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MAESTRÍA EN INGLÉS CON ORIENTACIÓN EN
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**“The impact of mistakes at the micro level of
pronunciation on the assessment of *English
Phonetics and Phonology II* students' oral
performance”**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	I
List of figures	II
List of tables	III
Introduction	1
Chapter I State of research and theoretical framework.....	6
Section 1	6
Overview	6
I.1 State of research.....	6
Summary	9
Section 2	10
Overview	10
I.2.1 Communicative Language Ability (CLA)	10
I.2.2 The dual focus approach to pronunciation	15
Summary	17
Section 3	18
Overview	18
I.3 Language assessment	18
I.3.1 Kinds of tests	19
I.3.2 Pronunciation assessment	21
I.3.3 Some considerations about pronunciation issues	23
<i>Pronunciation errors or pronunciation mistakes..</i>	23
<i>Functional load principle</i>	24
<i>Segmentals or supra-segmentals.....</i>	25
Summary	28
Chapter II The study	29
Overview	29
Section 1	29
Overview	29
II.1.1 Context of research	29
II.1.2 <i>Phonetics and Phonology II</i>	31
Section 2	35
Overview	35
II.2.1 Research questions	35
II.2.2 General objective	36
II.2.3 Specific objectives	36
II.2.4 Methodology	36

II.2.4.1 Participants and corpus.....	36
II.2.4.2 Questionnaire	37
II.2.4.3 Identification-collection grid	37
II.2.4.4 Procedures.....	38
II.2.4.5 External raters	39
II.2.4.6 Examples of mistakes	40
Summary	42
Chapter III Presentation and discussion of results.....	43
Overview	43
III.1.1 Preliminary analysis	43
Frequency of occurrence of each micro level mistake.....	44
Mistakes in vowels and consonants	45
Mistakes in weak forms and endings and consonant clusters.....	46
Mistakes in prominence / rhythm and intonation.....	47
III.1.2 Micro level mistakes and marks	48
Linear regression analysis	50
Multiple regression analysis	51
III.1.3 Questionnaire to teachers	55
Chapter IV Conclusions and suggestions for further research	58
Overview	58
IV.1 Conclusions	58
IV.2 Suggestions for further research	69
References	71
Appendix 1	79
Appendix 2	86
Appendix 3	93
Appendix 4	102
Appendix 5	104
Appendix 6	106

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List of figures

FIGURE 1: Areas of Language Knowledge (Bachman and Palmer, 2010:45)	14
FIGURE 2: Dual Focus: Speech Production and Speech Performance	17
FIGURE 3: Micro level mistakes identification grid	38
FIGURE 4: Type, number and percentage of micro level mistakes found in the samples	44
FIGURE 5: Mistakes in the production of vowels	45
FIGURE 6: Mistakes in the production of consonants	45
FIGURE 7: Mistakes in the production of weak forms	46
FIGURE 8: Mistakes in the production of endings and consonant clusters	46
FIGURE 9: Mistakes in prominence/rhythm	47
FIGURE 10: Mistakes in intonation	47
FIGURE 11: Marks obtained by the participants during the final exam	49
FIGURE 12: Linear regression analysis done to the collected data	50
FIGURE 13: Comparison between micro level mistakes frequency of occurrence and influence on the final mark	54

List of tables

TABLE 1: <i>Phonetics and Phonology II</i> final oral exam: features of assessment	33
TABLE 2: Average number of mistakes made by students with passing and non-passing marks	49
TABLE 3: Multiple regression analysis done to the collected data	53

Introduction

Language assessment has always attracted the attention of foreign language teachers and researchers. It is a crucial point in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and as a second language (ESL)¹ because of the importance of the data gathered during the assessment process and the decisions and consequences involved in it. Those in charge of assessing foreign language students' linguistic abilities have a great responsibility, which confronts them with several questions and dilemmas that are not always easy to deal with. Studying and doing research on different aspects of language assessment in educational contexts will surely contribute to the transparency, objectivity and fairness of this process.

In educational contexts, such as that of the present study, assessment of students' oral performance in English forms part of the teaching practice. Assessment is used to collect information that will later have an impact not only on students but also on the decisions made as regards programmes of study, course contents, teaching methodology, assessment and scoring methods and instruments, kind of feedback, among others. Measuring language ability through a test or examination is a complex phenomenon that involves a variety of issues that need to be considered simultaneously such as construct definition, test reliability, validity of scores, inter rater reliability, fairness, consequences of test use and test taker or background characteristics (Kunnan 1995; Cheng & Curtis 2010). This complexity has given origin to an important number of research studies which intend to throw some light onto this matter.

Although much has been published about English language assessment in general (Bachman & Palmer 1996; Bailey 1998; McNamara 2001; Lynch 2003; Bachman & Palmer 2010; Kunnan 2014), most published research studies focus on commercial large scale internationally recognised British and

¹ Even though in *second language* and *foreign language* learning environments the contexts, and consequently the amount and quality of input, are different, in this study the terms will be used interchangeably because the underlying fundamental psycholinguistic processes involved are similar in both situations (Gass & Selinker 2008; Bilash 2009).

American examinations of language proficiency such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (Bachman et. al. 1995; Person 2002; Chen et. al. 2009; Chapelle et. al. 2008), the Cambridge Certificate exams (Chalhoub-Deville & Turner 2000; Weir & Milanovic 2003; Szpyra-Kozłowska et. al. 2005; Taylor & Jones 2006) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Alderson 2002; Alderson et. al. 2004; Cheng & Curtis 2010). In addition, when it comes to the assessment of pronunciation, the list of research studies becomes much shorter. That is, pronunciation assessment seems to have been somewhat neglected. The scarcity of research in the area might be owing to the multiplicity of aspects that come into play in oral performance together with the elusive and complex nature of pronunciation.

Effective communication is one of the main aspects taken into account when assessing the oral production of students of English as a foreign language, and the essential role played by pronunciation cannot be ignored. Pennington (1996:6), for instance, refers to pronunciation as having a key role in communication by claiming that “phonology is an important aspect of fluency and therefore of discourse competence, i.e., the ability to construct extended stretches of speech appropriate to different contexts”. She also stresses that phonology should not be ignored because ignoring it means not paying attention to “an aspect of language which is central to the production, the perception and the interpretation of many different kinds of linguistic and social meanings” (p.6).

Morley (1994) highlights the importance of pronunciation in communication claiming that nonnative English speakers who have pronunciation problems may experience several serious difficulties such as “complete breakdown in communication, ineffectual speech performance, negative judgments about personal qualities, anticipatory-apprehensive listener reactions and pejorative stereotyping” (p.69). In a similar line, Luoma (2004) states that pronunciation is a crucial component in communicative effectiveness and says that standard learners’ aims should be based on comprehensibility.

Focusing on the suprasegmental level, Clennell (1997:117) claims that “failure to make use of appropriate pragmatic discourse features of English

intonation may result in serious communication breakdown” and points out a series of possible problems. First, the propositional content of the message may not be fully understood. Second, the illocutionary force of the utterance, that is, its pragmatic meaning, might also be misunderstood. Finally, inter speaker cooperation may be reduced and conversational management may be weakened.

Following a similar line of thought, authors such as Goodwin et al (1994), Brazil (1997), and Chapman (2007) also claim that the use of intonation patterns in English affects the communicative value of speech (see also Brazil 1985; Brazil et al 1980). For example, some other authors such as Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), Jusczyk and Luce (2002) and Hawkins (2003) claim that if a listener is familiarized with syllabic structure, lexical stress, intonation, and rhythm, they will find it easier to segment the speech stream, to recognise words more quickly and to identify the most important bits of information in an utterance². In other words, mastering discourse intonation is crucial for students of English as a foreign language. Summing up, pronunciation is essential to the achievement of communication efficiency and it has to be taught and assessed accordingly even more so in the case of English taught at university level like in the case of the present investigation.

I have always been interested in language assessment, especially in the assessment of oral production. I find it fascinating to consider all the aspects that need to be taken into account when scoring students’ oral performance and I have always wondered which aspects are given more importance at the time of rating such complex phenomena. In my experience as a teacher of English phonetics and phonology, I have often found myself in the dichotomy of whether rating students’ oral production taking into account only those aspects included in the course syllabus or considering features taught in previous courses as well. My interest in such questions was the leading force for this study. In addition, while doing the reading for the compulsory courses which were part of the MA, I noticed that even though there are some studies about pronunciation assessment in different contexts, very few focus on the evaluation of the

² See also Cutler (1984), Anderson-Hsieh and Koehler (1988), Anderson-Hsieh et al. (1992), Cutler and Butterfield (1992) and Munro and Derwing (1995).

pronunciation of prospective EFL teachers and/or translators in oral exams in EFL university contexts, which is my field of interest because of the nature of my work.

This study aims at determining the impact of mistakes at the micro level or pronunciation on the assessment of undergraduate EFL (English as a foreign language) students in the context of the subject *Phonetics and Phonology II* at the School of Languages, National University of Córdoba. More precisely, the study aims at a) identifying the micro level mistakes, both segmental and supra segmental, that students produce during *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exams and b) determining the impact of these mistakes on their performance assessment. To meet the objectives, the samples were collected during final oral exams and the marks students got were registered; then the samples were analysed so as to identify the micro level mistakes; the mistakes were classified following Morley's (1994) taxonomy; last, statistical tests were run in order to determine the impact of mistakes on the final mark assigned to participants.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter I describes the state of research and presents the theoretical framework. It is divided into three different sections. Section 1 presents several studies that deal with different aspects of pronunciation assessment in a variety of contexts. In Section 2, the concept of language proficiency is traced back to its origins and then the concept of Communicative Language Ability, put forward by Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996, 2010), is analysed. Finally, Morley's (1994) Dual Focus Approach to the teaching of pronunciation is described. In section 3, language assessment is defined, different testing methods are revised and the *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exam is described. Furthermore, pronunciation assessment in particular is discussed, together with the concept of error and the functional load principle. Reference is made to the tendency of focusing either on segmental or supra segmental features during pronunciation assessment.

Chapter II consists of two sections. In the first one, the context of this research study is described. Reference is made to the role of pronunciation in the programmes of study of the School of Languages, to its students and

teachers, and to the course *Phonetics and Phonology II*. In the second section, the study is presented: the research questions, objectives, methodology and procedures are thoroughly detailed.

In Chapter III, results are presented and discussed. First, a descriptive statistical analysis is made to the data to examine the occurrence of micro level mistakes and the marks students were given. Then, the results of linear regression and multiple regression tests are presented to determine the impact of micro level mistakes on students' final marks.

Chapter IV presents the conclusions reached in the study. There are also a number of suggestions for further research for people who are interested in doing research in the area of pronunciation assessment.

It is expected that this work should constitute a contribution to the field of pronunciation assessment in educational contexts where English pronunciation is taught to prospective EFL professionals.

CHAPTER I

State of research and theoretical framework

Overview

Chapter I describes the state of research related to this investigation and presents the theoretical framework on which this study is based. The chapter is divided into three sections.

Section 1

Overview

Section 1 refers to research studies carried out in the field of pronunciation which may be considered to be related to the present work.

I.1 State of research

The interest in language assessment has resulted in an increasing amount of research about different aspects. However, little has been published about the assessment of pronunciation and there are even fewer studies focusing on the evaluation of the pronunciation of prospective EFL teachers and/or translators in oral exams in EFL university contexts, which is the concern

of this investigation. Below, reference will be made to a few pieces of research which may be considered relevant to this work as they deal with topics which are related to English pronunciation teaching or assessment.

To begin with, there are a few studies that deal with pronunciation in higher educational contexts but they do not focus on pronunciation assessment. For example, at the School of Languages, National University of Córdoba, Ghirardotto (2009) studied the impact of pronunciation mistakes on the intelligibility and communicability of EFL students' oral production when reading aloud. This study focused on segmental features and did not take into account the suprasegmental level. In 2010, Kang et al. studied the oral production of international assistant teachers of English from different nationalities and tried to establish the relation between production of supra segmental features, level of comprehensibility and level of oral competence as perceived by university students who were native speakers of English. In another study, Kang (2010) identified the suprasegmental features of English which seem to exert the strongest influence on the perception of a 'foreign accent'. She found that 'pitch range' and 'word stress' are the prosodic features that contribute the most to listeners' perceiving a 'foreign accent'.

Second, there are some other studies which do focus on pronunciation assessment but in different educational contexts. As part of her MA thesis, Meike Wouters (2009) conducted research on pronunciation training and assessment in general English classes in Dutch secondary schools, where foreign languages are taught by means of a communicative approach. Basically, she wanted to find out when, during the course, it was better to assess students, whether students should be tested on controlled or spontaneous speech, whether both perception and production should be tested, and whether students should aim at acquiring a native like pronunciation.

We can also mention an MA thesis by Bombelli (2005) which studied the evaluation³ of pronunciation in higher education with a focus on inter rater

³Even though some authors establish a difference between assessment and evaluation (e.g. Suskie 2004; Bachman and Palmer 2010; Secolsky & Denison 2011), claiming, among other things, that assessment is systematic, substantively grounded and process oriented whereas evaluation is goal oriented, in this study the two concepts will be used as synonyms.

reliability. Bombelli concludes that the use of holistic rating scales enhances inter-rater reliability. She claims that trying to study and enhance inter-rater consistency in assessing pronunciation constitutes a contribution to both the evaluation of pronunciation in particular and to the process of evaluation in general. Talia Isaacs (2008) explored whether intelligibility is an appropriate criterion for assessing international English Teaching Assistants' (ITA) pronunciation proficiency. Even though she explored pronunciation assessment at university level, she worked with students who had already graduated from college.

Similarly, Fumiyo Nakatsuhara (2008) carried out a study in which he investigated pronunciation and fluency assessment, raters and scores. He explored some aspects of the relationship between variation in interviewer behaviour and its impact on a candidate's performance and scores as regards pronunciation. In order to investigate the impact of interviewer variation, he analysed "the variability of interviewer behaviour, its influence on a candidate's performance and raters' consequent perceptions of the candidate's ability on analytical rating scales" (p. 266). Lastly, Soler and Bombelli (2005) carried out a research study about the assessment of students' oral production in university contexts but the study focused only on the use of supra segmental features of pronunciation when reading aloud and the judges were not experts in phonetics and phonology.

Third, there is a set of studies which have focused on the assessment of pronunciation in international examinations with an interest in the methods used. Szpyra-Kozłowska et al. (2005) claim that pronunciation is an important element of communicative competence, whose testing has long been neglected due to the complexity of the speaking skill. In their research paper, these authors discuss the reliability of the most frequently employed pronunciation assessment methods in EFL. First, they examine impression based pronunciation testing in the Cambridge English Examinations and highlight its weaknesses. They argue that, in these examinations, inter rater reliability is seriously undermined because of two main reasons: first, the lack of clear cut criteria for assessing the candidates' pronunciation, as assessment relies too heavily on very imprecise impressionistic judgments; second, they point out that

these tests make unreasonable demands on nonnative examiners. Besides, Szpyra-Kozłowska et al. (2005) compare two different approaches to pronunciation testing: analytic (atomistic) and global (holistic, impressionistic). They conclude that it is very difficult to evaluate pronunciation in an objective and reliable way and, apparently, neither of the two methods can be viewed as “fulfilling all the necessary requirements of objectivity, reliability and practicality” (p. 4).

Anderson-Hsieh et al. (1992) also studied how assessment is carried out in an international examination. They tried to determine how certain ESL speakers' pronunciation problems during the 'Speak Test'⁴ influenced the impressionistic assessment done by expert raters who were part of the evaluating team. The researchers analysed the students' oral performance, identified mistakes at the segmental, prosodic and syllabic levels and, finally, established the influence of the different kinds of mistakes on the evaluators' scores. The results showed that even though all the mistakes that students made influenced the assessment of their pronunciation, the mistakes at the prosodic level were the ones which had the most influence.

Summing up, it is possible to find some studies about pronunciation assessment in a variety of contexts and with diverse objectives but very few focus on the evaluation of the pronunciation of prospective EFL teachers and/or translators in EFL university contexts.

Summary

In this section, reference has been made to investigations related to the present study because they focus on pronunciation or on pronunciation assessment in different educational contexts.

⁴SPEAK Test (*Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit Test*) is an English international exam organised by the editors of the TOEFL (*Test of English as a Foreign Language*). It tests speakers' oral competence. The test takers are usually foreign assistant teachers in American universities.

Section 2

Overview

Section 2 refers to the concept of Communicative Language Ability put forward by Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996, 2010) and to the contributions made by different authors. Then Morley's (1994) Dual Focus Approach to the teaching of English pronunciation is described.

I.2.1 Communicative Language Ability (CLA)

In the 1960s Chomsky put forward a theory of language in which he claimed that languages are "rule-governed systems which are unaffected by social and situational variation" (Lyons 1996:18); he stated that each language is composed of *competence* and *performance*, two terms frequently used when dealing with approaches to second language learning. When describing competence, Chomsky (1965:3) defined it as the knowledge of an "ideal speaker-listener", as opposed to performance, which was "the actual use of language in concrete situations"; he excluded the 'ability of use' from the definition. Chomsky's theory was quite restrictive and was criticised by authors such as Hymes (1972) and Campbell and Wales (1970), for not taking into consideration "the ability to produce or understand utterances which are appropriate to the context in which they are made" (Campbell and Wales 1970:247). For a good number of linguists, this ability is even more important than the grammaticality of sentences; as already said, it is often claimed that Chomsky's theory "provides no place for consideration of the appropriateness of the sociocultural significance of an utterance in the situational and verbal context in which it is used" (Canale and Swain 1980:4).

Hymes (1972) introduced "the notion of 'ability' to the concept of competence" (Llurda, 2000:86) and criticised Chomsky, claiming that the term *performance* should not be used to refer to "two distinct things: a theory of

performance and a theory of language use” (1972:272). Hymes stated that the notion of competence should refer not only to the underlying knowledge a person has of a language but also to their ability to use that knowledge in specific contexts. As a reaction, Chomsky established a difference between pragmatic competence and grammatical competence, which was also criticised by other linguists (Llurda 2000). In spite of all the opponents to Chomsky’s theory, it is important to point out that it constitutes an outstanding and influential contribution to the development of different approaches in the field of language acquisition and language theories in general.

