ESCUELA NORMAL DE IXTAPAN DE LA SAL

ENSAYO

THE USE OF PHONETICAL SYMBOLS AS A RESOURCE TO IMPROVE THE ORAL INTERACTION

QUE PARA SUSTENTAR EL EXAMEN PROFESIONAL Y OBTENER EL TÍTULO DE LICENCIADO EN EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA CON ESPECIALIDAD EN LENGUA EXTRANJERA (INGLÉS)

PRESENTA

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Dedications

To my parents

For giving me my life, being my first teachers and supporting me in every decision I have made.

To my English teachers

For helping me to achieve my English level, innovating their classes, giving me ideas and advice to my classes.

To my sister

For being my motivation to not quit and become a better person and her example to follow.

To the ENIS teachers

For sharing their enormous knowledge and wisdom with me, giving me the tools to improve every time, and making me a better teacher.

To Mrs. Francelia

For being my advisor during the elaboration of this document, for teaching and helping me improve my English proficiency, but above all for helping me during the four years since the very beginning until the end.

To the Secondary School "José Vasconcelos"

For including me and taking me into account, as well as, receiving me generously, giving me advice to improve my classes and making me feel welcomed.

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Introduction

Nowadays the English teachers have a humongous challenge while teaching their subject in Secondary Schools for many reasons, starting by the fact that we are working with students who are living one of the stages with more changes and this leads to emotional conflicts and difficulties in general. Another reason is the language itself, owing to, it is a communicative system different from their mother tongue, since the written and spoken language differ a lot at first sight. And, another reason is that the students do not notice its importance because they do not need it in that moment.

So, English teachers must rethink their teaching methods, in order to innovate and improve the classes through designing lesson plans according to the context, students' needs, and institutional projects. Besides, the Syllabus stablishes that the Secondary School students have to finish with competences in the four skills, but more important, they have to be able to interact with native and non-native speakers:

> El propósito general (…) es que los estudiantes desarrollen habilidades, conocimientos, actitudes y estrategias de aprendizaje para participar e interactuar en **prácticas sociales del lenguaje** (…) de diferentes contextos (…) con hablantes nativos y no nativos del inglés. (*Secretaría de Educación Pública* [SEP], 2017, p. 165)

That is why in this paper I write about interactions and how they could be improved using phonetical symbols; thus, I will explain my experience I had during my intervention sessions in the English classes working with different topics and using different strategies but which their final aim is to improve the students' language proficiency, but focused on the interactions, in which they keep conversations.

So, this document is organized in three chapters, a conclusions section, references, and appendices:

The first chapter is called "Context and diagnostic". Here I write briefly about those aspects and subjects that led me to work on this subject, and the questions that I expect to answer in the end. Besides I also explain the context of the school and students to

understand better their needs, as well as, the results of two diagnostic tests, one to know the English level of the students and another about the multiple intelligences.

The second chapter is called "Theoretical framework" in which there is technical information and quotations from different authors to support my essay, giving it more perspectives, since they have written about the language and studied the importance of the English interactions while learning this foreign language.

The third chapter is called "Analysis of the experience" in which I write the strategies I developed during my interventions, how I planned them, what happened while applying them, and finally a reflection of the strategy in which it is explained the activities that were effective, the ones that were not or some variants I would be able to use in a future to make the learning of students easier.

Finally, there is the conclusions section in which I try to answer the questions that were expected to be answered in the end of my practices, as well as, a general reflection of my experience, difficulties that I found, satisfactory activities and aspects I must work on to improve my performance during the English sessions.

CHAPTER I
CONTEXT AND DIAGNOSTIC

Chapter I
Context and Diagnostic

I am currently studying in the last semester of the Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education with Emphasis in a Foreign Language (English) at *Escuela Normal de Ixtapan de la Sal*. Teacher trainees are trained since the first semester with plenty of theoretical knowledge about history of education, current laws, methods and strategies to teach, and a variety of educational theories, that come from subjects as *Bases Filosóficas, Legales y Organizativas del Sistema Educativo Mexicano*, *Desarrollo del Adolescente*, *Propósitos y contenidos de la Educación Básica*, *La enseñanza en la escuela secundaria. Cuestiones básicas*, among others.

I have been working under the Syllabus 1999 at the Escuela Normal, which means the subjects and content learned belongs to an over 20 years old document. However, while designing my lesson plans to teach in Secondary School, I use the Syllabus 2011 of Basic Education for third grades and *Aprendizajes Clave* (2017) for first and second grades. Fortunately and as part of my training I have developed skills to adequate the content to the issues of the society, students' reality, and their interests to provide students with a meaningful class generating a life lasting learning, these were acquired through different subjects such as: *Observación y Práctica Docente*.

It is important to mention the concept of "lesson plan" which is an amount of ideas to present a class, having specified the times to each activity in order to make the session more understandable for the students, in words of Richards "(they) help the teacher think about the lesson in advance to "resolve problems and difficulties, to provide a structure for a lesson, to provide a 'map' for the teacher to follow, and to provide a record of what has been taught" (as quoted in Farrell, 2002, p. 31).

But, what is lesson plan importance? According to Farrell (2002), there are plenty reasons which could be divided into internal and external. Some internal reasons are to feel more confident, to learn better the subject, to enable lessons to run more smoothly, and to anticipate problems, while external reasons could be to satisfy the principal or supervisor's expectations, and to guide a substitute teacher in case the class needs one. In conclusion, lesson plans are a critical important part of the teaching practice.

Now well, another difficulty presented is that the Syllabus of Secondary Schools has a high level for the students considering that the content belongs to the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), while it is the first time for most of students having an English subject. The main reason for this is it was thought that the foreign language should be taught since third grade of kindergarten and, continuing in primary school; nevertheless, in the last level of Basic Education, from the first grade, it is required to work with essays, debates, round tables, etc. Thus, I also obtained those abilities to adequate activities, material, and evaluation resources according to the level of my students.

Moreover, I have not just learnt about pedagogy, teaching, education laws, and history, but also I have been helped to obtain my English certification with a B2 level according to the CEFR to be qualified by the time I become a teacher in service, through plenty of English courses along the four years, in addition, some of my curricular subjects were in that language and others were specifically to increase my mastering and developing of strategies to learn the foreign language.

Furthermore, practicing in Middle School is one of the basis of my training as English teacher, due to the fact that I started observing in a normal journey of classes to collect information needed to plan a session, as well as, recognizing the differences among other sorts of schools, during the first and second semester. After that, I began practicing just one session and continued increasing the amount of classes that I had to teach.

According to *Aprendizajes Clave* the general purpose of the English subject during the Basic Education is the following: That students develop abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and learning strategies to participate and interact in language social practices, through speaking, and writing, required in different communicative and cultural contexts, as native and no native speakers of the English language (SEP, 2017, p. 165).

This purpose involves a development of the knowledge and practice of the foreign language throughout the Basic Education, concluding in Secondary School with a huge ability to be communicated, that implies to write extended and complex written texts, and to have a fluent and clear conversation with other people as well, including being able to participate in discussions, debates, and round tables.

On the other hand, *Aprendizajes Clave* is divided into 4 cycles. The three grades in middle school belong to the fourth cycle of Basic Education which has the following aims to be obtained by the students (SEP, 2017, pp. 167-168):

1. Analyze some aspects that allows to improve the intercultural comprehension.
2. Apply some strategies to overcome personal and collective challenges into the learning of a foreign language.
3. Transfer strategies to consolidate the performance in learning situations of the foreign language.
4. Use a simple linguistic repertoire that is large at the same time, in a variety of known and current situations.
5. Exchange information of current interest.
6. Participate with a neutral record in social exchanges inside of a different situations range.

Additionally, According to *Aprendizajes Clave* all students who finish the Basic Education must reach the level B1 of the CEFR, which means:

Students are able to comprehend the main points of clear texts and in standard language if they are about known issues, either if they are work, study, or free time situations. They know how to perform in the most of situations that can be happened during a trip through zones where the language is spoken. They are able to produce simple and coherent texts about topics that are familiar or those which are of his personal interests. They can describe experiences, facts, wishes, and aspirations, as well as justify briefly their opinions or explain their plans (SEP, 2017, p. 169).

Hence, all of this represents a huge challenge for English teachers in Secondary School, not just because of the fact that most of students are not every day interacting with this foreign language, but also they do not realize the importance of mastering it, leading them to ignore even basic vocabulary or grammar structures; moreover, they are not used to practicing the language in his daily life.

Therefore, developing the speaking and writing skills become in the keys to learn the English language to use it in the real world, without excluding the listening and reading skills, because, those four must be worked together. However, one of the main obstacles that Spanish speakers face is the difference between the written and spoken situations. It means, the letters do not have a unique sound as in Spanish, in English a vowel can have two or three different sounds depending on the word it is written.

For that reason, it is needed to teach students: Firstly, all the sounds that are used in English since there are other sounds that do not exist in Spanish. Secondly, how to pronounce full words in order to show patterns and give tools to comprehend and use unknown words without having even heard them before. Consequently, the relationship between spoken and written English to be able to elaborate texts by themselves, to keep a conversation with native and non-native speakers as well.

So that, in the seventh semester is a requirement that teacher trainees must start going to the sessions of *Consejo Técnico Escolar* (CTE), which is the way to involve us on the school issues and reality, to know how teachers work and what difficulties they have. This helps us to obtain general knowledge about the school, the students' behavior, ways of working, and other important information.

Now well, a CTE is a type of meeting in which all the teachers who belong to a same school gather to talk about different issues they have, experiences, strategies, students, etcetera in order to share their successful sessions, or ask for help, besides it works to propose ideas, suggestions, and projects to improve the students' improvement according to the graduate profile, all of this leaded by the Principal of that institution. According to SEP it is the group of teachers of an educational institution in charge of take and develop decisions focused to accomplish evenly and satisfactorily a mission of a school (SEP, n/d, p.8).

1.1.   General Information of the Community

Ixtapan de la Sal is located in the South of the Mexico State, close to Guerrero. This place is considered as a *Pueblo Magico* (Magic Town) owing to its colonial age buildings. There is a church in the center of the town, most of the structures do not exceed two floors, and there are also some green places around this town, that means it is a very attractive place to rest and be relaxed during holidays, or to have a good time sharing with the family.

For that reason, this town has plenty of hotels and restaurants, there are also a watering place with thermal waters, and the aquatic park Ixtapan. Consequently, a lot of people visit this place, and no matter their nationality, most of them speak English. Thus, for people in this region who want to obtain a well-paid job have to master this foreign language, and not just that, but some people travel to the cities which big factories and industries seek for people speaking English. Finally, other more people go to The United States seeking a better life, so that, to reach that, they need to learn that foreign language.

Hence, the main economic activities are employees at a hotel as housekeepers or staff people, cooks and waiters in restaurants, taxi drivers, and builders who have a very low salary, and some of them obtain their main income through tips, nevertheless, they have less opportunities to have a good tip from foreigners if they do not know how to speak English since they cannot give a good service.

1.2.   School Context

The school where this paper will be developed is called *Escuela Secundaria No.* 0898 "José Vasconcelos". It is a general school located in an urban region, in the *10 de Agosto* neighborhood, *Ixtapan de la Sal*, Mexico State. The current principal is the teacher J Guadalupe Montes de Oca. This school is on a plain with a slightly elevation, and it is surrounded by isolated fields and a *Centro de Atención Múltiple* (CAM) institution.

About the social situation of the place is considered as a dangerous neighborhood, according to an interview done to the principal, he said that some years ago, the school was considered with a really low level of education, the students were very disrespectful, the walls were painted, many windows broken, and scholar resources were stolen. He

also said that now, some people from outside the school try to enter when there is no one there to rob whatever they can use to sell it, but the students are respectful and their parents help the school as well.

On the other hand, about the economic situation, the parents who send their children to that school work mainly as taxi drivers, merchants, employees, builders or they are housewives. This implies that most of them have a very low income, nonetheless they often go to scholar meetings, or attend the calls of the teachers when their children have some troubles or are in risk of not approving the subject. Contrary to this and as an obstacle to the students, some of them have a dysfunctional family.

