



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA
EDUCACIÓN CARRERA DE IDIOMAS

MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL

Proyecto de Investigación previo a la obtención del Título
de Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación

Mención: INGLÉS

TEMA:

**“THE USE OF GRADED READERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PRONUNCIATION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF THE STUDENTS
FROM THE SECOND SEMESTER OF PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS
NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS CAREER”**

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Ambato – Ecuador

2017

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is the result of the author’s investigation and has reached the conclusions and recommendations described in the present study.

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TO

I dedicate this to my family.

Especially to my grandfather and my mother who were the biggest support I could find in this stage of my life. I finally want to dedicate this to the ones who believed in me and were always asking about my performance and my achievements.

Carlos.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my family for giving me intelligence and the necessary skills that I inherited from them. Especially my mother who taught me to be myself and learn values in order to be a person who is always ready to face any situation in life.

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**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS
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TOPIC: “THE USE OF GRADED READERS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRONUNCIATION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF THE STUDENTS FROM THE SECOND SEMESTER OF PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS CAREER”

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Abstract

The purpose of this investigation is to expose the results obtained through surveys that are intended to deduce student’s view towards the use of graded readers and its use for improving pronunciation with the objective of spreading its impact on pronunciation development. Data was collected through surveys directed to students. The study was conducted to students from second semester of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Career of the Technical University of Ambato. The results were analyzed using a scatter plot graphic , which suggest the application of graded readers using a student- centered focus and based on connecting reading with pronunciation skills.

Key words: graded readers, pronunciation, extensive reading, and language skills.

**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS
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TOPIC: “EL USO DE LECTURAS GRADUADAS Y EL DESARROLLO DE LA PRONUNCIACION EN EL IDIOMA INGLES DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE SEGUNDO SEMESTRE DE LA CARRERA DE PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS”

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Resumen

El propósito de esta investigación es exponer los resultados obtenidos a través de encuestas cuyo propósito fue deducir la percepción del estudiante en cuanto al uso de lecturas graduadas y su uso para mejorar la pronunciación, con el objetivo de expandir su impacto en el desarrollo de la pronunciación. Datos fueron recolectados a través de encuestas dirigidas a los estudiantes. El estudio fue realizado a estudiantes de segundo semestre de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Los resultados fueron analizados usando un coeficiente de correlación, el cual sufre que la aplicación de lecturas graduadas usando un enfoque centrado al estudiante conectándolo con destrezas de pronunciación.

Palabras clave: lecturas graduadas, pronunciación, lectura extensiva, habilidades del lenguaje.

Introduction

The following investigation has as a principal objective the identification of students view towards graded readers and the development of pronunciation. Because graded readers present language simplification according to the student's level and it permits to read slower and to identify word by word while the student is reading, finally letting her or him to practice pronunciation skill while reading. Furthermore, activities that are connected with reading are mostly not directed to the development of pronunciation skills. Consequently, the relation between both variables is sometimes not promoted. The general structure of the investigation is divided in 5 chapters that are going to be described.

Chapter I: In this first chapter, the problem is described giving main details and information. The problem is stated as well as contextualized. It permits to deeply analyze the main causes of it and the possible effects that it is causing. As the problem is contextualized, it can be also noticeable where it is present and in what specific situations the problem was found.

Chapter II: This chapter describes in a detailed way the theoretical framework that worked as a basis for the investigation, as well as the main categories of both variables. Furthermore, a hypothesis was stated in order to be proved and then either rejected or accepted.

Chapter III: In this chapter the methodology and type of investigation is determined, as well as the population that was the subject of study.

Chapter IV: This chapter includes the analysis and interpretation of each of the questions that were posted in the surveys directed to students. Furthermore, results are analyzed and used to verify the hypothesis by using a scatter plot statistic tool.

Chapter V: In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations can be observed; they were based on the obtained results and the stated objectives.

CHAPTER I

Research Topic

The use of graded readers and the development of pronunciation in the students of “Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Career at Universidad Técnica de Ambato” .

1.2 Problem Statement

1.2.1 Contextualization of the problem

English is positioned as a global language nowadays and it is being promoted in schools and institutes around the world. As every country has a different view or purpose of the language, there are different policies that were created in order to incentive teaching it, especially at an early age. This is the case of Mexico, where there are policies approved by different organizations such as UNESCO (2003) and OCDE (2008), a lot of countries have incorporated English to their primary education.

In Mexico, teaching English has been only an issue that has to do with secondary and higher education. However, in the 90’s decade, 5 states of the republic started the implementation of English teaching programs in its primary schools. Mexico counts with an estate program that works since 2009 and 32 states have enrolled it so far, Romero, Irigoyen, & Grijalva (2009). Even though Mexico has implemented English to their educational system, reading has not been promoted at its full potential. Some investigations conducted by international organizations such as OCDE and SEP, detail that nowadays Mexico is a country that lacks of people who read. It is a country where promoting Reading as a tool for education has become a difficult task.

Other Latin American countries such as Venezuela count with methods of instruction such as the grammar translation method, where pronunciation and

speaking is practically inexistent, because communication is not the principal objective, González (2017). Due to the use of a less student-centered approach in which communication is not the main objective, productive skills such as pronunciation have been left behind.

Reading is definitely not a fundamental element in the systems before mentioned because methods such as grammar translation or English with specific purposes sometimes leave reading as just a small part of the program and it is not used as a tool to reinforce skills such as speaking or pronunciation, the main focus in the methods are grammar and the acquisition of vocabulary as well as basic communicative skills. This is caused by the use of syllabi that is mostly intended to cope with grammar issues more than the development of communicative skills such as speaking and pronunciation, which are sometimes left behind because of following strict curricula that is focused on grammar or vocabulary.

Reading could be a very useful resource when teaching English and mastering communicative skills. Quevedo (2015) affirms that students must develop reading in order to reinforce other skills such as definition, argumentation, fluency and also pronunciation. This statement can contribute to the analysis of the relation of reading with this problematic because it remarks that pronunciation must be developed to complete a correct communication process because it permits to put all the speaking skills together in order to talk and express ideas correctly.

As it is affirmed by Fernandez (2003), in his book “the use of literature in the English classroom: An example to carry out in the classroom” the use of readings is important in order to stimulate not only the reading habit but also the acquisition of vocabulary and the improvement of pronunciation, especially at an early age in which a person is acquiring a second language. Pronunciation sometimes comes with difficulties due to the fact that a reading habit is not created in the student since early ages, and it causes that students are not aware of the correct pronunciation of some words or misunderstandings related to the interference of their L1 and L2.

How can our system differ from a globalized English-teaching system? , another perspective of language teaching could be present. Hutchinson y Waters (1987) define English with specific purposes as a teaching focus where all the decisions related to the content and method are based on the student's reasons and needs for studying the language. Ecuador adapted this educational model with very specific purposes, and it is especially applied to students from business careers and those that are involved in international negotiations.

Quevedo (2015) analyses the historic evolution of the teaching English process in the country, supporting the idea that a linguistic and cultural leads to master English skills as well as the ability to negotiate and execute communicative behaviors. Pronunciation plays a very important role in order to master English skills that are related to the abilities mentioned by the author. However, most of the processes that are involved in mastering the language sometimes focus only on the accuracy of its use, and the messages that are emitted, more than in how correct words are pronounced and how can the mispronunciation of words can lead to an incomplete communication process.

Ecuadorian population also lacks people who read, as is indicated by the last census about reading habits in Ecuador conducted in 2012 by INEC, which provides the following results: 56,8% of surveyed people don't read because they are not interested, the 83% of people from 16 to 24 years old read more than other people because of their age. In addition, 33% of young people read only because they have to cope with tasks from school or college, and the 32% of the people read to know something else about certain topic according to INEC (2012). This leads to conclude that people in our country are not so interested in reading, especially those who are still students, the problem might rely in what kind of books the teachers are choosing or the habits that the students might have. Any of these reasons to make people uninterested in reading in our country is making that reading is not considered as a main part of education, especially when learning another language

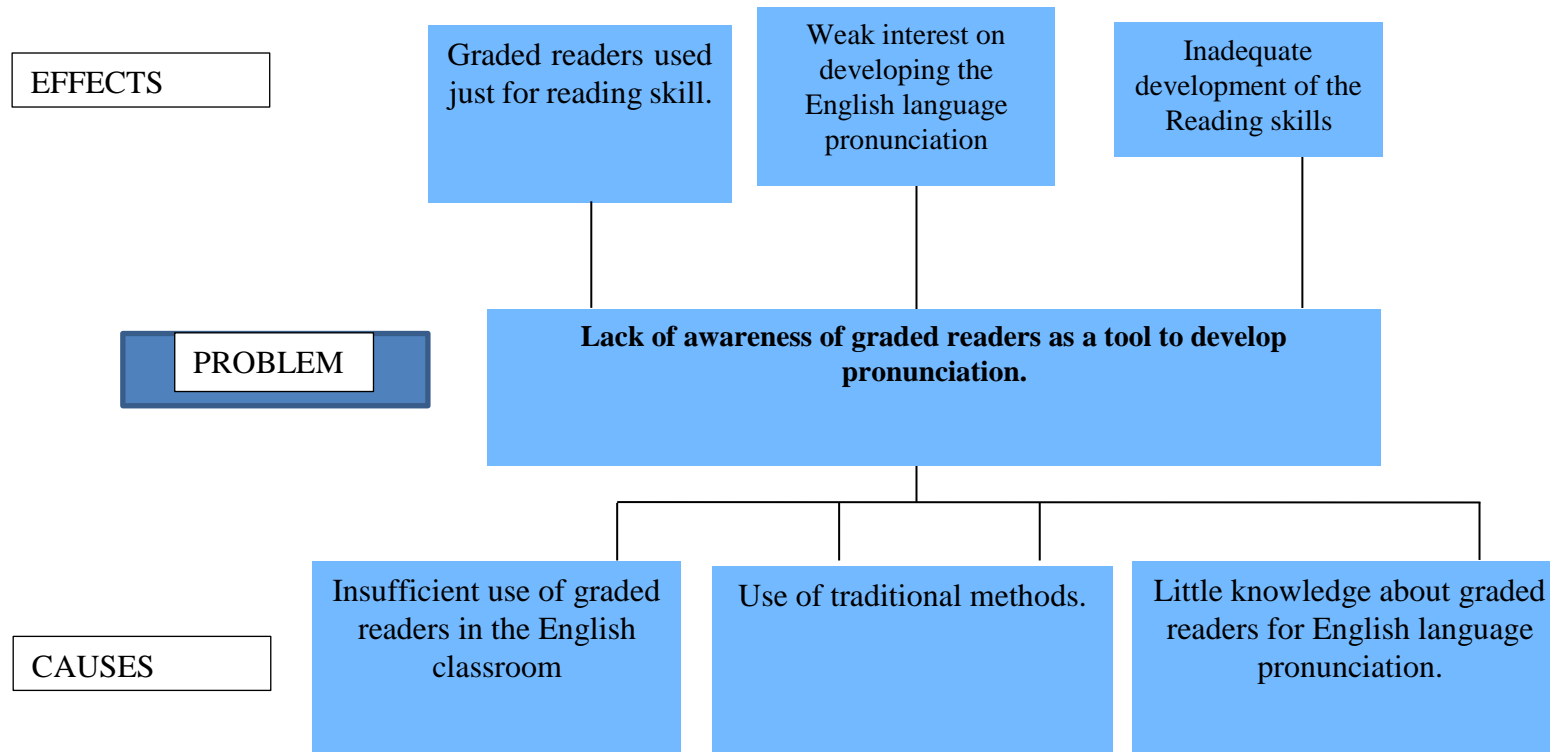
and it is not being connected to the development of language skills that could be used for communication such as speaking and pronunciation.

