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TRABAJO FIN DE MÁSTER

*From the big to the small screen: Using
movies as teaching tools for pronunciation and
spoken interaction.*

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Abstract

In the present dissertation it is discussed the use of movies in the classroom as a tool for teaching spoken interaction and pronunciation. This is achieved by designing activities to be developed in the classroom using three specific movies: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001); *Finding Nemo* (2003); and *The King's Speech* (2010). Aspects such as reasons behind the choosing of the movies and factors to take into account when selecting these type of materials are also discussed in this work, as well as different theories such the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTLM) are presented as a support to the work's objectives.

Through these movie students will see the difference in pronunciation between British (BrE) and American English (AmE), as well as slang words and phrases commonly used in both varieties.

Keywords: Spoken interaction, pronunciation, movies, slang words, BrE and AmE.

Resumen

En el siguiente Trabajo de Fin de Master se estudia la posibilidad de incluir películas en las clases de ESL como una herramienta para enseñar interacción oral y pronunciación. Para ello se diseñan actividades que se centran en tres películas: *Harry Potter y la Piedra Filosofal* (2001); *Buscando a Nemo* (2003); y *El Discurso del Rey* (2010). Se discuten, también, aspectos como las razones por las cuales se escogen estas películas y factores a tener en cuenta a la hora de escoger materiales audiovisuales de este tipo. Igualmente, se menciona teorías como Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) que aportan validez teórica a lo desarrollado en el trabajo.

A través de estas películas, los estudiantes verán de primera mano la diferencia entre el inglés británico y el americano, así como palabras y frases informales de uso típico en ambas variedades de inglés.

Palabras clave: películas, interacción oral, pronunciación, palabras y frases informales, inglés británico, inglés americano.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the Spanish language teaching method, grammar has always been seen as the most important factor when learning a new language, giving little care -in some cases none whatsoever- to pronunciation and oral expression. In a world where the learning of English is as important as it is, it is crucial to be able to communicate effectively in the L2. For nonnative speakers, this is particularly tricky, since for the most part we end up with a foreign accent that, in some cases, makes communication rather poor. This should not be misunderstood, accents exist and they are what makes our Lingua Franca, but it cannot be denied that a thick accent hinders communication, which is why it is important to pronounce clearly and correctly.

When we are learning a new language, I am of the opinion that the most important thing is to learn how to develop oral skills and to fluently communicate in the target language. Grammatical structures and learning how to write will come later on. It is not that one should think that grammar is not important, but, when learning a language, it is not what should be exhaustively taught first.

Learning grammatical structures is not an enjoyable task for -almost- anyone, which is why one should think of new methods and new ways to teach grammar without having to teach it per se, and making it fun for learners. Otherwise, it will happen what most of the time does: Learners get bored and lose interest in the language, hence the language becomes twice as difficult for them to learn.

It is known that our current society is changing and evolving constantly, so teachers have to adapt their methods to the ever changing situations. Children and teenagers are constantly being bombarded by the media and visual stimulations (movies, TV shows, even music videos). They are also around technology most of the time, which is why their generations are known as being technological native. One has to take advantage of that and use it to boost their skills. They watch movies and TV shows on their phones, tablets, or computers, without even flinching or having to teach them how to access them.

The making of series and movies is today greater than it has ever been. We have streaming services, such as Netflix, Sky TV, Amazon, Hulu, etc. on which children and teenagers, especially the latter, watch movies and series on demand all the time. Even older generations take advantage of these platforms and are hooked on more than one TV show. If every language student -teenagers, children, or older students- watched these kind of

entertainment in English, the pronunciation and oral comprehension would improve so much with only so little. One has to bear in mind, that even when children are learning their mother tongue, they learn fixed phrases that they know what they mean, and know how to use it without having to think too much about them. What if we did the same with the English language, but using things in which they might be interested?

Anglo-Saxon culture is different from ours, which is why, this is also a great way to learn from them, from intonation to body language. It is true that not many enjoy watching series or movies with subtitle, which is why this is a great opportunity to bring it into the classroom, to get them used to reading -at first- and watching at the same time.

One also has to bear in mind, that, especially teenagers, they use Anglicism all the time, which shows that the English language's importance is more prominent nowadays. In this work I will propose ways though which incorporating movies into our language teaching helps us improve students' oral skills, focusing on two major topics: spoken interaction and pronunciation.

2. SPOKEN INTERACTION

Herbert W. Seliger in his study *Does Practice Make Perfect?: A Study of Interaction Patterns and L2 Competence* postulates two different types of language learners that can be distinguished by the intensity in which they take up a new language. Those learners that pursue opportunities through which practice an L2 and cause others to speak to them in the language they are seeking out to practice are categorized as *high input generators*. However, those learners who often avoid interacting or play roles rather passive in in language interaction situations are termed *low input generators* (Seliger, 1977).

Since it is a given that the most important thing when learning a language is to master the speech production, more specifically, spoken interaction, as teachers, we should aspire that all of our students be *high input generators*. Our students should be taught first how to communicate and get their message across, rather than drilling grammatical rules into their brains without any explicit purpose whatsoever.

Interaction is fundamental in learning, and spoken interaction is considered to be the origin of language and what leads us to collaborative, interpersonal, and transactional functions. Following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:

Companion volume with new descriptors (2018) I will refer to three different types of spoken interaction, which are the ones that are most relevant according to what is looked for in this work: understanding an interlocutor, conversation, formal, and informal discussion (CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors, 2018).

2.1. Understanding an interlocutor

The word “interlocutor” is a very technical term and makes reference to the one with whom one is conversing about a given topic. It is of utmost importance that the conversation flows both ways and that both participants are able to understand each other. When learning a language, this is achieved by following a scale that goes from personal details and daily needs, to complex and abstract topics, including specific topics related to specific fields. Following this, the type of delivery by the interlocutor is also relevant since the scale goes from slow well cared speech production to unfamiliar accents and standard speech production.

There is also a factor to be taken into account which is the degree of accommodation that the interlocutor is willing to achieve go to, such as taking the trouble to help and repeat, as well as, in case de accent is not familiar, confirming facts and details.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, this is what each nonnative speaker of English should be able to do on each level as seen in Table 1.

UNDERSTANDING AN INTERLOCUTOR		PROSIGN
C2	Can understand any interlocutor, even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field, given an opportunity to adjust to a less familiar accent.	
C1	Can understand in detail speech on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.	
B2	Can understand in detail what is said to him/her in the standard spoken language even in a noisy environment.	
B1	Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.	
A2	Can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort.	
	Can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.	
A1	Can understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly to him/her in simple everyday conversation; can be made to understand, if the speaker can take the trouble.	
	Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker.	
Pre-A1	Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.	
	Can understand simple questions which directly concern him/her, for example about name, age and address or similar things, if the person is asking slowly and clearly.	
	Can understand simple personal information (e.g. name, age, place of residence, origin) when other people introduce themselves, provided that they speak slowly and clearly directly to him/her, and can understand questions on this theme addressed to him/her, though the questions may need to be repeated.	
	Can understand a number of familiar words and greetings and recognise key information such as numbers, prices, dates and days of the week, provided speech is delivered very slowly, with repetition if necessary.	

