LITERARY SHOW: A SPACE TO SHARE STUDENTS' COMPOSITIONS

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Abstract

This project proposes composition and oral presentation of rhymes in a literary show as a strategy to help students incorporate pronunciation patterns in their speech, based on certain vowel sounds. This paper describes a small-scale research project conducted in a public school classroom located in Santa Rosa de Viterbo, Boyacá (Colombia). All the students in our research were sixth grade students[1]. In order to collect accurate information, the following methods were used: a survey, an observation format, a tape recording, and students' artifacts. The results proved that learners were able to create meaningful oral and written texts while practicing and improving their pronunciation.

Resumen

Este proyecto propone la composición y presentación de rimas en centros literarios, como una estrategia que ayuda a los estudiantes a incorporar en su habla algunos modelos de pronunciación, basados en algunas combinaciones de vocales. Este artículo describe un proyecto de investigación de pequeña escala llevado a s estudiantes partícipes en esta investigación fueron de sexto grado. Los instrumentos para la recolección de información fueron una encuesta, formato de observación, grabaciones y producción de los estudiantes. Los resultados prueban que los estudiantes fueron capaces de producir textos significativos en forma oral y escrita, mientras practican y mejoran su pronunciación.

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[1] This article describes a small-scale research project that supports the area of "FL Teaching and Learning" which is one the main fields of research in the Master Program of FL Teaching. This research was developed in a two-month period in 2010.

INTRODUCTION

Problem

This research proposal was developed at Institución Educativa Casilda Zafra, a public school in Santa Rosa de Viterbo, Boyacá, Colombia. The participants of this research were all sixth graders. Most of these students are from the countryside and from the outer districts of the town. Five sixth graders were chosen at random, whose ages ranged from ten to twelve years old. Due to families' circumstances like the families inabilities to speak English proficiently, the classroom was the only place where the five students were exposed to English.

With limited exposure to the foreign language, students were reluctant to engage in activities proposed in their English classes. When it was time for the students to participate, it was difficult for them to communicate their ideas to others in a clear and effective manner. Their misunderstanding due to a lack of effective communication could be determined by the students' low levels of English pronunciation.

I observed the students' progress in several classes to identify the students' main problems in their foreign language learning process. As a result of my observations, I decided to create an in-class survey. Throughout the survey, I found that most of the students expressed issues with their pronunciation of English words. The most observed issue was the lack of knowledge about how English words should be pronounced.

The results of the survey helped me corroborate what I uncovered during the early observation process. Most of the students pronounced their words the way they were written. In one of the classes, a student expressed, "pronunciar así no es la mejor solución, porque casi siempre cometemos errores y nos vamos mal acostumbrando". From the previous statement, it was obvious that the students were aware of their mistakes.

Thus, the students revealed the same conclusions I had regarding their learning disability in pronouncing foreign words correctly. Therefore, I focused on students' poor levels of English pronunciation as the main issue in my research analysis. Taking into account the students' difficulty with oral communication, it was necessary to apply a pedagogical approach.

I chose composition and oral presentation of rhymes in literary shows because of the results of the survey I conducted at the beginning of my research process, which focused around the question "¿qué clase de actividades te gustaría que se implementaran en clase de inglés?" Most of the students chose to do compositions and oral presentations of rhymes because they felt that of the possible options, this option gave them the best opportunity to freely express their ideas.

According to the students' difficulty with oral communication, I proposed the following objectives for my research:

General objective

To foster sixth graders to use English pronunciation patterns correctly, such as: ee

[i], oo [u], ai [ei], ay, [ei] through the composition and oral presentation of rhymes in literary shows as a way of overcoming some pronunciation difficulties.

Specific objectives

1. To conduct strategies for incorporating certain pronunciation patterns into the students' speech.
2. To create meaningful texts in which the students contextualize vocabulary related to the pronunciation patterns taught.
3. To foster environments where students share their compositions and confidently demonstrate their ability to correctly pronounce words in the foreign language.

Research question

I also proposed a main research question:

What happens to students' English pronunciation when they use pronunciation patterns, such as: ee [i], oo [u], ai [ei], ay, [ei] in their speech through the composition and oral presentation of rhymes in literary shows?

This study is relevant for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)because it aims to promote correct use of certain English pronunciation patterns. The composition and presentation of rhymes in literary shows would give the students extra experience using the foreign language, particularly in the realm of pronunciation. During the English learning process, it is necessary to create and maintain an environment where learners enjoy learning and gain knowledge through actively engaging with their classmates, rather than

one where knowledge solely comes from the instructor. Having so many available resources clearly benefits the students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers are considered guides, responsible for providing students with tools and strategies to support and facilitate their learning. Keeping in mind aforementioned considerations and taking into account my own experience as an educator, I think about the idea of transforming an EFL classroom into an active space where my students can enjoy the learning process.

