

Didactics of phonetics for improving pronunciation in EFL for Spanish speakers

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Resumen

La presente monografía tiene un carácter de investigación cualitativa de una investigación descriptiva. Con la revisión de la literatura, se investigó y recopiló una variedad de estrategias de pronunciación que mejoran las habilidades orales de los estudiantes de EFL y los beneficios que ofrecen. Sobre los resultados, se compartió un cuadro denominado: La Selección de Estrategias de Pronunciación que contiene las estrategias y técnicas más relevantes para potenciar las habilidades orales. Se explicó que los docentes deben seleccionar las estrategias específicas considerando diferentes aspectos que incluyen: contexto, recursos, enseñanza, experiencia, tamaño del grupo y el estilo de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Se encontró que los docentes que aplican diferentes estrategias y métodos, promueven una buena pronunciación y ayudan a los estudiantes a sentirse seguros al hablar en el idioma meta. Asimismo, los autores han mostrado la importancia de utilizar la tecnología en el aula para potenciar las habilidades de pronunciación, ya que estas herramientas permiten a los estudiantes familiarizarse con el idioma de los hablantes nativos, escuchar y repetir algunas actividades tantas veces como quieran y promover el conocimiento de la lengua. Sonidos del inglés. Las estrategias de pronunciación recogidas en el cuadro presentan algunas características comunes: aumenta la confianza de los aprendices, estimula la entonación, la pronunciación, el acento y el ritmo. Además, esas estrategias son atractivas y agradables para los alumnos, ayudándolos a relajarse y hablar en el idioma de destino tanto como quieran. Sin embargo, el éxito y los resultados al aplicar estas estrategias pueden verse afectados por los diferentes factores mencionados anteriormente.

Palabras claves: Pronunciación, fonética, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera, hispanohablantes, estrategias de pronunciación.

Abstract

The current monograph combines a qualitative research element with a descriptive research element. Several pronunciation techniques that improve EFL learners' oral skills were researched, gathered, and compiled through the literature review, along with the advantages they provide. The most effective strategies and techniques to improve oral abilities are listed in a chart called Pronunciation Strategy Selection that was shared with the results. It was clarified that teachers must choose specific strategies while taking into account a variety of factors, such as the context, available resources, the teacher's expertise, the size of the class, and the students' preferred learning styles. The review exercise found that teachers who use a variety of strategies encourage precise pronouncing and instill confidence in their students when speaking the target language. Also, authors have shown the importance of using technology in the classroom to boost pronunciation skills since those tools allow students to get familiar with native speakers' language, to listen and to repeat some activities as much as they want and to promote an awareness of the sounds of English.

The pronunciation strategies collected into the chart present some common characteristics: increases learners' confidence, stimulates intonation, pronunciation, stress and rhythm. Additionally, those strategies are engaging and enjoyable for learners, helping them to relax and speak in the target language as much as they want. However, the success and results when applying these strategies might be affected by the different factors mentioned before.

Key Words: Pronunciation, phonetics, EFL Students, Spanish speakers, pronunciation strategies.

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Introduction

One of the main objectives of EFL is to train students to have clear pronunciation and reduce the effect of their native language structures on their oral production. In this aspect, the didactics of phonetics have a key role in identifying the needs and context of each student to design methodological strategies to achieve comprehensibility and intelligibility.

This monograph seeks to establish which phonetic didactics have a major impact on the improvement of pronunciation in EFL for Spanish speakers. Focus on four components first, identifying the recent didactical developments in the field of phonetics in EFL for Spanish speakers. Second, analyzing the contribution of phonetics didactics to better pronunciation practices. Third, organizing a scale of impact for didactics in phonetics based on the approach and pertinence. And finally, interpret current trends related to useful phonetic strategies.

Significance of the Study

The theoretical and methodological foundation of didactic strategies that allow an effective orientation of the teaching processes is necessary for the training of English teachers as a foreign language. Each didactic strategy or design is focused on achieving proficiency in the four linguistic competencies: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

As described by experts in the field of linguistics, the fluent and correct pronunciation of English becomes one of the major obstacles to learning. To enable the development of planning didactic strategies that contribute to improve pronunciation in the context of EFL, future teachers must know the field of study of phonetics of English as a foreign language. Starting from the identification and analysis of the most recent research in this field of study, which will allow us to organize and interpret in a more effective way the didactic planning designs oriented to improve pronunciation. The present monograph is inscribed in the context of EFL for Spanish speakers, in this sense it seeks to deepen successful strategies of the didactics of English phonetics to organize and interpret possible scales of impact and relevance for Spanish speakers.

Statement of the Problem

English as a foreign language (EFL) aims to train students in the basic skills that will enable them to communicate in both oral and written language. To achieve this purpose, English teachers start by asking themselves how each student learns to develop each competency. In other words, behind each strategy implemented there is a didactic question. One of those questions that are always present in the development of teaching English as a foreign language is ¿how do students learn to pronounce English correctly?

The correct pronunciation of English is one of the main limitations in achieving effective communication. One of the difficulties for many learners is to understand that English is a language that is not pronounced as it is written, which implies that the student must strengthen cognitive processes that allow the correct pronunciation of English. However, in most cases, the teaching and learning processes of English as a foreign language focus mainly on grammar. In this sense, training for the effective pronunciation of English requires the appropriation of other didactic fields.

Behind the question of how to learn English correctly, there are specific fields of knowledge such as English phonetics and phonology, but beyond being a purely theoretical question, it is a question of how to teach in this sense the didactics of English phonetics. This field of knowledge offers teachers of English as a foreign language the theoretical and methodological elements for the design of didactic strategies to develop effective learning.

The present monograph gives answer to this question from the orientation of the didactics of phonetics of English as a foreign language. First identifying the main contributions of this field of study for better pronunciation of English and second organizing a scale of impacts based on the relevance of its application and finally interpreting the main trends of this didactic perspective.

Objectives

General Objective

To establish which phonetic didactics, have a major impact on the improvement of pronunciation in EFL for Spanish speakers.

Specific Objectives

To identify the didactics in the field of phonetics in EFL for Spanish speakers.

To analyze the contribution of phonetics didactics to better pronunciation practices.

To organize a scale of impact for didactics in phonetics based on the approach and pertinence.