Table 1 (CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors, 2018).

2.2. Conversation

The main objective of conversation resides in the establishing and maintenance of interpersonal relations. As it happens in the previous section, the Common European Framework establishes goals that a student should be able to achieve in order to be placed on the correct level, as shown in Table 2.

As seen in the previous case, in conversation there is also a scale that goes from the most basic skills to the more complex ones. In the case of the *setting*, for example, the student should be able to produce, at first, short pieces of conversation up until maintaining a whole conversation while reading on and producing different social clues, so that the exchange goes as smoothly as possible.

CONVERSATION		PROSIGN
C2	Can converse comfortably and appropriately, unhampered by any linguistic limitations in conducting a full social and personal life.	
C1	Can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.	
B2	Can establish a relationship with interlocutors through sympathetic questioning and expressions of agreement, plus, if appropriate, comments about third parties or shared conditions. Can indicate reservations and reluctance, state conditions when agreeing to requests or granting permission, and ask for understanding of his/her own position.	
	Can engage in extended conversation on most general topics in a clearly participatory fashion, even in a noisy environment. Can sustain relationships with speakers of the target language without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with another proficient speaker. Can convey degrees of emotion and highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.	
	Can start up a conversation and help it to keep going by asking people relatively spontaneous questions about a special experience or event, expressing reactions and opinion on familiar subjects. Can have relatively long conversations on subjects of common interest, provided that the interlocutor makes an effort to support understanding.	
B1	Can enter unprepared into conversations on familiar topics. Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases. Can maintain a conversation or discussion but may sometimes be difficult to follow when trying to say exactly what he/she would like to. Can express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference.	
	Can establish social contact: greetings and farewells; introductions; giving thanks. Can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time. Can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest. Can express how he/she feels in simple terms, and express thanks. Can ask for a favour (e.g. to lend something), can offer a favour and can respond if someone asks him/her to do a favour for them.	
	Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord, though he/she can be made to understand if the speaker will take the trouble. Can use simple everyday polite forms of greeting and address. Can chat in simple language with peers, colleagues or members of a host family, asking questions and understanding the answers relating to most routine matters. Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions and apologies. Can express how he/she is feeling using very basic stock expressions. Can say what he/she likes and dislikes.	
A2	Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker. Can take part in a simple conversation of a basic factual nature on a predictable topic, e.g. his/her home country, family, school. Can make an introduction and use basic greeting and leave-taking expressions. Can ask how people are and react to news.	
A1	Can understand and use some basic, formulaic expressions such as 'Yes,' 'No,' 'Excuse me,' 'Please,' 'Thank you,' 'No thank you,' 'Sorry.'	
Pre-A1	Can recognise simple greetings. Can greet people, say his/her name and take leave of them.	

Table 2(CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors, 2018).

Another thing that is very important regarding conversation is the *topic*. The student should be able to navigate through the most general topics to the most familiar passing through personal news. Alongside the topic, another major key concept when it comes to conversation is the *language functions* which, among others, include invitations, greeting, offers, joking usage, etc. (CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors, 2018). Joking in a language that is not our own is not easy task, and yet it is a huge part of the social interaction process. Here it is when linguistic immersion comes to play a role. There are thousands of movies that could help develop this part of the spoken interaction which I will suggest further on in my work.

2.3. Formal and Informal interaction

Just as one should be able to joke in a foreign language, there comes times in which the setting demands a more serious approach, especially in academic or professional contexts. Within spoken interaction, another key concept that should be taken into account is the formal interaction.

Unlike informal interaction which covers aspect from both the evaluative and interpersonal use of language -since they are part of the daily life interaction-, formal discussion (or interaction) includes the discussion of issues that are not familiar, exchanges of proposed solutions to basic problems or more complex ones, and the ability to keep up with a discussion even if there is a need for rehearsing or keeping up with animated debates (CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors, 2018).

From the moment we start learning English, we are taught formal English, which, granted, is important, although, the same English we use to write academic papers is not the one that it is used to communicate in the day to day life. One has to take into account that the word choice, tone, and grammar differ greatly between formal and informal language. For example

- He could have been there on time (formal)
- He could've been there on time (informal)

Spoken English makes several abbreviations, drops letters or reduces some when engaging in an interaction, although this will be talked further in later sections of this work.

Still, as in the previous types of spoken interaction that we have seen, students have a scale to which one has to pay attention in order to teach what is needed on each level, as

seen in Table 3.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION (WITH FRIENDS)		PROSIGN
C2	Can advise on or talk about sensitive issues without awkwardness, understanding colloquial references and dealing diplomatically with disagreement and criticism.	
C1	Can easily follow and contribute to complex interactions between third parties in group discussion even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.	
B2	Can keep up with an animated discussion between speakers of the target language. Can express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.	
	Can take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding to hypotheses.	
	Can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her in discussion, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several speakers of the target language who do not modify their speech in any way. Can account for and sustain his/her opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments.	
B1	Can follow much of what is said around him/her on general topics provided interlocutors avoid very idiomatic usage and articulate clearly. Can express his/her thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music, films. Can explain why something is a problem. Can give brief comments on the views of others.	
	Can compare and contrast alternatives, discussing what to do, where to go, who or which to choose etc.	
	Can generally follow the main points in an informal discussion with friends provided speech is clearly articulated in standard language.	
	Can give or seek personal views and opinions in discussing topics of interest.	
	Can make his/her opinions and reactions understood as regards solutions to problems or practical questions of where to go, what to do, how to organise an event (e.g. an outing). Can express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement politely.	
A2	Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her which is conducted slowly and clearly. Can exchange opinions and compare things and people using simple language. Can discuss what to do in the evening, at the weekend. Can make and respond to suggestions. Can agree and disagree with others.	
	Can discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way when addressed clearly, slowly and directly.	
	Can discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet.	
	Can express opinions in a limited way.	
A1	Can exchange likes and dislikes for sports, foods, etc., using a limited repertoire of expressions, when addressed clearly, slowly and directly.	
Pre-A1	No descriptors available	

Table 3(CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors, 2018).

As mentioned before, one of the advantages of learning through movies is the use of “real English”. The language used is contextualized in daily life situations to which people react in a “real” way, which sometimes differ from the reactions that one might come across in textbooks. Here it is when *informal* discussions take place.

