about to be given a gist on how to begin their next journey, but they couldn't recollect the password that Lloyd gifted to them.

- Back in June, John suggested that he didn't genuinely enjoy Space Jam as much as Jane had imagined a million times; she should have adjusted her expectations.

<y>

- –Yesterday, you yelled at me for not liking your yellow yard.
+Yeah, youngster, my yoga yard really shouldn't make you yawn!
–Yikes.
- Shyly, but surely, the Python programmer Yekaterina yearned better years, when she was happy just by petting her tiny lynx called Yanni.

<w>

- We were wandering in the wrong way, Ms. Willow. We knew the shipwreck wouldn't be there!
- That was a wacky waste of time, and my wrists hurt after carrying around that wide wooden wardrobe!
- –Dwayne, how do you say "vatio" in English?
+Watt.
–You know, a "vatio". The power thing we use everywhere.
+A watt.
–Why do you keep doing this weird thing? Am I talking too low? Are you half-asleep or something? Wake up!
+What?
–Argh. Your surname may be Watson, but I am no Sherlock to understand you.

SESSION 4: Magic E (2)

ACTIVITY 4.1. Speaking. 4'. **Let's revise what we learnt two weeks ago. Read these sentences aloud. (Material created by the writer.)**

- Take these ice cubes home.
- The bee's huge skate broke a bike.
- The duke of Rome arrived late at Crete.
- This sheet of paper is used for noting down sizes.

ACTIVITY 4.2. Reading, Speaking & Listening. 10'. **Now, we shall work with the biggest exception to the rule: when the <r> consonant is between the vowel and the Magic E. How are these words pronounced?**

- Scare, nightmare, bare, square, stare.
- Here, beer, sphere vs. there, where.
- Fire, satire, retire, tyre, acquire.
- Anymore, Dumbledore, store, ignore, core.
- Cure, brochure, endure vs. furniture, fracture, nature.

Check and listen to some of them in online dictionaries. You can use:

- Cambridge Dictionary: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/>
- ToPhonetics: <https://tophonetics.com/>
- WordReference: <https://www.wordreference.com/>

Where is the pun here? In spelling, or sound?



Figure 19. "Tyrelessly" (n.d.)

ACTIVITY 4.3. Reading. 7'. **In groups, try to complete the following puzzle matching the words with the transcription of the <RE> ending. This will help you look for words in dictionaries. The winners will receive a prize!**

Smart /ɪər/	Here Adore /ɔr/ /ɑr/	Admire Secure /jɔər/	
Software	/jʊər/	Literature /ɔr/	Where
/eər/	Pure /aər/	/ər/	Before /eər/
Desire /aər/	/eər/	There Care /eər/	/ɪər/
	Sincere Comfort		

Figure 20. <V+re> puzzle. Material created by the writer.

ACTIVITY 4.4. Reading and Speaking. 9'. **What's the pun in this meme?**



Figure 21. "You will dialogue" (n.d.)

In groups, try to classify the following words depending on their ending and on whether they follow the Magic E rule or not. Can you notice any similarities?

Police, routine, give, age, unique, line, five, ice, garage, opaque, mace, move, language, Maurice, catalogue, love, stage, mine, rice, baroque, Pauline.

SESSION 5: Project Training (2)

ACTIVITY 5.1. Listening & Speaking. 30'. Watch the four following stand-up comedy acts and try to notice what the speakers do. How do they imitate? How do they indicate that they are changing the topic? Do they repeat things, and how? Do they interact with the public?

· Titan Events & Entertainment (2017): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DN8VOak84fQ> (Transcription in Appendix 6.1).

Answer key: She asks if there is anyone sharing something with her (nationality); she knows the answer is no, so she makes a joke. “But sometimes” receives emphasis to tell that the story begins. “The other day” is typical to begin talking about experiences. When paraphrasing the poster, she speeds up the rhythm at the end, which is then followed by a long pause and a short reflection. Rhetorical questions like “Are they apologising?” or talking to inanimate objects can be funny too. She repeats “on time” to emphasize a difference. Using something from one culture in another one, in a strange manner, can make people laugh too. Pausing at the reaction of someone else, imitating their expression, is effective, and you can add “hmm” or “huh”. A sudden informal expression/swear word can be funny, but only once.

· Stand-up Polska. (2019). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48o-frlVn9Y>

Answer key: Short pauses between words, trying to explain the logic of a sentence, can be funny. “Every time” is a useful expression to begin a story too. Impersonating someone, telling how they mispronounce things in English, can be really funny, but you must be careful not to be rude. You can make people laugh if you tell them that something works in a certain neutral way, but then you exaggerate it a lot when giving an example; this exaggeration can also make a negative statement be funny. To change the topic, he interacts with the audience first to make a pause. This comedian also makes use of pauses and rhetorical questions to let people breathe between laughs, which is important. Besides, as we have the same issue in Spain, you can also comment on wrong translations between languages, translating them back to English.

· Netflix India. (2019). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6aPg3YBvBQ>

· Kanan Gill. (2017). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kb1fFLkbPao>

Answer key: This comedian uses impersonations a lot in both videos. If you are good at this, your facial expressions and change of voice/accent can be more powerful than anything you say; moreover, suddenly changing from a happy to a serious tone is striking, in a good way. Using formal English and technical words, making you sound like a robot, can be funny. Highlighting the differences between the behaviour of people from different cultures (having a dialogue) is usually effective; you can even do it comparing people from your town to those from other towns. You can also highlight a stereotype people may have from you and your culture, and the audience will laugh when they learn you are aware of it. This comedian also uses intermittent pauses to

explain the lack of logic of something, which gets people laughing even before finishing the sentences. In the second video, he interacts with the audience a lot; you can take advantage of this if you know your audience beforehand, like the Japanese comedian. Notice, also, how he uses “then” after a pause to change the topic. Just like with the Polish speaker, you can speak about a negative topic, or in a rude way, without offending people, thanks to your attitude and selection of words; this is better when criticising the way of thinking of some people, so that the audience does not think you are like that.

