

**INGLÉS / INGLESA**

**Leire Muñoz Ardanaz**

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**THE IMPORTANCE OF  
TEACHING PHONETICS  
IN ENGLISH AS A  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales  
Giza eta Gizarte Zientzien Fakultatea

**Grado en Maestro de Educación Primaria  
/  
*Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasleen Gradua***



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Trabajo Fin de Grado  
Gradu Bukaerako Lana

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Leire MUÑOZ ARDANAZ

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y SOCIALES  
GIZA ETA GIZARTE ZIENTZIEN FAKULTATEA

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Leire MUÑOZ ARDANAZ

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Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales / Giza eta Gizarte Zientzien Fakultatea  
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**Director-a / Zuzendaria**

Héctor Odín FERNÁNDEZ BAHILLO

**Departamento / Saila**

Departamento de Filología y Didáctica de la Lengua / Hizkuntza Didaktika eta  
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## Preámbulo

El Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, modificado por el Real Decreto 861/2010, establece en el Capítulo III, dedicado a las enseñanzas oficiales de Grado, que “estas enseñanzas concluirán con la elaboración y defensa de un Trabajo Fin de Grado [...] El Trabajo Fin de Grado tendrá entre 6 y 30 créditos, deberá realizarse en la fase final del plan de estudios y estar orientado a la evaluación de competencias asociadas al título”.

El Grado en Maestro en Educación Primaria por la Universidad Pública de Navarra tiene una extensión de 12 ECTS, según la memoria del título verificada por la ANECA. El título está regido por la *Orden ECI/3857/2007, de 27 de diciembre, por la que se establecen los requisitos para la verificación de los títulos universitarios oficiales que habiliten para el ejercicio de la profesión de Maestro en Educación Primaria*; con la aplicación, con carácter subsidiario, del reglamento de Trabajos Fin de Grado, aprobado por el Consejo de Gobierno de la Universidad el 12 de marzo de 2013.

Todos los planes de estudios de Maestro en Educación Primaria se estructuran, según la Orden ECI/3857/2007, en tres grandes módulos: uno, *de formación básica*, donde se desarrollan los contenidos socio-psicopedagógicos; otro, *didáctico y disciplinar*, que recoge los contenidos de las disciplinas y su didáctica; y, por último, *Practicum*, donde se describen las competencias que tendrán que adquirir los estudiantes del Grado en las prácticas escolares. En este último módulo, se enmarca el Trabajo Fin de Grado, que debe reflejar la formación adquirida a lo largo de todas las enseñanzas. Finalmente, dado que la Orden ECI/3857/2007 no concreta la distribución de los 240 ECTS necesarios para la obtención del Grado, las universidades tienen la facultad de determinar un número de créditos, estableciendo, en general, asignaturas de carácter optativo.

Así, en cumplimiento de la Orden ECI/3857/2007, es requisito necesario que en el Trabajo Fin de Grado el estudiante demuestre competencias relativas a los módulos de formación básica, didáctico-disciplinar y practicum, exigidas para todos los títulos universitarios oficiales que habiliten para el ejercicio de la profesión de Maestro en Educación Primaria.

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En este trabajo, el módulo *de formación básica* nos ha permitido conocer a fondo la profesión docente; desde el funcionamiento interno y externo del centro educativo, como las características y necesidades de los alumnos en los diferentes cursos de primaria. Así pues, gracias a este módulo hemos podido identificar los factores más relevantes en el progreso del área de la fonética en el aula de lengua extranjera. Por otro lado, el haber trabajado constantemente con el Currículum de Educación Primaria de nuestra Comunidad Foral, nos ha posibilitado en todo momento saber cuáles son los principios por los que se rige nuestro sistema educativo, desde el desarrollo de las ocho competencias básicas, hasta las diferentes metodologías y la funcionalidad del aprendizaje, que en este caso se aplicaría a la funcionalidad del inglés.

El módulo *didáctico y disciplinar* ha sido un soporte básico para la fundamentación de este trabajo, ya que una de las claves del éxito en el aula es contar con una gran variedad de recursos que resulten atractivos para los alumnos. Bien es cierto que, aunque la unidad didáctica plantea la enseñanza del fonema Schwa desde una perspectiva algo formal, la imagen que proyectamos a los alumnos es, como se explicará en su correspondiente apartado, la de un proyecto similar a un taller de cocina. Así pues, el módulo didáctico y disciplinar nos ha enseñado la importancia de crear contextos significativos y motivar a los alumnos con elementos que utilizan en el día a día.

Asimismo, el módulo *practicum* nos ha permitido ser conscientes de la situación actual de la fonética dentro de nuestras aulas. Se desarrolla durante toda la primera parte y nos permite también enmarcar la unidad didáctica, ya que se han tomado como referencia alumnos de primaria de colegios que constan con una sola asignatura en esta lengua extranjera, tal y como se ha dado durante todas las prácticas escolares realizadas a lo largo del Grado.

Por último, siendo el módulo optativo *inglés como lengua extranjera*, se podría decir que se encuentra presente durante todo el trabajo, ya que el área de fonética no había sido antes impartida como asignatura durante el Grado de Maestro en Educación Primaria, a pesar de que, evidentemente, se nos exigía una buena calidad en el discurso oral.

## Hitzaurrea

Urriaren 29ko 1393/2007 Errege Dekretua, 861/2010 Errege dekretuak aldatuta, III. Kapituluaren Gradu ikasketari buruz hurrengo adierazten du: “ikasketa hauek Gradu Amaierako Lana eta honen defentsarekin bukatuko direla [...] Gradu Amaierako Lana 6 eta 30 kreditu bitarte izanen dituela, ikasketetako azkeneko epean eginen dela eta norberaren tituluarekin erlazionatutako gaitasunei bideratuta egon behar dela”.

Nafarroako Unibertsitate Publikoan, Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasleen Graduari 12 ECTS dagozkie, ANECA-k egiaztatutako tituluaren memoriak jasotzen duenaren arabera. Titulua irailaren 27ko ECI/3857/2007 Aginduak onetsitakoarekin gauzatuko da, bertan tituluen egiaztapenerako beharrezkoak diren baldintzak ezartzen direlarik, egiaztapen honek Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasle lanbiderako ahalbidetzen du; 2013ko martxoaren 12an Unibertsitateko Gobernu Kontseiluak onetsitako Gradu Amaierako Lanaren araudia ezarri.

ECI/3857/2007T Aginduaren arabera, Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasleen Graduko ikasketa plangintza guztiak hiru modulu orokorretan egituratzen dira. Lehenengoan, *oinarrizko prestakuntza*, eduki sozio-psiko pedagogikoak garatzen dira; bigarren, *modulu didaktiko eta diziplinazkoa*, diziplina izaerako edukiak zein hauen didaktika jasotzen dira; azkenik, *Practicum* modulua, Gradu ikasleek Eskola Praktiketara eskuratu beharreko gaitasunak deskribatzen dituena. Gradu Amaierako Lana azkeneko moduluan kokatzen da, esperientzia horien bitartez jasotako prestakuntza islatu behar baitu. Amaitzeko, ECI/3857/2007 Aginduak ez baitu 240 ETCS-en banaketa zehaztu, unibertsitateek kreditu kopuru jakin bat adosteko ahalmena dute, orokorrean hautazko ikasgaiak ezarri.

Modu honetan, ECI/3857/2007 Agindua betearaziz, ezinbesteko baldintza da ikasleak Gradu Amaierako Lanean aipatutako hiru moduluei dagozkien gaitasunak erakustea, Lehen Hezkuntzako Irakasle lanbiderako unibertsitateko titulu ofizial guztiek eskatzen duten eran.

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Lan honetan zehar, *oinarrizko prestakuntzako moduluak* atal teorikoa egituratzea ahalbidetu digu; ikasleak hezten diren heinean edukiak haien gaitasunei egokitzea, bakoitzaren beharrei erantzutea, talde osoaren erritmoa errespetatu eta ikasle bakoitzaren errendimendua kontrolpean izatea... Gure Foru Komunitateko Curriculuma etengabe jorrateak gure hezkuntza giroan jarraitzen diren nondik norakoak ezagutu eta haien ezarpen praktikoan trebatu ahal izan gara, esaterako, hizkuntza konpetentziaren araberako ebaluaketan. Aipatutakoa lanaren lehenengo erdian islatzen da, atal teorikoa egituratzen dituzten 1. eta 2. puntuetan, hain zuzen ere.

*Modulu didaktiko eta diziplinazkoa* funtsezkoa izan da lan honen garapenerako, honen bidez ikasi baitugu plangintza didaktikoaren atalak zehazten, baliabideak prestatu eta probesten, ikasleak motibatzen, aurrera eramaterakoan sor daitezken arazoei aurreratzen, aniztasunari arreta ematen, eta abar. Beraz, modulu honi dagokion ekarpena Gradu amaierako Lan Honetan 3. Eta 4. puntuetan jasotzen da, hau da, atal praktikoan (ikaskuntza metodoak eta unitate didaktikoaren diseinua).

*Practicum modulua* Gradu Amaierako Lan honen abiapuntutzat hartu daiteke, gai honi buruz egitea erabaki bainuen gure eskoletan dagoen fonetika irakaskuntzaren gabezia zela eta. Eskola Praktiketean ikusi ahal izan dut ikasleek aurkitzen dituzten arazoak eta baita irakasleenak ere. Modulu hau lanean zehazki antzematen ez bada ere, fonetikaren irakaskuntzarekiko dudan ikuspuntua, lan honen funtsa beraz, Practicum moduluan eskuratu izan dut.

Amaitzeko, *hautazko modulua* Atzerriko Hizkuntza: Ingelesa izanik, esan daiteke lan osoaren garapenean zehar antzeman daitekeela, ez baikenuen lehenago unibertsitatean fonetikari buruzko irakaskuntza jaso; ingeleseko ikasgaietan modu egokian ahoskatzea ezinbestekoa bazen ere, ez baitzen fonetika arloa bereziki lantzen.



## Resumen

Este trabajo pretende, por un lado, describir la situación del área de la fonética dentro de nuestros colegios, en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE). Por otro lado, el propósito de éste es encontrar una manera alternativa para trabajar la fonética en el aula de ILE. Para ello, se centra en la etapa de Educación Primaria. De acuerdo con las hipótesis de diferentes autores, durante la etapa de Primaria se producen los fenómenos de adquisición y aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera. A partir de ahí, se mencionan una serie de métodos de enseñanza que pueden ayudar a ambos procesos de adquisición y aprendizaje de la fonética de inglés. Finalmente, se propone una unidad didáctica para el aprendizaje del fonema Schwa (/ ə /).

*Palabras clave:* fonética, ILE, competencia, adquisición, aprendizaje

## Abstract

This paper aims, firstly, to describe the situation in the area of phonetics in our schools, in the classroom of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). On the other hand, the purpose of this is to find an alternative way to work on phonetics in the EFL classroom. In order to this, it focuses on the stage of Primary Education. According to the hypothesis of the different authors that we have read about, during the stage of Primary the phenomena of acquisition and learning a foreign language are produced. From there, we mentioned a series of teaching methods that could help both processes of acquisition and learning of English phonetics. Finally, a didactic unit is proposed, for learning the phoneme schwa (/ ə /).

*Keywords:* Phonetics; EFL; competence, acquisition; learning.

*Keywords:* 5 keywords separated by a semicolon.