It has been proven that informal or accidental learning is oftentimes the one that stick with the learner. From informal discussions the learner takes away more than from discussions that happen to be a bit more solemn, since usually, in informal discussions, the topics about which the exchange is taking place, are of interest for both parts.

When talking about informal discussion, there is no doubt that the weigh of this type of

interaction falls upon the dialogue. Engaging in dialogue is immensely effective when learning a language since it is the key that assists in the dissolution of barriers, and promoting collaboration and partnership. Based on my experience, learning through dialogues has been easier for my students than asking them to read a whole book, even if the book is minimum length.

Since movies are mainly scenes with dialogues, the pictures with which the student stays are people conversing in situation that they may comprehend with some background information that the teacher provides, even if some of the information is missing. Learning through images and sounds, has also been proven to be more effective than any other method of teaching.

3. COGNITIVE THEORY OF MULTIMEDIA LEARNING (CTML)

There is a theory popularized by the work of Richard E. Mayer that states that multimedia supports the way the human brain learns. Roughly, what this means is that people learn better by visual cues combined with words, than with only words (Mayer, 2005a). This is so, because we make mental representation of what is being learned. According to Mayer, the words can be either spoken or written and the pictures could come in any format: illustration, animation, photos, or even videos (Mayer, 2005b).

According to this theory there are three basic assumptions when it comes to multimedia learning:

1. Two separate channels for information processing (visual and auditory). This is sometimes referred as Dual- Coding theory.
2. These channels have a finite capacity
3. The act of learning is an active process of organizing, filtering, selecting, and integrating information based on previous knowledge.

As humans we can only store a limited amount of information in a channel at a time, and we make sense of incoming information by making mental representations which leads us to the three store structure of memory proposed by Mayer: sensory memory, working memory, and long-term memory.

As Sweller states, sensory memory is the cognitive structure that allows us to perceive new information; working memory is the cognitive structure in which we, consciously, process information; and long-term memory is the cognitive structure that stores our knowledge base (Sweller, 2005). It is only when we have transferred information to

working memory that we are conscious of long-term memory information. Mayer holds that sensory memory has a visual sensory memory that keeps printed texts and pictures as visual images; while auditory memory briefly holds sounds and spoken words as auditory images (Mayer, 2005a).

Bearing this in mind, it is important to provide students with not only sounds, but pictures and videos so that they can engage in a more active learning. According to Mayer (2010a), meaningful learning -which he distinguishes from “no learning” and “rote learning”- can only be demonstrated when students can apply what is learned to new situations, in the case of L2 learning, situations that are not the one through which the concept has been learned. This meaningful learning from words and pictures can be achieved when the learner engages with five cognitive processes:

1. Selecting words that are relevant for processing in verbal working memory
2. Selecting images that are relevant for processing in visual working memory
3. Organizing the selected words into a verbal model
4. Organizing selected images into a pictorial model
5. Intertwining the verbal and pictorial representations and relating it with prior knowledge.

These cognitive processes are the ones that select what information is selected or attended to, which piece of knowledge is integrated with new information after being retrieved from the long term memory, and ultimately, the transfer of that newly created information to the long term memory through a process called *encoding* (Mayer, 2008). For a student to retain the knowledge and effectively engage in these cognitive processes, it is necessary that the information is presented in a way that eases the *encoding* of the information, in this case, images and sound, hence, the importance of teaching a second language with these kind of tools -series and movies-.

There is plenty of evidence that asserts that cognitive control begets successful phonological acquisition (Miyake and Friedman, 2012) and an improvement of the oral communication skills, though, in order to achieve this cognitive control, the student has to be aware of it, and a way to achieve this, is to present him with sounds and images that they can associate while enjoying.

4. LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH THE USE OF MASS MEDIA

Most of us have had the experience that when foreign people speak to us in our native language, we have a hard time trying to understand what they are saying, and, in many cases, is not because of the vocabulary they use (or lack thereof), or because they are not using the proper grammatical structure, but because the sounds they produce are strange to us. This added up to the unexpected places in a sentence where their voice rises and falls, makes it really hard for us to comprehend what is being said.

The desire as teachers that our students speak as a native speaker is utterly unachievable, since the cases in which students have a near native pronunciation are relatively rare. As aforementioned, having an accent is not something to be embarrassed of, because as nonnative English teachers, we teach Lingua Franca; although it is true that it cannot be denied the importance that both pronouncing things as correctly as possible and the right intonation is crucial to a better understanding of what the L2 speaker is trying to convey. In order to better overcome this milestone, the teacher has to know why the students cannot articulate the sounds correctly or give a sentence the right intonation. Is it because the native phonological system is too different from the L2 phonological system? Is it a matter of how myself as a teacher use the language?

A great way of introducing the phonology, vocabulary, use of English, of a foreign language is using the media, more specifically, audio-visual Media.

4.1. Using Mass Media and TV programs as learning tools

Nowadays students are constantly bombarded by the different Media they use: social networks, TV, music, etc. Students already know a large number of words that are borrowing from the English language such as *tweet*, *like*, *show*, etc. The proposal is to go beyond these borrowings and take advantage of the Media to help them enhance their learning of English.

Media education has to do with film and television, with radio and press, and their impact on the students' progress is undeniable. There is also no doubt that in the years to come, Media will be more pervasive, hence the need to understand its influence and use it wisely. Teaching using this tool has several advantages such as:

4. It provides a large amount of information. It motivates students to speak -in case there is an interesting newspaper headline up for discussion- and integrate different skills

such as writing, listening, reading, and talking through different types of activities.

5. As a teacher we could exploit Media from different angles such as: analyzing ideas taken from a magazine or newspaper article, or analyzing a text from a book; watching and, afterwards, commenting on a TV program or movie, etc.
6. Since the information is presented in a pictorial way, the learning process is enhanced, and whatever is learned has a high probability to be encoded in the long term memory.
7. Using Media in the classroom helps students get to know the world, understand it and, in some cases, the need to change it for the better may be ignited (Tafani, 2009).

Within Media, Television plays a major role since most people today watch about three to five hours of television a day (Tafani, 2009). An American reporter, Philippa Thompson in his article *The Primary English Magazine* states that “It’s no use complaining that children today would rather watch TV or videos than read” and this is what we, as teacher should exploit in order to keep students motivated to learn the language. TV programs could be used as warmup activities, supplementary activities, or even a tool to lead up to the next issue that is going to be treated in the day’s class.