Fun fact: Did you notice the accent of the Indian comedian? He added an extra /h/ in many cases, just like some people in Andalusia. Beware of this, or you will end up saying *Elitism* as *Hellitism*, or *Amsterdam* as *Hamsterdam*.

SESSION 6: ‘A’ sounds

ACTIVITY 6.1. Reading. 4’. Why do you think these are puns?

- “Distract the truck, Thor!”, says the Spaniard, who doesn’t know much English. Thor, who is Norse and isn’t good at English either, goes and destructs a tractor. (Created by the writer.)
- “There’s a new ice cream shop.” “Am I *aloud* to scream?” (By the writer.)



Figure 22. “Ran somewhere” (n.d.)



Figure 23. “Nun” (n.d.)



Figure 24. “Past Tense” (n.d.)

ACTIVITY 6.2. Listening. 16’. Listen to the following song by one of the members from Monty Python. Try to catch all the ‘a’ sounds that you can on the first try: Eric Idle – Tema (2014): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEgTv68t-hE> (Lyrics in the Appendix 6.2).

Listen again and try to underline all the ‘A’ sounds in the lyrics. Did you notice a different type of ‘a’ apart from short and long ones? Pay attention a third time and

try to distinguish short 'a', long 'a' (ɑ:) and the special sound, which is written in phonetics as /æ/. Try to find /aʊ/ as well.

- Planet, expanding, that, began, had, collapsing, gas, acid, randomly, chimpanzee, Africa, standing, understand.
- Just, us, lucky, suns, wondering, understand.
- Star, far, bizarre, start, ask.
- Out, cloud, our, round.

Did you notice all the patterns? In turns (from stop to stop), read this explanation aloud. After you finish, repeat the words above.

The /æ/ sound usually appears at the beginning of words written as <a> when that syllable is strong; it does not work if we only have one <r> afterwards or if <s> is followed by more sounds (*carry* but *car*, *gas* but *last*). The short /a/ appears as <u>, but in our international accent we should include all words with <ar> too, because British people make them longer as they do not pronounce the /r/. It also appears with many <on> spellings, like *month*, *won*, *one*, *done*, or in *does*, *some* and *come*.

The long /ɑ:/ tends to be followed by <th>, or by <s> or <c> plus another symbol; e.g. *bath*, *ask*, *dance*, *glass*, *last*. With the mute <l> sounds we saw earlier (*half*, *palm*) too. The combinations <ou> and <ow> at the start are usually /aʊ/.

ACTIVITY 6.3. Writing & Speaking. 10'. Create 2 short sentences mainly using words from these lists. Then, playing the game Chinese Whispers, tell them to your colleagues to see if they understood them.

· ON | OTH+V | OVE - /ɑ/ (written as /ʌ/ in dictionaries)

Month, ^(w)one, ^(w)once, done, money, none, wonder(ful), mother, brother, another, nothing, other, love, glove, above. **But not:** convince, construct, online, both, moth, move, improve.

· IND, ILD, IGH, IGN, Y - /aɪ/

Find, mind, blind, child, mild, wild, high, light, sign, align, design; shy, try, why, cry, psychology, sly, my. **But not:** children, wilderness, sync, gym.

-OU/OW - /aʊ/

Loud, mouse, house, count, now, how, coward, down, browse. **But not:** low, grow, flow, row, throw, glow; a → young, country, enough, touch; u → should, youth; ou → shoulder, boulder.

SESSION 7: <ce> & <ci>, /j/ and /z/

ACTIVITY 7.1. Reading & speaking. 8'. In groups, read these jokes and try to explain why they are considered puns. You can use your pronunciation patterns sheets if you need any help.



Figure 25. "Daily Pun of the day 4" (n.d.).



Figure 26. "Ancient Grease" (n.d.).

Why is 'dark' spelled with a k and not c?

Because you can't see in the dark.

Figure 27. "You can't C in the dark" (n.d.).

Lance is a pretty uncommon name these days, but in medieval times, people were named lance a lot.

Figure 28. "Lancelot" (n.d.).

Dad : How were your grades this year ?
Me : Underwater
Dad : What ? What do you mean ?
Me : They were below C level
Dad :

Figure 29. "Below C level" (n.d.).

Former U.S. Marine says his 12-week-old baby raised its hand in salute during sonogram [abc7.la/2ch9e8g](#)



DB
@FreeTrendy_

thank you for your cervix

Figure 30. "Thank you for your cervix" (n.d.).

Bro, can you pass me that pamphlet?
Brochure.

Figure 31. "Brochure" (n.d.).

People who know exactly where
everything is located in the
store have shelf confidence

Figure 32. "Shelf confidence" (n.d.).



Figure 33. "Shrimply the best" (n.d.).



Figure 34. "Syncing" (n.d.).

Puns created by the writer:

- We have to find the person responsible for tearing these Kellogg's apart. Tell the citizens we are looking for a cereal killer!
- "Put me back into my shell!" exclaimed the clam who ran away from prison.
- I don't want to be rude, but this city hall... is a shitty hole.
- "Hey, welcome! Take a seat", said the Spanish teacher, exaggerating her accent. "Oh, okay" replied the Australian student, taking one of the teacher's sheets.
- These are my friends, all called Shaun. They are very sensitive and love wearing dark clothes. We could even say that I have lots of emo-Shauns.

ACTIVITY 7.2. Listening. 14'. The USA has a serious issue with guns, but even that topic can be approached from a comedic point of view to lessen the impact. Watch the following video, also from Trevor Noah's show, and pay special attention to all the 's' sounds, both from the native speakers and the foreigners. The Daily Show with Trevor Noah (2022). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4nn7j0eKbY>

We have three different 's' sounds in "mass shootings". Can you identify them? Check your spelling pattern sheets if necessary.

Watch the first 4 minutes of the video again. Focus on the pronunciation of the following words, and select which sound they represent. Can you tell any difference between the news reporter and, for example, the Colombian and Indian tourists?

- Days, doors, rifles, because, is/isn't, news, reason, zero, guns, exactly, ones.
- Shot, should, politicians, shit, sure, Polish, permission.
- Supermarkets, small, school, just, streets, Tulsa, Texas, inside, entrance, police, us, sense, tourists.

