

# Facultad de Lenguas

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*Acoustic phonetic performance level using onomatopoeias with elementary  
school children: A Case Study*

Thesis

A thesis submitted to the school of languages for the degree of

**LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS**

Presenta

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

When a non-native speaker pronounces a phoneme in English according to the maternal acoustic-phonetic knowledge, he has comprehension problems, since there is no such coincidence (Abeer, Abe, and Shrikanth, 2005, p.1). Actually, what is currently happening in the phonetic Area? Some children are not interested in reading a story because they cannot understand the vocabulary due to mistakes with the pronunciation of some phonemes. Unfortunately, they did not know what the word meant when they were mispronouncing the word by themselves. For example, with the word "sneeze," they know that / sniz / means "estornudo" in Spanish, but when they saw it in the book, they pronounced / esnes / and forgot the word meaning.

To emit a word, people make noise, so with a particular set of noises, we form a word. Then we provide it with a meaning to communicate in the same way onomatopoeias also help children emit sounds. In addition, they find it fun and entertaining to form their learning faster since they understand the message creatively.

Onomatopoeia is the existing representation of sound between a word and something else; various authors mention a relationship with the sounds of nature. The similarity between these two terms is that all this is possible thanks to imitation, echoes, reflections, and likeness of the sounds we hear. We reinforce our knowledge by expressing naturally or directly what we hear (Nikolina,2015, p.4).

If the onomatopoeia represents a sound relationship between a word and “something,” this term “something” can be a similar sound phoneme. For example, with the consonant “s.” Its sound is like the one that broadcasts a snake. If this were applied to help us get closer to the original sound quickly, they wouldn't even take it as a job.

About the onomatopoeic sound as a form of poetry, children will have more ease in forming a word that expresses a representation of the sound. The appreciation of the sound is evidenced through the teaching of songs, the memorable ones like 'Old MacDonald Had A Farm' 'The Wheels On The Bus,' among others are songs that young children love to sing. (Nikolina,2015, p.6).

Onomatopoeias are very easy for children to understand; in addition to being a natural learning method, it is a thriving learning way to catch the attention of them to continue perfecting the sound, emphasizing the sound showing the segments in terms of phonetic categories (occlusion, friction, nasalization, loudness, etc.) to give rise to a knowledge of acoustic-phonetic level. In 2009 the Computer Academic Assessment System was used to measure decoding skills, including literacy and fluency, and the Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery (WLPB) to measure vocabulary knowledge and reading and listening comprehension (Louisa and Carol, 2009,p.249).

The image (located in appendix B) clearly shows the results obtained, using a computer-administered pseudoword test indicates literacy, showing only a pronounced pseudo part produced from the words used in the fluency measure by alternating one letter of each word to the student, which upon reading it uses the phonological and orthographic conventions in English. These are some of the studies that measure the use of decoding of students based on their explicit knowledge of phonemes, but because they did not show which were the most

difficult phonemes to decode from the words used? and what can be done about it? (Louisa and Carol, 2009,p.250).

Many times, we have heard that an effective solution for the development of a language is to read, so this article tries to clarify whether it is possible to use the onomatopoeia to the mistakes they had with pronunciation trying to adapt the onomatopoeic sounds most similar to phonemes without excluding the natural perception of the native speaker. Onomatopoeias are helpful for children during the acquisition of the English language. Reading stories allows children to improve their pronunciation in a creative and fun way.

### **1.1 Problem**

The decoding ability is beneficial during the reading process. A necessary aspect of achieving it is that the reader first must have phonological and orthographic intelligence to feel confident during English learning. According to Patrick C, Diane, Maria S, Catherine E (2005, p.248), listening comprehension contributed to reading comprehension to help children get the confidence to produce English sounds. For that reason, the implementation of the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter to practice and learn English with the fourth grades from Motolinia elementary school. It lets us know that during the use of the story reading, children presented comprehension problems because they could not understand the vocabulary due to the mistakes they had with the pronunciation of some phonemes. Unfortunately, when they mispronounced the word, they did not know what it meant in their mother tongue. Also, during the process of learning English as a second language, the problem was more notable that the children could not produce the phonemes and know the vocabulary.



## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

The study aims to analyze the problems that children face when they associate the English language with onomatopoeia. Intending to explore possible funny ways to help the students motivate and to improve their learning of a foreign language, in this case, it is English.

## **1.3 Objectives**

Pronunciation of onomatopoeias to improve the acoustic-phonetic level, through reading, producing phonetic sounds that are not commonly pronounced in the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter. Demonstrate that the use of onomatopoeia when teaching English can be suitable for children in order they learn in a fun way, helping to feel confident during their learning in a pleasant environment for children to learn through the production of these specific sounds to improve oral production.

## **1.4 Research questions**

The thesis addresses the following research questions:

1. How does onomatopoeia influence the process to get successful phonetic learning to pronounce the words in the story better?
2. What is the main problem that prevents the correct pronunciation of phonemes?
3. What are the most common phonemes not pronounced in English in nine-year-old Spanish-speaking children?

4. How to differentiate between an onomatopoeic sound and a phonetic sound to avoid getting confused?

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

According to our maternal acoustic-phonetic knowledge, a native speaker pronounces a phoneme in English has comprehension problems since there is no such coincidence (Abeer, Abe, and Shrikanth, 2005, p.1). It is necessary to develop the pronunciation of phonemes in English in Spanish-speaking children because when they pronounce a phoneme many times in Spanish, they distort the pronunciation of the word, making it listen in another way, in other words, different from the usual one, consequently when they say it. Suppose they hear to correctly again in another social context. In that case, it will be difficult for them to recognize the sound because children have a different pronunciation from the original one besides that it is created by themselves. So, this research performs the acoustic-phonetic level in fourth-grade elementary school children to help them understand the vocabulary they pronounce in the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter and recognize them when they hear them.

### **1.6 Theoretical context of the research**

The paper was carried out in the Motolinia elementary school, located in the state of Puebla in the 033-school zone with institution code 21EPRO253. The students selected are fourth grade, group B. They are nine years old and all take classes in the morning. Also, the objective of the English classes is that the students can be learning the English language through the reading of onomatopoeias in the story “I love to sneeze” and allow them to hear these words.

## 1.7 Key words

***Onomatopoeia***: “Onomatopoeia” is one of the technical terms we most easily remember, perhaps because it is such an odd word, oddly spelled, and which could be a trochaic trimeter line by itself, but more probably because of its meaning, as it is usually defined and illustrated, is easy to grasp and fun to think about” (M. Ferber, 2019).

***Phoneme***: It is a small unit of speech that makes the sound different in words.

***Reading process***: It is a process that involves the reading of matching sounds to letters between the text and reader (Goodman, K.1988).

***Decode***: To discover the information or meaning about something useful to understand the message.

***Pronounce***: To say or mention a word or letter in a specific way.

## Conclusion

This research tries to find possible suggestions to get a solution focused on elementary learners' affective reactions that they have to face when they are learning a second language, such as the production of English onomatopoeias. Moreover, it is essential to consider the value of pronouncing other languages correctly to understand. Also, it is regarded as an opportunity to improve learning. For this reason, this study intends to include some essential aspects that are fundamentals to consider when learning English.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the present research will discuss the role of performing acoustic-phonetic with onomatopoeias in an elementary school to understand English as a second language. Also, this chapter will analyze some onomatopoeias in the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter and recognize them when they hear them or use them to communicate in a foreign language. This research explores the learning process of learning English with the use of a story, where the pupils practice reading, and at the same time, they are producing sounds and learning new phonemes. Currently, there is a lot of material to learn and practice a new language, but not all have onomatopoeia to catch the learner's attention. It will focus on the manner of speaking using sounds different from the mother tongue. There are many onomatopoeias in many places in each language, and each one counts with an owner classification according to types of sound. Even onomatopoeia involves culture. Aizen (1977) (as cited Gerolde, P. 2018) are sets of words of phonemes that imitate sounds for comics. Also, Pratha, Avunjian, and Cohn (2016) (as cited Gerolde, P. 2018) mention that onomatopoeia is a “standard form of ‘sound effect,’ given that it is a word designed to approximate a sound,” it can be different, but it depends on the place. Many onomatopoeic sounds in English have specific meanings with the images figured of them. It could be a challenge for learners, and sometimes it isn't easy to translate other languages. For example, words like a crash, ring, splash characterize a specific sound and are represented with images actions. As a result, when students are learning the English language, the use of onomatopoeias could help them get a better contact to facilitate the understanding of the sounds and familiarize little by little in a learning process.

## 2.1 Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the existing representation of sound between a word and something else; various authors mention a relationship with the sounds of nature. The similarity between these two terms is that all this is possible thanks to imitation, echoes, reflections, and likeness of the sounds we hear. We reinforce our knowledge by expressing what we hear naturally or directly (Nikolina, 2015, p.4). In other words, for onomatopoeia to have its origin motive, one must find who will give life to this sound since, as it is an imitation, the sound expression that is generated is of a primary sound. As a model, only the sound is replicated naturally as the sense of hearing has detected the sound waves.

Onomatopoeia is a form of expression that represents a sound through vocalization. And by expressing emotion, we see it accompanied by some children's songs and in comics and even advertisements. Onomatopoeia is a sound that sometimes emphasizes Comics, and some stories draw even more the attention of children. About the onomatopoeic sound as a form of poetry, children will have more facility to form a word that expresses a representation of the sound. The appreciation of the sound is evidenced through the teaching of songs, the memorable ones like 'Old MacDonald Had A Farm,' 'The Wheels On The Bus,' among others are songs that young children love to sing. (Nikolina, 2015, p.6). Regarding its multiple uses and ease of reproduction, it was considered a natural instrument to improve pronunciation in a group of nine-year-old children in the story "I love to sneeze." by Ellen Schecter.

### **2.1.1 Onomatopoeia to learn English**

For acquiring a first or second language, as the case may be, a natural tool to use with children can be onomatopoeia (Nikolina, 2015, p.7). Onomatopoeias help native Spanish speakers identify allophones that include their mother tongue when pronouncing some phonemes in English. As for the classifications in the Onomatopoeia, we have animal calls, sounds made by humans, of nature, and Miscellaneous (Kambuziya and Rahmani, 2014, p.220).

Onomatopoeias were created from Miscellaneous sounds according to their subdivisions.

"Theory of mirror neurons impacts the sense of sight, creates a sensation of activating stimuli" (Maria and Annarita, 2015, p.3).

Based on this theory, we decided to accompany the onomatopoeia with cartoons, and due to the exceptional infantile taste, it was beneficial to capture their attention fully. In all languages, these onomatopoeic expressions are accepted. It is not surprising to find similar characteristics since they are natural imitations (Kambuziya and Rahmani, 2014, p.220); because onomatopoeias are genuine imitations, we try to adapt the sounds most similar to phonemes without excluding the natural perception of the native speaker. The phonetic level transfer is the process that a native Spanish speaker performs when listening to English tries to relate it to sounds of their language, and even the slightest similarity can confuse them. This process is known as phonetic level transfer (Abeer, Abe, and Shrikanth, 2005, p.1).