According to Beckert: ‘Defenders call TV a window on the world, a magic carpet of discovery. They claim that it enlarges both knowledge and understanding. Defenders say it encourages a new way of thinking, with interlocking hopes, needs and problems. Critics call it the idiot box. They say it promotes mindless viewing of mindless programs. Critics say it stifles creativity and promotes distorted thinking. Social observers often urge parents not to use television as an electronic baby-sitter’ (Beckert, 1992). As seen, not everyone agrees with the idea that using TV in the classroom can improve the learning process, it is up to the teacher the way this tool is used and how to exploit it to its maximum.

4.2. Using movies in the classroom

Movies are also a great way for students to listen to daily life English, and it is a way of going beyond the listening exercises to which most of them are overly accustomed. Students should be encouraged to watching as many movies as possible, as it increases their critical and visual awareness.

Using films it is not an easy task, since some of them are very hard to follow or the plot or the vocabulary are too complex for students to understand, which is why one should try to choose films with a simple story line (s). Some of the genres that encompass these

types of characteristics are dramas, some science-fiction movies, and movies about sports. Another reason as to why using films in the classroom is difficult relies on the matter of time. Since movies are usually longer than one hour, it is very difficult to fit it into just one session, especially if the teacher plans on developing activities while watching the movie. For this reason, the teacher should schedule thoroughly the developing of activities and what is desired that the students take away from the movie. There are many ways to navigate this, for example, the teacher could show key scenes and ask to pay attention to the accent, the body language, choosing of words, etc; or the story could be told to the students without giving away the end and ask them what they think the end could be; the possibilities are endless.

Moreover, one of the many reasons why movies could help in the classroom is because, nowadays, there are many movies that are book adaptations, so there is a big chance that some students might know the book. This is a great opportunity to spark up debates in the classroom by which students practice spoken interaction while giving their opinion on a matter that they might find interesting.

Along this same line, we could start off with movies that students already know by heart, such as Disney movies. Watching a Disney movie, for example, a personal favorite, *The Lion King*, makes it twice as easy for the student to follow since most of them will know the story, or some of them will even go as far as knowing some of the dialogues (in their L1, of course). Also, the type of speech that is used in cartoons is easily understood, because voice actors enunciate almost to perfection and the words they use are not very complex.

Although movies are great tools, there are two very important issues that should be taken into account when thinking about using movies in the classroom: subtitles and dubbing¹. The teacher could choose to play a movie and superpose the subtitles in the L1 or, in the case of more advanced classes, the subtitles could be in the L2 language (coinciding with the audio of the movie), which would make the understanding of the movie easier. One should bear in mind that listening to the actual language that is being learned is harder than seeing the language written, therefore, subtitles match the words with the voice and the pictures which enhances the learning process. Using this method, the student is offered both listening and reading from which to choose, since, based on experience, students

¹ the replacement of a soundtrack in one language by one in another language (Collins). **formato de citas ?**

prefer reading over listening, although, there are some exceptions (Tafari, 2009).

5. PRONUNCIATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

One of the things that has been seen, according to Yule (1990), is that for teachers that are just starting there are only two choices when it comes to teaching pronunciation, either teaching it as articulatory phonetics² or just not teach pronunciation at all. According to Morley (1991), there has been a change -because there had to be a change- in the perspectives on language teaching and language learning that is evidenced in the gradual shift from the emphasis on teaching and teaching-centered classroom to an emphasis on learning and a learning centered-classroom (Morley, 1991). Adding up to this, with the change in the perspective of teaching has come changes in the different theoretical paradigms -instructional models, linguistic models, and learning models-, such as:

8. From a focus on language as a mere formal system, to a focus on language as both formal system and a functional system, one which existence relies on the need to satisfy the communicative needs of the user (Halliday, 1970, 1973, 1978).
9. From a focused mainly instructional on linguistic form and correct usage to one on function and communicatively appropriate use (Widdowson, 1978, 1983), and
10. From an orientation of the linguistic competence to one of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972).

All of these developments have gotten us to a broad variety of changes in virtually all aspects of English as a Second Language (ESL), including the area that deals with pronunciation teaching.

Teaching English pronunciation, however is no easy task, since there are many factors to be taken into account that heavily influence the way pronunciation is taught.

Firstly, the teacher needs to have a minimal knowledge of phonetics and phonology in order to successfully accomplish the task at hand. What this translates to is that the teacher needs to have a good pronunciation and know the difference between the different sounds if the students are to be taught a proper way of pronouncing words and sounds in English. Another aspect that makes teaching pronunciation difficult is the existence of different

² aspects of phonetics which looks at how the sounds of speech are made with the organs of the vocal tract (Ogden, 2009)

types of accents. Just as it happens in the Spanish speaking world, there are many different accents when it comes to English, and what oftentimes happens is that the teacher teaches a mixture of them. However, the massive growth of English has sparked in teachers a desire to know what variety is being taught, which has ultimately lead to a number of corpora with descriptions of varieties of English, accents, and grammar usage.

There are two major varieties of English that are nearly universally accepted as the most desired ones to be achieved by people who do have English as their native tongue.

6. General American (GA) which it's most prevalent feature is its 'rhoticity' which means that every 'r' in a word is virtually pronounced. There are other characteristics that are typical to this variety of English that are worth mentioning such as the dental and alveolar pronunciation of the letter 't' (or d) in words such as *latter*, *cheddar*, etc. Another major characteristic is that words such as *palm* and *stop* are the same, which does not happen in other instances of English; and the 'ash' vowel used in words like *ask*, *bath*, and *hand* (Lewis, 1987)
7. RP (Received Pronunciation). This principal EFL model does not have a universally accepted title, but as opposed to GA, this variation could be designated as 'General British' (GB) (Lewis, 1987).

These two varieties are the ones that are most represented nowadays in Media which might be a main reason as to why nonnative English speakers aspire to achieve one of these types of accents.

Something that is very frequently disregarded by foreign-language teachers, but that is crucial in the learning process of a new language is the syllabification -or internal juncture-, of stress and intonation, which reflects the variation in pitch in a sentence. If the wrong intonation is used, a question could be interpreted as an affirmation which draws close to the line of a polite request or a blunt demand (Rivers, 1967). According to Rivers, "the teacher should, therefore, emphasize these elements from the beginning, making clear their important role in comprehensible speech, and watching carefully to see that students develop and retain acceptable habits in these areas as well as in correct production of sounds." (Rivers, 1967).

6. METHODOLOGY

In order to better illustrate the importance of movies as a tool for pronunciation teaching, it was of utmost importance that I selected a couple of movies that could be useful in the classroom. When doing so, there are a couple of things to which one has to pay attention. For this work there are three main criteria that I took into account which are: rating, linguistic difficulty, and the type of video.

6.1. The matter of rating

Although using movies in the classroom is a great idea, there has to be a criterion for selection, since not all movies are according to the level or the class the one is teaching, there are certain things to be taken into account, as is the case of the *content rating system*. The *content rating*, also known as ‘maturity rating’, is what rates the suitability of either books, video games, TV, movies, comics, etc., to its audience (Help Center, 2018).