To interpret current trends related to useful phonetic strategies.

Literature Review

Communication is undeniably the backbone of modern society, enabling us to engage in economic, cultural, and political activities with ease. According to Byram (2018), with the world becoming increasingly interconnected through globalization, it's no surprise that English has emerged as the language of international communication. Beyond just facilitating communication, proficiency in English provides individuals with access to a vast body of valuable information. Consequently, many people from different nations are learning English as a second language to enhance their prospects and enable them to seize global opportunities. While learning the language, Spanish speakers have trouble pronouncing words correctly.

Because of this, some researchers have been looking into what factors affect how well EFL Spanish speakers develop and learn oral skills. Students want to communicate clearly, but many find it challenging to master oral skills because EFL instructors may not always employ the best methods, techniques or strategies to help students strengthen and improve the pronunciation, depending on a variety of factors that will be discussed.

This chapter was written based on a review of 45 academic articles and journals by subject- matter experts, about some phonetics didactics that have an impact on the improvement of pronunciation in EFL for Spanish speakers. This literature review is organized in some important parts:

Issues that make the pronunciation difficult for Spanish speakers.

Identifying the didactics in the field of phonetics in EFL for Spanish speakers.

Analyzing the contribution of phonetics didactics to better pronunciation practices.

Issues that Make the Pronunciation Difficult for Spanish Speakers

In language, pronunciation is key to express ideas and thoughts clearly and to have a good conversation. It is known that intonation and the way people communicate, would have a positive or negative impact on the information people want to transmit. For those reasons, it is essential for students who are learning a foreign language to learn about their phonetics of the specific language.

Spanish speakers of EFL, usually are concerned about their pronunciation because they find it difficult to understand how to pronounce and also, they realize that many native English speakers do not understand what they are saying and expressing, limiting the communication and making it tedious. For the purpose of developing successful instructional strategies, it is critical to comprehend the wide range of sciences and disciplines that contribute to the current phonetic issues face by Spanish speakers. However, the role of educators is to synthesize the most relevant research on this topic to design effective learning approaches to teach the pronunciation of English for native Spanish speakers.

Learning a new language involves different skills, and to learn the pronunciation of the words, it is important to understand the different characteristics of the sounds of the target language.

English sounds are complex: *“The first particularity is that the English sound system possesses unique sounds that are not common to those belonging to Romance, Sino-Tibetan, and Arabic linguistic families. The second singularity is that English does not have one-to-one grapheme-phoneme correspondence”* (Uribe et al., 2019, p. 217).

The phonetics of English should therefore be taught to students in order to aid in pronunciation improvement, better communication abilities, and competence. Some authors think that EFL teachers should consider those problems in order to help students to achieve proficiency in English pronunciation: For some authors, the main reason why EFL Spanish

speakers face such problems while learning, is because EFL teachers might not pay attention to the right oral pronunciation of students, they used to think that oral production, especially phonetics, is learned implicitly by students:

Pronunciation is a rather problematic aspect for most Spanish students. It is (regrettably) a fact, but the reasons and solutions may be varied in nature and in effectiveness. Traditionally, most Spanish-speaking countries have tended (and still tend) to neglect the teaching of pronunciation in EFL settings, focusing instead on grammar, reading and writing skills (Marzá, 2014, p. 263).

Some researchers have found that the most difficult skill to develop by students is oral production and many of them fear talking in English because they feel their pronunciation is not intelligible: *“Limited pronunciation skills can affect learners’ self-confidence by decreasing it, also restricting social interactions, and thus negatively affecting estimations of a speaker’s credibility and abilities, which obviously negatively influences the EFL instruction process”* (Pourhosein, 2012 as cited in Marzá, 2014, p. 263).

Ricart de Domingo (2018) argues that one of the main problems that Spanish speakers face pronunciation due to all the differences between the two languages. In some cases, English teachers do not teach or explain it and do not focus their teaching process on helping students improve their pronunciation, limiting their oral production. The different Spanish and English vowel charts present another challenge for Spanish speakers learning to pronounce English:

One of the characteristics that differentiate the vowel chart from English to Spanish is the number of vowels it contains. The number of vowels in English rises to 12 whereas in the Cervantes’ language the number is reduced to 5; concerning the diphthongs, the British language has eight and surpasses the five Spanish diphthongs. This variety in number complicates the Spanish

when it comes to recognizing sounds that are not represented in the Spanish vowel chart (Ricart de Domingo 2018, p. 14).

Since it enables students to develop meaningful learning and accelerate their process, motivation is crucial to the learning process. There are different factors that affect the learning process or the motivation of the students when learning the target language:

“Stereotypes, familiarity with particular English, competence, the idea of standardization, and person-specific attitudes such as physical appearance, race, or vocal characteristics are some of the factors that influence attitudes toward a variety of things.” (Galloway and Rose, as cited in Alonso-Herrero & Lasagabaster Herrarte, 2019, p.77).

Identifying Oral Production Learning Aspects

After identifying the primary barriers to pronunciation of English for Spanish speakers, it is essential to recognize the fundamental components of oral production learning in order to assist teachers in coming up with the best methods or approaches to get past the aforementioned obstacles.

Vowels and Vowel Glides:

Spanish speakers often struggle with English vowels and diphthongs, as well as with the distinction between long and short vowels. (Gomez & Sanchez, 2016) compared and contrasted the vowel systems of RP (Received pronunciation) and the PSP (Peninsular Spanish). Received Pronunciation (RP) is the standard accent of English in the United Kingdom, while Peninsular Spanish (PSP) is the official language of Spain. The two languages have different vowels and different ways of pronouncing them.

The vowel system of RP contains twenty sounds: twelve are monophthongs (seven short /ɪ e ʌ æ ə ɒ ʊ/, and five long /i: ɜ: ɑ: ɔ: u:/), and there are eight diphthongs: /aɪ eɪ ɔɪ əʊ

au iə eə uə/). On the contrary, PSP (Peninsular Spanish), consist of nineteen sounds, five of them are pure vowels /aeiou/ and fourteen are diphthongs (/e̞i̞ a̞i̞ o̞i̞ a̞u̞ e̞u̞ ou̞ ja̞ je̞ jo̞ ju̞ wa̞ we̞ wo̞ wi̞/). Additionally, RP has five diphthongs + [ə] combinations ([eɪ ə aɪ ə uɪ ə əʊ ə əʊ ə]), these, does not have corresponding in the Spanish triphthongs as the following: ([we̞i̞ wa̞i̞ je̞i̞ jai̞]).