Influenced by Hymes’ work, Canale and Swain (1980) and then Canale (1983) put forward and gave a detailed description of the concept *communicative competence*. In addition, Canale and Swain (1980:6) established a distinction between *communicative competence* and *communicative performance*, the latter referring to “the realisation of these competencies and their interaction in the actual production and comprehension of utterances”. According to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), *communicative competence* consists of four different components:

1. Linguistic competence: The focus is on sentence level language with attention to form (i.e., the grammar, the phonology, the lexicon of the L2, etc.).
2. Discourse competence: The focus is on discourse above the level of the sentence (i.e., language organisation, rhetorical markers, ways of showing relationships in extended oral and written texts, etc.).
3. Sociolinguistic competence: The focus is on manipulating language as appropriate to a specific context (i.e., situation, participants, roles, shared knowledge, etc.).
4. Strategic competence: The focus is on compensating for weaknesses in any of the other three competence areas (i.e., manipulating language as necessary to cope with breakdowns in communication, to repair miscommunication, etc.).(Canale and Swain 1980 in Morley 1994:78).

On the basis of the work carried out by preceding linguists, Bachman (1990) and Bachman & Palmer (1996, 2010) continued working and elaborating on the concept of *communicative competence*. These authors stated that *communicative competence* makes reference to the knowledge about the rules

of the grammar *-grammatical competence-* and to the knowledge about how to use language in specific situations *-contextual or sociolinguistic competence-*.

In 1990, Bachman's work focused on incorporating the theory of communicative competence to the field of language testing, which resulted in a better understanding of the factors that affect performance during language tests. He claimed that in order to develop and use language tests or to focus on issues related to the measurement of language proficiency, first it is essential to create a solid framework to describe the characteristics of the language abilities that we want to measure and of the methods we will use to measure those abilities. Thus, it is of prime importance to consider some determining aspects such as the context in which the test is or will be used, the nature of the language abilities that are being measured, and the nature of the measurement itself.

Bachman (1990) pointed out that in order to make inferences about language ability on the basis of performance in language tests it is necessary to define this ability or 'construct' clearly and precisely, taking into account particular testing situations, purposes, test takers and Target Language Use (TLU) domain. Based on the earlier work on communicative competence of scholars such as Hymes (1972), Munby (1978), Canale and Swain (1980), Savignon (1983) and Swain (1983), Bachman included the discourse dimension in his description of *communicative language ability (CLA)*. For Bachman (1990:84), CLA "consists of both knowledge, or competence, and the capacity for implementing, or executing that competence in appropriate, contextualised communicative language use".

Thus the framework of language ability proposed by Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996, 2010), includes two main components: *language knowledge (or language competence)* and *strategic competence*, which is described as "a set of metacognitive strategies that manage the ways in which language users utilise their different attributes (e.g., language knowledge, topical knowledge, affective schemata) to interact with characteristics of the language situation" (Bachman and Palmer 2010:44). These authors claim that meta cognitive strategies contribute to planning,

monitoring, and evaluating language users' problem solving ability. This description is in consonance with claims made by other authors who state that meta cognitive strategies are essential when planning, organising and evaluating one's own learning (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara and Campione 1983; Von Wright 1992; Savery and Duffy 1994; Oxford 1996, 2003; Purpura 1999; Hsiao and Oxford 2002). The combination of these two competences, language competence and strategic competence, allows language users to interpret discourse, to create it and to reach their communicative goals.

Bachman and Palmer (1996, 2010) describe language knowledge as the domain of information in memory which the language user makes use of in order to interpret and to create discourse. As shown in FIGURE 1 below, language knowledge includes two broad subcategories: 1) *organisational knowledge*, which controls the formal elements of language so that the language user can produce and/or comprehend grammatically acceptable oral and written texts and 2) *pragmatic knowledge*, which enables the language user to produce and/or interpret discourse by relating the texts to their meanings, to the language users' intentions, and to features of the language use setting (Bachman and Palmer, 2010).

Organisational knowledge is further divided into two sub components: a) *grammatical knowledge* and b) *textual knowledge*. Pragmatic knowledge is divided into a) *functional knowledge* and b) *sociolinguistic knowledge*. The knowledge of phonology is included as one of the subcomponents of grammatical knowledge, which makes reference to the way in which language users produce and comprehend accurate sentences and utterances (Bachman and Palmer 2010). The components of grammatical and pragmatic competence are closely related to each other; they are interdependent; they "all interact with each other and with features of the language situation" and "this very interaction between the various competencies and the language use context characterises communicative language use" (Bachman 1990:86).

I Organisational Knowledge (how utterances or sentences and texts are organised)

A. Grammatical Knowledge (how individual utterances or sentences are organised)

1) Knowledge of vocabulary

2) Knowledge of Syntax

3) Knowledge of phonology/graphology

B. Textual Knowledge (how utterances or sentences are organised to form texts)

II Pragmatic Knowledge (how utterances or sentences and texts are related to the communicative goals of the language user and to the features of the language use setting)

A. Functional Knowledge (how utterances or sentences and texts are related to the communicative goals of language users)

1) Knowledge of Ideational functions

2) Knowledge of manipulative functions

3) Knowledge of heuristic functions

4) Knowledge of imaginative functions

B. Sociolinguistic Knowledge (how utterances or sentences and texts are related to the features of the language use setting)

1) Knowledge of genres

2) Knowledge of dialects/varieties

3) Knowledge of registers

4) Knowledge of natural or idiomatic expressions

5) Knowledge of cultural references and figures of speech

FIGURE 1: Areas of Language Knowledge (Bachman and Palmer 2010:45)

As can be seen in FIGURE 1, knowledge of pronunciation –*knowledge of phonology*- is one of the different competencies that make up grammatical knowledge. These competences -knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax and phonology/graphology- “govern the choices of words to express specific significations, their forms, their arrangement in utterances to express propositions, and their physical realisations, either as sounds or as written symbols” (Bachman 1990:87). In turn, grammatical knowledge together with textual knowledge are the two components of organisational knowledge. Organisational knowledge is described by Bachman (1990) as comprising the abilities to control formal structures of language to produce and recognise sentences which are grammatically correct, to understand the propositional knowledge, and to order them so as to form texts.

What is remarkable about Bachman’s framework of CLA is that it relates competence and performance and presents a general model of language use on language tests that involves, as stated in Bachman and Palmer (1996:62), “complex and multiple interactions” of factors, such as language ability, test method and test setting characteristics, personal characteristics of test takers and random measurement error. Moreover, the framework can be used to describe “performance on language tests” (Bachman 1990:348), and to assess the different language components separately. In this study, the focus will be on some of the features which are part of the knowledge of pronunciation and which, following Morley (1994), can be said to belong to the micro level elements of pronunciation.

I.2.2 The Dual Focus Approach to English pronunciation

On the basis of the communicative perspective to the teaching of English pronunciation, Morley (1994) puts forward the “Dual-Focus Program Philosophy”, according to which pronunciation, an integral and essential part of

communication, is said to include elements belonging to two different levels: a micro level and a macro level (see FIGURE 2 below).

The macro level has to do with speech performance and global patterns. It encompasses general elements of communicability which aim at developing discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. This macro dimension focuses on components of communicative oral discourse such as “overall precision and clarity”, “overall fluency” and “overall speech intelligibility level” (Morley 1994:78).

The micro level pays attention to the phonetic and phonological competence, e.g. to the production of vowels and consonants, stress, rhythm, intonation, volume, pauses and adjustments. This level refers to the production of discrete elements of pronunciation, which have an impact on speakers' intelligibility.

<i>Micro Level</i>	<i>Macro Level</i>
<p data-bbox="225 1088 780 1234"><i>Speech Production: Discrete Points</i> (A focus on specific elements of pronunciation)</p> <ul data-bbox="272 1272 780 1973" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="272 1272 780 1417">• Clarity and precision in articulation of consonants and vowel sounds <li data-bbox="272 1451 780 1653">• Consonant combinations both within and across word boundaries; elisions; assimilations <li data-bbox="272 1686 780 1787">• Neutral vowel use; reductions; contractions <li data-bbox="272 1821 780 1973">• Syllable structure; phrase groups and pause points; linking words across word 	<p data-bbox="802 1088 1359 1234"><i>Speech Performance: Global Patterns</i> (A focus on general features of communicability)</p> <ul data-bbox="850 1272 1359 2002" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="850 1272 1359 1440">• Overall precision and clarity in contextualised speech, both sounds and suprasegmentals <li data-bbox="850 1473 1359 1619">• General vocal effectiveness in oral discourse; communicative use of vocal features <li data-bbox="850 1653 1359 1798">• Overall fluency in ongoing planning and structuring of speech as it proceeds <li data-bbox="850 1832 1359 1933">• Overall speech intelligibility level <li data-bbox="850 1966 1359 2002">• General communicative

<p>boundaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall rate of speech; variations in pacing; rhythm; stress, and unstress • Overall volume; sustaining energy level across an utterance; intonation patterns and pitch change points; vocal qualities 	<p>command and control of grammar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communicative command of vocabulary words and phrasal units • Overall effective use of appropriate and expressive nonverbal features of oral communication
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FIGURE 2: Dual Focus: Speech Production and Speech Performance

As already stated, in the present study, special attention will be placed on the micro level of pronunciation and both segmental and supra segmental features will be taken into account. As to the segmental features, we will focus on individual sounds that speakers use to form words or larger stretches of speech; as to the supra segmental features, we will consider aspects such as rhythm, word stress, prominence and pitch movement. It should be pointed out that both segmental and suprasegmental features are interdependent and essential; as Pennington (1996) claims, the supra segmental dimension may be considered as the basis and the framework where the segments fit.

Summary

In section 2, Bachman's (1990) and Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) concept of Communicative Language Ability was described and analysed. In the following subsection, Morley's (1994) Dual Focus Philosophy, a communicative approach to the teaching of pronunciation, was described. These two approaches serve as the main theoretical framework for the development of this study.

Section 3

Overview

In this section we will draw on Bachman (1990, 2004) and Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) definition of language assessment, we will describe different testing methods (Bachman 1990; Bailey 1998; McNamara 2000) and describe the *English Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exam. Then, we will deal with pronunciation assessment in particular. We will refer to the concept of error as used in this study and to the functional load principle. We will discuss different authors' opinions on whether to focus on segmental or supra-segmental features when assessing pronunciation and then the perspective adopted in this study will be presented.

I.3 Language Assessment

Bachman (2004:6-7) defines assessment as “the process of collecting information about something that we are interested in, according to procedures that are systematic and substantively grounded”. That is, the assessment of language ability means using appropriate methods and instruments to collect information about this ability and then process that information. In educational settings, tests or examinations are frequently used as instruments to assess language ability.

Within the context of this research, our interest lies in *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral examinations and in their function as “indicators of abilities or attributes” in language use and as “sources of information for making decisions” (Bachman 1990:54) which affect our students' academic life. Following McNamara (2000), we can say that those decisions may be considered as “*high-stake decisions*” (p. 195), since they involve major consequences for the test takers and, once the assessment process is finished, errors in the process cannot be easily corrected.

Language tests may serve a variety of purposes. They are instruments which can be very helpful and valuable to make decisions about the teaching and learning process and also about the educational system as a whole. For example, Bachman and Palmer (1996) claim that tests give teachers and raters important information when deciding on matters such as materials, objectives, and achievement. Moreover, test outcomes can serve as feedback on the effectiveness of our teaching and testing practices.

I.3.1 Kinds of Tests

As already stated, assessment implies collecting information and this may be carried out in a variety of ways. We will make reference to assessment and types of tests and their characteristics as seen from different perspectives and, on this basis, we will then describe and analyse *Phonetics and Phonology* // examination.

Tests, or examinations, can be classified according to their purpose - what they are for. Different authors make reference to different purposes. Bachman (1990:70), for example, expresses that “any given test is typically developed with a particular primary use in mind, whether it be for an educational program or for research”. He differentiates several types of tests depending on their purpose, such as *selection, entrance, readiness, placement, diagnostic, progress, achievement, attainment, and mastery* tests. Brown (2004), Alderson (2005) and Bachman and Palmer (2010) also establish a distinction between tests that are administered to serve “*summative and formative purposes*” (Bachman and Palmer 2010:29) depending on whether they aim at checking if the course objectives have been accomplished or at improving learning and teaching processes and practices. Similarly, Bailey (1998:37-39) makes reference to a variety of tests which, according to their purpose, can be classified as *aptitude tests, language dominance tests, proficiency tests, admission tests, placement tests, diagnostic tests, progress tests, and screening tests*. As Bailey (1998) claims, each type of test has its own assessment purpose and this should be clearly understood “so that tests and

their resulting scores are not misused or misinterpreted in ways that negatively affect language programs and learners' lives" (pp. 39-40).

In terms of purpose, McNamara (2000) distinguishes between theory based tests, called *proficiency tests*, and syllabus based tests, called *achievement* or *attainment tests*. That is, *achievement tests*, such as end of course tests or portfolio assessments, are those associated with the instruction process. They are used, for example, to gather evidence in order to see how much progress students have made or whether they have reached the learning goals set for the whole course. As to *proficiency tests*, they are criterion based, rather than syllabus based, and are used to collect information about how well a test taker will perform in the "future 'real life' language use" (McNamara 2000:7) independently of any teaching-learning context. Within this type, we may find admission tests to universities or job positions.

Tests may also be described according to their testing method. In terms of method, McNamara's (2000) distinguishes between *paper-and-pencil language tests* and *performance tests*. The former "take the form of the familiar examination question paper" and they are usually used to assess "either separate components of 'language knowledge' or 'receptive understanding'" (p.5). On the contrary, in *performance tests*, language ability is assessed through an act of communication. In these tests, raters elicit relatively extended pieces of writing or speaking and rate the samples using a specific rating procedure.

Considering testing conditions, Harris and McCann (1994) and Brown (2004), for example, differentiate between *informal* and *formal* assessment. The former has to do with teachers tracking students' ongoing learning process continually by using informal methods such as portfolios or diaries. The latter involves standardised tests or other exams which are administered under certain conditions in order to collect data and/or to determine the test-takers' level of achievement. Besides, Bachman and Palmer (2010) claim that tests can be *implicit* or *explicit*. Implicit tests are usually continuous, cyclical and instantaneous and they occur when students are not aware of the fact that some kind of assessment is taking place; on the other hand, testing is *explicit*

when the rater has clearly stated that the task will be an instance of assessment or a test.

Concerning scoring criteria, Bailey (1998), among others, establishes a difference between *criterion-referenced* and *norm-referenced testing*. In *criterion-referenced testing*, the score “is interpreted relative to a pre set goal or objective - the criterion” (p.36), which may be the course syllabus objectives, for instance. On the other hand, in *norm-referenced testing* the “grades or scores are based on a comparison of the test-takers to one another” (p.35); thus, each test-taker score is interpreted against the results of other test-takers.

Another distinction made is that between *objective* and *subjective* scoring criteria (e.g., Bachman 1990). In *objective tests* raters are not required to make any judgment whatsoever; “the test taker’s response is determined entirely by predetermined criteria” (p. 76), for instance, in a multiple choice test. On the other hand, in *subjective tests* the rater “must make a judgment about the correctness of the response based on her subjective interpretation of the scoring criteria” (p.76), for instance, in an open ended question exam.

I.3.2 Pronunciation Assessment

Assessment is a complex process and it seems to be even more complex in the case of pronunciation. Acknowledging the complex and elusive nature of pronunciation, Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) point out that there are features which are unique to pronunciation that influence “how evaluation is carried out, how feedback is provided and, at which stages of instruction is most appropriately given” (p.341). Similarly, and referring to the assessment of oral performance, Luoma (2004:X) mentions difficulties such as the fact that it involves raters’ “instantaneous judgments about a range of aspects”, one of which is “the sound of speech”, which includes features such as “individual sounds, pitch, volume, speed, pausing, stress and intonation”; that is, raters need to pay attention to a myriad of features that occur simultaneously: segmental and suprasegmental micro level features as well as macro level

features of pronunciation. So raters' individual perception plays an essential role.

An important factor involved is then raters' subjectivity. It is the rater who decides on the score or rating that represents the level of students' performance during the assessment process. Different questions may influence raters' judgment and it is essential to try to minimize unwanted effects. Rater standardization meetings with explicit assessment criteria and the use of rating scales can contribute positively.

So a further aspect to consider when dealing with assessment, and in this particular case with pronunciation assessment, is the scoring method used by raters. There are, of course, different methods and each has advantages and disadvantages. In the context of this investigation, for example, raters assess students' pronunciation performance "impressionistically", i.e. "without an explicit scale" (Weigle 2002:149). However, the use of rating scales is usually recommended in the literature⁵.

No matter which scoring method the rater chooses to use, the construct proposed for the test needs to be clearly defined; that is, the aspects that are going to be taken into account when scoring must be explicit and clear. In the case of pronunciation, for instance, the rater will need to know whether the focus is on macro level features or on micro level features, or on certain segmental or supra segmental features.

Finally, it should be pointed out that when numerical scores are needed, like in the case of this study, Carr (2000), for instance, states that there are "inherent limitations involved in reducing complex performances to one or more numerical ratings" so it seems that greater care must be taken so that these scores represent level of achievement or performance as accurately as possible.

⁵Rating scales are usually divided into *global* (sometimes called *holistic* or *unitary*) and *analytic* (sometimes called *componential*). *Holistic scales* consider language ability as "a single unitary ability", whereas *analytic scales* "incorporate the notion that language ability consists of multiple components and that it involves separate *analytic* ratings for each of the specific components in the construct definition" (Bachman & Palmer 2010:238). For more details on rating scales see Bachman & Palmer (2010).