Now, the infrastructure of the school is the following: it is delimited by a wall of approximately 2 meters high and on it there is a metal net. It has a huge green area with only grass and a few trees. There are two buildings in which one of them is used as the second grade classroom, in the middle there is the school yard, finally, in the other building there are the rest of rooms divided into two floors.

On the first floor, there are: the principal, teacher, school counselor, and the secretary rooms respectively, as well as, a warehouse, the school library, and the restrooms. While on the second floor there are: the classroom of third and first grade, there is also a computer room which is used to project videos, images, slideshows, etc., in order to give classes or to have meetings there. In addition, internet could be used too, but not all of the computers work or have a good connection, plus, the internet wire is cut by the students, or sometimes the internet does not work well.

About the organization of the school, there are: the principal, a school counselor who works as vice principal as well, 6 teachers, and lastly the school secretary joined to work in there. One teacher is in charge of the civic ceremonies and doing the mural newspaper for one month. The classes start at 8:00 am, and they finish at 14:10 pm, with a break of 20 minutes from 11:20 to 11:40.

On the seventh semester, and during the first week of the school year I was sent to observe and collect the most important and relevant information to elaborate the lesson plans. In this period of time, I was able to apply a diagnostic to know the English level of

the students in which there were exercises of elementary English such as: present simple tense, verb "to be", numbers, days of the week, months, and the four seasons. The results showed that they did not have even the basic knowledge, because they, with a lot of effort, could answer the numbers section and some names of the days, months, and seasons (see appendix 1).

All the students had a very low level; however, the first grade showed almost nothing knowledge about English, students mentioned during some classes that they have not had classes of this foreign language before, or been in courses about it either, the only touch with the language was in videogames, and music. The students from second and third grade, despite of not having a high level, they knew some basic vocabulary and they were closer to the English level, due to the other years in middle school.

Besides, students from first grade are used to pronouncing all the words as they see them, it means with just one sound each letter, they read as they see the letters, and they write as they hear them. Not the same with the students from the other grades, they have a low knowledge, although they have a better spelling and pronunciation, plus they know the tenses and how to write simple sentences.

This is the main reason I chose the first grade to work with, they have the lowest mastering of the English language, so that, it can be very helpful to them in the future, starts from the simplest, the sounds, to progressively going working with vocabulary, difference between written and spoken language in order to identify patterns, to continue with simple sentences, to finish with the students creating complex texts. However, this implies a lot of time and practice to reach those achievements with the learners.

1.3. Classroom

Inside the first grade classroom, there are windows on the left and right, that means there is a good illumination, and a good ventilation too. The door is made of metal so it can be closed at the end of the classes, preventing that someone enter and damage or steal something inside. There are two white boards: one in front of the class and one behind it, nonetheless, the second one is forgotten by the teachers, they do not use it at all. There
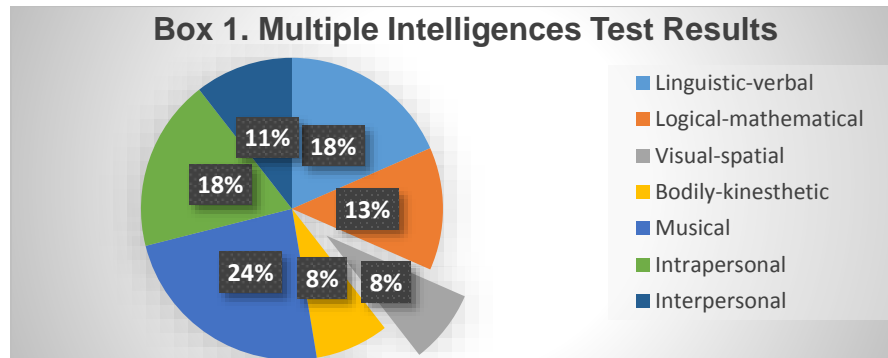
are also a teacher's desk and chair. In addition, there are 37 students' chairs made of plastic and metal. Finally, the floor, roof, and wall are made of concrete. Everything seems in good conditions, even the space is big enough to allow students walking through the rows with no problems.

1.4.   First Grade Group "A"

At present, some students left and others entered, but so far there are 38 students taking classes in the first grade, 20 are girls while 18 are boys who are between 11 and 13 years old. According to the English diagnostic test, they had a level A1- at the beginning of the school year, which means that they just know a really small repertoire of words, they do not know instructions in English, they are not able to use grammar rules to create simple sentences, they do not even know the correct spelling of some words they know, and common phrases are pronounced wrongly by them.

Some days after classes started, the students answered a test of multiple intelligences (from the Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences), which was applied by the school counselor. In this test there are questions with no correct answers, however, they allow us to know what intelligence is predominant on the students to obtain a general overview of the way students learn easier and which their obstacles are, in order to design lesson plans according to them.

As stated in this multiple intelligences test the results were as follows: 7 students obtained linguistic-verbal, involves the knowing which comes through language (Gardner, 1983). 5 students had logical-mathematical, it uses numbers, math, and logic to find and understand (Gardner, 1983). 3 students were visual-spatial, it represents the knowing through images and forms (Gardner, 1983). 3 students obtained bodily-kinesthetic, which means learning by moving and touching (Gardner, 1983). 9 students had musical, which is learning through sound and vibration (Gardner, 1983). 7 students were intrapersonal, this is the introspective intelligence (Gardner, 1983). And 4 more obtained interpersonal, it is the person-to-person way of knowing (Gardner, 1983) (see Box 1).

Box 1. Multiple Intelligences Test Results

■	Linguistic-verbal
■	Logical-mathematical
■	Visual-spatial
■	Bodily-kinesthetic
■	Musical
■	Intrapersonal
■	Interpersonal

11% 18%
18%
13%
24% 8% 8%

(**Source:** own creation)

Regarding to the information obtained from the observation week, I realized that first grade students have huge problems with motor-coordination activities for two main reasons: first one is they have not developed completely that skill, and second one, some of them do not care about the activities and just make fun about it. From the *Sistema de Alerta Temprana* (SisAT) test and the teachers' diagnostic applied in every subject, most of the students have a truly low level of knowledge.

The strengths observed in the group are:

- Having respect to the teacher.
- Following instructions when they listen to them.
- Participating actively during activities about sharing ideas.
- In group, they can speak English, in the moments that it is required such as singing in the school festivities as in the Day of the Death, and a Christmas carol in December.
- Doing tasks among all the group.

On the other hand, the improvement areas are:

- Being focused for a long period of time.
- Doing individual tasks.
- Pronunciation.
- Using a bilingual dictionary.
- Bringing requested material.

And, the main obstacles are:

- Doing a lot of noise that interfere where the instructions are given.

- Being reluctant to do exercises in English such as: writing words, pronunciation, and oral exchanges.
- Fear of being teased when they participate in English.
- Time to practice and be in contact with the target language.
- Differences between the written and spoken language.

During the first period of intervention, the first class was specifically to teach the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet), and to practice an example of each sound, it had to be very quickly since I had to teach other topics provided by the English teacher of the Secondary School. Despite of the little time to practice the different sounds and to learn the phonetic symbols, the students showed having memorized them, with some difficulties with a few consonant sounds.

Students were able, plenty of times, to pronounce a word without even having heard it before, it means, I did not say them the right way to pronounce a word, but with the phonetical transcription they did it very well. In contrast, there was little time to practice the words with its phonetical transcription, so that, the students used to forget how to say a word the next session.

Initially, students were completely embarrassed to say anything in English, they used to say that they were not Americans, they just spoke in Spanish. However, and through the continue practicing they were able to say "good morning", "good afternoon", and "May I go to the bathroom?" Actually, sometime after, they used to greet me by themselves, without talking to them before.

1.5. Purposes of Study

The general purpose is:

- ❖ To use the International Phonetic Alphabet as a resource to improve the students' oral skills in the first grade of Secondary School.

While the specific purposes are:

- Students recognize and master the International Phonetic Alphabet to pronounce correctly English words through exercises of repetition.

- Encourage the oral production through a cooperative environment which is intolerant to teasing.
- Stimulate the autonomous learning.
- Generate sessions of practice to improve the speaking skills.
- Work speaking jointly with the listening, reading, and writing skills.

1.6. About the Topic

The topic to be developed is: "The use of phonetical symbols as a resource to improve the oral interaction", which belongs to the second thematic line stablished on *Orientaciones Académicas para la Elaboración del Documento Recepcional* (SEP, 2002, p. 20), this is related to the analysis of teaching experiences. This involves to work using different strategies related to my topic to obtain results from the real practice in a Secondary School.

Phonetics is a really extensive area of study, however, it is pretended that students know the phonetical symbols to understand and have a fluent conversation, it is also wanted that students master the pronunciation of the most common words and phrases in English. In other words, working with the vowel and consonant sounds, students will be able to produce their own speech having confidence, to make them realize that they speak well.

Students will master the English pronunciation step by step, not only because it requires much time to practice, but because there are only three classes a week, which makes it difficult that they train daily and do not forget what is checked during each session. Owing to that, it is necessary to take the most advantage of those classes. Firstly, vocabulary will be provided to students to practice, after that, the grammar rules required to create sentences will be taught, and finally, they will be able to have an oral exchange.

1.7. Questions that are Expected to be Answered

According to the selected topic of investigation, it is expected to give an answer to the following questions:

1. How does the teaching of phonetic symbols influence students to improve the oral production?
2. How motivating could to know how words are pronounced in English be for students?
3. What are the students' attitudes facing exercises that implies oral production?
4. How appropriate could the activities be which involve the speaking skills with students who their main obstacle is the embarrassment about speaking another language?
5. How to design plan sessions leaded to develop the oral production but worked jointly with the listening, reading, and writing skills?
6. How to adequate the session plan considering the learning outcomes stablished on *Aprendizajes Clave*, the curricular content which is pretended to be taught, the students' characteristics, and the context of the community?
7. How important is to know the sound of the letters to be able to speak in a foreign language?
8. How impacting could mastering the International Phonetic Alphabet be to students learn autonomously?
9. What is the relevance of this research to use it by the time I will be a teacher in service?
10. How many students improved their speaking skills after implementing the strategies mentioned in this paper?

CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter II
Theoretical Framework

The aim of this chapter is to present the current theoretical information that supports this essay, to show a range of perspectives related to the work implemented in the last two semesters of the Normal school. The main purpose of this paper is to register experiences obtained in the practices focused on a main topic to demonstrate if it was relevant and important to improve the teaching practice, in this case: the use of phonetical symbols as a resource to improve the oral interaction.

Moreover, it is intended to answer some questions through an extensive research about the theme related to phonetics, pronunciation, speaking and listening skill, in order to obtain a better result in the sessions with the group of first grade, to help them improve their knowledge on the foreign language and collecting information of the process followed to achieve that.

Due to that, this component is integrated by: in first instance, the Syllabus 1999 of Normal school to talk about the importance of the subjects taken during the formation as a future teacher, followed by *Aprendizajes Clave* which is the Syllabus used in Secondary Schools for first and second grades; after that, the importance of listening to understand and produce an accurate pronunciation, consecutively, the IPA and the symbols that represent sounds, then the oral production in the classes, and finally, the oral interaction which is the main aim.

2.1. Syllabus 1999. *Escuela Normal*

To start with, it is necessary to mention aspects about the Syllabus 1999 as I have been trained under this. Since all the subjects are set up into this Syllabus and we have to attend to obtain all the competences that a teacher must have at the end of the training at the *Escuela Normal*. According to the Syllabus 1999 (SEP, 1999) there are five fields in which the competences are organized and those are: 1) specific intellectual abilities, 2) mastering of purposes and content of Secondary Education, 3) didactic competences, 4)

professional and etic identity, and, 5) capacity of perception and action to the social conditions of the school context.

There were plenty of subjects taken along the teacher formation that has given tools and theoretical information which have influenced and help to elaborate this paper and to work on this subjects. The first important subject is *Desarrollo de los Adolescentes*, because after studying and reading the contents of the subjects we learned about how students think and react in that stage of their lives, what issues teenagers face, and how to work with them to create a work environment and a meaningful learning.