## Laburpena

Lan honen asmoa, alde batetik, gure ikastetxeetan fonetikak duen egoera deskribatzea da; ematen zaion garrantzia eta honek ingeleseko ikasgelaren barruan duen eragina ere. Hau da, ingelesaren irakaskuntza barne, hizkuntzaren atal honek duen garrantzia nabarmendu nahi da. Bestetik, gure intentzioa fonetika Atzerriko Hizkuntza Ingelesa (IHA) saioetan txertatzeko modu desberdin bat aurkitzea izan da. Horretarako, Lehen Hezkuntza Etapan oinarritu gara. Hainbat autoreen hipotesien arabera, Lehen Hezkuntzako etapan zehar atzerriko hizkuntzaren barneratze zein ikaskuntza prozesuak ematen dira. Bi fenomeno hauen bereizketak eta erlazioak ezartzen dira, eta hortik abiatuz, ingeleseko ikasgelaren barruan fonetikaren barneratze nahiz ikaskuntzaren prozesuei laguntzeko metodo batzuk aipatu egiten dira. Amaitzeko, unitate didaktiko bat diseinatu eta azaldu da, Schwa (/ ə /) fonemaren ikaskuntzari bideratuta.

Hitz gakoak: fonetika, IHA, gaitasuna, barneratzea, ikastea





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## Introducción

He decidido abordar este tema porque, en mi opinión, el campo de la fonética debe coger fuerza dentro del aula de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE), ya que, como vamos a explicar en las siguientes páginas, existe una carencia notable en este ámbito, tanto en objetivos como en criterios de evaluación. He basado estas afirmaciones en mi experiencia como profesora. Tanto en las Prácticas Escolares como en clases de apoyo de la asignatura inglés, he podido comprobar que los niños de primaria hacen un gran esfuerzo para memorizar la escritura del vocabulario y estructuras gramaticales. Sin embargo, cuando producen las oraciones de forma oral, no se enfatiza en la correcta pronunciación de los fonemas extranjeros. Por ejemplo, al corregir en voz alta un ejercicio con la estructura gramatical *there are / there is*, los alumnos generalmente pronuncian utilizando sus fonemas nativos: / der ar / , en vez de / ðær ɑ: /. Aunque el profesor pronuncie apropiadamente, si no se corrigen estos matices (/ ð, ə, ɑ: /). Otro ejemplo muy común es la pronunciación *fuerte* de los fonemas / h / y / r /.

Esto resulta una contradicción, en el sentido de que durante los cuatro años de carrera, hemos aprendido la importancia del desarrollo integral de cada una de las competencias, tal y como se especifica en el Currículum de Educación Primaria. Nuestro currículum está dirigido a desarrollar las competencias; en este caso, hablamos de la competencia lingüística de inglés como lengua extranjera. Ser competente consiste en saber aplicar el conocimiento adquirido en el aula para solucionar problemas en diferentes situaciones, tanto dentro como fuera del colegio. En la enseñanza del inglés durante la etapa de Primaria, educar alumnos competentes en ILE se traduce a desarrollar las habilidades comunicativas en esta lengua: comprensión lectora, expresión escrita, comprensión auditiva y expresión oral. Las dos últimas son las que pertenecen al campo de la fonética, que, junto con el vocabulario y la gramática, constituye la base sobre la que se desarrolla la competencia lingüística. Es muy común escuchar que los niños son buenos

en la asignatura Inglés porque sacan buenas notas en el colegio. Sin embargo, en una situación fuera del contexto educativo, los resultados no concuerdan con el rendimiento escolar. Para que pueda producirse una utilidad del contenido aprendido en el aula de ILE fuera de ésta, debe existir esta posibilidad. Por ejemplo, cuando los alumnos viajen al extranjero, ¿Qué habilidades van a tener que utilizar más ocasionalmente (en restaurantes, museos, parques de atracciones, etcétera)? La respuesta es obvia. Aunque tener un buen nivel de comprensión lectora y expresión escrita en inglés también es importante, las habilidades más funcionales en un entorno de habla inglesa son la comprensión auditiva y la expresión oral.

La cuestión es por qué siendo así, nuestro sistema educativo no lo enfoca desde este punto de vista, dando más peso a los campos de lectura y escritura. Durante la primera parte, vamos a explicar los factores que, bajo un punto de vista global, afectan a la enseñanza de la fonética dentro del aula de ILE, y a continuación, como resultado de la situación actual, los problemas más frecuentes que nos encontramos cuando se trata de enseñar fonética.

Hablando de competencia lingüística, la referencia más cercana que tenemos a la competencia en ILE es la experiencia de los alumnos al adquirir su lengua materna. El problema está en que los niños han interiorizado su fonética nativa desde el mismo instante en que empieza a interactuar con su entorno, mientras que por lo general, los alumnos de ILE tienen su primer contacto con el inglés al ser escolarizados.

Partiendo de ahí, en el segundo apartado de este trabajo *2. Phonetics: acquisition or learning?* vamos a tratar de aclarar si la fonética del ILE es algo que se adquiere inconscientemente, o si debe ser aprendida de manera formal. Para ello, tomando como factor clave la edad de los alumnos, nos vamos a apoyar en las afirmaciones de diferentes expertos en este campo, como las *Hipótesis de Adquisición-Aprendizaje y Monitor* de Stephen Krashen, (1981, 1982), la *Hipótesis del Periodo Crítico* de Eric Lenneberg (CPH, 1987) y las afirmaciones de David Singleton sobre el factor edad en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras (1989). Según las conclusiones obtenidas de este apartado del trabajo, vamos a pasar a lo que será nuestro punto de



partida para la parte práctica. En el tercer apartado, daremos pie a una serie de metodologías alternativas que pueden ser utilizadas en el aula de Primaria con la finalidad de conseguir que los alumnos avancen en las habilidades comunicativas dentro del aula de ILE. Finalmente, vamos a desarrollar el diseño de una unidad didáctica, la cual está enfocada a la enseñanza del fonema *Schwa* / ə / con la finalidad de conseguir un discurso hablado más fluido y natural. Esta unidad se llevaría a cabo mediante una combinación de las metodologías explicadas, que se concretan en el apartado 4. 4., *Methodologies*. Tanto la reflexión personal como las conclusiones obtenidas del trabajo de investigación realizado se recogen en el apartado *número V. Reflexión y conclusiones*.

## **1. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE TEACHING OF PHONETICS IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL)**

Given the above, one thing is clear: phonetics has something that makes it especially difficult to teach in a Foreign Language classroom. Factors which we will discuss below are the most important from my view, because of different reasons: I have had the experience of studying a second language by immersion during all Nursery and Primary stage, and I have done all my Teaching Practice in schools with this total language immersion model. Therefore, I know the factors that are promoted for the foreign language (FL) to be used almost as naturally as their mother tongue, although obviously, the success of speaking acquisition depends on the specific capabilities of each student, as in the rest of areas.

Before continuing, I should clarify that I do not believe that immersion is necessary to learn the Foreign Language successfully. As I said in the introduction, I have based this work in my own experience with children that study in a total Basque language immersion model (D model), having English as their Foreign and Third Language. What I explain below is the easiest way to acquire a good phonetic level and fluent speech in the second language, from my point of view.

## **1. 1. Educational context**

Educational context is defined as any situation in which teaching takes place both inside and outside school. Ideally, the students visualize the school as a space in which only the second language is spoken, both when entering into class and when saying goodbye to the concierge. The fact of attending events related to the use of EFL outside the center, such as puppet performances, craft workshops, museum visits... are very useful for phonetic acquisition of students because they see the opportunity to apply their knowledge of the second language outside school, evaluating the importance of listening comprehension. On the other hand, other fields of education (Physical Education, Mathematics, Biology, and etcetera) are taught in the foreign language, involving a situation in which the student has no choice but to learn to understand and speak the language. They may have better or worse results, they may be better or worse educated, they can be bad at reading and writing, but the student will eventually finish his stage Elementary being bilingual, although, evidently, this capacity is lost if the practice does not continue in the future.

## **1. 2. Small groups**

For schools that do not have an immersion model, working with groups of about twelve students helps the acquisition of phonetics, as it is easier to take control of the class and keep their attention. When working with the articulators, or performing communicative activities, is much more comfortable for both learners and teacher being in a smalls group, since the attention that each child receives is more direct and personal. For that, considering that the usual groups are generally between twenty and thirty learners, it would be necessary to separate them into two groups. Here we find a problem, as the number of teachers would need to double, in order to satisfy this need. These groups do not have to be the same during all the school year, they may change and try with different teachers, being exposed to different English voices.

### **1. 3. English teacher with a good level of phonetics in the foreign language (FL)**

The teacher is the greatest reference to imitate for EFL students, and he has to be able to correct phonetic errors simultaneously to leaving the student speak spontaneously in the FL (e. g., correcting if the student vocalizes / b / when the right is / v /). All FL teachers are qualified professionals in English. So, the emphasizing of phonetics is up to each one, to a greater or lesser extent. Students are not going to motivate themselves in having good pronunciation; the teacher should be the first to show interest in phonetics, provoking the right production and reinforcing it positively every day.

### **1. 4. How the communicative skills are developed**

Acquiring the area of phonetics of a language involves, as we mentioned, the development of two skills; a receptive one, listening, and a productive one, speaking.

#### *1. 4. 1. Teaching Listening (Hamer, 2007)*

It is important to take this competence seriously, since the quality of the students' spoken discourse depends on the efficiency with which this competence has been developed. To achieve this, we can use two types of listening:

- *Extensive listening*: students listen to a second language for pleasure. The best way to carry it out in the classroom is through excerpts from movies and series with English subtitles. It is something that appeals to them, the subtitles will help students understand and absorb the phonetics of the language without being aware of it. The activities related to this kind of listening are more interesting if they involve more than one English accent. It would be useful to choose TV series and watch them by parts during the year, this way the students get used to the pronunciation and intonation of the characters and it is easier to engage them with the activity.

- *Intensive listening*: used to study how English is spoken to meet specific objectives related to phonics. It can be carried out by different types of resources: video and audio recordings; listen to a reading and taking notes, teacher's performance, and an active participation of students, when they speak in front of their peers and are corrected if necessary.

Although the use of authentic material is not very exploited for being too far from the student's comprehensive ability, it is good to go insert gradually it in the classroom, and to evaluate the students' progress in the listening comprehension of the long term. The students must be able to recognize the paralinguistic clues that are offered, such as intonation, to understand the type of situation (comic, sad, scary...) and its meaning. Additionally, they must develop the ability to listen to particular information (listening for detailed comprehension), being alert to hear the words he needs to know. This can be done by exercises like *solving the mystery* or *Jigsaw listening*, where students have to listen to different recordings of the same thing (e.g., witness reports after a crime), in order to talk and clarify what happened. Other example is the *message taking*, where students must listen, write and share phone messages. In addition, the student must also be able to listen to a general understanding, such as when interacting in a conversation or when hearing a story about someone.