In short, multiple aspects must be taken into account when assessing oral language ability in general and pronunciation in particular. There are a number of intervening factors or characteristics that need special attention such as the complexity of the skill *per se*, raters' subjectivity at the time of scoring, and the instruments and scoring methods involved.

As already stated, researchers have not paid enough attention to pronunciation and pronunciation assessment and this is even more noticeable in the context of higher education. As Derwing and Munro (2005:380) claim "much less research has been carried out on L2 pronunciation than on other skills such as grammar and vocabulary". So much remains to be done in this field because instructional materials and practices are many times influenced only by notions based upon common sense, intuition or idiosyncrasy.

I.3.3 Some considerations about pronunciation issues

Before describing the study itself, some considerations should be made about a few issues that seem to recur when assessing pronunciation.

Pronunciation errors or pronunciation mistakes

As already stated, this study is concerned with the pronunciation of English *Phonetics and Phonology II* students and with how micro level errors impact on the assessment of their oral production.

There are a number of authors that make a difference between *errors* and *mistakes*, such as Carrió and Mestre, 2010⁶. *Errors* are considered to be typical of language learners and they are defined as "deviations from the standard use that a (competent) L1 speaker would have" (Mestre 2011:207). Thus, errors show an L2 learner's interlanguage, a language learner's competence. As the Council of Europe, (2001:155) states:

⁶ For more details on the difference between errors and mistakes see Jain 1974; Richards 1974; Corder 1981; Bueno et. al 1992; James 1998; CE 2001; Carrió 2005; Karra 2006; Xie & Jiang 2007 and Gao 2009.

Errors are due to an 'interlanguage', a simplified or distorted representation of the target competence. When the learner makes errors, his performance truly accords with his competence, which has developed characteristics different from those of L2 norms.

On the other hand, *mistakes* are considered to be the "faulty use (or misuse) of competences" (Mestre 2011:208), not deviations from the norm. Mistakes can be made by both language learners and L1 speakers. This means that the language user or learner who makes a mistake fails to express himself or herself correctly even though he or she knows the rules of the language and usually uses them correctly. As the Council of Europe (2001:156) states, "mistakes [...] occur in performance when a user/learner (as might be the case with a native speaker) does not bring his competences properly into action."

In this research study, the terms *error* and *mistake* will be used interchangeably as we will be concerned with pronunciation problems independently of whether they are the result of "deviations from the standard use" (Mestre 2011:207) or of the "faulty use (or misuse) of competences" (Mestre 2011: 208).

Functional load principle

Pronunciation errors or mistakes may be described on the basis of the principle of functional load. The term *functional load* had its origins in the Prague School and is often used in the field of linguistics, speech recognition and phonology to describe the extent and degree of contrast between linguistic units (King 1967; Brown 1988). More specifically, King (1967) defines it as "a measure of the work which two phonemes do in keeping utterances apart -in other words, a gauge of the frequency with which two phonemes contrast in all possible environments" (p.831). That is, functional load is established as the result of measuring, comparing, and ranking segmental contrasts according to their frequency of occurrence in a specific language. For example, Fry (1947, in Gimson 1994:196) claims that, in English, segments such as /t/, /d/ or /ð/ have a higher frequency of occurrence than other segments, which means they are involved in a bigger quantity of minimal pairs than segments like /ʒ/ or /j/. If a certain phonological contrast is very frequent in a specific language, the

contrast is said to have a *high functional load*. On the contrary, if the phonological contrast is infrequent, it is said to have a *low functional load*.

Finch and Ortiz Lira (1982) and O'Connor and Fletcher (1989) make reference to those segmental and suprasegmental features which, because of their high functional load, should be given priority when teaching and assessing pronunciation. For example, a contrast such as that between English phonemes / ɪ / and / i: / has a high functional load and failure to produce it will have a greater impact on intelligibility and communicability; hence this contrast should be effectively taught, accurately modeled and carefully assessed.

The concept of *functional load* will be resorted to in this study because of its implications in the field of pronunciation assessment (Brown 1988). This concept will help us analyse *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' errors and their possible impact on the assessment of their pronunciation.

Segmentals or suprasegmentals

In the field of pronunciation teaching, whether teachers should pay more attention to segmental or to supra segmental features is still an ongoing debate.

On the one hand, there are authors who suggest that miscommunications occur mostly because of errors in the production of phonemes. Some of them claim that errors at the segmental level (both phonemic and allophonic) may impair communication by slowing down word recognition speed, for instance (Derwing and Munro 1997; Smith 2005; Shatzman 2006). Following this line of thought, Jenkins (2000) proposed a Lingua Franca Core for pronunciation instruction in her EIL (English as an International Language) or ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) approach, which emphasises the importance of mastering several segmental features that, according to her, are responsible for speakers' intelligibility. Similarly, Riney et al. (2005) support focusing on segmental features when teaching nonnative English speakers because these authors found that emphasising suprasegmentals does little to decrease native listeners' perceptions of nonnative speakers' accent.

On the other hand, some authors claim that the focus should be on suprasegmentals⁷. Adams-Goertel (2013) asserts that focusing on prosody in pronunciation teaching is the key to effective communication. Similarly, Avery and Ehrlich (1992) state that pronunciation instruction and assessment should focus mostly on supra-segmental features due to the fact mastering these aspects “leads to better and quicker speaker intelligibility than a focus on segmentals” (p.371). Levis (2005) expresses that there is a tendency now for pronunciation teachers and raters to emphasise suprasegmentals rather than segmentals in promoting intelligibility and he claims this trend may have its origins in the results of studies which “have shown some support for the superiority of suprasegmental instruction in ESL contexts (e.g., Derwing & Rossiter 2003)” (p. 369).

More specifically, when discussing the use of prosodic features, Finch and Ortiz Lira (1982) state that proficient students need to master supra segmental features such as English rhythm and accentual patters. They claim that failure to master these features may make the learner “sound no only foreign, but also over formal or affected, and can obstruct fluency and sometimes even understanding” (p.111). When talking about intonation, they state that even though no intelligibility problems come up when English is spoken with some type of Spanish intonation, “the future teacher must aim at the highest possible level of performance” (p.131). Likewise, within the field of second language acquisition research, Hann (2004) and Field (2005) have found that errors with regard to prominence (word stress and sentence accent) are more important to the intelligibility of L2 speakers than segmental errors. In the same line, Pennington (1996) states that while explicit attention to the segmental features of phonology can cause some small localised improvements in students’ oral performance, attention to the prosodic features will most likely make “global and sequential improvements to the whole stream of speech, i.e., across neighbouring segmental sounds” (p.19).

⁷ For more details, see Finch & Ortiz Lira 1982; Anderson-Hsieh et al. 1992; Avery & Ehrlich 1992; Celce-Murcia et al. 1996; Jusczyk & Luce 2002; Hawkins 2003; Laoubi 2010 and Adams-Goertel 2013.

A more balanced view on the dichotomy of focusing either on segmentals or supra segmentals is put forward by some authors such as Celce-Murcia et. al. (1996:10). They claim that the tension between these two approaches to English pronunciation teaching and assessment is not so important and that the focus nowadays should be more harmonious because these features happen simultaneously and are only divided into stages due to pedagogical reasons:

(...) both the inability to distinguish sounds that carry a high functional load (such as /l/ in *list* and /i:/ in *least*) and the inability to distinguish supra-segmental features (such as intonation and stress differences in yes/no and alternative questions) have a negative impact on the oral communication of non-native speakers of English.

In the same line, Brazil (1994) claims that pronunciation instruction and assessment should focus on both, segmental and supra segmental features because these two aspects depend on each other and complement one another. He asserts that students should focus on intonational matters together with the production of segments because when working on both aspects at the same time, they can understand their interdependence. Moreover, Brazil (1994) states that by working on both, segmentals and supra segmentals we can “ensure that the work students do in one area supports and reinforces the work they do in the other” (3). Jenkins (1998: 121) also claims that even though it is

almost undoubtedly true that the suprasegmentals contribute far more than the segmentals to intelligibility for the native receiver, complicating factors in interlanguage talk make it necessary to maintain a balance between the segmentals and suprasegmentals in teaching where the learner’s goal is to be effective in EIL rather than in EFL (native/nonnative) contexts.

To sum up, it seems that three different approaches to English pronunciation teaching and assessment can be identified: 1) focusing on segmentals, 2) focusing on supra segmentals, and 3) focusing on both aspects. Choosing one of these perspectives over the others during assessment may bring about important differences in the rating process and outcome. As a subsidiary objective of this study, we hope to find out whether it is possible to if *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers show any tendency or preference in this respect. It seems relevant to add that, as Derwing and Munro (2005) claim, more research needs to be done in this area because assessment priorities

appear to be mostly determined by rater intuitions rather than by well supported or solid research.

As a theoretical framework, Morley's (1994) approach to pronunciation offers the advantage of not lingering on the dichotomy *segmental* vs. *suprasegmentals* but presents a more comprehensive view on pronunciation. Pronunciation is considered to be an integral part of communication and is divided into two interdependent and essential levels (each with a number of subcomponents) only for pedagogical reasons.

Summary

In section 2, we have referred to language assessment resorting to Bachman's model. We have seen how language assessment may be approached according to purpose and testing methods. We made specific reference to pronunciation assessment and to the concept of error used in this research study. We referred to how the functional load principle and the importance assigned to segmentals or supra segmentals may have a bearing on pronunciation assessment.

CHAPTER II

The study

Overview

Chapter II consists of two sections. Section 1 presents a description of the context in which this study was carried out and Section 2 develops the study itself.

Section 1

Overview

In this section, the School of Languages of the National University of Córdoba is presented as the context in which the study was carried out. Reference is made to the role of pronunciation in the programmes of study, together with some considerations about teachers and students. A description of *Phonetics and Phonology II* course and final exam is also displayed.

II.1.1 Context of research

This study was carried out at the School of Languages of the National University of Córdoba with students who become EFL teachers and/or translators after completing a five year programme of study. Students receive specific training in English pronunciation during three years through three annual subjects: *Pronunciation Practice*, in first year, *Phonetics and Phonology I*, in second year, and *Phonetics and Phonology II* in third year. By the end of the third year, students should have developed the perception and production language skills necessary for professionals in English as a foreign language. In

order to help students reach an adequate level of competence, classes combine theoretical and practical work.

Following Morley's (1994) communicative perspective to English pronunciation and her "Dual-Focus Program Philosophy" (Chapter I, Section 1), we can state that the main focus of the courses *Pronunciation Practice* and *Phonetics and Phonology I* is on the micro level of pronunciation, which pays attention to the phonetic and phonological competence, i.e., to the production of vowels and consonants, stress, rhythm, intonation, volume, pauses and adjustments. In other words, they focus on the production of discrete elements of pronunciation, which have an impact on speakers' intelligibility.

In first year, one of the basic aims of *Pronunciation Practice* is to improve students' listening comprehension skills and their speech articulation. By the end of the course, students are expected to produce the sounds of the English language naturally and fluently and to transcribe texts phonemically and allophonically. Students are also trained in the production of the so called 'strong and weak forms', essential for the acquisition of English rhythm and for the achievement of textual coherence and informative cohesion. (See Appendix 1 for *Pronunciation Practice* syllabus).

In second year, *Phonetics and Phonology I* students are supposed to manage the features of English taught in *Pronunciation Practice* and to continue improving their pronunciation. By the end of the course, they are expected to identify and produce phonemic adjustments in guided and spontaneous speech. They are also required to effectively use two of the four subsystems that make up the system of intonation: the subsystem of prominence and the subsystem of tones⁸. Thus, they should identify and effectively produce English accentuation and rhythmic patterns and also identify and appropriately produce rising and falling tones in accordance with their communicative purpose (See Appendix 2 for *Phonetics and Phonology I* syllabus).

The present study was specifically carried out in the context of the subject *Phonetics and Phonology II*, which, as already stated, is taught in the

⁸ According to Brazil's theory of Discourse Intonation, the system of intonation is composed by four subsystems: prominence, tone, key and termination. See Brazil (1997) for further details.

third year of the programme of study. In contrast to *Pronunciation Practice* and *Phonetics and Phonology I*, in *Phonetics and Phonology II* instruction focuses mainly on the macro level of pronunciation. As explained in Chapter I, Section 1, the macro level has to do with speech performance and global patterns. It encompasses general elements of communicability which aim at developing discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. This dimension focuses on components such as “overall precision and clarity”, “overall fluency” and “overall speech intelligibility level” (Morley 1994:78).

II.1.2 *Phonetics and Phonology II*

Building on the knowledge and skills developed in the previous years, when *Phonetics and Phonology II* students complete the course, they are expected to understand and produce oral texts appropriate to a variety of different situations and contexts. In addition, students are expected to have acquired the tools to describe, analyse and improve their own oral texts or texts produced by other speakers.

The first classes of *Phonetics and Phonology II* are devoted to reviewing concepts such as that of rhythm, tone unit, prominence and tone with the subsequent individual and group practice. Then, and within the theoretical framework of *Discourse Intonation*, new concepts and features are introduced: key and termination, pitch sequence, and reading orientation are thoroughly developed and practised. Furthermore, intonation and topic structure, the intonation and role of discourse markers and the correlates of intonation are discussed and practised in a variety of text types, including oral presentations (See Appendix 3 for *Phonetics and Phonology II* syllabus).

In order to pass *Phonetics and Phonology II*, students must take a final examination which is only oral for students in good standing (i.e., those who have already passed two term tests); this exam is similar to the oral sections of the term tests. During these oral exams, students are required to read aloud known and unknown texts and to make a two minute oral presentation on a

topic assigned by the teacher. Students must use phonetic, phonological and paralinguistic features effectively and, in the case of paralinguistic features, they are required to justify and explain their choices when reading aloud.

As it is clearly stated in the course syllabus, when assessing students' communicative pronunciation achievement during final oral exams, teachers do not ignore the micro level of pronunciation. However, as already mentioned, the focus is on the students' production of features at the macro level, such as general intelligibility, general fluency, general communicability, and paralinguistic features, which should be appropriate to the text type and to the discursive context.

On the basis of the description presented before (Section I.3.1, p.19), it is possible to say that the *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exam serves as an indicator of abilities that are of particular interest in the context of assessment; that is, it constitutes an essential source of information which allows teachers to make decisions within an educational context.

TABLE 1 below presents the features of assessment for *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral examination:

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY II FINAL ORAL EXAM	
Construct	Syllabus-based
Testing conditions	Formal Explicit
Testing method	Performance
Purpose	Achievement

	Summative
Decision involved	High-stake
Scoring method	Subjective Impressionistic
Interpretation of scores	Criterion-referenced

TABLE 1: *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exam: features of assessment

Regarding the test construct, i.e., “aspects of knowledge or skill possessed by the candidate which are being measured” (McNamara 2000:13), it can be labelled as *syllabus-based*, as the course syllabus serves as the frame of reference used to establish the language knowledge or skills expected from the test-takers. That is, the syllabus is the basis for deciding which specific components of language ability are to be measured or assessed (see Appendix 3). Besides, as the test is administered under certain previously established conditions, it becomes an instance of *formal* and *explicit* assessment.

As to the testing method, the *Phonetics and Phonology II* exam can be labelled as a *performance test* because a sample of speech is elicited from the test-taker. Pronunciation is assessed through specific acts of communication, such as reading aloud and oral presentations on a given topic.

As regards its purpose, this test can be classified as an *achievement test* because it is associated with the process of instruction: the test is administered at the end of a course to see whether students have achieved the goals set in the syllabus. Students have to pass the exam in order to finish the course successfully. In other words, the test has a *summative* purpose.

As to the decisions made in this assessment situation, they can be categorised as *high-stake decisions* because the result of the test will determine

whether the student will pass the course and, hence, advance in their programme of study.

In the School of Languages, there is no institutionalized standardization of raters and the teachers of the chair *Phonetics and Phonology II* assess and grade (using a scale that goes from 0 to 10)⁹ students' production *impressionistically*, i.e., without using a specific 'explicit scale' with descriptors. In addition, since the evaluators judge the appropriateness or correctness of the students' response based on their own interpretation of the scoring criteria, the assessment can be described as *subjective*. The scoring criteria are derived from the course objectives and content. Students' performance is judged without using separate analytic ratings for the pronunciation components involved but in terms of levels of ability demonstrated in completing the test task. These tasks are designed taking into account the objectives of the course and are similar to the practice activities that students need to take part in during class.

As to assessment criteria, in the *Phonetics and Phonology II* syllabus there is a short section which is titled 'assessment criteria' (see Appendix 3). This section makes reference to the aspects and features that are taken into account when grading students' performance. It is stated that, in *Phonetics and Phonology II* exams, students' communicative competence is assessed taking into account both the micro and the macro level of pronunciation. That is, assessment of pronunciation achievement includes segmental and suprasegmental phonetic and phonological features and also intelligibility, fluency and paralinguistic features. However, as expressed in the course syllabus, the main focus of instruction is on features that belong to the macro

⁹The following is the scale provided by the university (the author's translation) and used in all formal assessing contexts at university level:

MARK	CONCEPT
10	Outstanding
7-8-9	Very good
5-6	Good
4	Adequate
1-2-3	Inadequate
0	Fail

level, it is this level the one that receives special attention when assessment is carried out.

Section 2

Overview

Section 2 starts with the research questions and the objectives of the study. Then, the methodology and procedures are presented.

II.2.1 Research questions

The following research questions were postulated:

- 1- Which mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation, both segmental and supra segmental, are identified in the oral production of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students during final oral exams?
- 2- Which impact do mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation, both segmental and supra segmental, have on the assessment of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' performance during final oral exams?

The previous research questions gave rise to the following objectives:

II.2.2 General objective

To study the impact that mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation, both segmental and supra segmental, have on the assessment of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' oral performance in the corpus collected during a final oral exam at the School of Languages, National University of Córdoba.