Secondly the subjects of English I, II, III, and IV helped me to know better the grammar rules stablished in this language, moreover, I developed my four skills through different activities that gave me a lot of ideas that I have put into practice in my groups. Furthermore, "Strategies and resources II. Listening comprehension and oral expression" was very useful to obtain exercises to develop those two skills that are related to each other, since to have a face to face interaction both are imperative.

In addition, those subjects related to the observation and practices were critical important as to my training as to my decision to work on this subject, because I designed plenty of lesson plans, and a lot of materials, besides I worked with different sorts of groups, and that leaded me to realize that the weakest skills are speaking and listening, the reasons are many, but most of them finish with the students that are not used to doing exercises that implies those.

Last but not least, the subject who made choose to work with the IPA to develop the speaking skill was "Optional I. Phonetics", in that subject I learned the difference on pronunciation between the Spanish and English language, since there unknown sounds for us as native speakers of the first one, so to understand, find patterns and improve the speaking skill, it is needed to learn the IPA in order to pronounce correctly and the most similar possible to an English native speaker.

2.2. *Aprendizajes Clave*

Another crucial document that is needed to take into account is the Syllabus 2018 for first and second grade of Secondary School which is called *Aprendizajes Clave*, because currently it is pretended that teachers design their lesson plans from this. Firstly, the graduate profile is divided into eleven aspects, which are the following (SEP, 2017, pp. 24-25):

1. Language and communication.
2. Mathematical thinking.
3. Exploration and comprehension of the natural and social world.
4. Critical thinking and problem solution.
5. Socioemotional skills and life project.
6. Collaboration and team work.
7. Coexistence and citizenship.
8. Artistic appreciation and expression.
9. Body and health attention.
10. Environment care.
11. Digital skills.

All of them must be developed along of the Basic Education and in every subject that is intended to be taught, however, for the English subject the most remarkable is the "Language and communication" aspect which is stablished as follows: in the end of Middle School the students will be able to (…) describe experiences, facts, desires, aspirations, opinions, and plans in English (SEP, 2017, p. 27).

This aspect is mainly focused on the two productive skills of a language: speaking and writing, since it is specified in the current Syllabus, they must be able to elaborate different speeches to communicate with others.

Now that the graduate profile aspect related to this subject was shown, it is necessary to differentiate some concepts that could be taken as the same thing or that could be confused and those are: mother tongue, second language, and foreign language. First of all, the mother tongue or native language, according to *Aprendizajes Clave* (SEP,

2017, p. 159), is the first one that the children acquire in their natural environment surrounded by adults and the communication with them.

On the other hand, the concept of second language is a little bit more complicated because it depends on different characteristics such as the moment of acquisition of the language, its presence on the society, situations and conditions in which it is learned, but more simplified is that it is consider as second language when within a country coexists different languages, accordingly, Spanish could be a second language for children who speak an originative language (SEP, 2017, p. 159-160).

Otherwise, a foreign language is considered (SEP, 2017, p. 160) like that when that language is not official or native of the country in which is acquire, for example; in Mexico, English and French are considered as foreign languages. Consequently, the correct concept to talk about English is "foreign language" even if the children learn it right after their mother tongue.

In addition, and critical important is the general purpose stablished in *Aprendizajes Clave* which is:

> The general purpose of the Foreign Language. English subject is that the students develop abilities, knowledge, attitudes and strategies of learning to participate and interact in **language social practices**, <u>orally</u> and written, of different communicative and cultural contexts which are routine, regular, and known, with native and non-native English speakers. (SEP, 2017, p. 165)

2.2.1. English teaching approach. According to *Aprendizajes Clave* (SEP, 2017, p. 170) the English teaching approach is centered in language social practices which are oriented to the process of learning to interact in different communicative exchanges. This means that the main purpose of the English subject in Basic Education is making students be able to interact with other people more than know grammatical rules or translate anything.

This approach considers the learning as linguistic as cultural which its function is socialization, consequently it is intended for students to interact, progress, and rebuild their social world through their effective and successful own language social practices. In

other words, students have to be able to develop the productive skills to be communicated with people who are English speakers.

2.3. Listening

The first step on the way of speaking interaction is the listening skill, but, why is listening the first step to develop the speaking skill? Well, according to Dendrinos (2015, p. 9): "language learning should begin with listening. This is the first skill children practice in L1, so it is natural to begin with listening". In other words, to ensure the students improve their knowledge and skills in a foreign language, it is necessary to start with listening.

Consequently, since the students have a low level of proficiency of English, they need before producing, something to produce, in this way, listening works as the input of information that students will hear, process in their minds, understand and finally use what is heard in other conversations, Dendrinos (1992, p.64) explains this as follows: "listening is important to language learners since they start build an idea of how that language works".

Also, Lewis & Hill agree about the importance of listening to develop speaking skill stablishing that "you learn to speak by good listening; good listening means the listeners are actively involved" (1992, p. 64), in this sense, this is the first step to develop: first a good pronunciation, then an accurate oral production, and finally a properly oral interaction.

For this reason, it is important to involved the other skills to foster the mastering of the L2, but if it is wanted students to develop the speaking skill in order to succeed in oral interactions, which could be phone calls, video calls, speak with a foreigner, work with costumers who speaks English, etc., "we need to recognize that successful L2 communication demands listening in equal measure with speaking" (Field 2009, p.5).

Finally, the relationship between speaking and listening is explained by Field as follows: "communication requires a two-way traffic, and unless the non-native speaker has a listening competence as developed as his/her command of speech, then it will simply

not be possible to sustain a conversation" (2009, p. 2). Hence, speaking and listening skills goes increasing together, and sometimes we do not even realize about it.

2.3.1. Listening comprehension. Now well, listening, as it was stablished before in this paper, is a macro-skill, but to make students have a fluently conversation, it is needed to improve their listening comprehension, it means, students do not just listen, but understand what other people say in order to participate actively in an interaction situation (a conversation with friends, meetings, interviews, etc.), since "comprehension is viewed as a process of decoding" (Richards, 2008, p. 4).

Shumin expresses the importance of listening comprehension while speaking when he wrote that:

Speaking feeds on listening, which precedes it. Usually, one person speaks, and the other responds through attending by means of the listening process. In fact, during interaction, every speaker plays a double role – both as a listener and as a speaker. . (Shumin, 2002, p. 205)

Finally, Penny Ur (1996, p.105) explains the conception of this sub-skill stablishing: "in principle, the objective of listening comprehension practice in the classroom is that students should learn to function successfully in real-life listening situations". Thus, the teacher must design lesson plans taking into account the students' context, interests, and needs, so that, those plans has the aim of recreate interactions.

2.4. International Phonetic Alphabet

It is a fact that in all languages there is a relationship among the four macro-skills which are: speaking, listening, writing, and reading, however, in the case of the English language, the written world is completely different to the spoken one because "when writing in English, we use 5 vowel and 21 consonant letters. When speaking English we typically use 20 different vowel sounds (including 12 diphthongs), and 24 consonant sounds" (Kelly, 2000, p. 7).

This fact creates confuse among the Secondary School learners, because in Spanish there is a relationship "face-to-face" between what is written and what is said, for example, in Spanish the vowel "a" has just one sound /a/, while in English that same vowel could have different sounds depending on the word and those could be /ə/ in the case of *about*, /ɔ:/ in fall, or /æ/ in *cat*, Kelly (2000, p.7) explains this with this words: "In some languages, there is essentially a one-to-one relationship between spelling and pronunciation, and there will be (with the occasional exception) the same number of phonemes used in the language as there are letters in the alphabet".

Another point that makes more complicated the understanding of English for Mexican students is that "there may be sounds, and combinations of sounds in L1, which do not occur in English" (Kelly, 2000, p. 8), as well as, "there may be sounds, and combinations of sounds, used in English which do not occur in L1" (Kelly, 2000, p. 8). Otherwise, students can read or say words as is written because it is normal, plus, it could be part of the Mexican style to speak English, besides students could be understood by their classmates or other Mexican people who speak English.

However, when it is wanted to interact with people abroad, there could appear the first problems of misunderstanding, mainly with non-native speakers, for example, if a Mexican goes to a restaurant and asks for /soup/ because that is the way it is written, the waiters could get confused about it thinking that he wants soap /səʊp/, maybe to wash his hands or something. Another example of the difficulty of the English language is given by Kelly:

> George Bernard Shaw, in a possibly idle moment, created the nonsense word *ghoti*, saying it should be pronounced in the same way as the word *fish* / fɪʃ /. He explained this by demonstrating how the pronunciation of *gh* could be taken from words like *tough* / tʌf /; the *o* could be taken from women / wɪmɪn /, and the *ti* could be taken from words like *notion* / nəʊʃən /. What he was showing was that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between spelling and pronunciation in English. The 44 different sounds we use when speaking English are written downs using only 26 letters. This means that although there obviously is some correspondence

between sounds and letters, many letters can represent more than one sound. (2000, p. 122)

And, it is true that letters could have different sounds, and this could make think the English learners that then, there is no way to know how a word is pronounced by seeing a word for first time, or how a word is written when it is said, however "surveys of the system have shown that over 80% of English words are spelled according to regular patterns, and that there are fewer than 500 words whose spelling can be considered completely irregular" (Kelly, 2000, p. 123).

This is why, after listening, pronunciation is another key factor to have an adequate oral interaction, to not create misunderstandings and to make a conversation suitable to the moment and the person who it is speaking to. Hence, the way to understand the spoken system in English and improve our pronunciation is knowing and mastering the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

So that, it becomes critical important to mention some phonetical terms to obtain a better comprehension of the function of the IPA, first we have the phonemes which are the smallest part of phonetics, Kelly (2000, p.1) explains: "phonemes are the different sounds within a language. Although there are slight differences in how individuals articulate sounds, we can still describe reasonably accurately how each sound is produced".

Moreover, "the set of phonemes consists of two categories: vowel sounds and consonant sounds. However, these do not necessarily correspond to the vowels and consonants we are familiar with in the alphabet" (Kelly, 2000, p. 2). Therefore, to give an accurate performance while speaking or having and oral interaction, it is needed to know the different sounds used in English, not just that, but when the phonetical symbols are mastered, it could support to the self-taught learning, because, when a student wants to know how a word is pronounced, he could read the symbols and even without having heard that word before, he will be able to produce and accurate pronunciation. The following chart shows the IPA:

Vowels		Diphthongs		Consonants			
iː	bead	eɪ	cake	p	pin	s	sue
ɪ	hit	ɔɪ	toy	b	bin	z	zoo
ʊ	book	aɪ	high	t	to	ʃ	she
uː	food	ɪə	beer	d	do	ʒ	measure
e	left	ʊə	fewer	k	cot	h	hello
ə	about	eə	where	g	got	m	more
ɜː	shirt	əʊ	go	tʃ	church	n	no
ɔː	call	aʊ	house	dʒ	judge	ŋ	sing
æ	hat			f	fan	l	live
ʌ	run			v	van	r	red
ɑː	far			θ	think	j	yes
ɒ	dog			ð	the	w	wood

(**Source:** Gerald Kelly (2000). *how to Teach Pronunciation*)

The English teaching approach stablished in the current Syllabus called *Aprendizajes Clave* is centered in *language social practices* which implies our students to have an accurate performance while speaking and fluency during conversations, so that, "any serious learner of English will need to learn a system of phonetic transcription, not in order to transcribe, but in order to read pronunciation in a good dictionary" (Lewis & Hill, 1992, p. 71).

2.5.   Oral Production

Before having oral interactions, students must be able to produce their own statements, this could be obvious to mention, but it is important to recognize this third step in the way of oral interactions. Once, students develop their listening comprehension, which allows them to decode a message to understand what is said, and students improve their pronunciation to avoid misunderstandings, now it is necessary to produce replies to continue a conversation and to achieve it follows as natural as possible.

But, why is speaking so important nowadays? There are two main reasons, the first one is because of the Syllabus and its approach, and the second one and perhaps more important is that "learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency" (Richards, 2008, p. 19).