Similarly, at the Technical University of Ambato, in the languages career, teachers promote reading implementing it in each of the tasks and development of the 4 skills, as teachers follow a syllabus and educative models where reading is a key element of the learning process, they maintain the use of books and texts where reading is going to be used by the students at a considerable level. In addition, this might result in students developing the reading skills at the same time that they are developing the rest of the skills in this learning process. However, the fact of maintaining a determined teaching method, doesn't allow teachers to explore different and relatively new tools such as graded readers that could be beneficial when developing language skills.

It could be noticed that the view of students towards reading in English was quite positive, by general observations and collection of answers from them; it can be also perceived that reading is present in their English lessons and it is sometimes used as a mean of practicing. However, most of the students only read because they have to, the lack of interest is one of the biggest points of this problematic in our country as well as in the University. Furthermore, reading is mostly taught isolated, with pre, while and post activities that make the student reflect on what he or she read and the general comprehension of the text. However, it is rarely connected to activities that promote the use of speaking, as well as the correct use of pronunciation.

1.2.2 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Graphic 1 PROBLEMS TREE



Source: Direct Research

Made by: Oñate, C (2017)

Problems in acquisition of pronunciation of a foreign language depend on extra linguistic factors that are beyond the teacher and students, Krashen (1977). Further to this statement, it can be added that pronunciation could also be influenced by language skills such as reading. So it's worth to mention and point out problems that connect these two elements. When students read texts correctly, they know the right pronunciation of words.

Foreign Language pronunciation could be influenced positively by implementing reading in the classroom. So, the idea that the little use of graded readers as a teaching tool influences negatively in the process of acquisition of a new language and the development of its pronunciation, could be reinforced by that statement. As reading is being taught isolated and it is sometimes not connected with productive skills such as speaking, because of the insufficient use of resources such as graded readers that could permit students to connect two different skills and develop them correctly at the same time they are using an innovative teaching resource such as graded readers. The inexistent connection between graded readers and pronunciation might rely in what kind of curricula the teachers are following and what is the content that they are asked to teach at the beginning of the school year.

Besides teaching resources, there is also a negative predisposition from students at the moment of taking risks and trying to talk and pronounce words correctly. This could be caused by the different tools and resources that teachers are using. It is important to know that the repetitive use of traditional material is also a factor that might affect learning as well as the development of the language skills in a student. Not having access to other tools or not varying the use of resources in order to have a wide variety of teaching tools is always something that leads to the use of traditional readings, and this always influences negatively in the development of a second language, because students develop a high grade of demotivation and lack of interest in the language. This becomes a problem when they start to perceive language learning as a tedious and repetitive task, and this conveys results that are not effective.

In addition, as the relation between graded readers and the development of pronunciation in students has not been noticed as it should have, most of the members of an educational community are not aware of what it could be achieved by giving the necessary importance to notice how important could be to use resources such as graded readers in order to contribute to the development of pronunciation in students of a foreign language. Reading different kinds of texts and books can be a task that is mostly isolated or sometimes connected with small questionnaires about what students have read. However, students are not aware of how can these kinds of tasks like reading can be also connected with the development of pronunciation skills. Not knowing an alternative to traditional readings results in teachers using the most common tools, and even if the students have an idea of how to develop a reading exercise, it would appear tedious and complicated because of not using a wide variety of new alternatives and tools such as graded readers.

In conclusion, there are other alternatives and tools in the teaching field, especially in the languages teaching field, such as the use of graded readers that have been unknown and wasted. This affects the development of all the skills that are required to manage a language in a clear way. This is the case of pronunciation, that is reinforced only few times and usually using other tools different to graded readers. As the development of communicative skills gets more and more important through the years, it is worth to make students and teachers aware of the role of pronunciation in communication, because without a proper pronunciation, a message could be conveyed in a wrong way, leading to little or big misunderstandings.

1.2.3 Prognosis

In case that student's level of use of graded readers keep low, the development of their English pronunciation will be affected and it will be most likely to act negatively in the communication process, because an inadequate pronunciation is not useful to convey messages in a correct and clear way. At the same time, they will not be able to clarify their doubts about the correct pronunciation of words because they have not read them nor seen them in other written source such as graded readers in English.

On the other hand, through the implementation of graded readers to the competency of pronunciation in English in the classroom, will influence in a big way in the progress of the students, using this kind of readings will provide opportunities to learn more about the correct pronunciation of phonemes, as well as the different sounds that must be correctly pronounced for certain words that are frequently used.

At the same time, the students will feel motivated because of the fact of using new tools that are adapted to their abilities and interests. Teachers will find a strategy when using this type of readings to develop the different skills, the use of extra activities such as reading; will be fomented at the same time that the habit of reading is being cultivated in the students.

1.2.4 Problem Formulation

How do graded readers influence in the development of the English language pronunciation of the students from the second semester of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Career?

1.2.5 Research Questions

- What is the relation between graded readers and the English language pronunciation?

- What are graded readers and their main benefits?
- How can be graded readers be used as a tool to develop pronunciation?
- What is the impact of using graded readers in the English language classroom?

1.2.6 Delimitation of the object of investigation.

Field: Pedagogy

Area: Communicative

Content: graded readers

Aspect: Development of pronunciation

1.2.7 Spatial delimitation

The following investigation was conducted at the Technical University of Ambato, located in Tungurahua province, with the objective of promoting the use of graded readers in order to develop student's pronunciation. This investigation project focused in the educational field, looking for the possible alternatives in order to solve the few use of graded readers that is affecting students from the institution.

1.2.8 Temporal Delimitation

September 2017 – February 2018

1.3 Justification

The purpose of this investigation was to study the relation between the use of graded readers and the development of the speaking skill, paying special attention to pronunciation. In addition, it is expected that students might use this kind of readings in a near future in order to develop their pronunciation in a **practical** way, and that they consider this tool as a different alternative because of the facilities that are involved when using it.

This investigation is **important** because nowadays, reading is still an infinite source of lexis, not only for the ones that enjoy reading, but also for the ones who are attracted by this productive activity. Graded readers are positioning as an alternative, a different way to learn and develop skills at the same time that you are forming a reading culture. Students and teachers could notice the advantages of using this readers and how they influence positively in the learning process.

The investigation is **original** of the person who is doing the investigative labor, because the use of graded readers proves how this works as a teaching material besides helping teachers and students to learn the correct pronunciation of words and how to avoid mistakes in pronunciation, basing on similar investigations and taking relevant data from scientific sources that have studied similar topics.

The **beneficiaries** will be the students, teachers, parents and also authorities from the universities because it projects the use of graded readers to improve a key point in learning as it is the development of English pronunciation.

The **impact** of this investigation in the educative community is **positive** because this is based on the implementation of new tools that are intended to benefit students and improve the teaching and learning process of the English language.

It is also **feasible** due to the resources that can be found online as well as in other sources such as books, magazines and scientific articles. This permits that the investigation could be properly supported by data that is totally trustworthy and updated. In addition, enough time will be available in order to complete all the necessary steps to conduct the investigation.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General

To determine the influence of the use of graded readers on the English pronunciation in the students of the second semester of the Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros career in the technical University of Ambato.

1.4.2 Specific

- To study the relation between the use of graded readers and the English language pronunciation
- To establish the benefits of the use of graded readers to develop pronunciation skills.
- To describe the use of graded readers as a resource for the development of the English pronunciation.
- To explore the impact that graded readers might have in the development of the English language pronunciation.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Investigative Background

In an international and interuniversity Journal of Foreign Language Didactics called *Porta Linguarum*, The author remarks the use of graded readers in this article with a particular purpose, using an application methodology of three stages with activities that contribute to the learning process. She emphasizes that making a student manage reading skills at its 100% requires a series of steps that might end up with a proficient student in reading. She made up this 3-steps plan in order to achieve this, using pre, while, and post reading activities. However, this 3-steps plan was only focused on reading activities to make students aware of the language that they are using and familiarization with vocabulary more than practicing productive skills or making students aware of their pronunciation mistakes while they read.

On the other hand, graded readers were presented as a post activity because the author wanted to show how this resource promoted autonomy and expansion in the L2 learners. This investigation shows how graded readers can be used in order to master reading skills, as well as the acquisition of vocabulary and learner autonomy. However, it doesn't mention how this resource could be used in order to reinforce other skills besides reading.

Another study provides results from a study where an amount of students wrote post-reading reports in order to show how reading can positively influence student's skills such as fluency, comprehension and general language development. The methodology applied for this investigation was repeated reading, which is a fluency building , usually used in L2, which showed positive results in L2 learners, increasing reading fluency and comprehension. It was shown that reading is a meaningful means of developing foreign language abilities, particularly in foreign language settings where input sources are limited. Gorsuch & Taguchi (2010). This

investigation clearly connects both reading and the development of speaking skills in a very direct way.

Another important contribution suggests that literature can be used in order to reinforce reading comprehension in English, using appropriate strategies as well as books that are according to the level of proficiency of the students. Lerner (1999) exposes graded readers as a great resource because of its low grade of complexity and high rate of availability. She also adds that this resource might result in reducing student's doubts and incrementing reading comprehension in them. The investigation was conducted using small groups in order to work in a classroom, using a qualitative methodology of observation, in order to apply pre, while, and post reading activities on students, that were carefully selected in order to show positive results that might associate the use of reading to the development of pronunciation. Once again, this whole investigation focuses on how reading comprehension can be supported by using different elements, mentioning graded readers as one of them. However, it doesn't mention other skills that could be connected with the use of them.

There a contribution that claims that methods might be a factor that influences heavily in student's pronunciation. Different methodologies for pronunciation teaching have been developed, and most of them have been grouped in two different conceptions: intuitive focus and linguistic- analytical focus, Celsa (1996). This investigation collected empirical and anecdotal evidence in order to remark the importance of pronunciation by comparing methods of language instruction, making a deep analysis, reinforcing his statements with scientific basis. The author claims that those method that are more focused in repetition and oral practice such as the audio-lingual method, could influence on pronunciation. The study concluded that communicative-focus methods such as suggestopedia and the communicative approach are most likely to contribute to the development of pronunciation in students.