I grounded this research experience on some basic concepts. The first one is pronunciation, which is presented as a fundamental micro-skill in English language communication. The second one was rhymes, which are defined as a concrete action of incorporating pronunciation patterns into speech. Composing rhymes was central part of the pedagogical strategy I implemented to incite the improvement in pronunciation. Finally, the third concept I used was literary shows that focused on the oral presentations of students' rhymes.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is understood as the language feature that identifies speakers as non-native. It needs to be taught in order to improve communicative interaction in different classroom activities (Goodwin: 2001). With this knowledge, I felt motivated to encourage students to apply certain pronunciation patterns to their speech as a way of overcoming some expressive difficulties.

Goodwin (2001) and Peck (2001) agree that as students practice pronunciation and develop their communicative skills, it is important that they gain confidence in their ability to speak and to be understood. Therefore, performing well in a communicative situation requires more than good pronunciation and good vocabulary. The speaker must also feel comfortable speaking. Thus, by helping students feel more confident while speaking the foreign language, we helped make them better speakers.

Similarly, Morley contends that one important goal of pronunciation instruction is "Functional Communicability". This refers to the learner's ability to function successfully within the specific communicative situations he or she faces. "We can see which features of pronunciation will be particularly important for them to master" (1994: 118). To accomplish this, it is necessary to design strategies that encourage learners to practice and improve pronunciation by encouraging them to pay attention to their own speech as well of the speech of their correspondent. Goodwin (2001: 118) asserts that "in this way, we help our learners make better use of the input they receive in classes".

To complement the above mentioned issue, Hewings (1998) argues that students usually have difficulties when pronouncing sounds that are different in their mother tongue, especially vowel combinations. Likewise, Clavijo (1998) adds that learners will usually have difficulty when learning sounds that do not exist in their L1. According to Goodwin, "vowel sounds are the syllable core; the sound within the syllable that resonates and can be lengthened or shortened" (2001:122). Thus, the recognition of vowels in English becomes a key that could make pronunciation easier, especially, for beginners. From this perspective, instruction of pronunciation features should be always focused on sounds and words in a context.

Bowen (1992) stresses the importance of teaching pronunciation in meaningful contexts. It is not enough to just distinguish the differences between the various phonemes in isolated words. It is necessary to embed the minimal phonemes contrasts into contextualized sentences or texts. With regards to this focus, Morley (1994) asserts that learners initially associate each vowel with a key word rather than a phonetic symbol. Students rhythmically repeat words or phrases until they can remember them. In this way, learners are internalizing different sounds and words.

Some ideas related to this issue are reported by Perlman (2008). He claims that it is crucial to identify the English sounds that differ from those in one's own native language, to identify those that are simply not in the first language inventory and to focus particular attention on the differences.

Rhymes

Rhymes are one of the many techniques used to incorporate pronunciation patterns into speech. According to Gartner, "rhymes are effective tools for pronunciation teaching because these include various components of communicative competence like intonation in oral discourse, pronunciation, and nonverbal communication" (1995: 5) From this perspective, one of the advantages of using rhymes is that they

emphasize certain key aspects of English language learning.

In this respect, Geyer (2001) says rhymes encourage stress, intonation, rhythm, ear training, pronunciation, and the correct use of punctuation marks. Taking this into account, students can become skillful in several micro-skills in English learning. Malkoc adds, "Practising intonation through rhymes and poems is mostly funny and very effective.These kinds of texts have strong patterns of stress syllables that help learners hear and associate common language features" (1999: 24).

Other authors also promote using rhymes for teaching English as a foreign language. Phillips (1993: 101) found in a research study with young learners that "rhymes help learners internalize the sounds and rhythms of English ... develop a sense of rhythm..., [and] give the children a chance `to let off steam´". Brown also emphasizes the importance of teaching rhymes in the classroom: "rhymes are taught to practice the sounds, rhythms, and stress patterns of English" (2006: 4). According to these authors, the rhythm of the verses helps learners put stress in the right places, creating a natural flow of language and allowing students to gain fluency.

Furthermore, Jordano (1998) mentions that the composition of rhymes contributes to the development of students' English language production in the classroom. Peck (2001) supports students who participate in these kinds of activities and states that such activities help students both express themselves more easily and acquire new vocabulary words. From this perspective,

learners can become familiar with new sounds and at the same time increase and broaden their vocabularies.