The contrastive approach, according to the authors, might be very advantageous to the teaching and learning of EFL for Spanish speakers because it allows for: Firstly, let teachers identify the interlanguage phonological system of students, including the native language (L1) and the recognition of the second language (L2) sound systems and other universal phonetic principles.

Consonants:

Obstruent and sonorants are the two primary subgroups of consonants. Obstruents include three different consonant kinds that are produced with various airflow impediments. Fricatives cause friction, whereas plosive consonants obstruct airflow through the mouth or nose, and affricates combine both articulations. Sonorants, otherwise, are defined as frictionless noises that result in almost unhindered oral or nasal airflow. Consonants can also be categorized using one of three VPM labels: Vocal cord vibration during articulation is indicated by voicing (voiced-voiceless).

Place of Articulation:

It is referring where the obstruction or stricture happen with regard to eleven possible locations in VT: (vocal tract),(bilabial, labio-dental, dental, alveolar, post-alveolar, palato-alveolar, palatal, velar, uvular, pharyngeal, and glottal).

Manner of Articulation:

It is the type of obstruction that exists in the VT: broadly, plosives, affricates and nasals involve complete closures, laterals are generated with a partial oral closure, and

fricatives need a stricture of close approximation. Additionally, there are some important differences between Spanish and English consonants: Spanish consonants are articulated with a minor muscular tension than in English.

Furthermore, in relation with the frequency counts, English consonants take place more frequently than in Spanish. Still, in both languages, the places of articulation are generally alveolar followed by velar.

Aspects of Connected Speech:

Connected speech is defined as “*utterance consisting of more than one word*” (Gimson 1984, as cited in Gomez & Sánchez 2016, p. 233).

One of the distinctive features of connected speech is that when uttered in chain speech sounds affect each other and their features change in such a way that allophonic variations, or different realizations of phonemes, occur as a result of the operation of a number of (allophonic) rules which, in general, can be described as simplification rules (Gómez & Sánchez 2016, p. 233).

Segment: Stress, Rhythm and Intonation.

The authors Gomez & Sanchez defined “*segmental*” (p.262) phonetics and phonology, as the following: it is the articulatory, acoustic and auditory features of segments and the phonological processes implicated in their production, especially to the sounds of RP (Received pronunciation), and paying less attention to the sounds of PSp (Peninsular Spanish).

Segment has some features that include: stress, rhythm and intonation. Stress means the production and reception, or the emphasis or force that is given to a syllable in a word in isolation (word stress or lexical stress). Stressed syllables are perceived as more forceful than others. Rhythm is defined as: “*periodic repetition of an event, that is, at regular intervals of time*” (Gómez & Sánchez 2016, p.262).

Additionally, the authors mention that there are four basic levels of speech as the following: Low, Mid, High and Extra High. By integrating effective strategies and incorporating the main learning aspects, teachers can aid students improve their oral production skills in English. Mastering oral production learning aspects, students can improve their ability to understand and speak English with clear and accurate pronunciation, leading to better communication and greater success in both personal and professional settings.

Identifying the Didactics in the Field of Phonetics in EFL for Spanish Speakers

Teachers can gain valuable insights into students; oral production learning needs by identifying specific aspects that can enhance their learning process. Many authors have made significant contributions to researching strategies aimed at improving students oral production skills.

Pronunciation teaching strategies are defined as:

Pronunciation strategies are intentional behaviors and thoughts used by learners so as to enable them to comprehend, learn, or remember L2 pronunciation. A pronunciation learning strategy is an attempt to enhance phonetic and phonological competence in the target language. Every pronunciation learner utilizes pronunciation learning strategies either deliberately or deliberately when focusing on segmental and/or suprasegmental phonemes in the target language and trying to do tasks given by the teacher in the pronunciation classroom (Hişmanoğlu, 2012, p.248).

Hişmanolu (2012) gathered some learning strategies employed by advanced EFL learners to improve their pronunciation, and he also analyzed important differences between the learners who were successful and the learners who did not achieve an improvement in their English pronunciation. The instrument and data collection used to collect the

information were the pronunciation strategies questionnaire. The findings had showed the following results:

Of six main types of strategies, the majority of the participants indicated that they employed metacognitive strategies to improve their English pronunciation with a mean score of 2.85 (SD=0.10). Of four sub-categories of metacognitive strategies, self-evaluating was the most frequently used pronunciation learning strategy by students of ELT department with a mean score of 3.45 (SD=0.20), which indicated that the participants recorded their voice to listen to their pronunciation as the related tactic to deploy self-evaluating as a pronunciation learning strategy (Hişmanoğlu 2012, p. 250).

Osborne 2003, as cited in Hişmanoğlu 2012, described seven main strategies that contribute in the learner's pronunciation learning: *“which are focusing on sounds below the syllable level, focusing on individual syllables, focusing on prosodie structures, monitoring global articulatory gestures, focusing on paralinguistics, focusing on individual words, and focusing on memory or imitation”* (p.248).

The authors: Criollo et al. (2022) proposed some methodologies to work in conjunction with some mobile applications to aid students to promote their communication skills. This hybrid proposal incorporates three methodologies as the following:

communicative language teaching, the direct method, and the audio-lingual method.

According to Criollo et al., 2022, these methodologies have these characteristics:

The communicative language teaching method: This method focused on the improvement of oral skills. Additionally, it allows teachers to implement diverse activities and emphasize on grammatical, lexical and phonological aspects that are fundamental in the communicative process.

The direct method: This methodology suggests the development of the lessons and to give instructions in the target language. Grammar and pronunciation are taught inductively and vocabulary is explained using visualization of objects and images.

The Audio-lingual method (ALM): This method is developed on behaviorism, which recognized that repetition can form habits (Criollo, et al., 2022). The method proposes activities focused on listening and oral repetition.

Other authors propose a strategy called: oral corrective feedback as a way to help students to identify the errors in the pronunciation that students have while they are talking in the target language.