On the other hand, pronunciation has also been studied by some people in order to show its importance and how it can be mastered. Fraser (1999) , a senior lecturer in linguistics, wrote an article about pronunciation where she outstands the fact that pronunciation cannot be taught by using materials such as drilled dialogues or drilling phonemes, she suggests that interaction will be the main vehicle to get to an appropriate pronunciation, especially if it this interaction is produced with native speakers. She made a critical analysis on how drilling can affect negatively and how it can be replaced by putting pronunciation in a communicative context, applying several examples even with inexistent words in English, as well as speakers of other nations. Although she doesn't mention the use of books such as graded readers in order to master pronunciation, she suggests that learners could develop critical listening trough reading, and that will end up helping in their pronunciation.

Another example that is worth to mention is an article written by Ismail Çakır (2014), the study was carried out to students who take an optional English prep program; it was applied on students from 18 to 22 years old. He asked the participant to fill in a pronunciation attitude inventory (PAI) that was adapted by him, in order to find out the attitudes of the foreign language learners towards pronunciation. He presents ideas about anxiety caused in students due to the fear that they have to take risks when speaking the language, sometimes pronunciation can cause fear to take risks, and he also explains in the results, that motivation plays an important role, and this is something that goes related with choosing the appropriate materials at the moment to teach. It is worth to mention that he considers that reading can be used in order to make students feel less afraid towards pronunciation. This last statement clearly connects the two variables of this investigation. In short, pronunciation can be heavily influenced by reading, as well as psychological and the choice of methodology factors.

2.2 Philosophical foundations

This investigation is based on the critical-propositional- reflexive paradigm because it contributes to a proper analysis of reality, and at the same time it can be get to be known and studied deeply. At the same time it promotes critical, examiner and reflexive thinking in order to look for possible solutions to certain problems in the educational field, after analyzing the use of graded readers in the development of pronunciation, and in that way, it contributes to this investigation at the moment of making an important reflection on the relation of both variables and the impact they both have in the problematic that is being studied.

2.3 Legal basis

Ecuadorian Republic Constitution (2008): Art.343. - The national educational system will have as a main objective the development of abilities and individual and collective potentials of the population that facilitate learning. The system will have as the main focus the learner, and it will work in a flexible and dynamic, inclusive, effective and efficient way.

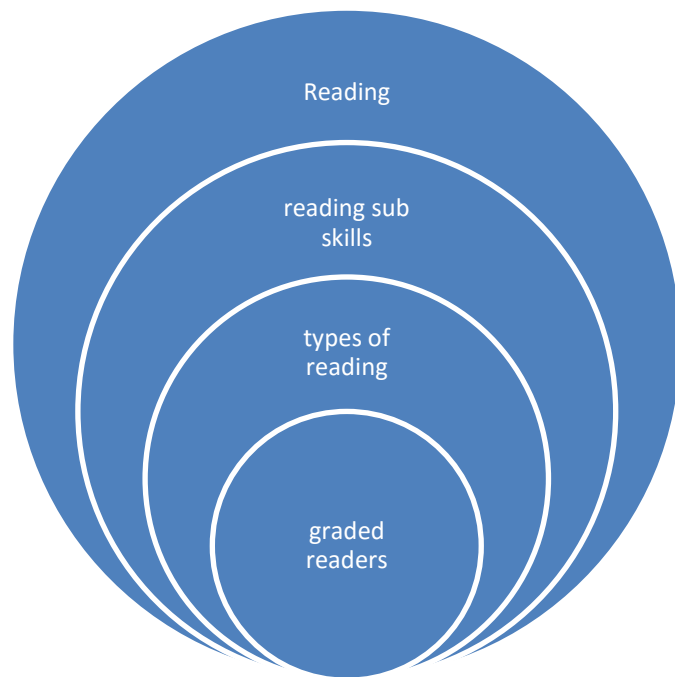
Great living national plan (2012 – 2017)

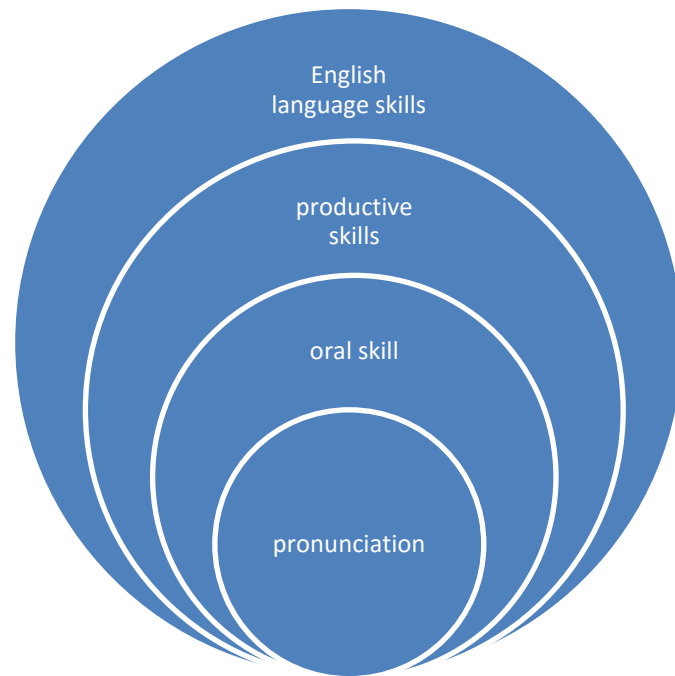
Objective 4. Reinforce capacities and potentials of the population

Politic 4.8 Promote intercultural dialogue as an axis of the pedagogic model and the use of educative space.

2.4 MAIN CATEGORIES

Graphic 2 Main Categories





Independent Variable

2.4.1 Reading

Definition

Reading can be described as a visual action, or simply as the act of reading. In fact, there is no doubt that reading is a skill that consist on decode and interpret written material. Some teachers view reading as a mean to be empowered, Duffy (2009).

The author's view towards reading places it as an important skill that must be developed in the classroom. Anaya (1994) confirms the big importance of reading in the classroom. by stating that the child needs to learn how to read because he or she has to read in order to learn. If they don't learn to read, either they learn with difficulties, or the student will probably be most likely to fail. This both views support the idea of implementing reading in the classroom to have positive effects.

Reading as a tool

However, Duffy (2009) adds that real tasks must be incorporated in order to achieve meaningful success. Besides being a skill, authors have defined reading as a tool; because it intervenes in cognitive processes and there is no doubt that it will be useful in the learning process of a person.

As it is affirmed by Jimenez (2004), reading is a cognitive activity of enormous importance and complexity, used usually in order to acquire knowledge. In the educational field, it is totally evident that reading will be the principal transmitter of pieces of knowledge that are going to be received by the students, letting them explore diverse areas of science.

Other authors' view towards reading

However, a neurological perspective is not usually included when trying to define reading and it is important to mention it in order to understand reading processes of normal individuals. As a complex skill, reading involves all of the regions of the brain, because it involves all cognitive functioning of humans, verbal and non-verbal, Kweldju (2015).

In addition, reading is mentioned as well as a habit that denotes a high level of culture, and that allows enriching the mind and lexis of the person that is reading. Cavallo (1997) affirms that reading is capable of building friendship, start new social relationships and even create polite habits.

At first look, there are many statements that confirm the productivity of reading as well as its importance in many educational fields; this can be related to this investigation because reading can be also seen as a resource in order to be used in class. It must be understood that if the skills of a language are developed without the use of resources, it might present some obstacles at the moment of trying to get positive results with students.

Reading also has been viewed as a mean to develop other skills that are necessary in students in general. Reading is necessary to reinforce cognitive abilities such as characterization and argumentation Quevedo (2015). This leads to conclude that besides being a skill, reading is also a vehicle that might contribute to a student's psychological and cognitive development and it is of great importance to know how to take advantage of it when teaching a foreign language.

Due to its role as an instrument to develop critical thinking and socialization, reading is remarked as a key element in education. Fernández, (2005).

2.4.2 Reading sub skills

For Samuels & Schachter, (1978), the most general skills of reading are the identification of words and its comprehension. Learning by association and by stimulus are mostly used to explain sub-skills of learning. However, there are some other sub- skills that have been exposed and described by other authors, this is the example of Woodward (2001) who has proposed the following subskills :

- knowing letters, words and phrases,
- read a text quickly to catch the main idea,
- read to obtain details, read to predict and remember,
- relate what is read with personal experience,
- criticize or comment,
- read aloud

The author prefers to mention specific actions as subs kills instead of mentioning general skills that have been traditionally taught and analyzed by several authors, with the objective of making readers aware of what they can achieve by reading properly.

Duffy (2009), explains a more specific view of some of the sub skills that can be considered for reading. He differs from the other authors by classifying reading skills by means of coping with an objective. He presents the following sub skills: Read directions, read expository texts, read newspapers for information and read for entertainment.

Having a closer view to what are the different reading sub- skills that are involved in reading, it is undeniable that some of them could contribute to the development of other skills such as speaking, especially pronunciation. For example reading aloud, it can be used to develop other skills that might be related with the production of sounds.

There is no correlation between a bad-reading aloud text, and a bad pronunciation, Ferreiro (1982) . This statement clearly connects the fact of using reading in the classroom and developing a proper pronunciation.

Cognitive subskills

A more cognitive view is presented by Kweldju (2015) , who mentions sub skills such as attention, planning, abstract reasoning, predicting, inhibition, use of strategies, problem solving, working memory, and long-term storage memory and retrieval of vocabulary and concepts, the procedural skill of retrieval, the use of grammatical knowledge, and the motor mechanism for visual processing, and production, that are involved in reading as a cognitive and neurological process. The author emphasizes those reading skills in order to show how reading process can pass from visual recognition to interpretation and comprehension. C6ppola (2004) takes some aspects from the cognitive vision of reading, adding that perception and de-codification are the most relevant sub skills that lead to decode written language and find equivalents in spoken language.

2.4.3 Types of reading

Perceptive, selective, and interactive reading

One of the most popular classifications of the different types of Reading that there can be found are the ones presented by Brown (2003). The author encloses reading in three types according to the skills that are involved to develop them. Perceptive reading, that helps to recognize the different components of the text. selective reading, which is in charge of the lexical and grammatical recognition, Interactive Reading, which includes activities in that are incorporated to the interpretation of the text, and extensive Reading which includes processing large amounts of texts found in books, essays or any type of document.

Silent reading and reading aloud

Some other authors tried to explain readings according to the way in which the reading is executed; Woodward (2001) encloses two types of reading: silent reading and reading aloud. Silent lecture is the most common when the person is reading a text by him or herself with the objective of receiving information, on the other hand, reading aloud can be used also with communicative or presentation purposes.) He even states that the act of reading aloud is considered a reading sub-skill.

Readings according to their use

There are also types of readings according to their use, for example, critical reading, selective reading, comprehensive reading, recreative reading, etc. Various authors have tried to enclose the different types of reading in big categories in order to facilitate their identification and description. This is the case of Pereda (1990), who classifies reading in two big categories that are informative reading and appropriating reading. The author describes informative reading as the one that permits the person who is reading, acquire information about the situation of the text in a quick way, in other words, the main idea, more than the intention of the author or the structure of the text itself.