Videos are usually rated ‘G’ when they are apt for all different audiences. Some examples of movies with this rating are Disney/ Pixar/ Dreamworks movies, movies are also called ‘family movies’.

On the other hand, there is the ‘NR’ rating, which stands for ‘no restrictions’. As the name may suggest, this type of rating is highly sensitive for its high content of sex, violence, nudity, obscene language, nudity, and gore. These type of videos should not be used as a teaching tool, at least in the classroom, since this can spark up controversy and there are other choices from which one can choose. It is up to the instructor to set his/ her own standards regarding the videos they choose to use as means of learning.

Along the line of rating, the teacher should also take into account a number of factors when selecting the videos to use: *socio-demographic characteristics*, *offensiveness of the video*, and the *structure of the video* (Berk, 2009).

The first set of characteristics relate to the age, gender, grade level, language dominance, and ethnicity. As a teacher, one should know our students, hence the importance of bearing these characteristics in mind at the moment we set ourselves to choose a video with which to work in class.

Another crucial factor to think about is the *offensiveness of the video*. Even movies or shows that are rated G, can be offensive if misinterpreted: one could come across with

minor racial slurs, put-downs of females, professions, politicians, celebrities, etc. A student that is offended by a video, will zone out and get angry, which, instead of enhancing his/ her learning process, will hinder it. Sometimes, one could use a video, even if offensive, just to show why those videos should not be used, or what to avoid, although, in these cases, students should be warned, so that they prepare themselves and not take it personally.

Lastly, the *structure of the video* refers to its length -which can alternate between long and short depending on the need or the teacher's idea for its use-; context -every day language use-; and the number of characters -a large number of characters could be confusing for the students, therefore, the number should be reduced to a few-. (Berk, 2009)

6.2. Linguistic difficulty

Since movies rely on scenery, and most importantly, dialogue, attention to speech is of great importance. Granted that this work also develops how films can improve spoken interaction, students should be able to comprehend the foreign language in order to better reproduce it. That being said, another of the criteria that I chose to take into account when selecting the type of video is the linguistic difficulty presented in them, thus I chose to highlight three important headings: lexis/ syntax, text-type (visual texts in this case), and acoustics.

11. Lexis/ syntax: the lexis and the syntax of the movies chosen should be according to the level that one intends to teach. Animated movies have an easy-enough-type of syntax and lexis that makes their understanding more accessible for all levels.
12. Text-type: this is relevant in the case that subtitles are used. Here there is a perfect union of visual and spoken text. What we see and what we hear should not be treated as two completely separate entities, which is why one should think that the difference between words and pictures is rather in the way we receive the information (Meinhoff, 1998). This will lead us to think that it may be better to conceive a message out of a combination of words and pictures, than doing it separately, since the message will be more complete. There is no doubt that sometimes, the linguistic text overruns the comprehension of the visual input, such is the case of L2 students when watching a movie in original version with English subtitles; and in other cases it will be the other way around, but, oftentimes, comprehension will be better if it is a combination of the

two.

13. Acoustics: some acoustic characteristics the teacher should take into account are speech-rate (is the speech present in the video too fast for my students to comprehend clearly?), hesitation, stress, pause phenomena, rhythmic pattern, and diction (do the characters properly articulate words and make a correct sentence segmentation?) (Bahrani, 2011).

6.3. Type of videos

As mentioned before, there is wide variety of categories from which one could choose. The choice we make will depend on the purpose of our teaching, what we want our students to take from whatever is played in the classroom, the students' characteristics, and their interest, of course.

One could think of the genre with which we want to introduce our students to videos in original version (it should be kept in mind that some -or most- of our students will have never seen or watched movies their original language) which could be drama (easy to follow plots), action, romantic comedy, comedy, animated, and some science fiction movies (although most of them have vocabulary that is not apt to the level or the plot line is rather tangled and complicated, but there are some exceptions). Moreover, although this work focuses on the positive effects of movies in English, other texts types that one could use in the classroom are documentaries, commercials, faculty or student made videos, etc.

All of these types of videos can evoke or induce different emotions such as excitement, motivation, love, laughter, calmness, relaxation, activity, etc. The teacher should be able to play on those emotions and spark up interesting debates in the classroom which will improve the spoken interaction which is one of the main things for which we, as English teachers, should strive. If a one type of video is used inappropriately, in lieu of motivating our students, we will be left with a major decrease of motivation and classroom dominated mainly by yawns.

Having said all of the above and having taking into account the different aspects mentioned in this section, I selected the following movies with which to work in class:

14. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001)*

15. *Finding Nemo (2003)*

16. *The King's Speech (2010)*

It should be noted that there are several other movies that could be chosen with which to work in the classroom. Although, in order to narrow down my work, I selected the examples listed above.

7. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this section of my paper, it will be described and proposed ways in which pronunciation and spoken interaction can be improved by using the movies listed above. It should be noted that these movies should not be used as a marathon and be played from beginning to end, trying to fit a two-hour movie into one class. What I propose is to watch it in several classes and pause it when necessary to discuss important scenes or important topics that could come up, to make the experience as didactic and dynamic as it could be.

7.1. Title: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001)*

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone -also known as *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in the U.K.- is a fantasy novel published by British author J. K. Rowling in 1997 and taken to the big screen by Chris Columbus in 2001.

This movie is the first of an 8 movie franchise that captivated teenagers and young-adults -and some adults as well- all over the world. It was a movie that had great success at the box office and was received with the praise and great reviews by critics and the press. The main actors and actress gave the movie a special touch thanks to their charisma, despite their young age, and the supporting characters, and therefore, actors made the movie great altogether.

The main reason why I selected this movie as a part of my work is because of its universality. Almost everyone, knows, or has heard of, Harry Potter. If not the movie, they know at least, the books. Or even if they haven't seen or read the movie and the book, respectively, they know the story of the young wizard and some of his adventures at Hogwarts.

Another reason behind the choosing of this movie is its simplicity. The plot is very straightforward and the speech used in the movie is not fast-paced: the actors have great

diction and the dialogues are easy to understand, even if subtitles are not used. Adding up to this, the book also deals with various themes (such as death, power, friendship, humility, etc.) that can initiate different debates in the classroom which is a great opportunity for the students to practice their oral skills and their interaction with each other.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone tells the story of a 12 year old orphan boy who happens to be a wizard destined to study at Hogwarts, a castle in Scotland which is also a school of Witchcraft and Wizardry. There he meets his two sidekicks and best friends: Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger. Together, they embark in different adventures inside the castle and the castle grounds, and, in later movies, outside the castle. As mentioned before, the speech and intonation in Harry Potter is very understandable and easy to copy. It is also a great way to practice and learn how to recognize the British accent, as all the actors are strictly British, at least in this first movie. It should be taken into account, that I will refer to very specific scenes in the movie (the ones that I would personally use in my classroom).