#### 1. 4. 2. *Teaching speaking (Hamer, 2007)*

Making the students talk at classroom is very important to get practice speaking English through real-life situation tasks. They try to use all the English they know, activating different language elements that have already been absorbed into their brain. The more of these elements are activated, the more automatically becomes their use, as a result, without making a conscious effort. In these activities, there is not a purely linguistic objective, and difficulty varies depending on the grade in which we are moving. There are different kinds of speaking exercises:

- *Defending a position*: this activity consists in requiring the students to be involved with the topic, in order to defend it or speak against it. This is an effective way to make the students be motivated and interested at using spoken English their best. To make it more meaningful, we could choose a current issue which they consider important, related to their environment. For example, the debate about if there is necessary to have a mall in the village, with the consequence of losing the town's largest park. To defend one position or the other, all the students have to organize their ideas, clarify the reasons why they have to defend the mall or the park, and start practicing their speaking in order to get a confident and convincing oral speech.
- *Question-answer exercises*: the teachers can ask questions about the content when finishing a lesson or an activity. The students answer one by one, or altogether. When the children are ready, they can ask to their classmates each other. This is a conclusion exercise; for example, when they have come back from a school tour, they are asked about their experience. Before the tour, it is supposed that this topic has been worked in the classroom and the students have to complete a worksheet. This will be their guidelines for the end of the tour to explain it speaking.
- *Role plays*: A game where each student has a character makes the spoken English useful; the learners have to use it as a tool to communicate with classmates and teachers, in order to win the game. There are plenty of options to create characters that they can choose, so as to make the students feel identified to them. These kinds of games are more successful in small groups led by English teachers; it is easier to follow the clues and steps correctly. The clues are focused on getting correct phonic production, including activities such as distinguishing similar but not-equal phonemes to receive the next instruction.

## **1. 5. Problems when teaching phonetics in EFL**

One of the biggest obstacles that elementary students find when learning phonetics in the classroom arrives on the First year of Primary school, when the student begins to read and write. They write the words as they sound, as in their native language. In Spanish, this translates to the confusion of the letters *b* and *v*, *g* and *j*, *ll* and *y*, but in English, it supposes a lot of written errors by the student. Therefore, it is important to teach the phonetic alphabet instead of the letter alphabet that is not useful for acquiring the English phonemes.

Students also have difficulties with the intonation and rhythm: Spanish follows a syllable-timed rhythm, while English follows a stress-timed rhythm that plays a central role in spoken discourse. This is acquired by ear, based on mistakes and correcting themselves until eventually it comes naturally as a result of practice.

Moreover, there is widespread prejudice about the learning of phonetics. It is said that only the natives can get a correct pronunciation in English, and this makes students feel insecure when producing spoken English. To avoid these complexes, it is important to work occasionally with the articulators, to produce specific phonemes consciously, and in order to improve the level of the students' speech. It depends on the level of each student; some of them need more exercises than others.

One of the biggest problems for foreign language teachers is that phonetics has many shades and it is more difficult to assess their progress in this area than their progress in grammar and vocabulary. Phonetics should be assessed in the long term, and this is not possible for the EFL teacher, as he teaches at various elementary grades and does not know if the following year will continue having the same groups of students or not. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the curriculum by which our education system is governed is extensive in contents, so that the English teacher is severely limited by time, having fifty minutes a day for each class and organizing tests that assess the knowledge about these contents, leaving the area of phonetics aside, without possible alternative. Since there is no specific way to assess a process of

long-term phonetic acquisition, no targets are relating to the development of this, having the results we have been talking about. As a result, we could say that the best starting point is encouraging students to the importance of good listening and pronunciation through meaningful communicative situations,

## **2. PHONETICS: ACQUISITION OR LEARNING?**

According to studies on the acquisition of the mother phonetics, this is the way it is produced: since birth, we begin to perceive sounds, interacting with the environment around us. As we grow, we are able to discriminate more types of sounds. The interaction with the environment becomes more complex and we have to use these sounds to communicate. This is the situation in which the phonetics of the mother tongue is acquired, and gets better as it is practiced. The mother phonetics begins, therefore, at a very early stage of our brain. From that time until the children are in school, it has been three years (or six, in the case of Primary) and their brain is far from that initial state. Mean that students cannot acquire the phonetics of their second language, and therefore must learn it? From there, we are going to clarify this topic around some questions:

- What is the difference between acquiring and learning the FL phonetics?
- What is the relation between acquisition and learning phonetics in EFL?
  - How do we ensure that students have acquired a good phonetic basis?
  - How do we make possible the improvement of this basis?

The following pages discuss the issues of acquisition and learning phonetics of English as a second language. To do this, we have explored the works of authors such as Stephen Krashen (for his contribution of distinction between acquisition and learning), Eric Lenneberg (because of having identified the age limit between them) and David Singleton (since he made a comparison between people that acquired and learned the second language). Next, Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis is explained, relating acquisition and learning, in

order to get the highest possible level of English at school. Finally, we explain the way in which these notions are applied to the EFL classroom in Primary.

We have included two kinds of methodologies, so as to address phonetics teaching in the whole stage of Primary; the first one is thought for children to exclusively acquire the language. The other group is useful to improve the acquired language through formal learning of more abstract units of the FL. In this sense, we are going to explain these methodologies' approach and application into the field of phonetics. As a conclusion, we will gather the interesting point from each method and justify why they are useful for us when preparing a didactic unit.

## **2. 1. Differences between acquiring and learning phonetics in EFL**

Although the following authors have based their hypotheses in the acquisition and learning of the second language (L2), we have interpreted these notions for the acquisition and learning of EFL, in order to explain the importance of the students' age when teaching phonetics in EFL.

Stephen Krashen (University of Southern California) was the first author that distinguished between acquiring and learning a second language. He developed a hypothesis about it, published in his book *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1981). This is called *Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis*, and according to him, there are two different systems of L2 performance:

The acquired system or *acquisition* is the product of a subconscious process, very similar to the process children are subjected to when they acquire their First Language (L1). It requires meaningful interaction, in which students are focused on the communicative act, instead of the form. Children acquire FL phonetics through listening to sounds again and again in their everyday lives, by routines, coexistence and interaction. The assessment is made through situations where the students have to use the L2 phonetics. When a pupil is able to apply the acquired phonemes in different contexts (shopping, hobbies, clothes, numbers ...), it is considered that he is competent at phonetics, and therefore, the acquisition process has been successful.



The learned system or *learning* is the product of formal instruction, and it involves a conscious process based on conscious learning about the language. When learning the Second Language phonetics, the assessment is focused on phonological rules, such as distinguishing between linking and intrusive / r / or memorizing the different kind of phonemes (*labiodental fricative, alveolar plosive...*). The success of the second language phonetics learning depends on the ability the student has to learn by heart a set of phonemes features or different phonological rules.

Eric Lenneberg (Germany, 1921-1975), on the other hand, made an important contribution called Critical Period Hypothesis, published in his book *Biological Foundations of Language* in 1967. There, he argued that the limit between acquisition and learning is the age of the pupils. According to this hypothesis, there is a period in our lives when our brain is in its best moment of receptivity to acquire the language. This period concurs with brain lateralization, which has taken place at thirteen or fourteen years old. If before the lateralization this ability has not been exploited for the acquisition of FL, the result of the process fails, and students must learn the second language consciously. This means that, during the whole stage of Primary (from six to twelve years old), we will be talking about acquisition of the Second Language Phonetics, not about learning.

Stepping up, I have been interested on the point of view of David Singleton, since he speaks directly about also the acquisition of English as a Foreign Language (*Age and the Acquisition of English as a Foreign Language*, 1994), instead of any language acquired after the mother tongue at school. In his book *Language Acquisition: The Age Factor*, published in 1989, he defends that the younger in begin to acquire the FL, the better long term results are. In teaching phonetics, this translates into lack of fluency as a result of people that started learning a second language when their brain was already lateralized, consciously.

According to Singleton's findings, this is what happens: teaching students that begin acquiring a Second Language at school age (when they are five to six years old) is not focused on content, and it is developed throughout the stage

of Primary Education. These children go through a gradual process in acquiring the FL while their cognitive system is growing. As a result, these pupils can arrive to the end of its Critical Period with good listening comprehension and fluent speech in the FL. These two skills, in addition to belonging to the phonetic field, are necessary for students to be able to use the foreign language spontaneously and creatively in different contexts.

In the case of learners that started the FL learning (remember that when the brain has already lateralized, we are not talking about acquisition, but learning) when they were adults, the second language learning process is focused on content, formed by grammar structures and vocabulary. The learning has more success in short term because adults use learning techniques and are able to organize the content.

The result of the FL learning are students that know much content, but whose speech is mechanical, lack fluency and are limited to academic contexts. Adult learners can achieve fluency and spontaneity in speech, assuming that they continue with learning for a long time. Still and all, the effort is much higher than during the critical period.

The idea that the sooner the acquisition begins, the better the long-term, is consistent with the idea we will develop below, which explains how acquisition and learning of L2 complement each other, leading to acquisition through learning; the younger the students start the acquisition of the L2, the nearest the students will be to from phonetics acquisition.

## **2.2. Relation between acquiring and learning phonetics in EFL**

Although Krashen made a clear distinction between acquisition and learning, in 1982 he published an article called *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, where he proposed the *Monitor Hypothesis* as part of his theory about L2 acquisition. It explains the influence that learning has in the acquisition of the second language (*acquisition through learning*). According to the Monitor Hypothesis, the learners use their knowledge about the Second Language in a conscious way in order to correct and improve the language they have acquired before, during the critical period. This hypothesis

is relevant for teaching phonetics, since it is the most used in the structure of our teaching system (at school).

This leads us to the conclusion that, although acquisition and learning are two different systems in the performance of the second language, they are not opposites. When we begin to study Language as a subject at school, we learn spelling rules, grammatical structures and punctuation in our mother language. By repeating, we end up applying this knowledge, obtaining a higher level in this language. This is especially interesting, because once we got that students have internalized the phonemes correctly through a long process and based on practice, learning theoretical standards is carried out with the long term goal of gradually improving the L2 phonetic level. Going back to Singleton's idea, thus, the younger the students start acquiring the Second Language phonics, the more successful will the improvement through learning be.

Up to now, we have clarified the following statements:

- During the first thirteen or fourteen years of life we are in a period in which the acquisition of the second language can be produced with little effort. If after that age the student does not have a phonetic acquired base, the L2 phonetics is learned consciously and with greater difficulty.
- Acquisition and learning of phonics in the classroom can be complemented, considering learning as a tool to improve the listening and speaking that has been informally acquired during the critical period. The success of this improvement through learning depends on the phonic level the student acquired before.

Building up from these notions, we would need to know about the way that both processes of acquiring and learning are focused at school. Methodology is which address this aspect. In other words, we need to know what methods can we use to ensure FL phonetic acquisition through learning.

### 3. METHODOLOGIES FOR TEACHING PHONETICS

Methodology is the part of the formal education responsible for introducing and working on content to develop the competences, where language skill is included. Therefore, it corresponds to the methodology giving equal importance to phonetics as to other areas of English. Because of that, it is important to have appropriate methods that focus on listening and speaking skills, enabling the process of acquiring and learning phonics we have explained above.

In the following pages, we will try to answer these questions based on the theoretical framework in which our schools operate, as it affects the teaching of English as a second language and, therefore, the teaching of phonics. The EFL teachers organize their sessions in order to get both phonetic acquired base and acquisition through learning, using different teaching methods that determine how the phonetics is acquired and how does the conscious learning improve this acquisition. I chose the Natural Method, the Communicative Language Learning, the Grammar Translation Method and the Audio Lingual / Audio Visual Method, because of being the most commonly used at school in the stage of Primary. As I said before, there are two different groups of methods, in order to ask the question about acquisition, learning and the relation between them.

#### 3. 1. Helpful methods for acquiring phonetics

As we have explained, the acquisition should start from the beginning of the school years. This means that students are very young, and therefore, methods of teaching phonics must be adapted to their cognitive and language skills (Piaget, *Child's Psychology*, 1977). We cannot require them as adults, not to create frustration to children. The methods on which we discuss below are the direct and communicative ones. I opted out for them because of the principles they follow when teaching phonics of English as a foreign language. The principles that both have in common are:

- English Immersion: this technique is very favorable for the natural acquisition of phonetics: the fact that students are continually exposed

to this language, by a teacher who masters a native level, means that in a short period of time they discriminate foreign phonemes from those they had already acquired in the first language. The students are gradually required to communicate each other using English.