On the other hand, appropriating readings are described by him as a type of reading where the objective is to know the author's intention, reading from a more critical point of view , understand the main idea and the details of it.

Having a wide variety of readings, contributes to this investigation because it will permit to make distinctions and find out the suitability of using certain types of readings in order to develop pronunciation.

Readings according to the type of material

Another very popular analysis of the different types of readings that exist, presents them according to the frequency and purpose with which they are used, Specifying the type of material, more than the type of reading itself. Flores (2011) presents a classification which varies from: novels, books, magazines, and even online articles.

It is evident that the author has a totally different view from the classifications before presented, because he classifies readings based on the type of material that they are and their main uses. Cabañas (2009) , presents types of readings according to their investigative use : investigative reading, that can be used to find heuristic components of a problem, self – help readings, that push the reader to make an autonomous investigative work, and ethic readings that are intended to build a system of ideas that are coherent to explain certain phenomena.

The author presents a set of investigative-focused readings that are mainly known by investigators and people that is involved in that branch of knowledge. However, it helps to understand that readings can be classified beyond their educational and entertainment uses. Reading has been even classified by means of emotional connection with the user. Virginia (2010) exposes the importance of Reading at the moment of developing emotional intelligence. For this, she presented a classification of reading according to their use as well as the motivation that they produce in the reader.

The author mentions Reading as a mean of learning, as a mean of entertainment, and as an alternative to boredom, emphasizing that they could influence in the affective part of a student's development.

2.4.4 Graded Readers

Definition

As Navarro (2006), proposes, graded readers must be treated not just as linguistic objects but also as means of decoding and interpreting the content of the text. Graded readers can be clearly defined as a type of reading in which the language has been simplified and adapted to be used by people that are learning their second language.

Hinojosa (2005), defines graded readers as books, fictional or not, specially written for students of second language or foreign languages. As its name indicates, they are modeled according to the difficulties that the language presents.

Characteristics

They are specially oriented for kids; however, there are also graded readers that are used in teenagers and even adults. Graded readers are a resource that is used in the classroom to develop reading skills, as well as the acquisition of vocabulary and the correct pronunciation of phonemes.

Other characteristic that can be mentioned about graded readers is that the books containing them have covers that are especially attractive for the reader. The objective of this is having books with covers that motivate the person to entirely read it. Some of these graded readers, especially in upper levels, can be accompanied with drawings, maps, charts and diagrams that are usually used to illustrate more abstract ideas or new vocabulary.

Lerner (1999) On the other hand, remarks that one of the most important characteristics of graded readers is that they are setting in an authentic and contemporary context. So students also acquire cultural information while they

read. This kind of books count with controlled structures and dosed vocabulary Lerner (1999).

This books count with keys and cues for the reader such as introductions with a brief description of the main characters, as well as the general background of the story. There are also pre and post reading exercise, in some occasions, graded readers can also present a glossary annexed to them.

Due to their simplified and understandable language, graded readers present various advantages when they are used in a second language learning process. Graded readers can be applied in different ways when used as a classroom tool.

Graded readers as an educational tool

Hinojosa (2005), states that when applying graded readers, teacher help their students to be more independent in their learning, encouraging trying new strategies and skills by themselves, making them able to read more extended and complex readings at the end of the school year.

On the contrary, Imedio (1997) Proposes that the use of graded readers is correlated with intensive Reading, because in extensive Reading, the main objective is not vocabulary or pronunciation, but it is the global comprehension of the text. Extensive reading has the important benefit of being able to read a book from the initial level, Alonso (1991).

The relation between intensive reading and the use of graded readers can be noticeable by contrasting these two statements because objectives in extensive reading are different from the ones that the use of graded readers can achieve.

Application in the classroom

The application of graded readers in the classroom has a lot to do with the teacher and the objectives that he or she wants to accomplish. Studies have proved that the use of this resource also influences positively in the development of other language skills such as oral and writing skills. Hinojosa encloses two methods in which graded readers can be applied in the classroom, basing in reading programs adapted to the scholar curricula, student's needs, and the time that they dispose. The models of application of graded readers proposed by Hinojosa are the following:

- As a part of an individual reading program in which students choose the books that they like the most from the school library, and read it in an individual way. This type of readings is more independent, because students dedicate time to a book that they have chosen. Different books are used as good choices to cover every student's skill.
- As a part of a reading program in which all the class intervenes reading the same book. Reading collectively can contribute to have motivation to overcome obstacles when trying to understand the content or the vocabulary. After reading the book, there is the possibility of exposing and interchanging ideas and opinions.

Lerner (1999), suggests that it is pertinent to evaluate the quality of graded readers before applying them in the classroom, for example evaluate the quality of the language and the content of each book to maintain the student's interest.

Muñoz (1996) keeps a similar view when he mentions that it is worth to select text suggestive and open enough in order to provoke negotiation because it is the intern engine that characterizes communication. Suggesting that material must be authentic and meaningful, is a clear vision of how important is to manage this process of acquisition of language skills.

The author also establishes that it is important to make post – reading activities in order to internalize information in students. Activities proposed by the author are the following:

- Search and underline the different discourse connectors in the text
- Erase those connectors in order to make the students re-write them
- Substitute connectors in the text by others that carry out the same function
- Look for synonyms in order to avoid repetition
- Identify pronouns, demonstratives and possessives in the text

As it is visible that there are a lot of activities that can be carried out through reading, it also leads to think that graded readers could be applied in several ways and activities can be incorporated to them in order to be more effective and entertaining for students.

This is a contributing fact to the investigation due to the valuable information that could be used as a guide to study the whole problematic.

Dependent variable

2.4.5 English Language skills

Besides containing a grammatical, semantic and syntactic structure, a language also contains a group of skills that are necessary for its use with primarily communicative purposes.

There are four main skills in a language, and each one of them contains specific sub-skills, these four basic skills are speaking, writing, listening and reading. In order to produce meaningful language, it is necessary that these skills group together and the user manages and develops them. However, Bermudez (2010), states that one of the key skills that are useful in order to develop language skills are linguistic

skills that require certain level of management of the language, the author mentions skills such as follow instructions, listening, and understand little readings.

Development of language skills

In the case of English, it is very important that these skills be developed in the learner from an early age, being communication the principal objective. Teaching a foreign language promotes numerous opportunities for communicative interaction in the classroom. Littlewood (1981).

Dominguez (2008), states that skill or ability, is associated with behaviorist theories that conceived learning as a habit-formation process in which was more important “ savoir-faire ” than “ savoir”. For that reason, is that the development of the language skills constitutes not only a learning process that is theoretical and practical, but also a psycho-cognitive learning. It is evident that there are two parts involved in the development of language skills. However the development of the four skills sometimes does not happen at the same time.

According to Garcia (2002), in the mother tongue, it is thought to read and write. While speaking and listening are mostly taught when learning a second language. The learner of L2 is mostly interested in the use of the code. However, it is important to know that learning of a new language is incomplete when not all of the skills have been developed with the same effectiveness.

Rivers (1981) has a view about language skills in which he incorporates structured practice, teaching sounds, listening comprehension, learning the fundamentals of the speaking skill, various approaches to teaching communicative skills, reading skills, writing skills, and cultural understanding as parts of the whole management of language skills.

Finally, the connection between the development of language skills and motivation must be remarked. Navarro (2006) adds that motivation plays an important role because it influences student's interest positively and it has a lot to do with the development of sociolinguistic knowledge.

2.4.6 Productive skills

Productive skills take part in the management of a language, in this case, being in charge of producing messages, in order to be received, analyzed and interpreted by a receptor.

Among this productive skills are speaking skill and writing skills, that permit create and use the language with diverse purposes that are related with language functions such as : giving opinions, debating, making requests,etc. In the skills before mentioned, the person that is using them, integrates knowledge from language such as grammar and vocabulary to put them into practice and produce messages.

Development of productive skills

The development of the productive skills represents a big step in order to manage a language adequately, especially if it is used with communicative purposes. Vocabulary has been taken into account as a key factor in order to develop productive skills.

Stenius (2008) proposes that vocabulary range is associated with reading and writing abilities. As it is remarked by Freire (2008), the main objective of studying a language, is learning how to speak it and write it better in order to communicate with everyone else.

Oral language and written language reflect personality, culture, education of an individual, his or her way of thinking, etc. In short, paying special attention to just one skill could be harmful for a proper development.

The adequate mastery of language skills comes when all of them are connected and permit the user to develop them at the same time at a regular level. Some obstacles might appear during the development of productive skills success in speaking seems to be more strongly related to affect than success in writing skills.

Djigunović (2006) affirms that affective factors might influence in student's performance on writing and speaking, because students usually have to take risks when speaking and writing and they need motivation as well.

2.4.7 Oral Skill

It is known that oral skill is part of the four that imply the adequate use of a language. Oral skill is the principal mean of communication and interchange of messages; it is the main vehicle that the speaker uses.

As it is affirmed by Levinson, (1989), when it is said that oral skill of a language constitutes the basic form of linguistic interaction which develops normally, spontaneously, unpredictable, contextualized and informal. Obviously, the proper use of oral skills permits the development of communicative skills of an individual, as well as the ability to interact.

At the moment of learning a language, it is normal to find points of view that reinforce and emphasize the importance of developing oral skills properly, and how important is to get to that point.

Hedge (2000) also supports this idea by adding that one of the key points of the communicative teaching methodology establishes the necessity of developing oral skills in the student in order to participate effectively in any conversational act.

On the other hand, it is also a skill that presents difficulties during the process of perfecting and dominating it, due to its complexity and it also depends of the willingness to learn of the person.

As it is remarked by Gonzales (2008) when mentioning that oral expression is actually the hardest skill due to the factors that intervene in it, the speaker has not only to think what he is going to say, but also how it is going to be said, in a very short space of time. Due to the difficulty of developing speaking skills, it might present obstacles in pronunciation. However, it can be improved by choosing appropriate resources and methods.

2.4.8 Pronunciation

Definition

It is important to analyze various concepts and definitions that have been proposed to define pronunciation with key and concrete words. It is known that is an important vehicle in order to produce language correctly and the message could be understood by the receptor. However, there are many other concepts of pronunciation among language in general.

As it is remarked by the author Gimbrerière (1994) , languages have become functional tools that constitute an instrument of communication that is indispensable in the world of business and also the world of entertainment, for this reason, English language has become the main tool for people around the world, with the main objective of communicating.

Without a correct pronunciation, the message is not emitted nor received in an adequate way. This can be confirmed with the affirmations of Brown (1992) , for whom pronunciation is not only the production but also the perception of the sounds when speaking.

In other words, it is of great importance not only in the person that is producing the sounds, but also for the receptor of them. Sounds have determined meanings in languages around the world, as well as sense, depending of the intonation and

accent with which they are emitted. In this way, Seidlhofer (2001), remarks this two last elements before mentioned when affirming that pronunciation is the production and perception of sounds, accent and intonation.