This leads students not just to have a high proficiency in English speaking, but that motives students to continue learning, and this implies the four skills, since those are related to each one, as it was shown before. However, there are some important issues that causes students not to want to participate actively, consequently not to develop their speaking skill, according to Penny Ur (1996, p. 121), some problems of those kind of activities are: Inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and mother-tongue use.

Thus, teacher has the purpose of elaborating interactional environments since the beginning of the classes, the sooner learners familiarize to communicate to each other in English, the better for students to get used to and eliminate those obstacles. Of course, all of these happen in a long-time period, and for teenagers could become harder, and that is why teacher has to encourage students to produce oral and written products.

On the other hand, one technique which is helpful to improve pronunciation and oral production is "choral pronunciation" which allows students practicing all together, making learners being more relaxed since the attention is not centered on them, besides the teacher walking around could notice who has more difficulties to help them in that moment.

Lewis & Hill stablishes that "the technique of choral pronunciation […] is useful with all students, at all levels, and save for classes containing only two or three students, for all class sizes" (1992, p. 67), this allows teachers to ensure all students to develop their speaking skills, not just pronunciation is fostering with this, but intonation and stress is practicing as well while repeating phrases. Plus, "well used, the technique is fun, lively, increases the pace of the lesson, helps individuals to relax, and is one of the principal techniques which enable teachers to create a pleasant, relaxed yet dynamic classroom" (Lewis & Hill, 1992, p. 67).

2.6. Oral Interaction

Now that it was explained the importance of listening comprehension, pronunciation, and oral production, the next aspect to be considered is the final intention which is oral interaction, but, what is that? "Talk as interaction refers to what we normally mean by "conversation" and describes interaction that serves a primarily social function" (Richards, 2008, p. 22), in other word, it is share and receive information, ideas, opinions, to have an agreement, when people say something and receive feedback, that is oral interaction.

Speaking as it could be appreciated is not just saying words or phrases, not just talking as such, but it implies other skills, knowledge, emphasis, and meaning (since one comment could change its meaning according to the context; for instance: *sorry!* to express apology, and *sorry?* to express doubt about what was said), Shumin, in this aspect, stablishes:

> Learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. Learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange, in which many factors interact. (Shumin, 2002, p. 204)

According to Shumin (2002, p. 208) "the functions of spoken language are interactional and transactional. The primary intention of the former is to maintain social relationships, whereas that of the latter is to convey information and ideas". This is the reason which oral interaction must be one of the main aims, due to this involves not just speaking but, the other skills are present as well.

Moreover as Brown (2006, p. 10) wrote "teachers can build on listening tasks to provide speaking practice. At the same time, speaking tasks give students practice in listening to each other", so that, in the moment of the oral interaction, both, speaking and listening complement each other, growing together into the students.

And, why are those interactions important if the students have a very low level of proficiency in all skills? To answer this question, it is needed to be remembered that this process begins with listening, and slowly encouraging students to speak, that in words of

Shumin "as learners get more experience, they will be able to use some of the simple exchanges and know how to open conversations" (Shumin, 2002, p. 208).

Finally, for teachers evaluate oral interactions becomes a hard task, and more in groups with a huge number of students, that is why, a strategy that could help to make easier that job is through task-based activities which according to Penny Ur "a task is essentially goal-oriented: it requires the group, or pair, to achieve an objective that is usually expressed by an observable result, such as brief notes or lists, a rearrangement of jumbled items, a drawing, a spoken summary" (Ur, 1996, p. 123). That observable result will be used as the evidence of the activity while the interactions will be observed and corrected at the moment.

CHAPTER III
ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCE

Chapter III
Analysis of the Experience

Throughout this chapter, the experiences obtained during the practices will be explained taking into account the different aspects to design the lesson plans implemented to teach English to students of first grade: some of those aspects were the topic presented in this essay, characteristics of the students, context, Syllabus 2018, and the main purposes of each topic that was given to me by the teacher in charge of the English class in the Secondary School.

In this case, the main topic was the use of the phonetical symbols as a resource to improve the oral interaction, which is why all the strategies which will be mentioned next are going to be focused and designed after analyzing these characteristics. At the same time, it will be expressed how to match the four macro skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) during the activities or topics worked with the students. Beside, one important part of this chapter is the reflection of those participations, so, there will be observations and important aspects obtained in those activities.

So, to start it is necessary to explain the definition of strategy, since they are the subheadings of this chapter and those strategies allowed me to reflect, collect information and organize it in this chapter. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (n/d) it is "a long-range plan for achieving something or reaching a goal, or the skill or making such plans". In this paper the strategies are those plans designed and leaded to students achieve to interact each other.

Each strategy is divided into three subheadings: the first one is called "Description of the strategy" in which I write about how I planned the strategy and the steps which were supposed to follow to reach the aim, however, it works similarly to a lesson plan, since it is an organization of activities, but they could change in the moment of practicing. The second one is called "Didactic sequence development" in which I explain what happened during giving classes, so that, it could differ slightly with the first subheading. Finally, in the "Reflection" section I write about the aspects that were relevant to take into account, difficulties, goals achieved, and variations that can help or improve the strategy.

3.1. Strategy 1: Teaching the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) – The Use of Bilingual Dictionaries

The first topic that was given by the teacher of English was "Teaching the IPA - The use of bilingual dictionaries", which is stablished in the Syllabus 2018. Its social environment of learning is academic and formation. The social practice of the language is: Write instructions to use a bilingual dictionary, and the achievements that I worked with were:

- Select and check bilingual dictionaries.
- Understand the use of textual component of bilingual dictionaries.

I applied this strategy the first time I practiced with first grade owing to the students had a very low level of English proficiency according to the diagnostic made during the observation week, observation during the classes of the subject and interviews made to the students about their contact with the language in their lives.

3.1.1. Description of the strategy. Since it was the first time practicing in that school, the topic that I worked with was the IPA, in other words, the sound of the vowels and consonants pronounced in English. The first step was to make students understand that there are differences between Spanish and English pronunciation presenting some examples of words, one of the purposes was to show students that English has more vowel sounds and that the written words could change their sound depending on the word, due to the fact that in the foreign language the letters have more than one sound.

The second step was to show the phonetical symbols to the students, but separately, first the vowels: showing that each symbol represent a particular sound and that there are diphthongs, the way to produce those sounds and practicing them to master their pronunciation. Thirdly, the consonant symbols had to be shown on the board, as well as, their pronunciation working specially with those unknown sounds or which had a strange symbol for the students.

The fourth step was to show the difference between spoken and written symbols, through teaching which the so–called written letters and the symbols (between slash marks) are. To do that it has to be presented examples in which similar symbols were

written on the board and to understand the difference that was on a normal word and a word written with phonetical symbols between slash marks.

The fifth step was to provide students with some words (which could be written on the board or using flashcards) which were pronounced in first instance by the teacher and repeated consequently by the students with the objective of practicing the correct pronunciation of those words and the symbol that was intended to be taught. Those words had to be short, and with practical used during their daily life in the house and school mainly.

The sixth step was to use the phonetical transcription in the following activities when students had problems in the moment to pronounce words. Moreover, to present the phonetical transcription of the key words that would be used throughout the topic and its respective activities to practice them along the classes.

3.1.2. Didactic sequence development. The first thing I did was to write the name of the title of the topic we would work first which was "vowels"; after that, I asked students to remember and say the vowels they knew (written letters) in Spanish and then to say their sound. Then, I asked the students to think how many vowels are in English (firstly, the written ones), some students thought there were more than in Spanish while others were saying that there were the same in both languages.

Later, I explained that the symbols used to write are different of the sounds produced by them, so I asked students to think and try to guess the number of the vowels used in pronunciation, since there could be sounds and combinations of sounds in Spanish that do not occur in English and vice versa according to Kelly (2000), I thought it would be a challenging exercise to show their prior knowledge. Again, the answer of the students were five (the same as in Spanish) to ten. Afterwards, I wrote the twelve single vowel sounds and the eight diphthongs with short words below the symbols while students were copying them on their notebooks (see appendix 2).

Subsequently, I explained to the students that the symbols could be differentiated between phonetical transcription and written letters if one of those symbols are between slash marks, to do this I also explained that the letters has a name as they are said in the

alphabet; for instance: a is called / eɪ /, b is called / biː /, and so on. Then I wrote the following symbols: *a* and */ a /.*

In the first moment they did not understand and they said that both were / eɪ /, so I explained that when they were between slash marks the symbol represented a sound while the letter alone had that name, so I pointed on one of the symbols and the students had to say / a / or / eɪ / respectively, after some practice they understood the difference of those symbols.

Then, I started pronouncing each symbol alone (including the diphthongs), and right after, the students tried to repeat those sounds, obviously, the easiest where those that has the same symbol as the written letters and where pronounced the same as in Spanish, however they had troubles with those which had an unknown symbol and where not used in their mother tongue as in the case of: / ə / / ɜː / / æ / / ɪ /, actually they used to forget the sounds of: / ɔː / / ʌ / because, even though they had a known sound, the symbol was not.

Consecutively, I pronounced the short words below underlining the letter which made the sound, and the students repeated those words in group to encourage them all, I chose this activity because as Lewis & Hill (1992) stablished that the choral pronunciation is useful with all students, at all levels, besides it is fun, lively, helps individuals to relax. When I heard a wrong pronunciation I asked to do it again until they corrected themselves, but again, the most complicated words to pronounce were those which had / ə / (schwa sound) and / ɜː / because they thought that they were pronounced like / e /, so we practiced those words more than the others.

After the vowel sounds, I wrote the title "consonants" (see appendix 2) and I asked the students to say what consonants are, once they told me I wrote the 24 symbols, and I asked to guess how they were pronounced, nevertheless they said their names, sometimes even in Spanish, so I pronounced a symbol to make them understand the difference, so they could tell me the other sounds, and I emphasized on the / r /, since in Mexico it is said vibrating a lot, while in English make that sound differently.

Moreover, I explained those sounds which its symbol was strange for the students, and they could reproduce the most of them quickly, nonetheless the most difficult one was the *th* sound (/ θ /), but some students could not produce that sound. At the same time, I explained the minimal pairs and the difference between voiced and voiceless sounds, however, I did not use those technical terms but I showed them asking them to touch their throat and make the same sound (minimal pairs) but once making vibrate the throat and not doing it after.

Subsequently, as with the vowels I pronounced the words below of each symbol underlining those letters which made the sounds, and immediately the students repeated the words. In this point, I emphasized on the *th* sound and its difference with the *t* sound writing the next examples: *tree* and *three* with the purpose of making the students realize the difference of pronunciation and misunderstandings that could occur with a wrong pronunciation.

Finally, I used the phonetical transcription of the key words when I started a new topic to practice along the activities, mainly when I taught vocabulary in the beginning. Besides, I used to write some phrases needed to make an oral practice writing the spelling and below the phonetical symbols so the students could see how to say those statements (see appendix 2).

3.1.3. Reflection. I just took one session to teach both vowels and consonants as a topic for two main reasons. The first reason is not specified in the Syllabus 2018 in any achievement, and the second one was that the English teacher did not give me to topic of pronunciation or something related to it and I had to show evidences of the topics that I had to work with. That was why I worked the first completely class to introduce the IPA and the next activities I included the phonetical transcription.

Through this, I realized that one class was not enough to the students to master the correct way to pronounce some sounds and they used to forget what sounds corresponded to the new symbols like the *th* sound or the schwa. Besides I think I had to give more than just one example of each symbol to practice more and provide more meaningful knowledge.

On the other hand, the phonetical transcription is another symbol system and consequently is similar to another language, so, it must be worked more time and with different activities to show the difference between the spoken and written language in English, but at the same time, to make students realize that there are some patterns that give us an idea of how a word could be pronounced.

Since phonemes are the simplest and smallest part of a language the topic must be taught in the very beginning and to use the mother tongue as a way to make students understand better the difference between name and sound of a word (for example */ ku /* as the name for the letter *q*) and that some letters could have different sounds (like in the case of *ca - / ka /* and *ce - / se /* in Spanish).