- School as an English speaking space: the teachers and students create an exclusive English speaking space in the classroom, making students become involved in an environment directly associated with the need to interact in this language. Acquisition through communication is very effective for the acquisition of listening comprehension and spoken language, as the students are required to act in different situations where they will have to listen and then give an answer in English.

The students have already acquired various useful phonemes in their L1 when they arrive to school for the first time; / b, p, t, k, n, m, d, θ, tʃ, s, f /. The FL teacher has to work on this basis and introduce gradually the new sounds (/ ð, z, h, dʒ, ɳ ... /). These new phonemes are introduced in the Second Language lessons without any formal instruction, imitating the first process, until the students reach the *concrete operational stage*, which lasts from seven to eleven years old. At that age, children are already able and tend to use logic when producing oral speech.

These principles involve time, being patient and providing significant examples into the classroom, and teacher's role consists on repeating routines every day in order to create an English environment where children feel comfortable; they love to know what is going to happen and take part actively when they feel self-confident. It is important for the teacher to have under control the evolution that each child is having in English listening comprehension and spoken expression, in order to make personalized assessment and adapt the objectives of the activities if necessary. This is made through different questions in the classroom, to evaluate if their answer is right or wrong. For example, to evaluate listening comprehension, the teacher asks to a student: *what are you going to do after school?* Although the student's answer is in his mother tongue, if it is coherent with the question, he has understood, so it

means that we've achieved the basis to work on spoken language, and therefore, to start producing phonetics.

### 3. 1. 1. *The Direct Method*

Taking into account all we have said, we are going to propose a set of activities that could be used in the classroom in live with the Direct Method (DM). At starting levels, these activities' main objectives are acquiring listening comprehension and fluent speech. Gradually, the teacher will require correct phonetic production from children, correcting the errors when performing the activities. These are some examples about how can we perform the speaking exercises from the view of Direct Method:

- 1) **Being the machinist:** The machinist practice is widely used in Kindergarten and it is that every day one child of the classroom acts as if he were the machinist of a train (in Nursery is very common to make a train with infants to go anywhere). This child works as assistant for the teacher during the day, as a responsible of daily routines into the classroom.. As we said, routines are situations where children feel comfortable. The machinist tells the class the date, what's the weather like, who is missing in the classroom... Every day the machinist role change. This helps to the acquisition of phonetics since, by repeating the routines, children know the pronunciation of the structures that don't change during the school year.
- 2) **Playing board games:** organizing groups of 4-5 pupils and being one teacher in each group, pupils have fun and are involved in a situation where they have to express their thoughts in English. This is an informal context where students use the language spontaneously and acquire the correct expression of their teachers and classmates while playing (*you did it wrong, take that tab, no way, it's my turn!*).
- 3) **Expressing likes and dislikes:** this is a very meaningful activity where the students are asked about sports, family, clothes, food, school, home... children take part one by ones, to ensure that the shyest are taking part too, taking an active role for this exercise:

- 4) **Singing songs:** In this line, *Jolly Phonics* is a system that provides a set of songs in order to distinguish similar phonemes. For example, there are the songs to work with the similar phonemes / s / and / z /. To work with / s /, the pupils relate it to the sound of the snake (sss), and to work with / z /, they relate it to the sound of the bee (bzzz). This is a method thought for Nursery Education, but could still being used in the First Cycle of Primary.

As we have seen, the Direct Method is thought for the first approximation of English into the classroom. Using listening patterns, the youngest students acquire a minimum base to start communicating their emotions in the L2. In fact of this, based on Singleton's idea about the younger = the better in long-term could be applied for this. This does not mean that the Direct Method should not be used in Primary, but this use has to me completed with others, taking into account that this method is limited to activities into the classroom.3.

### 3. 1. 2. *The Communicative Method*

This teaching methodology assumes that both listening comprehension and oral speech must be acquired through communicative purposes. Therefore, the students are presented along with the second language as a communication tool that will be used to carry out the students' day to day in the classroom. From minute one, situations arise in the second language.

This methodology is more appropriate when students see the school as a place where all communication takes place in English, teachers and maintenance staff are English speakers and communicate in this language both within the classroom and outside (during breaks, trips ...). It is essential to gain fluency, so the student is obliged to make the effort to use English. By persisting into this methodology during the whole Primary stage, is achieved that students are able to communicate in English using the acquired listening comprehension and speaking skills. The following activities are good for make the students able in communication with foreign people in English:

- 1) **Give an advice to someone in the FL:** the students watch some videos in which English native students explain their

different problems; not having friends, feeling self-conscious about the physical, their parents are divorcing, etc. This is especially appropriate when working with feelings and empathy. It helps to the acquisition of phonetics since the students have to get emotionally involved with the content, so they have to listen very carefully in order to understand what problems the other person has. Then, all of them have to think what they are going to tell back in their voice recording or video. Again, our students are in a situation where they must use a good spoken speech in order to be understood. Before recording the last version, all the errors have to be corrected and the right form has been practiced.

**2) Exchange of information with foreign students.** It is a very appropriate task to work in phonetics, as people from other countries are not going to understand the message if some words are incorrectly produced. In this way, it makes the students are interested and motivated to get the right form and to have a good phonetic production. It could be any kind of information taken from topics treated in the classroom, either share their literary tastes, music, or hobbies, like explaining a creative activity that has taken place in the classroom. The example below will show how a group of students can prepare their costumes for the school carnival day. They could be in the Second or Third Cycle of Primary, needing more or less help from the teacher to the different tasks:

**3) Send a voice message to a famous person:** for example, an English Writer. Nowadays it is very common that famous people have an internet space where people can send their messages. We can use it for a pedagogical purpose, for example, to celebrate the International Day of the Book. The students will record a message for the writer telling their



opinion about the book they have read. For this, there is a planning of ideas and practice / correction with the teacher. In this activity there is not a listening comprehension, but reading comprehension. It is the kind of activities we make in the Literature subject, but applied for the English as a Foreign Language classroom. Working with small groups makes the communicational situation being more fluent and organized

In the Communicative Method, learning of printed phoneme arrives from an error: when the student is communicating in the FL and has an error with a phoneme (for example, pronouncing / fɔ: / instead of / fə /, or / wɔ: k / instead of / wɜ: k /), the teacher explains to him the difference between the confused phonemes using written phonemes. This method is good to work on phonetics in a meaningful way; communicative goals make phonetics become totally meaningful for students; all the oral practice is produced for other people to listen to it, and it makes the students be motivated to do it as good as possible, correcting different phonetic and intonation-stress features during the process.

I think that working on phonetics from this point of view is really interesting, although we have to admit that it would be very difficult to put it into practice in our schools; this method should be preceded by the direct method for children to be able to start talking in the FL about any topic (not only the units established in the text book) when necessary. This is very appropriate long-term learning; doing project work, for example. This gives them the chance to build their own knowledge, learning the written phonemes only when necessary, when a problem arises.

As I have said, this would be complicated in a standard primary school where a total immersion model is not offered. In this case, long term goals are not comfortable for many FL teachers that don't know if they will have the same students groups next year. Anyway, it is clear that the Communicative Method is one of the best to develop students' in oral skills.

Up to now, we have explained how to provide situations and organize activities in order to get the students have a fluent use of English and acquire a good

phonetic level that will be improved the following years of Primary through other different methods that will be gradually introduced in the general dynamic of the EFL classroom.

### **3. 2. Helpful methods to improve phonetics**

When students come into an age where they know how words are said, and they operate with ease in different situations using the phonetics of the language acquired, it is time to formalize this teaching. Students have begun to read and write in their mother tongue, in which they have established a relationship between letters and phonemes (letter c can make the sound / k /, and sometimes the sound / θ /). If we assume that their first language is Spanish, letters show us how to pronounce a word (using tittles). However, in English there are two completely different things; since letters do not tell us how to pronounce a word, but the phonemes do. The following methods are designed to improve the phonetic acquisition through exercises that establish the relation between the phonemes and letters of the foreign language.

These methods are more related to traditional sessions where students are sitting and paying attention to the teacher's explanations. In order to this, they would be introduced in the Second and Third cycles of Primary. Actually, when the following methods are used at classroom to improve phonetics, it is supposed that the students have acquired English phonetics through the methods explained before. The goals are now not focused on the students' ability to use the native phonemes in different contexts.

#### *3. 2. 1. The Audio-Lingual / Audio-Visual Method*

The Audio Lingual method is based on behaviorism. From a behaviorist perspective, language is a type of behavior, and it should be learnt as such following audio and visual stimulus-response patterns. This method sourced when some teachers started to use tape recorders and film strip projector in their FL classroom. Although this method is not the best to learn Mathematics or Biology, it could be very productive when teaching Foreign Language phonetics. I have chosen this method because it is quite used at our schools and it helps to improve phonetics through conscious learning of some rules,

such as Grammar Translation Method that we will explain next, but using audio and visual stimuli, focusing on listening comprehension and oral proficiency.

Listen and repetition exercises, using authentic audio material, are useful to work phonetics into this method, as the students are involved in a situation where he knows that he has to guess something from the voice recording. This makes them be paying attention to the audio in order to receive the stimulus (what they need to guess) and having response to the audio content.

### 3. 2. 2. *The Grammar Translation Method*

In this method, the learning would be more about abstract units of the language, that is, more focused on Phonology than in Phonetics. To be successful, it is necessary a minimum level of maturity from pupils. I have chosen this method because, although it is not focused on the students' communicative skills, it helps to the improvement of phonic acquisition, learning it in a formal way, as when we put the stress on words when talking, for example. The learning process would be based on:

- **Isolated learning of phonemes:** vowels, diphthongs and consonants.
- **Transcription of texts:** (from letters to phonemes and vice versa), learning of rules (linking /r/, alliteration, elision ...), and colors to mark rhythm and intonation.
  - **From phonemes to letters:** the students guess the words applying the knowledge about the phonemes, being careful with homophones. During the learning process, they could build a list of homophones and homographs.
  - **From letters to phonemes.** It makes the students reflect on their pronunciation, when transcribing the words, and identify their errors when talking. For example, a student who tends to say / g ɒ / instead of / g əʊ / (go) habitually, will realize when transcribing this word that he is doing wrong.

- **Applying theory:** it consists of a set of texts taken from different sources; literature, news, articles... Students would transcribe them using the theory learnt. For that, they would apply the phonological rules, such as elision or punctuation marks.

This is the way in which oral proficiency is taken into account. During our University degree, in the subject *Pronunciation and Oral Practice*, we have learnt about phonetics and phonology using explanations of different kind of phonemes (plosives, fricatives, affricates ...), transcription and conscious knowledge of rules. The explanations were always in English. We also learnt the organs that produce the oral speech: respiratory, phonation and articulatory organs. When working with the articulators, the aim of the lessons was getting a good level of pronunciation in phonics practice, which is not an important point for the grammar translation method. It could be useful to learn about phonology, the formal aspects of the language, instead of phonetics (physical production of phonemes).

