

Global English awareness: experiencia de comunicación intercultural en el aula de inglés

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Abstract

This paper proposes a classroom intervention for teachers to use in their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons to familiarise their students with the idea of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Here, Spanish students' perceptions towards non-standard varieties of English in international contexts are investigated. The study, first of all, reveals an awareness by the majority of the participants of the need to learn to communicate better with other non-native speakers of English inside the EFL classroom. Most claim they would like their teachers to pay more attention to pronunciation in order to avoid misunderstandings, others suggest they need more exposure to non-standard varieties of English to be prepared for real-life interactions, proving that the proposed intervention raises students' awareness towards the intercultural usage of English in global communication settings. The main objective of this paper is to show a classroom experience designed to teach Spanish students Global English, instead of the traditional Standard English, with the aim of facilitating real-life communication outside the classroom. This classroom experience aims at raising awareness towards other varieties of English which students will most likely encounter in international contexts. This classroom experience proves that students are not presented to world Englishes in their learning process, not even C1 level students, which is the second highest level of English learning according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It is clear that this intervention raises students' awareness and creates more intelligible English speakers who are more prepared for international communication. After seeing the potential of this short classroom experience, one could claim that a wider classroom intervention based on this experiment could result in not only aware English speakers but also more intelligible ones, prepared for international interactions in today's era: the era of the communication. This classroom intervention could be modified to be implemented in any other EU country for common intelligibility amongst EU nations.

Keywords: English as a foreign language (EFL), English as a lingua franca (ELF), global English awareness in EFL classroom.

Resumen

El presente artículo propone una intervención didáctica para que sea usada por profesores de inglés en sus clases de inglés como segunda lengua para familiarizar a los estudiantes con la idea del Inglés como lengua franca. En él se investigan las percepciones de los estudiantes de inglés de nacionalidad española sobre las variedades del inglés no nativo en situaciones internacionales. El estudio, primeramente, revela un conocimiento por parte de la mayoría de los alumnos sobre la necesidad de aprender a comunicarse mejor con otros hablantes de inglés no nativos. La mayoría de ellos afirmaron que les gustaría que sus

profesores de inglés dieran más importancia a la pronunciación con el fin de evitar malentendidos; otros sugirieron que necesitaban más exposición al inglés hablado por personas no nativas con el fin de estar preparados para interacciones reales fuera de clase. Esta intervención crea conciencia hacia el uso intercultural del inglés en situaciones de comunicación global. Los objetivos principales de este artículo son, primero, analizar el incremento de uso del inglés como lengua franca y, segundo, hacer una demostración de una experiencia educativa diseñada para enseñar inglés global al alumnado español, en vez del típico inglés estándar, con la finalidad de preparar a dicho alumnado para una comunicación más fácil en el mundo real, donde la mayoría de los hablantes del inglés son también no nativos. Dicha experiencia demuestra que a los estudiantes no se les presenta el inglés mundial en su proceso de aprendizaje, ni siquiera en niveles tan altos como el C1. Está claro que esta intervención crea conciencia y moldea al alumnado para que puedan convertirse en hablantes de inglés inteligibles, más preparados para participar en situaciones de comunicación internacional. Después de ver el potencial de esta corta experiencia, se podría decir que una intervención más amplia basada en este experimento no solo resultaría en hablantes de inglés más concienciados, sino también más inteligibles, preparados para interacciones internacionales en la era de la comunicación en la cual vivimos. Esta intervención se podría modificar para ser implementada en cualquier otro país de la Unión Europea para un entendimiento común hablando inglés entre países.

Palabras clave: inglés como lengua extranjera, inglés como lengua franca, concienciación del inglés global en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera.

1 Introduction

English has become an international language used all around the world to communicate, meaning that whenever the interlocutors do not share the same first language, they will most likely turn to English to share the information. As a result of the spread of English throughout the world due to facts as the colonial expansion of the British Empire, the usage of English as language of information, both in the Internet and the academic world -to mention a few-, English has become a lingua franca at a gradual pace, starting over one hundred years ago and still being highly relevant today for cultural, intellectual or commercial exchange.