Penny, 1996, as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016, mentioned some techniques for teaching English pronunciation as the following: recording their speech and compare with the native model, imitation of teachers, tongue twisters, self-correction y hearing their own speech, dialogues and rhythms.

Furthermore, Cook 2001, as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016, suggested some techniques to aid students to improve their oral production: imitation, phonetic transcript, discrimination of sounds and communication. Moreover, the author Schmitt 2002, as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016, mentioned some learning English pronunciation that included: mechanical production, ear training for sound contrast and sounds for meaning contrast.

According to Thornbury 2008, as cited by Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016, intelligibility is fundamental in English pronunciation. He proposed some techniques to improve the English pronunciation that included: cards of rhyming words, telling stories and identifying mistakes and correcting them, and presenting speaking exercises.

Scarcella and Oxford 1994, as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016, listed the following techniques for teaching pronunciation as the following: self-monitoring, self-study,

communicative activities, individual correction, written versions of oral presentations, computer assisted language learning, communication strategies and affective strategies.

Fan and Chen 1995, as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016, mentioned some strategies to teach pronunciation that include: intonation, rhythm, stress, vowels and consonants.

The different didactic phonetics has brought positive results in the learning of pronunciation. The following strategies showed an important help for students in the development of their speaking skills: use of minimal pairs, phonemic charts, phonemic awareness activities, and articulatory drills. Additionally, using audio and visual materials, such as videos and recordings, can also be beneficial. Finally, repetition and practice are key to improving pronunciation, so creating activities that allow students to practice their pronunciation in different contexts can help them to develop their skills.

Another important strategy to improve the pronunciation in English are games. According to Tejedor et al. (2020) mobile learning games are useful tools to improve the English pronunciation. They proposed a game named: Clash of Pronunciations (COP). The game emphasizes pronunciation training at the segmental level. Based on minimal pairs, that consist of two words, generally monosyllabic, which are the same, but excepting one sound, although, their meaning is entirely different. The authors described the activities as the following:

Our proposed tool implements the traditional program that consists of (1) exposure activities with minimal pairs, synthesizing both words in the pair at varying paces, and allowing the student to directly experience the perceptive differences between two particular phonemes; followed by (2) discrimination (perception) activities in which the player must decide to which word of the pair a given synthesized audio corresponds, and finally, production activities,

in which users must pronounce the words of the minimal pair correctly so that the ASR system will accept them'' (Tejedor et al. 2020, p.7)

The authors explained that the main purpose of those steps is to help students to recognize the relevant acoustic features that they did not perceive before, and aid them to assimilate those acoustic characteristics and then, they will be able to articulate the target sounds properly.

According to Torres & Valencia (2021), video series represent a positive impact when teaching English pronunciation. They describe the following advantages of videos: it is allowed to include real time contrast with the sounds related with the images, and let learners to make a comparison and contrast of the sounds of L2. Additionally, they also said that videos are accessible tools that could be used at any time, repeatedly.

Additionally, the authors remarked on the importance of imitation in pronunciation processes, which they said is an essential step for the acquisition of the intonation and the rhythm of the target language. According to them, the use of different communication and information technologies such as: films, videos, short films would allow the training and approach of the sounds of English.

Alegre & Villar 2015, as cited in Torres & Valencia 2021, stated that videos are useful since they allow students to identify the following aspects of the language: pronunciation, body language and accent.

Cardenas & Ramirez 2021, as cited in Torres y Valencia 2021, suggested the use of technology as a useful tool for the acquisition and learning a language and mentioned some advantages: it aids students to strengthen their oral skills and contextual management. Furthermore, it is allowed to increase vocabulary of different topics, and the mastery of pronunciation.

Peterson 2000, as cited in Eckstein 2007, the strategy self-evaluation through listening to their own pronunciation, is a beneficial metacognitive activity for learners who want to boost their pronunciation skills. Manik (2015), suggested Songs as Media in Teaching English Pronunciation. He said that songs are useful tools to improve the English pronunciation.

Encalada & Sarmiento (2019), made a study about the perceptions of EFL students about the use of Self-Recording Videos (SRV), to enhance speaking skills and they found the following results: students said they had enhanced their pronunciation and vocabulary and practiced what they learned in the class. Also, they felt motivated when creating the videos since they can practice what they learn into the classroom.

Dandee & Pornwiriyaakit (2022) recommended English phonetic alphabet drills to improve pronunciation skills. This involves vowels and consonants English phonetic alphabet drills. The authors argued that it is essential that students know the accurate phonetics principles to produce English consonants and vowels correctly. They also mentioned the importance of the learner's knowledge about speech organs, and places of articulation for students to pronounce the words accurately.

Cheng 1998, as cited in Wei 2006, suggested the following strategies to teach pronunciation: using games, songs and tongue twisters, that would increase students motivation in a pronunciation lesson and the author also said motivation is essential when practicing pronunciation. Also, he suggested assessing students 'progress, since that would help to maintain learner's motivation. In a study made by Szyszka (2015) with some students who usually practice and apply different pronunciation learning strategies and have a good English pronunciation, the author found the following results: Students usually used to listen to movies, television tapes and music, they often practiced talking aloud and They also

usually imitated native speakers. Students agreed listening to L2 as a strategy presented a positive impact on improvement of their oral skills.

The students also preferred active strategies that include: repetition, imitation, singing songs. Moreover, some students also mentioned the following pronunciation practice: talking to oneself and native speakers and reading text out loud.

After recognizing some of the most popular and effective phonetic didactics suggested by some important authors, it is important to conclude that all those phonetics didactics have shown to be successful in different scenarios and contexts in the improvement of learners' pronunciation. Additionally, the characteristics of the students is a factor that has a specific impact in the improvement of the pronunciation.

Other authors have suggested the following strategies that aid students to boost their learning and improvement in pronunciation: self-evaluation through listening to their own voice, it is beneficial to boost the pronunciation skills.

Additionally, Boonkit (2010) argues the importance of confidence and competence to strengthen English speaking skills. Patil 2008, as cited in Boonkit 2010, suggested increasing the learners, confidence, helping them to dismiss the fear of making mistakes, and aid them to feel comfortable talking in the target language.

O'Malley & Valdez 1996, as cited in Jaramillo 2021, said: "*part of being a proficient speaker is listening to oral language and understanding what is said*" (p. 58). In this sense, the listening activities are essential to students to improve their oral skills.