To avoid confusion between the sound of a phoneme and an onomatopoeia, we use the so-called "phoneme friends" to clarify that the phonemic sounds have a similar sound. And they are only helping us to get closer to the original. Finally, since we improve the pronunciation of the phonemes, we emphasize the sound showing the segments in terms of phonetic categories

(occlusion, friction, nasalization, loudness, etc.) to give rise to a knowledge of acoustic-phonetic level.

### **2.1.2 Difference between an onomatopoeia sound**

The natural sounds are considered onomatopoeias. Some sounds are emitted by animals, doorbells, hits, or any sounds that are pronounced similarly. It helps to create mental images of natural objects, animals, or actions. Also, onomatopoeias are represented in comics or stories, and it is a fun way for children to learn English words. For children, onomatopoeia is a significant advantage to breaking the monotony while reading an English long text, which could be challenging to understand. After all, onomatopoeia sounds not only add to enhancing students and their emotional appreciation of language. According to, Selevičienė(2013), learning is an individual's awareness to get new knowledge to develop skills through a variety that exposes students to the sound structure of the language and teaches them to recognize and identify when students can identify the correct sound or stress, and they feel confident.

### **2.1.3 Onomatopoeia types**

According to the topic “the classification of onomatopoeia,” They can be many subgroups since onomatopoeia are made depending on the context which is to be adapted. Because in most of each one what is sought as the purpose is to create an emphasis, only, depending on the theme, is its origin and use generated or obtained. Some of them can be animal sounds, which humans commonly generate as impact reactions, among others. (Nicolina, 2015, p.10).

Onomatopoeia, a sound of natural perception, is very common to be used as the sound of something, object, person, and even why not of an animal. However, the purpose will be only known according to the need that the transmitter wants to achieve in the message to communicate his ideas. Commonly in children's songs, they show the emission of onomatopoeia from an animated character. The main objective to remember is that in the same way when the onomatopoeia sound has already been generated, it can be presented with a character that the audience likes.

#### **2.1.4 Functions**

The creation of onomatopoeia is a way of expressing a sound formed from the derivation of another sound (the original), it is like having a natural dubbing of a sound in the form of imitation, where the sense of hearing is involved, which could get to imitate the original (Kambuziya and Rahmani, 2014, p.220). In this case, the process of this performed function is more of a natural human perception because, in the same way, the children could use natural tools, in this case, the sense of hearing and speech, which are responsible for the whole process. As they are made naturally, there is a lot of ease of understanding. On many occasions, companies decide to use onomatopoeia to make the public quickly grasp their message and spontaneously attract attention.

When an onomatopoeia is found in some writings, texts, or environments of daily life, they play the role of showing with greater emphasis the content of the same because depending on the context. Sometimes they can manage the work of a melody, and thus depending on the range where they perform their function. They achieve the objective of deepening the message that the reader will receive. The functions of onomatopoeia are shown below: Animal calls, sounds of



nature, Sounds made by humans, and Miscellaneous sounds (Kambuziye and Rahmani, 2014, p.220).

## **2.2 Onomatopoeia and reading stories**

Learning a new language has been implemented first to children at an early age at school, and it involves a lot of ways and options intended to help children in the learning process. According to Long (1996), Mackey (2007), and Fleta (2015) mention “. Concerning, for non-native children to learn the phonemes and prosody of English”. For that reason, when the teacher uses some reading stories to get the child’s attention, the reading stories play an important role. Also, Kambuziye and Rahmani (2014, p.220) argue the onomatopoeia functions englobe, the sound of nature, sounds made by humans, animal calls, and finally miscellaneous sounds.

For that reason, reading stories result as a practical option to teach a reading child. Still, the teacher first needs to identify the material it will use. The children's phonological skills are acquired for the mother tongue and how they can be transferred into English, and which ones are not equivalent in both languages and need to be learned. In addition, Machado (2010, p. 293) (as cited in CLELEjournal, 2017) argues that the stories come into play to develop the combination of sounds to get a better comprehension. As well as, teachers implement the use of stories where they combine verbal and visual texts with telling stories and engaging children, all of this is through the production of the sounds, the imitation where the children are lookers and listeners, and later on as readers. Also, Wright (2000) describes “stories are the cornflakes of the classroom” because it involves all the ingredients for language and content learning. Finally, children are learning in a natural process with a realistic perception.

### **2.2.1 Teaching with English reading stories**

Reading stories aims to give pupils oral input in the new language that they are learning. Also, the teacher should first do a pre-reading to establish a connection between sounds, words, and pictures from the book to children, and they could have a better understanding of the story. Therefore, Porras G and Nohora I (2010) argue, "Reading stories aloud allows children to make connections between oral language and the print that represents that oral language."

On the other hand, reading provides many opportunities for all people because they can expand vocabulary, creativity, listening skills, cognitive and language development. Such as, English reading stories help children with their learning, and they feel confident when they are learning a new language. In other words, Freeman, J. B. (2016) describes "the stories are structured so children will both hear the target sounds (via the storyteller) and vocalize the target sounds (via repetitive structures involving refrains, onomatopoeias, and other sound-based elements)." When teachers use reading stories, their students probably have significant learning because it is a substantial resource for learners. It helps to understand words in a different language.

Also, stories help children actively improve their language learning with their eyes and ears. Also, Fleta (2015) (as cited in CLELE journal, 2017) affirms listening to stories from picture books being read in class is among the most effective awareness-raising practices to teach active listening and engage young learners in the production of words. Thus, shared reading stories are an effective way to learn a different language because it is a fun and attractive material for children to make meaning of a message and understand new English vocabulary. As a result, reading stories for children is an appropriate methodology and didactics to improve or help students' meaningful learning.

### **2.2.2 What is a reading story?**

Reading a story involves spoken language, and it is complemented by images that attract attention to who the story is directed. Story reading is not just for fun. And it also helps children during the process of learning to be better users of the language. Also, the stories could be a valuable tool for children to learn the language and get a positive response. It helps children learn to search for the meaning of the new vocabulary. It impacts children's overall academic performance and may also help children become more understanding citizens.

Besides, Kim (1999, p.182) (as cited CLELE journal, 2017) mentions, “storytelling today is increasingly recognized as having important theoretical and practical implications,” but this does not require the presence of printed text. On the other hand, the reading story provides an opportunity for cooperative learning and developing children's skills significantly, producing positive gains in oral language. Reading stories involves oral and written language and is attached to one. For that reason, reading stories offer a wide variety of educational benefits.

In addition, Porras G and Nohora I (2010) say, “Repetitive stories are straightforward for children to memorize” and “Repetition helps children learn the patterns and structure of a story and, eventually, word recognition.” It is favorable for children. While they have more contact with the reading story, they could have more understanding. Through the repetition of some words like onomatopoeias, they could be more interested in the story. To summarise, the reading story is a process where children are more exposed to learn a new language in a funny way that is very useful for them.

## **2.3 Learning English**

In the first place, learning English as a second language (L2) is considered a phenomenon in many locations worldwide for many people. Knowing English increases their chances of obtaining a better job, new knowledge, and opportunities to improve their lives, but learning a different language is not easy; this language learning process implies several requirements. In the words of Masterson (2002), the term second language “refers to the development of near-native language skill, and this takes time, effort, and persistence.”

These are essential aspects for persons to develop communicative competence to communicate in a second language for many reasons. On the other hand, Ortega (2013) defines the second language as any language learned after the mother tongue, where learners are exposed to the new language to acquire it. Furthermore, Oxford & Shearing, 1994, p.14 (as cited in Baker, S & MacIntyre, P, 2003) mentions the second language is “one that is learned in a location where that language is typically used as the main vehicle of everyday communication for most people”. As a result, it is essential to be aware of the implications of learning and teaching English as a foreign language.

### **2.3.1 Characteristics to learn English**

Learning a language distinct from a mother tongue helps to improve the knowledge and the way to think about other cultures, showing new ways to learn. On the other hand, a foreign language is “learned where that language is not typically used as the medium of ordinary

communication” Oxford & Shearin, 1994 p. 14(as cited in Baker, S & MacIntyre, 2003). For this reason, it is difficult for English language learners to learn a language different from their mother tongue because it is complicated for learners to remain in contact all the time with their language and are not exposed to the second language. Learners face different difficulties learning English in a natural context. The learners are at a disadvantage because they are almost always surrounded by their language, especially elementary school children. They do not have positive contact with the English language. Hence, it is recommended to learners to make activities that help interact for exposure to English as possible to improve their language competence. It can be through the use of the reading stories, for example, the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter.

### **2.3.2 The role of students and teacher**

English as a second language implicates many variables, where the teachers and students have to work together. When the students learn a new language, they probably face confusion and feel frustrated with the sound pronunciation to learn and apply it. Also, learning new vocabulary could be a tedious process to use the language. Thus, the main job of a language teacher is to encourage learners to use English not only in the classroom but also in their daily interaction with their classmates, with teachers, or any other English-speaking people, if possible.

The present study explores the role of learners in developing students' speaking skills through the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter and recognizes them when they hear themselves reading the book. These variables change step by step when interacting as learners work toward their objectives and catch new knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and develop skills that add more positive or negative experiences during learning a language that can be significant for their

professional development in future life. To Ahmed (2018), the role of teacher and learners are similar because both need to work together to perform their communication doing activities that make classroom situations more interactive and provide opportunities to exposure to English as possible to help learners.

#### **2.4 The field of a second and foreign language teaching**

For a long time, learning and teaching English has used various theories and methods of language learning. One of the most common methods was the Grammar translation method that occupied the field of foreign and second language teaching for many decades and is still in use today. Teachers put different approaches in practice or apply them to teach English and motivate their students to learn and acquire it. As a result, the students have to improve their language competence. In the words of Hymes (2001), communicative competence is “the tacit knowledge” of the language and “the ability to use it for the communication” (as cited in Ahmed, 2018).

Similar to Chomsky (1965), competence is “the ideal speaker-listener knowledge of his language” (as cited in Ahmed, 2018) because he argued that language competence has a relation with the abstract abilities to speak and write to produce the second language. As well, Savignon (1972) defined language competence as “the ability to function in a truly communicative setting” (as cited in Ahmed, 2018). She considers communicative competence as an ability to function in communicative settings. This is something different from the linguistic competence by Chomsky (1965), as no one can operate in a real-life situation with only grammatical competence. For Savignon (1983), competence is “what one knows,” and performance is “what one does” (p: 94). For that reason, the teacher’s and student's roles are vital to teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

### **2.4.1 Learning and acquisition of a foreign language**

All people speak different languages, and it depends on the place and the context in which the speakers grow up because the acquisition of the language comes naturally. Similarly, Brown (2000) mentions that "language acquisition is innately determined." This is a genetic capacity as a natural process. Furthermore, Eric (1967) (as cited in Brown, 2000) says that "hypotheses of the innate propose that language is species-specific behavior and that certain modes of perception, involving language-related skills and mechanisms, they are biologically determined."