Furthermore, that topic would have been more meaningful if I had used a game in which students had to produce the sounds individually, which could allow me to know if they understood or what were the most difficult parts to practice again and at the same time to make a relaxing environment and a way to evaluate the students individually.

3.2.   Strategy 2: Songs.

The second exercise of pronunciation were the learning and practice of songs related to the celebrations that were close to be organized and included in a participation in the school. The English teacher was in charge of the first graders and their participation on those events so I was requested to design an activity to prepare and being performed by the students.

This strategy was not planned in the beginning; however, after the needs of the Secondary School discussing and taking decisions during CTEs with the ceremonies of the Day of the Death, and Christmas I designed and included those activities in the lesson plan that I already had.

Even though those participations were not part of a section of *Aprendizajes Clave* and they were not stablished as achievements to be obtained by the students, those activities belongs to the hidden curriculum which is defined as "the unwritten, unofficial, and often unintended lessons, values, and perspectives that students learn in school"

(The Glossary of Education Reform, 2015), plus, it "is based on the recognition that students absorb lessons in school that may or may not be part of the formal course of study" (The Glossary of Education Reform, 2015). Thus, it is implicit in the graduate profile of Basic Education, moreover, it was the result of CTE meetings.

3.2.1. Description of the strategy. The first step was to adequate the lesson plan which was already made, since one of the characteristics of these plans is the flexibility, because as Farrell (2002) stablishes: teachers may need to make certain adjustments to the lesson at the implementation phase, owing to something could happen during an early part of the lesson that necessitates improvisation. So, I included the songs that would be performed by the students on the ceremonies of the Day of the Dead, and Christmas. At this point, it was necessary to choose the song, materials (like a speaker, an mp3 player, and the printed lyrics for the students), times, and way to teach the pronunciation of the song.

The second step was to decide the space and the moment to practice the song with all students, when the computer room was free, the projector could be used to show the lyrics with the song at the same time with bigger words which could help to follow easier the song.

The third step was to sing a short part of the song and ask students to repeat it with the song at the same time, after that, try to repeat it with a karaoke which means no help of the singer, and finally, try to make it acapella, with the rhythm and correct pronunciation, in each phase of the teaching of the lyrics, I had to pay attention to the students attempts and practice until mastering the song.

3.2.2. Didactic sequence development. On Friday, October 4th, the CTE meeting was made, and we talked mainly about the *Programa Escolar de Mejora Continua* (PEMC), projects that were proposed in the beginning of the school year and the celebration of the month which would be the Day of the Dead, so the teachers had to prepare a participation to do that day, so I was asked to prepare something as well with the first graders.

I chose a singing participation with a song known for most of the students, but at the same time easy to perform, so I printed the lyrics of the song "This is Halloween" by Danny Elfman from the movie "A nightmare before Christmas", I prepared my speaker, my laptop, and the videos: one song with the lyrics and another one of karaoke. Once I had all the material I decided to take five minutes before finishing each class to practice (see appendix 3).

When the computer room was free, we used to go there ten minutes before finishing the class to project the videos of the song and in the beginning I started singing a part of the song followed by the students and when there were doubts or I listened to some wrong pronunciation I wrote the phonetical transcription and we practiced that part until it was well made by most of them.

In the beginning the students were shy to sing, however it quickly changed their mind and among everybody was singing and asking for the pronunciation of some words or the meaning of them. I was not present in the moment of the participation during the event, however, the English teacher told me that he chose the students who had bad grades to perform and obtained some extra grades.

After that, on November 15th, all the teachers had another CTE meeting, and one of the points discussed was the Christmas celebration, so again, the teachers had to design another participation to that day. And I decided to work with the "Jingle bell rocks" song by Bobby Helms, since it has a slow rhythm and it was easy to practice because it has no many letters and they tend to be repeated (see appendix 3).

In this occasion, there were rehearsals to participate on the Revolution Day parade on November 20th, but not all first graders would take part, then the rest of the group

stayed practicing the song and this time they were more participative to do the activity, owing to, it created a relaxed environment and the students perceived that as a moment to rest according to their comments.

Anew, I was not able to be on the Christmas celebration, so the English teacher continued with the activity after I finished my time of practicing and she decided how to organize the group to perform that day.

3.2.3. Reflection. In first instance I realized that to be a teacher implies more than just teaching the curriculum of the Syllabus, because there are events that requires our participation and makes us work beyond the subject we teach. On the other hand, I had my first experience modifying my lesson plan to include activities which belong to other areas and school projects that must be produced. I obtained a first glance of the real world of teaching in a public school.

I perceived that songs are a good way to teach pronunciation, since all the students sing at the same time, they obtained the courage necessary to participate and try to pronounce correctly. Most of the time, participate and produce orally in English is complicated if it is made alone owing to the fear of being the center of attention, make mistakes and the classmates make fun of him/her. So that, the teacher perceives when there are troubles and corrects them without exposing anyone.

The students perceive these kind of exercises as a way to rest from the tasks that they have to do every day in the different subjects along the school day, they are more relaxed and enjoyed to do that, because they also think that is like a way to not work in classes, it is just like a game to them, and they do not even realize they are learning.

Moreover, when they do an extracurricular activity using the knowledge of a subject, they obtained a perception that what they are learning, it is useful and they really use it in the real world. Sometimes, students are not motivated to learn because they think that what is taught in the school is not useful in their daily life, so when they participate outside a classroom, not as a task to obtain a grade, they are even more participative with that kind of activities.

About the materials, I provided students with a sheet with the lyrics of the songs, however, I did not gave them the completely phonetical transcription, instead, when they had troubles to pronounce a word I used to write it in English and its transcriptions, so students were focused on the written words, and since they already knew the pronunciation of some of them I just wrote those which were strange or complicated to pronounce, so that, students wrote the symbols above or below the word.

I have to say that using songs as a way to teach is one of my weaknesses, because I do not feel confident enough to include them in a topic from the Syllabus, and besides I could not exploit them. Learning with songs could be used to teach more than just pronunciation, because there is a large range of activities that could be designed from one single song to work with the four skills, which means I have to improve using songs more often in my lesson plans.

3.3. Strategy 3: "The Little Worm"

After working with the phonetical symbols and pronunciation it was time to produce and interact orally, in other words, it was time to the students to give another step in their speaking skill starting talking to each other. Obviously, to do that it was necessary to take into account the level of the students, and the topic worked on to design the classes in order to prepare the students to make their first oral interaction activity.

This strategy was developed on the second time of intervention of the seventh semester. The English teacher gave me the following topic: "Which are my friends' preferences?". According to the Syllabus 2018 its learning social environment is family and community; the communicative activity is "Exchanges related to itself and others' information.

Furthermore, it is stablished that the language social practice is as follows: Exchange compliments, likes and dislikes in an interview. Finally, the achievements to be developed are:

- Explain compliment, likes and dislikes on written dialogs.

- Express compliments, likes and dislikes in a dialog.

3.3.1. Description of the strategy. The first step was to show the topic in which we would work on, and make the students to remember their previous learning to start and make it easier to understand. One important thing to take into account is the knowledge students already have to make the classes more meaningful, besides it allows to support each other when they work in group. This part is the introduction which involves questions from the teacher and guesses and answers from the students.

The second step was to teach key vocabulary writing the words on the board and asking students to guess what they mean and making students drawing pictures related to the words in order to have different words they can use to have a better performance during the activities they would do after. This moment is the first part to elaborate a speech, so the students had to know the correct spelling and pronunciation of words related to the topic.

The third step was to teach grammar in first instance writing it on the board, then showing some written examples and finally asking students to give their own examples, in other words, the structure to create sentences correctly with coherence. So that, in this part, it was necessary to teach how to use the verbs like and dislike in present simple, having into account if they would use another verb (if they like doing an activity like playing soccer), a countable or uncountable noun.

The fourth step was to practice the pronunciation of the sentence that would be repeated, and this would be the question and the answer to express likes and dislikes. With this exercise, the students would be more confident during the oral interaction and if they had questions they could ask in that moment.

The fifth step was to develop an oral interaction activity which was a game called "The little worm" which consists of the students and teacher would be in a place where enough space to walk around freely has. Students walk in all directions trying to not do it next to the same classmates while the teacher could ask them to do another exercise meanwhile (like moving their heads upside-down, running, jumping, etc.). Then, the teachers shouts "The little worm has…", a number, and "…feet". For example:

- The little worm has 4 feet!
- The little worm has 16 feet!

It is more convenient to use a pair number since each student has two feet, which means, if the teacher says 6 feet, three students have to gather, however, odd numbers could be used as well and it adds an extra difficulty to the exercise, besides it could be funnier since one student has to be standing in one foot.

This exercise could be repeated as many times as needed until they gather in pairs to talk to each other and interact in English using the structure that was learned before; of course, they have to know how to ask, answer, and ask back to make it an interaction. Although, there is another variant in which it does not matter the number of students in a group they can share their answers each other, depending on the time.

3.3.2. Didactic sequence development. This strategy was developed along three sessions. The first day I wrote the name of the topic in which we would work on that was "What are my friends' preferences?", then the students had to guess what was the title about, and among all the group they interpreted what it meant in Spanish, after that I wrote the three key words: "like", "don't like", and compliments.

Then, they tried to guess the meaning of the words and they quickly understood the words and the topic; however, they were confused with the word compliments, since we worked with some grammatical rules before to create sentences in simple present tense, so they thought that compliment and complement were the same, that was why I explained them what the meaning was and I told them some examples to be clearer.

As we worked before on the present simple tense I asked them to remember how to create statements, nevertheless they showed not remembering, hence I told them to use their notes on their notebooks to remind them, so they gave me the answer which I wrote on the board to be seen for the whole class and then I started with the explanation of the function of the verb like.

Once they understood the use of the verb like I asked them to create five sentences, they had to write what they like. One of the purposes was to practice the grammar rule when they write the same first part of the sentence and changing just the

end that could be a noun or a verb. The second purpose was to make the students autonomous because they have to look up nouns and verbs according to their reality.

On the second session we worked on how to improve their sentences to be correctly written, due to the exercise they did the last session they wrote using the rule, but, the form of the verbs and some nouns were incorrectly, so I explained that after like they should use a gerund action, besides I showed them the difference between countable and uncountable nouns, subsequently, I explained when to use *the* when they talk about something very specific, as well as, the plural to talk in about things in general (see appendix 4).

On the third session I asked the students to write three examples of things they do not like using an action or a thing according to their reality. After that, I wrote the questions to ask about likes and dislikes, the phonetical transcription of the questions as well. When they finished I explained the students that we would play "The little worm" and the rules to do it, so we went to the school yard and the dynamic started

The first time was an example, and they understood quickly, then I asked to gather in pairs and they had to ask each other the questions about what they like or do not like writing the answers on their books as an evidence of the activity which would help me to grade the students, and during the interaction I walked around hearing each pair and checking they were doing the activity well.

3.3.3. **Reflection.** An important thing to start with a new topic is the prior knowledge of the students. Some reasons are: they are introduced and make students to be prepared for what they could see and learn during the next sessions. Another one is that the teacher realizes what the students know about it to start from there and make it easier to be understood. Also, to create a more meaningful learning, since the students associate and make connections between what they knew in the beginning with the new knowledge. And according to Jim Gee (2012) "students build on what they already know and have come to understand through formal and informal experiences"

I thought that the students would understand and work quickly because we worked with simple present tense, nouns, and verbs as words alone when the topic was the usage

of a bilingual dictionary, however, some time passed from the first intervention to the second one, and they did not continued working with that they forgot it which made to delay what I had planned.

Consequently, I realized that it would have been better to spend one class with likes using verbs (actions) to show them the gerund form and students practiced more how to convert a verb from its base form to gerund. Then use another session to work with uncountable and countable nouns, making emphasis on the first ones. And finally, on a third session work with general things (using plural without *the*), and specific objects (using *the*).

During the three sessions students would work and practice on the like statements, mastering them and memorizing the rule unconsciously, varying just the final part, however, as teacher trainees this is difficult because we have to show we are advancing on the achievements giving different types of evidences, and if we have more topics given for the English teacher that we have to teach, the time to work on each one reduces.