ACTIVITY 7.3. Reading & Speaking. 8'. Taking into account what you have seen in the previous exercises, underline the typical spellings belonging to /s/, and circle the ones belonging to the English /z/.

Peace	-	Peas	Centre	-	Zebra
Crazy	-	Mercy	Hissy	-	Dizzy
Noisy	-	Gypsy	Romance	-	Chimpanzee

Once you have finished, read the following tongue twisters and correct your group members if you hear anything wrong. (Created by the writer.)

- The poisonous gas wasn't noisy nor peaceful.
- The cerebral zebra seahorses habit no place but the ocean.
- You should at least squeeze and then freeze six oranges and their juice.
- Keep your eyes on the prize, Lizzie; once Lisa steals this show, she is going for the other ones.

SESSION 8: 'E' and 'I' sounds

ACTIVITY 8.1. Reading. 4'. Read and try to explain the five following puns.

When you find out approximately 95% of all ocean critters remain undiscovered.



Figure 35. "Sea Crits" (n.d.)



Figure 36. "Weak days" (n.d.)



A strawBEARy

Figure 37. "Strawbeary" (n.d.)



Figure 38. "You herd me" (n.d.)



Figure 39. "Wurst Käse Scenario" (n.d.)

ACTIVITY 8.2. Listening & Reading. 18'. Listen to the following text being slowly read by the teacher. In groups, classify the words depending on the various pronunciations of 'E' and 'I' and their diphthongs. Some words may have two; focus on the first sound and underline the different part.

One day of May, maybe the eighth, when I get up from bed, there will be birds singing; these will be heard until there isn't air on Earth. Repeat with me: "Please, not again! Not on my birthday! Mayday!" I'll search for some grey ear plugs to wear, even if I have to pay for them with all the money I have left, or else, I'll begin a great journey to despair. Everyone will feel the fear of my hurt brain. I'll need the aid of some nurse, because my dread will be out of this world, so much it won't be able to be expressed with any word. Many will prefer to stay at the office and work to death; many will tear apart their shirts; but in the end, the only way not to lose my hair is to scare all those birds away, or turn them into meaty steaks. **(Created by the writer).**

/e/ /ɜ:r/ /ei/ /eər/ /ɪ/ /i:/ /ɪər/

Can you notice the difference between /ɜ:r/ and /eər/? Check out this pun.



Figure 40. "Warewolf" (n.d.)

Can you see patterns for /eɪ/ and /ɜ:r/? And for /ɪ/? Take a look at any, many, again, great, steak, grey, journey, wear and tear. Do they fit in their categories? The good news for you is that these are some of the most common exceptions.

ACTIVITY 8.3. Reading & Speaking. 8'. Following what you saw in the previous exercise, and checking your spelling sheets, which vowels should you use in each row? Repeat and pay attention to the strong /ɜ:r/ and the long /i:/.

- Dear, spear, clear, year, near, hear, weird, buyer, lawyer.
- Prey, spray, play, way, maiden, rain, sleigh, weight, obey.
- Cheat, beat, beach, mean, reason, believe, receive, field, algae.
- Fresh, melt, send, pencil, wet, tent, bread, head, breath.
- Represent, deconstruct, pretty, behold, emotion, event, miss, big, happy.
- Purtle, burger, first, girl, herb, earn, pearl, worst, worm.

SESSION 9: Project Training (3)

ACTIVITY 9.1. Reading. 10'. Today, we are going to learn how to look for rhymes using online websites, which is useful for creating puns. For instance, imagine that you want to find a rhyme for the words "rice", "scare" and "attitude". With *The Free Dictionary*, you can look for starts, endings or combinations of letters inside a word. If you click on the word, you can find the phonetic transcription to check its sound. If you want more information, you can use the online dictionaries from the previous sessions, or similar ones. URL: <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/words-that-end-in-ice>

If we had the next sentences and we wanted to show that someone misunderstood them, which similar words could we use to replace them? Remember that only one sound, and sometimes two, should differ from the original.

- Let's eat some rice! Answer key: some ice/mice/lime!
- Ma'am, you won't scare us. Answer key: won't snare/spare/share us.
- You don't have the attitude to fly. Answer key: the latitude/altitude to fly.

ACTIVITY 9.2. Reading & Writing. 20'. In groups, try to change the final words of at least 2 Limericks so that you have a rhyme (AABBA) with other sounds; if you can do more, then better. Use the resources mentioned earlier to check the pronunciation. The result should only have a tiny bit of sense, because rhymes are what matter the most; however, you are free to modify other words if you want to.

· An elderly man called Keith,
Mislaid his set of false teeth.
They'd been laid on a **chair**,
He'd forgot they were **there**,
Sat down, and was bitten beneath. (*Funny English Limericks*, n.d.)

· A crossword compiler named Moss,
Who found himself quite at a loss.
When asked, Why so **blue**?
Said, I haven't a **clue**,
I'm 2 down to put 1 across. (*Funny English Limericks*, n.d.)

There was an odd fellow named Gus,
When travelling he made such a fuss.
He was banned from the **train**,
Not allowed on a **plane**,
And now travels only by bus. (*Funny Limericks*, 2021)

· There was a young lady of Kent,
Whose nose was most awfully bent.

She followed her **nose**,
One day, I **suppose**,
And no one knows which way she went. (*Funny English Limericks*, n.d.)

· My dog is quite hip,
Except when he takes a dip.
He looks like a **fool**,
when he jumps in the **pool**,
and reminds me of a sinking ship. (*Funny Limericks*, 2021).

A man and his lady-love, Min,
Skated out where the ice was quite thin.
Had a quarrel, no **doubt**,
For I hear they fell **out**,
What a blessing they didn't fall in! (*Funny Limericks*, 2021).