Author Jaramillo (2021) said that some studies have shown that MS instruction (Metacognitive Strategies), has an important incidence in learners' vocabulary repertoire.

Metacognitive Strategies are executive processes used in planning for learning, monitoring one's own comprehension, production, and evaluating how well one has achieved a learning objective. These processes help learners to control their thinking and learning. They involve observable judgments, analyses and/ or regulations operated by learners in their own performance (Chamot 2005, as cited in Jaramillo 2021, p.123).

Additionally, he explained that those processes occur before, during and after students' performance along with the following skills:

Planning: In order to improve performance, the author highlights the significance of choosing the appropriate tactics and resources. It is advised to apply prior knowledge, create reasonable listening objectives, and make a mental or written map of the major concepts. **Monitoring:** This relates to a learner's capacity to evaluate their performance of a task. The author emphasizes the value of students' understanding awareness, which gives them the ability to assess and manage their own learning. **Evaluation:** Using their expectations and learning goals as a guide, learners can evaluate their progress thanks to self-regulatory mechanisms. Successful language learners naturally use these skills, whereas unsuccessful language learners do not gain from them (Jaramillo, 2021, 38p. 124).

Practicing with effective strategies, techniques and methods, students might overcome pronunciation challenges and communicate more effectively in English.

Larosa et al. (2020), suggested repetition drill. They describe this technique as the following: Students repeat what the teachers say or repeat a recording. The authors argued that this technique is useful to help students get familiar with specific structure, to practice new vocabulary and pronunciation and fluency. Additionally, it allows students to participate actively, and increases motivation.

Mendrofa & Wijaya (2022) also recommended drilling repetition since it is focused on hearing and speaking senses. Hidayat (2016), as cited in Mendrofa & Wijaya (2022), said that this technique brings a lot of benefits in practice: students can pronounce the words correctly in the target language. Moreover, it aids passive students to become active and motivated during the class activities.

Another important strategy to boost pronunciation skills are dialogues. García (2018) indicates that dialogues are efficient and useful to practice pronunciation, intonation, stress, and prosodic features. The author also mentioned that dialogues allow students to boost listening skills and promote speaking practice, which is essential to improve pronunciation skills.

Neupane (2019) advises that role play is a useful and engaging tool to help students improve their oral skills. "The students have opportunities for stimulating their speaking skills which they can perform easily in the front of the class. In other words, role play helps the students to improve their speaking skill" (Neupane 2019, p.13).

Sarhandi et al. (2020) showed the importance of technology: Pronunciation Training Applications in the teaching and learning process of pronunciation. According to them, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), is an effective tool to students' comprehension of prosodic features of the English language: stress, intonation and rhythm and to identify the distinct phonemes. The authors also said that Computer Assisted Teaching Pronunciation (CAPT), increases confidence and motivation. They mentioned the app English Pronunciation that supports the training on the articulation of connected speech, targeting mainly on stress, pitch, and rhythm.

Mardiyah & Santika (2023) proposed imitation to improve oral skills. They described imitation: copying the phrases, intonation, stress, pauses, gestures, of native speakers.

Imitation lets students be aware of sound patterns in English. Moreover, imitation through English Videos enables learners to hear intonation, stress, and rhythm, in conjunction with watching facial expressions and body language.

Some researchers like Palpanadan et al. (2021), have claimed that that imitating the native speakers' pronunciation, it allows students to communicate naturally since it enables learners to copy intonation, gestures and facial emotions of native speakers.

Derakhshan et al. (2016), also suggested imitation to improve speaking abilities since this activity let students to practice intonation of the target language, paying attention to a specific vowel sounds and copy them.

Reading aloud to improve oral skills is suggested by authors like Ariyani et al. (2013), It promotes the learning of the vowel sounds and increases motivation. Additionally, it allows the following exercises: phrasing, expression, and pronunciation of the target language.

Ninsuwan (2015) also suggested reading aloud boosts learners' self- confidence to pronounce the unfamiliar words of the target language and it is also beneficial to memorize words. Gil et al. (2017) also suggested reading aloud to help students to the acquisition of prosodic and supra-segmental dimensions (rhythm and intonation) of the target language.

Is clear that in EFL classes for Spanish-speaking learners is required a variety of strategies, techniques and activities that cater to individual needs. According to Mu'in et al. (2017) tongue twisters are useful to improve English oral skills. They listed the following advantages of these exercises: they are engaging and enjoyable for students, so they find it motivating.

Sitoresmi (2016) also recommended tongue twisters to improve pronunciation skill. He listed the following advantages of this technique: increases motivation, since it allows one to implement a variety of activities such as: watching videos, peer teaching and whispering

games, as well as let them to build self-confidence thanks to all the activities that allows them to be actively involved.

Tuan (2010) stated that minimal pairs promote and boost the pronunciation in the target language: *“When learners compare and contrast discrete sounds in the environment presented in minimal pairs, the importance of these sounds in denoting word meaning is transferred to their mind naturally”* (p.541). The author Rajadurai 2001, as cited in Tuan 2010, said that pronunciation classes enable students to be aware of their own pronunciation and help them to contrast their pronunciation with the target language.

The author Bennett 2007, as cited in Abdolmanafi et al. 2013, Stated that listening is essential to aid students to develop a good pronunciation. He suggested including different voices and styles to boost the learner’s pronunciation skill.

Cakir (2012) made a pilot study to evaluate how listening activities contribute to boost and improve correct pronunciation of the target language. He found that extensive listening activities can enhance lexical competence, increases self-confidence and to talk in the target language as much as they want.

Parker (2000) suggested different activities that included songs and videos to improve oral skills. She mentioned the following advantages:

These activities address students’ needs and desires to improve their listening proficiency and pronunciation in four ways. First, they expose students to hearing prosodic elements in connected speech in an entertaining and useful manner. Second, they help students learn how to listen to connected speech. Third, by listening then comparing what they hear with a script, they improve both their aural and visual modalities and, fourth, learn to listen for meaningful word groups and phrases instead of continuing the word-for-word listening many of them have learned. (Parker 2000,p. 6).