Role of pronunciation in a language

The role of pronunciation inside communication and the production of a language are fundamental. However, the fact that a good pronunciation offers fluid conversation between 2 people mustn't be omitted. Furthermore, it denotes and demonstrates information about the situation in which communication is produced as well as our identity, geographic origin, social facts, style, etc. Seidlhofer (2001).

Pronunciation is composed by elements that make them effective. This elements are accent and intonation that cope with determined functions. They basically have three functions: the principal one is to integrate discourse in significative blocks (pre-linguistic function), each one with a nucleus (accent of the phrase) The linguistic function of intonation permits the distinction between declarative, interrogative, suspended and emphatic functions.

Finally, by using the expressive function of intonation, a variety of emotions can be transmitted Cantero (2002). In other words, sounds integrate and group together with the accent and intonation in order to form speech and finally get to oral communication. Pronunciation is a key part when teaching a language, especially in the development of oral skills.

Even though it is a sub-skill, its importance in the learning process must be recognized. As it is affirmed by Rigol (2005), pronunciation has been trough diverse stages in teaching history, in which its importance has varied enormously. From the grammar translation method, in which was not important, to audiolingualism, in which its role is the most important.

Difficulties in pronunciation

An aspect that is also worth to mention is that pronunciation is usually studied with less attention than other skills when learning a foreign language, due to its complexity and sometimes difficulties that are presented.

Pronunciation is a field in second language acquisition (SLA) which is studied less than the others due to its nature that is more difficult to conduct researches and many different variables interfere with its process such as gender, motivation, field dependence / independence, etc., (Asher & Garcia, 1969).

Another difficulty that can be found is the inexistence of some sounds in the language, for example “Ñ” in Spanish, does not exist in English, and there are difficulties with other languages as well. Piske, MacKay & Flege (2001) , confirm that besides the inexistence of some particular sounds in some languages, the age of learners also has a great influence on pronouncing the sounds accurately.

Nunan (1998) states that there are periods in life in which humans can acquire language more easily, and after that period it becomes more difficult, this was actually suggested at first by Lenneberg in his Critical Period Hypothesis.

Gilbert (1993), concludes that suprasegmental aspects such as accent, rhythm and intonation play the most decisive role in language articulation and pronunciation. As rhythm and intonation are developed while reading, especially aloud, it could be assured that it can be directly related to a proper use of pronunciation.

Techniques to improve pronunciation

There are many different ways in which pronunciation can be applied to Reading exercises in order to improve it and rehearse on its correct use:

Reading texts with fluency, without doubting or omitting words, and reading aloud, permits the teacher to evaluate different aspects of speech, especially pronunciation.
"

Reading aloud is one way in which students can realize how important is to read in order to develop correct pronunciation skills. For example, if a student reads aloud and a word is mispronounced, the teacher can either make an immediate correction or make a list of the mispronounced words after the exercise in order to practice them one by one.

Further to this technique, it is also known that teachers use different tools in order to make students realize how each of the letters sound and how they should be pronounced when they are put together. Tools such as phonological charts can be used to practice pronunciation making students produce the sounds by themselves after practicing with the chart.

2.5 Hypothesis

The use of graded readers influences positively on the pronunciation of the students of second semester from the Language Pedagogy career of the Technical University of Ambato.

The use of graded readers doesn't influence positively on the pronunciation of the students of second semester from the Language Pedagogy career of the Technical University of Ambato.

2.6 Identification of Hypothesis Variables

Independent variable: graded readers

Dependent variable: pronunciation

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CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

3.1 Approach

The following investigation was conducted with a quantitative and qualitative approach. Quantitative because important data was obtained and it contributed to prove the hypothesis in a numeric and statistic way.

As is it stated by Ceron (2006), a quantitative focus Works with simple units and numbers, belonging to individuals and their social relationships. Consequently, it contributes to the method and approach used in this investigation.

Qualitative because through qualitative techniques, the problem is going to be understood and the veracity of the hypothesis could be discovered. Furthermore, Ceron (2006) indicates that a qualitative approach permits meaningful correlations between the variables of an investigation.

3.2 Basic method of investigation

Grajales (2000) emphasizes that a descriptive investigation pretends to develop a clear representation of a studied phenomenon based on its characteristics. The following investigation was principally descriptive due the fact that it permitted to know, describe and analyze phenomena and real situations.

In addition, it was be a field investigation because the investigator was present in the place and he kept in contact with the people who are taking part of the project at the same time that it is occurring.

Finally, the investigation was of a bibliographic-documentary type because it is pretended to collect relevant data about the topic, and also analysis of informative resources such as articles, thesis, magazines, books and also websites with the objective of internalizing information about both variables.

3.3 Level or type of research.

Dankhe (1986) proposes that the exploratory investigation allows the investigator to explore and unknown area and describe a concrete situation. It was also of a explorative type because relevant information about a problem was obtained, using instruments of observation for students such as observation forms and charts, which were applied and the data was documented to be posteriorly analyzed and in that way get to know which factors are involved in the influence of pronunciation of students by using graded readers.

3.4 Population and simple

Students from “Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales Y extranjeros Career ” at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Graphic 3 : Population

Level / Course	Number of students
2 nd A	32
2 nd B	22
Total	54

3.5 Operationalization of variables

Table 1: Independent Variable “Graded Readers”

CONCEPTUALIZATION	CATEGORIES	INDICATORS	ITEMS	TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS
<p>They are a kind of <u>written texts</u>. In this case, specialized <u>books</u>, with <u>simplified</u> language that makes reader’s understanding easier. Vocabulary is presented in this <u>educational material</u> according to the student’s level and it is used to promote reading and language skills in general.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensive reading - Silent reading - Reading comprehension - Implementation of reading in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of post reading activities - Implementation of reading for pleasure - Acquisition of vocabulary - Selection of reading activities - Selection of written texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are graded readers used to promote reading activities in the classroom? - Are graded readers usually introduced in specific lessons? - Are graded readers used in speaking activities? - Do you think graded readers would help to improve someone’s pronunciation? - Are Graded readers available for everyone? - Do you think graded readers can help to improve speaking skills? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey directed to students and teachers

	<p>the classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perception of language - Reinforcement of language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perception of phonemes - Perception of words - Application of graded readers in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think that reading can be connected to other skills such as speaking? - Do you think graded readers could influence in someone's way of speaking? - Do you think graded readers could be used in a speaking lesson? - Do you think graded readers could be adapted to oral assignments? - Do you think that graded readers would make the development of speaking skills easier? 	
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Table 2 : Dependent Variable " Pronunciation"

CONCEPTUALIZATION	CATEGORIES	INDICATORS	ITEMS	TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS
<p>Linguistic <u>sub skill</u> that is related to the <u>production of sounds</u> . It occurs when speech is produced in order to transmit a message adequately in a determined language. It belongs to the oral skill which is a <u>productive skill</u> of language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral production - Oral expression - Intonation - Stress - Perception of phonemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fluency - Accuracy -rhythm -intension of the message - understanding - Tone of voice - Emission of information - meaning of words - production of mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think that reading aloud exercises could help to develop pronunciation in a better way? - Are pronunciation excercises applied after a reading activity? - Are pronunciations doubts clarified at the moment of making a mistake? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey directed to students and teachers.

Source: Direct Search
Made by: Oñate, C (2017)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - processing of information - intention of the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think that pronunciation mistakes could change the message of the speaker? - Do you think pronunciation is related with reading? - Do you think that pronunciation could improve by reading? - Are pronunciation activities applied before reviewing vocabulary? - When reading a new word, do you usually check its pronunciation? 	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Do you think that reading a word correctly could make student's memorize its pronunciation?- Do you think pronunciation could affect communication	
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Source: Direct Search

Made by: Oñate, C (2017)

3.6 Collection of information

Data was collected in order to reach the proposed objectives for the investigation; which was conducted to students from second semester of the language Pedagogy career, with the study of graded readers and the development of pronunciation as the main focus.

The investigation lasted 6 months approximately, and it was conducted once in each of the participants.

The instruments of analysis that were used were surveys for students, and reading passages that were used to teach students how they can be used to improve pronunciation. The whole investigation was conducted in the available hours for investigation.

3.7 Processing and analysis

The first step in order to conduct this investigation was asking for the authorization from the authorities of the languages career at the Technical University of Ambato.

After that, a diagnostic of the problem was done in order to determine the problem of investigation from which objectives and a hypothesis raised. In this way, it could be determined that experimentation using specific techniques and instruments were the main tool to use. In this case, the use of surveys was the most suitable alternative in order to conduct the experiment and analyze the data obtained that contributed to prove the hypothesis as well as to know student's view towards the problematic.

As a result, the information that was collected was tabled, analyzed, interpreted, and represented graphically.

3.7.1 Validation of instruments of data collection

The process of validation contributes to prove how suitable the tool that is going to be used could be. The survey was first conducted to a group of students from a different institution, which permitted to verify that the elements in the survey were meaningful. The validation instrument contained a questionnaire directed to students using a Likert scale.

3.7.2 Items Reliability

To continue with the validation process, a pilot test was applied to 12 students, they were assigned the first survey. It permitted to know the reliability of the instrument before using it in the real group of work. With the results obtained, a Cronbach's Alpha, which is a statistic coefficient that determines items reliability using values from 0 that represents a null reliability to 1 that represents a maximum reliability. The value for the Cronbach alpha in this investigation was 0,81 , which shows that the items are totally reliable.

Table 3 : Calculation of the Cronbach's Alpha

item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	total
Students											
1	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	38
2	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	37
3	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	37
4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	36
5	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	37
6	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	36
7	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	38
8	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	36
9	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	39
10	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	37
11	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	39
12	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	38
	0,08333333	0,1515152	0,08333333	0,2045455	0,2651515	0,2424242	0,2045455	0,2045455	0,2045455	0,2651515	1,1515152
number of students	12										
variations	1,9090909										
total variations	7,5801242										
alpha	0.8161584										

CHAPTER IV

4.1 Interpretation and Analysis of results.

Question 1

How often are reading activities used in the classroom?

Example: reading small texts, reading a letter, reading a newspaper, etc.

Graphic 4 : Use of Reading

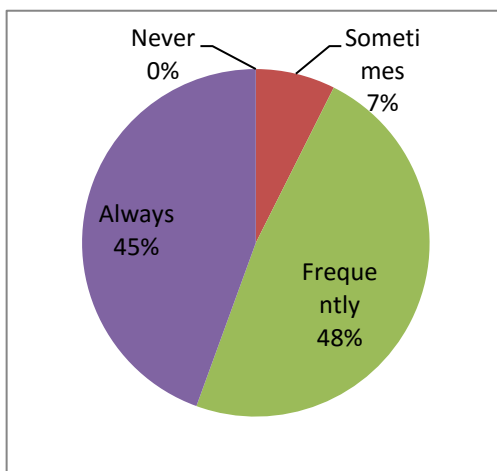


Table 4

Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	0	0%
Sometimes	4	7%
Frequently	26	48%
always	24	45%
total	54	100%

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Analysis and interpretation.