7.1.1. Task Description

In this first task students will be made aware of British pronunciation as they will have to compare it with American pronunciation in a later activity with a different movie. Also, spoken interaction will be practiced as students will have to interact with each other. For this activity we will focus on the scene (example 1) in which Harry, and Ron, and Hermione meet for the first time (the first part of the scene in which Ron and Harry meet is the example 1 and the latter part of the scene in which Hermione makes her entrance is example 2). The scene takes place in the train that is taking the students to Hogwarts to begin their academic year. I chose this scene because it is when our three main characters meet for the first time, and what makes this movie interesting, apart from the clarity with which the actors speak, is that we get a showing of some of their most distinctive personality traits.

7.1.2. Pre-task

As a warm up activity, students will be played a clip from the movie and the teacher will ask them if they recognize the characters and suggest that they try to guess their names and what the whole story is about, without spoiling it for the ones that have

not seen the movie.

(1) Ron: Excuse me, do you mind? Everywhere else is full.

Harry: No, not at all.

Ron: I'm Ron, by the way. Ron Weasley.

Harry: I'm Harry. Harry Potter.

Ron: So-so it's true?! I mean, do you really have the...the...

Harry: The what?

Ron: Scar...?

Harry: Oh, yeah.

Ron: Wicked.

Harry: Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans?

Ron: They mean every flavour! There's chocolate and peppermint, and there's also spinach, liver and tripe. George swore he got a bogey-flavoured one once!

Harry: These aren't real chocolate frogs, are they?

Ron: It's only a spell. Besides, it's the cards you want. Each pack's got a famous witch or wizard. I got about 500 meself.

(2)Hermione: Has anyone seen a toad? A boy named Neville's lost one.

Ron: No.

Hermione: Oh, are you doing magic? Let's see then.

Ron: Aghhhehm. Sunshine, daises, butter mellow, turn this stupid fat rat yellow!

Hermione: Are you sure that's a real spell? Well, it's not very good, is it? Of course I've only tried a few simple spells myself, and they've all worked for me. For example...Oculus Reparo. That's better, isn't it? Holy Cricket! You're Harry Potter! I'm Hermione Granger...and you are...?

Ron: I'm...Ron Weasley.

Hermione: Pleasure. You two better change into your robes. I expect we'll be arriving soon. You've got dirt, on your nose, by the way, did you know? Just there.

7.2.3. Task

A great way to exploit this scene, after playing it at least twice for the students, is to make students play a role game in which they get to practice the dialogue as well as the pronunciation, trying to get as close as possible to the original sounds. The teacher should explain how some sounds work, and make the students repeat it.

In the extract from the movie script I highlighted some words (and word constructions) that are worth mentioning and explaining their pronunciation to the students such as the hard 't' in *better* as opposed to the American pronunciation; the way the word *scar* is pronounced by Ron with no rhoticity, as it happens when Harry pronounces his last name, or with words such as *there*, *flavour*, and *are*, as seen in (1). There are also, interesting things such as the difference in which Hermione pronounces *myself* and the way Ron does it, as *meself* (2). All these little things are a way to get students interested in the matter of pronunciation, as well as sparking their desire to achieve a good one.

Moreover, there are also whole phrases and word constructions that I highlighted such as the times in which the guys ask a question or are excited about something. It is important that students notice the difference in intonation, or exclamation, so that there is not room for confusion and a question does not transform into an affirmation or exclamation.

When it comes to the practice spoken interaction, there is an infinite number of activities that can come in handy which students might enjoy. First one could start by asking them what they know about the movie and why they think these movies are so famous and loved by almost everyone. Doing so, the teacher would be initiating a debate, because it is very unlikely that everyone in the classroom knows the movie, and some people might even dislike it, which is a great way to ask questions about their opinion towards the movie and ask them to give reasons as to why their opinion are such.

7.1.4. Post Task

Students will be encouraged to read the same scene from the book and compare it to the one they just saw in class, hence finishing with a debate to enhance students' oral skills.

7.1.5. Timing

This activity will take up the whole session: 50 minutes

7.1.6. Class management

Students will be working in groups to facilitate the execution of the activities.

7.2. Title: **Finding Nemo (2003)**

Finding Nemo is an animated movie released in 2003 by Walt Disney Pictures that won the 2003 Academy Awards for Best Animated Feature, and was nominated for other three different categories. Needless to say that this movie was the highest grossing G-rated film of all time before it was overthrown by Pixar's *Toy Story 3*.

This movie, being an animated movie whose main audience target are children, is a great choice to use in the classroom for its linguistic simplicity and how great the voice actors are, which makes the movie very easy to understand by ESL students. As it happens with *Harry Potter*, most of the students should know the movie or have an idea about the plot, and even know some dialogues of some scenes.

7.2.1. Task Description

In this case, I will focus on the scene in which Marlin -Nemo's Dad- meets Crush, the turtle. This scene is especially good because it is filled with slang and informal English, idioms, and collocations, which is a great way for students to go beyond the text-book English. Also, since the voice actors that appear in this scene from are Americans, the accent that the students will hear is different from the one in *Harry Potter*, which is a great way for them to compare. This task is mainly about comparing British and American accents and the use of slang words.

(3) Crush: Oh, saw the whole thing, dude. First you were like, 'whoa'! And then we were all like, 'whoa'! And then you were like, 'whoa'.

Marlin: What're you talking about?

Crush: You, mini-man. Takin' on the jellies. You got serious thrill issues, dude.

Marlin: Ooh.

Crush: Awesome.

Marlin: Ooh..ooh, my stomach. Ooooh..

Crush: Oh, man. No hurlin' on the shell, dude, okay, just waxed it.

Marlin: So Mr. Turtle...

Crush: Whoa, dude. Mr. Turtle is my father. Name's Crush.

Marlin: Crush? Really? Okay Crush, listen I need to get to the East Australian Current. EAC?

Crush: Ha ha ha, dude, ha ha, you're ridin' it, dude! Check it out!

7.2.2. Pre-task

As a warm-up exercise, students will be asked about Pixar movies and if they can name a few. The teacher should briefly describe the plot of *Finding Nemo* and students should be able to guess its name in English, instead of Spanish. They should also name some of the characters in the movie and briefly describe them.

7.2.3. Task

In (3) we have the transcript of part of the scene when Crush and Marlin meet which will be given to students. Students will be asked to underline slang words or idioms that they think are present, and any other form of informal English that they consider worth mentioning.