Consequently, not every person who uses English as a means of communication is native, in fact, just one out of four speakers of English is native (Crystal, 2013), which means that English is mostly used for communicating among non-native speakers. Kachru (1992), cited in Xiaoqiong and Xianxing (2011), designed the Concentric Circles model to explain the three categories in which the speakers of English fall. The Inner Circle is the smallest of the three circles, it contains the countries where English is the mother tongue: Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and South Africa. The Outer Circle, which is where countries having English as an additional official language fall, is significantly bigger than the Inner Circle. Here, we can find former British colonies, such as India, Ghana, Zimbabwe, etc. Finally, the Expanding circle, the bigger of the three, contains all those countries where English is learnt as a foreign language, as Spain, China, Russia, and many others. And, as its name suggests, it is expanding until it covers every other country in the world. There is no doubt, however, that the Outer and Expanding Circles outnumber the first (Xiaoqiong & Xianxing, 2011). This, then, raises the question “why do we teach American or British

English instead of Global English, if the latter is the most used type of English in real life interactions?”

Having students be prepared to speak English with non-native speakers is, then, a must when teaching this language nowadays. The main objective of this paper is to show a classroom experience designed to teach Spanish students Global English, instead of the traditional Standard English, with the aim of facilitating real-life communication outside the classroom. This classroom experience aims at raising awareness towards other varieties of English which students will most likely encounter in international contexts. Consequently, the principal goal would be to prepare students not only to pass an English proficiency exam, but also, and more importantly, to be able to communicate globally using English as the means of communication without misunderstandings or transfer from their mother tongue.

Speaking English in global contexts is becoming extremely important in the information age, however, few are the institutions which incorporate Global English in the curriculum. In Spain, for instance, one can find an allusion to intercultural communication in the Official School of Languages' curriculum, which states that students must be able to mediate with native people of the target language to express daily routines or personal interests (BOE, 2017, Sec. I. p. 127781), nevertheless, when looking at the curriculum for Spanish high schools or middle schools, the usage of English as a global language does not seem to be a priority, instead, the focus appears to be in countries where English is spoken as a native language: “students must be aware of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic features from the communities where the target language is used, and its differences to the students' own cultures, adapting to the interlocutors' characteristics and the communicative situations within the production of the spoken text” (BOE, 2015, Sec. I. p. 437). Students still exclusively study Standard English (British or American) in most Spanish institutions with the aim of passing to the next English level or earning a diploma, never looking past the academic aspect of learning a language. The need of presenting students to a different usage of English, one which is more useful in real-life contexts, was the reason for this classroom experience to emerge.

Coursebooks in English language teaching (ELT) have always played an essential role in classrooms, as teachers and students follow them throughout the academic year. One would expect, then, coursebooks to incorporate the newest trends in ELT, although, as Vettorel and Lopriore (2013) claim, “findings show that there have been no significant changes in the inclusion of WE (World English) and ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) oriented materials and related tasks” (p. 497). Some coursebooks, however, devote a section to English as a global language, sometimes adding a text on different cultures around the world for a reading comprehension; others add “Global English facts”, as Clandfield and Pickering's *Global Elementary*; and many others are introducing audio clips where the speakers are non-native English speakers, as Oxford's *Voyage C1* (2016), although their speech is closer to standard English than to a real international interaction. However, even though many shed some light upon English as a global language, all the books examined are still strongly linked to Standard English, having Standard British English as the model to follow, in terms of grammar, lexis and even pronunciation. The aim of most books, then, is for students to acquire a native-like competence of English, completely forgetting about the social aspect of the language which is to communicate globally with anyone understanding them and for them to be understood (Caleffi, 2016).

There is no denying that whenever one speaks a foreign language, the first language plays an important role, either in the transferring of words (false friends), phonemes (minimal pairs) or grammar structures. This transfer may not be a burden when communicating with other speakers of one's first language, as they are shared features amongst the interlocutors, but it hinders communication when faced with a native speaker of English or a non-native English speaker having a different mother tongue. This can very well mean that a person being an A+ student inside a classroom where everybody shares the same first language, can find many difficulties communicating with someone who does not share this first language, either because they cannot understand or be understood.

The main reason for the emergence of this classroom experience is the imminent need of bridging the gap between classroom performance and international social interaction. For this, every session and activity has been cautiously designed to raise awareness towards non-standard varieties of English, including their own variety of English (with Spanish transferring) and also to improve students' listening skills in non-standard contexts and pronunciation skills in order to be appropriately understood when presented with an international environment.