I consider songs and rhymes to be relaxing because they vary the lesson's progress, make learning fun, and "encourage harmony within oneself and within a group"(Murphey, 1992: 8).Pupils learn more when they associate the material with fun. Shy or slow-learning children, especially, are given encouragement by singing or speaking with their peers. Unsurprisingly, Murphey concludes that "children really enjoy learning and singing songs and have fun doing rhythmic activities while composing and reciting rhyme" (1992: 8).

Utilizing this breadth of research, I conclude that rhymes could be used to give a feeling for the rhythm and intonation of the spoken language. Practicing intonation through reciting rhymes can help EFL learners acquire the natural rhythm of the English language. Consequently, students are encouraged to learn and practice English through participation in activities to share their own compositions.These kinds of exercises allow learners to become able to create and express their ideas and to break down the fear of speaking in an audience.

Literary shows

Wisner (1997: 16) asserts that "literary shows are live performance spectacles where participants share activities with teacher and students in order to demonstrate their artistic and communicative abilities." This concept deals with Watcyn-Jones'(2000) ideas about fun class activities. This author suggests that literary shows allow the exploitation of the

communicative and creative potential of students.

This author also mentions that "a literary show is an activity that must be worked several times with students, especially if they do not frequently work with these kinds of learning practices". The involvement in literary shows offers many advantages in the academic field: improving students' self-confidence when it comes to speak, learning in new ways, and developing productive skills.

Similar statements were reported by Watcyn-Jones (2000), who contends that literary shows are activities where the learners reveal how skillful they are at communicative acts. In this respect, literary shows could become a challenging activity for EFL learners because they have to demonstrate their abilities in the foreign language.

Likewise, Lazaraton gives a short account of speaking and listening as the most demanding of the four skills. As evidenced by her suggestion that"teaching of oral communication skills as a socio cultural activity has become the focal point in many ESL classrooms" (2007: 103), for her, most learning is based on listening and speaking. This learning involves a closer and direct interaction in environments that foster communication.

With regards to the perception that literary shows are communicative activities, Kang (2006) states that literary shows enable participants to share their thoughts and ideas with their classmates and become familiar with oral presentations. Literary shows require more than a mechanical repetition of words or phrases in front of their classmates. This kind of interaction demands the construction of meanings from their own learning practices, in order to strengthen their communicative skills.

Additionally, Recinos (2010) points out that literary shows are an eclectic mix of talents which broaden the horizons of learning. Peck says that "many children are kinesthetic learners: they learn best through lessons involve actions" (2001:143). In my point of view, literary shows allow teachers to appreciate the individuality of their students. Each student is unique. They possess different skills. They could transform their worlds according to their ways of feeling or thinking. Literary shows could be a good option to discover the uniqueness of students' abilities.

According to the previously mentioned concepts it is clear that communicative activities contribute to the social and intellectual development of learners. Literary shows, in particular, make a great contribution in students' learning process. Furthermore, learners' immersion in communicative tasks helps them express their opinions and invite them to interact with the world.

I conclude that involvement in composition and oral presentation of rhymes in a foreign language allows students to be aware of certain features of speaking, such as pronunciation. This awareness boosts vocabulary level, broadens their knowledge of the language they are leaning, and helps them develop fluency and learn English unconsciously. Therefore, literary shows could be a good tool to shape enthusiastic

speakers able to face communicative situations.

METHODOLOGY

This research project attempted to provide an environment where students felt eager to participate in English classes and orally express their ideas in English. The primary vehicle for the execution of this pedagogical strategy was through the composition and oral presentation of rhymes in literary shows. The goal of composing rhymes was to create an enthusiastic environment while also promoting the incorporation of pronunciation patterns into students' speech. Additionally, another purpose was to encourage students to make oral presentations of their compositions.

The methodology used in this research was organized according this sequence: diagnosis, selection of materials, design and implementation of the lessons, and evaluation. Concerning diagnosis, as I mentioned before in the problem section, I first conducted an observation process in order to identify my students' main learning difficulties. After analyzing some conclusions from the observation process, I wanted to confirm them with a survey. From this diagnosis stage, I was able to make some conclusions. Some of them are: the students had low levels of English pronunciation; they lacked effective communication; most pronounced their words the way they were written because they did not know how to pronounce some words.

In regards to selection of materials, I chose certain rhymes which included the pronunciation patterns I was going to teach

and related to the topic the students were studying. I preferred to select simple short texts because of my students' English level.

In designing and implementation of the lessons I took into account Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin's theory about pronunciation instruction .Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) present a communicative framework for teaching pronunciation, which I applied in classroom. It includes four stages. Their teaching stages are similar to a presentation, practice, and production sequence concerning pronunciation patterns. These stages are: description and analysis; listening discrimination; controlled and guided practice; and communicative practice.