II.2.3 Specific objectives

In the collected corpus:

- 1- To identify mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation both segmental and supra segmental.
- 2- To determine the frequency of occurrence of the different kinds of micro level pronunciation mistakes both segmental and supra segmental.
- 3- To establish the impact that the identified mistakes have on *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers' assessment of oral performance.

II.2.4 Methodology

II.2.4.1 Participants and corpus

Fifty-two students agreed to be recorded while they were sitting for their *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exam. Three samples had to be discarded because of technical problems, such as low volume or unwanted noises. Thus, the final corpus consisted of 49 recordings of short oral presentations participants gave during their *Phonetics and Phonology II* final exam. It was decided to study the oral presentation and not the reading aloud part of the exam because, during the oral presentations, students speak more spontaneously.

Numbers were assigned to the recorded samples so as to keep anonymity; they became S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 and so on up to S49 (S = sample). The number of samples allowed for statistical processing of the data collected.

The students, who were randomly selected, were not given details about the purpose of the study but were made sure that the procedure would not affect their performance whatsoever. The raters were the four teachers who belong to the *Phonetics and Phonology II* Chair at the School of Languages, National University of Cordoba, who agreed to participate; they were not given any details about the study either.

II.2.4.2 Questionnaire

So as to gather additional information, the raters were asked to answer a questionnaire especially designed by the author (Appendix 4). The objective was to find out about the raters' opinion about the oral exams and rating criteria. It was expected that the collected data might contribute to the interpretation of results and the drawing of conclusions. It could also be the point of departure for further research on the field.

II.2.4.3 Identification-collection grid

In order to register the micro level mistakes detected in the samples, an identification grid (FIGURE 3) was specially designed by the researcher on the basis Morley's (1994) classification of micro level features (see p. 16). As can be seen in FIGURE 3 below, the grid consisted of a number of columns to register the type and number of micro level mistakes in each sample, the mark assigned by the raters, and the researcher's comments about the sample/performance if considered appropriate. The micro level mistakes pertain to the production of the following features: vowel phonemes and allophones, consonant phonemes and allophones, prominence/rhythm, weak forms,

endings/consonant clusters and intonation (tone choices). (See Appendix 5 for an example of how the grid was used)

SN	V	C	P/R	WF	E/CC	I	TN	M	Cm
S1									

SN: Sample Number; **S1:** sample 1; **V:** Vowels; **C:** Consonants; **P/R:** Prominence / Rhythm; **WF:** Weak Forms; **E/CC:** Endings / Consonant Clusters; **I:** Intonation; **TN:** Total number of Mistakes; **M:** Mark; **Cm:** Comments

FIGURE 3: Micro level mistakes identification grid

It should be pointed out that in this research study, as it was stated in Chapter One, the terms *error* and *mistake* are used interchangeably. Consequently, the focus is on pronunciation problems independently of whether they are the result of “deviations from the standard use” (Mestre 2011:207), which show L2 learners’ interlanguage, i.e., a simplified distorted representation of the target competence or of the “faulty use (or misuse) of competences” (Council of Europe 2001:208). Any failure identified at the microlevel of pronunciation in the students’ performance was registered, no matter its origin.

II.2.4.4 Procedures

The samples were collected during the *Phonetics and Phonology II* final oral exams students took in November-December and then in February-March. A high quality digital device was used to record the oral presentations. As usual, students’ performances were rated ‘impressionistically’ by a board composed of three teachers of *Phonetics and Phonology II*. The researcher took note of the

mark assigned to each student and she also wrote down additional information if necessary.

Once all the samples had been recorded, the raters were asked to answer the questionnaire. As explained above, it was thought that their answers might positively contribute to the analysis of the data.

Each sample was thoroughly analysed by the researcher so as to identify the mistakes belonging to the micro level of pronunciation. The mistakes were registered and classified using the grid already described (FIGURE 3)¹⁰.

II.2.4.5 External raters

In order to check the reliability of the analysis carried out by the researcher, three teachers, external to this study and specialized in the area of English phonetics and phonology, were asked to use the grid to identify micro level pronunciation mistakes in five of the collected samples. The teachers had been previously trained in the use of the identification grid and, as they are experienced teachers, one standardization session was enough to clear out doubts about categories and registration procedures. Then, the t-test was used to compare the means of the mistakes identified by the researcher and the means of the mistakes detected by the three external raters in each micro level mistake category.

The t-test showed no significant differences (See Appendix 6 for details of external raters' analysis). That is, the results showed that the differences between the mistakes identified by the external raters and those registered by the researcher are not statistically significant.

¹⁰ Mistakes were registered whenever identified, no matter whether they were repeated or not.

II.2.4.6 Examples of mistakes

What follows are some examples of the different kinds of micro level mistakes identified in the samples:

1) Vowel sounds

- ✓ S1: /mɑ:n/ instead of /mæn/
- ✓ S3: /wɒld/ instead of /wɜ:ld/
- ✓ S47: /'dɑ:ndʒərəs/ instead of /'deɪndʒərəs/

2) Consonant sounds

- ✓ S1: /deɪ/ instead of /ðeɪ/
- ✓ S3: /i:sɪə/ instead of /i:zɪə/
- ✓ S22: /ti:neɪjə/ instead of /ti:neɪdʒə/

3) Weakforms

- ✓ S7: /ðə 'seknd ri:zn ɪz ðæt ðeɪ 'lɜ:n/ instead of /ðə 'seknd ri:zn ɪz ðæt ðeɪ 'lɜ:n/
- ✓ S9: /'pi:pəl əv 'ɔ:l 'eɪdʒɪz/ instead of /'pi:pəl əv 'ɔ:l 'eɪdʒɪz/
- ✓ S12: /jə hæv 'lɒst 'tʌtʃ wɪð ðəm/ instead of /jə hæv 'lɒst 'tʌtʃ wɪð ðəm/

4) Prominence/rhythm ¹¹

- ✓ S23: /'pɒsəbɪlɪti/ instead of /,pɒsə'bɪlɪti/
- ✓ S27: /kəm'ju:nɪkeɪʃn/ instead of /kə,mju:nɪ'keɪʃən/

¹¹ Following Coulhard (1985), mistakes in word-stress or word-accent are considered mistakes in the assignment of prominence/rhythm, as we are analysing connected speech, and word-stress may change depending on the context in which the word occurs. According to Coulhard (1985), prominence is the “name given to a property that is not inherent, like accent, but only associated with a word by virtue of its function as a constituent part of a tone unit”.

- ✓ S27: /sə'pɔ:tɪd baɪ jə bɒdɪ 'læŋgwɪdʒ/ instead of /sə'pɔ:tɪd baɪ jə 'bɒdɪ læŋgwɪdʒ/
- ✓ S9: /'naʊə'deɪz/ instead of /'naʊədeɪz/

5) Endings/consonant clusters¹²

- ✓ S34: /'pi:pl ə'sætɪsfɑɪ/ instead of /'pi:pl ə'sætɪsfɑɪd/
- ✓ S38: /ðeɪ 'tʃeɪndʒɪd ðə 'klæ/ instead of /ðeɪ 'tʃeɪndʒd ðə 'klæ/
- ✓ S44: /jə kən ə'skeɪt tə 'lu:z 'weɪt/ instead of /jə kən 'skeɪt tə 'lu:z 'weɪt/

6) Intonation¹³

- ✓ S19: //bi:ɪŋ ə 'fʊl taɪm ↗mɒm // həz 'sevrl ↗drɔ:bæks// In this context, 'drawback' is much more likely to be uttered or produced with a fall. The rising tone may convey an idea of incompleteness, hesitation or even lack of confidence.¹⁴
- ✓ S30: //wen wi 'fɪnɪʃ →praɪməri// ɔ: →sekndri sku:l// ðə dɪ'sɪʒn tə gəʊ 'ɒn ɔ: 'nɒt z 'lɜp tə→ju:// instead of // wen wi 'fɪnɪʃ praɪməri ɔ: ↗sekndri sku:l // ðə dɪ'sɪʒn tə gəʊ 'ɒn ɔ: 'nɒt z' lɜp tə ↘ju://¹⁵
This utterance contains three level tones in a row, which sounds monotonic and unusual in English.
- ✓ // ↗ðeə // ðeɪ kən ↗swɪm // ən si: ðə ↗fɪʃ // instead of // ↗ðeə // ðeɪ kn ↗swɪm // ən si: ðə ↘fɪʃ // This utterance also contains three rising tones in a row. This may sound repetitive and unnecessarily

¹² Mistakes in endings and consonant clusters were grouped together as an important number of consonant clusters occur in word final position.

¹³ Following Pennington (1996), an intonation mistake was registered when the tone choices were perceived as "misleading" (p. 256), unusual in English or "relatively flat (monotonic)" (p. 253).

¹⁴ In these examples, the focus of attention is on intonation errors. The occurrence of other kinds of mistakes in these utterances was considered in the other items.

¹⁵ This is one of the possible options.

dominant. On the other hand, the excessive use of the rising tone may also convey doubt.

Summary

In the first section of Chapter II, the context where this study was carried out is described and the *Phonetics and Phonology II* exam is described. In Section 2, the research questions and objectives are presented, followed by the methodology used.

CHAPTER 3

Presentation and discussion of results

Overview

In this chapter, a descriptive statistical analysis of the data will be presented first. The total number of micro level mistakes identified in the samples, the frequency of occurrence of each type of mistake and the marks participants got in the exam will be described. Then, the relation between the number of each type of mistake found in the samples and the marks given to the students will be analysed in order to try to determine the influence of each kind of mistake on the assessment of students' performance.

III.1.1 Preliminary Analysis

The first statistical analysis done on the collected data was a descriptive one. In this descriptive stage, the total number of micro level mistakes found in the samples was computed; as already described (see p.38), the mistakes were grouped into six different micro level categories: 1) production of vowels, 2) production of consonants, 3) production of weak forms, 4) production of endings and consonant clusters, 5) assignment of prominence and rhythm and 6) intonation.

Of the total number of mistakes identified in the corpus (673 mistakes), 48% of them have to do with the production of vowels and consonants; the number of mistakes in the production of vowels (170 mistakes) is quite similar to the number of mistakes in the production of consonants (154 mistakes). On the other hand, though the percentages of mistakes in prominence/rhythm (48 mistakes) and in intonation (55 mistakes) are quite similar, grouped together,

they constitute only 15% of the total number. The remaining 37% accounts for mistakes in weak forms (138 mistakes) and in the production of endings/consonant clusters (108 mistakes)

FIGURE 4 below shows the type, percentage and, between parenthesis, the number of micro level mistakes identified in the 49 samples.

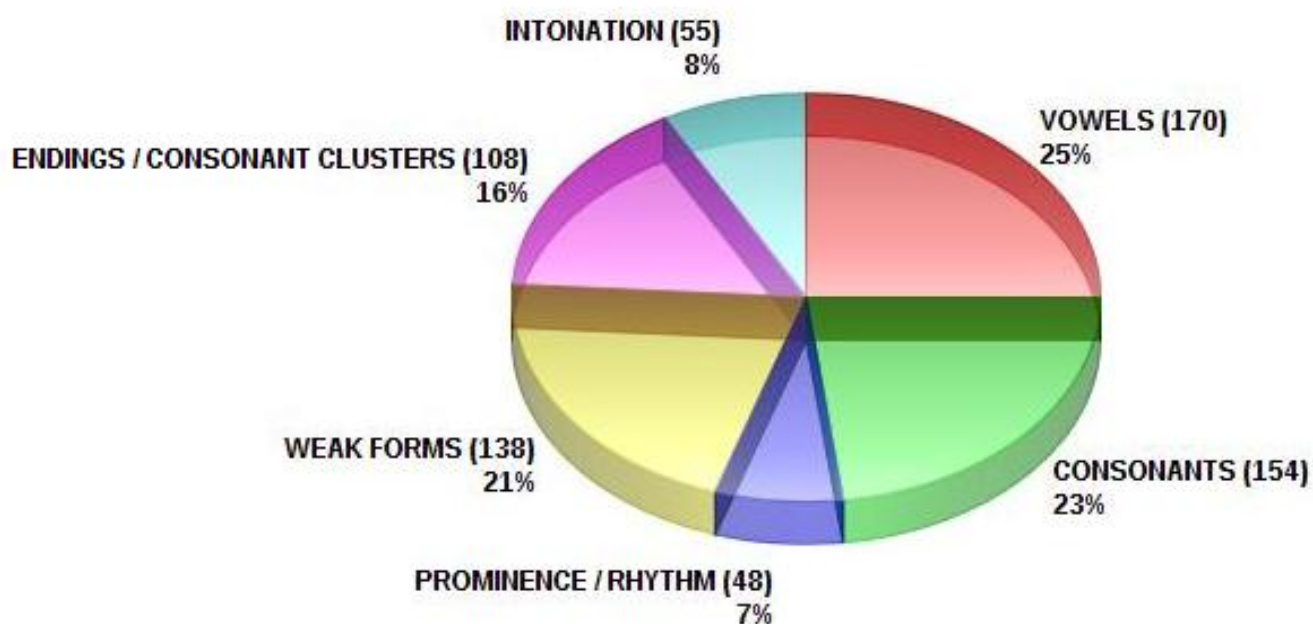


FIGURE 4: Type, number and percentage of micro level mistakes found in the samples

Frequency of occurrence of each micro level mistake

Absolute and relative frequencies were computed for the six categories into which mistakes were classified: 1) production of vowels, 2) production of consonants, 3) production of weak forms, 4) production of endings and consonant clusters, 5) assignment of prominence and rhythm and 6) intonation (tone choices). The purpose was to obtain information as to which type of micro level errors were more frequent considering the other types of micro level

mistakes and also the number of students who made them (See Appendix 6 for micro level mistakes frequency tables).

This detailed description of kinds of mistakes and number of errors per student will be considered in relation to their impact on the mark assigned.

Mistakes in vowels and consonants

Mistakes in vowels and consonants were the most frequent ones and the ones identified in almost all samples, as shown in FIGURES 5 and 6 below.

FIGURE 5 shows that the number of mistakes in vowels per student goes from 0 to 10. Only 6% of the participants made no mistakes in the production of vowels; most students, 82%, made between 1 and 5 mistakes. The remaining 12% made between 6 and 10 mistakes of this kind.

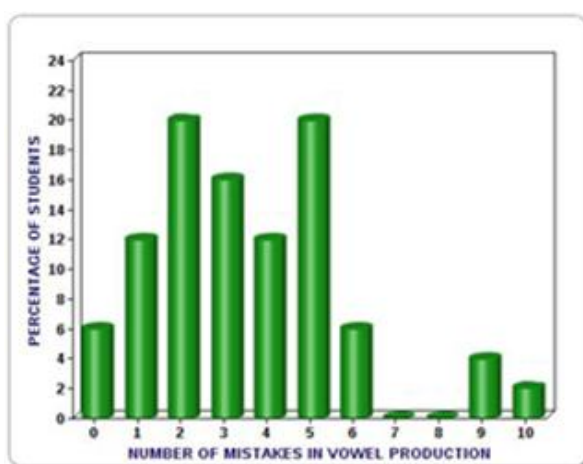


FIGURE 5: Mistakes in the production of vowels

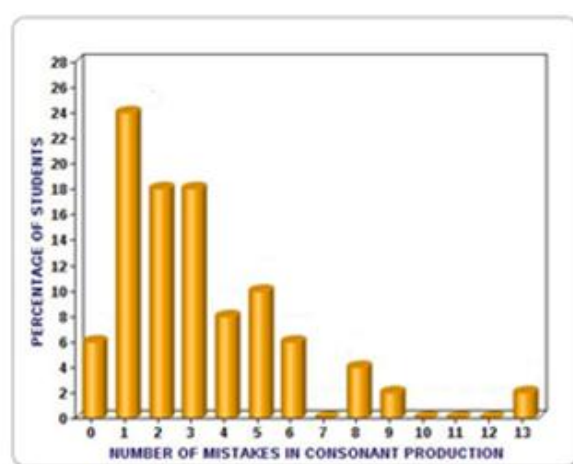


FIGURE 6: Mistakes in the production of consonants

As to the number of mistakes identified in the production of consonants, FIGURE 6 shows that it goes from 0 to 13. As in the case of mistakes in vowel production, 6% of the students made no mistakes of this kind; 2% of the students made 13 mistakes, 13 being the highest amount registered. When comparing FIGURES 5 and 6, it can be observed that the patterns are very

similar. The majority of the participants made between 1 and 5 mistakes when producing vowel sounds and also when producing consonant sounds (82% in the case of vowels and 80% in the case of consonants).

Mistakes in weak forms and endings and consonant clusters

FIGURES 7 and 8 below show the number of errors identified in the production of weak forms and endings and consonant clusters.

FIGURE 7 presents mistakes identified when producing weak forms. The range in the number of mistakes goes from 0 to 7. It can be seen that 44% of the students made either 2 or 3 mistakes of this kind.

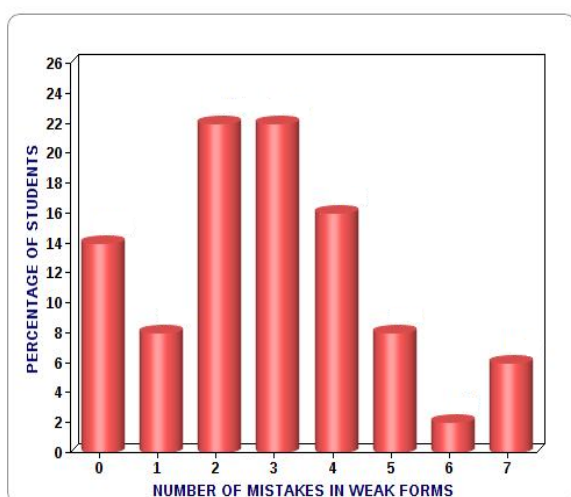


FIGURE 7: Mistakes in the production of weak forms

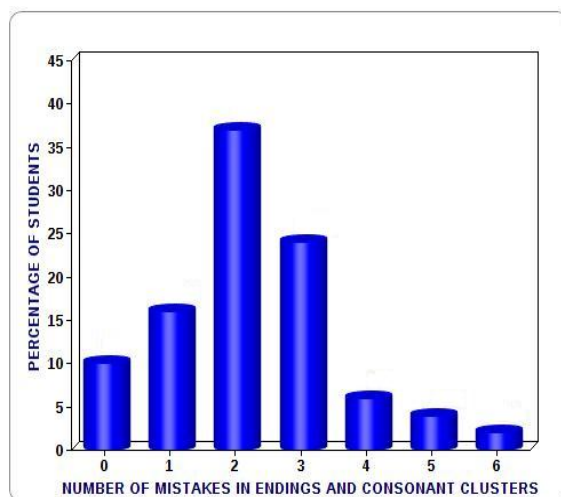


FIGURE 8: Mistakes in the production of endings and consonant clusters

FIGURE 8 presents the number of mistakes students made when producing endings and consonant clusters. The range in the number of mistakes goes from 0 to 6. Most students, 61%, made either 2 or 3 mistakes.