Similarly, Chomsky (1965) (as cited in Brown, 2000) explains, "the properties of innate language have a relationship with language in a short time, the abstract nature of the rules of language, knowledge. On the other hand, Chomsky says a black box in the brain that works as a language acquisition device. While the second language, according to Gass (2013), refers to the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned".

Furthermore, it can refer to any language learned after the mother tongue has been discovered, regardless of whether it is the second, third, fourth, or more languages. Acquiring a second or foreign language begins with connecting the first language that figures prominently in the speaker's mind. Therefore, in a foreign language, Thorne (2011) has mentioned that "the union of community and communication resonates well within a foreign language and L2 education" (p. 304) since they are all communities and can communicate with each other to improve and express their needs through language.

### **2.4.2 Teaching English as a foreign language in Mexico**

Teaching a foreign language that is different from the mother tongue probably seems like a challenge because English is more predominant in this context. According to Pennycook (2000) (as cited in Gopar, 2013), in Mexico, the English language is considered an economic and social media to increase education. The governments mention this in this country.

However, English in Mexican society and schools have had difficulties, and an example is the loss of mother tongues. It should be noted that in Mexico, there are several languages in different states of this country. Besides, Ryan (2003) describes the perception of Mexican foreign language teachers as a guide to the students to learn English during learning a second language maintaining the relationship with the culture to the language that the students are learning.

On the other hand, English is not available for all students. The words of Gopar (2013) mentions, “the federal government in 2008 decided to implement an interactive program to teach English, but it is not available for all students to access”. During this time, the learning and teaching of an additional language and the mother tongue is a step to achieve in the professional field and develop the language skills. Currently, learning English as a foreign language in Mexico continues expanding; for adults or children and many people who speak English as a foreign language or are learning the language, it is crucial to get a document to demonstrate their language level.

### **2.4.3 Articulators of speech sound to produce phonemes.**

During the language learning process, the articulatory codes are present from phonological representations. Onomatopoeia is a word that people engage with the meaning of sounds, so it is



commonly related to activation between the mother tongue and the foreign language. According to, Indefrey and Levelt (2004) (as cited in Papoutsis, M, Zwart, J, Jansma, J, Pickering, Bednar, J, and Horwitz, B), There is a brain area named Broca which forms part of the phonological process and has a strong relationship with the process of syllabification.

On the other hand, Hickok and Poeppel (2004) (as cited in Papoutsis, M and et al.) says, "Broca's area was assigned to phonetic encoding and implementing the mechanism of retrieving or generating the articulatory codes"(p, 275). Humans can emit one hundred sounds or words to communicate many messages. Also, the language permits the transmission of linguistic unit phonemes or phrases with the idea that it is helpful to establish communication. The people could decode the words through the articulator's system. So, speech sounds are always used to speak. When children are learning a new language, it is expected that the variation of the mother tongue sounds but little by little, it could be more similar to the foreign language.

## **2.5 Competence and performance**

The communicative process involves strategies with significant impacts on learners. Alibakhshi words (2011) defines communication competence as strategies or techniques used by learners to acquire knowledge of a different language. The objective of language learning is no longer defined in terms of the acquisition of communicative competence in a foreign language because it involves cultural, economic, educational, and social aspects in all states that belong to Mexico. For that reason, the necessity of learning English or other foreign languages has different purposes. Learning foreign languages has been a priority for many people to improve or develop competencies to get a good job.

Moreover, the acquisition of a second language plays a fundamental role in learning and knowing about cultures. It is giving way to bilingual identity and multiculturalism about the people's necessities. Learning a language involves the emission and interpretation of signs, but the most relevant is exchanging knowledge and acquiring a new way to think. According to Oliveras (2000), the people who decide to study a foreign language must be aware of the acquisition of knowledge and the immersion in a culture differently, also in the influence in their behavior, beyond that how to speak a new language.

### **2.5.1 How do nine-years-old children learn**

Young children acquire all knowledge naturally without conscientious learning. They can imitate sounds. They have the advantage of using their individual and innate language-learning strategies to learn through playing. Also, they have more time to spend on new activities to improve their learning. It focuses on children at a specific age and involves some aspects such as memory, reasoning, language, behavior, and others. Children have a lot of ways to learn a new language, where they acquire their knowledge based on their experiences. They can learn things without influence from someone else.

According to Piaget (1929) (as cited in Louisa K,1980), four stages are age-specific. Each one is marked by essential characteristics with specific objectives children achieve as they move through a stage. Also, Piaget believed all children pass through these phases in each step. Focusing on Piaget's theory, stage three is for children approximately age seven until eleven years old. It is the concrete operational stage. In this period, children develop abilities to think concretely and begin to think abstractly.

Furthermore, in this stage, the children's reading skills that are most profitably emphasized are those dealing with a sequence. Besides, if children know the language they are trying to read, it will be easier. Reading what they know by heart is a fundamental step in learning to read as it gives children opportunities to work out how to decode simple words themselves. Once children feel comfortable with that, they can read.

### **2.5.2 The most common phonemes not pronounced in English in nine-year-old Spanish-speaking children.**

In the English language, there is a difference between phonemes and letters that are consonants. In English, the three onomatopoeias are the sounds to represent the letters /th/, /l/, and the schwa. The pronunciation can be voiced or unvoiced and sometimes represent problems for non-native speakers. Besides, Manrique (2013) (as cited in Uribe, Smith, Vargas and Rey, 2019) describes “the first language (L1) highly influences the degree of difficulty learners may face during the development of the second language (L2) spoken ability”, causing interference between the mother tongue and the target language. When children are learning phonemes in a foreign language, it has singularities that teachers could consider to teach their Spanish-speaking students. Also, Griffiths (2004) (as cited in Uribe et al. 2019) says that pronunciation is a way to achieve good English pronunciation and successful communication. All speakers and teachers need to be aware that the production of the English language involves speech organs and Spanish speakers tend to change the letter sounds, for example: /b/, /d/, and /g/.

### **2.5.3 Education processes and the subject**

The pupil's learning process involves several aspects that happened to dairy. According to Laing and Catherine (2014), children have a better understanding of the use of onomatopoeia when they are in contact because it is a bootstrapping mechanism on a lexical and a phonological level. Also, it is a funny and spontaneous way of learning new sounds of English words. However, Kelly (2000) (as cited in Uribe, Smith, Vargas, and Rey,2019) the process of learning a foreign language regarding the technique of pronunciation, retention, and there are aspects that teachers must take into account to achieve English pronunciation. Students have to be aware of their language because it could present interference. Teachers should have a clear understanding of how to pronounce onomatopoeia words and what needs to be taught. Finally, the English teacher should be alert about the student's necessities to learn in a meaningful form.

### **2.5.4 Meaningful Learning**

A language is a capacity that all people have, and learners use all their time to communicate. During the learning process, the teachers have an essential role in helping their pupils to acquire a new language. Thus, in the classes, the teachers can implement techniques or material to create good control management to teach in a positive and significant form. Similarly, Robertson and Acklam (2000) mention when thinking about how to give English classes, it is fundamental that the students keep these elements, engage, study, and activate. Besides, it makes sense to use English as much as possible in the classroom if we want our students to improve rapidly. It is surprising how students do not use their mother tongue inside the school. It needs to be used to

keep our classroom language and improve students' language acquisition. This could be with the use of devices such as gestures, mime, and pictures.

An example is onomatopoeias. Above all, it may find it necessary to give instructions or explain certain items to compare or provide samples in the mother tongue, with the purpose to help the learning students. To help students in their learning, they are guided by the necessary activities to achieve success to increase their skills based on the learning obtained in class, which is called meaningful learning. It is well known that if teachers manage to capture their students' attention, it will be much easier than at the time of giving them the explanation. As it is phonetic, they understand the teacher's message and even more feasible when the teacher finds an effective way to teach. It is necessary to remember that in this case, it is essential to remember that children's classes sometimes have to be dynamic so that, in addition, to pay attention they want to participate, thus achieving the practice of knowledge and by reaffirming it, completing their meaningful learning

## **Conclusion**

The ability to write is efficient to better understand this new world for children of the English language. It is important to emphasize that in reading, children can, in addition to practicing this skill, learn English since it is necessary to apply the knowledge they have acquired during their classes. And the explanations of the topics that their teachers have given and if in that at the moment there is some doubt to be able to reaffirm what has not yet been clarified to continue advancing in their future learning with good basic knowledge. Likewise, it was done with the 9-year-old children of the Motolinia primary school because when they were put to read the story, they showed their skills, demonstrating which thematic they needed to reinforce. So, that later how they were supported would be very creative as with the use of onomatopoeia as a learning

instrument in the English language, leaving as a first impression that pronouncing in English is easy and fun and then to end with a complete acquisition of phonetic knowledge, emphasize the sound showing the segments in terms of phonetic categories to know the correct positions of the articulators of speech leaving meaningful learning as a goal. Conclusion: there is no doubt that what seems complicated with imagination, creativity, energy, and commitment can take you on the easy path to achieve successful learning in the English language and the fourth-grade children group "E."

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This chapter will talk about the methodology used in this research, the approach, and the instrument that will be considered to do this research. First, it describes the essential elements like approach, qualitative, quantitative and mix, method, the context, the participants, and the instrument. This research explores the children's problems that they face while learning English classes. Therefore, this study aims to know how children learn with onomatopoeias, how they improve a second language through the story that has onomatopoeias. And how they can learn funnily.

In this case, the methodology for this research will be a case study because the information collected will help explain and justify the development of the procedure. Then, the data collected will be helpful to describe their learning. Besides, this chapter presents the elaboration of an instrument that will be carried out with the methodology.

### **3.1 Approach**

"Theory of mirror neurons impacts the sense of sight, creates a sensation of activating stimuli" (Maria and Annarita, 2015, p.3). Based on this theory, the decision was to accompany the onomatopoeia with cartoons. Due to the exceptional infantile taste, it was beneficial to fully capture their attention since it is easier to start developing a class for children if it seems fun to them because it encourages them to want to know what it will be about, thus capturing their attention so as not to be distracted when they are about to receive the input of information, thus generating enough concentration to get the message.

Try to imagine that in class the teacher is about to teach some verbs such as action verbs, starting with the verb “run” if at the moment some action or gesture is assigned to that word, such as the student running from a bit of extreme to another, activates the corresponding motor of neurons. In the same way, as in onomatopoeias, expressive gestures are contained while making them, different assignments are started (Maria and Annarita, 2015, p.3).