SESSION 10: 'O' and 'U' sounds

ACTIVITY 10.1. Listening, Reading & Speaking. 18'. **Listen to the teacher reading this text twice. Underline all the long /ɔ:/ sounds that you can hear, circle the short /ɒ/ sounds, and do both things for /oʊ/. (By the writer.)**

"Stop this shortly! I don't want to call the law!", said the old Coach in his cold porch, holding the door with his small hands as it poured. "Oh, boy, that would be the most awful choice", the tall robber told him. "You should give me all your gold, and a toast and a teapot to get warm". Then, Coach laughed and spoke: "You can be sure you won't put a step on my floor and that I won't be your host. Go home and rot with your mould! I shall talk no more". The robber then said "Why does it always follow this course? Alright, I don't know why I thought it would work; perhaps because you looked cool. I'm a method actor from the north, and I was only trying to get my story told." Coach, in awe, said "You've made me fall for it; I never saw it coming. But all the hospitality I can offer you... is sending you to the hospital. So grab your coat, hit the road, and be gone already!". The lonely actor walked away into the autumn dawn.

Can you see the patterns with <au>, <aw>, <our>, <al> and <all>? What about <old> and <oa>? And <oi> and <oy>? What did you hear in *because*, *would*, *mould*, *want*, *warm*, *laugh*, *only* and *gone*? Group yourselves and read the text in turns.

ACTIVITY 10.2. Reading & Speaking. 12'. In groups of three, each person has to select one of the texts and classify, with the help of the spelling sheets, which type of 'U' sounds you have. Then, read the text aloud. (Material created by the writer).

- Look at the news bulletin! A woman from the neighbourhood was reading a book when a bull came running as fast as a bullet and pushed her into a bush; there, a wolf was waiting to bite her foot, which scared her for good!
- A few uniformed guys of the new crew usually put their boots on top of a tomb when they go drink a juice. What fools! They could lose them in a situation where a furious goose in a blue suit pulls them away and throws them into a sewer.
- Lewis, who is a university tourist from Europe, took a fully different route in Peru than the rest of his group; he went to eat a soup. He shouldn't have done that, as he lost his shoe and was wounded by a puma who confused him with food.

SESSION 11: /b/ & /v/, <th> and <gh>

ACTIVITY 11.1. Listening. 12'. Watch the following video twice and listen carefully to the words listed below. Which differences can you tell between the rows? Brunoscota (2009): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PktyJR_U2J0

- Blond, belts, back, possible, bored.
- Have, violin, marvellous, vitally, I've, above, leave, remove.
- Something, thinking, with, three.
- Another, that, this, there, the, they.

What happened with "alright" and "climbing"? Check your pronunciation sheets.

Fun fact 1: Did you notice that <th> as in *they* is not exactly a /d/? If you ever use a dictionary to search for <th> words that do not sound like /θ/, such as in *think*, you will find /ð/. It is a sound between a /d/ and a /θ/.

Fun fact 2: Did you notice that these speakers did not pronounce the /r/ sounds in most cases? Remember that this is typical of British and Australian speakers.

ACTIVITY 11.2. Listening & Reading. 12'. The combination <gh> in English is quite confusing. Watch the following video explaining the main rules. Aze Linguistics (2000). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSSGKbkvqBE>

Now, classify the words in this text depending on the sound: mute, /g/ and /f/. Then, identify the sounds with /θ/. (Material created by the writer.)

“My dearest daughter, we ought to have thorough care. If there is not enough light, there is no sight, which makes things very tough, as we can’t fight any mighty ghost that isn’t bright; besides, we might fall from a great height. In those cases, as I taught you, we can weigh our options and sigh together, but let’s not cough if we don’t want to be caught. But, even though things may seem rough, ghastly thoughts must not frighten us, because there is always time for a good laugh, and these cannot be bought even at a high price.” “Alright”, answered Breight through the door.

ACTIVITY 11.3. Speaking. 6’. **Now that you have learnt about these differences, it is time to practice. In groups, read these tongue twisters aloud. Make sure to check your pronunciation patterns and notes if you have any doubt.** (Material created by the writer.)

- I love people from Los Villares. They all live on olives.
- David, do you have the verbal verve to pronounce these brave verbs?
- Ben Banner’s bad vibes arrived when Bette Villy recovered the banished bin that had vanished in Vin Diesel’s vaccine convention back in November.
- The best candidate to pilot the boat received more votes despite her previous ban; she drove with a wardrobe in the back of her van, and with a reflective blue vest on that blinded drivers-by. For her and her investors, though, it became the Vest Day ever after.
- The indebted rebels climbing the mountain stopped combing their hair when the bombers revealed themselves in the sky. The climbers could feel their limbs subtly trembling like those of a lamb full of doubts.
- There are three thousand therapists in this side of the Thames, like Thomasine Thyme, who think that thin horns are a better sign of a healthy animal than thick thighs.

SESSION 12: Review

ACTIVITY 12.1. Listening & Writing. 12’. **The teacher will read aloud the following words. You have to write them down and hand in the piece of paper for evaluation. This will serve as a practice for full sentences in future exams.**

- Just, nothing, month, tough, enough, cart, ask, past. Glass, gas. Cut, cat. Much, match. Love, lab. Price, light, fire, tire (or tyre).
- Bury, very. Bed, bird. Gain, again. Say, says. Mate, bake. Waste, strange. Break, great. Warehouse, werewolf. Worm, worst.
- Bit, beat. This, these. Sit, seat. Ship, sheep. Feel, fear. Hissy, dizzy.
- Though, thought. Already, always. Call, cold. Fall, folder. Mall, mo(u)ld. Water, warm, quality.
- Through, too. Pull, pool. Full, fool. Would, good. Could, should.

ACTIVITY 12.2. Speaking. 18'. At least one volunteer from each group will have to read one of these puns aloud; if more of you want to, go ahead. The teacher will explain the unknown words and expressions beforehand, with no context. Try to use pauses to make them funnier, and do not laugh until the public does. Examples taken from *The Last of Us Wiki* (n.d.).