It can also be pointed out that the number of mistakes registered in the categories 'weak forms' and 'endings and consonant clusters' is much smaller than the number of mistakes found in the production of vowels and consonants. (FIGURES 4 and 5).

Mistakes in prominence / rhythm and intonation

FIGURES 9 and 10 show the number of errors made by students in prominence/rhythm and in intonation, respectively.

Mistakes in prominence/rhythm and in intonation (tone choices) were the least frequent micro level mistakes found in the samples. FIGURE 9 presents the relation between students and their mistakes in the assignment of prominence/rhythm. The range in the number of mistakes goes from 0 to 3. Most students (72%) made either 1 or 0 mistakes belonging to this category; the remaining 28% made 2 or 3 mistakes of this kind.

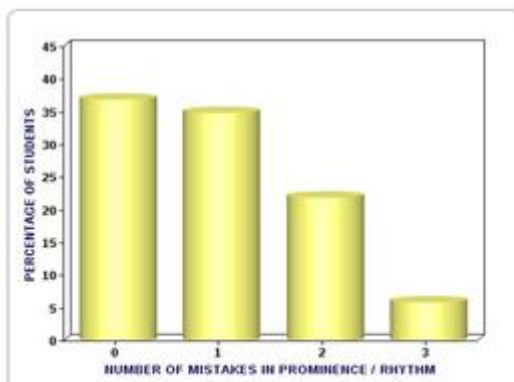


FIGURE 9: Students and their mistakes in prominence/rhythm

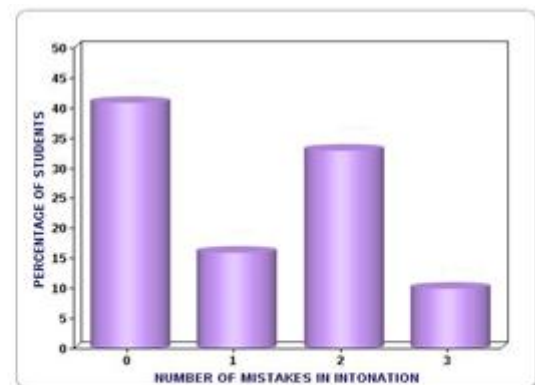


FIGURE 10: Students and their mistakes in intonation

The number of participants and the mistakes identified in intonation choices is presented in FIGURE 10. The range of mistakes goes from 0 to 3. It can be pointed out that 59% of the students made mistakes of this kind.

The number of mistakes registered per student in the category 'intonation' is quite similar to the number of errors identified per student in the category

'Prominence/Rhythm'. Furthermore, the range between the lowest and highest amount of mistakes identified per student is identical in these two categories.

In general terms, we can state that both the amount of mistakes and the range or difference between the lowest and highest amount of mistakes students made is much wider in the production of vowels and consonants (FIGURES 5 and 6) than in the production of weak forms (FIGURE 7), endings and consonant clusters (FIGURE 8), prominence/rhythm and intonation (FIGURES 9 and 10).

III.1.2 Micro level mistakes and marks

In this subsection, we will analyse first the marks obtained by the participants during the final oral exam. Then we will compare the average number of micro level mistakes made by students with passing and with non-passing marks (only the mistakes belonging to the six categories described in section II.2.4.3, p.38, will be considered). After that, through a linear regression analysis, we will see the impact the occurrence of these micro level mistakes had on the final marks without making any distinction between kinds of mistakes. Finally, through a multiple regression analysis, the impact each kind of micro level mistake had on the mark will be described.

Students and the marks they were given in the exam are presented in FIGURE 11. The lowest mark registered was two and the highest one was nine. Most students, 82%, got passing marks (four or more), whereas 18% of them got non-passing marks (less than four). Six and seven were the most frequent marks registered.

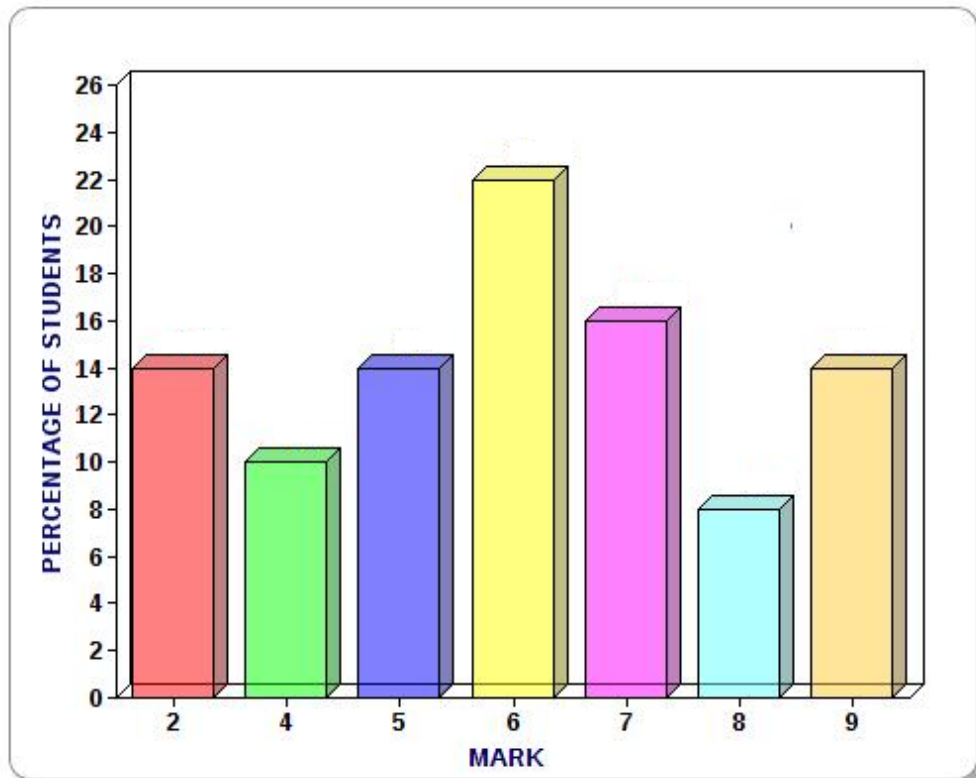


FIGURE 11: Marks obtained by the participants during the final exam

In TABLE 2 below, we can observe the average number of micro level mistakes made by both students who got passing marks and students who got non-passing marks. Students who passed the exam made an average of three micro level pronunciation mistakes, whereas those who did not pass made an average of 6,29 mistakes.

	AVERAGE N° OF MICRO LEVEL MISTAKES
STUDENTS WITH PASSING MARKS	3
STUDENTS WITH NON-PASSING MARKS	6,29

TABLE 2: Average number of micro level mistakes made by students with passing and non-passing marks

The number of micro level mistakes made by students with non-passing marks doubles the number of mistakes made by those who passed the exam.

In order to determine the relation between the number of mistakes belonging to the micro level of pronunciation and the mark students got, two statistical tests were run on the data collected: linear regression analysis and multiple regression analysis.

Linear regression analysis

The linear regression analysis is used to predict the value of a variable (dependent or outcome variable) based on the value of another variable (independent or predictor variable). In the case of this research study, the dependent variable is the final mark and the independent variable is the number of micro level mistakes made by students.

FIGURE 12 below shows the relation between number of micro level mistakes and marks.

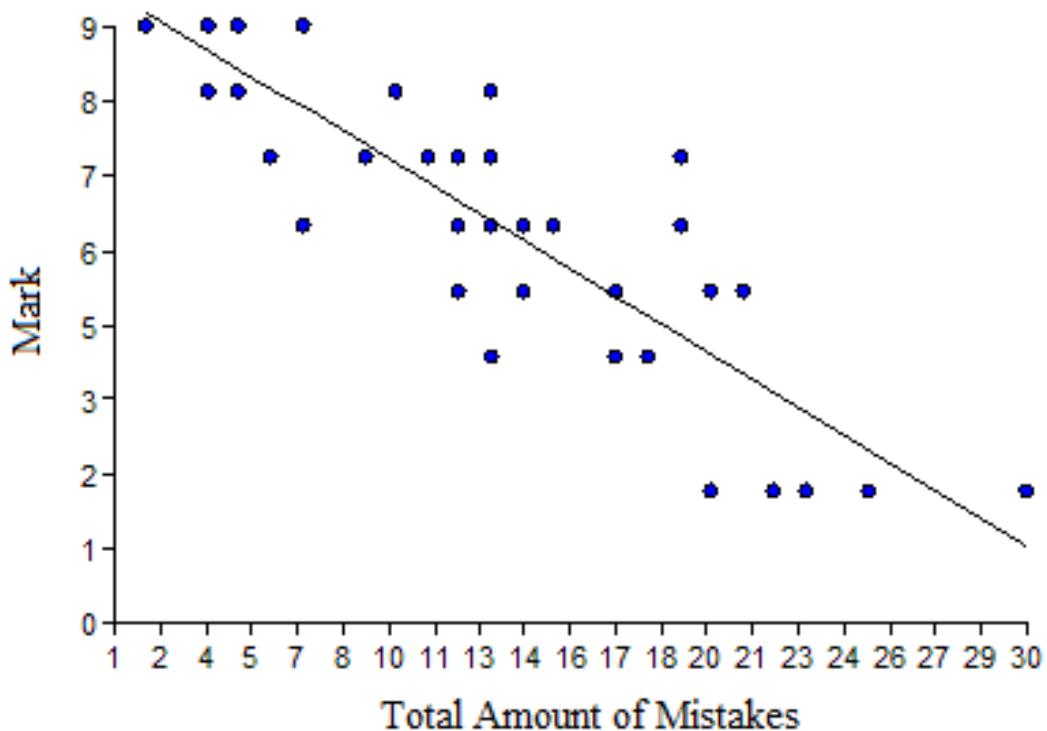


FIGURE 12: Linear regression analysis done to the collected data

As can be seen, the more micro level mistakes students made, the lower the mark they got in the final oral exam. In this test, the relation between the total number of micro level mistakes made by each student and their marks was considered without discriminating between different mistake categories.

It should be pointed out that there was a small number of students with a similar amount of micro level mistakes but with considerably different marks. As what counted in this study was the total number of micro level mistakes, no discrimination was made as to whether the total number meant the repetition of the same mistake or the occurrence of different mistakes, which might influence raters' assessment in different ways. For example, two students made 20 mistakes each and one of them (Sample 27) got a five, while the other one (Sample 47) got a two. The difference in the scores may be related to the kinds of mistakes they made. In Sample 27, most mistakes registered belong to segmental features, mostly consonants, vowels and weak forms, whereas in Sample 47, the number of mistakes was distributed in a more balanced way through the six categories considered in this study.

Multiple regression analysis

The multiple regression model enables us to determine the individual or conjoint influence of several independent variables on a dependent variable. In the case of this study, this model allows us to analyse the individual and conjoint influence of the six categories of micro level mistakes on the marks *Phonetics and Phonology II* students were given during the final oral exam.

Coefficient of determination

The coefficient of determination or R squared (R^2), which ranges from 0 to 1, is used to determine the proportion of total variation of the results of a

statistical analysis, i.e., the conjoint predictiveness of the entire multiple regression model. The formula to calculate it is as follows:

$$R^2 = \frac{SS_{yy} - SSE}{SS_{yy}} = \frac{SS_{yy}}{SS_{yy}} - \frac{SSE}{SS_{yy}} = 1 - \frac{SSE}{SS_{yy}}$$

In the case of this research study, the R^2 value is 0,79, which means that the statistical analysis made accounts for 79% of the variables that were at play during assessment. The rest, 21%, refers to the variables which have not been taken into account in this study and may have influenced assessment in some way, such as candidates and raters' personality, length of the exam, time of the day when each participant sat for the exam, mistakes which were not taken into account, and so on.

In TABLE 3, we can observe the results of the multiple regression analysis done to the data collected. The *Beta* column shows the number of points deducted from the final mark per micro level mistake made. The mistakes which seem to have more impact on the mark belong to the categories 'Prominence'/'Rhythm' and 'Endings'/'Consonant Clusters'. That is, whenever either of these two types of mistakes occurred, an average of .55 points was deducted from the participant's final mark. Considering the points deducted, the mistakes that follow in importance or impact on the final mark were the mistakes in intonation, which deducted an average of 0.30 points each time they occurred; intonation was followed by 'weak forms' (0,29). Statistically speaking, the mistakes students made in the production of segmental features were the least significant in terms of impact on the score: 0,22 points deducted per each consonant mistake and 0,18 per each vowel mistake.

	Beta (points deducted)	P-value
Vowels	-0.18	0.0455
Consonants	-0.22	0.0023
Prominence / Rhythm	-0.55	0.0045
Weak Forms	-0.29	0.0036
Endings /Consonant Clusters	-0.55	0.0002
Intonation	-0.30	0.0598

TABLE 3: Multiple regression analysis done to the collected data

In a statistical analysis, p-value determines the significance of the results obtained; it is used to test the validity of a claim that is made about a number of samples. For this model, the variables which were most significant were prominence/rhythm, weak forms, consonants and endings and clusters (see TABLE 3) because their p-value was lower than 0.05. This means that even though mistakes in 'intonation' for instance, deducted .30 whenever they occurred, if this variable were eliminated when analysing the impact of micro level mistakes on final marks, the overall results of the regression analysis would not change significantly because its p-value is the highest of all the independent variables considered.

In FIGURE 13 below there are two graphics: the one on the left presents micro level mistakes organized in terms of frequency of occurrence in the data collected (from most frequent on top and with bigger font, to least frequent at the bottom and with smaller font), whereas the one on the right organizes the mistakes in terms of influence or impact on the final mark (most influential on top and with bigger font and least influential at the bottom and with smaller font). As can be seen in the left hand side graphic, mistakes in the production of

segmental features were the most frequent ones, whereas mistakes in supra segmentals were the least frequent.

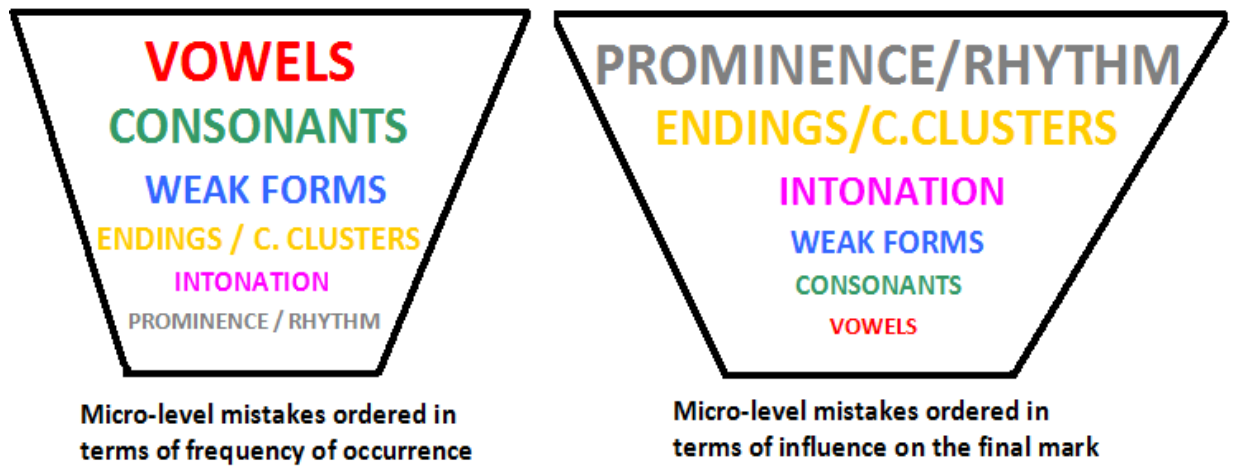


FIGURE 13: Comparison between micro level mistakes frequency of occurrence and influence on the final mark

Conversely, in the graphic on the right it can be observed that the problems in the assignment of prominence / rhythm seem to be the mistakes which most influenced the final mark given to students. Apparently, the least frequent mistakes were the most influential ones. On the other hand, the mistakes made in the production of vowels and consonants were the ones which seem to have least influenced the final mark students got. It appears that the most frequent mistakes were the least influential ones at the time of assessment. Thus, the order of the categories in the graphic on the left is almost the opposite of their order in the graphic on the right.

III.1.3 Questionnaire to Teachers

A questionnaire (see Appendix 4) was administered to three *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers so as to find out their opinions on the oral exam and rating criteria. It was thought that their answers might be useful when interpreting the results and drawing conclusions.