In the same way, as is the case of children in this class of phonetics with onomatopoeia as a natural instrument for their learning, the child is acting, also showing that he is not only about to begin to approach the sound but also activate one more neuron of his brain related to the gesture with that friend of the phoneme, so that, it also serves as a type of strategy to activate another part of the brain. There is a better reception since by using more brain skills, this awakens and has a better reception. Then, they emphasize the sound showing the segments in terms of phonetic categories to end with a complete acquisition of phonetic knowledge.

According to Cresswell (2012), he describes case study could be based on qualitative through the observations because it allows looking at the participants. It is complemented with qualitative to show the statistics in graphs giving. As a result, the mixed approach.

### **3.1.2 Method**

This research is an exploratory case study is defined as a study that investigates a lack of phenomena, that helps to make hypotheses about something specific that limits the choice of methodology. Also, this kind of method is a procedure to understand cultures, values and beliefs, based on human experiences and situations that they face day by day, with the purpose to explore a situation in a real context to solve a problem (Creswell and Plano, 2011). First, Creswell. W. describes “qualitative data collection consists of collecting data using forms with general, emerging questions to permit the participant to generate responses” (2012, p.205). This



approach permits collecting texts, images, and information from a small number of students. On the other hand, quantitative data provide numbers or scores on instruments that can be analyzed to get results about the study that allow complement the information gathered.

According to Burr (2003) (as cited in Goodhall, N., & Atkinson, C. 2020) “An exploratory case study was used to explore perception around play within the two contexts”.

The statement mentioned reflects how it can explore social interaction and that allows collecting useful information where the researchers explore children’s experiences focusing in their environment where they are acquiring English as a second language. “The qualitative methodology is, therefore, a multidisciplinary way of approaching to social reality knowledge” (Andrés, 2002:374). From this interdisciplinary approach we consider a qualitative methodology “a research strategy based on a refined and rigorous contextual description of the event, conduct or situation that ensures the maximum objectivity in the capturing reality, always complex, and preserve the inherent spontaneous temporary continuity, so that the corresponding analytical data collected, always direct and regardless of their orientation, the ideographic and procedural preference enables and analysis to obtaining a substantial knowledge with sufficient explanatory power, in any case, with the stated objective and the descriptors and indicators to which they had access” (1986:24 Anguera). In agreement with Merriam, S. B. (1998) based on Yin (1994), “defines case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in a real context.” For this reason, in this case, study the data is collected through exploration and the analysis of phonemes that are not commonly pronounced with the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter in fourth grade from Motolinia elementary school. Besides, to the phonetic level transfer is the process that a native Spanish speaker performs when listening to English tries to

relate it to sounds of their language, even the slightest similarity can confuse them this process is known as phonetic level transfer (Abeer, Abe, and Shrikanth, 2005, p.1).

### **3.1.3 Case study**

This kind of research is used in a community study because it is considered one of the life sciences. In addition, a case study is determined when it is necessary to conduct a personal survey. Thus, initiating the description through an investigation generates a data collection of the characteristics of a circumstance, analyzed in depth to achieve a change for improvement (Roberta and Alison, 2017, p.7). According to this information, the research "Perform acoustic-phonetic level with onomatopoeias with elementary school" meets the aforementioned characteristics of a case study, based on how nine-year-old pronounce a story and at the moment present problems. This circumstance initiates a study is created. After analyzing the characteristics of their behavior, the source of the problem was found: their difficulty in pronouncing phonemes in English. It starts with creative solutions such as accompanied onomatopoeia and phonemic pronunciation employing the articulators of speech, helping them improve in a simple, effective, fast, and fun way.

### **3.2 Context**

The research was carried out in the Motolinia elementary school, located in the state of Puebla in the 033-school zone with institution code 21EPRO253L. Also, it forms part of the 4 thousand and 652 elementary schools in Puebla and is officially recognized by the Secretaría de Educación Publica. The Motolinia school is an institution that gives opportunities for many students to study in a morning shift. In this case, it allows us to do a professional practicum that helps to do

research and implement a story to explore the acoustic-phonetic level in fourth grade elementary school children to help them understand the vocabulary they pronounce in English. The students selected are sixteen students from fourth grade, group E, and the objective of the English classes is that the students can be learning English language through the reading of onomatopoeias in the story "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter when they are pronounced the onomatopoeias located in the story. So, the students participated in learning little by little through the reading story and the sound repetition, where the fourth-grade children group "E" are learning in an attractive form with the use of a story.

### **3.3 Participants**

The participants of this study are one group with 16 students attending classes in the morning shift, whose ages range are nine years old with Mexican nationality. This group of children is taking lessons in different subjects like math, geography, history, Spanish, and English, for that reason, were selected to participate in this study. Also, the mixed-method allows extending the survey to obtain specific information through description, explanation, and exploration of the acoustic-phonetic level. According to Ary, Cheser, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2009), random is the method that allows equal participation between the participants. With this method, the sixteen students participated in reading with their first contact individually without a teacher who guides them with the English language in the same way without any distinction. In addition, when they started elementary school, their contact with a foreign language started. For that reason, it is fundamental that all students in this group participate actively to explore and analyze the process of learning English with the use of onomatopoeias.

### **3.4 Data collection**

Exists several kinds of techniques that are a fundamental part of research to allow the researcher to collect information about their object of study systematically, can be people, things, and phenomena, and about the setting that they occur in more precisely, research methods or techniques help us get a solution to a problem in a specific topic and area. Also, research techniques are divided into two groups: primary and secondary, but in this case, it is to implement observation techniques that are part of the primary group.

Therefore, using observation, the research or investigator observes and records the participants' behavior rather than relying on reports. When observation is applied in a study, it usually consists of detailed notation of behaviors, events, and the context and behaviors.

### **3.5 Instrument**

First, the instrument is a tool used to collect, measure and analyze data related to research in different areas. Also, they are used to obtain information through various procedures to heighten the dependability and trustworthiness of the data and their interpretation. In this study, the naturalistic observation instrument is implemented, which is applied to a mixed-method approach. Secondly, the present research utilizes a qualitative method. The instrument aims to explore the problems faced by learners when they read the English story during the class to develop oral competence. According to Creswell (2012) argues “in qualitative research, you ask open-ended questions or an open-ended response” (p.218). As a result, participants can better express their experiences and allow them to create options to respond.

Based on a conceptual framework or the researcher's understanding of how the particular variables in the study connect, for that reason, it applies the observation instrument to explore the behaviors of the participants when they use a storybook contains 32 pages and several onomatopoeias where students practice English and pronounce, decode and learn a new language. Besides, it is essential to use a research method to collect and analyze data about the research. There exist different instruments, but in this case, naturalistic observation is the most adequate to explore this study because it permits us to know participants' behavior in the natural context. The words of Adler (1994) (as cited in V, Agrosino, 2007) describe observation as a "fundamental base of research methods, this process interacting in a natural context. Therefore, the instrument was a consonant rubric because it can collect information from a community or specific people, and it is complemented by Teaching American English Pronunciation, Oxford (Avery & Ehrlich, 1994, p.26).

In addition, it is registered in a table that is used at the beginning and during the English course (number of classes) to evaluate consonant pronunciation. It is divided into three sections, phone, the number of times they repeat wrong, and high or low pronunciation are difficult for the participants. For instance, pronunciations of onomatopoeias in which the participants can use the English language. Another instrument implemented the last part, a vowel rubric, and complemented it with the same table to register vowel pronunciation.

### **3.5.1 Consonant Rubric**

The purpose of the following table is to know in detail the characteristics of phonetic sound in the area of the consonant letters in their different classifications, accommodating each phoneme with its corresponding articulation. In the first column, we have the places of articulation, which

are the different ways of using the mouth articulation instruments during pronunciation.

Therefore, in the first line, the manner of articulation is the different ways of using air during pronunciation. Finally, to complete the characteristics of a phonemic sound, the table considers the acronym vcls = voiceless if there is no vibration in the throat when pronouncing the phoneme. On the other hand, the acronym vd = voiced represents that the throat will have to vibrate for a correct emission to be pronounced.

**Figure 2**

*Consonant chart of the sounds that give an approximation of the English language sound.*

**Table 2.9: Consonant chart** vcls= voiceless vd= voiced

		bilabial	labiodental	interdental	alveolar	alveopalatal	velar
stops	vcls	p			t		k
	vd	b			d		
fricatives	vcls		f	θ	s	ʃ	g
	vd		v	ð	z	ʒ	
affricates	vcls					tʃ	
	vd					dʒ	
nasals		m			n		ŋ
retroflex					r		
lateral					l		
semi-vowels		w					

Note: The table represents the consonants classification where vcls = voiceless and vd= voiced.

This chart is based on Avery & Ehrlich (1994, p.26) *Teaching American English Pronunciation*.

*Oxford: OUP.*

**3.5.2 To Evaluate**

The table below is an evaluation rubric, which is necessary to keep track of the phonemes spoken by the children in the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter. How the phonemes will be evaluated are first in categories: the first category are the sounds of the consonants and the second are the sounds of the vowels, of which the phonemes of the consonants will be represented first, which are the ones that will appear written in the table in figure number 3. It also contains a specific qualification for a better and complete evaluation of the same as High pronunciation difficulty represented with an "H" or Low pronunciation defined with an "L."

**Figure 3**

*High or low pronunciation difficulty by children with the use of phonemes(consonants)*

Phoneme	High or low pronunciation difficulty

Note: The table allows the register of phonemes (consonants) produced by children during the production of onomatopoeias to learn English. This chart is based on Avery & Ehrlich (1994, p.26) *Teaching American English Pronunciation*. Oxford: OUP.

### 3.5.3 Vowel Rubric

The purpose of the following table is to know in detail the characteristics of a vowel sound. In the vowel section, there are different classifications, accommodating each phoneme with its corresponding articulation. 1 Tongue Height-Here it says if the leading articulator of sound the tongue is high or down in the mouth. 2 Frontness/Backness of Tongue- In this section, we will know precisely whether the front or back of the tongue is involved. 3 Tenseness/Laxness-the muscles also play an essential role in the joint, and in this section, the muscles will be defined by tense or lax. 4 Lip Rounding- finishing completing how these sounds are made, here we will discover if the lips are rounded. (Avery & Ehrlich, 1994, p. 26).

**Figure 4**

*Vowel chart of the sounds to produce an approximation of the English language sound.*

		<i>Front</i> <i>(unrounded)</i>	<i>Central</i> <i>(unrounded)</i>	<i>Back</i> <i>(rounded)</i>
<b>high</b>	<i>tense</i>	<i>iy (beat)</i>		<i>uw (boot)</i>
	<i>lax</i>	<i>I (bit)</i>		<i>ʊ (book)</i>
<b>mid</b>	<i>tense</i>	<i>ey (bait)</i>	<i>ə (m<u>a</u>chine)</i>	<i>ow (boat)</i>
	<i>lax</i>	<i>ɛ (bet)</i>	<i>ʌ (but)</i>	<i>ɔ (bought)</i>
<b>Low</b>		<i>æ (bat)</i>	<i>a (pot)</i>	



Note: This chart gives examples of producing high, mid and low vowel sounds according to the front, central and back positions. Based on Avery & Ehrlich (1994, p.33) *Teaching American English Pronunciation*. Oxford: OUP.