Once having analyzed the collected information, it is confirmed that 26 students that represent the 48% affirm that the teacher uses reading activities in the classroom in order to develop language skills, while 24 students that belong to the 45% affirm that this kind of texts and reading activities are always used in class. Finally, 4 students that represent the 7% from the total, mention that this activities are somewhat used in the classroom.

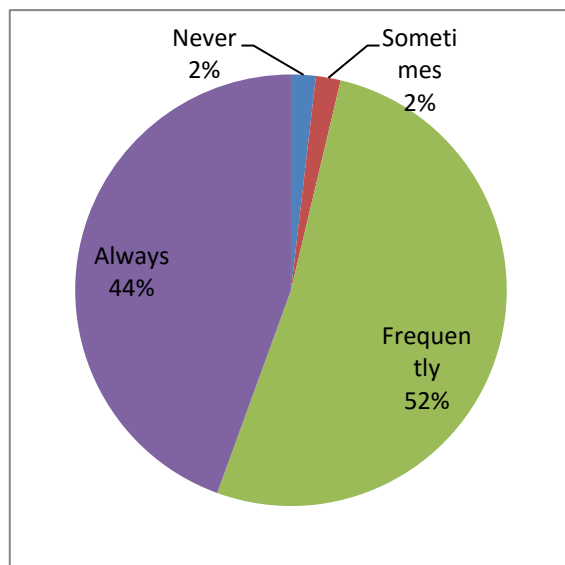
This clearly evidences that reading is present inside the classroom, with the intention of implementing it in activities to improve language skills as well as to practice them in a context where students can understand it.

Question 2

How often do you read or use reading in specific lessons? Example: reading instructions, reading activities

Graphic 5 : Reading in specific lessons

Table 5



Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Alternative	Frequency	Percentage
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	1	2%
Frequently	30	55%
always	22	41%
total	54	100%

Analysis and interpretation.

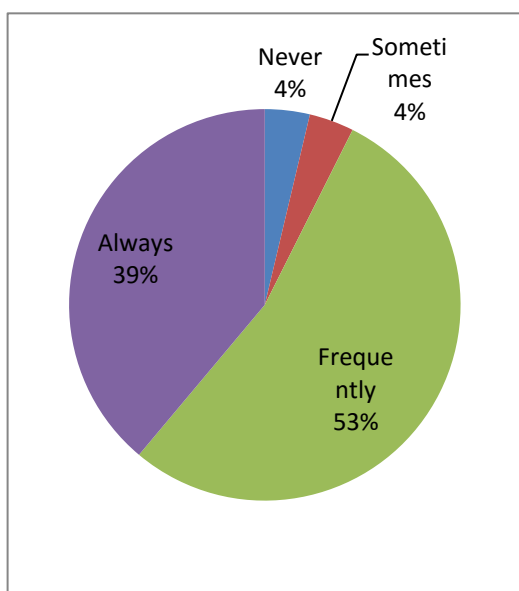
As it is shown in the following analysis, The 55% of students, which is represented by 30 of them answered that reading is frequently used in specific lessons. It means that more than the half of the total considers that reading is frequently present in the classroom. Furthermore, a considerable number of 22 students, which represents the 41% consider that reading is always present.

This analysis leads to conclude that reading is present in most of the lesson and it is constantly being used in the classroom as a mean of learning and knowledge transmitter.

Question 3

Is reading used in speaking activities? Example: read a dialogue and then perform.

Graphic 6: speaking activities



Made by : Onate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Table 6

Table 6

Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	2	4%
Sometimes	2	4%
Frequently	29	53%
always	21	39%
total	54	100%

Analysis and interpretation.

The 53% of the students, which is represented by 29 of them, answered that reading is frequently used in speaking activities. Moreover, 39% of the students added that reading is always used; they were represented by 21 students.

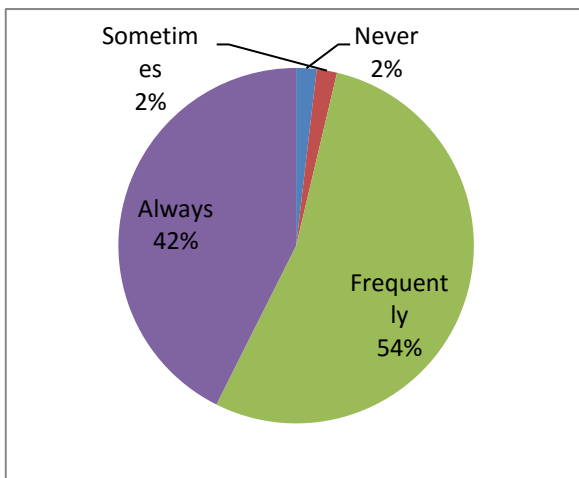
The collected information for this question can help to confirm that reading is totally used in speaking activities such as performing dialogues or reading instructions for a role-play.

Question 4

How often can be reading used to help to improve pronunciation?

Example: reading aloud exercises.

Graphic 7 : Pronunciation



Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Table 7

Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	1	2%
Frequently	24	54%
always	28	42%
total	54	100%

Analysis and interpretation

More than the half of the students, specifically the 54%, which is represented by 24 students, answered with the option that confirms that reading can frequently help to improve someone's pronunciation. In addition, the 42% , which is represented by 28 students, answered that it can always help someone's pronunciation.

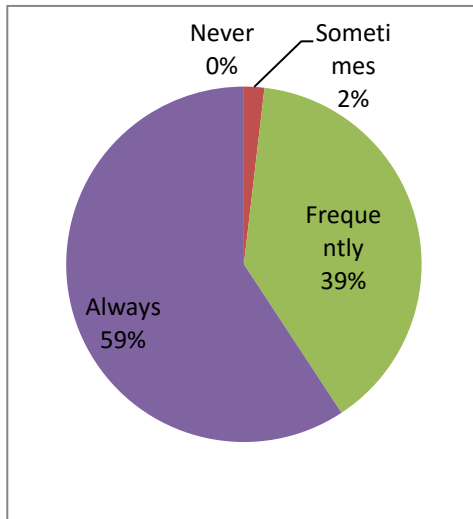
The following statistics can help to deduce what is student's view towards pronunciation and how it can be improved; they stated that some exercises can always be helpful to improve pronunciation, especially if they are correctly applied.

Question 5

How often can reading be helpful to improve speaking skills?

Table 8

Graphic 8 : Speaking Skills



Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	0	0%
Sometimes	1	2%
Frequently	26	48%
always	22	50%
total	54	100%

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Analysis and interpretation.

Once having the data collected for this question, it can be represented and confirmed that exactly the half of the students, which is the 50% represented by 22 students,

answered that reading can always help to improve speaking skills. Furthermore, the 48% of them, which is represented by 26 students, affirmed that reading can frequently be used to improve speaking skills.

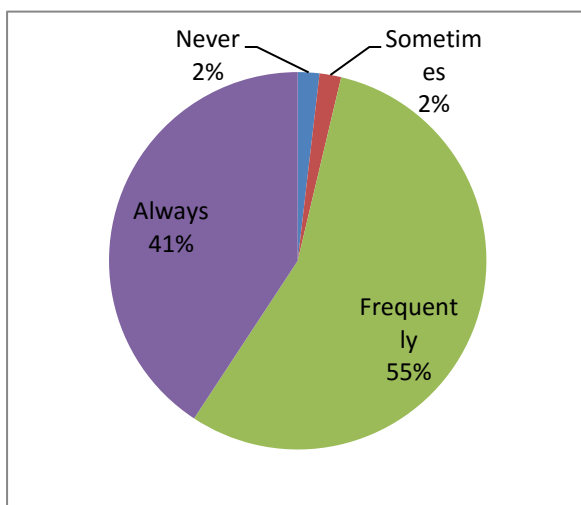
The majority of the students clearly affirmed that reading can surely help to improve speaking skills such as fluency and pronunciation, the use of reading in the classroom could be also noticed with the similar answers in the rest of the questions.

Question 6

How often do you think that reading has a relation with speaking?

Table 7

Graphic 9 : relation with speaking



Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	1	2%
Frequently	30	55%
Always	22	41%
Total	54	100%

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

In this question, more than the half of the students, which is the 55% represented by 30 of them, answered that speaking can be frequently related to reading. In addition, 41% of them, which is represented by 22 students, added that this two skills can be always related.

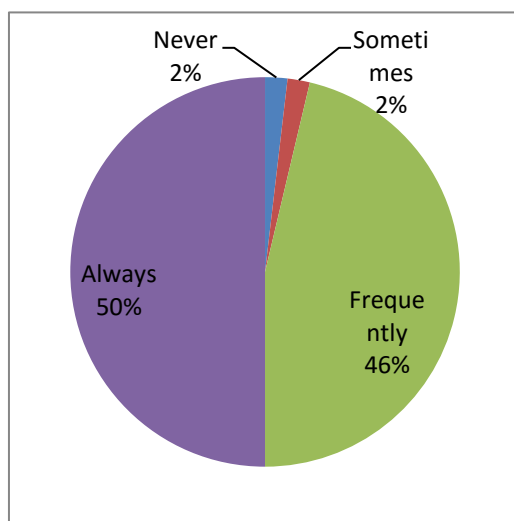
Most of the students noticed the close relation that both variables have and they agreed that reading has a relation with speaking due to the answers that were obtained in this question.

Question 7

Do you practice pronunciation after reading a text?

Table 8

Graphic 10 : pronunciation practice



Alternative	Frequency	Percentage
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	1	2%
Frequently	25	46%
always	27	50%
Total	54	100%

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Analysis and interpretation

The half of the students, which is the 50% represented by 27 of them, answered that they always practice after reading a piece of written text. Furthermore, 25 students, which is the 46% answered that they frequently do it.

The evidence provided by the following analysis can help to determine that most of the students actually practice their pronunciation skills after reading a text and that

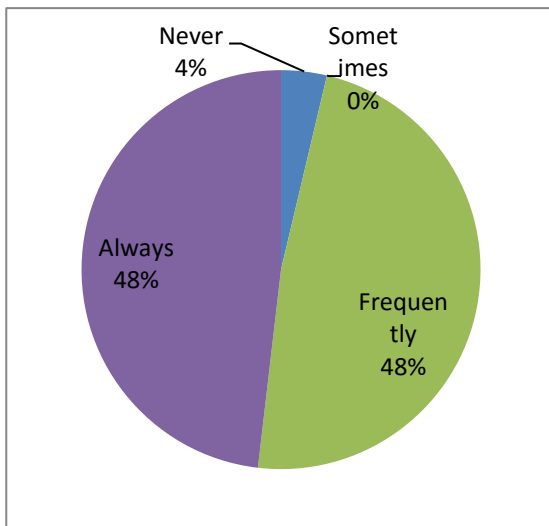
just a small percentage of them are neither interested nor accustomed to practice pronunciation skills when reading different texts in class.