In both methods the teacher is the nearest reference and therefore the most related to the children, and it means that in situations out from the context they are working, they would tend to imitate the teachers' pronunciation, ahead of the recording tapes. Besides that, we should also take into consideration that the large amount of content that student must retain in memory without any use outside the classroom; two weeks after the exam, most of this content learned so much time and effort, disappears to be replaced by new units. This is the reason why is so important having into account our main objective with these methods: the students have to improve the acquired phonetic through learning, so the assessment must be related to comprehension in listening and their spoken level, instead of proving that the students know all the clothes' names, numbers, and etcetera. **Appendix1**

### **3. 3. Inferences**

In this part of the project, we have taken into account theories of different authors and we tried to clarify whether phonetics should be acquired or

learned. Through these theories, we have made the distinction between acquisition and learning. To do this, we have relied on the statements of Krashen (Acquisition -Learning Hypothesis), Lenneberg and Singleton (Critical Period Hypotheses). We concluded that first the students acquire phonetic unconsciously, and then improve this phonetic through a formal learning (Monitor Hypothesis, Krashen).

Finally, we have developed methods of teaching phonics from two different approaches. The first methods, the direct and the communicative, are applied to ensure that students acquire a phonetic consistent basis, both comprehension and production. On the other hand, methods of Grammar Translation Method and Audio- Visual or Audio- Lingual Method are scheduled for students to improve the phonetic basis acquired with previous methods. All proposed methods are interesting for designing didactic units, to a greater or lesser extent.

As my teaching unit is designed for the Third cycle of Primary school, I focused on the Communicative and Audio-Lingual/Visual methods. The Audio-Lingual/Visual method is useful to introduce the topic in class and to make the students be focused on the content that is presented. The students respond to the content by imitation and discrimination of sounds. Identification of phonemes is required before any production. The Communicative method, on the other hand, is the most important in the development of the unit, since we have created a communicative situation where our students interact with other English speaker pupils. It makes students be motivated to use spoken English.

The Direct Method is supposedly the students have passed in previous Elementary cycles, and, therefore, has been used with them before (this is the way in which the students have acquired their phonetic basis of the Second language), so we will continue using the immersion technique, introducing authentic material in the EFL classroom. The Grammar Translation Method was not used, since this particular unit does not need explanations on the rules of phonology. However, students may use the transcript when they are not sure how to pronounce a word, which means that it could be an application of Grammar Translation Method if students need it, but is not planned from the beginning.

## 4. PROPOSAL FOR TEACHING THE PHONEME SCHWA / ə / IN THE THIRD CYCLE OF PRIMARY

### 4.1. Theoretical basis

This is a didactic unit designed for students to improve the pronunciation of the phoneme Schwa / ə /. I decided to focus on this phoneme because of its relevance in the English Language, since the most used English words have Schwa when located in a sentence (*for, the, of, a, an, at, ...*): When we listen to spoken English, we realize that the unstressed syllables of the words become / ə /, making this phoneme a very natural sound in native speakers. To introduce this foreign phoneme in the classroom, we have resorted to the phoneme / e /, as a phoneme that they control and bears a strong resemblance to Schwa. Thanks to this similarity, we can work with the articulators through / e / to get the pronunciation of / ə /.

It is thought for twelve or fourteen students in the Fifth grade of Primary. At this age, as we have said before, they have been acquiring heard and spoken English during the First and Second cycles of Primary. Now they have to improve those phonemes (in this case / ə /) that English and Spanish do not share, through the different methods that we have previously explained. The characteristics taken from the different methods will be mentioned in the part of Methodologies.

As we can imagine, the context in which the students will be involved to learn the phoneme Schwa is food. I have chosen this topic because I think it can be very significant in the sense that food is something we are in daily contact with, and everyone has a favorite food. Cuisine gives us many options in terms of vocabulary, as there are a variety of foods that contains / ə /, and therefore gives much play to decorate the classroom with this topic. Besides, cooking is fun, and the students appreciate the fact when they are having fun at school. In this sense, the choice of food context also acts as a motivator.

On one hand, I wanted to make it meaningful, i.e., create the need for students to engage with learning the proper production of this phoneme. To do this, I

have resorted to exchanging cooking videos with students in a school abroad, hence the title of this teaching unit, Sharing Recipes. Providing communication with native English speakers, we get a communicative purpose and the activities are directly related to it. By exchanging information with young people who have excellent L2 pronunciation, it promotes oral proficiency and motivates the children to do their best.

To accomplish this, there must be coordination between the two classes of teachers who will share their recipe. This would involve the use of a blog together where our pupils can publish their work and to receive the response from the other students. The didactic unit will be divided in two parts. The first one addresses the conscious learning of phoneme Schwa, as we have said before, because of being a basic phoneme to have fluent English. If the students have been in touch with the language for enough time, they will know this sound, and even they will be able to produce it. Still, let's start from the assumption that they do not know. If it happens that some of them are advanced, it would be an advantage for teaching, since students can help each other during the development of the teaching unit.

On the other hand, the second part is focused on implementing the worked phoneme / ə /. For this, as we have mentioned, the context of food is used. The assessment is that students prepare an oral presentation that explains a prescription. This oral presentation should reflect the learning process; preparation, memorization and practice. The part of practice is what will take us longest; the students have to make the selected text sounds natural and fluid. From the beginning of the learning process, the students will be required to use / ə / correctly when communicating in the classroom.

#### 1. Learning and practicing the phonemes / ə / and / e /:

- a. Work with articulators in order to produce both phonemes correctly.
- b. Reading sentences and discriminating / ə / and / e / sounds.
- c. Practice with a list of most relevant words containing / ə / and / e /.

2. Preparing the video in pairs: the students are told that they are going to exchange recipes with native English speakers from another school. This part will be developed through the following steps:

- a. Watch cooking videos and choose one as model to imitate in their final production; sections, name of kitchen tools, expressions ...
- b. Choose a recipe that is already written in the Second Language: from internet or cookbooks.
- c. Identify / ə / and / e / in the recipe: all the words containing these phonemes will be practiced with the teacher.
- d. Memorize the speech: the students practice in pairs as if they were being recorded, *using imaginary food*. The errors are corrected by the teacher.
- e. Record the children explaining their recipes: children would have the option of recording their voice at class with the teacher's management (and add it to the video where they appear cooking at classroom), or record it at home if they prefer, and appear talking in the video, while they cook.
- f. Share the final product with the other students: the teacher would create an online space where upload all the videos, with a short introduction to explain them that our students are working on the phoneme Schwa using the cuisine topic, and asking for comments.

#### **4. 2. Contents**

These are the contents that will be worked through the development of this unit, in the same order in which they will be introduced in the classroom. There are two kinds of contents, corresponding to the parts of the project that we have explained:

- Phoneme / ə /: listening and production (articulators and airstream)
- Phoneme / e /: listening and identification (distinguish it from Schwa)
- Vocabulary related to food and connectors (is not pre-determined)
- A recipe: order of ideas and intonation.
- Guidelines for the making of the video: introduction, ingredients, execution, conclusion.



### 4. 3. Objectives

Objectives are the most important basis when designing a didactic unit; they reflect what we need to achieve. Assessment criteria are directly related to them, since it values the extent to which each objective has been met. The objectives we want to achieve in order to work the content that we have specified are the following:

- Relate the foreign phoneme / ə / with the known phoneme / e /
- Distinguish the phonemes / ə / and / e / when they are produced
- Provide students with authentic material
- The correct the production of / ə /
- Organized speech about how a recipe should be prepared.

Active participation of students when producing .Foreign Language sounds and intonation.

### 4. 4. Methodology

The development of the project will take place according to the following methods, used for specific purposes in the different parts of the teaching unit:

1) Audio-Lingual / Audio-Visual method: the ideas that I have taken from this method for the development of this unit are:

- a) Use of audio recording to introduce the phoneme Schwa in the classroom.
- b) They learn it from examples to theory: from reading a sentence to the phoneme we are going to work, the Schwa. They learn how to produce this phoneme correctly in a conscious way.
  - / ə / and / e / are each compared by the vowel triangle: is a schematic diagram that reflecting the position of mouth to pronounce different vowels. The English vowel triangle is different from the Spanish one, because of the fact that English has got seven more vowels than the Spanish.

- Identify before producing: We want the student to be aware that we are working on a particular phoneme and we want to focus on it. Because of this, our pupils Have To Be able to be identified for the new phoneme then reproduce and fix
- Imitation: Children begin to produce Schwa themselves by imitating the teacher. The gestures that the teacher does with his mouth to explain the correct position of the articulators will be very useful. Later, they will start to repeat this phoneme in complete sentences, to improve their spoken fluently.
- Repetition: Repetition is the most efficient resource to produce a short-term pattern properly. Therefore, students will use it as a tool to internalize the foreign phoneme / ə / until end up producing spontaneously.
- Sort words into phonemes: it is important that from the beginning the students associate the letters that correspond to the phonemes they have formally learned. This will begin to make through practical examples at the beginning, and it will continue for a period into the unit, when we will decorate the class with meaningful words that can be accompanied by images.

c) The oral presentation is prepared by:

- Memorizing the text: is one of the best resources that students have to feel confident when speaking in front of the people.
- Establishing and repeating intonation in each sentence.

2) Communicative Method: as I said before, this unit is also based on the Communicative Language Learning, because we have created a communicative situation in which our pupils have to communicate in English with foreign pupils, through sharing videos in a blog. During the unit, some other principles of the Communicative Method are followed:

- Watching videos and other classmate's productions: the students communicate in the Second Language to receive and give advices about their oral presentation.

- Pair-work: it involves taking decisions for both components of the group, under equal participation, sharing the work, correcting and helping each other. In other words, social competences are developed through communication.
- Acclimate the learning space: during this unit, the classroom is decorated with food images, posters and real objects that have Schwa on it. In this way, we create a context and a supportive working environment, helpful for the acquisition of sounds.
  - Use of Information and Communication Technologies: ICTs will take an important role, since the students will have to look for recipes and videos on the internet. The teacher also will need to use it, in order to case manage the blog.

3) Direct Method: although we have said that this method is the best one for the phonetic acquisition of L2 in the First cycle of Primary, there are some ideas that we still maintaining for this unit:

- Immersion technique: although all the subjects are not taught in English, some of them, such as *Health & Feed, Arts & Crafts, Citizenship ...*) can be adapted in order to develop the unit. When working on this unit, all explanations will be given in the Second Language. The students are required to participate in the L2, asking for a translation when they need it.
- Use of authentic material: we work with Schwa for our students to get a more natural and fluent speech in English. Adapted recorded material is good for imitation, as we have said, but it doesn't sound natural; it may be too exaggerated.

*Other methodological issues:*

- Teacher's role: the teacher provides examples and explanations when students require. He is responsible for contacting the foreign

school and arranges the blog to make this communicative situation possible. While the students are preparing the oral presentation, the teacher is around, having under control the progress of each group, providing alternatives and reinforcement through pronunciation exercises and repetition

- Students' role: the students follow the guidelines told by the teacher. They have got a passive role when listening to the teachers' models, and are active participants when pronouncing the sounds. The most part of the unit they work in pairs in an autonomous way, asking the teacher when necessary.
- Most of the learning takes place in the classroom. For that, we would need a set of resources and materials in order to cook in the school. Children can record themselves at home if they prefer. In this case, they have to record their voices before at class (the relevance of evaluation is the oral production).

#### **4. 5. Didactic resources**

Choosing good resources can mean the difference between success and failure of an exercise. The teaching resources are specified within each activity, in the sequence of activities. Also during the development of this teaching unit students will have the following resources:

- Visual and audio media. Voice recorder, camera.
- Cookbooks (written in the Second Language), posters, pictures and objects containing the sounds / ə / and / e /.
- A guide to provide students with the guidelines.

A worksheet in which each student writes the words of their recipe that have the sounds / ə / and / e /, and new phonemes learnt during the execution of the project.