Another thing that I realized is that I should work on a more specific topic; for instance: to work with verbs I could work with sports, to work with nouns I could use the topic of food with the purpose of maintain a less range of vocabulary that students could have, which could allow me to teach a short number of words to all students and they choose what the most suitable were according to them.

Another aspect that I discovered was the variant of the "The little worm" in which the number of members of a group does not matter while they do interact with each other. In the beginning the idea was to make some previous groups until they were a pair and then they changed their ideas, however the third time I shout a number of feet (which was more than two people in each group) they immediately started questioning and answering each other so I continued like that until the end of the activity.

Finally, I observed that most of the group worked actively doing what was asked to do, asking and answering, even if they did not have a good pronunciation they tried and if they were not sure they asked me to remind them. So, games are a good way to make

students participate, have fun, and learn at the same time, although they must be encouraged to speak from the very beginning.

3.4. Strategy 4: Matching

This strategy was developed during the third intervention on the seventh semester, and the English teacher game the topic of "The future". It is stablished in the Syllabus as "Produce constructive forecasts about the others". Its social environment of learning is ludic and literary, and the achievement worked on was "write statements which express future tense to form forecasts".

3.4.1. Description of the strategy. The first step was to make a brainstorming in order to obtain all the knowledge and words that students knew about the topic to obtain a diagnostic, and then start working on the main task; with this, all the students contribute with one thing (word or short phrase) which in the end will be a bunch of ideas. Besides, the students prepare themselves about the topic they will work on and have a glance of what it involves from the perspective of each student.

The second activity was to write the key words of the topic, and their phonetical transcription. They would be written in a list form, however they would be disordered to add a bit of difficulty, plus the students had to be observers to notice that the words did not coincide with the phonetical transcription, and finally they notice some patterns between words and pronunciation.

The third step was to dictate or provide the students with the definition of the key words. Then make the students try to match the key word, its phonetical transcription and the meaning. After that, the students would change their notebooks with the classmate next to them and start evaluating that activity.

Finally, the teacher would ask for participation from the students to answer the activity one by one in order to make them the main actors of the class, and hear and discuss when a student had another point of view, but making his/her own classmates give him/her arguments to convince him/her of the correct match.

3.4.2. Didactic sequence development. To start with, I wrote the topic in which we would work on that was "Future" in the middle of the board and asked the students to think and write as many words as they could think of when they see future in a lapse of five minutes. Then I asked the students to come to the front of the board and write one of those things they wrote. So that, the students wrote and individual brainstorm and another one with all the group. I developed this activity because "Brainstorming can encourage to think more freely and creatively (…). It allows learners to remember what they know, and to teach each other. It is a dynamic and stimulating way to lead learners into a topic" (British Council, n/d).

The first part of the activity was to activate the students and start thinking in English and what they could associate with that word, then the second part has the aim of making students realize some other things they could not think in a first moment, and help those students which have a lower level so they wrote just one or two words within the five minutes and obtain a longer number of ideas.

The third moment was to discuss why they chose that word or phrase since they had to write just one idea. The objective of this part was to make students think and share more than just a few words and give their ideas clearer, but mainly was to make students comprehend what they had since some of them looked up words in dictionaries when others took verbs form their verbs sheet, thus, they were pushed to think in something that had a more meaningful reason to share that idea with the group.

Next session, I wrote six words on the board which were: future, environment, society, science, technology, and forecast as a list, and then on the other side I wrote their phonetical transcription but not aligned so they were disordered. In the beginning the students copied as it was on the board until one student asked if they were word and phonetical symbols together, so I said "no" and most of them copied again.

Afterwards, I asked for six volunteers who wanted to match the words and phonetical symbols, they did it and subsequently we corrected the matches among the group. Then, we practiced the pronunciation, I asked the students to pronounce the words before I did it, and they did it well, after that, I said the word and the students repeated to

practice and make them realize if they pronounced correctly or they had to change the sounds.

Later, I dictated the definition of the words randomly in Spanish numbered, so when they finished they already had the words so they matched them, some of the students wrote the word next to the definition, others wrote the number, and others used lines to make the connections. Finally, they exchanged their notebooks and again I asked for participation so the students gave the answers and when it was wrong, I used to ask for other options and arguments to respond that (see appendix 5).

3.4.3. Reflection. The time to develop this strategy was a problem, since I developed it in the last intervention of the seventh semester which lasted one week and I had to work with other grammar as well. Besides, I had planned to do the match with other variants in which I spelled the words and the students had to match that word with the symbols on the board and reversely as well, I mean, give them the phonetical symbols and they had try to write the word.

This strategy was thought to teach patterns as well, but to do that, it is needed more time and examples to show when in different words, some sounds are repeated like in the case of the sound / tʃ / when appear *tur* together in the middle of a sentence (fu*tur*e, na*tur*e, cul*tur*e, vul*tur*e) or the / ʃ.n / sound when there is a *tion* ending (information, communication, population, institution).

I also realized that this strategy could be more meaningful with pictures as a visual resource, so that, students would have the word, its phonetical transcription, definition and image to be easier to comprehend and learn those words. On the other hand, I could design a worksheet in which those four things were collocated and then the students would have to match them. Finally, an example of the use of those words would have been more representative.

3.5. Strategy 5: Sharing Feelings.

This strategy was developed on the last intervention on the eight semester. The first graders had already been working with phonetical symbols, pronunciation and activities of oral interaction so this time they had to use their speaking skill more often, in order to, increase the difficulty and the mastering of the language every time, and to do that the topic of "Feelings" was very suitable, because they have the opportunity to practice this every day questioning how their classmates feel.

3.5.1. Description of the strategy. The first step was to elaborate a cover on the notebook to show that a new topic would be worked on. The main purpose of the activity was to make students express their previous knowledge and share it with their classmates to have a longer repertoire of the topic, plus to know different points of view. Finally, it was dedicated to the creativity to the students allowing them to express themselves as they wanted to having a topic in particular but being free to personalize their cover.

The second step was to teach the key words and to do that the students had to elaborate a "Secret brochure" in which they would have four sections: the word that would be spelled by the teacher slowly to make students improve their listening skill and mastery of the alphabet in English since it was one of the first topics worked on with the teacher in charge of the subject.

Then, the second section would be the phonetical transcription of the word in which in first instance the students had to try to pronounce by themselves the word to practice and know how students had improved in the use of the IPA, subsequently, the teacher would pronounce the word and students repeat to correct if necessary and practice pronunciation of the vocabulary.

After that, the third section would be pictures or drawings to represent the words and make them easier to comprehend and memorize, in order to recognize them in the future and understand the message received. And, the fourth section would be the translation in Spanish for those students with lower level and who is more difficult to understand a new word in another language.

The third step was to work on oral production mainly through an activity in which all students has to ask the others how they feel. First, the teacher had to write the question and the way to answer to that question with their phonetical transcription, then it was time to practice those statements, and in the end the teacher started asking the first student how he/she feels, then he/she answers and it is his/her turn to ask the next classmate.

The fourth step was to work on listening and listening comprehension. To do the first one was a pre-listening activity in which the teacher had to show a question to know how some things made them feel, in this case some songs would be played and the students had to express their feelings about them, while the listening comprehension task was through an English conversation and a worksheet in which there were true-false questions.

The fifth step was to work on grammar and express when they feel in a certain way (happy, angry, sad, etc.). So the teacher had to teach the first part of the statement: "I feel *happy/sad/angry* when, and the students had to remember the grammar structure to create sentences in simple present tense to complete those statements, so they had to write some according to their reality.

The sixth step was to work on oral interaction, after all students developed and learned on the last sessions was time to perform in a conversation, having their sentences they wrote before as their tool; however, because of their level they had to have those examples with them all the time to remember and express their statements, so the teacher had to write the question on the board and practice the pronunciation of the root of the sentences first.

Then, the dynamic to do this activity was the following: the students had to stand up and face another row, in other words, the first row had to see the second one and the second one had to see the first one, while the third and fourth rows had to see each other. Subsequently, the pairs had to exchange their statements and to do that the teacher had to give from 2 to 3 minutes, when the time finished, one of the rows had to move; for example: the student in front had to pass to the end while the other ones had to move one space leaded to the place of the first student.

3.5.2. Didactic sequence development. The first session was dedicated to create a cover which would introduce the topic to work on the next sessions, the main purpose was to start a type of project in which it was noticeable the activities, vocabulary, and structures of that subject; however, in this part the students had to write the title, write words and draw images related to it, so they would show their previous knowledge and they had the opportunity to design that cover freely to develop their creativity.

After that, I wrote the phonetical transcription of the key words that I would teach for the topic; then, I spelled those words, however some students had some troubles to understand even when I did it slowly because they did not remember the English alphabet, so that, I re-took this topic using phonetical symbols to practice and remember it, so the students had to copy it on their notebooks (see appendix 6).

Even, in that moment of the class I spent it to reinforce the knowledge about the name of the words writing on the board some letters randomly and ask to the students, besides I wrote those words that sounds similar together to make students realize the difference and they could differentiate them when someone is spelling a word. For instance: *s* and *z* since one is voiced and the other one voiceless and the *c* as well, owing to, sometimes they are confused with those three letters, the same case with the *b* and *v* letters (see appendix 6).

Next session, I spelled the key words again, so the students had them and their phonetical transcription, subsequently I provide students with two white sheets to make a "Secret brochure" (see appendix 7), in front of it they had to write the title "Feelings". On the top the students wrote the six words, on the second column the phonetical transcription, on the third one they drew an emoji related to the feeling written, and finally for those students, who had troubles and wanted to, wrote their translation on the bottom.

The following sessions I wrote the question "how do you feel?" and the answer "I feel...", and their phonetical transcription below, so I explained that we use that question to ask about feelings and they could use the ones they wrote on their Secret brochure, however, they were free to use other ones. During the main activity, for instance: a student asked me how to say surprised, so I wrote it on the board and all together practiced the pronunciation.

In the main activity I started asking the first student of the first row so he/she had to answer me, but after that, he/she had to ask the same question to his/her behind. In this time they had to choose their feeling and if they could not do the activity, they passed in front of the class observing their other classmates doing the exercise in order to do it when everyone did it. The purpose of this activity was to develop oral production mainly, owing to the students had to repeat the same question and the same answer but changing just the feeling.

The next class I wrote the question "*How does it make me feel?*" and I gave opportunity to the students for trying to guess how to answer that question and they did it; after that, I played some songs, then they wrote the question and how that song made them feel. After that, I provide the students with a worksheet about a listening activity (see appendix 8): they answered a pre-listening activity in which they matched words with their definitions, then I played twice the audio and they answered; however they had troubles, so the third time I stopped the track and they told me the answer.

In the final session I started with a warmer: it "is an activity at the start lf the class to warm up the learners. They tend to be short, dynamic activities" (British Council, n/d). So, I reminded students how to say and write sentences in present simple tense to express feelings (*she feels, he feels, they feel*), then I presented different pictures that showed people doing different expressions, then I asked "*How does he/she feel?*" and the students answered "*he/she feels…*", in the beginning they only said the feeling but I asked them to practice the full answer (see appendix 9).

Later, we changed to grammar and structures, I thought the first part of a sentence which was "*I feel happy/sad/angry when…*" to express different actions or thing that make us feel that way, subsequently I asked to remember how to write sentences in simple present again and they did it, I wrote some examples that the students created among the whole group, and I asked to write five more sentences according to their reality, however some students just wrote three or two.

Finally, the last activity was to interact, for that reason I wrote the question "*When do you feel happy/sad/angry*" and we practiced the pronunciation. To start this activity the students had to be standing facing their classmates of another row, they were in pairs so

they had to ask each other, and three minutes after I asked them to change their pair, so the first student of one row had to go to the last place and the other ones had to move just one step to the next classmate. Some students had some troubles while pronouncing but they tried all the time (see appendix 10).

3.5.3. Reflection. I think making covers to the new topics is a great activity to start since, previous knowledge, creativity and a relaxed environment converge, because in this moment, the students can do a brainstorm by themselves in the beginning, then a brainstorm of the group to exchange point of view and students can remember or obtain new ideas and when they are designing their cover with words and drawings they are relaxed using their creativity for themselves.