As one can see the use of informal English is very prominent, specially the use of the word *dude*, which Crush uses repeatedly. Students should know that this is a word one uses in English with friends, it is basically the equivalent to the Spanish slang word 'tío'. They should be able to locate in (3) the use of a very common type of verb in English: phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are a nightmare to any ESL student, especially if their language is strange to this type of collocations. The most effective way of learning phrasal verbs is by hearing them and, of course, practicing them. In this case, Crush uses *takin' on* which one should explain students that it means -in this context- 'to fight or to confront something/ someone.

Students will also be asked to listen to the way the word *takin'* is pronounced. If they cannot spot the nuance, the teacher will explain this phenomenon. This is very common in daily life English and, is a great way to boost students' confidence, especially of those who cannot make the /ng/ sound. The same thing happens with the way Crush pronounces *hurlin'* and *ridin'*.

There is another collocation that students should be able to locate in the scene extract: *Name's Crush*. Students should be taught that the language, rather than being a rigid

entity, is a flexible one with which one can improvise and play -to some extents, of course-. In this case, Crush does not use the typical sentence that we are taught to use when introducing ourselves: 'My name is...'; and this way of introducing oneself is also acceptable, especially if you are in an informal, or familiar, atmosphere.

In a second part of this task, the focus will move to intonation and comparison with the way some phrases are said in BrE to AmE, for instance, the way Marlin asks *what are you talking about?*. If we focus on the intonation, one can see that is different from the way the characters in Harry Potter make their questions, as the accent is also different. Pointing this out to students will make them realize that not every accent (or every language, for that matter) has the same intonation when it comes to asking questions, leading up to the improvement of where students place pitch in a sentence.

In (4) we get to the part of the scene in which Crush's son, Squirt, makes his appearance a:

(4) Crush: Whoa. Kill the motor, dude. Let us see what Squirt does flying solo.

Squirt: Whoa! Whoa! That was so cool! Hey dad, did you see that? Did you see me? Did you see what I did?

Crush: You so totally rock, Squirt! So give me some fin..noggin..

Crush/ Squirt: ...dude!

Crush: Oh, intro. Jellyman, Offspring. Offspring, Jellyman.

Squirt: Jellies? Sweet.

Crush: Totally.

Marlin: Well, apparently, I must've done something you all like. Heh, uh, dudes.

Squirt: You rock, dude!

Marlin: Ow.

Crush: Curl away, my son. Aw, it's awesome, Jellyman. Little dudes are just eggs, leave 'em on the beach to hatch, then coo-coo-ca-choo, they find their way back to the big 'o blue.

Marlin: All by themselves?

Crush: Yeah.

Marlin: But-but-but dude, how do you know when they're ready?

Crush: Well, you never really know. But when they'll know, you'll know, you know?

In this part of the scene we have got a number of things that are worth mentioning. First, the idiom *kill the motor*. Students should try to guess the meaning based on the context, that would be a great way to get them to talk and try to be more autonomous, which is crucial in language learning. After guessing the meaning, the students should be presented with idioms that mean the same, such ‘hold your horses’. This is a great way to enrich students’ expressions that are commonly used.

The use of the word *cool*, for instance, is another way to introduce accent comparison. The teacher should take the students back to Harry and Ron met for the first time and see if they can remember what word Ron said after Harry showed him the scar. They should answer ‘wicked’. In this case, this is a word that is mostly used in the U.K.; whereas in American English, this word is almost never used -except in some parts such as in New England-. Along this same line is the word ‘sweet’ which Squirt uses with the same meaning as ‘cool’, or ‘wicked’ in the case of Ron in Harry Potter.

Towards the end of the scene, when Squirt leaves, he says good-bye to Marlin with a “you rock, dude!”. In this case, we could ask our students about the intonation with which Squirt articulates this phrase and what they think he meant. That way, students learn a new idiom that is also common in the English language.

One should also mention the dropping of sounds that also occur in (4) as it happens in (3), and that our students should also know. We have the case of *em* in which Crush drops the ‘th’ sound after the /l/. This is a great hack for our students, since sometimes this pronoun is articulated after sounds that might be difficult to follow with an interdental consonant which can hinder fluency as a whole. This dropping of the ‘th’ sound in the pronoun ‘them’ is very frequent in English, hence the importance that our students are aware of it.

7.2.4. Post Task

It is of great interest to mention the word play that happens at the end of the scene when Crush says “Well, you never really know. But when they’ll know, you’ll know, you know?”. Students will try to explain what the turtle means by this and the different use of the pronoun ‘you’.

Furthermore, we have the phrase “you know?”. Fillers like this are very much used, especially in the States, when communicating a message. Conversations are filled with fillers and are a great way to approach the language and it gives the speaker time to think what he is going to say next.

7.2.5. Timing

As it happens with the first movie, this activity will take up the whole session: 50 mins.

7.2.6. Class management

Students will be working in groups.

7.3. Title: *The King's Speech* (2010)

The King's Speech is an Academy Award winning movie from 2010 starred by Colin Firth who, thanks to this movie, won that year the Oscar to Best Actor. This movie is a historical drama and it is based on the figure of King George VI, king of the United Kingdom and the Dominions during the period of the British Commonwealth. George VI reigned between 1936 and 1952, year in which he passed.

In this movie Colin Firth plays King George who suffers from severe stutter, and in hope of coping with this speech impediment, he sees an Australian speech and language therapist who will help him deliver his first discourse as King of the nation in which King George VI will declare war to the Nazi Germany. Although this is a great movie, it would work best in a classroom where the students' English level is rather high (I would recommend a class with a minimum English level of a B1.)

What makes this movie the great classic that it is, is the way English is used. Since King George is oftentimes unable to pronounce words at once, he requires the assistance of the speech therapist who gives him great techniques to both public speaking and pronunciation of words. Most like learning a language for the first time, the king has to be taught to properly articulate words, take deep breaths, and repeat tongue twisters to improve his pronunciation and to overcome his stutter.

The success of a movie like this in an ESL classroom lays behind the fact that our students are learning a language and in many cases they might relate to the figure of King George VI. Our king lacks confidence and is afraid of addressing his nation, lest he would not be seen as a prominent figure enough as to declare war on the Nazi Germany.

Regarding our students, one should bear in mind that very often they are afraid to speak out loud or express their ideas or opinions about a certain matter, lest they make a mistake. This movie teaches our students that it is okay to make mistakes and learn from them, as it is okay to work hard in order to overcome them and try your best when you set your

mind on something. In a way this movie is boost to their confidence which will improve both their spoken interaction and their pronunciation.

7.3.1. Task Description

Students will be played a scene from the movie and then be given the transcript and the scene will be played again. In this scene (transcribed in 5), King George seems to have given up on trying to overcome his stammer. This scene is a crucial moment in the movie, because of its content and its emotional charge. In the script it is very difficult to translate the struggle through which the King was going with every word that he tried to utter until rage overcame him.