- I'm glad I know sign language. It has become quite handy.
- When the power went out at the school... The children were de-lighted.
- Diarrhea is hereditary. It runs in your genes.
- I heard two peanuts walk into a park... One was as-salted.
- The Magician got frustrated and pulled his hareut out.
- A criminal's best asset... is his lie-ability.
- I tried to catch some fog earlier. I mist.
- Why did the scarecrow get a promotion? He was out-standing in his field.
- What did the mermaid wear to her math class? An algaeu-bra.
- I stayed up all night wondering where the sun went. Then it dawned on me.
- 3.14 percent of sailors are Pi-rates.
- A moon rock tastes better than an earthly rock because it's meteor. (meatier)
- A book just fell on my head, I only have my shelf to blame.
- What did Confederate soldiers use to live on? Civil ware.

3.10. Diversity outreach

In the following pages there will be some extra contents to support what has been taught in the classroom. There are more basic (reinforcement) activities for students

who have a harder time with English, while there are more complex ones for those who are really good at it. The latter could be carried out in class if there was enough time left. For the student with hearing impairment, contents have already been adapted, as most videos have captions or lyrics, and the ones which did not are included in the Appendix; the dictation from Session 12 would be, instead, a sort of “transcription” without phonetic symbols (unless the student wanted to use them).

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 1

Is the Magic E rule used in the following rows?

- Police, medicine, unique, garage, lose, improve, come, none, algae.
- Quite, face, strange, rose, Steve, reduce, waste, moped.
- Since, mouse, mopped, battle, Jesse, choose.
- Stare, here, admire, score, pure, future. Answer key: <re> exception patterns.
- Nice, make, hope, free, tie, due.

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 2

Identify the ash /æ/ sound in the following sentences and underline it. Circle the other ‘a’ sounds. Then, practise their pronunciation. (Content created by the writer.)

- From the right distance, a pannang camara can catta walking catta as if they were monsters.
- A fan of *The Stanley Parabale* is not lackang in paranaoia nor fun.
- Ann underandas mankind better than Alfred does.
- Sad pancakes must land on your hands for you to be happy.
- Thanks, Mr. Mank, but my back won’t be able to travel that far.

With which combinations is the long /ɑ:/ normally used? Check your spelling sheets and look for examples. Try to think of one or two that are not in there.

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 3

Are the long /i:/ sounds used in these rows? Practise their pronunciation.

- Kit, Smith, reconstruct, prefer, built, guilty, minute.
- Bread, spread, thread, health, eight, monkey, dead, break, great, steak.

- Each, meet, receive, key, weak, heal, believe, bee, these.

Are the strong /ɜ:r/ sounds employed in these rows? Practise their pronunciation.

- Birthday, purple, heard, blur, sir.
- Where, there, Esther, here, chair, hair, aware.
- Herd, bird, nurse, stir, search, Earth.

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 4

Listen to this song and classify all the words below depending on their sounds.

SonySoundtracksVEVO (2021): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=di3mNRymKZg>

- so, may, start, now, time, supposed, fear, all, enough, taboo, you, close, budget, just, authors, tales, die, us, agree, here, vain, high, hope, goes, outside, thought, built, key, too, lazily, show.

/a/ /aɪ/ /eɪ/ /ɪ/ /i:/ /ɪər/ /ɔ:/ /oʊ/ /u:/

EXPANSION ACTIVITY 1

Read these excerpts from *The Tragedy of Macbeth* by Shakespeare (1606). Highlight the 'Magic E' rule examples, and underline the exceptions.

MACBETH What man dare, I dare.

Approach you **like** the rugged Russian bear,

The armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan **tiger**;

Take any **shape** but that, and my firm nerves

Shall never tremble. Or be **alive** again

And dare me to the desert with your sword. [...]

DOCTOR Were I from **Dunsinane** away and clear,

Profit again should hardly draw me here. [...]

MALCOM Let us **seek** out some desolate shade, and there

Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Too cruel anywhere.

Dear Duff, I pray to you, contradict yourself,

And say it is not so. [...]

MACBETH The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step
On which I must fall down or else **over**leap,
For in my way it **lies**. Stars, **hide** your fires;
Let not light **see** my black and **deep** desires. [...]

SIWARD He's worth no more.
They say he parted well and paid his score,
And so, God be with him. Here comes newer
comfort. [...]

MALCOM Be comforted:
Let's **make** us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief. [...]

EXPANSION ACTIVITY 2

Note down all words with the /æ/ sound and try to practise them. Why is the song funny? Do lyrics match with the picture? About which topic is it ironic? R O B I N E T T E (2017). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9h55mdF4lw>

EXPANSION ACTIVITY 3

Classify the words and then write down which sounds belong to each of them.

Box 91 Student handout

Part A
cheese rough shampoo author Philip tights champagne
toothpaste Thomas stomach ship geography chef
Ghanaian chemistry cherries smooth headache shoes
Stephen pharmacist coach shower Chinese Thai yacht
shorts cough throat physics chest shiver light

Part B
1 three things you can eat or drink
2 three things you find in the bathroom
3 three things you might do or have when you are ill
4 three nationalities
5 three male names
6 three means of transport
7 three words describing how things feel
8 three jobs
9 three school subjects
10 three parts of the body
11 three items of clothing

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Figure 41. Mute H sounds (Hewings, 2004: 176).

EXPANSION ACTIVITY 4

Choose one of these songs and note down the words that have the pronunciation rules we have seen during these months: *mind*, *frozen*, *rain*, *hear*, *mother*, *government*, etc. Listen to it as many times as you need.

- 1) Person Whatname (2009). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrzNABgN420>
- 2) Jeff Russo – Tema (2020). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HanmKCzz-ZE>
(Lyrics in the Appendix 6.3).
- 3) Lyrics (2009). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qg_TRaiWj4o

3.11. Evaluation

According to the RD 1105/114, two references will check the degree of acquisition and development of the skills and objectives proposed: evaluation criteria and assessable learning standards. Both aspects will be closely related to the didactic objectives we discussed in section 3.3. Evaluation rubrics have been included as well.

3.11.1. Evaluation Criteria

For didactic objectives 1 and 4, the evaluation criteria (in reference to the Order of 15th January) selected are the following. The abbreviations below stand for: Linguistic Communication (CCL), Digital Competence (CD), Learning-to-Learn Competence (CAA), Sense of initiative and entrepreneurial spirit (SIEP), Cultural Awareness and Expressions (CEC), and Social and Civic Competence (CSC).