LouafiAmina 2017 as cited in Hamad et al. 2019, evaluated the effectiveness of using podcasts in EFL class in the improvement of oral skills and found that using podcast in EFL classrooms brings many benefits on students' oral proficiency, and boost motivation and participation. Additionally, it allows students to get familiar with the spoken English language, letting them learn vocabulary and phrases in context and improve pronunciation.

Grisales & García (2017), suggested the creation of podcast to improve oral skills since it helps students to identify and correct their pronunciation when listening their own recordings. Furthermore, leaners feel comfortable when they have to perform in class because through the previous creation process, they feel prepared, avoid fears and concerns and also their confidence increases since they feel more prepared.

Indahsari (2020) also suggested podcast since it allows students to listening to native speakers and it is also a useful tool because students can access to these tools as much as they want.

Al -Jarf (2022) recommended YouTube videos to improve pronunciation and he listed the following advantages: present a variety of instructional materials as the following: letters, sounds and pictures simultaneously. Additionally, students found this tool motivating, fun and interesting. Fouz - González (2019) also recommends a podcast approach with the combination of input, output and peer evaluation to aid learners enhance their pronunciation of segmental features.

Another important strategy to improve oral skills are oral Corrective Feedback strategies. Aranguiz and Espinoza (2016) argued that errors are key for learner's learning process since this allows students to notice and make a contrast between their production and the target language.

Alsolami (2019) also highlight oral corrective feedback because enable active interaction between the learner and the teacher as well as promoting a meaningful learning: *‘‘This approach allows for immediate analysis of wrong and right forms of the phrases in question. It is an ideal approach which enables objective language teaching positively impacting on the learning outcomes of the students’’* (p.674).

Agudo & de Dios (2013) found in research about how learners emotionally respond to oral corrective feedback: students think that oral corrective feedback is useful to improve their pronunciation skills and to they feel satisfied with the oral feedback teachers give them.

Gilakjani (2011) said that teachers can help students to improve their pronunciation by focusing on the following elements of the pronunciation: syllables, sounds, stress and intonation. He explained that when students are aware about the importance of these elements and produce the words taking into account these elements, students can pronounce accurately.

Analyzing the Contribution of Phonetics Didactics to Better Pronunciation Practices

The implementation of particular phonetics didactics may or may not be successful depending on a number of variables, including the context in which they are used, the students' unique characteristics, the resources available for instructional support, and the overall goals of a particular language course.

For instance, certain phonetics tactics, for example, may be more effective in intense language programs where pronunciation improvement is a primary focus, while others may be more suited for ordinary classroom settings where language development spans a wide range of skills.

In summary, all the phonetics didactics have shown a positive impact in the improvement of pronunciation of EFL students. However, those phonetics didactics would

work better in different contexts, the students' characteristics, the resources available to implement some strategies and the objectives of a specific course.

In the following chapter, there is a comparative chart that contains some strategies that have shown a positive impact in the improvement of students' oral skills.

Methodology

For the monograph; *Didactics of Phonetics for Improving Pronunciation in EFL for Spanish Speakers*; a methodological framework is introduced in this phase. Due to its thorough analysis of the information gathered and inferred implications on the teaching of language oral skills, the monograph has a qualitative research character of a descriptive research. Bhandari (2023) describes: qualitative research involves the analyzing and collection of non-numerical data to comprehend and explain different opinions, concepts, or experiences from different authors.

Qualitative research is usually used to collect deeper insights into a problem or produce new thoughts for research. In this sense, it was made a description of the methods, strategies, and approaches suggested and documented by different authors that have shown the effectiveness of the improvement of pronunciation in EFL for Spanish speakers.

The methodology goal is to analyze based on the documentation from the literature review the effectiveness of various didactic teaching strategies for English language teaching, their applicability, engagement, practicality, authenticity individualization, integration, assessment, teacher expertise, resources, and research support from different authors included.

The methodology presents four phases that include: literature review, criteria analysis collection of significant strategies and the creation of a chart for choosing pronunciation strategies that incorporates important findings from documentation analysis and serves as a resource for best pedagogical practices when choosing a strategy, method, or technique that best meets a given learning need.

Phase 1: Literature Review

This chapter contains an extensive literature review on English teaching didactics strategies from different authors that had researched and suggested the most suitable strategies in the field of pronunciation to boost student´ oral skills. The sources to collect the strategies included: books, scholarly articles, videos, and other resources that allows to identify and describe various strategies proposed and implemented in the teaching process of EFL instruction for Spanish Speakers.

Phase 2: Criteria Analysis

Considering an important documental analysis from different techniques, methods, and strategies and how those have been shown to boost and promote pronunciation skills in EFL learners from the expertise of many authors, the idea of how critical is to ascertain the factors that influence selection and help teachers make the best decisions played a key role while reading over. Finding the best strategy requires careful consideration of many factors, from the context and available resources to the student's learning needs and motivation. A first table with the most pertinent methods covered in the first phase served as a means of information organization and made certain aspects of each of those methods clear.

Phase 3: Selection of the Most Relevant Strategies:

A number of important factors need to be considered when choosing the best pronunciation strategy, didactic approach, or teaching methodology for a particular class. For this monograph it was important to identify from the studied documents and references the adaptability of the strategies to different teaching contexts, resources, and learner´s characteristics. Also, the practicability and ease of implementation of the strategy technique or method within the constraints of typical EFL classrooms.

Considering the how the strategy, method or technique allows learners to engage with authentic materials, contexts, sources, and communication is as well a variable to integrate at the time of decision making and the possibility for the strategy to be integrated with other language skills and content areas in the curriculum. Finally, the level of teacher knowledge, skills, and training required to effectively implement the strategy.

Phase 4: Proposal of the Practical Chart

In this final phase, a chart which better join the analysis process of all strategies, techniques and methods for the improvement of pronunciation is presented with the most relevant strategies selected. This chart might allow teachers to compare, evaluate and choose the suitable strategy to implement according to their specific learning objectives and student's needs. Each strategy or technique is listed, and its ratings across the criteria items are indicated, so, teachers might select the strategies considering the different aspects.

The chart considers things like class size, the method of education, the level of English language proficiency of the students, the resources at hand, and the teacher's expertise. By considering these factors, teachers might decide how best to modify pronunciation teaching to meet the specific needs of the classroom. The chart turns into a crucial instrument for guaranteeing a tailored and effective learning experience, where the selected method fits in seamlessly with the dynamics of the classroom and allows the students to maximize the growth of their oral language skills.

Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the discussion, and outcomes of all the data gathered about pronunciation techniques that improve students oral and pronunciation abilities in EFL students for Spanish speakers are shared. The exploration examines information about strategies documented and applied by different authors who have shown effectiveness on the improvement of learners' pronunciation.

Through the literature review, it was identified the different issues faced by learners of EFL Spanish speakers in pronunciation, one of them was the English sound system, which has a particular sound. Spanish, on the other hand, is pronounced exactly as it is written, whereas English is not. EFL students frequently mistakenly believe they can pronounce the words in the same way as in their native tongue because of this singularity.

Another important issue is that EFL Spanish speakers fear talking in English because they realize most of the time, native speakers do not understand them clearly, limiting the communication and generating frustration when they are trying to talk in the target language, since their pronunciation is not intelligible, affecting learners' self-confidence. For this reason, some authors argue the importance of helping students to gain confidence and helping them to develop and boost their pronunciation and oral skills through the different strategies that have shown effectiveness and be successful in specific contexts.

The methodology explained that the goal of the current monograph was to compile information in a chart of the most effective techniques and strategies used in the field of pronunciation for EFL Spanish speakers. However, teachers should select the specific strategies taking into account different aspects as the following: context, resources, teaching expertise, size of the group, and student learning styles. Having in mind those considerations,

it is important to mention that all the strategies are effective and relevant when applying in the right context.

For easier comprehension and upcoming analysis, pertinent strategies, techniques, or methods were arranged in a table:

Table 1

Benefits of the English pronunciation strategies

Strategy	Description	Author(s)
Repetition and drilling	This technique allows learners to repeat structural patterns through oral practice and improve their pronunciation, motivating students to enhance their speaking skills.	Noni Larosa, Hijjatul Qamariah, & Rosdiana (2020)
Minimal pair practice	Minimal pairs enable students to compare and contrast the sounds of words that may sound similar but have different meanings.	Luu Trong Tuan (2010)
Dialogues and role-plays	These exercises allow students to practice and improve pronunciation, intonation, stress, and prosodic features, enhancing listening skills crucial for oral proficiency.	Noelia Malla García (2018)
Phonetics and IPA	It enables students to recognize vowel sounds, aiding in correct word production.	Sherwin P. Trazo & Ferdinand T. Abocejo (2019)
Accent reduction apps	Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is an effective tool for comprehending prosodic features such as stress, intonation, and	Pir Suhail Sarhandi, Rafique A. Memon, & Imran Farooque Khan (2020)

	rhythm, and for identifying distinct phonemes.	
Peer feedback and correction	Peer feedback and correction help students identify linguistic errors, including phonological, morphological, and syntactic errors.	María Fernanda Aranguiz & Angie Quintanilla Espinoza (2016)
Self-evaluating	Successful pronunciation learners often use this strategy to evaluate their achievements against their expectations and objectives.	Murat Hişmanoğlu (2012)
Active listening to native pronunciation	This strategy allows students to familiarize themselves with English sounds and accents.	Murat Hişmanoğlu (2012)
Imitation through English videos	Imitation through English Videos enables learners to recognize English sound patterns, intonation, stress, and rhythm, along with observing facial expressions and body language.	Abbas Gilakjani & Narjes Sabouri (2016)
Songs as media in teaching English pronunciation	Songs engage students and promote gestures and mimics, aiding comprehension and production stages of language learning.	Sondang Manik (2015)
Reading aloud	Reading aloud aids in learning vowel sounds, increases motivation, and allows for exercises in phrasing, expression, and pronunciation.	Dyna Ariyani, Rismaya Marbun, & Dwi Riyanti (2013)
Increasing learners' confidence	Building confidence motivates and strengthens speaking skills, enabling students to speak the target language comfortably and with less anxiety.	Kamonpan Boonkit (2010)
Tongue twisters	Tongue twisters are engaging exercises effective for learning	Fatchul Mu'in, Rosyi Amrina, & Rizky Amelia (2017)

minimal pairs and
differentiating between
certain phonemes,
enhancing pronunciation
accuracy.

Note. Relevant English pronunciation strategies described in the literature review. Elaborated by the author.

Based on this way of organizing, it was clear that teachers must select and apply the strategy technique or methodology considering the different characteristics and contexts. Furthermore, some authors also suggested the importance of increasing self-confidence in learners and motivation to develop and improve pronunciation.

With too many options in mind and considering alternatives to include in the EFL classroom, it might be easier to select the one that best answers real class needs. A chart listing various crucial factors to take into account when deciding on the best strategy, method, or technique to enhance oral language skills is provided as a resource result of the intensive documental revision.

The Pronunciation Strategy Selection Chart is divided into six columns: teacher expertise, class size, mode of instruction, English language proficiency, available resources, and pronunciation technique. Each criterion has a few attributes that provide a description of each strategy or technique. It is important to mention that teachers should select the methods considering the different factors presented in any specific context and the students' needs, for those reasons, teachers should evaluate and combined the strategies in accordance with the objective's learnings, learners' preferences, available resources, and the class size.

This chart may help teachers choose and make better decisions about the implementation of more suitable didactic strategies to enhance Spanish speakers'

pronunciation in EFL. This is a useful tool which came after reading over references, when used in conjunction with the classrooms; unique characteristics identification, the chart, and a careful examination of which options best fit the situation, the available resources, and the students' learning needs, may help determine the most effective didactic approach for a given class.

Table 2

The pronunciation strategy selection chart

Pronunciation technique /didactic /strategy	Class size	Mode of instruction	Students' English language proficiency	Available resources	Teacher expertise
Repetition and Drilling	Small to medium	Both	Beginner to intermediate	Minimal resources required	Moderate expertise required
Minimal Pair Practice	Small to medium	Both	Intermediate to advanced	Pronunciation charts, audio recordings	Moderate expertise required

Dialogues and Role-plays	Small to large	In-person	Intermediate to advanced	Real-life scenarios, role-play materials	Moderate to high expertise required
Phonetics and IPA	Small	In-person	Intermediate to advanced	IPA charts, phonetic exercises	High expertise required
Accent Reduction Apps	Small to large	Online	Beginner to advanced	Pronunciation apps, audio recordings	Minimal expertise required
Peer Feedback and Correction	Small to large	Both	Intermediate to advanced	Peer feedback forms, pronunciation assessment criteria	Moderate expertise required
Self-evaluating	Small to large	Both	Intermediate to advanced	Audio recording	Moderate expertise required
Active listening to native pronunciation	Small	Both	Intermediate to advanced	Pronunciation apps, videos, podcast	Moderate expertise required.