### **3.5.4 To Evaluate**

The table below is an evaluation rubric, which is necessary to keep track of the phonemes spoken by the children in the story “I love to sneeze” by Ellen Schecter. How the phonemes will be evaluated are first in categories: the first category is the sounds of the consonants and the second are the sounds of the vowels, of which the phonemes of the consonants will be represented second, which are the ones that will appear written in the table in figure number 4 also contains a specific qualification for a better and complete evaluation of the same as High pronunciation difficulty represented with an "H" or Low pronunciation defined with an "L."

### **Figure 5**

*High and low pronunciation difficulty by children with the use of phonemes(vowels)*

Phoneme	High or low pronunciation difficulty

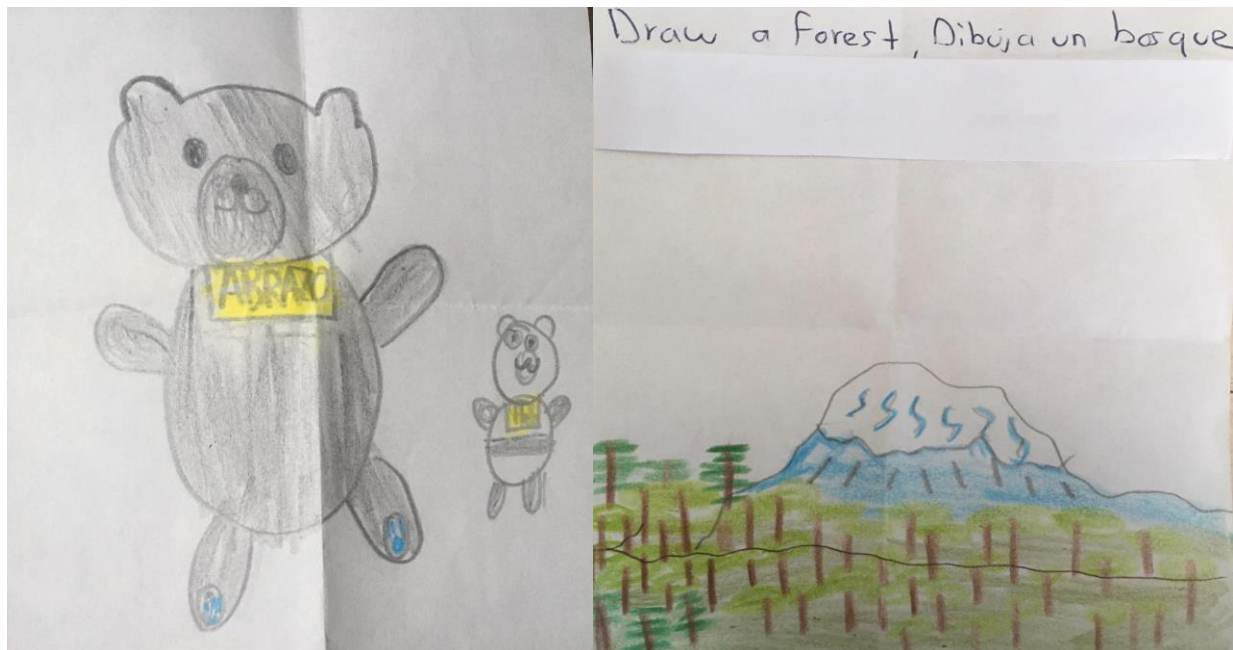
Note: The table allows the register of phonemes (vowels) produced by children during the production of onomatopoeias to learn English. Based on Avery & Ehrlich (1994, p.33) *Teaching American English Pronunciation*. Oxford: OUP.

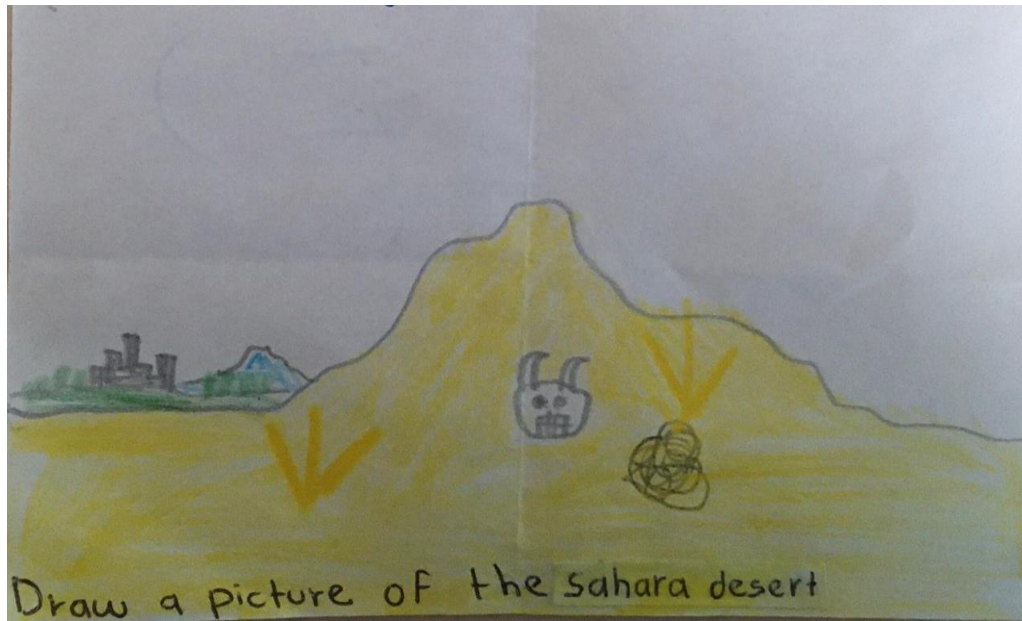
**3.6 Piloting**

Piloting is considered a significant part of the research design. It intends to find details that research the same line, in some occasions, this could be positive or negative. According to Gudmundsdottir and Brock-Utne, (2010), Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) (as cited in Malmqvist et al., 2019) mention "one of the aims with conducting a pilot is to increase research quality," thus allowing the improving aspects in the research process. For that reason, the pilot of the current research was applied as the first step to identify the possible inconsistencies in the study. In addition to that, it provides valuable information to contribute to the successful research project. This piloting focuses on the use of onomatopoeias in elementary school children to learn

English. Thus, this research was applied to children in fourth grade with this subject. Based on that, the participant chosen to carry the piloting is Camargo Lozano Axel, who is nine years old. Then, the researcher contacted the child before he was included in the activity session to explain the activity and adequately guide the process.

The application of the previous instrument was made in-class time, giving essential points about the research. For example, to capture children's attention and so that they can learn English more efficiently, they like the activities to have pictures and colors. In fact, for that reason, the onomatopoeia was accompanied by illustrated characters, so they pretend to be the friends of the onomatopoeia. The following picture is evidence of the process taken during the application of the piloting.





### **3.7 Procedure**

In this study, data was collected by the observation procedure. First, the naturalistic observation addressed consonant pronunciation and registered only three aspects, emphasizing the aspect of onomatopoeia in children's English learning and its use for obtaining an answer that helps children during contact with a foreign language English. Second, the children use the vowel sound of the onomatopoeia that was taken into account during the pronunciation of the onomatopoeias through naturalistic observation. The results and findings are the results of this research that will be shown in qualitative and quantitative analysis.

The data collection will analyze all information obtained through the observations obtained systematically and in the same context. It is the following methodology. First, the data collected through the observations will be registered, organized in sections, and reinforced with a video recording.

The information is analyzed and observed to divide into two parts as the best way to understand it. The first section is going to take into account the consonant pronunciation

participant's information. It is enlisted in a table where phoneme, number of times repeated wrong, and high or low pronunciation difficulty can be seen. These elements are helpful to understand the student's understanding and how they improve their learning with the story "I love to sneeze."

A case study with a mixed approach is defined as a procedure for analyzing, collecting, and mixing qualitative and quantitative methods in a single research or study to solve a problem (Creswell and Plano, 2011). Moreover, the qualitative method is fundamental to do as well as this part of the analysis. Afterward, the information collected from the observation will be helpful to describe the positive or negative causes of the use of onomatopoeias to learn English.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter was about the methodology and the research approach used to analyze the data collected from the instrument applied for the participants. Then, it talks about the participant's context where they are studying, the grade and numbers of students, and more specific information about the age of the participants. After that, the instrument was elaborated with the previous information to be applied for the participants and how it was collected and registered observations to answer the instrument. Finally, how the methodologies analyzed the data collection, in the following chapter, the results will be presented based on the analysis made with the elementary children to respond to onomatopoeias to learn English, positively or negatively.

## CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

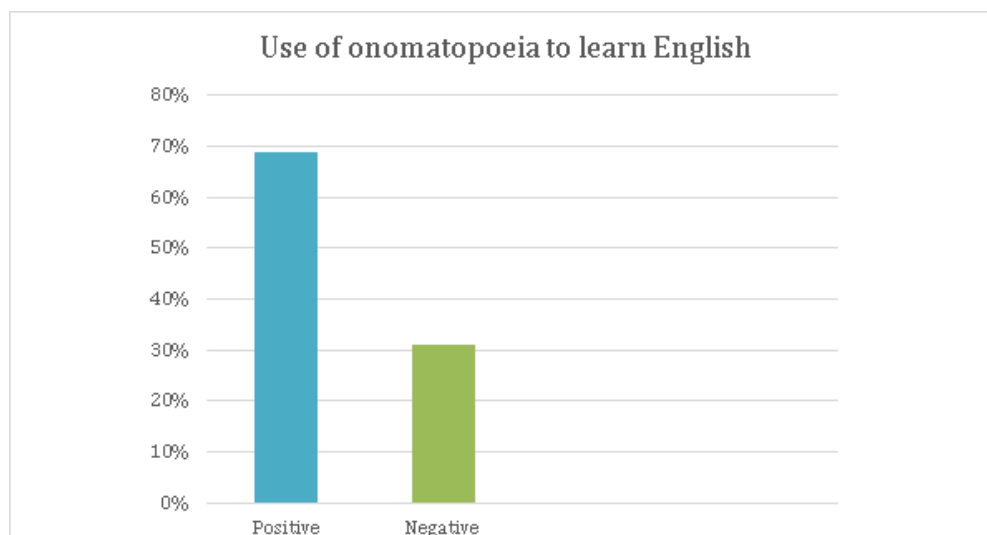
### Introduction

This present study focuses on the use of onomatopoeia to help children in elementary school learn and produce new vocabulary in English. In other words, if the English onomatopoeia sounds could facilitate the language learning of the child. Also, if the onomatopoeia helps children improve their pronunciation, how is the influence of onomatopoeia in child learning, and how is it assisting children in emitting sounds in a foreign language. Besides, they are entertaining, forming their learning faster because they understand the message in creative ways. On the other hand, it is a very successful way of learning to catch their attention to continue perfecting the sound, funnily through the reading.