1. *Description and analysis*: Initially, the teacher presents a feature showing when and how it occurs. The teacher might use charts or he or she might present the rules for occurrence either inductively or deductively. For example, the teacher can both present the rules for vowel combination sounds and provide multiple examples with texts that included these sounds.

Firstly, I presented the rules of pronunciation, inductively and deductively. I provided examples in a context and I asked the learners to figure out the rules of pronunciation. Then, I asked students to pronounce brief texts which contained those pronunciation patterns. Students recognized and analyzed some guidelines about how to pronounce words.

2. *Listening discrimination*: This is defined as the ability to recognize and contextualize what a listener understood in a listening or

communicative activity. At this stage, learners need to focus their attention directly on a feature that they might not yet recognize.

After introducing pronunciation patterns in English classes, I guided learners in order to make them focus their attention directly on the words, which contained sounds that they were starting to recognize. Students paid special attention to the sentences and words that contained vowel combinations sounds and tried to guess how to write them. Besides recognition, students associate words according to pronunciation patterns.

3. Controlled and guided practice: At the beginning, in more controlled activities, the learners' attention should be focused almost completely on form. Any kind of choral reading can work if students underpin on the target feature. Poems, rhymes and dialogues can all be used if the content and level engage a learner's interest. In guided activities, the learners' attention is no longer entirely on form. The learner now begins to focus on meaning, grammar, and communicative intent as well as pronunciation.

In this stage, I needed to develop a continuum of bridging activities, while the students attempted to maintain control of the pronunciation target. Afterwards, the learners were guided to practice the new language features in several ways until they got familiar and incorporated them in their speech. Students received continuous feedback.

4. Communicative practice: In this stage, activities strike a balance between form and meaning. Examples include role plays, poems rhymes, and drama scenes. As the activities become gradually more communicative, the learners' attention should still be focused on the features.

In this stage, students were exposed to oral presentations with the purpose of making them pay attention to the way of performing in a kind of communicative practice. This communicative practice was highlighted in literary shows.

The next chart compiles the methodology applied throughout the development of the lessons with this group of students.

Chart 1. Methodology applied throughout the development of the lessons

STAGE	ACTIVITIES	PURPOSE	PRINCIPLE
Description and Analysis	1. Introducing pronunciation patterns: inductively and deductively. 2. Predicting: guessing (through examples in a context) 3. Recognizing: pronunciation of brief texts which contained pronunciation patterns. 4. Listening exercises	To familiarize the learners with certain Pronunciation patterns	Engagement
Listening Discrimination	5. Guessing: guess how to write certain words. 6. Repeating and associating words: word- groups. 7. Correcting	To monitor language learning	Enhancing English language learning
Controlled practice and guided practice	8. Post-reading tasks 9. Giving feedback 10. Production activities 11. Composing rhymes 12. Reciting rhymes	To provoke language use and creativity	Check understanding and appropriation
Communicative practice	- Composing rhymes 13. Oral presentation in literary shows: sharing own rhymes	To foster the students' involvement in English class	Enhancing English language practice

RESEARCH STUDY

This project was an action research study. It is an approach for collecting and interpreting data that involves a cycle of procedures (Celce-Murcia, 2001:490). Kemmis and Mc Taggart (2001) describe action research as "a form of reflective inquiry". The objective of action research is to give new and proper solutions to problems in educational practices, reinforced by Burns (1999), who states that "action research is contextual; it identifies and investigates problems within a specific situation. It is evaluative and reflective, as it aims to bring about change and improvement in practice. It is participatory…[;]changes in practice are

based on the collection of information or data which provides the impetus for change". his statement is related to the identification of a specific learning problem, which could be solved by means of the design and application of strategies in order to find solutions. This concept also suggests that action research involves reflection on the applied action. It is necessary to evaluate the process, and if this action works during the research process or not.

The presented action research project was carried out in four stages. The starting point was to identify what issues affected students' learning. This first step was done through exploring. As a result of this

exploration, an issue related to students' oral communication in English was identified. Based on this stage, I was able to design a strategy that I could implement in English classes. This strategy proposed composition and oral presentation of rhymes. While applying this strategy it was necessary to collect data. The instruments to do so were an observation format, tape recordings, and students' artifacts. From my observations I was able to recognize that students began to incorporate pronunciation patterns in their speech while composing their rhymes. Finally, I reflected on the outcomes. Thus, the last stage was the systematic analysis of data and the reflection on the results. The purpose of this reflection was to evaluate if the action was effective in students learning of some pronunciation patterns.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

For data analysis process, I took into account the information I had gathered since beginning to implement composition and oral presentation of rhymes in classes. I applied this strategy throughout a two-month period during the second semester of 2010. This strategy complemented and reinforced the topics of the classes.