2 Methodology

A total of 27 students of C1 English level from the Official School of Languages of Burgos, Spain, participated in the study. They were divided into three groups of approximately 10 people each undergoing the experiment equally, thus not having a control group. The age of the participants ranged from 16 to 54 years: 7.40% falling into the 14-18 category; 3.70% into 19-24; 40.70%, 25-34; 30%, 35-44; and 18.50% fall into the 45-54 category. There were 18 female participants and 9 male ones with different educational backgrounds divided into five categories: those who have a vocational school certificate (3.70%), those who are still attending high school (7.40%), those who are currently attending university or who already have a university degree (51.50%), those who have a master's degree (30%), and, finally, those who have a PhD (7.40%). All the participants were originally from Spain, although not all of them shared the same geographic origins: 92.60% were from different parts of Castile and León, mostly Burgos, León and Valladolid; 3.70% from Córdoba, Andalusia; and 3.70% from San Sebastian, the Basque Country. This means that the majority of the participants speak standard Spanish as their first language, only the Andalusian student will have a different phonological repertoire. We can conclude then that this was a mostly heterogeneous group, with 92.60% of the participants being from the same area, 88.9% sharing a university background, 66.70% being women, and 52.60% being adults.

The instruments for compiling the information were two qualitative questionnaires and a likert-type scale, both anonymous. The questionnaires were divided into a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test aimed at gathering the participants' attitudes towards different varieties of English before they were exposed to the classroom experience, covering questions such as "Where is English spoken?", "Do you think there is more than one type of good English pronunciation? If so, what types of English would you consider to be good?", "Do you think you have an accent?", "Do you think you can understand any speaker of English even if they are not native speakers?", "Can you always tell if someone is a native speaker of English?", "Can you distinguish among different varieties of English?". The pre-test was designed to see the evolution of the participants in the matter,

the aim was to see if these participants were now less prejudiced towards non-standard English varieties after having undergone the intervention, two weeks apart from the pre-test. The questions were virtually the same, with just a few nuances, as “With the knowledge you have acquired, where would you say English is spoken?”, “Do you now think there is more than one type of good English pronunciation?”, “Is it now your aim to sound like a native speaker of English?”, “Would you now consider taking pronunciation more seriously?”, “Had you ever thought about different non-native English pronunciations before?”, “Do you consider you are more aware now of the intercultural usage of English?”. The likert-like scale was inserted into a classroom activity during the intervention where participants had to listen to an audio clip made up of authentic material where non-native speakers of English talked about a different range of subjects. After listening to the speakers, participants had to fill in the scale with their reactions towards what they had just listened to, 1 being “I completely disagree” and 5 “I completely agree”. The statements were as follows: “I could not understand some speakers”, “I could not understand most speakers”, “I could not understand any speaker.”, “I could tell the speakers were not native English speakers”, “I got distracted by the speakers’ accents and, for that reason, I did not pay attention to what they were saying.”, “If the speakers would have been native English people, I would have understood everything they said.”, “These speakers should change their accent for being understood.”, “I prefer to listen to someone with a good English accent even if what they say is less relevant.”, “I have had problems to identify the origin of the speakers.”

The general didactic objectives of this classroom intervention revolved around listening comprehension, and oral expression and interaction. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), for students to pass a C1 level course, they would have to acquire a certain degree of proficiency in all the skills: writing, reading, listening and speaking (both oral production and oral interaction). For this classroom experience only the last two skills (listening and speaking) are going to carry more weight. The main competence this intervention covers is the phonetic and phonological one, which, according to the CEFR, refers to the acquisition of an articulability capacity close to those of the standard varieties of the target language and a perception, without much effort, of those variants. All these skills, according to the CEFR, need to be reached following a standard-like manner, taking as a model the European country within the European Union (EU) where that language is spoken as a native language, and choosing its standard variety, in the case of English, British English with Received Pronunciation (RP) would be the goal. This intervention, however, does not aim at acquiring a British English RP, instead, its purpose is to make students be intelligible in international contexts, whether it is inside or outside the EU, for this, the participants will be exposed to many different non-native varieties of English for their listening activities, and will be asked to attain an intelligible pronunciation for their speaking skills, but never will they be asked to speak like a native English speaker.