First they were asked whether they assign more importance to micro or macro level features at the time of assessing *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' oral performance. The three teachers who answered the questionnaire claim that they pay more attention to the production of features belonging to the macro level of pronunciation (Overall Precision and Clarity or Communicative Effectiveness, Overall Fluency and Overall Intelligibility) than to micro level features. One of them, for instance, justifies his position by claiming that, according to him, the aim of the course is that students acquire a level of English pronunciation that allows them to be understood by English speaking people all over the world, without paying attention to unnecessary micro level features. He goes on saying that the main objective of pronunciation courses is that students become comfortably intelligible, not phoneticians or native like speakers. He adds that even though some mistakes at the micro level may affect communication, being intelligible is more important than being accurate in the production of micro level features. Another teacher justifies her answer stating that even though *Phonetics and Phonology II* students are trained in the production of features belonging to both the micro and the macro level, because these levels depend on each other, the macro level features are more important in this context. She supports her position by making reference to some of the specific objectives of the course. She states that these students are expected to understand and produce oral texts belonging to a variety of genres, so achieving intelligibility, clarity, fluency and communicability should be given priority when teaching and assessing *Phonetics and Phonology II* students. She asserts that communicative effectiveness when reading aloud and when speaking spontaneously cannot be reached without mastering the macro level features.

In the second question, teachers had to state how relevant (from 1 to 5, 1 being “not important” and 5 being “extremely important”) they consider the production of micro level features to be when assessing *Phonetics and Phonology II* students. All the teachers consider that the production of micro level features, both segmental and supra segmental is important or very important because it is the basis for the production of macro level features. One of them supports her opinion by asserting that it is impossible for an EFL student to reach intelligibility or communicative effectiveness without producing vocalic distinctions or consonant clusters, or without assigning appropriate prominence to an utterance, for instance. In a similar line, another teacher claims that students’ recurrent mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation usually cause them to fail during *Phonetics and Phonology II* exams. She supports her claim by stating that even though the production of segmental and supra segmental features is not the main focus of the course, students’ fluency and intelligibility are seriously affected by these errors so students who make many micro level mistakes are not effective at the time of putting the message across. Moreover, she adds that as these students do not study English just to communicate with other English speaking people but to become professionals of the language, they may probably be pronunciation models in the future, so they should aim at improving their pronunciation as much as possible both, at the micro and macro level.

In the last question teachers had to order the micro level features considered in this study in terms of the importance assigned to them during *Phonetics and Phonology II* oral exams. Two teachers claim that mistakes in the assignment of prominence or rhythm and in pitch movement are the ones that most influence assessment. They state that mistakes in the production of these features may completely change the meaning of the utterance, whereas mistakes in the production of consonants and vowels are usually not so serious, as they do not affect meaning so much and, in many cases, meaning can be recovered from the context more easily. On the other hand, one of the teachers considers the production of vowels to be the most important micro level feature, followed by weak forms and endings and consonant clusters. Something worth

mentioning is that the three teachers who participated in the study agreed on placing the production of consonants as the least influential feature.

CHAPTER IV

Conclusions and suggestions for further research

Overview

This chapter deals with conclusions and poses a number of suggestions for further research.

IV.1 Conclusions

As shown in Chapter III, several statistical tests were used to analyse the data collected and to reach the three specific objectives stated in Chapter II. The corpus consisted of recordings of the oral presentations made by 49 *Phonetics and Phonology II* students during their final exam. In a preliminary analysis, micro level mistakes, both segmental and supra segmental, were identified and categorized so as to comply with the first specific objective set. Second, a test was run to determine the frequency of occurrence of those mistakes. Last, a linear and a multiple regression analysis were made so as to establish the impact the identified mistakes had on *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers' assessment of oral performance.

Thus, it was possible to answer the two research questions, as postulated in Chapter II:

Question 1

Which mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation, both segmental and supra-segmental, are identified in the oral production of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students during final oral exams?

The exploratory analysis reveals that the six categories of micro level mistakes were present in the collected data; that is, it was possible to identify errors 1) in the production of vowels, 2) in the production of consonants, 3) in the production of weak forms, 4) in the production of endings and consonant clusters, 5) in rhythm and prominence and 6) in intonation (tone choices).

Considering the differentiation between segmental and suprasegmental micro level mistakes, errors at the segmental level were the most frequent ones. In fact, inaccurate production of vowels and consonants constituted almost 50% of the total number of identified mistakes. There are students who made up to ten mistakes in vowel production and others who made thirteen errors in the production of consonants, for instance.

As it was stated in the description of the context of this study (see Chapter II, Section 1), the segmental features of English constitute one of the main teaching-learning objectives of the first-year subject *Pronunciation Practice*. This means that a considerable amount of time is devoted to the description and practice of these features. In addition, segments, among other features, are further reviewed and practiced in second year, in the subject *Phonetics and Phonology I*. However, contrary to what might then be expected, most of the *Phonetics and Phonology II* students who participated in this study still have problems with the production of segmental features.

The concept of language transfer might explain why students make an important number of errors at the segmental level. According to Odlin (1993), language transfer is the influence that results from similarities and differences between the target language and any other previously acquired language. Hence the differences between the Spanish and English phonological systems might have negatively and strongly influenced the pronunciation of the students who participated in this study, who are all native Spanish speakers. In other

words, as Carrier & Falk-Ross (2005) state, students may have difficulty in perceiving and producing the English sounds that do not exist in Spanish and may replace them with Spanish ones, which is identified as a mistake by pronunciation teachers. Language transfer might also explain problems in the students' production of English endings/consonant clusters which are different and not as frequent in Spanish.

The persistence of errors at the segmental level might also be explained on the basis of the phenomenon known as *fossilization*. As pointed out by authors such as Selinker (1969, 1972), Selinker and Lamendella (1979), Long (2003), Larsen-Freeman (2006) and Han (2004, 2009), it is possible to find features in a student's interlanguage which become fossilized, that is they remain far from the target form in spite of optimal learning conditions. It might be argued that the learning conditions for the students who participated in this study are not optimal because of lack of permanent exposure to the target language, scarcity of opportunities for in-class practice due to the large number of students, which might also cause students' motivation to decrease and their pronunciation to fossilize, and so on. Furthermore, it might even be speculated that it was these students' individual pronunciation aptitude that did not allow them to acquire more accurate articulatory habits or to reach a higher level of performance.

Results also showed that, of the total number of mistakes identified at the micro level of pronunciation, those made in the assignment of prominence and in the choice of intonation were the least frequent ones. What is more, the students who did make mistakes belonging to these two categories, made a maximum of three mistakes. This significantly lower number of mistakes identified at the supra-segmental level (15%) might be explained from different perspectives. For example, it might be attributed to the explicit systematic reinforcement and practice carried out in *Phonetics and Phonology II* during the first two months; if we compare the revision segmental features versus the revision of suprasegmentals, it must be said that, though not neglected, the reinforcement in the production of segments is not so systematic or explicit.

At a higher level of generalization, it may also be argued that, for Spanish speakers, English prominence and intonation patterns seem to be easier to produce than English consonant and vowel sounds. This might be attributed to the similarities that prominence and intonation patterns in English and in Spanish share. Both are intonation languages, even though Spanish speakers use a much narrower pitch range for intonation contours (Celce-Murcia 1996). In both languages, speakers use rising tones at the end of repetition or echo questions, inverted questions and tag questions; both languages offer their speakers four different pitch levels¹⁶ (Chela-Flores 2003; Farías 2013). Furthermore, in the two languages content words are usually more prominent than structural words. Another feature they have in common is that Spanish and English speakers use prominence to highlight new or relevant information and to express contrast, for instance (Ferreiro & Luchini 2015). On the other hand, there are many differences when it comes to the phonemic inventories of these two languages; the quality and quantity of sounds differ considerably from one another.

Independently of the previous speculations, what is certain is that efforts should be made to try to help students reach higher levels of achievement.

Finally, we must say that the question could be further explored by studying the same students' oral performances during the final examinations of *Pronunciation Practice* and *Phonetics and Phonology I and II*. The focus would be on the six micro level categories considered in this study. It might be interesting to find out about their progress.

¹⁶ See Chela Flores (2003) for more details on the differences and similarities between English and Spanish intonation.

Question 2

Which impact do mistakes at the micro level of pronunciation, both segmental and supra-segmental, have on the assessment of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' performance during final oral exams?

As already explained, in order to determine the impact of mistakes belonging to the micro level of pronunciation on the mark students got, two statistical tests were run on the data collected: linear regression analysis and multiple regression analysis.

Linear regression analysis

To begin with, results of the linear regression analysis showed that micro level mistakes had a significant impact on the mark assigned to the participant: the more mistakes students made at this level, the lower the mark they received. It may then be said that that even though the micro level of pronunciation is not included as one of the focal points in the *Phonetics and Phonology II* syllabus, it seems to have been taken into account by raters; that is, errors at the micro level appear to have had an impact on the assessment of the oral performance students made during their final examination. This is absolutely in keeping with the assessment criteria described in the *Phonetics and Phonology II* syllabus (Appendix 6).

The fact that micro level mistakes had an impact on the marks assigned allows us to say that they seem to be considered important even in the context of *Phonetics and Phonology II* final exams. In fact, the value assigned to the production of these features was made explicit in the questionnaires the three pronunciation teachers answered. They stated that the accurate production of micro level features, both segmental and supra-segmental, should be taken into account when assessing *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' oral performance because micro level features constitute the basis for the appropriate production of macro level features. The teachers claimed that micro level mistakes affect fluency, intelligibility and communicative effectiveness. These results may be considered in keeping with Ghirardotto's (2009) findings, which showed that the frequency of errors in the production of segmental

features of readers aloud influenced readers' intelligibility and communicability. The more mistakes in the production of segments they made, the less intelligible and communicatively effective they were judged or perceived to be.

When analysing the results of the linear regression analysis two additional subsidiary questions arose:

- a. *Why are there cases in which students with the same or similar number of micro level mistakes got very different marks? How could this be explained?*

It is important to point out that in the linear regression analysis (see FIGURE 12) there was a small number of students with a similar amount of micro level mistakes but with considerably different marks. This difference might have to do with the functional load of the mistakes and, obviously, with rater's evaluation of how the errors affected student's communicative competence during the exam. Certain segments have a much higher frequency of occurrence than others so they may be given priority by teachers when assessing students' pronunciation because of their impact on intelligibility and communicability. As what counted in this study was the total number of micro level mistakes, no discrimination was made as to whether the total number meant the repetition of the same mistake or the occurrence of different errors, which might influence raters' assessment in different ways. This might explain why students with a similar or equal number of errors had considerably different scores. Teachers may have chosen not to take into account the repetition of the same mistake when deciding on the mark, resulting in higher scores for those students.

Another reason for these differences could be related to the value given by raters to informal assessment done throughout the year. *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers monitor, test and listen to their students numerous times during the whole academic year. The mark given in a final examination may be based not only on the student's specific performance during that exam but also on the work the student had done in class. This is also a controversial issue because it poses a new question: Are teachers assessing that particular exam

performance or are they assessing the students taking into account their language development and progress throughout the year?

Finally, the difference in the marks could also be related to the students' speech performance at the macro level of pronunciation, which was not taken into account in this study. A student may produce sounds clearly and precisely and may assign prominence in an effective way, for instance, but may have problems in their overall fluency and intelligibility, which might affect their communicability. On the other hand, a student may be comfortably intelligible, fluent and effective when communicating but may make several micro level mistakes while speaking. In such cases, the raters need to decide whether to value that the student reached the specific objectives of the course or whether to rate them taking into account that they did not incorporate many of the features taught and practised in the previous pronunciation courses. A more detailed comparative analysis of these cases could be done in a future study to find out the origin of these differences.

The second additional question that came up during the research study was the following:

b. Which other aspects may have influenced raters' scoring criteria while assessing students' oral performance?

As it was mentioned in Chapter II, when the *Phonetics and phonology II* exam was described, raters judge the correctness of students' performance based on their own subjective interpretation of the scoring criteria. Moreover, the assessment is impressionistic because no explicit rating scale is used except the numerical scale 0-10. Raters select which aspects to focus on or to give more importance to considering the course objectives and content. However, their decisions may be also influenced by their beliefs, knowledge and experience. For instance, some *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers are also teachers in *Pronunciation Practice* and/or *Phonetics and Phonology I*. These teachers who are part of more than one pronunciation chair may have a different position as regards the importance of the production of micro level features during *Phonetics and Phonology II* exams. Further comparative

research could to be done so as to have an insight on the variation in pronunciation teachers' rating criteria depending on the courses they teach.

Another aspect to take into account when analysing rating criteria is the nature of oral assessment. *Phonetics and Phonology II* teachers face the challenging task of paying attention to micro and macro level pronunciation features while listening to a student for a short period of time. After such a short performance, they are required to translate that into a numerical rating. Taking into account a myriad of aspects simultaneously and reducing such a complex phenomenon to a simple number may be extremely difficult and may cause raters to make mistakes or to vary the criteria depending on the circumstances. As raters' perception is crucial in these exams, if the rater is tired because they have been grading students for a long time nonstop, which is the case of *Phonetics and Phonology II* oral exams, for instance, perception may be disturbed, which will be reflected on the mark.

As it was stated in Chapter III (see p.52), the coefficient of determination of this research study shows that the statistical analysis made accounts only for some of the variables that were considered in the study (six micro level features). There are variables which have not been taken into account in this study and may have influenced the assessment process in some way, such as candidates and raters' gender and age, length of the exam, time of the day when each participant sat for the exam, mistakes which were not considered, and so on. The influence of all these variables could be the focus of future research.

Multiple regression analysis

After establishing, through a linear regression analysis, that the micro level mistakes had an impact on the assessment of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' performance, a multiple regression test was run on the data to determine the relative influence of each type of micro level mistake on the marks (see TABLE 3).

As shown in Chapter III, the most frequent mistakes, the ones registered in the production of vowels and consonants, seem to have been the errors

which had the lowest impact on the mark assigned to students. Apparently, raters considered these errors to be the least relevant ones. Conversely, the three least frequent mistakes registered, in 'Prominence/Rhythm', 'Intonation' and 'Endings/Consonant Clusters', seem to have been considered of paramount importance by raters at the time of assessing students' oral performance.

Phonetics and phonology II teachers usually pay special attention to the assignment of prominence and to the production of endings and consonant clusters because the meaning is usually distorted when prominence is wrongly assigned or if an ending is mispronounced. For example if a student fails to pronounce the ending of the past form of a regular verb, even though the interlocutor may understand the utterance because of contextual cues, he or she needs to make an additional effort to do so. Failure to assign appropriate prominence to utterances also affects meaning and may even affect the production of endings. If the speaker fails to make a word prominent when it should have been, the ending of that word may be missing, which may lead to miscommunication. As Solé Sabater (1991) claims, word and sentence stress (which in this study has been called *prominence*) and rhythm are "the backbone of English pronunciation" (p.147) because they are features that affect the production of other crucial features, such as realization of segments, syllabic structure, morphology, syntax and ultimately, meaning. Kang et al. (2010) also stress that the supra-segmental features of English pronunciation, especially pitch range and word stress, seem to exert the strongest influence on accentedness (See Antecedents, p. 8). Hahn (2004) and Phan & Sonka (2012) also found that the production of supra-segmentals, especially prominence, have a higher impact on accentedness and comprehensibility ratings than vowel and consonant production. Finally, Pennington (1996) claims that it is the inappropriate use of intonation (flat, monotonic, unusual intonation, for example) and wrong stress placement (referred to as *prominence* in this study) that "interfere with intelligibility" (p.253).

The answers of the interviewed teachers support the results that showed that the identified micro-level mistakes in the assignment of prominence or rhythm and in intonation (tone choices) were two of the most influential features

at the time of assessing the pronunciation of the participants of this research study. The teachers stated that the misuse of these supra-segmental features may produce serious problems in meaning, changing the emphasis and information load in an utterance. They added that errors in the production of vowel and consonant phonemes are not as important, as they do not affect meaning so much because meaning can be easily recovered resorting to contextual cues. Similarly, Gilbert (2012) asserts that if prominence is correctly assigned, listeners will understand the message even though there may be mistakes in the production of individual sounds, whereas when the sounds are clear but prominence is inappropriate, meaning problems may arise. Interestingly, contrary to the results of the present study, one of the teachers interviewed considered the production of vowels, weak forms and consonant clusters to be the most important micro level features to consider when scoring students' performance. As it was already mentioned, these differences in rating criteria may have to do with the different courses the raters teach, and their personal opinion, beliefs and experience in pronunciation teaching and assessment.

When assessing *Phonetics and Phonology II* students, teachers pay particular attention to students' intonation (tone choices) and the role it has in the organization of discourse. Learning how to use tones appropriately when reading aloud and when making oral presentations is of paramount importance. It is worth pointing out that even though in this study the statistical analysis showed that mistakes in 'intonation' deducted .30 whenever they occurred (see Table 3), according to the p-value, this variable was not as significant as some of the other features so if we decided to eliminate it from the model, the overall results of the regression analysis would not change significantly. The reason for this may be that teachers might have chosen not to give so much importance to intonation mistakes and to focus on other more frequent mistakes. Moreover, as the marks were assigned to students in a specific exam situation under unique circumstances (in a noisy room with a considerable number of students, long hours of rating nonstop, time constraints, short performances, among others), raters may have decided not to take into account or to give less importance to some features of students' performance and to focus mostly on certain

mistakes. On the other hand, the registration of mistakes after the data was collected was done under different circumstances (in a quiet room with no distractions or time limits and with the possibility of listening to the same sample as many times as necessary), which allowed for careful and thorough analysis of all the features studied, without having to select or to ponder one over another. This could account for the statistical difference between the two coefficients.

Those in charge of assessing foreign language students' linguistic abilities have a great responsibility, which confronts them with several questions and dilemmas that are not always easy to deal with. As it has been stated, this study has intended to contribute to providing more information about the process of pronunciation assessment at higher education and to determining how different aspects influence the final mark assigned to students. As Weigle stated (1998), "It is not enough to be able to assign a more accurate number to examinee performances unless we can be sure that the number represents a more accurate definition of the ability being tested" (p. 281). Doing research and studying the multiple aspects of language assessment in educational contexts will definitely contribute to making this process more transparent, objective and fair for all the participants involved.

IV.2 Suggestions for further research

In this thesis, we have analysed the impact of micro level mistakes on the assessment of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students. There are still several studies that could be carried out following a similar path.