Categorization was done in order to ana-lyze the collected information. To begin, in-formation was grouped according to com-monalities. Then, common topics were put together to establish categories, and named using key words. Finally, two categories and some subcategories emerged. These cat-egories and subcategories can be seen in the diagram N. 1.

RESEARCH QUESTION	CATEGORIES	SUBCATEGORIES
What happens to students' English pronunciation when they use pronunciation patterns, such as: ee [i], oo [u], a i [ei], ay, [ei] in their speech, through the composition and oral presentation of rhymes in literary shows?	1. Adopting one's own strategies to incorporate pronunciation patterns	a. Discrimination, Association and Repetition. b. Need to express ideas in English.
	2. Becoming confident speaker	

1. Adopting one's own strategies to incorporate pronunciation patterns:

This category emerged from the different strategies students adopted during the process of incorporating pronunciation patterns. These patterns were focused on certain vowel combinations, such as: ee [i], oo [u], ai [ei], ay: [ei].

A few students experienced difficulties understanding and identifying vowel combination sounds. Thus, I had to explain with many examples, and inductive and deductive exercises, such as showing them vowel combinations inside a context. Then, I would ask them to repeat that vowel sound until they clearly understood the pattern.

When I was sure all students understood the pronunciation patterns taught, I asked them to compose two strophes of a rhyme contextualizing words with those features. At this stage, I was able to notice that students began to use their own strategies to incorporate pronunciation patterns. Some of them made a list of possible words that contained pronunciation patterns and included them in their composition. Some of these words were the result of the previous knowledge and others were found in the dictionary. The students' goal was to recognize new words and be able to pronounce them correctly. This approach to learning is supported by Phillips, who states that one of the aims of rhymes is to practice listening skills and the vocabulary(1993: 112).

Then, students practiced pronunciation among themselves, and tried to pronounce words and phrases the best they could. They corrected their peers and suggested that they use pronunciation patterns in the correct way. To illustrate this situation, an example was taken in the observation format during the first workshop when a student was practicing the pronunciation of some words. Andy tried to correct his peer's pronunciation and explained to him why a certain word had to be pronounced in one way and not in another. Then, Andy asked the teacher if he was right or wrong.

8 Andy: así no se pronuncia, no es [suet] sino [sui:t] (para referirse a la palabra "sweet").
9 ¿Cierto, teacher? (observation format, 1st workshop)

It is evident that students' pronunciation was not perfect, but they began to become aware of the importance of pronunciation. At least they became conscious about some of their pronunciation mistakes, and, when it occurred, they corrected themselves. More evidence could be gathered to prove this. The following quotation was captured in a recording transcription during the literary show, while students presented their rhymes.

34 I like Halloween day **[dei]**,
35 witches fly on their brooms **[broms]** No… ésta se pronuncia**[brums]**.
46 It's Christmas day **[dei]**,
47 we ask blessings and pray **[prai]**. Sorry teacher me equivoqué, es**[prei]**. (Leidy, Recording Transcription, 3rd workshop)

a. Discrimination, Association, and Repetition

This strategy was supported by repetition and association of words. They repeated continuously, imitating and associating the words which contained similar features for the mechanization of these patterns. This situation could be substantiated in that some students' quotations taken during the process of understanding and learning the pronunciation patterns.

14 O sea profe que book [buk] se pronuncia casi igual que look [luk], lo único que cambia
15 es la L, o por elemploummmmm… play [plei] que es jugar con gay [gei] que es ummm.
(Tom, Recording transcription, 1st workshop)

18 Teacher, aquiencontrévariaspalabrasque se escribencomoesas good [gud], book
19 [buk], root [rut], roof [ruf], food [fud]
(Sammy, Recording transcription, 1st

workshop)

20 Teacher yo… con la ee sweet [su:it], deer [dir], meek [mik] (Reiku, Recording transcription, 1ˢᵗ workshop)

21 Profeyotengo con lasotraspalabras pay [pei], payment [paiment], trail [treil], main [mein] (Yiyi, Recording transcription, 1ˢᵗ workshop)

Goodwin emphasizes the importance of enabling students "to monitor their speech based on input from the environment" (2001: 117). Speech monitoring requires learners to pay attention to their own speech as well as that of others. Thus, learners could make better use of the input they receive.

When the students presented their compositions orally, their peers paid attention in order to discriminate sounds and understand the meaning of the text. This situation provides evidence as it follows in students' quotations during their orally rhymes presentation in the literary show.