The contents covered in this classroom experience are mainly those related to phonology, phonetics and communication. Here they are presented as they appear in the *Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE)*, i.e. the Spanish Official Gazette: **Characteristics of the communication:** Sociocultural varieties, language levels depending on sociocultural factors: polite, standard, vulgar English and slang; geographical varieties, national or regional varieties of English offered by English-speaking territories. **Phonetic and Phonological Contents:** Sounds and phonemes and their combinations, usage of phonetic

transcription. In terms of the attitudinal contents, this intervention aims at students' disposition to learn phonological and phonetic elements of both standard and non-standard English varieties, having an open mind towards native and non-native accents of English, and the acquisition of a favourable attitude towards the use of English as a global language.

This classroom intervention was a pilot experiment, thus only lasting two weeks, from the 27th of March to the 9th of April 2019. It was divided into four different sessions of 50 minutes each for each of the three C1 level groups from the Official School of Languages of Burgos, Spain, where each group had two sessions per week. Every session was carefully designed to last half of the 2-hour sessions, i.e. 50 minutes. For every session, some in-class activities were proposed, both individual and in groups. As Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) claims, for students to acquire knowledge in the cognitive domain they need to go through different stages of processing such information. First, students have to be presented with the knowledge, and recall it; second, they will explain the information which has been given; third, they will interpret the information; next, they will have to compare what they have learnt with other information they already had; to, finally, being able to create their own thoughts in the matter. On the whole, there were three types of activities: initial activities, those which introduce the topic (See session 1); development activities, with which students assimilate the new concepts presented to them (See session 2); and compiling activities, which reinforce whatever has been learnt (See session 4).

The organisation of the classroom intervention was made into four major steps. First, it focused on the detection of the level of the students' awareness of the usage of different varieties of English in international contexts and their perceptions towards said varieties. For collecting this data, an anonymous questionnaire was designed and handed in the first day. Second, the classroom experience started, sequenced into four sessions which will be explained in more detail in the following section. Finally, a different questionnaire was distributed in order to evaluate whether the classroom intervention had contributed to a modification of students' attitudes towards the usage of non-standard English varieties in international interactions.

Given that this was a pilot classroom experience and not a real didactic unit based on the curricular project of the centre, students did not sit an exam nor had a final mark after concluding the intervention, instead, they were evaluated every day in the classroom from the first day of the experience to the last, through anonymous qualitative questionnaires and active observation of their evolution on the part of the teacher which was evaluated as follows: every student was assessed in four different aspects of their pronunciation. First, their level of intelligibility was assessed with a likert-like scale where 1 stands for unintelligible (they mispronounce most of the words and are not able to differentiate between most phonemes which are minimal pairs), 3 stands for more or less intelligible (they mispronounce some words because of their difficulties pronouncing some phonemes), and 5 means perfectly intelligible (they virtually do not mispronounce any word and have a great command of phonemes). Secondly, their performance at phonemes is considered in the first session, the teacher ticks the minimal pair or pairs each student has more difficulties with, to have a more individualised evaluation of their pronunciation, and, thus, help each individual with the sounds they struggle with, and, at the same time, focus on those sounds most students have problems with. Third, another likert-like scale is used to assess the final result of the students, i.e. whether they have

acquired a more intelligible pronunciation or not after having undergone the experience, following the first scale: 1 stands for unintelligible (they mispronounce most of the words and are not able to differentiate between most phonemes which are minimal pairs), 3 stands for more or less intelligible (they mispronounce some words because of their difficulties pronouncing some phonemes), and 5 means perfectly intelligible (they virtually do not mispronounce any word and have a great command of phonemes). The last grid is for annotations of the improvement of each student.

3 Classroom intervention

The first five minutes of the first session are dedicated to filling anonymously a qualitative pre-test on their thoughts on English as a global language. After this, the students will listen to a recording without any visual stimulation featuring five non-native English speakers from different parts of the world -India, France, Korea, Russia and Jamaica-, retrieved from authentic Ted Talks videos. These speakers were chosen because all of them use English as a means of communicating information worldwide, each with their own real accent, influenced by their mother tongue. While students listen to the audio clip (which lasts 15 minutes), they will have to fill in a worksheet which is divided into three different tasks: one is a fill in the gaps activity, another one is guessing what nationality each speaker has by only listening to the audio clip, and the third one is a likert-like scale where students have to answer with their perceptions on the speakers' varieties of English. Once every student has finished the listening tasks, the correction of the activities is done out loud. Students are asked not to erase their first answers even if they are wrong, for data gathering on their performance when faced with authentic non-standard English material. During this correction, students are asked for their own personal experiences speaking English abroad with native and non-native English speakers. Finally, a Powerpoint presentation including information on Kachru's Three Concentric Circles model is shown.