#### **4. 6. Sequence of activities**

This section contains the steps in the development of the unit, organized by sessions or activities. The teaching sequence is divided into four parts. The

first is exclusively focused on teaching Schwa, and will be carried out using warm up activities and knowledge consolidation exercises (with examples related to food). In the second, students will begin to work themselves with food, they begin to work in pairs to find a recipe, adapt and work the pronunciation of key words with Schwa. The third part contains exercises related to the preparation of the oral presentation, by practicing in pairs, in front of classmates and with the teacher. During this period, necessary corrections will be made, and the students will simulate that they are cooking the chosen recipe. Finally, each couple will be taxed cooking the recipe and the videos will be shared on the internet space created for this purpose.

### ***1. Introducing the topic: the phone Schwa***

#### 1. Warm up exercise:

a) The teacher asks for a volunteer to read the following sentence:

- *Can I have salad for dinner?*

When the student had read it, they listen to the recording.

b) Then, the students are asked to identify the most common sound in this sentence (/ ə /). It is compared to the phoneme / e / to emphasize the difference between them.

c) The teacher explains how it must be produced, using articulators correctly: the lips as if we would pronounce / e / and the airstream as if we would say / ʌ /. Then, they are given a vowel triangle and it is explained locating in the teacher's face. Pupils will try to guess which vowel is the new one they are learning. When they find it, all of them will pronounce the sound according to its position in the triangle. **Appendix 2. I.**

d) Children imitate after the teacher more examples with schwa: butter, salmon, other, for, the, of (/ˈbʌtə , 'sæmən , 'ʌðə , fə , ðə , əv /).

e) After the teacher, children repeat the before read sentence, emphasizing the stressed syllables: | kən 'aɪ həv 'sæləd fə 'dɪnə ; |

f) With the guide of the teacher, they arrive to the following conclusion:  
when a word has two syllables, the unstressed tends to become Schwa.

- Conclusion: some letters are pronounced as Schwa:
  - Final – er
  - Final -or
  - Intervocalic unstressed -e-
  - Intervocalic unstressed -i-
  - Beginning e-

Timing: one and a half session: 80 minutes

## 2. Knowledge consolidation exercise:

The students will be given some written sentences about food. They have to listen to the sounds of each sentence, in order to find the phoneme / ə /.

They will probably need to listen to it several times. When they identify the letters pronounced as Schwa, they will look at the transcription before, and try to repeat looking at phonetic transcription. **Appendix 2. I**

Timing: one session (50 minutes).

From this moment, the students will look for images, photos, articles, books, etc. related to food and meaningful words that contain Schwa to decorate the classroom during the project.

## ***II. Working with the content: food***

### 3. Choosing a recipe in pairs:

The students are given a worksheet in which their implication is sought through questions about their likes and dislikes relating to food. They have already been told that they are going to show other students from a foreign country how they explain and prepare a recipe. In this activity, they are shown different videos where other native speakers talk about different recipes. There is time to stand up in pairs and choose the recipe to share. The teacher needs

to control that the recipes chosen are easy, healthy and not expensive (and be careful if there are allergies related to food). **Appendix 2. II**

Timing: four sessions of 50 minutes (two school days),

### ***III. Practicing the oral presentation***

Each student has a paper where they have written the words of their recipe that contain the sounds / ə / and / e /, and new phonemes learnt during the execution of the project. It will be a support for the next exercise:

4. Practice by themselves: The students will have to read they memorize and repeat the speech until they feel ready to expos it in front of the other classmates and / or until the teacher considers that they do it well enough. They practice telling their part each one several times, respecting punctuation and trying a good intonation and emphasis in the phoneme Schwa.

Timing: Two sessions (100 minutes)

5. Explain the recipe for the rest of classmates. It involves work distribution and previous practice. Pupils should:

- Be concentrated on pronunciation, intonation and rhythm.
- Ask the doubts if necessary.
- Take notes about the different mistakes and errors that are repeated during the presentation.
- Ask other pupils for advice (good posture, attitude, show self-confidence).

Timing: Two sessions, three pairs in each one.

6. Watch different cooking shows extracts and add to their oral speech the following parts:

- Introduction (at the beginning): name, age, school.
- Conclusion: when the food is ready, say good bye.

When it is done, the teacher corrects the mistakes and listens to the last version of their oral presentation.

Timing: one session (50 minutes)

#### 7. Practicing the speech while cooking:

The groups will organize all the material they are going to use: knife, table, pots and pans, and other tools that students bring from home. The ingredients are imaginary, to be replaced by food in the final recording. Each group takes the responsibility of having their material clean and tidy.

- a) Practice of speech
- b) Practice of cooking (only using the tools)

Timing: This would be the longest part of the didactic unit; six sessions, to ensure that all of them are ready to record their work.

### ***IV. Recording recipes and sharing videos with the other school:***

The teacher will be responsible to record students' voices explaining the recipes, before any video recording. The student has to be ready for speaking and cooking. When all the pairs have been recorded, everything will be tidied and we will say goodbye to this unit sharing the final work. There are different ways to share media content on the internet, such as *Droppbox*, *Dive*, a *school blog* ...

#### **4. 7. Assessment**

The assessment would be done in three different ways. Firstly, rest of peers would evaluate each oral presentation by some criteria and conditions that will be given to them (**worksheet4**). As we can see, there's no possibility to fail in this assessment. This is more to make students conscious on what they are learning, and also to raise their self-teem. After the recording, they will listen to it and each one makes their self-assessment from one to three, according to the following criteria:



Secondly, each student will have to assess themselves after watching their video, though other different criteria (**workshit5**). Finally, the teacher's assessment is going to be totally accorded to the objectives before specified.

8. Recording the final production: This will be the product of all the work done, so, this would be the part of assessment. The teacher will assess if the specific objectives of this unit have been

The speech production of the students will be assessed by the teacher according to the objectives we mentioned before, therefore, the teacher is going to follow these criteria:

- He has made an effort to identify and produce Schwa at the beginning.
- He has looked for recipes and videos by his own
- He has been involved in pair-work, creating the speech in group.
- He has made an effort to memorize and practice his part of the oral presentation.
- He has produced Schwa in a natural way during his final speech production.

The scale to qualify these criteria will be *Excellent*, *Good* and *Poor*. The total teacher's qualification is obtained by calculating the average of the results obtained for each criterion.

Thus, it will be considered that this unit has not been successful for a student if he has not being involved in the process, if a group member works more than the other ,or not even try to pronounce the Schwa correctly (if they have made the effort, it is not a problem that they produced incorrectly a few words). Therefore, what is being evaluated is the process of acquiring or learning this phoneme, and speech fluency. The initial situation of every student will be taken into account, so as to make a comparison when finishing the unit. If they manage to go from low to high, it means that there has been progress in the content we wanted to work on, and therefore, it is considered that the unit has been successful.

The timing of the whole didactic unit is sixteen sessions (about two sessions a day), this means that the students will be three weeks working Schwa. We

could think that this is too much time for an only phoneme, but we have to take into account that we have been talking about the importance of having long-term results. The most common thing is require the students to make an effort to memorize the spelling of a lot of words that they probably will not remember when they start with the next lesson. This way the students will get a global idea about the language without really developing English language skills. If we consider that the short-term assessment it is better for the students', this unit is too long. However, if we consider phonetics an important part of linguistic competence, we have to respect the process that the students need in order to acquire phonetics effectively. This is made through long-term assessment, where the teacher can see each student's rhythm and progression in listening and speaking skills.

## **CONCLUSIONES Y REFLEXIÓN**

Me ha parecido muy interesante abordar este tema por el hecho de que, bajo mi punto de vista, se tiene una visión global errónea sobre el área de fonética dentro del aula de inglés. Se debe fomentar que los alumnos sean conscientes de la importancia de tener comprensión auditiva y buena pronunciación. Saberse las estructuras gramaticales, aunque es muy importante, no sirve para comunicarse si la pronunciación es pobre (ya que existe una gran diferencia entre la manera de pronunciar y entonar en español y en inglés).

A lo largo de este proyecto, hemos tratado diferentes campos relacionados con la enseñanza de la fonética en el aula de inglés. Por un lado, hemos explicado los factores que afectan a la enseñanza de esta área del lenguaje y los problemas más frecuentes en nuestros colegios respecto a la enseñanza de la pronunciación de la lengua extranjera. Por otro lado, nos hemos basado en las hipótesis de S. Krashen, E. Lenneberg y D. Singleton con el fin de aclarar la relación entre adquisición, aprendizaje y edad. Basándonos en las observaciones, hemos llegado a la conclusión de que el factor edad no es explotado como debería dentro del aula de ILE en nuestros colegios; mientras se les exige a los alumnos que hagan un gran esfuerzo por memorizar cómo se escriben las palabras en inglés, estamos desaprovechando la gran capacidad

que tienen para la adquisición de la fonética, enfocando su esfuerzo hacia tareas que rara vez le ayudarán a desenvolverse en un entorno de habla inglesa. Consideramos, por tanto, que no se debe esperar a que los alumnos hayan alcanzado la edad en la que empiezan a estudiar de una forma más formal para introducir la fonética dentro del aula de ILE.

A continuación, en relación con las conclusiones extraídas de estas hipótesis, hemos explicado diferentes métodos para llevar a cabo la enseñanza de la fonética en el aula. Estos métodos han sido clasificados según su función. Así pues, hemos distinguido dos grupos de metodología para ILE: el primer grupo está formado por métodos que favorecen la adquisición inconsciente de la fonética. El segundo, son métodos para el aprendizaje formal de la fonética del inglés, con la finalidad de pulir y matizar la fonética de los alumnos. A partir de estas metodologías, extraemos las siguientes conclusiones:

- Para hacer alumnos competentes en lengua inglesa es imprescindible que adquieran la capacidad de poder comunicarse en inglés, tanto dentro como fuera del aula. Para conseguir esta competencia durante la etapa de Primaria, por lo tanto, es importante valerse de situaciones comunicativas. Pero este método no va a tener éxito si los niños no constan de una base lingüística para poder entender y responder, aunque sea en un nivel muy básico. Así pues, para que este método tenga éxito en el aula de ILE, es muy favorable que los alumnos hayan adquirido esa base durante la etapa de infantil por medio de sesiones de inmersión en inglés.
- Es importante que el niño haya estado en contacto con habla inglesa de nivel nativo durante un largo periodo de tiempo, antes de empezar a introducir la fonética como tal (como una unidad más que se debe trabajar) en el aula de inglés. De lo contrario, le va a costar un gran esfuerzo captar esa fonética cuando se encuentre en una situación comunicativa real, y es muy poco probable que sea capaz de responder al mismo nivel.
- Para avanzar más allá de lo que viene siendo la comunicación, es decir, recibir un mensaje y mandar una respuesta, existen otros métodos que

ayudan a la consolidación de la fonética y sus matices. Estos métodos, que hacen de la fonética un campo más que pueda aprenderse formalmente, se basan en la repetición de patrones lingüísticos y la habilidad para transcribir de letras a fonemas y viceversa. Por un lado, aunque la repetición es un sistema que ya ha sido superado en Educación Primaria, a la hora de enseñar una lengua extranjera como el inglés, este método resulta beneficioso para trabajar la entonación y otros aspectos como el ritmo y la acentuación. Por otro lado, no es nuestro objetivo dentro del aula de ILE que los alumnos sepan transcribir, ni mucho menos, pero está comprobado que, una vez se ha adquirido la capacidad de comprensión y expresión en inglés, ayuda a la consolidación y la mejora de ambas competencias (comprensión auditiva y expresión oral).