Furthermore, it is relevant. The phonetic level transfer is the process that a native Spanish speaker performs when listening to English tries to relate it to the sounds of their language. Even the slightest similarity can confuse them; this process is known as phonetic level transfer (Abeer, Abe and Shrikanth 2005, p.1). Onomatopoeia helped native Spanish speakers identify allophones that include their mother tongue when pronouncing some phonemes in English.

Based on the instrument: Book "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter, these are the phoneme not pronounced correctly in English by Spanish children /s/ /z/ /l/ /ə/ /u:/ /θ/ /h/ to avoid confusion between the sound of a phoneme and onomatopoeia, we use the so-called "phoneme friends" to clarify that the phonemic sounds have a similar sound and are only helping us to get closer to the original, in a comfortable way. Finally, since that improved the pronunciation of the phonemes, it allowed emphasis on the sound showing the segment in terms of phonetic categories (occlusion, friction, nasalization, loudness, etc.) to give rise to a knowledge of acoustic-phonetic level.

**Graph 1** (below) shows the general percentage from the positive (left) to the negative (right) from the one group of participants. The blue bar displays the result obtained from the positive learning to learn English through onomatopoeias, and the green bar shows the negative learning.



#### **4.1 Presentation and discussion of the first results**

For data collection, we first took as a reference the textbook and reference manual on teaching the pronunciation of American English, written specifically for teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) of Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers by Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich to determine the necessary work tools that would help collect the data required to start the investigation and as a first point based on two boxes that contained the phonemes with their respective vocalization, two rubrics were made.

First, the phonemes of the box with vowel sounds were obtained to the first rubric, then the box of consonant sounds to the other rubric. By having the two complete rubrics, the next item was to verify the correct sound of each one utilizing the vocalizations and thus analyze with broader knowledge in a better way the pronunciation in children. To determine if a phoneme had

a high pronunciation difficulty, it was determined to consider their fluency and the number of times they did it because if they suddenly pronounced it wrong and then corrected it themselves, it would not be taken into account. On the other hand, the phonemes in which they have difficulty will work them. These would be considered a problematic phoneme and to take as one of the points to work first with the onomatopoeia to begin developing their pronunciation and then complete them with the vocalization.

At the time of the study, there were indeed pauses in the phonemes that were more difficult for them due to their stuttering. Also, there was a surprise that some of the phonemes were not pronounced. They have skipped the students who got to do it the most. He was asked to please do it again and this time to pronounce everything because it was necessary. Of course, he tried, but the student felt this attempt was forcing him since when reading, he presented signs of anxiety and preferred to comment that he accepted his failures.

When doing so not to strain the children, it was decided not to pressure them to pronounce the phonemes that skipped when reading the words, but that also took them as a problematic phoneme. These are the results obtained in the graphs.

### **Table 1**

Results obtained by children during the production of consonants

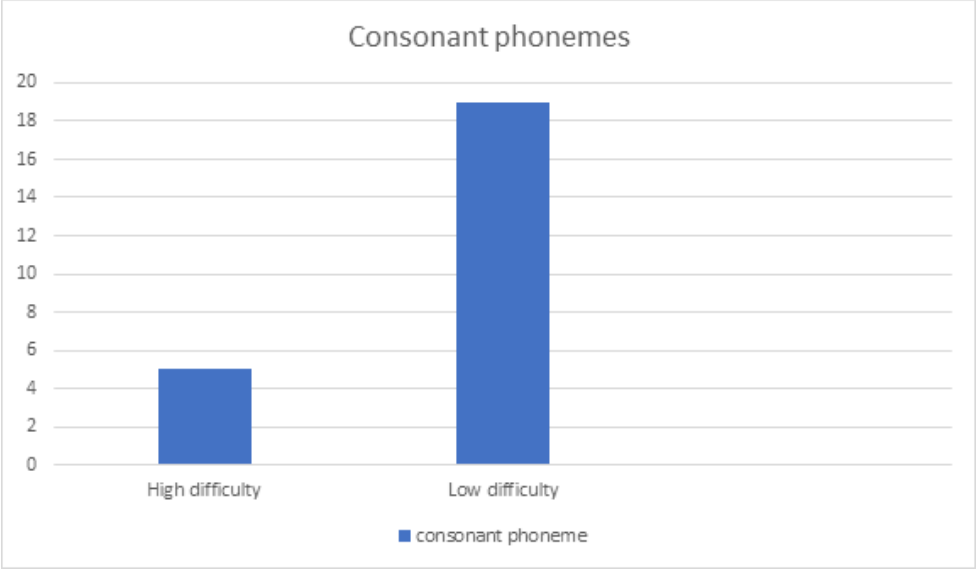


Phonemes	High or low pronunciation difficulty
/p/	L
/b/	L
/m/	L
/w/	L
/f/	L
/v/	L
/θ/	H
/ð/	L
/t/	L
/d/	L
/s/	H
/z/	H
/n/	L
/r/	L
/l/	L
/ʃ/	H
/ʒ/	L
/tʃ/	L
/dʒ/	L
/y/	L
/k/	L
/g/	L
/ŋ/	H
/w/	L

Note: the table shows which phonemes were low(L) and high (H) during their production by children. It is based on learners from Motolinia elementary school's fourth grade.

## Graph 2

*Representation of consonants phonemes produced by elementary school learners*



This graph is divided into two categories: high difficulty and low difficulty. Based on the results obtained by 16 participants from Motolinia elementary school.

**Table 2**

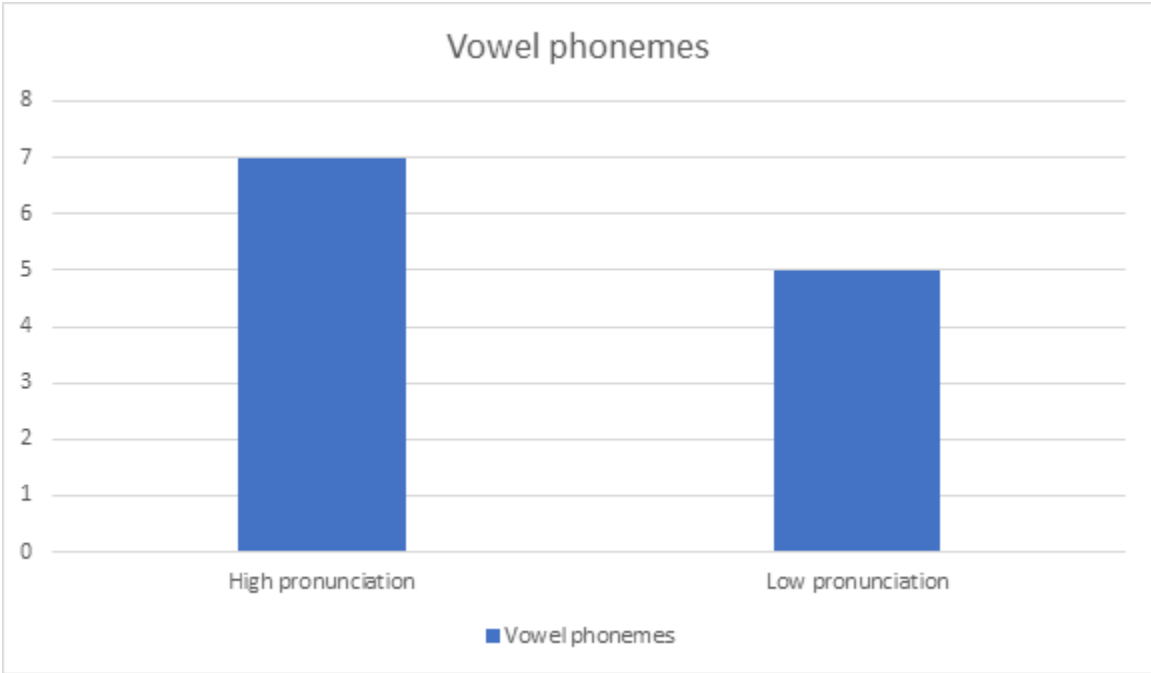
Results obtained by children during the production of vowels.

Phonemes	High or low pronunciation difficulty
/iy/ (beat)	H
/I/ (bit)	H
/ey/ (bait)	H
/ɛ/ (bet)	L
/æ/ (bat)	H
/ə/ (m <u>a</u> chine)	H
/ʌ/ (but)	H
/uw/ (boot)	L
/ʊ/ (book)	H
/ow/ (boat)	L
/ɔ/ (bought)	L
/a/ (pot)	L

Note: This table shows which phonemes(vowels) were low(Low) and hidden (H) during their production by children. It is based on learners from Motolinia elementary school's fifth grade.

**Graph 3**

*Representation of phonemes (vowels) produced by elementary school learners*



This graph represents the classification of high and low pronunciation of the phonemes.

## **4.2 Contextualization of the graphs**

As shown in the two tables, both have the phonemes according to the manual on teaching the pronunciation of American English of Oxford Handbooks. Although in the first only the phonemes referring to the consonants are perceptible, in the second table, the vowel phonemes were now completed writing, these being the ones that do include a word in parentheses that shows an example of the sound, since taking into account that in vowels exist short. For instance, long sounds of the same vowel, such as / iy / (beat) and / I / (bit) were decided to accompany this group of phonemes. In addition, for a straightforward evaluation of the phonemes, there were two specific classifications to analyze their pronunciation, the first one: High difficulty, which it would be written if the majority of the group of children showed stuttering or the incorrect pronunciation of the phoneme, on the other hand, the low pronunciation difficulty was written if that of the group of children only if they pronounced the phoneme very close to the original because as we can remember they are native speakers of Spanish and it is impossible to have a full American accent but if they show at the time of speaking the sounds reproduced from another language that They are understandable and allow a fluent and correct pronunciation.

## **4.2 Onomatopoeias most used by children**

For acquiring a first or second language, as the case may be, a natural tool to use with children can be onomatopoeia (Nikolina, 2015, p.7). Onomatopoeias help native Spanish speakers identify allophones that include their mother tongue when pronouncing some phonemes in English. As for the classifications in the Onomatopoeia, we have animal calls, sounds made by humans, of nature, and Miscellaneous (Kambuziyya and Rahmani, 2014, p.220).