Question 8

When you make a pronunciation mistake, do you correct it or do it again?

Table 9

Graphic 11 : correction mistakes



Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	2	4%
Sometimes	0	0%
Frequently	26	48%
always	26	48%
Total	54	100%

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Analysis and interpretation

Both of the options (frequently, always) reached the 48%, which is represented by 26 students in each category.

The following results permit knowing that there is a similar view from students that always correct their errors at the moment they do them, and the students who frequently do it. As it is noticed in the data, most of the students actually correct their mistakes and try to do it at the moment or do it again if necessary. While just a small amount of them, never do it.

Question 9

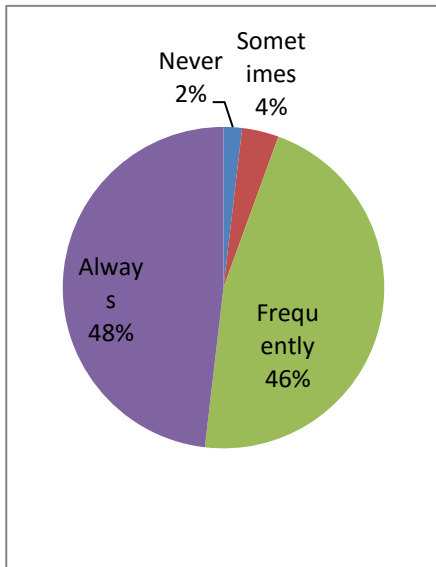
How often Do you pronounce words before reading a vocabulary section?

Graphic 12 : Revision of vocabulary

Table 10

Alternative	Frequency	Percentaje
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	2	4%
Frequently	25	46%
always	26	48%

total	54	100%
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Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Analysis and interpretation

The 48% of the students sometimes are used to pronounce words before reading a vocabulary section, as well as the other 46% that always do it. This is represented by 26 and 25 students in the order that they were mentioned.

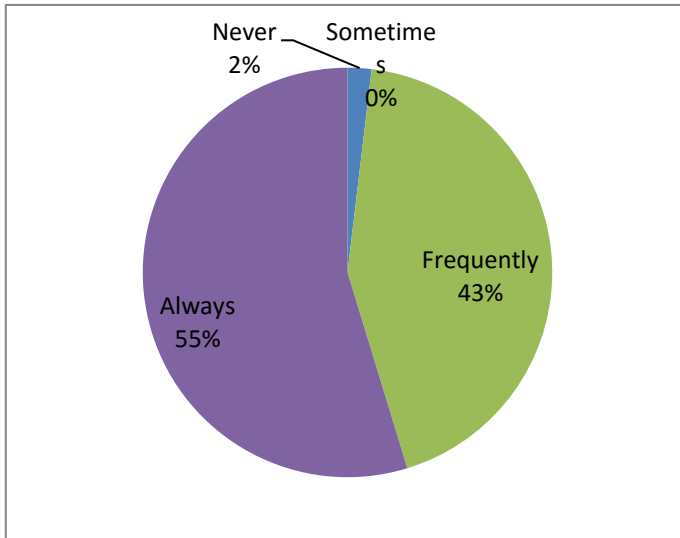
In this analysis, it is easily noticeable that most of the students are accustomed to pronounce words before reviewing a vocabulary list or section, especially if there are new words in it.

Question 10

When you read a new word, do you usually check its pronunciation?

Graphic 13 : Checking pronunciation

Table 13



Alternative	Frequency	Percentage
Never	1	2%
Sometimes	0	0%
Frequently	29	55%
always	23	43%
total	54	100%

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Made by : Oñate C. (2017)

Source: Survey directed to students

Analysis and interpretation

When starting to read new words, more than the half of the students answered that they frequently do it. This was represented by 29 students; it means the 55% of the total. Moreover, 23 students added that they always check pronunciation before reading a new word; this was represented by the 45% of the total.

The following data allows the investigation to know what are other aspects related to pronunciation and reading. Furthermore, the few students that answered opposite

options let the investigation have supporting data to say that the majority of the students is accustomed to check pronunciation of words that seem new for them.

4.1 HYPOTHESIS VERIFICATION

To determine the relationship between both variables and verify the hypothesis, the R value was calculated using a formula in order to determine the variation between 2 surveys and consequently the correlation between both variables of the project.

Dependent Variable:

Pronunciation

Independent Variable:

Graded Readers

4.2 Hypothesis statement

Ho: Graded readers don't influence pronunciation development on students from second semester of Pedagogia de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros career at the Technical University of Ambato.

H1: Graded readers influence pronunciation development on students from second semester of Pedagogia de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros career at the Technical University of Ambato.

Mathematic model

Ho: $O = E$

H1: $O \neq E$

Significance level

$\alpha = 0,05$.

Decision and calculus of the statistic model

The R value, which represents the correlation between both cumulus of data , were calculated by using the following formula :

$$r = \frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Calculus of the statistic model

Table 14

Table 14. R score

First survey average	Second Survey average	number of students	54
26	27	p value	0,145005
30	29	R score	-0,20119583
29	28		
28	27		
26	29		
30	28		
27	28		
26	29		
26	29		
29	27		

Calculus of P value

R Score:
 N:

Significance Level:

- 0.01
- 0.05
- 0.10

The P-Value is 0.145005. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$.

Decision

Once the operations were done, it was determined that the R score was -0,20119583 and the p value was 0.145005 , which leads to **REJECT** the null hypothesis and **ACCEPT** the alternative hypothesis. Graded readers influence pronunciation development on students from second semester of Pedagogia de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros career at the Technical University of Ambato.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

- There is evidence that there is a wide level of awareness from students that Reading is an important element in their learning process and that they apply the skill in different stages of it, sometimes connecting it with other language skills such as pronunciation. However, a process to learn to select and apply the suitable readings is still on the way.
- The activities that are based on Reading are sometimes complemented with activities that involve productive skills such as speaking and pronunciation, but students are still discovering what graded readers are and how can they be applied in order to improve other language skills.
- Furthermore, there is evidence that was collected through surveys that students are being promoted to correct themselves when they make pronunciation mistakes. However, there is no evidence that they practice pronunciation when reviewing new vocabulary or checking totally new words for them.
- In activities that connect reading with speaking, there are only activities such as reading dialogues and instructions before to perform them or analyze vocabulary sections in order to practice the pronunciation of words after it. Expansion of Reading is sometimes promoted when assignments require the students to read pieces of texts that are larger or small stories. However, these are only connected with either Reading activities or writing activities. But speaking practice is isolated; it is somewhat connected with other skills, but mostly practiced by itself.

Recommendations

- To maintain the use of reading as a fundamental part of every day's lessons as well as a mean of practicing other language skills that are related to it.
- To apply graded readers as a supplementary element in activities that involves speaking and pronunciation.
- To create a habit in students where they get accustomed to correct themselves when making a mistake and then practice the correct pronunciation of the word.
- To integrate reading to lessons that are mainly speaking-focused , so students can connect both skills and develop them at the same time.

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Anexe 1 : Academic Article

Grader Readers: the student's view towards the use of practical readers in pronunciation.

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Abstract

This paper contains detailed information that was collected through direct contact with students in order to find out what is the global view they have towards the incorporation of material such as graded readers, that might , or might not be a great tool in order to improve productive skills that help to convey a clear message, in this case pronunciation. Data and conclusions were obtained by applying surveys to students and posteriorly using a scatter plot in order to explain them and emphasize key points. Results are going to be exposed and explained emphasizing key points of the main stages of this investigation.

Key words: graded readers, pronunciation, and communication.

Introduction

There's a high quantity of people who have been looking for answers towards the use of Reading in second Language Acquisition, and how the habit of Reading can influence in someone's skills improvement.

Susser (1990), surveyed students and teachers, using specific questions in order to find out their view towards the use of reading in class. The objective of this investigation is directed to a similar goal, which is the collection of data, which is going to be useful in order to analyze and study the global view of using graded readers in order to improve pronunciation skills. And to establish a relation, (either is positive or negative) about both variables.

Reading

Reading can be described as a visual action, or simply as the act of reading. However, there is no doubt that reading is a skill that consist on decode and interpret written material. Reading can also be defined as a tool, because it intervenes in cognitive processes and there is no doubt that it

will be useful in the learning process of a person, as it is affirmed by Jimenez (2004) in his phd thesis, reading is a cognitive activity of enormous importance and complexity, used usually in order to acquire knowledge.

Reading sub skills

For Samuels & Schechter, (1978), the most general skills of reading are the identification of words and its comprehension.

Learning by association and by stimulus are mostly used to explain sub-skills of learning.

However, there are some other sub-skills that have been exposed and described by other authors, this is the example of Woodward (2001) who has proposed the following subskills : knowing letters, words and phrases, read a text quickly to catch the main idea, read to obtain details, read to predict and remember, relate what is read with personal experience, criticize or comment, read aloud

Types of reading

There are two big types of reading, which have been proposed according to the way in which the reading is executed, this two types of reading are: silent reading and reading aloud. Silent lecture is the most common when the person is reading a text by him or herself with the objective of receiving information, on the other hand, reading aloud can be used also with communicative or presentation purposes. Woodward (2001) , even states that the act of reading aloud is considered a reading sub-skill.

Graded readers

Graded readers can be clearly defined as a type of reading in which the language has been simplified and adapted to be used by people that are learning their second language.

Hinojosa (2005) , defines graded readers as books, fictional or not, specially written for students of second language or foreign languages. As its name indicates, they are moduled according to the difficulties that the language presents.

Language skills

Besides containing a grammatical, semantic and syntactic structure, a language also contents a group of skills that are necessary for its use with primarily communicative purposes. There are four main skills in a language, and each one of them contains specific sub-skills, this four bug skills are speaking, writing, listening and reading.

Productive skills

Productive skills take part in the management of a language, in this case, being in charge of producing messages, in order to be received, analyzed and interpreted by a receptor.

Among this productive skills are speaking skill and writing skills, that permit create and use the language with diverse purposes that are related with language functions such as : giving opinions, debating, making requests,etc.

Oral Skill

It is known that oral skill is part of the four that imply the adequate use of a language. Oral skill is the principal mean of communication and interchange of messages; it is the main vehicle that the speaker uses.

As it is affirmed by Levinson, (1989) , when it is said that oral skill of a language constitutes the basic form of linguistic interaction which develops normally.

It is important to analyze various concepts and definitions that have been proposed to define pronunciation with key and concrete words.

It is known that is an important vehicle in order to produce language correctly and the message could be understood by the receptor. However, there are many other concepts of pronunciation among language in general.

As it is remarked by the author Gimbretière (1994) , languages have become functional tools that constitute an instrument of communication that is indispensable in the world of business and also the

world of entertainment, for this reason, English language has become the main tool for people around the world, with the main objective of communicating.

Without a correct pronunciation, the message is not emitted nor received in an adequate way.

Objectives of the investigation.