I realized that spelling is one of the most difficult activities for students in general, since I applied this kind of activities in the three grades and they were confused, some of them frustrated owing to they forgot the alphabet, so I think that it must be practiced constantly when a student asks for a word, besides, a good idea to develop this is to start with an introductory activity in which the teacher writes letters randomly and students says the name of them in order to make them to memorize the alphabet but not ordered but understand and know the letters alone.

Another activity that I consider is good to teach vocabulary is to elaborate "Secret brochures", since it is a handcraft that could be de-stressing for students, besides the creativity takes places here as well. Drawings or printed pictures could be used depending on the time and the way students work. But, I realized that instead of using a space for the translation of the word, students and the teacher could elaborate examples of their use.

About the oral production activity I could notice that it was good to make all students practice the structure and improve while listening to others. A bad point to this activity was that when the group has a huge number of students it could turn boring to the students who already participated, or those who participate in the end, nevertheless, this exercise is very helpful for the teacher to observe who have more troubles to understand and pronounce and the students when they do the activity, practice, and repeat.

Furthermore, I think a week point of this strategy was to not work more time with listening activities with native speakers talking and having a conversation, nonetheless, I also consider that to make this activities more meaningful and considering the level of the students, those activities should be done through videos in which students can see body language to help them to understand better before working with audios with no visual material. And in my case, it was complicated to do that since there is just one projector in the computer room and sometimes is occupied by other teachers.

Finally, I consider that I should work with grammar and the oral interaction activity in two different sessions to deepen those exercises, giving opportunity to the students to understand better and master the structure, owing to, those activities were more complicated and I could develop in just one session. I first wanted the students to write sentences with four different feelings, and they did it using just one, however, it was enriching since the students tried to express themselves in English.

Conclusions

Teaching the IPA to the students had a very satisfactory impact in them, owing to, during the last sessions when I used to write words as vocabulary, they were the ones who asked for the phonetical transcription to know the pronunciation of those words, besides this gave students the enough confidence to participate actively in oral production and interaction activities in the most of students, however, some of them were yet shy, they tried to do them though.

I could not observe how motivating was for students to know the IPA and the different sounds, nonetheless, I found that they obtained enough courage and confidence to at least try to speak and participate during the classes. In the first classes they were very shy while doing any English activity which implied to participate while their other classmates were observing them, but, with practice and making everyone participates while creating a participative environment.

Furthermore, I found that those activities of speaking were appropriated for the students even when they were fearful of embarrassment and making mistakes, even though when in the beginning it seemed it would not work, the practice and participation of everyone made that eventually they wanted to participate and do the activities even when they had to speak in English.

Moreover in the beginning I found quite difficult to take into account all the characteristics to design my lesson plans, in other words, adequate the sessions considering the context of the community, the students' characteristics, achievements stablished in *Aprendizajes Clave* and the topics given by the English teacher was a challenge, however, it was becoming easier every time (with practice), besides, talking with teachers during CTE, sharing experiences with classmates, and asking for ideas was very helpful to improve.

Additionally, another obstacle I found was to work jointly with the four macro-skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) for two main factors, one of them was that the topic and the level of the students make it difficult to find exercises and material suitable for them to learn specially to develop listening and reading. And the second one was the

time: while seeking for material or creating new one, and during the intervention since I usually had to teach 4 topics by intervention (one topic a week), however, it is possible to work with the four skills, spending one session by skill and designing the material according to the students' characteristics.

On the other hand, about the impact of mastering the IPA to make the students learn autonomously I discovered that had no impact, and it could be because of the context, because, the first graders had no dictionaries with phonetical transcription, so they always asked me to write it or tell them the pronunciation of the words. As group they advanced well together during the classes, but I could not notice that any student had investigated a topic before or the pronunciation of words. Although, they had a slightly improvement seeking words on bilingual dictionaries when they wanted to know a word in English.

In the end I could not asses the improvement of the students in the four skills through a test which could show evidences in paper, nevertheless, through observation and continuous assessments I noticed that students raised their level, having a better pronunciation of the words. but more important, they used daily phrases with me every day like "good morning", "hi", "bye", "may I go to the bathroom", etcetera, and it was even outside the classes, plus they had sang twice in scholar events: Day of the Death and Christmas.

Now well, I realize that this research will help me by the time I will be a teacher in service, since I observed that students had a good improvement in pronunciation and that encouraged students to interact each other and with me in English, even taking into account they had no English classes before so they were beginners and the curriculum stablishes a higher level content, and they at least tried to talk (I use the word try because some students did not pronounced well and others were shy to do it but in the end they did it).

Now well, I found other challenges, weaknesses and questions which appeared in my performance as a teacher, one of them is the question if I should speak all the time in English to make them get used to the target language, but it could lead to spend more

time to explain an activity, and lose the students' interest because they do not understand what is telling them.

One weakness was the time, since I could not finished all the activities I had planned, plus, sometimes students worked slowly, or other activities were made during the English class so I had to adequate my lesson plan. But here appears another question, is it better to work faster and have evidences of the students working, and to not be in one topic for a long period of time, or make students have a meaningful learning doing a working deeper in a topic but as consequence I would not be able to teach all the curricular content.

Finally, a difficult challenge I have is to find better ways to assess the speaking activities, in addition how to do it in a group with a large number of students, in order to evaluate them but more important, to know how to help them in that skill in particular, since in my interventions I just registered that the students did the activities and I helped them when they were wrong but it was too difficult for me to observe and assess them all.

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APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix 1.   English diagnostic test

ESCUELA NORMAL DE IXTAPAN DE LA SAL

EXAMEN DIAGNÓSTICO DE INGLÉS

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

GROUP: _____ DATE: _____ LEVEL: _____

1. INSTRUCTIONS: Put the words into the correct order to make correct sentences.

1. I'm / . / British / French. / I'm / not

2. sisters / Margaret / . / are / and / my / Melanie

3. Paris / . / capital / the / of / France./ is

4. are / we / you / happy / to / . / very / see

5. is / is / brother / John / . / my / and / he / 24

2. INSTRUCTIONS: Choose the correct form of the verb 'to be' for each space.

1. I _____ married.
2. My favourite sports _____ tennis and windsurfing.
3. My best friend _____ a student.
4. _____ you from Britain?
5. _____ Sean Connery from Scotland? Yes, _____

3. INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the questions with 'is' or 'are'. Give true answers for you.

a) Your a good singer?

b) Your teacher/ married?

c) Tennis/ your favourite sport?

d) Your shoes / new?

e) Your best friend / English?

f) You / very intelligent?

Example:

a) Are you a good singer?   Yes, I
am   or   No, I'm not.

a)
_____

b)
_____

c)
_____

d)
_____

e)
_____

f)
_____

4. INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the sentences with the verb in parenthesis.

1. They _____ hockey at school. *(to play)*
2. She _____ e-mails. *(not to write)*
3. _____ you _____ English? *(to speak)*
4. My parents _____ fish. *(not to like)*
5. _____ Anne _____ any hobbies? *(to have)*
6. Andy's brother _____ in an office. *(to work)*
7. Leroy _____ very fast. *(can not to read)*
8. _____ Jim and Joe _____ the flowers every week? *(to water)*
9. Yueno's mother _____ a motorbike. *(not to ride)*
10. _____ Elisabeth _____ coke? *(to drink)*

5. INSTRUCTIONS: Write the numbers.

1. 34567 _____
2. 670074 _____
3. 345768 _____
4. 657 _____
5. 9870 _____
6. 123 _____
7. 8765 _____
8. 56781 _____
9. 9087 _____
10. 3256 _____

6. INSTRUCTIONS: Write the missing days of the week, months of the year and seasons of the year.

Days of the week	Months of the year	Seasons of the year
Sunday	5.	Spring
1.	February	9.
Tuesday	6.	Autumn
2.	7.	10.
3.	May	
4.	June	
Saturday	8.	
	August	
	September	
	October	
	November	
	December	

GOOD LUCK!!!

Appendix 2.   International Phonetic Alphabet
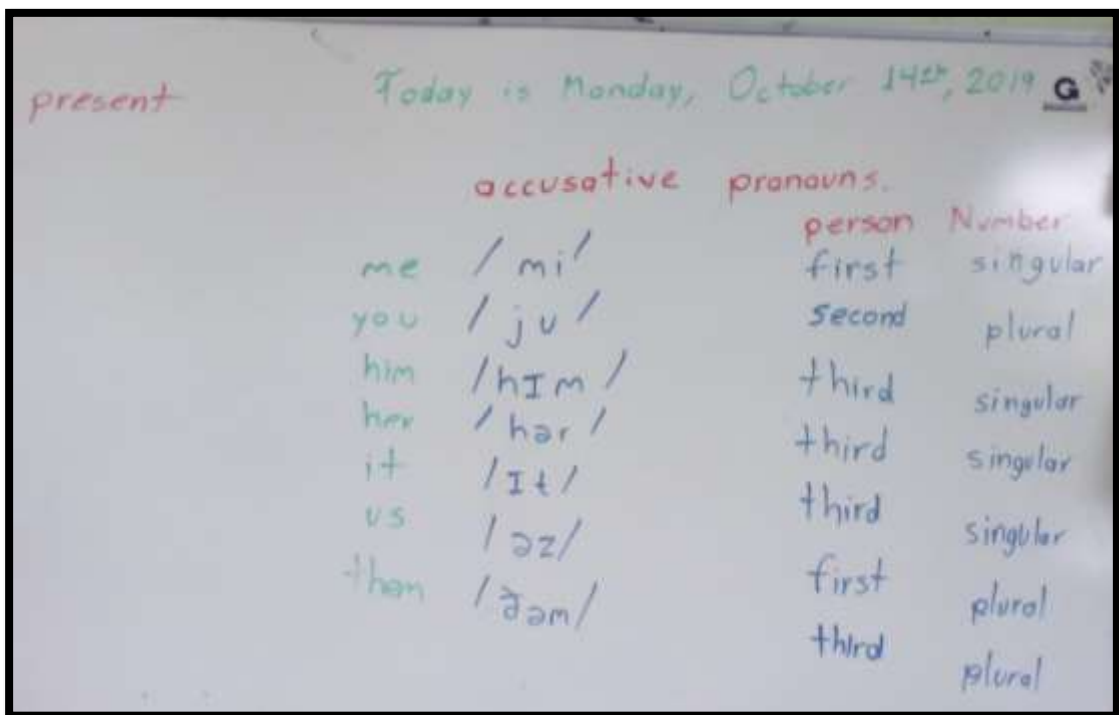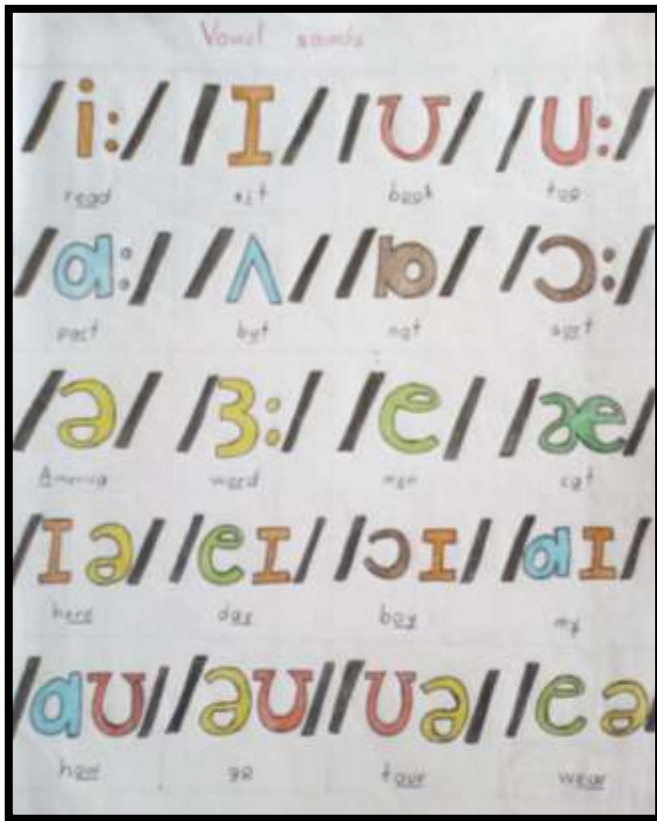
This is Halloween

Boys and girls of every age
wouldn't you like to see something strange?
come with us and you will see
this our town of Halloween.