The second session starts with a presentation on vowel sounds: A table is drawn in the blackboard where half will be devoted to Spanish vowels and the other half to English vowels. First, the teacher writes down the five Spanish vowels in one half of the table, with an example: /a/, as in sal. Then, the other half of the table will be filled with the English vowels, first the short vowels will go, as they have a similar sound to Spanish. For instance, if we take Spanish /a/ as in the word sal, we will have to find a similar sound in English, which could be /a/ or /æ/ -depending on the English variety we choose- as in the word cat. Now a new table will be attached to the half devoted to English vowels. We will look for a similar sound, now focusing on long vowels. To continue with the same example the teacher will write down /a:/ as in car. This way we will have the Spanish vowel and the English short and long vowel sounds in the same line. The same process is done with every single vowel (a, e, i, o, u). However, there are still two sounds missing, which will be added with an asterisk below the table, these sounds are schwa /ə/ as in the second syllable of water and the open mid-back unrounded vowel /ʌ/ as in bus. It is very important to take some time in this activity and the previous one, letting students give the answers and think about the similarities among Spanish and English vowels. It is also crucial for the teacher to raise awareness about the main difference between Spanish and English vowels: in Spanish there are just five vowel sounds, whereas in English there are twelve. This is sometimes a difficult issue for Spanish students to grasp as there are some English minimal pairs which are found difficult to pronounce by them (hat and heart, for

instance) due to the fact that in Spanish all vowels are short. The session will end with a miscommunication example due to the mispronunciation of long vowels: I had to take the sheets off the bed where using a short or long vowel in the word sheet changes the meaning of the whole sentence. If a Spanish student uses the Spanish /i/ instead of the English long vowel /i:/ (which does not exist in the Spanish vowel repertoire) in the word sheet, they would be saying shit instead.

The third session will start in a similar fashion to the last session, however, this time the presentation will be of consonants. First, standard Spanish sounds which do not exist in standard English are shown, for instance the gü sound as in *agua*, or the /χ/ sound, as in *jamón*. After working with the sounds, students should not transfer from their first language if they are aiming at intelligibility in international contexts, the English sounds which do not exist in standard Spanish are presented: /v/, /z/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /h/. More importance is given to those sounds which can cause misunderstandings, /v/ which can be confused with /b/ (*vase* versus *base*). As a practical activity, students are given minimal pairs to discriminate the different sounds, for instance: /sɪp/, /zɪp/ and /ʃɪp/. Following this, the concept Consonant Clusters is explained, as they are normally quite difficult for Spanish students to master, as they do not exist in Spanish to the same extent. Unlike in English, in Spanish a word starting with s will always be followed by a vowel, never by a consonant (*salud* versus *school*). The most usual English consonant clusters are presented: the pronunciation of the past tense suffix for regular verbs -ed, as it is a very recurrent mistake Spanish students make, which can result in miscommunication. Next, word stress is going to be tackled using homograph words which are not homophones, the only difference between these words is the stressed -or strong- syllable, as the verb *con'test* and the noun *'contest*. Other words are *record*, *greenhouse*, *moving van*, *toy factory* and *new Polish teacher*. With this activity students will be aware of how important stress is in English to avoid misunderstandings. Finally, students are asked to pronounce words as *Edinburg*, *comfortable*, *island*, *Wednesday*, *infamous*, *literature*, *spontaneity* or *Arabic*, which can be difficult to pronounce for foreign students, as they are not said as one might expect. This activity aims at raising students' awareness towards English pronunciation: sometimes it is impossible to guess the pronunciation of a word if you do not know such word previously, which hopefully will lead to the thought of never guessing what a word might be pronounced like, but rather look for the appropriate pronunciation before saying it in a formal context, for instance.