49 Teacher la rhyme que dijo Andrés si rimaban las palabras night [nait] con Light [lait] y
50 moon [mun] con roof [ruf]. (Yoliz, recording transcription, Lit. Show)
60 Además se entendíaclaritico. In Christmas night, / I look at moon / I put the lights /
61 around the roof. En noche de Navidad / yo miro la luna / Yo pongo las luces de
62 Navidad/ alrededor del techo/ En español no rima pero en inglés si. (Leidy, recordingtranscription, Lit. Show)
63 Las rimas suenan más chévere en inglés que en español. (Rinrin, recording transcription Lit.Show)
70 Teacher yo escribí algunas palabras de

la rima de Erica, ¿Se escriben así? [….wud] **wood**, [sun] **soon**, [mun] **moon**

Related to the aforementioned issues, Brown (2006) argues that "rhymes and songs can also help a student compare how the words may not look the same". Furthermore, Szeto reinforces the importance of identifying rhyming words: "Being able to identify rhyming words is an important skill. Students who cannot correctly identify rhyming words have a more difficult time speaking"(2010: 6).

I considered good recognition of these pronunciation patterns to be a fundamental point in time of new findings because they allowed students to express clearly and be understood easily by their classmates. Also, good recognition allows students to understand new words without knowing how these words were written. They simply listened to those new words, and they immediately tried to guess how to write them and to infer the meaning of the whole idea.

b. Need to express ideas in English

Constructing rhymes constituted a strategy for helping students express their ideas in English when creating their rhymes. Students realized that, if they wrote their compositions in Spanish with rhyming words at the end of the verses and then translated them into English, these words did not maintain the musicality and rhythm of the original Spanish version. I infer that rhymes allow no time for translation, and I assume children tried to avoid it.

I can support this category with some students' samples obtained during the observation process.

9¿Por qué si en español rima….y al pasarla in English ya no?
10 Teacher ayúdeme, una palabra que rime con roof, sino la estrofa me queda coja.
13 Profe…¿esta rima si quedaría bien? It's Christmas **day**/ we uummh and **play**/ It´s 14 Christmas **day**/ we laugh and **play**. Teacher ¿**stars** puederimar con **custard**? In
15 Christmas **night**/we dance and see the **stars**/ In Christmas **night** / we eat **custard**"(See annex 2).

I took into account some Brown' assertions in order to state previous considerations. He indicates that "rhymes foster EL learners effort for expressing ideas in English" (2006: 28). In this way, during the process of composing rhymes, learners tended to use the proper words while building their texts. Therefore, the main students' purpose was to create meaningful texts. I took into account some of Geyer's contributions in this issue:

Songs and rhymes give them a special connection with their human environment and influence the acquisition of the English in an important way. Analogous to the development of the mother tongue, the following points also support foreign language acquisition :
1. Music, rhythm and rhymes produce a positive live feeling.
2. They motivate to learn and to be active.
3. Children do not understand all words but do not feel inhibited.
4. Rhythm supports vocabulary and structure learning.(2001: 2).

With regards to this topic, Clavijo also contributes the idea that "rhymes allow no time for translation, so children do not try to translate anything"… "Rhymes gradually move students from avoiding the use of their mother tongue's structures to use unconciously their second language's structures". Therefore, the composition of rhymes could be an enjoyable and a challenging experience for those attempting to learn English.

From the statements above mentioned, it may beconcluded that composing rhymes plays an important role in English teaching. Rhyme practice creates new ways for students to learn because this strategy offers opportunities that allow learners to acquire several pronunciation features, such as intonation, rhythm, and word stress, and, most importantly, encourages students approach to English as it was their first language.

2. *Becoming confident speaker:*

I could see that students' confidencein speakingwas rising throughout the process of incorporating pronunciation patterns; they began to correctly pronounce words and sentences. In addition, knowledge and application of these patterns helped them recognize the importance of good pronunciation in clearly expressing and understanding what they said or heard. During the process, I witnessed some students' reactions towards the use of these pronunciation patterns through their comments, interest, and participation in the activities. I took some notes about these reactions in an observation format.

16 Profe yo quiero decir lo que escribí. I like Halloween day / witches fly on their brooms, / 17 and the scarecrows play /near to the brook. (Carreño, observation format, 2nd workshop).

23 Teacher, please ¿asíestoypronunciando-bien? In Chritsmas time [In krism?staim]/ is a 24 beautiful day [is ? bjut?f?ldei] / to go to play [tu go tuplai] and gain candies again 25 [ændgeinkændlsagein] (Zori, observation format, 2nd workshop).

I took into account Brown's (2006) statements in which this author expresses that listening to various rhymes can help students become more familiar with the foreign language and make them more confident in their ability to listen and understand the world around them.

Goodwin (2001) asserts that while learners gain communicative skill, they also need to gain confidence in their ability to speak and be understood. To cultivate this confidence in the foreign language learning process it is necessary to take into account some aspects: to provide learners with enough input, to give consistent targeted feedback, to make corrections timely and carefully, and to monitor the process.