To study the relation between the use of graded readers and the improvement of pronunciation skills
To describe the use of graded readers as a resource for the development of the English pronunciation.

To explore the impact that graded readers might have in the development of the English language pronunciation.

Methodology

This research followed a methodology based mainly the quantitative and qualitative approaches because the focus was to obtain data in order to interpret it and analyzed.

Meaningful data will be collected in order to prove a hypothesis and to contribute to the objectives of this investigation. And the quantitative

focus because the investigation works with simple units and numbers.

Additionally, it will be descriptive because through the use of surveys, relevant data can be obtained and described, studied and represented graphically.

According to the mixed paradigm, the main focus is qualitative and quantitative because data collection is considered to analyze, interpret, and relate several pieces of information.

This data is going to be used to contribute to the verification of a hypothesis and to cope with the objects of the investigation.

This investigation demanded the elaboration of surveys, selecting specific questions which are going to be answered a Likert's scale in order to classify data and represent it graphically.

Observed results were represented in a scatter plot in order to verify the hypothesis and the variations that were present in each of the survey.

The focus was students from second semester of Carrera de Los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, which were chosen to be surveyed.

The first time they were surveyed without knowing if they are aware of graded readers and its use in the classroom.

Then, the other survey was applied a week after presenting a Reading aloud exercise, using graded readers, which can be used to improve pronunciation.

This process included studying relevant previous work about Reading habits, selection of materials, types of Reading according to the interest of the student and methodologies that could be compared to the investigation and that could contribute to the solidification of it.

Once working with the students, they were surveyed again a week later in order to find out their global view about graded readers and its use in pronunciation.

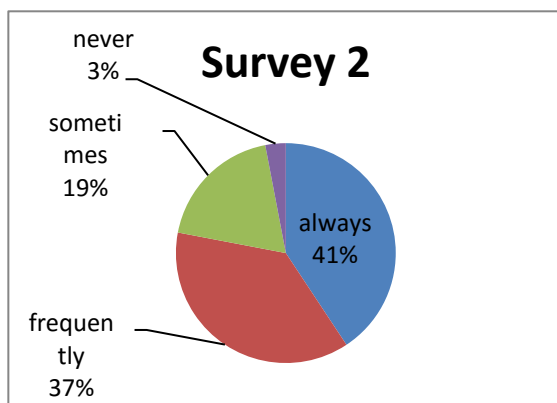
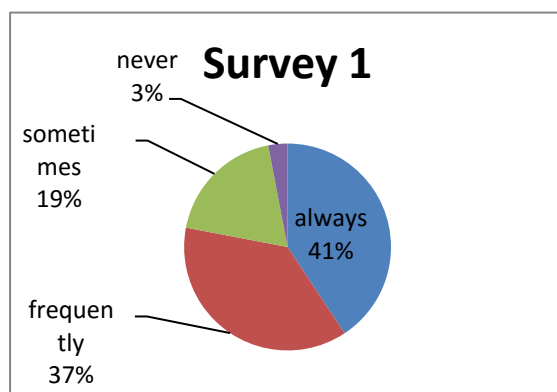
The survey also used a Likert Scale, but the question slightly changed in terms of words, but they still preserved the same objective and they were addressed to obtain the same kind of data.

Results

Students showed a quite high level of awareness of how reading can improve some of pronunciation skills and how reading is being applied in their lessons. It could be noticed that students were kind of used to check pronunciation when they review new vocabulary or when they want to be aware of the correct pronunciation of something, or whenever they make a mistake.

It could be also noticed that reading was present in assignments that connected it with the development of other skills such as speaking. This led to conclude that their view towards reading in general was positive and they were aware of how it can be incorporated in specific lessons or activities.

The tendency showed the majority of students answering with the options always and frequently, while other percentage of them answered sometimes and also never.



It is noticeable that in the second survey, results slightly changed, permitting to be more aware of the actual global view that students have towards the use of graded readers and its use in pronunciation. Student's tendency this time was to answer Always or frequently in the Likert scale most of the time. However, there were still little percentages of people that answered with the options for never and sometimes.

The hypothesis was verified through the analysis of the data compiled. The hypothesis concluded that in fact, there is a relation between the use of graded readers and its use for pronunciation and students are aware of that.

As a consequence, it could contribute to confirm that Graded Readers could be useful to be used in the second language teaching classroom at the moment of creating activities mainly used for the improvement of pronunciation skills.

It can be observed that in the moment of creating activities parting from graded readers, what is usual among students is Reading dialogues and pronounce vocabulary words before reviewing new language.

The predominant activities are part of extensive reading because is promoted through graded readers. Data reflect that there is a relation between graded readers and extension activities. However, it is limited at the same time students are aware of how activities work and how they can be used in improving their language skills.

Discussion

The discussion about the relation between reading and pronunciation can be strengthened in the following investigation, as it is mentioned by Gorsuch & Taguchi (2010), It was showed that reading is a meaningful means of developing foreign language abilities, particularly in foreign language settings where input sources are limited.

This investigation clearly connects both reading and the development of speaking skills in a very direct way.

Another important contribution suggests that literature can be used in order to reinforce reading comprehension in English, using appropriate strategies as well as books that are according to the level of proficiency of the students.

Lerner (1999) exposes graded readers as a great resource because of its low grade of complexity and high rate of availability.

This relation between reading and pronunciation is also supported by Fraser (1999), a senior lecturer in linguistics, who wrote an article about pronunciation where she outstands the fact that pronunciation cannot be taught by using materials such as drilled dialogues or drilling phonemes, she suggests that interaction will be the main vehicle to get to an appropriate pronunciation, especially if this interaction is produced with native speakers.

She made a critical analysis on how drilling can affect negatively and how it can be replaced by putting pronunciation in a communicative context, applying several examples even with inexistent words in

English, as well as speakers of other nations.

This evidences that reading is actually present at the moment of improving, practicing and learning pronunciation while students read, in this case drills , that are a kind of written material as useful as graded readers.

With this, it is evidenced that the bigger the exposition and practice of Reading connected to pronunciation is, the better opportunities to develop both skills are.

It is demonstrated that the integration of Reading and pronunciation is positive in activities inside and outside the classroom, with generates positive evaluation and motivation in students, especially if they are frustrated towards Reading.

Data revealed that the application of the process of graded readers supported by the surveys in this article, reflected positive results, especially after talking to students about graded readers and their main uses. Results reveal as well that the characteristics mentioned by Claridge (2012) (for example: selection of a good Reading, level of difficulty) are key part in order to increase

motivation while students read and improve their language skills at the same time.

In this way, graded reader's characteristics are combined and included in the pronunciation development process.

What is mentioned before is closely related to the results obtained by Ahour, Mukundan, & Rafik-Galea (2012), who affirm that when exposing students to pronunciation activities related to Reading, they transfer patterns with relation to the organization of information and emission of information through sounds.

The process of exposing information about graded readers to students and applying a small Reading aloud exercise in the students, which included surveys as a key part of the planning, redaction of results and the collection of data, was followed as a part of the revision and edition of the analysis.

Student's view about graded readers and its relation with pronunciation is reflected in the survey's results where a way of thinking that is based on

awareness and correction habits are clearly exposed.

It can be contrasted with what is mentioned by Flower & Haynes (1981) where they say that one of the biggest obstacles when pronouncing a word in an incorrect way is the lack of awareness of how it is read. Consequently results also reveal the advantages of using Reading as a base for pronunciation.

Conclusions

Because this investigation didn't include evaluation or surveys about awareness of Reading habits, interest and motivation towards graded readers, creation of a great Reading environment, etc, the application of graded readers is weaken.

Furthermore, due to the activities that are present in the classroom and are based on reading or graded readers are monotone and they are neither guided either expanded in order to promote extensive reading or reading for pleasure in order to integrate the practice of other skills such as pronunciation.

References

Finally, paying attention to factors such as new vocabulary acquisition or mistake correction, students are aware of their performance towards pronunciation and they are accustomed to correct themselves especially when talking about pronunciation mistakes.

The correlation between the both variables that are graded readers and pronunciation can be still in debate.

However, important data was collected through this investigation and it permitted to deduce how high is the level of awareness of students and what their view towards reading and pronunciation is first applying the survey without knowing their level of awareness and then applying a simple exercise and give them some cues about the use of graded readers for pronunciation.

A recommendation that can be pointed out is to take advantage of this student's awareness in order to promote reading in the classroom and to try to connect this activity with the improvement of productive skills such as pronunciation by making simple reading aloud exercises.

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Anexe 2: First survey directed to students



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA
EDUCACIÓN
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS

This survey is directed to students

Objective: To collect data about the use of graded readers and its influence on English Language pronunciation of students from Second Level of “Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Career”.

Instruction: read the questions carefully and put X in your answer.

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
	Always

1. How often are graded readers used to promote reading activities in the classroom?	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
2. How often are graded readers introduced in specific lessons?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
3. Are graded readers used in speaking activities?	Never	
	Almost Never	
	Sometimes	
	Frequently	
4. How often do you think graded readers would help to improve someone's pronunciation?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
5. Do you think graded readers can help to improve speaking skills?	Never	
	Almost Never	
	Sometimes	
	Frequently	
	Always	
	Frequently	

6. Do you think that reading can be connected to other skills such as speaking?	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
7. Are pronunciation exercises applied after a reading activity?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
8. Are pronunciations doubts clarified when students make a mistake?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
9. Are pronunciation activities applied before reviewing vocabulary?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
10. When reading a new word to students, do you usually check its pronunciation?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	



Anexe 3: Second survey directed to students.



**UNIVERSIDAD TÈCNICA DE AMBATO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA
EDUCACIÒN
CARRERA DE IDIOMAS**

This survey is directed to students

Objective: To collect data about the use of graded readers and its influence on English Language pronunciation of students from Second Level of “Pedagogia de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Career”.

Instruction: read the questions carefully and put X in your answer.

QUESTIONS	ASNWERS	
1. How often are reading activities used in the classroom?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	

Example: reading small texts, reading a letter, reading a newspaper,etc.	Almost Never	
	Never	
2. How often do you read or use reading in specific lessons? Example: reading instructions, reading activities	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
3. Is reading used in speaking activities? Example: read a dialogue and then perform.	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
4. Do you think reading can help to improve pronunciation? Example: reading aloud excercises.	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
5. Do you think reading can help to improve speaking skills?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
	Always	

6. Do you think that reading has a relation with speaking?	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
7. Do you practice pronunciation after reading a text?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
8. When you make a pronunciation mistake, you correct it or do it again?	Never	
	Almost Never	
	Sometimes	
	Frequently	
9. Do you pronounce words before reading a vocabulary section?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	
	Never	
10. When you read a new word, do you usually check its pronunciation?	Always	
	Frequently	
	Sometimes	
	Almost Never	

Anexe 3 : Pictures



Urkund Analysis Report

URKUND

Documento [trabajo de investigacion Carlos Ofiate.docx](#) (D33554370)

Presentado 2017-12-09 12:08 (-05:00)

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