The first twenty minutes of the fourth and last session are devoted to practicing tongue twisters. After this, students are asked to sit in groups of three or four people. Each person from each group is given a bingo card where many minimal pairs are written, as *bit* and *beat*. The member of the group who has the first card (number one) says the first word out loud for their group mates to hear, everyone (including the person who said the word) has to cross the word they heard, i.e. someone wanted to say the word *beat* but used a short vowel instead of the long one, their group mates will cross the word they have heard, which in this case will be *bit*. This will end up in miscommunication, which will have to be talked through amongst the members of the group to come to an agreement. The goal of the game is for the whole group to call *bingo*, if this happens, it means there has been little or no miscommunication and every member of the group has pronounced properly each and every word. However, if this does not happen, students will be aware of their own mistakes and the importance of pronouncing words which can be ambiguous correctly. To finish with the session, students are given a qualitative post-test which they

will have to anonymously fill in on their thoughts on English as a global language after having gone through this classroom intervention. This post-test has some questions which had been introduced in the pre-test previously, in order to make sure students answered sincerely or not.

4 Results

As it has been mentioned previously, two qualitative questionnaires and a likert-like scale were handed to the participants to anonymously fill in with their impressions of English as a global English. The qualitative questionnaires were made up one by 8 and the other by 7 questions to which the participants had to answer yes or no, and explain their answer. The data extracted was not very far from the initial hypothesis of this paper: Spanish students are not familiarized with English as a lingua franca, nor are they ready to engage in efficient native and/or non-native interactions in international contexts. In this section I present the findings classified in different claims, each of the claims being supported by evidence from the data collected during this classroom experience through the questionnaires and the likert-like scale:

- 1) More focus on pronunciation is essential in English as a foreign language lessons for students' intelligibility and self-esteem: 55.55% of the participants claim that they would like to have a native English accent, and 26% claim that their aim is intelligibility.
- 2) Students need more exposure to non-native accents for their personal life: 18.51% have already communicated in English with native and non-native speakers, however 7.41% state that although it is not impossible to understand other English speakers, they surely find it difficult. This will most likely be because of the lack of exposure they have to different varieties of English, as 37% of the participants claim they can only distinguish among American and British English.
- 3) Students need more exposure to non-native accents of English, both for being less prejudiced and for coping better when interacting with non-native speakers: 30% of the participants considered, at the beginning, the different non-native pronunciations of English to be wrong or weird, and, on the same note, 37.5% stated they would prefer to listen to someone with a good English accent even if what they say is less relevant than what a non-native speaker says and 38.46% affirm they got distracted by the speakers' accents and, for that reason, did not pay attention to what they were saying. After this intervention, however, 44.44% claimed in the pre-test that they thought there is a good type of English pronunciation which is the one spoken in native countries, but then, in the post-test, they reached the conclusion that any accent (native or non-native) is a good accent.

After this classroom intervention, participants are more aware of the importance of English pronunciation for international communication: 44.44% of the participants claim they will now consider taking pronunciation more seriously to avoid misunderstandings, 26% say they will do so to communicate more efficiently and 14.8%, to be more proficient in English. They have also acquired a more open-minded point of view towards different varieties of English, as 37.04% of the participants first considered English to be spoken only in native countries, but after the classroom intervention they stated that

English is spoken in more places. And, what is more, a significant amount of students who mispronounced most of the words and were not able to differentiate between most phonemes which are minimal pairs at the beginning improved their pronunciation skills at the end of the experience, making an effort with the pronunciation of long and short vowels and incorporating new phonemes to their repertoire, as /h/ or /z/.

5 Conclusions and implications

This classroom experience proves that students are not presented to world Englishes in their learning process, not even C1 level students, which is the second highest level of English learning according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It is clear that this intervention raises students' awareness and creates more intelligible English speakers who are more prepared for international communication.

After seeing the potential of this short classroom experience, one could claim that a wider classroom intervention based on this experiment could result in not only aware English speakers but also more intelligible ones, prepared for international interactions in today's era: the era of communication. This classroom intervention could be modified to be implemented in any other EU country for common intelligibility amongst EU nations.

6 Limitations

At least two main limitations can be found regarding this classroom intervention. One is the low number of participants taking part in the experience, which, as a result, makes the sample not be representative of Spanish EFL students. However, this pilot intervention would be more reliable if it were reproduced with more groups including different proficiency levels, cities and ages. On the other hand, one has to bear in mind teachers' capacity to implement this intervention into their classrooms, there would have to be some sort of teacher training for teachers to acquire the intelligible pronunciation they are going to demand students to have: teachers have to be a good example for students to copy.

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