In this respect, Peck (2001) highlights that an important aspect to help learners to become confident when learning a second language is constituted by how well they can express their ideas and understand when listening to their peers. Furthermore, she considers songs and rhymes to bebuilding blocks for children's proficiency in many ways. They boost vocabulary through learners hearing pronunciation modeled and then practicing the sounds repeatedly.

CONCLUSIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, I discovered that applying different pronunciation patterns in composing rhymes fostered a confident environment to engage students' participation. As the students increased their practice of these patterns, their pronunciation improved. The implementation of pronunciation patterns in the students' education was effective. Most of the students used them correctly. Also, the use of vowel sounds like ee [i], oo [u], ai [ei], and ay [ei] created a good habit of self-correction in the students throughout their learning process.

During the implementation of this research, the composition of rhymes was a useful way to encourage learners to express their ideas within the target language. Most of the students tended to avoid translations from their native language into English. They knew that, if they wrote a rhyme in Spanish to be translated into English, the rhyming words could not coincide. Also, the rhyme would lose essence, meaning, rhythm, and musicality.

It is crucial to mention that compositions and oral presentations of rhymes in a literary show stimulate the students' imaginations. The students used different language resources to express what they thought. One finding in this research is related to the strategies students used while composing their rhymes. On one hand, while learners were making their compositions, some of them replaced the rhyming words with drawings; in this way, they were challenging themselves to remember the words and their pronunciations without seeing the words in writing. Besides, when students were doing their oral presentations in the literary show, some of them did mimicry while reciting their rhymes.

Some of the students broke English grammar rules while composing their rhymes. There were several cases in which these

constructions were meaningful. These learners supported the idea to write their compositions this way, because poetry and songs usually break the grammatical structure of sentences.

I noticed that the practice of pronunciation patterns began to create a good habit of self-correction in the students. Most of the students used pronunciation patterns correctly. Students demonstrated they were especially interested in improving their pronunciations. Therefore, students tried their best to avoid any mistake by all means. For instance, when a student did not know how to pronounce a word, he/she asked his/her teacher or his/her fellow classmates for assistance.

Throughout the development of this research, which was based on the students' comments, the composition of rhymes was also a useful way to increase vocabulary. As the students had to incorporate rhyming words into their texts, they needed to recognize the vocabulary learned from current and previous lessons. Furthermore, it is important to mention that students incorporated these words in their compositions, so they would not learn isolated words.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I would like to invite teachers to participate in these kinds of innovations in order to foster a fun environment in the classroom. One of the benefits of composition and oral presentation of rhymes is the improvement related to the students' performance, not just as users of English but as active learners able to achieve effective communicative tasks. Thus, these active learners can express their opinions and be able to interact with the world.

This research study can be a motivating experience for my colleagues who work in similar contexts. It is a challenge to change our teaching practices and take into account students' voices. The classroom constitutes a space for generating changes towards new perspectives of learning.

Another important recommendation deals with assuming the challenge of proposing new teaching practices in which students are be given the opportunity to be in contact with environments that strengthen the students' willingness to participate in oral presentations. This would allow students to overcome some of their learning difficulties.

It is important to mention that teachers need to be careful with rural settings. This kind of context has specific characteristics which need to be explored. In some opportunities, teachers from rural schools consider learning a new language such as English to be unnecessary for students. Thus, students become disinterested in developing English skills.

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APPENDIX #1 PEDAGOGICAL DESIGN

LESSON PLAN #1

LEVEL: 6th Time: two hours

FUNCTION: Rhymes in order to practice some pronunciation patterns in students' speech.

OBJECTIVE: To incorporate some basic pronunciation patterns in speech in order for students to improve pronunciation.

CONTENTS:
Vowel combinations
ee: [i] Examples: see, sweet, bweet, breen, green, feed, greet, feel, sleep, meet.
oo: [u] Examples: good, choose, moo, book, notebook, wood.
          Exceptions: Door, floor.
ai: [ei] Examples: pain, rain, tail, raisin, pail, mail.
ay: [ei] Examples: day, play, pay, lay, stay, way.

ENABLING OBJECTIVES:
1. To listen to and to become familiar with some sounds (specifically vowel combinations), through listening and reading a rhyme.
2. To associate the sounds of vowel combinations with the pronunciation of some words.
3. To pronounce correctly words included inside the rhyme and other with similar sounds.

PRE TASK: WARMING UP ACTIVITY
The rhyme presented to students:
                              APPLES

I love to **eat** apples.
They are juicy and **sweet**.
The one thing I don't know,
is which one to **eat**.

Red, yellow, and **green**,
they are all **good** for me.
If you had to **choose** one,
which one would it be?