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Imitation through English Videos.	Small to large	In person	Beginner to intermediate	Videos, podcast, films.	Minimal expertise required
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Songs as Media in Teaching English Pronunciation.	Small to large	Both	Beginner to intermediate	Videos, songs	Minimal expertise required
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Reading aloud	Small	Both	Beginner to intermediate	Physical books, digital lectures.	Moderate expertise required
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Increasing the learners' confidence.	Small	Both	Beginner to advanced	Minimal resources required	Moderate expertise required
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Tongue twisters	Small	Both	Beginner to advanced	Books, digital materials	High expertise required
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Dialogues	Small to large	Both	Beginner to advanced	Minimal resources required	Moderate to high expertise required
written versions of oral presentations	Small	In person	Beginner to advanced	Minimal resources required	Moderate to high expertise required

Note. Techniques listed by various authors that have shown effectiveness in the improvement of oral skills of EFL students. Elaborated by the author.

The techniques gathered in the chart were deemed the most pertinent because they were listed by various authors, who then used them and demonstrated their efficacy. It is important to note that there are certainly many more strategies that could have been mentioned, but the relevance of the ones listed in the chart was taken into account, according to the authors, who cited the benefits and improvements in pronunciation associated with their application in EFL Spanish speakers.

Teachers who apply different strategies promote good pronunciation in the class. Good pronunciation is encouraged in the classroom by teachers who use a variety of methods. Also, metacognitive techniques like recording their voice, listening to their pronunciation, and self-evaluation were among the techniques mentioned by the authors and used by students with good pronunciation.

Other strategies collected on the chart as: self-correction and active listening to native pronunciation have shown an important improvement of learners' oral skills. Imitation has been an important strategy in pronunciation since it allows students in the rhythm and intonation of the English language.

Additionally, authors have underlined the value of incorporating to strategies communication and information technologies, in particular videos and short films, as crucial instruments for improving students' oral English skills. These multimedia tools make it easier to learn about and be exposed to the real English language sounds and grammatical structures. underlined the value of incorporating to strategies communication and information technologies, in particular videos and short films, as crucial instruments for improving students' oral English skills.

These multimedia tools make it easier to learn about and be exposed to the real English language sounds and grammatical structures. Moreover, using songs has proven to be a successful strategy because it not only makes students happy but also promotes active student participation. Songs introduce suprasegmental phonetics, which are essential components of oral communication and include intonation and rhythm.

The oral proficiency of students has improved when teachers encourage them to participate in activities like viewing movies, television shows, listening to music, and practicing oral repeat of native speakers. These techniques can be used by teachers to create dynamic and immersive.

Findings also showed the importance of increasing learners' confidence to the acquisition and improvement of pronunciation. Self-confidence is essential to boost and motivate students to participate actively.

Furthermore, imitation techniques have proved to be a successful tool since it lets students train the mouth and ears, which is fundamental in the improvement of the pronunciation of the target language and it also increases the attitude of students.

Reading aloud was also a significant strategy to increase the improvement of oral skills because it enables students to pronounce unfamiliar words and to practice intonation and rhyme of the language.

As it was mentioned before, all the strategies collected present different benefits and advantages in the improvement of pronunciation. Those strategies are different; however, they share some characteristics: let students participate actively, increase learners' confidence, and it is useful to promote pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and stress. Moreover, those strategies are engaging and enjoyable for learners, helping them to relax and feel comfortable when talking in the target language and finding motivation to participate as well as to get familiar with the spoken English language, and to practice phrases and vocabulary in context. All those similar features and benefits shared by those strategies, promotes a meaningful process and helps students to build confidence and achieve oral proficiency.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Each pronunciation strategy presents its own advantages and benefits in the improvement of oral skills. However, teachers should select the specific strategies taking into account different aspects such as the following: context, resources, teaching expertise, size of the group, and student learning styles. Considering those aspects, the strategies and methods would boost their impact when applying and using in the correct context.

Those strategies and methods are essential to boost oral skills. Through the literature review, it was identified a variety and the different characteristics of them and the benefits. The following strategies and methods were collected in the chart: Repetition and Drilling, Minimal Pair Practice, Dialogues and Role-plays, Phonetics and IPA, Accent Reduction Apps, Peer Feedback and Correction, Self-evaluating, Active listening to native pronunciation, Imitation through English Videos, Songs as Media in Teaching English Pronunciation, reading aloud, Increasing the learners ' confidence, Tongue twisters.

Those strategies presented a lot of advantages in the improvement of English pronunciation for EFL students and it had been applied by different authors, who showed their effectiveness. The strategies mentioned present the some of this advantages: allows students to practice and repeat structural patterns, let them to compare and contrast the sounds of some words, students develop their listening skills, which is essential to promote good pronunciation, allows students to practice and improve pronunciation, intonation, stress, and prosodic features, and most of them, help student to build confidence when taking in the target language and also boost motivation, which is invaluable in the learning process.

It was found that Teachers who apply different strategies promote good pronunciation in the class. Good pronunciation is encouraged in the classroom by teachers who use a variety of methods and strategies to promote the improvement of oral skills.

Teachers who apply and use a variety of materials that let students get familiar with the English sounds, promotes good pronunciation and motivation in the classroom. Additionally, students build confidence, feeling more comfortable when talking in the target language, and becoming more active during the lessons.

Technology has been recognized as valuable tools in the EFL process because they offer different activities, materials and resources that let students be exposed to the real English language pronunciation, and also to learn the language in context. Additionally, students could find these materials and repeat different videos, or podcasts as many times as they want to practice and identify the English structures and the English sounds.

In summary, all the strategies collected present different advantages in the improvement of pronunciation. However, the successful implementation of the strategies would be affected by different elements and factors that take place during the process. Teachers should select the strategies to improve Spanish speakers' pronunciation in EFL, taking into account the context, available resources and the learner's need to choose the most suitable strategies.

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