Block 1. 1- To identify the general meaning, the essential information, the main points and the most relevant details in short or medium-length oral texts, clearly structured, transmitted orally or by technical means and articulated at medium speed, in a formal, informal register or neutral, and that deal with concrete or abstract aspects of general topics, about everyday matters in common or less usual situations, or about their own interests in the personal, public, educational and occupational/labour spheres, provided that the acoustic conditions do not distort the message and you can hear what was said again. CCL, CD.

Block 1. 7- Discriminate phonological patterns, sound, stress, rhythmic and intonation patterns in common use, and recognize the meanings and general communicative intentions related to them. CCL, CAA.

Block 2. 6- To pronounce and intonate the sentences clearly and intelligibly, even if sometimes the foreign accent is evident or sporadic pronunciation mistakes are made, as long as they do not interrupt the communication, although the

interlocutors may need repetition to help understanding if it is rare words and structures. CCL, CAA.

Block 2. 7- To maintain the rhythm of the speech with enough fluency to make the message understandable when the interventions are short or medium in length, handling short phrases, groups of words and formulas to communicate in habitual and everyday situations, occasionally interrupting the speech to look for expressions, articulate less frequent words and repair communication in less common situations or in longer interventions. CCL, CAA.

Block 3. 7- To recognize the main formatting, spelling, typographic and punctuation conventions, as well as abbreviations and symbols in common and more specific use (for example, use of the apostrophe, &, etc.), and their associated meanings. CCL, CAA.

Block 4. 7- To know and apply, so that the text is mostly understandable, the most frequent spelling, punctuation and formatting conventions (for example, the point, the comma (the use of upper and lower case letters, or the use of the apostrophe), although there may be some influence from the first or other languages; knowing how to handle basic text processing resources to correct spelling errors in texts produced in electronic format, and adapting to the common conventions for writing texts on the Internet (for example, abbreviations or others in chats, SMS, WhatsApp, etc.). CCL, CAA, SIEP.

Turning to the didactic objective 2, these are the main evaluation criteria taken into consideration:

Block 1. 4- To distinguish the most relevant communicative function or functions of the text and a repertoire of its most common exponents, as well as basic discursive patterns of frequent use related to the organization and expansion or restructuring of textual information (for example, new versus known; exemplification; abstract). CCL, CAA.

Block 2. 2- To know and be able to apply the most appropriate strategies to produce brief or medium-length monological and dialogic oral texts, with a simple and clear structure, exploiting the resources available and limiting expression to them, using, among others, to procedures such as the adaptation of the message to patterns of the first language or others, or the use of approximate lexical elements, the simple definition of elements in the absence of more precise ones, or starting over with a new strategy when communication fails. CCL, CAA, SIEP.

Block 4. 1- To write on paper or electronically short or medium-length texts, coherent and with a clear structure, on topics of personal interest, or everyday or less common matters, in a formal, neutral or informal register, properly using the basic resources of cohesion, the basic spelling conventions and the most common punctuation marks, with reasonable control of expressions, structures and frequently used lexicon, both general and more specific within one's own area of specialization or interest. CCL, CD, SIEP.

Block 4. 2- To know, select and apply appropriate strategies to produce short or medium-length written texts, for example, rephrasing structures from other texts with similar characteristics and communicative purposes, copying conventional formats, formulas and models typical of each type of text, or writing preliminary drafts. CCL, CAA, SIEP.

Block 4. 6- To know and use a written lexical repertoire of common use sufficient to communicate brief, simple and direct information, opinions and points of view related to everyday matters and to general topics or those related to one's own interests, studies and occupations, and a limited repertoire of expressions and frequently used idioms, although in less common situations and on lesser-known topics, the message must be adapted. CCL, CEC.

As for didactic objective 3, these are the main evaluation criteria employed:

Block 1. 3- To know and use sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects related to daily life (study habits and study activities, work and leisure), living conditions (habitat, socioeconomic structure, environment), interpersonal relationships (generational, between men and women, in the educational, occupational and institutional spheres), behaviour (postures, gestures, facial expressions, use of voice, eye contact, proxemics), and social conventions (customs, traditions, attitudes, values). CCL, CSC.

Block 2. 3- To incorporate into the production of monological or dialogic oral texts the acquired sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge related to social structures, interpersonal relationships, patterns of action, behaviour and social conventions in the personal, public, educational and occupational/labour spheres, selecting and contributing necessary and pertinent information, suitably adjusting the expression to the recipient, the communicative purpose, the subject matter and the communication channel, and expressing opinions and points of view with the necessary courtesy. CCL, CSC, SIEP.

Block 3. 3- To know and use the sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects related to daily life (study and work habits, leisure activities, including artistic

manifestations such as music or cinema), living conditions (habitat, environment, socioeconomic structure), interpersonal relationships (generational, between men and women, or in the educational, occupational and institutional spheres) and social conventions (customs, traditions, attitudes, values), as well as general cultural aspects that allow understanding information and ideas present in the text (for example, of a historical or literary nature). CCL, CSC.

Block 4. 3- To incorporate into the production of the written text the acquired sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge related to social structures, interpersonal relationships, patterns of action, behaviour and social conventions in the personal, public, educational and occupational/labour spheres, selecting and providing necessary and pertinent information, suitably adjusting the expression to the recipient, the communicative purpose, the subject matter and the textual support, and expressing opinions and points of view with the necessary courtesy. CCL, CSC, SIEP.

3.11.2. Assessable learning standards

The assessable learning standards associated with didactic objectives 1 and 4, also following the Order of 15th January, are the following:

Block 1. 1- Catches the main points and relevant details of clearly articulated recorded or live voice messages that contain instructions, directions or other information, including technical information (e.g. on answering machines, or on how to carry out an experiment in class or how to use a machine or device in the occupational field).

Block 2. 1- Makes brief, well-structured, pre-rehearsed presentations with visual support (e.g. PowerPoint) on specific aspects of academic or occupational topics of interest, organizing basic information coherently, explaining main ideas briefly and clearly, and responding to simple, clearly articulated questions from listeners at medium speed.