I love to **eat**bapples.
They are juicy and **bweet**.
The one thing I don't know,
is which one to **eat**.

Bed, bellow, and **breen**.
They are all **good** for me.

If you had to **choose** one,
which one would it be?

I love to enjoy **time**,
every**day** with my friends.
Sharing my **rhymes**,
Until the day ends.

(Taken from Phonemic awareness: songs and rhymes by Kimberly Jordano& Trisha callella).

Steps
1. The teacher read a rhyme emphasizing pronunciation of vowel combinations.
2. The teacher made students repeat some words and phrases to make students get familiar with some sounds.
3. Students associated sounds of vowel combinations with the pronunciation of some words.

TASK
1. The teacher handed over the written texts "Apples" and students indicated the words that had vowel combinations and pronounced them correctly.
2. Students looked for more words into the text that contained those vowel combinations made comparisons and incorporated words into a context such as a rhyme.

POST TASK: Production activity
1. Students had to create a strophe of a rhyme taking into account what do students like to do in their free time?
2. Students had to use words with the pronunciation patterns taught in the strophe of their rhymes.

LESSON PLAN # 2

MATERIALS: Photocopies, drawings, friso, posters.

FUNCTION: Creating rhymes in order to incorporate some pronunciation patterns in students' speech.

OBJECTIVE: To practice some basic pronunciation patterns in speech and incorporate them into a context.

ENABLING OBJECTIVES
1. To get familiar with some specific vocabulary about some special dates of the year (Halloween, Christmas time).
2. To incorporate into their speech the sounds of vowel combinations by practicing the correct pronunciation through a rhyme.
3. Create a rhyme about a specific topic.

WARMING UP ACTIVITY:
The teacher introduced the class to ask questions about what students like to do on special dates

of the year such as Halloween, Christmas time. The questions were:
a. what do you like to do on Halloween?
b. what is the best about Christmas time for you?

Teacher took into account students' answers to give some examples about some specific activities in Halloween and Christmas time.

ACROSTIC
*H*allo**ween** is a very special date.
*A*ll my friends **play** with me,
*L*augh and enjoy the time,
*L*augh and have fun.
*O*ur mothers tell us tales,
*W*itches make us afr**a**id. But
*E*ach child only wants
*E*at candies and dance
*N*ear to his friends

(Taken from Phonemic awareness: songs and rhymes by Kimberly Jordano& Trisha callella).

TASK
1. The teacher read a rhyme about Halloween and at the same time students worked with an uncompleted version of the same rhyme.
2. Students tried to understand what the missing words were and choose them from a vocabulary box.

Students' sheet

Listen to this rhyme. Choose what words of the vocabulary box belong to the rhyme. Fill with them the lines.

VOCABULARY BOX

> moon, good, book, notebook, roof, cook, wood, brook,
> Halloween, green, see, see, playing, staying

IT' S HALLOWEEN NIGHT
It's _____night,   I want to _____ the_____.
I **feel** very _____.
It' shallo**ween** night,   I think I_____ a bat,
It is on the._____   _____with my friends
Now, there is a black cat,   And carrying some sticks of_____.
Sitting on my._____

(Taken from Phonemic awareness: songs and rhymes by Kimberly Jordano& Trisha callella).

I see a scarecrow
Near to the_____,

POST TASK: Production activity
Students had to take into account this new vocabulary referring to HALLOWEEN, CHRISTMAS TIME to create their own rhymes.

VOCABULARY

HALLOWEEN			CHRISTMAS TIME		
Nouns			Nouns		
Pumpkin	Witch	Broom	Christmas tree		Presents, gifts
Black cat	Candy, candies		Christmas lights		Doughnut
Tales	Horror	Darkness	Custard		Jesus' birth
Verbs			Christmas' novena		Santa Claus
Ask for candies		Feel afraid	Reindeers	Sleigh	Star
Fly on brooms		Disguise	Verbs		
mask			Celebrate	Pray	Play
			Give and receive presents		

Steps
1. The teacher asked students to work in peers to create a rhyme taking into account special dates of the year such as Halloween, Christmas time.
2. While students were doing their rhymes, teacher was guiding the process through giving feedback and orienting students to write proper words and phrases.
3. Students had the opportunity to make a drawing, a friso or a poster in order to make easier their performance in the literary show. It was a free option.
4. Students had to be ready to present their compositions for the next class.

ANNEX # 2 OBSERVATION FORMAT

OBJECTIVE: To recognize what effect had the incorporation of pronunciation patterns in students' speech.

SAMPLE OF STUDENTS	How do students use these pronunciation patterns in class?	What effect do I perceive in students' pronunciation micro skill as they use pronunciation patterns?	Reflection notes
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

APPENDIX # 3