1. On the basis of Morley's (1994) taxonomy, the impact of mistakes at the macro level of pronunciation could be determined and compared with the results of the present study to see which of these levels, the micro or the macro, have the greatest influence on the assessment of *Phonetics and Phonology II* students' oral performance. It would also be interesting to determine the relative influence of macro level errors.
2. Another inviting research topic could involve studying other variables which may affect pronunciation assessment, such as raters' and test takers' familiarity with a specific speech event, topic or interlocutor, level of tiredness, environmental factors, among others (Pickering 2006), which were not taken into account in the present work.
3. This study was conducted in a third year course, *Phonetics and Phonology II*; that is the impact of micro level pronunciation errors was studied in a context where the focus is on the production of macro level features. A similar study could be conducted in *Pronunciation Practice* (a first year course) or *Phonetics and Phonology I* (a second year course), where the focus is on the production of micro level features. The influence of macro level pronunciation mistakes could be investigated in contexts where the focus is on the production of micro level features.
4. The interlanguage speech intelligibility benefit (Bent & Bradlow 2003) could be studied so as to observe if there are scoring differences depending on whether the rater is a Spanish native speaker or a native speaker of another language.

5. As the corpus of this study consisted of oral presentations given by students, the same analysis could be done on a corpus consisting of read aloud texts. This might provide information about how the same raters assess different types of oral texts and about mistakes made when reading aloud and when making oral presentations.
6. Another field that could be interesting to go deeper into is that of the washback effect. The impact that the different kinds of tests used in our educational context might have on the teaching and learning of pronunciation is an issue to be considered and reflected upon. For example, it could be studied whether tests influence our teaching practice and/or affect our students' learning process.

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Issue 4

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APPENDIX 1

**Universidad Nacional de Córdoba
Facultad de Lenguas
Sección Inglés**

Carreras: Profesorado- Traductorado- Licenciatura

CÁTEDRA: PRÁCTICA DE LA PRONUNCIACIÓN DEL INGLÉS

CURSO: Primer Año

AÑO ACADÉMICO: 2012

RÉGIMEN DE CURSADO: Anual

CARGA HORARIA SEMANAL: 4 Horas Cátedra

CORRELATIVIDAD: de acuerdo a la reglamentación vigente

PROFESORES INTEGRANTES DE LA CÁTEDRA:

Profesora Titular:	Cecilia Ferreras
Profesores Adjuntos:	Florencia Giménez Martín Capell Dolores Orta Griselda Bombelli (en uso de licencia)
Profesoras Asistentes:	Evangelina Aguirre Sotelo Andrea Canavosio Josefina Díaz

OBJETIVOS

Objetivos Generales

1. Informar acerca del área de competencia de la Fonética Inglesa.
2. Promover la concientización respecto de la importancia de adquirir una buena pronunciación en Inglés.
3. Capacitar para el desarrollo de una comprensión auditiva eficiente del Inglés.
4. Facilitar la adquisición de nuevos hábitos de articulación.
5. Proveer de la información y destreza necesarias y suficientes para emplear oralmente con precisión y fluidez los contenidos temáticos y estructuras morfo-sintácticas presentes en las asignaturas Lengua Inglesa I y Práctica Gramatical del Inglés.

6. Desarrollar la capacidad de identificar la distribución de la prominencia en el texto como selección significativa de ordenamiento textual.
7. Desarrollar la capacidad de reconocer la organización rítmica prescriptiva del Inglés.
8. Representar simbólicamente los rasgos segmentales del Inglés.

Objetivos Específicos

Se espera que al finalizar el ciclo lectivo los alumnos sean capaces de

1. producir los sonidos del Inglés en forma contextualizada con naturalidad y fluidez
2. emplear las llamadas “formas fuertes y débiles” del Inglés en forma eficiente y apropiada.
3. producir la cadencia rítmica que resulta del uso de las “formas fuertes y débiles” del Inglés.
4. distribuir el rasgo de prominencia en forma apropiada para lograr cohesión informativa y coherencia textual
5. realizar transcripciones fonémicas y alofónicas con destreza y precisión.

Contenidos

Unidad 1: Introduction to the subject

Objectives of the subject. Related field of study.
The Speech Mechanism: articulators and cavities.
BBC English as model accent.

Unidad 2: The description and classification of English sounds

Definition of phoneme. BBC English Phonemes: classification. Vowel phonemes: definition, description and classification. Consonant phonemes: definition, description and classification. Morphophonemic rules of English morphemes “s/es”, “ed”, “ing” etc. Phonemic Transcription. The relationship between spelling and pronunciation in English.

Unidad 3: Strong and weak forms of English

Recognition, discrimination and production of weak and strong form words. Rules for their use..The relationship between the use of these forms and the rhythmic and informational structuring of utterances. Phonemic transcription revisited.

Unidad 4: Allophonic realisations of phonemes

Allophone: definition. Vowel phonemes and allophones: vowel length: degrees of vowel length. Consonant phonemes and allophones: Voicing and devoicing. Aspiration. Types of release: non-audible, nasal, lateral. Variations of place of articulation. Syllabicity. Allophonic Transcription.

METODOLOGÍA DE TRABAJO

El trabajo a realizarse durante el año lectivo se agrupa en tres tipos de actividades fundamentales:

1. Entrenamiento auditivo:

Actividades que promueven el entrenamiento auditivo necesario para discriminar y reconocer los rasgos segmentales y suprasegmentales del Inglés.

2. Producción oral:

Actividades que promueven la actividad oral subdivididas en:

- 2.a Producción en forma de imitación de modelos mediante el empleo de textos contenidos en el material grabado, adaptados y/o producidos por el profesor. Dichos materiales estarán basados en los contenidos temáticos de los libros de texto obligatorios en esta asignatura (ver bibliografía obligatoria) y en otros materiales de estudio utilizados en Lengua Inglesa I y en Práctica Gramatical.
- 2.b Producción en forma de narraciones breves que remitan al contenido temático de una historia dada (actividades de “retelling”)

3. Producción escrita:

- Práctica intensiva en la realización de transcripciones fonémicas y alofónicas de palabras aisladas y en textos
- Práctica en dictados para ser tomados en transcripción fonémica.
- Ejercitación en el reconocimiento auditivo y producción oral de patrones de acentuación y distribución de prominencia textual .

La metodología de trabajo explicitada anteriormente se implementará a través del entrenamiento sistemático en el uso de estrategias de aprendizaje que se correlacionen con estilos de aprendizaje y promuevan un aprendizaje autónomo y creativo.

CRONOGRAMA DE ACTIVIDADES (tentativo)

Abril: 3ª y 4ª semanas: unidad 1.

Mayo: unidad 2.

Junio: 1ª 2ª semanas: unidad 3.

Junio: 3ª y 4ª semanas: primer parcial (escrito y oral)

Julio: 1ª semana: entrega y retroalimentación de resultados

Agosto: 2ª, 3ª y 4ª semanas: unidad 4.

Setiembre: unidad 4 y entrenamiento para el desarrollo de la actividad de “retelling”

Octubre: 1ª y 2ª semanas: integración de todos los contenidos del programa.

Octubre: 3ª y 4ª semanas: segundo parcial (escrito y oral)

Noviembre: 1ª semana: parcial recuperatorio

MODALIDAD DE EVALUACIÓN

A. Alumnos Promocionales: no se otorga promoción.

B. Alumnos Regulares: Durante el año, se tomarán 2 (dos) exámenes parciales y 1 (uno) de recuperación, que consistirán en una parte oral y otra escrita (ambas eliminatorias). Para obtener la condición de regulares, los alumnos deberán aprobar 2 (dos) exámenes parciales.

En los exámenes parciales orales el alumno deberá leer un texto conocido y/o desconocido basado en el material empleado en clase. Se incluirán además actividades de producción en forma de narraciones breves que remitan al contenido temático de una historia dada (actividades de “retelling”).

- En los exámenes parciales escritos se incluirán ejercicios de transcripción fonémica y alofónica y ejercicios de dictado para ser tomados en transcripción fonémica. En los textos que se utilicen para transcripción fonémica se incluirá el marcado de las sílabas prominentes.

C. **Alumnos Libres:** son aquellos que no cumplen con los requisitos exigidos para los alumnos regulares.

EXAMEN FINAL

Los **ALUMNOS REGULARES** rinden un examen final oral con las mismas características de los exámenes parciales orales. Los **ALUMNOS REGULARES** no rinden examen final escrito.

Los **ALUMNOS LIBRES** rinden un examen final con programa completo. Dicho examen consiste en una parte oral y una escrita con características similares a los exámenes parciales orales y escritos. Ambas partes son eliminatorias. El examen oral antecede al examen escrito.

CRITERIOS DE EVALUACIÓN PARA EL EXAMEN FINAL

Evaluación escrita

La evaluación escrita estará dividida en dos secciones:

Sección A:

A.1 Dictado de un texto para ser tomado en transcripción fonémica.

A.2 Transcripción fonémica de un texto dado con marcado de las sílabas prominentes cuyo contenido morfológico, sintáctico y lexical estará basado en los textos de uso obligatorio para el dictado de esta asignatura.

En ambos casos, cada error cometido en la transcripción fonémica equivaldrá a un 1 % . Si el alumno repitiese el error en una misma palabra en más de una ocasión, dicho error será considerado sólo una vez. Si el alumno cometiese más de 40 errores en esta sección, no se continuará con la corrección de las secciones B y C, ya que se considerará que el alumno no ha alcanzado el 60 % mínimo requerido para aprobar el examen.

Sección B:

Transcripción alofónica de palabras extraídas de A.1 que ilustren las instancias de realizaciones alofónicas solicitadas.

En la sección B se solicitarán instancias distintas de realizaciones alofónicas. Cada error cometido en las distintas instancias equivaldrá a

un 2 %. Si el alumno superase el número de errores equivalente a un 40 % entre las secciones A y B, , no se continuará con la corrección de la sección C, ya que se considerará que el alumno no ha alcanzado el 60 % mínimo requerido para aprobar el examen.

Evaluación oral

En la producción oral de los alumnos se tendrán en cuenta los siguientes aspectos:

- correcta realización fonética de vocales y consonantes.
- Correcta pronunciación de los pasados de los verbos regulares, de las formas plurales de los sustantivos, de la 3 ° persona del singular del presente simple, formas contraídas de las formas verbales 'is', 'has' .y caso genitivo.
- Correcta realización de las formas fuertes y débiles del Inglés.
- Correcta producción de la cadencia rítmica que resulta de la aplicación de la normativa de acentuación típica del inglés.
- Apropiaada distribución de la prominencia textual.
- Grados de inteligibilidad y fluidez aceptables para un nivel intermedio.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

LIBROS DE TEXTO

- Capell, Martín S.; Gimenez, Florencia; Orta González, M. Dolores; Ferreras, Cecilia R.; Bombelli, Griselda E. (2010) *GettingPronunciationStraight. A Theory and PracticeHandbook*. Córdoba: Todo en Copias ISBN: 978-987-05-8497-1
- O'Connor,J.D and Fletcher,C.(1989) *Sounds English. A pronunciation practicebook*. Longman. (Libro y cassettes)
- Textos y cassettes de uso obligatorio en Lengua Inglesa I y en Práctica Gramatical del Inglés.
- Material de práctica complementaria
- Diccionario de usoobligatorio. Jones,D., Roach,P. and Hartman, J. (2003) *English Pronouncing Dictionary*.Cambridge: Cambridge UniversityPress.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA DE CONSULTA (Parte teórica)

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D.M. and Goodwin, J. M.(1996) *Teaching Pronunciation: a Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Finch,D and Ortiz Lira,H.(1982), *A course in English phonetics for Spanish speakers*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Gimson, A.C and Cruttenden,A.(1994-2001), *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*, London: Edward Arnold.

Kenworthy, J. (1987), *Teaching English Pronunciation*, London: Longman.

Roach,P.(2000), *English Phonetics and Phonology*, 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA DE CONSULTA (Parte práctica)

Bowler,B and Parminter,S. (1992), *Headway Pre-Intermediate Pronunciation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cunningham, S. and Bowler, B. (1994), *Headway Intermediate Pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hancock, M.(1996), *Pronunciation Games*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mortimer, C.(1985), *Weak Forms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mortimer, C.(1990), *Elements of Pronunciation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DICCIONARIOS RECOMENDADOS

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, (última edición), London: Longman.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,(última edición), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wells,J.C.(última edición), *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*. Harlow: Longman Group UK Limited.

APPENDIX 2

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

SECCIÓN INGLÉS

CÁTEDRA: FONÉTICA Y FONOLOGÍA I

CARRERAS: PROFESORADO - TRADUCTORADO - LICENCIATURA

PROFESORES INTEGRANTES DE LA CÁTEDRA

Titular: Lidia Rosa Soler

Adjuntos: Florencia Giménez

Martín Capell

Profesora Asistente: María Verónica Ghirardotto

CURSO: Segundo

CARGA HORARIA SEMANAL: 4 horas cátedra

RÉGIMEN DE CURSADO: Anual

ARTICULACIÓN HORIZONTAL:

Lengua Inglesa II
Gramática Inglesa I

ARTICULACIÓN VERTICAL:

Materias que deben regularizarse

Práctica de la Pronunciación del Inglés
Lengua Inglesa I

AÑO ACADÉMICO: 2012

FUNDAMENTACIÓN

La inclusión de la enseñanza de la pronunciación del inglés en el plan de estudios de las carreras de Profesorado, Traductorado y Licenciatura en inglés se fundamenta, en primer lugar, en la necesidad de proporcionar al estudiante herramientas que le permitan desarrollar hábitos de percepción y producción en la lengua extranjera, adecuados al nivel de competencia fonológica y fonética de futuros profesionales. Por otra parte, el estudio de una lengua a nivel universitario implica también la adquisición, por parte de los estudiantes, de los conocimientos teóricos y metodológicos indispensables para su desempeño en la docencia, la interpretación y la investigación. En base a lo anteriormente expuesto es que la enseñanza de la pronunciación de la lengua extranjera se realizará desde una perspectiva teórico-práctica.

OBJETIVOS

A.- OBJETIVOS GENERALES

Al finalizar el curso, el alumno estará en condiciones de:

- 1.- Expresarse fluidamente utilizando los rasgos de simplificación fonológica, acentuales y entonacionales característicos de un estilo de pronunciación coloquial.
- 2.- Comprender la importancia que reviste el conocimiento del sistema fonológico del inglés para una comunicación adecuada.

B.- OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS

Al finalizar el curso, el alumno estará en condiciones de:

- 1.- Reconocer y producir en forma dirigida y espontánea los rasgos de simplificación fonológica del inglés.
- 2.- Identificar los patrones de acentuación y ritmo del inglés y utilizarlos correctamente en el habla.
- 3.- Reconocer y producir en forma dirigida y espontánea las variaciones entonacionales del inglés atendiendo a su función comunicativa.

CONTENIDOS

UNIDAD 1: Phonemic Adjustments

- 1.a. Linking features. Styles of pronunciation.
- 1.b. Elision at word internal and at word boundary levels.
- 1.c. Assimilation at word internal and at word boundary levels.
- 1.d. Compression.

UNIDAD 2: Word Stress

- 2.a. Stress in English simple words.
- 2.b. Stress in English compound words.
- 2.c. Rhythmical modifications of stress patterns.
- 2.d. English rhythm. Reference to Spanish rhythm.

UNIDAD 3: Intonation: general characteristics

- 3.a. The structure of the Tone Unit.
- 3.b. Prominent vs non-prominent syllables.
- 3.c. The tonic syllable.
- 3.d. The functions of intonation: attitudinal, grammatical and discoursal.

UNIDAD 4: The Communicative Value of Discourse Intonation

- 4.a. Falling and Falling-Rising tones.
- 4.b. The Rising tone.
- 4.c. The Rising-Falling tone.
- 4.d. The Level tone.

UNIDAD 5: The Intonation of Questions

- 5.a. Wh-questions and Yes/No questions.
- 5.b. Declarative mood questions.
- 5.c. Social questions.
- 5.d. Brief reference to Spanish intonation.

METODOLOGÍA DE TRABAJO

Actividad oral:

- 1.- Discriminación auditiva, imitación y producción espontánea de los rasgos de simplificación fonológica a través de la lectura fluida de textos de diversa extensión.
- 2.- Reconocimiento auditivo y producción de los patrones acentuales de palabras simples y compuestas, aisladas y en contexto.
- 3.- Imitación y producción espontánea de textos de variada extensión con el ritmo característico del inglés.
- 4.- Discriminación, imitación y producción dirigida y espontánea de los rasgos entonacionales del inglés en textos de diversa extensión.

Actividad escrita:

- 1.- Transcripción fonológica de los rasgos de asimilación, elisión y compresión
- 2.- Marcado de patrones acentuales de palabras simples y compuestas, en listados y textos.
- 3.- Reconocimiento y marcado de entonación por medio de dictados y/o grabaciones.
- 4.- Marcado libre de entonación en diversos textos.

MODALIDAD DE EVALUACIÓN

- A.- Alumnos promocionales: no se otorga promoción
- B.- Alumnos regulares: Para obtener la condición de regular los alumnos deberán aprobar 2 (dos) exámenes parciales.
- C.- Alumnos libres: aquellos que no cumplan con los requisitos exigidos para los alumnos regulares.

Alumnos regulares:

Parciales: durante el transcurso del año lectivo, se tomarán 2 (dos) exámenes parciales y uno recuperatorio, orales y/o escritos (ambas partes eliminatorias). El examen recuperatorio podrá ser rendido por quienes hayan estado ausentes o resultado aplazados en uno de los dos parciales.

Examen final : examen final oral.

Alumnos libres: rinden un examen final con programa completo. Dicho examen consiste en una parte escrita (teórico-práctica), y otra parte oral, siendo ambas eliminatorias. La parte oral tiene las mismas características que las del examen para los alumnos regulares.