Por todo ello, estos métodos han sido mencionados y aplicados al campo de la fonética como alternativa al sistema que se sigue generalmente en nuestros colegios respecto a la enseñanza de ILE, donde, debido al límite de tiempo y la gran cantidad de contenidos, la pronunciación y práctica oral no recibe la atención necesaria para educar alumnos con una competencia integral en inglés.

Por un lado, bien es cierto que, siendo el inglés una lengua extranjera, resulta ajena en el día a día de los alumnos. A pesar de que en un futuro van a tener la necesidad de ser competentes en inglés, durante la etapa de Educación Primaria es difícil hacer que los alumnos vean la necesidad de comunicarse en este idioma. En estas condiciones, la fonética queda limitada a su uso dentro del aula. Y es por ello que los maestros de ILE debemos tratar de poner medios para que los niños vean la funcionalidad de tener una buena pronunciación, aunque solamente sea por el hecho de aprobar la asignatura, que, al fin y al cabo, es el mismo motivo por el que estudian la escritura del vocabulario y las estructuras de la gramática. Eso no quiere decir que tengamos que dejar de fomentar el uso de material auténtico de audio y la correcta pronunciación.

Con todo esto, debemos decir que vivimos en un país de transición, donde las cosas van a su ritmo. España es uno de los pocos países de Europa donde es

difícil encontrar al azar a alguien que sepa hablar inglés. Es por eso que la necesidad social de saber entender y hablar correctamente inglés en cualquier situación no ha llegado al contexto de nuestros colegios. Aun así, a medida que vaya surgiendo esa necesidad y el profesorado se vaya adaptando a esta situación, los alumnos también lo harán, simplemente es cuestión de hacerse a la idea. Si miramos atrás en la trayectoria de la enseñanza de idiomas extranjeros, la fonética ha ido adquiriendo más valor en las aulas a lo largo del tiempo, aunque como ya hemos dicho, todavía no ha alcanzado el peso suficiente para que los alumnos pasen a Educación Secundaria con un nivel fonético de inglés similar o cercano al de su lengua materna.

En otras palabras, enseñar fonética en el aula de inglés es un proceso largo y lleno de obstáculos, cuyo progreso debe ser evaluado a largo plazo. A pesar de que las condiciones de nuestro ámbito educativo (la falta de necesidad de hablar inglés, la falta de tiempo, etc.) no favorezcan a la enseñanza de ésta y nos puedan limitar como docentes de lengua extranjera, debemos asumir la enseñanza de la fonética como un reto más al que hay que enfrentarse, de la misma manera que se han ido enfrentando otros obstáculos hasta llegar a la situación actual. Para que esto se vaya produciendo, es importante no dejar de darle importancia a la pronunciación dentro del aula, aunque no se tenga tiempo para trabajar la fonética tal y como sería necesario. Si los docentes de lengua extranjera no hacemos el esfuerzo para que este tema avance, no podemos sorprendernos de que nuestros niños no hayan alcanzado las competencias.

## **ONDORIOAK ETA HAUSNARKETA**

Oso interesgarria iruditu zait gai honi buruz jardutea; nire ikuspuntutik, ingeleseko saioetan fonetikari ematen zaion ikuspegia desegokia baita. Ikasleak entzumenaren ulermenak zein ahozko adierazpenak duten garrantziaz jabetzea bermatu behar da. Egitura gramatikalak menperatzea oso garrantzitsua izan arren, ezin da komunikatzeko tresna bezala hartu ahoskera

zuzena ez bada, kontutan izan behar baita euskaraz edo gaztelaniaz erabiltzen den intonazioa ingelesekoarekin alderatua, oso desberdina dela.

Proiektuaren garapenean zehar, ingeleseko ikasgelaren barruan fonetika irakasterakoan hainbat eremu desberdin kontutan izan dira. Alde batetik, irakaskuntza honi eragiten dioten faktoreak azaldu ditugu, eta gelan fonetikaren irakaskuntzarekin lotutako arazorik ohikoenak ere. Bestalde, S. Krashen, E. Lenneberg eta D. Singleton adituen baieztapenetan oinarritu gara, ikaslearen adina, edukien barnerapena zein ikaskuntzaren arteko lotura argitzeko asmoarekin. Behatutakoarekin, hurrengo ondoriora iritsi gara: ikasleen adinak eskaintzen dituen aukerak ez dira behar bezala Atzerriko Hizkuntza: Ingelesa ikasgai (AHI) probesten. Ikasleei hainbat hitzen idazkera buruz ikastea eskatzen zaie ikasgaia gainditzeko, haurrek adin goiztiarrean duten hizkuntzarako eta hain zuzen ere fonetikarako gaitasuna alde batera utziz. Beraz, ikasleen ahalegina funtzionalitaterik gabeko jardueretara bideratuta dago, hitzen hizkiak memoriaz ikasteak ez baitie lagunduko etorkizunean elkarriketa bat ingelesez mantentzen.

Hau kontutan hartuz, uste dugu ez dugula txoin behar ikasleak heziketa formalago batean egotera ingeleseko fonetika ikasgelan sartzeko.

Hurrengo paragrafoetan, hipotesiengandik ateratako ondorioekin erlazionatuta, fonetikaren irakaskuntzarako metodo desberdinak azaldu izan dira, bi taldeetan sailkatuta, betetzen duten funtzioaren arabera: lehenengo taldea fonetikaren oharkabeko barneratzeari laguntzen dioten metodoei dagokio. Bigarrena, aldiz, fonetika modu formalean ikasteko metodoak dira, aurretik barneratutako oinarri fonetiko hobetzeko funtzioarekin. Metodologia hauetatik abiatuta, hurrengo ondorioak atera ditugu:

- Ikasleak ingeleseko hizkuntzan konpetente izateko, ezinbestekoa da hizkuntza honetan komunikatzeko gaitasuna eskuratzea, bai ikasgelan eta bai ikastetxetik kanpo. Lehen Hezkuntzako etapan gaitasun hau lortzeko, beraz, garrantzitsua da ingelesez komunikaziorako egoerak erraztea, horrela ez bada, haurrek ez badute aurretik oinarri fonetiko bat eskuratu, metodo honek ez du arrakastarik izango, beharrezkoa baita ikasleek mezuak ulertzea eta erantzuteko gai izatea (nahiz eta ekoizpena

hobetu behar izan). Oinarri hau murgiltze ereduaren zein beste baliabide edo metodo aurrekarien bitartez lor daiteke.

- Ikaslea denbora luzez ingelesa jaiotzeko hizkuntza gisa duten pertsonekin harremanetan egotea ere oso lagungarria izaten da, fonetika landu beharreko ikasgai gisa gelan sartu baino lehen. Horrela ez bada, hasierako egoera komunikatiboetan ez baitu izango parte hartzeko gaitasuna.
- Komunikaziorako gaitasunetik haratago joanez, hau da, mezuak jaso eta erantzunak bidaltzeaz gain, beste metodo batzuk existitzen dira, fonetikaren finkapenari laguntzen diotenak. Metodo hauek fonetika ikasgai formal bezala ikusten dute, eredu linguistikoen errepikapenean eta fonema nahiz hizkien transkribaketan oinarritzen direlarik. Alde batetik, nahiz eta errepikapena gainditutako teknikatzat hartu, atzerriko hizkuntza irakasterakoan oso lagungarri izan daiteke segun eta zein aspektuetan; erritmoa zein intonazioan trebatzeko, hain zuzen ere. Gure helburua ez da ikasleak transkribatzen ikastea, baina demostratuta dago horrelako teknikak ahozko irakaskuntzaren hobekuntzari laguntzen diotela, bai entzumenaren ulermenari eta bai ahozko adierazpenari dagokionez.

Hau guztia dela eta, metodo hauek aukeratu ditugu fonetikaren alorrean ezarri nahian, eskoletan eskaintzen den fonetikaren irakaskuntzaz gain, beste aukera bat bezala. Gure eskoletan dagoen arazo nagusia eduki kopurua eta ikasturteko ordutegiaren arteko kontua da, ez baitago astirik haurrei ingelesez behar den bezala entzuten eta hitz egiten irakasteko, eta beraz, ikasle konpetenteak hezteko..

Alde batetik, egia da ingelesa atzerriko hizkuntza bat izanik, ikasleen egunerokotasunean ez omen dela garrantzitsua. Nahiz eta etorkizunean ingeleseko gaitasuna behar izan, Lehen Hezkuntzako etapan ez da behar hori nabaritzen. Baldintza hauetan, fonetikaren erabilera ingeleseko ikasgelara mugatuta gelditzen da. Hori dela eta, ingeleseko irakasleok gure esku dagoena egin behar dugu, haurrek kalitatezko ahoskeraren garrantzia ikus dezaten, nahiz eta soilik ikasgaia gainditzeko izan; hori baita, azken finean, hitzen idazkera nahiz egitura gramatikalak buruz ikastearen arrazoi bakarra: ikasgaia

gainditzea. Horrek ez du esan nahi berezko materiala zein ahozkotasan zuzenaren sustapenari utzi behar diogunik, ezin baitugu ahaztu zeintzuk diren komunikatzeko trebetasun esanguratsuenak.

Guzti honekin, esan beharra dago trantsiziozko herrialde batean bizi garela, gauzak bere erritmoan doazela. Espainia Europako herrialdeetatik bereizten da, kaletik ez baita erraza ingelesez ongi dakien pertsona bat harrapatzea. Horregatik, edozein egoeratan ingelesez ulertu zein adierazteko beharra ez da gure testuingurura iritsi. Hala ere, behar hau sortzen doazen heinean eta irakasleria egokituz joaten direnean, ikasleak ere egokitu eginen dira. Hezkuntzaren ibilbideari erreparatzen badiogu, fonetika arloaren irakaskuntza nabarmenki hobetu egin da azkeneko urteetan, nahiz eta, aipatuSi miramos atrás en la trayectoria de la enseñanza de idiomas dugun bezala, oraindik ez du behar duen indiar guztia hartuz, ikasleak ingeleseko hizkuntzan benetako gaitasuna lortzeko.

Beste hitzekin esanda, ingeleseko ikasgelan fonetika irakaslea trabaz beteriko bide luzea da, eta beraz, epe-luzerako helburu eta ebaluazioa behar du. Gure ingurugiroko baldintzak lagungarriak ez diren arren, eta irakasle bezala mugatze gaituzten arren, fonetikaren irakaskuntza erronka bat bezala ikusi behar dugu, bat gehiago, orain arte lortutako aurrerapen guztiak bere egunean izan ziren bezalakoa. Hau posible izan dadin, funtsezkoa da gelaren barruan ahozkotasanari garrantzia ematen jarraitzea, nahiz eta fonetika berezko unitate formal bezala ezin irakatsi; ariketak ozenki zuzentzerakoan, beti ahozko ekoizpen zuzena bilatu behar da. Ez bagara gu horrez kezkatzen, ezin baitugu espero beste edonork egitea.



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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix 1: Activities taken from the different teaching methods

#### THE DIRECT METHOD: *Being the machinist*

NAME:

- *Today is (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday...), (January, February) .... (st, nd, rd, th) of 20....*
- *The weather today is (sunny, cloudy, windy), (it rains, it snows), and it's (cold, warm).*
- *Today ....., , ..... and ..... are missing.*

#### Expressing likes and dislikes

- a. First, when the students have not acquired the grammar structure of the activity yet, the teacher starts saying things like *I don't like rollerblading, but I like playing basket. Do you like rollerblading?* In this part is very important gestures, voice intonation and facial expressions of the teacher, in order to make the students understand when it is a question, affirmative or negative questions.
- b. Then, when pupils have acquired the structure of questions and answers, they start asking their classmates and answering the questions. For example, one student asks another: *Anna, do you like swimming?* And the other says: *No, I don't. Do you like chocolate?* The teacher goes around the class listening to children' dialogues and correcting when necessary.