Onomatopoeias were created from Miscellaneous sounds according to their subdivisions and according to a sound similar to that of the phonemes that were more difficult to pronounce in 9-year-old children:

This phoneme /θ/ sound of a broken flute, /s/ sound of a snake, /z/ sound of a mosquito, /ʃ/ sound of a teacher asking for silence, /ŋ / sound of a child gargling water, /iy/ mocking sound, /I/ sound when you get hit in the stomach, /ey/ sound when you want to get someone's attention, /æ/ sound when you don't understand something, /ə/ phantom sound, /ʌ/ sound of a gorilla, /ʊ/ sound when you get disappointed.

All of these onomatopoeia provided an enthusiastic initiative in the children to improve their pronunciation in addition to promoting natural learning in a fun, comfortable, and easy way in the classroom, thus giving the teacher the full attention of the student to continue teaching phonetics, leaving one side the idea that English phonetics is a complex subject that is hardly discussed in children because recently children can learn in a better way if their classes are much more creative.

#### **4.2.1 Influence of the onomatopoeia to learn English**

Research focuses on symbolic sound forms because these are very common in many languages, such as English. This study's objective is onomatopoeia and how children learn English using these words that are thought to be present across most of the world's languages and known to be dominant in children.

The story "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter shows how children processing, the use of the onomatopoeias like a vantage pronounce phonemes in a language different from their mother tongue (e.g., sneeze they know that / sniz / means estornudo. However, Onomatopoeia is more significant when children are motivated to use this kind of onomatopoeia, making it easier for

children to learn. This study analyses the onomatopoeias production to show a phonological motivation for foreign language acquisition. According to Laing and Catherine (2019), learning through onomatopoeia is a benefit to learning English, "onomatopoeia is shown to be driven by a preference for structures that are easy to plan and produce."

### **4.3 Awareness about the use of onomatopoeias**

During the past years, there have been different theories of language learning on children. However, not only children are in constant contact with the language, but all people are in contact with language processing almost every day in their life at any moment. This language takes place in the spoken, written, and signing process. As well as the fact that children encompass the ability to learn whichever language system they are introduced to. Learning a language or language acquisition is something that every child does successfully within a few years. It is the development by which they acquire the ability to produce, perceive, and use words to communicate. For that reason, the result is helpful to mention that onomatopoeia refers to terms that have a sound representing what the word means. Allowing the children to associate the words through the sound is how new words can be created. In the classroom, onomatopoeia is an exciting and fun area for learners. Besides, the teachers could implement new strategies to teach new vocabulary with the use of onomatopoeias. As well as learners guessing what they represent, activities that use them include comparisons between languages, reading stories, creating sound effects when reading, and inventing new examples. Both teachers and pupils can create many instances where children can be explored and learn.

#### **4.4 Reasons for the use of onomatopoeia to teach English**

Onomatopoeias could be an exciting and attractive form for children in the classroom because it relates to creating sound effects to give examples about the topic. For example, when children learn a language different from their mother tongue, the teachers implement stories to read with onomatopoeias. Students can acquire the new vocabulary language using onomatopoeias and promote learning with onomatopoeias developing abilities and knowledge in several ways to improve children's learning significantly. Azari and Sharififar (2017) argue “peculiar characteristics of onomatopoeia as a type of word often cause challenges for learners, trainers, and translators of any language.” It could be strategies during the learning process of English, in general, these kinds of words that improve learning through the imitation of the sounds of what they represent.

Furthermore, Lyons (1981) (as cited in Azari and Sharififar, 2017) says, “a specific characteristic of onomatopoeias is the peculiar relationship between the signifier and the signified,” this happens with the sound imitation about they are representing in different contexts, texts. Also, when students are producing onomatopoeias frequently, they reinforce their language acquisition positively and efficiently. Finally, it can use onomatopoeic words whenever you're trying to describe a sound or writing to describe a scene or setting. Teachers and students can have a lot of fun making up their own words to describe different sounds and at the same time get in contact with another language.

#### **4.5 Allophones in phonemes**

When some Spanish native speaker commonly hears a new language as English, he relates each sound with their Spanish sound (Abeer, Abe, and Shrikanth, 2005, p.1). The main difficulty that the children had to pronounce the English phoneme was the interference with their allophones Spanish that they pronounced by themselves with the English sound. For children, it is inevitable to carry out this decoding of phonemes already applied in reading because we remember that they are only used to using Spanish in their daily lives because it is their mother tongue since it is the language that they apply the most due to the circumstances of life daily. It is that if for adults it is prevalent that they present this problem for children, it is inevitable to carry out this decoding of phonemes already applied in reading as in the story "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter of their mother tongue. By the way, a child says the onomatopoeia. He quickly detects the allophone making him aware that he is pronouncing the phoneme according to their Spanish knowledge. In this way, he progressed in his acoustic-phonetic level transfer.



## Conclusion

When learning a new language, it is customary to refer to the mother tongue since the ear seems to deceive the Spanish speaker on many occasions. They can consider it as part of their own with the slightest similar sound and not characteristic of the second. Sometimes it is difficult to identify these allophones with the naked eye and more in children they are in the process of developing their skills and knowledge in the Spanish language, so when another language is presented in them, in this case English, it is customary to failure like any person who begin to learn English so if starting a new path is complex and unknown it is necessary to practice it since unlike Spanish they do not carry it out in their daily life and only in school as is the case with this group of children they only have it of two hours a week, the lack of practice in this case is not much compared to Spanish so for this reason it can be difficult for them so it is vital to provide them with easy tools that help to promote their pronunciation as is the case of onomatopoeia that in addition to being a natural tool that is even better, it leaves them creativity to do everything they set out to help them achieve their goals and forget that Speaking English in is problematic because if when you start something new you present yourself optimally, you will get it more accessible and if children at that age have a lot of creativity and skill, it is important to teach them that they are capable of everything that they continue to learn.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Introduction**

This chapter addresses the study's limitations and suggests some recommendations for further research related to the same line of investigation. As shown above, the limitations are present in continuation and in the inquiry addressed. Each of the following points refers to the participants, the instrument, and the focus of the research. Likewise, some recommendations are presented to guide future research within the same area of study. In this sense, it is important to emphasize the realization of more studies about the influence of reading stories and onomatopoeias to learn English. That could be implemented by the teacher and in the child reading process, and it will provide more information about how each one works and the importance of reading comprehension. It focuses on the children from Motolinia elementary school.

### **5.1 Answers to the research questions**

How does onomatopoeia influence the process of getting successful phonetic learning to pronounce the words in the story better?

Onomatopoeias also help children to emit sounds. In addition, they are entertaining, forming their learning faster because they creatively understand the message. Onomatopoeias are a very successful learning way to catch the attention of them to continue perfecting the sound.

What is the main problem that prevents the correct pronunciation of phonemes?

The phonetic level transfer is the process that a native Spanish speaker performs when listening to English tries to relate it to sounds of their language. Even the slightest similarity can confuse them; this process is known as phonetic level transfer (Abeer, Abe and Shrinkanth 2005, p.1).

Onomatopoeia helped native Spanish speakers identify allophones that include their mother tongue when pronouncing some phonemes in English.

What are the most common phonemes not pronounced in English in nine-year-old Spanish-speaking children?

Based on the instrument: Book "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter these are the phoneme not pronounced correctly in English by Spanish children /s/ /z/ /l/ /ə/ /u:/ /θ/ /h/

How do we differentiate between an onomatopoeic sound and a phonetic sound so as not to get confused?

To avoid confusion between the sound of a phoneme and onomatopoeia, we use the so-called "phoneme friends" to clarify that the phonemic sounds have a similar sound and are only helping us to get closer to the original, finally, since that we achieve an improvement in the pronunciation of the phonemes the sound emphasized the pronunciation showing the segment in terms of phonetic categories (occlusion, friction, nasalization, loudness, etc.) to give rise to a knowledge of acoustic-phonetic level.

## **5.2 Summary of the key findings**

The book "I love to sneeze" was a valuable instrument to work on in the reading area. In the beginning, when children read, they did not understand the reading. Also, the children were not interested in continuing the story due to a problem with vocabulary because they mispronounced words repetitively. For example, with the word "sneeze," they know that / sniz / means "sneeze"

in Spanish, but when they saw the word in the book, they pronounced / esnes / and forgot its meaning.

They could not understand the vocabulary due to the errors that another student presented with the pronunciation of some phonemes, distorting the words, and making them sound in a way. It is different from the usual one. It is difficult for them to recognize them because they created a pronunciation different from the original one. For that reason, it was essential to analyze the phonemes that they did not pronounce exclusively in the story "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter to propose a solution that would help improve the pronunciation of those phonemes that their pronunciation appreciates.

Then, before showing them the correct pronunciation, children have to connect with onomatopoeias, getting their attention using onomatopoeias of phonemes called "Phonetic friends," helping them first bring them closer to the original sound. Finally, after a few repetitions, the students improved the pronunciation of the phonemes, emphasizing the sound showing pronunciation using speech articulators to give rise to a knowledge of the acoustic-phonetic level. Then, all children read the first page, and the result was surprising because they became pronunciation clearer and more fluent and understood the story better.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The recommendations are for teachers because if they have dynamic, creative, and energetic classes, they handle more skills when students learn, especially children. After all, as we know, most of them are very curious, they always like to discover new things. They will always be interested in all the screening material that is accompanied by some music. They can move their bodies, make gestures with their hands, and even why not some grimaces because all that activity

was entertaining for the children. They will want to do it in a better way because that is how extrinsic motivation arises in them, which through the teacher makes the student want to learn English.

In this case, when teachers accompany their classes with any of these ideas, they achieve a better result for children when it comes to working because children will always work in a better way if they feel comfortable. All this was what the onomatopoeias managed to do when the students formed them. They paid attention to the expressiveness of their teacher, and as it was an easy activity to do, their teacher showed them through this technique that learning English is not a difficult task to achieve. It is not his mother tongue does not mean that it cannot be pronounced when reading a story. So, when thinking about how to do a class, you have to think about what the majority of the students' tastes are to develop better. In the case of the primary level, with onomatopoeia, the children felt in a pleasant environment and with a more extraordinary skill when it came to learning.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the study**

This study focuses on the phonetic-acoustic performance level with onomatopoeias in the story "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter with elementary school children since it helps them understand the vocabulary and recognize when they hear it.

One of the limitations found was that they were not familiar with the English language sounds, which is why they presented complications in understanding the reading. In addition, the group of participants had not had contact with English. They had not practiced it. As a result, this limitation impacts the recognition of the new vocabulary in each participant.

## **Final conclusions**

The world of onomatopoeias is still a new world to discover. Although not many studies have been done on them, it is as enjoyable as they surround in many ways. They become part of many daily situations without the importance required to consider them as a learning instrument. It seemed like a difficult job to believe since onomatopoeia is not part of the language that would not help in its development.