Evaluaciones orales parciales y finales: consistirán en:

- 1.- Lectura de textos conocidos y/o desconocidos con o sin transcripción entonacional.
- 2.- Producción oral espontánea a partir de situaciones asignadas por el profesor.

Evaluaciones escritas parciales y finales: consistirán en:

- 1.- Transcripción fonémica que incluya los rasgos de simplificación fonológica cubiertos en la asignatura.
- 2.- Marcado de acentuación.
- 3.- Marcado de entonación (prominencia y tonos)
- 4.- Dictado para reconocimiento de entonación (prominencia y tonos).

CRITERIOS DE EVALUACIÓN

Evaluaciones orales: Se valorará:

- La correcta utilización de ajustes simplificadorios.
- La correcta utilización de patrones de acentuación.
- La correcta producción de la entonación atendiendo a su valor comunicativo.
- Grado de inteligibilidad y fluidez apropiados.
- Se tendrá en cuenta, también, la correcta realización de todos aquellos rasgos fonéticos y fonológicos estudiados en primer año.

Evaluaciones escritas: Se valorará:

- La correcta transcripción fonémica con especial énfasis en las simplificaciones fonológicas.

- El correcto uso de patrones de acentuación en listados de palabras y textos.
- El correcto y apropiado marcado de entonación en diversos tipos de textos.
- La correcta toma de dictado de entonación.

CRONOGRAMA DE ACTIVIDADES (tentativo)

Abril: unidad 1.

Mayo: unidad 2.

Junio: 1^a, 2^a semanas: unidad 3.

Junio: 3^a semana: integración unidades 1, 2 y 3.

Junio: 4^a semana: primer parcial (escrito y oral)

Julio: 1^a semana: primer parcial (continuación de la parte oral)

Agosto: 2^a, 3^a y 4^a semanas: unidad 4.

Setiembre: unidad 5

Octubre: 1^a y 2^a semanas: integración de todos los contenidos del programa.

Octubre: 3^a y 4^a semanas: segundo parcial (escrito y oral)

Noviembre: 1^a semana: parcial recuperatorio

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Bibliografía Obligatoria

Bradford, Barbara (1988). Intonation in Context. Cambridge: CUP (with cassette)

Finch, D. & H. Ortiz Lira (1982). A Course in English Phonetics for Spanish Speakers. London: Heinemann Educational Books. (with cassette)

O'Connor, J.D. & C. Fletcher (1989). Sounds English. Longman. (with cassettes)

Material preparado por la cátedra

Textos y grabaciones utilizados en la asignatura Lengua Inglesa II

Bibliografía Recomendada

Brazil, D., M. Coulthard & C. Johns (1980). Discourse Intonation and Language Teaching. London: Longman. (with cassette)

Brazil, D. (1985). The Communicative Value of Intonation in English. Birmingham: English Language Research. (with cassette)

Brazil, D (1994). Pronunciation for Advanced Learners of English. Cambridge: CUP. (with cassettes)

Cruttenden, A., (1986) Intonation. Cambridge: CUP

Gimson, C.A. (1970). An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English. London: Arnold (third edition).

O'Connor, J.D. and G.F. Arnold (1976) Intonation of Colloquial English. (second edition). London: Longman.

Ortiz-Lira, H. (1999) Word Stress and Sentence Accent. *Cuadernos de la Facultad, Monografías temáticas Nº 16*. Santiago: U.M.C.E. (with cassette)

Roach, P. (1983). English Phonetics and Phonology. Cambridge: CUP. (with cassettes)

Stannard Allen, W. (1954). Living English Speech. London: Longman.

Diccionarios recomendados:

Hornby, A.S. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. London: OUP. (Últimasediciones)

Jones, D. English Pronunciation Dictionary London: Dent (Últimasediciones).

Jones, D. (2003). English Pronouncing Dictionary. New edition. (Ed. P. Roach, J. Hartman y J. Setter). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lewis, J. Windsor. A Concise Pronouncing Dictionary of British and American English. London: OUP. (Últimasediciones)

Wells, J.C. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. London: Longman. (Últimas ediciones)

APPENDIX 3

Asignatura: **Fonética y Fonología Inglesas II**

Cátedra: A, B, C, D, E

Profesor: Titular: Griselda Bombelli – Lidia Soler
Adjunto: Verónica Ghirardoto
Asistente: Andrea Canavosio

Sección: Inglés

Carrera/s: PROFESORADO/TRADUCTORADO/LICENCIATURA

Curso: 3º año

Régimen de cursado: ANUAL

Carga horaria semanal: 4 horas semanales

Correlatividades:

Materias regularizadas: Lengua Inglesa II, Fonética y Fonología Inglesas

I

Materias aprobadas: Lengua Inglesa I, Práctica de la Pronunciación

FUNDAMENTACIÓN

La inclusión de la enseñanza de la pronunciación del inglés en el plan de estudios de las carreras de Profesorado, Traductorado y Licenciatura en inglés se fundamenta, en primer lugar, en la necesidad de proporcionar al estudiante herramientas que le permitan desarrollar hábitos de percepción y producción en la lengua extranjera, adecuados al nivel de competencia fonológica y fonética de futuros profesionales. Además, el estudio de una lengua a nivel universitario implica también la adquisición, por parte de los estudiantes, de los conocimientos teóricos y metodológicos indispensables para su desempeño en la docencia, la interpretación y la investigación. En base a lo anteriormente expuesto es que la enseñanza de la pronunciación de la lengua extranjera se realizará desde una perspectiva teórico-práctica.

OBJETIVOS

A.- OBJETIVOS GENERALES

Al finalizar el curso, el alumno estará en condiciones de:

- * Entender el inglés oral espontáneo y auténtico y lograr el uso apropiado del inglés conversacional en situaciones varias.
- * Integrar conocimientos adquiridos en los dos cursos anteriores y adquirir los conceptos teóricos que sustentan los contenidos prácticos de la asignatura y que favorecen el desarrollo de las distintas competencias: lingüística (fonético-fonológica), discursiva, sociolingüística y estratégica.
- * Tomar posición con respecto al rol del inglés como lengua de comunicación a nivel internacional y, especialmente, en ámbitos académicos

B.- OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS

Al finalizar el curso, el alumno estará en condiciones de:

- * Analizar las características fonológicas del inglés cotidiano espontáneo.
- * Reconocer y reproducir textos orales (lectura y expresión espontánea) atendiendo a su organización por medio de la entonación.
- * Analizar y explicar el uso de rasgos fonológicos y paralingüísticos teniendo en cuenta el contexto discursivo y utilizando el metalenguaje adecuado.
- * Reconocer las principales diferencias fonético- fonológicas de los acentos estándares del inglés más reconocidos internacionalmente.
- * Desarrollar las estrategias necesarias que faciliten el aprendizaje, el monitoreo y la autocorrección de errores fonológicos que afecten la comunicación.

CONTENIDOS

UNIDAD 1

Discourse Intonation: brief revision of the concepts of Rhythm, Tone Unit, Prominence and Tone. Key and Termination. Pitch concord. Divergence of form and function. Direct and Oblique Orientation.

UNIDAD 2

The pitch sequence. Intra-sequential and inter-sequential choices of Key and Termination. Intonation and topic structure. The intonation of Discourse Markers and their role in the organization of spoken discourse.

UNIDAD 3

Correlates of intonation: tempo, pause, loudness, paralinguistic features. Phonological analysis of different discourse types: the role of intonation and its correlates in spontaneous conversation, stories, interviews, lectures, poems and news bulletins.

UNIDAD 4

English as a language for international communication. Different accents of English. Standards of pronunciation. British English. General American.

METODOLOGÍA DE TRABAJO

- * Comprensión auditiva del inglés cotidiano y espontáneo en forma consecutiva y en un acento por vez, en grabaciones, videos y contacto con nativos.
- * Imitación y producción espontánea de diversos tipos de discurso oral de acuerdo al contexto.
- * Lectura en voz alta de diversos tipos de texto utilizando los rasgos suprasegmentales y paralingüísticos adecuados.
- * Producción oral fluida y apropiada de uno de los dos acentos estándar del inglés.

- * Detección, análisis y corrección de errores de pronunciación, acento, entonación y ritmo de la lengua inglesa
- * Actividades comunicativas que permitan el empleo espontáneo de las estructuras rítmicas y entonacionales estudiadas.
- * Transcripciones de rasgos suprasegmentales y paralingüísticos de diversas variedades de discurso oral.
- * Reconocimiento auditivo y transcripción de las características fonológicas diferenciales de los acentos estándares del inglés.
- * Discusión e intercambio de opiniones y aportes sobre los posibles aspectos positivos y negativos de contenidos y actividades.

MODALIDAD DE TRABAJO CON EL AULA VIRTUAL

Las clases presenciales se complementarán con el uso de un aula virtual. Según los principios del aprendizaje combinado o mixto (*blended learning*), este espacio de intercambio e interacción virtual permite el aprendizaje no presencial y enriquece el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. El aula virtual se encuentra en la plataforma *Moodle*. Allí, los alumnos de todas las comisiones que integran la cátedra tendrán acceso a actividades de práctica extra, presentaciones digitales y material teórico relacionado con las unidades desarrolladas en clase. Esta instancia de aprendizaje requiere que el alumno adopte un rol muy activo y que el docente participe como guía y facilitador, lo cual fomenta el aprendizaje autónomo de los estudiantes.

MODALIDAD DE EVALUACIÓN

- A.- Alumnos promocionales:** no se otorga promoción
- B.- Alumnos regulares:** Para obtener la condición de regular los alumnos deberán aprobar 2 (dos) exámenes parciales.
- C.- Alumnos libres:** aquellos que no cumplan con los requisitos exigidos para los alumnos regulares.

Alumnos regulares

Parciales: durante el transcurso del año lectivo, se tomarán 2 (dos) exámenes parciales y uno recuperatorio orales y/o escritos (ambas partes eliminatorias). El examen recuperatorio podrá ser rendido por quienes hayan estado ausentes o resultado aplazados en uno de los dos parciales. En cada caso, el parcial recuperatorio abarcará los contenidos correspondientes al parcial (1º o 2º) que se espera recuperar.

Examen final: examen final oral.

Alumnos libres

Los alumnos libres rinden un examen final con programa completo. Dicho examen consiste en una parte escrita (teórico-práctica), y otra parte oral, siendo ambas eliminatorias. La parte oral tiene las mismas características que las del examen para los alumnos regulares.

Evaluaciones orales, parciales y finales

Los alumnos deberán:

- a) leer distintos tipos de textos nuevos y/o conocidos empleando los rasgos fonéticos, fonológicos y paralingüísticos apropiados.
- b) producir textos orales espontáneos a partir de temáticas asignadas por el profesor.
- c) justificar, con el metalenguaje apropiado, las elecciones fonético, fonológicas y paralingüísticas realizadas en su discurso oral (espontáneo y/o leído).

Evaluaciones escritas, parciales y finales

Los alumnos deberán:

- a) desarrollar uno o más temas teóricos utilizando el metalenguaje adecuado.
- b) realizar una o más actividades prácticas que demuestren el conocimiento de los fundamentos teóricos de la asignatura.

CRITERIOS DE EVALUACIÓN

Evaluaciones orales

Se valorará el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa en dos niveles:

- a) en el micro nivel se tendrá en cuenta el uso correcto de los rasgos fonético-fonológicos del inglés tanto a nivel segmental como suprasegmental;
- b) en el macro-nivel se tendrá en cuenta el uso de aquellos elementos que favorecen la comunicación: inteligibilidad, fluidez, rasgos paralingüísticos adecuados al tipo de texto y al contexto discursivo.

Evaluaciones escritas

Se valorará:

- a) la precisión en el desarrollo de los temas teóricos y el empleo del metalenguaje correspondiente;
- b) la correcta resolución de las actividades prácticas con su fundamentación teórica, si correspondiere.

CRONOGRAMA tentativo

Primer cuatrimestre: Unidades 1 y 2

Segundo cuatrimestre: Unidades 3 y 4

Los contenidos del programa se desarrollan de manera espiralada, es decir que los temas se retoman periódicamente incrementando el nivel de profundidad y complejidad a medida que se incorporan contenidos nuevos.

Fechas tentativas de los exámenes parciales

Primer parcial: las dos últimas semanas del mes de junio y la primera de julio.

Segundo parcial: las tres últimas semanas del mes de octubre.

Ambas instancias de evaluación estarán seguidas por dos sesiones de explicaciones de los resultados obtenidos tanto en los exámenes orales como en los escritos.

Parcial recuperatorio: primera semana de noviembre

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Bibliografía Obligatoria

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Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D.M. and Goodwin, J. M. (1996). Teaching Pronunciation: a Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dalton, C. and B. Seidlhofer. (1994). Pronunciation. UK: OUP

Geddes, M., G. Sturtridge and S. Been, (1991) Advanced Conversation. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

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Hewings, M. (2007). English Pronunciation in Use. Advanced. UK: CUP.

- Material de audio seleccionado por la cátedra.
- Manual compilado por la cátedra con material para práctica oral y material teórico de lectura obligatoria.
- Textos y/o material de audio utilizados en la asignatura Lengua Inglesa III.

Bibliografía recomendada

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- Speak Up. Madrid: RBA Revistas (con CD)
- Trudgill, P. and Hannah, J. (1994). *International English*. (3a edición). London: Arnold.

Diccionarios recomendados:

- Hornby, A.S. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. London: OUP. (Últimasediciones)
- Jones, D. (1963, revised by Gimson, A.C. 1977). *English Pronunciation Dictionary* London: Dent. (Últimasediciones)

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APPENDIX 4

CUESTIONARIO ABIERTO A LOS PROFESORES DE LA CÁTEDRA DE FONÉTICA Y FONOLOGÍA II

1. ¿Cuáles considera que son los rasgos que más influyen a la hora de evaluar la producción oral de un alumno de Fonética y Fonología II (elijá A o B)? ¿Por qué?

A) Producción de rasgos pertenecientes al nivel micro de la pronunciación: Producción de vocales, Producción de consonantes, Acentuación y ritmo del inglés, Producción de formas débiles, Producción de finales de palabras y grupos de consonantes, movimiento tonal.

B) Producción de rasgos pertenecientes al nivel macro de la pronunciación: Precisión y claridad general o Eficiencia comunicativa, Fluidez general, Intelligibilidad general.

2. ¿Qué importancia le asigna (del 1 al 5) a la producción de rasgos del nivel micro de la pronunciación cuando evalúa a alumnos de la materia de Fonética y Fonología II? Justifique su elección.

1) Nada relevante, 2) poco relevante, 3) relevante, 4) muy relevante, 5) totalmente relevante.

3. Indique qué importancia le asigna a los siguientes errores a la hora de evaluar el desempeño oral de los alumnos de Fonética y Fonología II. Ordénelos según su importancia y justifique el orden que seleccionó.

Producción de vocales

Producción de consonantes

Acentuación y Ritmo del inglés

Formas débiles

Producción de finales de palabras y grupos de consonantes

Movimiento tonal

1-

2-

3-

4-

5-

6-

APPENDIX 5

EXTERNAL RATERS' MISTAKES REGISTRATION

STUDENT 2							
	VOW	CONS	PROM	WEAK F	END/CC	INTO	TOTAL
T1	3	0	1	2	0	2	8
T2	4	0	3	2	0	2	9
T3	2	4	0	1	0	0	7
Average (T1, T2, T3)	3	1,3	1,3	1,7	0	1,3	8
RESEARCHER	2	0	1	1	1	2	7
STUDENT 8							
T1	4	1	0	1	1	1	8
T2	5	0	2	1	1	1	10
T3	2	5	0	3	1	0	11
Average (T1, T2, T3)	3,7	2	0,7	1,7	1	0,7	9,7
RESEARCHER	4	1	0	3	2	1	11
STUDENT 12							
T1	5	2	1	2	1	2	13
T2	4	3	2	3	1	1	14
T3	3	6	1	4	2	0	16
Average (T1, T2, T3)	4	2,7	1	3	1,3	1	14,3
RESEARCHER	5	4	0	4	2	1	16
STUDENT 21							
T1	8	7	1	1	2	1	20
T2	5	7	0	2	1	0	15
T3	6	6	0	0	0	0	12
Average (T1, T2, T3)	6,3	6,7	0,3	1	1	0,3	15,7
RESEARCHER	8	7	2	2	2	0	21

STUDENT 37							
T1	3	2	3	3	0	1	12
T2	4	4	2	1	0	1	12
T3	5	3	3	2	1	1	15
Average (T1, T2, T3)	4	3	2,7	2	0,3	1	13
RESEARCHER	5	3	3	3	1	1	16

APPENDIX 6

MICRO LEVEL MISTAKES FREQUENCY TABLES

AF: ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY

RF: RELATIVE FREQUENCY

Mistakes in the production of vowels	AF	RF
0	3	6
1	6	12
2	10	20
3	8	16
4	6	12
5	10	20
6	3	6
7	0	00
8	0	00
9	2	4
10	1	2
	49	

Mistakes in the production of consonants	AF	RF
0	3	0.06
1	12	0.24

2	9	0.18
3	9	0.18
4	4	0.08
5	5	0.10
6	3	0.06
7	0	0.00
8	2	0.04
9	1	0.02
10	0	0.00
11	0	0.00
12	0	0.00
13	1	0.02
	49	

Mistakes in the production of weak forms	AF	RF
0	7	0.14
1	4	0.08
2	11	0.22
3	11	0.22
4	8	0.16
5	4	0.08

6	1	0.02
7	3	0.06

Mistakes in Endings and Consonant Clusters	AF	RF
0	5	0.10
1	8	0.16
2	18	0.37
3	12	0.24
4	3	0.06
5	2	0.04
6	1	0.02

Mistakes in Prominence/Rhythm	AF	RF
0	18	0.37
1	17	0.35
2	11	0.22
3	3	0.06

Mistakes in Intonation	AF	RF
0	20	0.41

1	8	0.16
2	16	0.33
3	5	0.10