Block 2. 3- Participates appropriately in informal face-to-face conversations or by telephone or other technical means, on everyday or less common matters, in which he exchanges information and briefly expresses and justifies opinions and points of view; narrates and coherently describes events that occurred in the past or real or invented plans for the future; hypothesizes; makes suggestions; asks for and gives directions or instructions in some detail; expresses and justifies feelings, and describes concrete and abstract aspects of topics such as music, cinema, literature or current affairs.

Block 3. 6- Understands specific information of a concrete nature on Web pages and other clearly structured reference or consultation materials (e.g. encyclopaedias, dictionaries, monographs, presentations) on topics related to academic subjects or occupational matters related to their specialty or interests.

Block 4. 3- Takes notes, messages and notes with simple and relevant information on common matters and specific aspects in the personal, academic and occupational fields within their specialty or area of interest.

Meanwhile, the assessable learning standards for didactic objectives 3 and 4 are:

Block 1. 3- Identifies the main ideas and relevant details of a formal or informal conversation of a certain duration between two or more interlocutors that takes place in their presence and in which familiar topics or of a general or daily nature are discussed, when the speech is articulated with clarity and in a standard variety of language.

Block 3. 2- Understands the general meaning, the main points and relevant information of announcements and communications of a public, institutional or corporate nature and clearly structured, related to matters of personal, academic or occupational interest (e.g. about leisure, courses, scholarships, work offers).

Block 4. 5- Writes, in a conventional format, brief and simple reports in which he gives essential information on an academic, occupational, or unusual topic (eg, an accident), briefly describing situations, people, objects, and places; narrating events in a clear linear sequence, and explaining in a simple way the reasons for certain actions.

Block 4. 6- Writes personal correspondence and participates in forums, blogs and chats in which he describes experiences, impressions and feelings; narrates, in a linear and coherent way, facts related to their field of interest, past activities and experiences (e.g. about a trip, their best vacations, an important event, a book, a movie), or imaginary facts; and exchanges information and ideas on specific topics, pointing out the aspects that seem important to them and briefly justifying their opinion on them.

3.11.3. Evaluation tools

The different tools employed to evaluate students' improvement over the course of these three months will be the following:

- Daily observation checklist

	Activities are completed in a proper manner.	The student showed some degree of interest and effort.	The student has used English as much as possible, and even tried to be humorous.	
Yes				/3
No				

- Dictation from Session 12 (Activity 1)

	1	2	3	4	5
Vowels	Understood 6 vowels or less	Understood 7 vowels	Understood 8 vowels	Understood 9 vowels	Understood 10 vowels or more
Consonants	Understood 2 English features or less	Understood 3 English features	Understood 5 English features	Understood 7 English features	Understood 8 English features
Mark					/ 10

- Final Presentation Rubric

	1	2	3	4
Elaboration of the Script and Use of English	There are multiple notable grammatical and lexical mistakes, or most of the script has been copied from an external source.	There are some grammatical and lexical mistakes that affect intelligibility in a few instances, and/or there is a certain lack of use of the strategies proposed.	Grammar and vocabulary are good for the most part, and the strategies proposed have been employed several times, even though some of them may not be appropriate.	Grammar and vocabulary are (almost) perfect, while the strategies proposed have been used to a great extent in appropriate cases.
Use of puns	There is no use of puns at all, neither in practice nor intention.	One or two puns have been used, but they are not phonetically accurate and/or they do not fully work.	At least one pun has been incorporated successfully, while another one did not fully work.	At least two puns have been incorporated successfully, or only one but with other three or four flawed attempts.

Pronunciation of Consonants	Everything is read as it is written, with one or two exceptions.	At least 4 of the 10 features are used by the student.	At least 6 of the 10 features are used by the student.	At least 8 of the 10 features are employed: · <j> is not /h/. · <w> is not /gu/. · <y> is not /dʒ/. · Mute /l/ is used. · <ce> & <ci> with /s/. · <sh> with ʃ. · Pronunciations of /z/ are often correct. · vs. <v>. · Pronunciations of <th> are often correct. /d/ valid. · Pronunciations of <gh> are usually correct.
Pronunciation of Vowels	They use the Spanish sounds, maybe with one rare exception.	They distinguish at least 6 of the vowels and a few glides.	They distinguish at least 8 of the vowels and several glides.	They distinguish at least 9 of the vowels and most of the glides.
Fluency & Time	The students surpass the time limit by a large margin, or they have very serious fluency problems in general.	The students surpass the time limit by a margin, and their fluency is not ideal.	The students surpass the time by a very small margin, and their fluency is mostly good.	The students finish in time and their fluency is great.
Final Mark				/ 20

3.12. Resources and Materials

- Google Classroom (at students' home).
- Computer.
- Screen/projector.
- Audio device.

- PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat Reader, to present exercise statements in phases, and for bigger pictures.
- Internet connection.
- Sheets of paper.
- Students' notebooks and pens.
- Students' smart devices.
- Moveable chairs (and desks, if possible).
- Nearpod, Quizlet and Kahoot, to possibly present some of the exercises as online activities: <https://nearpod.com/>, <https://quizlet.com/es> & <https://kahoot.it/>
- Cambridge Dictionary: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/>
- ToPhonetics: <https://tophonetics.com/>
- WordReference: <https://www.wordreference.com/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/>
- The Free Dictionary: <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/>

4. CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this Master's Dissertation, it was stated that English phonology plays a major role in communicating the user's ideas, given that living languages are meant to be spoken rather than written. Hence, for a proper transmission of the message, improving learners' pronunciation is of the utmost importance.