Instead of thinking if something is not yet proposed. It was vital to suggest including the onomatopoeias as a subject of study and participating in the improvement of acoustic level in nine-year-old children. For this instrument to have even more power, one idea was to accompany it of expressiveness to catch the children in this way. It was incredible how some of them even acted at the time of making them; then, when they showed the articulators of speech of each phoneme, the children did not take it as classwork; they thought that everything was a game and wanted to keep learning. It is beautiful to see smiles in students when they learn something. In addition to that, they understand it because education is in a role of stress-related situations or a strict regime model in which very rarely is concerned about the well-being of the student and that at the same time seeing that may be the most important thing in school education because if we have a student who thinks that developing an intelligence such as the English language is a simple task like a game in which everyone can have fun especially in children, the hobbies in the students would also be learning. That is the important thing with creative classes, and that is that sometimes students no longer take the same importance as before, they prefer to relax playing video games, although why not better now to play and learn?

## **Reflections**

Learning starts from infancy until an adult, as well as language during all processes of acquisition. Indeed, children do not acquire language fast; it is a process of linguistic development through psychological, behavioral, and social-cognitive aspects. Language acquisition is a process of evolution by levels, with internal and external factors, through communication and interaction between children and adults. This process occurs at home, school, or other familiar places for most children, where the child is surrounded by input. Social situations cause this language input. These are child-directed speech and Piaget's hypothesis of stages where children could be learning according to their age. All children are surrounded by sounds and words that they may understand because they use sounds or words to transmit and express their necessities.

These sounds words could be seen to be part of their speech and tend to be onomatopoeia words, which refers to nature, animal, human sounds, and miscellaneous sounds. So, all the time, children are immersed in learning sounds since their birth and growth in all ages. For that reason, when a teacher implements in classes the use of reading stories with onomatopoeias, the imitative sounds help them produce and learn new vocabulary and obtain new knowledge, and at the same time improve their phonological awareness for making reading effectively. In the beginning, the implementation of onomatopoeias in this research allowed exploring how the students are adapting and learning.

This implementation facilitated learning language for children in the fourth grade of elementary school. It was a comfortable learning time for all participants, even though it could be a game, but it was funny and beneficial. Findings conclude that onomatopoeia does facilitate learning language and language skills. Finally, children enjoy their learning of a different

language funnily, and it shows that children are learning. At the same time, they produce sounds, considering a game where they felt confident enjoying their class. Thus, exploring and analyzing a specific area and obtaining positive results is satisfactory and more significant if the students were happily enjoying their lessons, playing, and learning through the production of onomatopoeia sounds.



## APPENDIX

The study was carried out on a group of nine-year-old children from the fourth grade of Motolinia primary school. Before the study, the children were asked if they took English as part of their educational program, and their answer was no. However, they commented that they had received English classes from practicing teachers who asked the school to release their professional practice hours. They also showed all the work they did and the topics given by the teacher practitioners, thus showing that their level of English was only at a starter level. The practitioners only saw a short introduction to English grammar; children listened to songs and sang them in the listening and speaking area. In the writing and reading area, the children formed sentences in their notebooks. When they finished writing them, they read them, and any errors in pronunciation were corrected, first listening to the pronunciation and then repeating.

This is how they introduced their knowledge of English in all areas, which were their work tools to acquire their knowledge and apply it in the study.

It is worth mentioning that in terms of the difficulties that arose at the time of conducting the study, there was only one that was presented since at the time the study was carried out, a girl who did not obtain the expected result, on many occasions, she was requested to leave the classroom by her mother, at the moment in which all the other children received the explanation of the realization of onomatopoeias and phonemes. Hence, she only read the part of the story that she played, in addition, to the situation she had, caused her partner, who was next to her, also to get distracted by being aware of her.

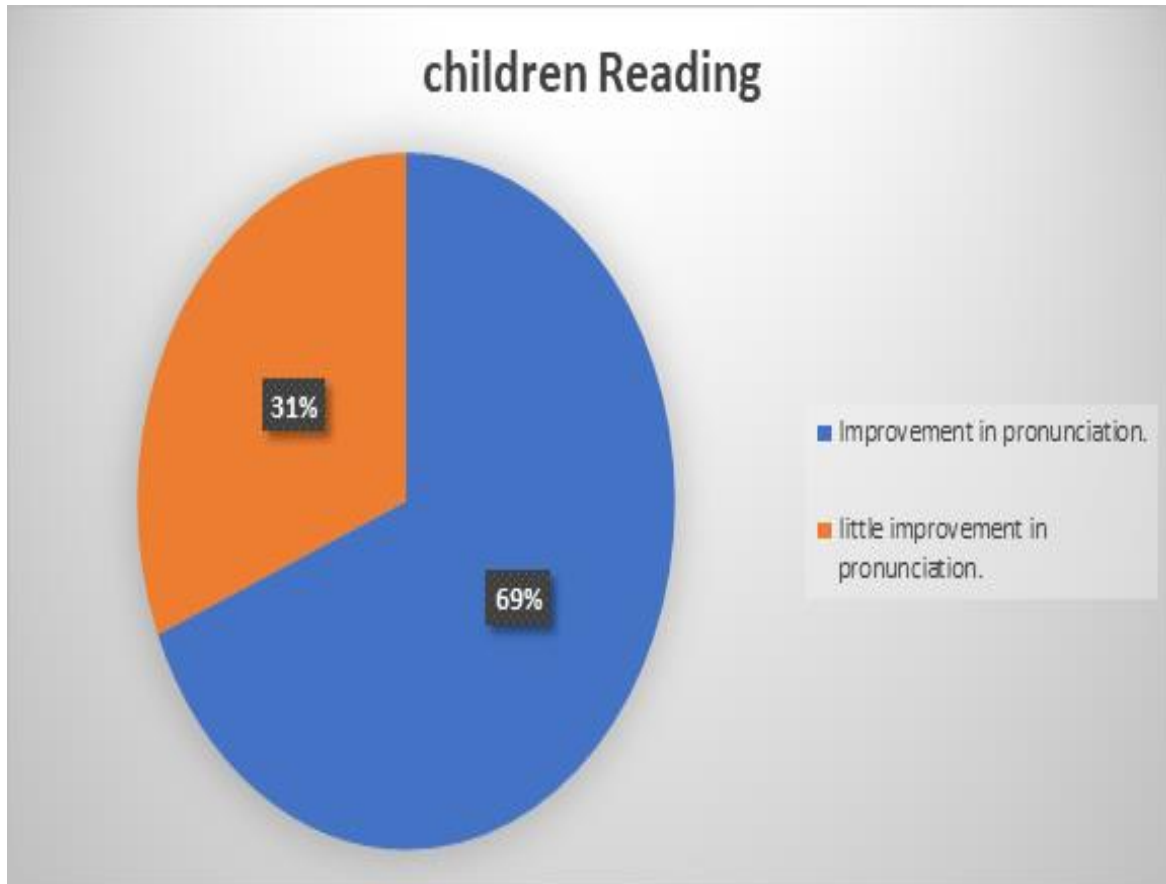
From there on out, all the children received the same explanation and orientation equally, being only from that group, three children, whose pronunciation improved very little, being able to say that without counting those two girls, only three students would have been those who did not

achieve the expected objective but the decision was to estimate the other two girls because although they did not participate in the explanation of the onomatopoeias and phonemes, they participated in reading a reading sheet, which was also analyzed for the creation of the onomatopoeias, in short, we counted with a total of 16 participants that only five of whom did not achieve the objective.

## TABLE OF GRAPHICS

### Graph 4

*Improvement in the process of children reading through the use of onomatopoeias*



Note: This graph shows the final results about the implementation of onomatopoeias to improve learning the English language in the Motolinia elementary school, where the participants learning through the production of onomatopoeias in the story "I love to sneeze" by Ellen Schecter (author) and Gioia Fiammenghi (Ilustrador) (1992) "I love to sneeze." Bantam Dell Pub Group

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## APPENDIX A

BENEMERITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

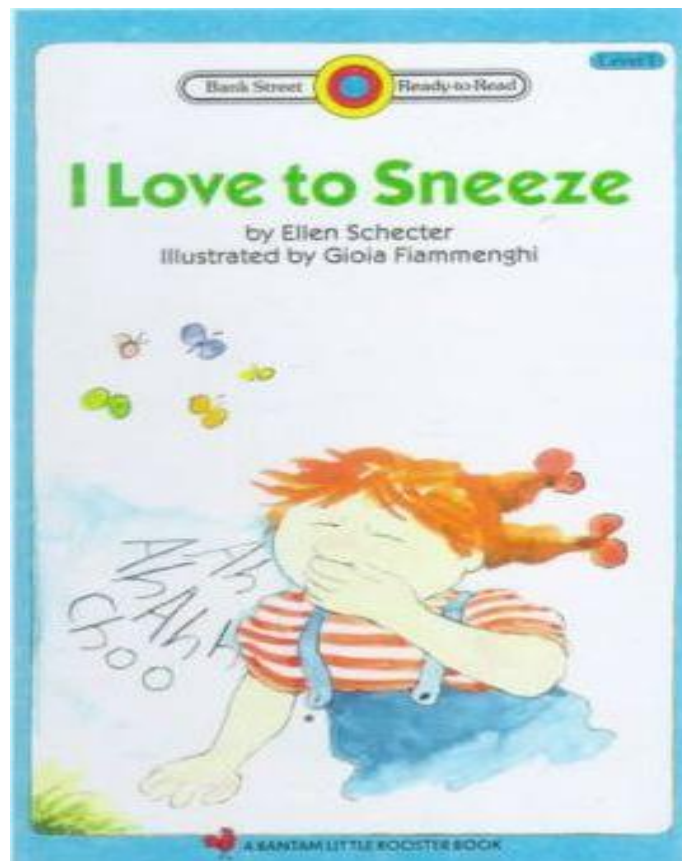
“THE INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF ONOMATOPOEIAS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LEARNING”

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Read the book bellow



Ellen Schecter (author) and Gioia Fiammenghi (Illustrator) (1992) "I love to sneeze". Bantam

Dell Pub Group. Link: <https://epdf.pub/i-love-to-sneeze-bank-street-level-1.html>

## APPENDIX B

### Figura1

*Demographic and Socioeconomic indicators for participants schools*

PROCTOR, CARLO, AUGUST, AND SNOW

Table 2  
*Demographic and Socioeconomic Indicators for Participating Schools*

School site	Total enrollment	% LEP	% free and reduced lunch	% Anglo	% African American	% Latino/a	% Asian
Boston	741	48.3	87.9	3.5	19.4	76.1	0.7
Chicago	943	53.0	99.0	3.8	7.1	89.1	0.0
El Paso	642	69.2	74.8	0.5	0.2	99.3	0.0

Note. LEP = limited English proficient.

Note: The graph shows results from three schools, where Limited English Proficient is represented by LEP. This chart is based on Louisa, M. and Carol, T. (2009) *Why Phonological Awareness Is Important for Reading and Spelling*.