## COMMUNICATIVE METHOD

### *The Gorge of Lumbier*

<i>Animals that we can see in Lumbier</i>	<i>Have you seen them?</i>
<i>Griffon Vulture</i>	✓
<i>Osprey</i>	X
<i>Golden Eagle</i>	✓
<i>Owl</i>	✓
<i>Peregrine falcon</i>	X

- ❖ *In this trip we have seen the Griffon Vulture, Golden Eagles and an owl.*
- ❖ *My favorite one has been ....., because*

*We are going to tell other children how we made the carnival costumes. These children are from the U.K.*

- ❖ *Start preparing how you will do it. Order of ideas*

- 1. Introduce yourself: name, age, grade, where are you from.*
- 2. Why did we choose that costume this year*
- 3. Materials*
- 4. Steps*
- 5. Farewell*

- ❖ *When you think you are ready, explain it in front of the teacher and correct the errors. Finally, record yourself and share it with your corresponding foreign student (use your Dropbox account).*

## AUDIO-LINGUAL / AUDIO-VISUAL METHOD

- **Visual stimulus-response: from examples to own production.**
  - Listening: discriminating sounds related to a specific phoneme.
  - Pronunciation: correct execution of phonemes using the phonic target language.
  - Intonation and stress: good intonation using imitation and respecting the stress marks.
    - Affirmative sentences
    - Negative sentences
    - Questions
  
- **Use of recorded material for reading imitation.**
  
- **Oral repetition:** memory is a very exploited resource by children in this method; although the learning of phonetics has place around a context into the classroom, the students must repeat again and again the correct production in order to get a good mark in the exam.

**Exercise1. Listen and repeat. Then, put the stress marks in the correct places and check:**

| wi həd dɪnər ɪn ə tʃaɪni:z restɒrnt lɑ:st \*sætədeɪ | \*aɪ lʌv tʃaɪni:z fu:d |

| lu:zɪŋ maɪ fju:tʃə z nɒt laɪk lu:zɪŋ ən ɪlekʃn ɔ:r ə fju: pɔɪnts ɪn ðə stɒk mɑ:kɪt |

| nəʊ | aɪ dɪdnt də maɪ həʊmwɜ:k | aɪ kɒdnt ʌndəstænd |

**Exercise2. Listen and repeat. Then, find silent letters in the following words:**

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Island  | 6. listen |
| 2. Talk    | 7. take   |
| 3. History | 8. write  |
| 4. Sight   | 9. half   |
| 5. Honest  | 10. fruit |

**Exercise3. Listen and repeat. Then put numbers in the next words, according to the order in the listening:**

_ Bear	_ Beer	_ Ear	_ Air
_ Hear	_ Hair	_ Pier	_ Pear

## GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

The following activity is an example about how the theory is explained without any contextualized situation, just for explaining specific aspects of the language. After the theory there is an activity thought to apply what we have learned from theory.

### 1. **Consonants. Labiodental voiced / v / vs. bilabial voiced / b /**

*Consonants are normally given in pairs, one of them is voiceless, and the other is voiced (the focal folds vibrate to produce it). For example:*

1. A) *LABIODENTALS (voiced / v / and voiceless / f /): these consonants are produced when the upper teeth and lower lip rub to expel the airstream. The phoneme / v / is commonly replaced by the bilabial voiced / b /. This is a problem when speaking English, since it could suppose a complete change of meaning (vowel, bowel).*

*ACTIVITY: Identify phonemes' features in texts: when looking at a transcription. The text chosen will have a range of words with a specific phoneme.*

*Victoria saw her violet book and she thought it was very big.*

| \*vɪk tɔ:rɪə sɔ: hə vaɪələt bʊk ənd ʃɪ θɔ:t ɪt wəz veri bɪg |

*Ben hasn't been invited because he is violent.*

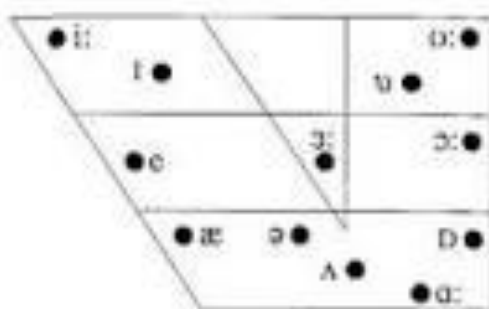
| \*ben 'hæznt bi:n ɪnvartɪd bɪkɔz hi z vaɪələnt |

## Appendix 2: Material to use in the didactic unit to introduce Schwa

### I. Introducing the topic: the phone Schwa

Worksheet\_1

*Look at this triangle: can you find where the sound we are learning is? Try to find it and check it with a partner.*



worksheet\_2

- *I think that these sausages are cheaper than the other.*
- *Low fat sandwiches are actually old fashioned.*
- *My favorite snack is made of strawberries and yoghurt.*
- *The cake is sugar-free, so it is allowed for special diets.*

*ACTIVITY (Recording): listen to what people say about food.*

*Then, underline the vowels pronounced as / ə /.*

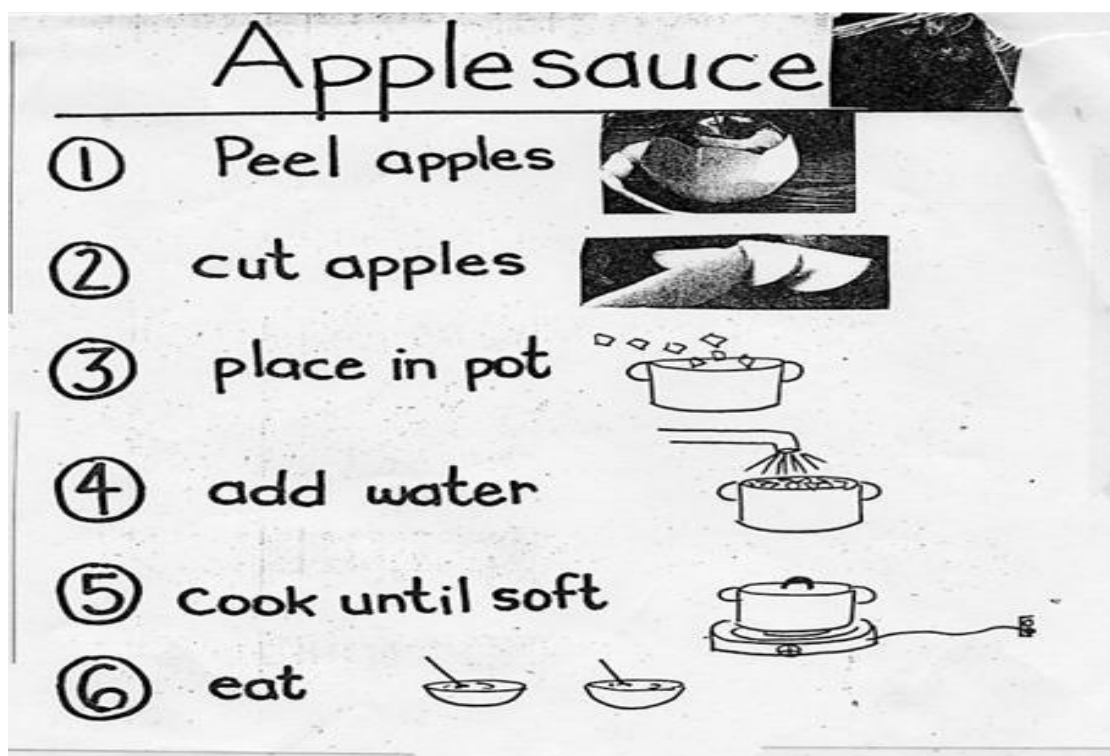
- */\* 'aɪ 'θɪŋk ðæt ði:z 'sɒsədʒɪz ə 'tʃɪ:pə ðən ðɪ 'lðə /*
- */ ləʊ fæt 'sænwɪdʒɪz ə 'æktʃuəli ʊld 'fæʃnɪd /*
- */ maɪ 'feɪvərət snæk s 'meɪd əv 'strɔ:bərɪz ənd 'jɒgət /*
- */ ðə keɪk s 'ʃʊgə fri: | 'səʊ ɪt s ə'laʊd fə 'speʃl 'daɪəts |*



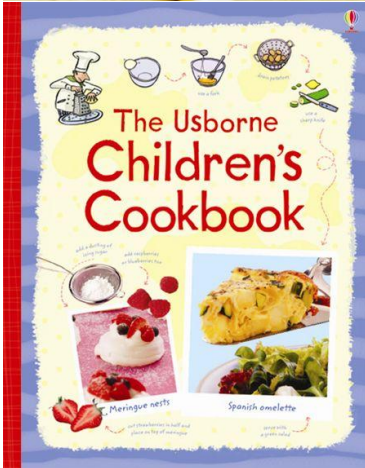
## II. Working with the content: food

Worksheet\_3

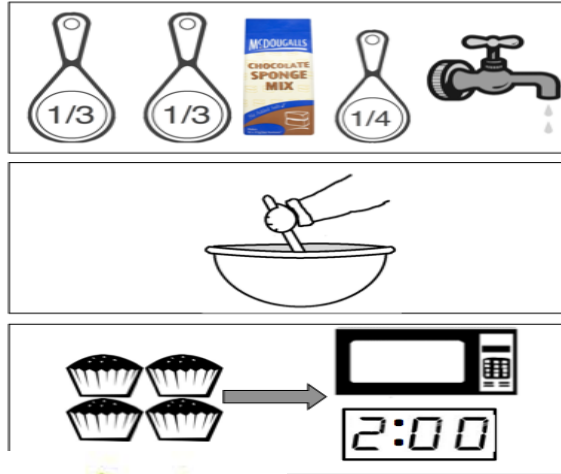
- *Have you ever cooked?*
- *Which is your favorite food? What food you don't like?*
- *Look for a recipe you'd like to share with a person from another country (it must be written in English). Ask the teacher the unknown words if necessary. Then, read and answer:*
  - *Why have you chosen this recipe?*
  - *What ingredients do we need?*
  - *How is it prepared? Adapt the found recipe to your own words, in order to make the oral production as comfortable and natural as possible for you.*
  - *Locate the words that you think have / ə / and check it with the following source:*  
<http://www.photransedit.com/online/text2phonetics.aspx> (you must use whole sentences, not isolated words).



\* Images to acclimate the classroom



Chocolate cakes



Recipe \_\_\_\_\_  
Prep Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Serves \_\_\_\_\_

Ingredients \_\_\_\_\_  
Directions \_\_\_\_\_



Leire Muñoz Ardanaz

**Recipe Book**

From the collection of \_\_\_\_\_  
Ingredients \_\_\_\_\_  
Serves \_\_\_\_\_



#### **IV. Recording recipes and sharing videos with the other school:**

Worksheet\_4

ASSESSED GROUP:

	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>It could be improved</b>
<i>Spoken fluency</i>			✓
<i>Time spoken</i>		✓	
<i>Organization of the speech</i>	✓		

Worksheet\_5

***Evaluate yourself using 1 to express disagreement, 2 to express middle-term and 3 to express agreement:***

- ❖ ***I clearly distinguished the phonemes / ə / and / e /.***
- ❖ ***My speech has been fluent.***
- ❖ ***I have been speaking for the same long time as my partner.***