As we have seen throughout this paper, although Received Pronunciation has usually been the target variety in educational materials due to its status, it is no longer the most appropriate accent to teach, as it has mostly fallen in disuse even in Great Britain; for that reason, General American and Estuary English would be more realistic target varieties, but they present far too many features that might affect intelligibility, which is not suitable for international communication. Then, Jenkins's Lingua Franca Core is probably the best interpretation of English as an International Language, for it only keeps the essential phonological elements needed for English to be understood around the globe. Furthermore, it significantly reduces the amount of work needed for learners. This is especially positive for Spanish-speaking students, given the vast difference existing between the vocalic systems of both languages, plus some relevant

nuances in terms of consonants and suprasegmentals. Another great issue for Spanish learners is that of the English dissonance between the spoken and written form, but as we have seen, although there are many exceptions, English spelling follows a series of patterns that make its teaching far easier than it might seem at first sight. Therefore, the LFC, if combined with the teaching of phonics and phonetics, would become a great tool in English classrooms that would suppose a considerable enhancement of learners' pronunciation.

In the didactic proposal, it has been shown that a reasonable presentation of the segmentals of English can be provided in a period of three months, all without affecting the teaching of other contents. However, due to that time constraint, many activities needed to be more mechanical than usual, but they could easily be turned into online activities to further motivate students. More time would be needed to teach intonation and other features, but those can be introduced in an overt manner in other sessions. The use of humour, and especially of puns, can foster the interest of learners and show the nuances that the English language has, providing rich input, cultural awareness and entertainment. The teaching of phonology, although relatively brief, can be easily carried out while doing all the previous things. Besides, as it is paired with the teaching of phonics, a learner can become capable of properly using dictionaries and even looking for rhymes to create puns, just like a native speaker of their age could (to a certain degree).

Therefore, with the LFC and the appropriate training methods and time allotment, Spanish-speaking students can overcome many of the difficulties they have with English, whilst exercising their creativity and increasing their interest for the target language.

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⁵⁰ The authorship, titles and dates of basically all pictures were unclear, so a title has been designed for them, while providing a link to where they were retrieved from. In three cases, they were taken before working on this dissertation and their specific links have vanished, so a generic one to the website where they were found has been provided.

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6. APPENDIXES

6.1. Yuriko Kotani On Stand Up Central – Transcription

Hello, everyone! It's great to be here. Uhm, so, uhm, I'm from Japan. Have we got anyone from Japan tonight? (The public says no) Because... all the Japanese are still at work. So I've been living in this country for eleven years, eleven years now, and I really love living in this country, very much so. But sometimes, things frustrate me and, let me share it with you. The other day I was on a train and a poster caught my eye, and it said: "93.12 percent of all London Overground trains ran within 5 minutes of the scheduled time between 28th of June 2015 to 12th of July 2015". (Laughs from the audience) Is this confession? Underneath it said: "we're improving our journey on London Overground". Are they apologising? Because I supposed the trains are supposed to be running within zero minutes of delay at all time. In Japan, trains are on time, like, proper on time ON time. So that morning I was very tired, so even though I was in a rush to work, I couldn't stop myself and I said to the poster (pause) out loud: "I forgive you".

Because as I said earlier I really love living in this country, because people's more laid-back, relaxed, than back home. And there is one word, one beautiful English word I love, and we don't have this word in Japanese. It is "ish". So I decided to bring this "ish" concept back home. So the last time when I visited my family, I told my mum: "let's meet up at one-ish". But because we don't have this word, I said to her: "let's meet up in between 1:05 and 1:25". (Laughs from the audience) I saw her eyes. With... confusion? And rage. I believed that this "ish" culture began long time ago and it is in people's blood. That's why people are called "British". (Pause).

So I leave you with this. The other day I was walking down the street and there was a very good-looking young white Englishman; said to me "Nihao". Maybe some of you know this meaning. This means "hello" in CHINESE. I thought "quite nice", because living in this modern society, nobody really says hello to strangers on the street. So I said "hello" in Polish. Get it right, motherfucker!

6.2. Galaxy DNA Song (by Eric Idle) – Lyrics

Just remember you're a tiny little person on a planet
In a universe expanding and immense,
That life began evolving and dissolving and resolving
In the deep primordial oceans by the hydrothermal vents.

Our earth, which had its birth almost five billion years ago
From out of a collapsing cloud of gas,
Grew life, which was quite new,
And eventually led to you,
In only three point five billion years or less.

Deoxyribonucleic acid helps us replicate
And randomly mutate from day to day.
We left the seas and climbed the trees
And our biologies
Continued to evolve through DNA.

We're 98.9 percent the same as chimpanzees,
Whose trees we left three million years ago
To wander swapping genes out of Africa, which means
We're related to everyone we know.
(Oh là là)

Life is quite strange,
Life is quite weird,
Life is really quite odd,
Life from a star is far more bizarre,
Than an old bearded bloke they call God.

So gaze at the sky, and start asking why
You're even here on this ball,
For though life is fraught,
The odds are so short,
You're lucky to be here at all...

Standing on a planet which is spinning round a star,
One of just a billion trillion suns
In a universe that's ninety billion light years side to side,
Wondering where the heck it all came from.

You've a tiny little blink of life to try and understand
What on earth is really going on
In biology and chemistry,
Which made you you and made me me.
But don't ask me I only wrote the song.

6.3. Mother (by Roger Waters) – Lyrics

Retrieved from *Musixmatch* from Google Search:

Mother do you think they'll drop the bomb
Mother do you think they'll like the song
Mother do you think they'll try to break my balls
Ooooh aah, Mother should I build a wall

Mother should I run for president
Mother should I trust the government
Mother will they put me in the firing line
Ooooh aah, is it just a waste of time

Hush now baby don't you cry
Mama's gonna make all of your
Nightmares come true
Mama's gonna put all of her fears into you
Mama's gonna keep you right here
Under her wing

She won't let you fly but she might let you sing

Mama will keep baby cosy and warm

Ooooh Babe Ooooh Babe Ooooh Babe

Of course Mama's gonna help build the wall

Mother do think she's good enough for me

Mother do think she's dangerous to me

Mother will she tear your little boy apart

Ooh aah, mother will she break my heart

Hush now baby, baby don't you cry

Mama's gonna check out all your girl friends for you

Mama won't let anyone dirty get through

Mama's gonna wait up till you come in

Mama will always find out where

You've been

Mamma's gonna keep baby healthy and clean

Ooooh Babe Ooooh Babe Ooooh Babe

You'll always be a baby to me

Mother, did it need to be so high.