This is Halloween
This is Halloween

Pumpkins scream in the dead of night
this is Halloween,
everybody make a scene
trick or treat
till the neighbors gonna die of fright
It's our town, everybody scream
in this town of Halloween

I am the one hiding under your bed
teeth ground sharp
and eyes glowing red

I am the one hiding under your stairs
fingers like snakes
and spiders in my hair.

This is Halloween,
This is Halloween,
Halloween, Halloween,
Halloween, Halloween.

In this town we call home
everyone hail to the pumpkin song

In this town, don't we love it now?
everybody's waiting for the next surprise

Round that corner man,
hiding in the trash can
something's waiting now to pounce and how you'll
SCREAM

This is Halloween
red and black
slimy green
aren't you scared?

Well that's just fine
say it once, say it twice
take a chance and roll the dice
ride with the moon in the dead of night

Everybody scream,
everybody scream.
In our town of Halloween.

I am the clown with the tear-away face
here in a flash and gone without a trace.

I am the "who" when you call "who's there?"
I am the wind blowing through your hair.

I am the shadow on the moon at night
filling your dreams to the brim with fright.

This is Halloween
This is Halloween
Halloween, Halloween
Halloween, Halloween
Halloween, Halloween

Tender lumplings everywhere
life's no fun without a good scare.

That's our job,
but we're not mean
In our town of Halloween.

In this town,
don't we love it now
everybody's waiting for the next surprise.

Skeleton Jack might catch you in the back and
scream like a banshee make you jump
out of your skin
This is Halloween, everybody screm

Won't ya please
make way for a very special guy
our man Jack is king of the pumpkin patch
everyone hail to the pumpkin king.

This is Halloween
This is Halloween
Halloween, Halloween
Halloween, Halloween.

In this town we call home
everyone hail to the pumpkin song.

La, la, la...

JINGLE BELL ROCK

Jingle bell, jingle bell, jingle bell rock
Jingle bells swing and jingle bells ring
Snowing and blowing up bushels of fun
Now the jingle hop has begun

Jingle bell, jingle bell, jingle bell rock
Jingle bells chime in jingle bell time
Dancing and prancing in Jingle Bell Square
In the frosty air

What a bright time, it's the right time
To rock the night away
Jingle bell time is a swell time
To go gliding in a one-horse sleigh
Giddy-up jingle horse, pick up your feet
Jingle around the clock
Mix and a-mingle in the jingling beat
That's the jingle bell rock.

Jingle bell, jingle bell, jingle bell rock
Jingle bells chime in jingle bell time
Dancing and prancing in Jingle Bell Square
In the frosty air

What a bright time, it's the right time
To rock the night away
Jingle bell time is a swell time
To go gliding in a one-horse sleigh
Giddy-up jingle horse, pick up your feet
Jingle around the clock
Mix and a-mingle in the jingling beat
That's the jingle bell,
That's the jingle bell,
That's the jingle bell rock.

Appendix 4.   Likes

Which are my friends' preferences?

Like   Dislike
👍   👎

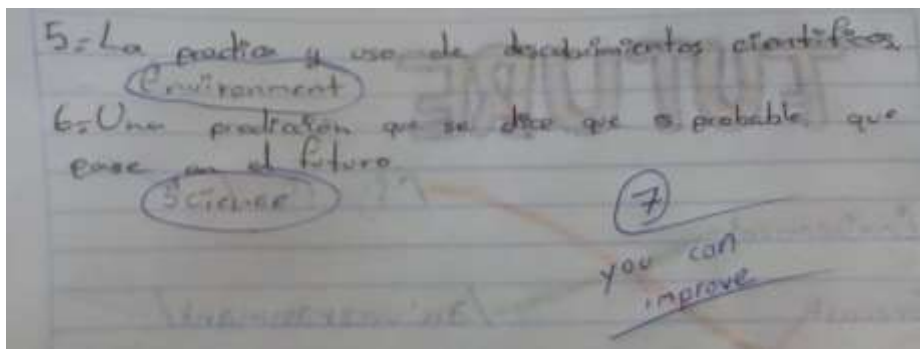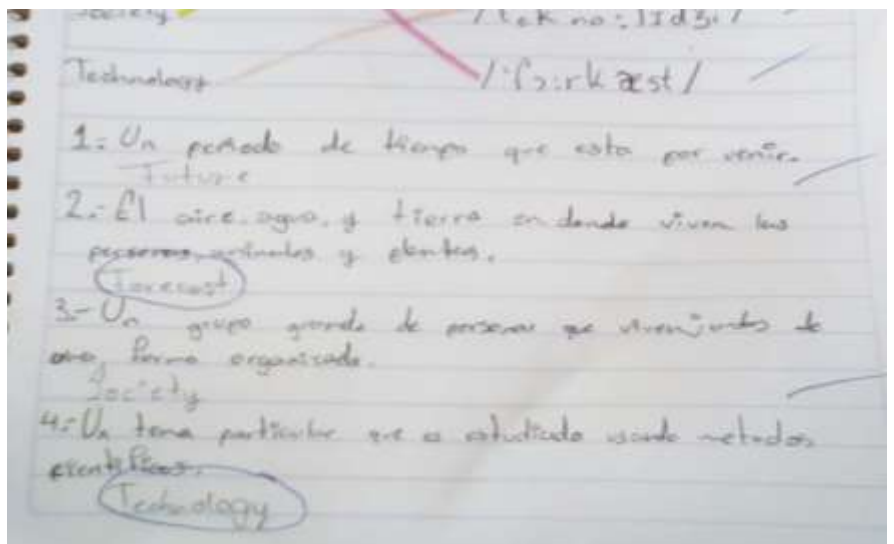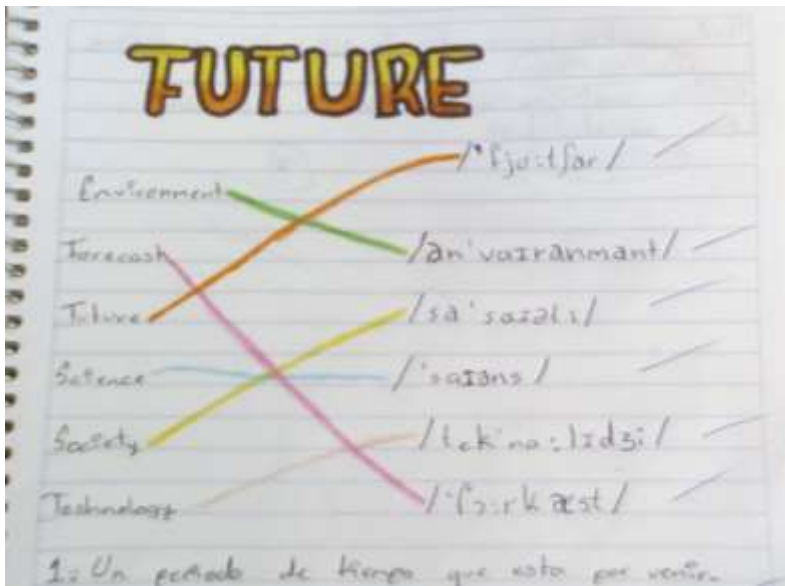Subject + like + verb in gerund + complement
        /'laɪk/

Subject + like + noun + complement-
        /'laɪk/

1.- I like eating food
2.- I like watching movies
3.- I like reading
4.- I like sleeping
5.- I like listening to music

1.- I like make up
2.- I like hot gelly beans
3.- I like (the) cats
4.- I like (the) tacos.
5.- I like ice cream

Excellent

Appendix 5.   Matching exercise

Appendix 6.   The alphabet

Appendix 7.   Secret brochure

Appendix 8.   Listening activity "Band auditions"

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BRITISH COUNCIL

Learn English Teens

Listening skills practice: Band auditions – exercises

Listen to the conversation and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Do this exercise before you listen. Match the vocabulary with the definition and write a – c next to the number 1 – 3.

1. .... band
2. .... instrument
3. .... audition

a. An object like a piano, guitar or drum that you use to play music.
b. A time when a band asks new people to sing or play to decide if they can be in the band.
c. A group of people who play music.

1. Check your understanding: true or false

Do this exercise while you listen. Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

1.	The boy wants to be in the band.	True False
2.	He doesn't like singing.	True False
3.	He can't remember the song on the guitar.	True False
4.	The boy is good at the drums.	True False
5.	The girl says she will call him the next day.	True False

www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishteens

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BRITISH COUNCIL

Learn English Teens

Listening skills practice: Band auditions – transcript

Transcript for **Band auditions**

Boy: Ah, band auditions. Great! I'd love to be in a band! ... Hi. Is this the band audition?

Girl: Hello. Yes. So, you'd like to be in our band?

Boy: Yes, I love music.

Girl: Well, we need a singer, a guitarist and a drummer.

Boy: Oh, I love singing!

Girl: OK, so you can sing. Let's sing the beginning of this song.

Boy: (singing) Tonight I'm going to have myself a real good time. I feel alive ...

Girl: Right, OK, mmm, maybe not. Can you play an instrument?

Boy: Er, well, I can play the guitar a little.

Girl: OK, let's hear you. What can you play? ... That's it?

Boy: Er, yeah. I can't remember any more.

Girl: Erm, can you play the drums?

Boy: Yeah, sure.

Girl: OK! OK! STOP! That's enough. Erm, what about the maracas? Can you play the maracas?

Boy: Yes, I can. (singing) Young and strong and ... er ...

Girl: Great, great! Hmm ... thanks for coming. I'll call you next week.

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Appendix 9.   Face expressions

Appendix 10.   Oral interaction

Ixtapan de la Sal, México., 30 de junio 2020.

DR. ARTURO GIL MENDOZA
DIRECTOR DE LA ESCUELA NORMAL DE IXTAPAN DE LA SAL
PRESENTE.

Quien suscribe, docente en formación **Eric Rubén Millán Bustos**, de la Licenciatura en Educación Secundaria con especialidad en Lengua Extranjera (Inglés), Plan de estudios 1999, Generación 2016-2020; por medio de la presente asume la responsabilidad absoluta del trabajo motivo de titulación **The use of phonetical symbols as a resource to improve the oral interaction**, que presenta en la opción de **Ensayo.**

Por lo que ha de responder por el proceso de elaboración del documento y su reproducción; dado que en su momento y con base en el Reglamento y Normatividad vigente, recibió por quien corresponde las orientaciones, guía e indicaciones en cada aspecto del mismo.

Sin otro particular, agradece el interés y apoyo recibido durante el proceso de titulación.

A T E N T A M E N T E

ERIC RUBEN MILLAN BUSTOS

"2020. Año de Laura Méndez de Cuenca; emblema de la Mujer Mexiquense".

ESCUELA NORMAL DE IXTAPAN DE LA SAL

OFICIO NÚM: 1192
ASUNTO: **Se autoriza Trabajo de Titulación para sustentar Examen Profesional.**

Ixtapan de la Sal, Méx., 1 de julio de 2020.

C. ERIC RUBEN MILLAN BUSTOS
P R E S E N T E

La Dirección de la Escuela Normal de Ixtapan de la Sal, a través de la Comisión de titulación y el área de Exámenes Profesionales, comunica a usted que ha sido autorizado el Trabajo de Titulación bajo la opción de **Ensayo**, que presenta con el título: **The use of phonetical symbols as a resource to improve the oral interaction.** Por lo que puede proceder a realizar los trámites correspondientes para la sustentación de su Examen Profesional.

Se comunica lo anterior para su conocimiento y fines consiguientes.

"FORMANDO DOCENTES CON HUMANISMO Y VOCACIÓN"

A T E N T A M E N T E

DR. ARTURO GIL MENDOZA
DIRECTOR ESCOLAR

c.c.p. Archivo