(5) Bertie: It'll be like mad King George the Third, there'll be Mad King George the Stammerer, who let his people down so badly in their hour of need!

{Lionel sits down on the chair of Edward the Confessor.}

Bertie: What're you doing? Get up! You can't sit there!

Lionel: Why not? It's a chair.

Bertie: No, it's not, that is Saint Edward's Chair!

Lionel: People have carved their initials into it!

Bertie: That chair is the seat on which every King and Queen!

Lionel: It's held in place by a large rock!

Bertie: That is the Stone of Scone, you are trivialising everything!

Lionel: I don't care. I don't care how many Royal arses have sat in this chair.

Bertie: Listen to me... !

Lionel: Listen to you?! By what right?

Bertie: Divine right, if you must! I'm your King!!! Lionel: Noooo you're not! Told me so yourself. Said you didn't want it. So why should I waste my time listening to you?

Bertie: Because I have a right to be heard!

Lionel: Heard as what?!

Bertie: A man! I HAVE A VOICE!!!

7.3.2. Pre-task

Since our students need to learn intonation, it would be a great idea to get them to identify the emotions that the characters in the scene were experiencing and analyze the

way their voices raise and where it falls. A great idea is to pick a sentence and get students to guess which word is the one that is stressed and why they think the stress relies on that specific word

7.3.3. Task

In this case we will focus on word stress in sentences. Students are asked to underline the word that they think is stressed in (6).

(6) I don't care. I don't **care** how many **Royal arses** 'ave sat on this **chair**.

(7) /aɪ dɒnt keə. aɪ dɒnt keə haʊ 'meni 'rɔɪəl 'ɑ:sɪz æv sæt ən ðɪs tʃeə/

This would be a great way to explain students that in English, as it happens in Spanish, not every word in a sentence is stressed, some words are barely pronounced and reduced to a minimum as seen in (7). Words such as *don't*, *have*, *on* are not pronounced per vowel. In the case of *don't* the diphthong /əʊ/ the /ʊ/ is dropped and the whole diphthong is replaced by a single schwa vowel; same happens with the preposition *on* which in lieu of being pronounced as /ɒn/ the long open vowel /ɒ/ is shortened to a schwa. And in the case of /hæv/ the /h/ is dropped as it happens in many cases in which the /h/ succeeds a consonant. Students should know that these changes of word pronunciations are very common in daily life English and it relaxes the speech which brings together the different parties of a conversation.

There is another great scene in this movie in which King George demands Lionel -the speech therapist- to help him with the 'mechanical difficulties of his speech', as the Duchess of York -King George's wife- puts it. Lionel tells the king tips to improve his speech such as: relaxing his jaw muscles, strengthening his diaphragm, and strengthening his tongue. The latter he advises to be achieved by repeating tongue-twister such as: "I'm a thistle-sifter. I have a sieve of sifted thistles and a sieve of unsifted thistles. Because I'm a thistle-sifter."

This tongue-twister is a great way to motivate students to improve pronunciation, as it has got numerous /v/ sounds which one does not have in Spanish and which brings about difficulties in our students when pronouncing them.

The teacher will provide other examples of tongue twisters and get students to repeat them as something they should be able to do without problem by the end of the course. With a goal set, students will be more motivated and encouraged.

7.3.4. Post-task

Students will be asked to identify in this scene tips that Lionel gives the king in order to achieve a better vocalization and will discuss how they think said tips could help them personally. The techniques that Lionel suggests are a great way to relax the face muscles and they are fun exercises that the teacher could do with students in the classroom before every lesson, such as bouncing, moving the jaw from side to side to get it relaxed to get the muscle memory to be at its best when learning new sounds, and taking deep breaths to feel grounded which improves confidence when speaking. All these tips are great to get a class into the right mindset before starting a lesson.

7.3.5. Timing

As in previous cases, this activity will take up the whole session: 50 minutes.

7.3.6. Class management

Students will be working in groups.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The use of mass media in the current education era is the order of the day. TICs are constantly used in ESL teaching, from early ages to adulthood. These are alternative methodologies that break with the traditional way of teaching in a society in which technology plays such an important role.

Music, news, clips, magazines, etc. have always been used in the classroom when teaching either a second language or even subjects such as Mathematics, Literature, or History. These are also ways of breaking with the more traditional methodologies.

As the reader could see, using movies in a classroom can be very useful when teaching both spoken interaction and pronunciation. The best thing about using movies is that students go beyond the simple use of a text book which nowadays is highly overrated. Moreover, students learn English that is used in everyday life which, very often differ from the one they learn in text books. A teacher can complement books by using activities and learning materials with which he can come up himself which will make the learning process easier, especially if the tools used are visual and auditory.

As teachers, one should take into account that many of our students are going to be either visual or auditory learners (some could be kinesthetic as well, although these type of learners are not of abundance) which one should exploit to its maximum by using audio-visual materials that enhances what is taught in class.

One should also take into account several factors when selecting this type of tools -listed in section 3-. Of course, these factors depend on the use the teacher wants to give his/ her videos in the classroom, I attempted to give a general view of the ones that I took into account when selecting the movies about which I talk throughout my work. Every movie that I selected was carefully watched and the scenes that are analyzed in this work are just focal points to narrow down my work, although there are many more scenes from which a teacher can come up with ideas.

Harry Potter, *Finding Nemo*, and *The King's Speech* are three movies that, as one can see, can be very helpful in ESL teaching. Besides being excellent choices for a teacher to use to improve students' spoken interaction and pronunciation, they tap into values that are present in our current society and that can initiate interesting debates through which students are able to express their opinions in a secure atmosphere and are heard.

Finally, there are four lessons that *The King's Speech* teaches any educator and to which one should pay close attention while keeping in mind:

1. The Importance of the 'informal' part of language teaching. Lionel always insists on being informal with the king by using their respective first names and using humor in the teaching environment, which brings him closer to Bertie -King George VI-, thus breaking 'a barrier' and lightening the 'affective filter' so that language may be acquired.
2. Credentials might sometimes be overvalued. There is a scene in which the king discovers that Lionel has not got any official credential as a speech therapist which could lead us to think that teachers are not taught -or trained- but rather developed.
3. Relationships are what makes teaching. Our relationship with our students is what can enhance their learning process or hinder it, as it happens between Lionel and Bertie.
4. The development during childhood is the key to long term success. Bertie's stutter developed from early childhood trauma and the lack of a proper environment. From this one can deduce that giving our students a safe teaching environment in which they may feel free to express their own ideas without the fear of being judged or mocked at is primordial for success.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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