

UNIVERSIDAD DE CONCEPCIÓN
FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN
PEDAGOGÍA EN INGLÉS



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' AFFECTIVE RESPONSE TOWARDS PRONUNCIATION ACTIVITIES

SEMINARIO PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE LICENCIADO EN EDUCACIÓN

Prof. Guía: Dr. Claudio Heraldo Díaz Larenas

Seminaristas: René Ignacio Muñoz Pérez

Leyla Carolina Saavedra Saavedra

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Abstract

Pronunciation is considered as “an integral part of oral communication” (Morley, 1991, p.496) since good pronunciation facilitates communication and enhances intelligibility (Varasarin, 2007). Despite this fact, pronunciation is either totally overlooked or treated dubiously in many language programs. In Chile, the English curriculum has an emphasis on receptive skills rather than productive skills, being pronunciation left to a second place. However, teachers understand how essential pronunciation is and students comprehend that pronunciation is a tool for better communication. Even though there are several pronunciation activities that can be used, teachers do not know which ones are better for the students’ interests.

Immersed in this context, this research aims to determine the affective response that pronunciation activities produce on 9th graders from two semi-public schools. This research was conducted in only one session in which students did two pronunciation activities (*Word stress* and *Tongue twister*) and afterwards completed a Semantic Differential Scale to collect the data required. The Mean Score, Standard Deviation and the Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient were the techniques used to analyze the results from the Semantic Differential Scale. The findings show that students do not have a negative affective response towards pronunciation activities in general. However, the second activity (*Tongue twister*) is the one that obtains more positive affective responses, and students feel more at ease doing it.

Key words: Pronunciation- Teaching- Affective response- Activities.

Resumen

La pronunciación es considerada como “una parte integral de la comunicación oral” (Morley, 1991, p.496) ya que una buena pronunciación facilita la comunicación y mejora la inteligibilidad (Varasarin, 2007). A pesar de esto, la pronunciación es totalmente pasada por alto o tratada de forma poco clara en muchos programas de idiomas. En Chile, el diseño del currículo de inglés tiene un énfasis en las habilidades receptivas en vez de las habilidades productivas, quedando la pronunciación rezagada a un segundo plano. Sin embargo, los profesores entienden lo esencial que es la pronunciación y los estudiantes comprenden que esta es una herramienta para la mejora de la comunicación. Aunque hay varias actividades de pronunciación que pueden ser usadas, los profesores no saben cuáles son mejores de acuerdo a los intereses de los alumnos.

Inmersa en este contexto, la presente investigación tiene como propósito determinar la respuesta afectiva que las actividades de pronunciación producen en los alumnos de primer año medio de dos establecimientos subvencionados. La recopilación de la información fue realizada en una sola intervención en la cual los participantes debieron realizar dos actividades de pronunciación (acentuación de palabras y escuchar y repetir), y posteriormente completar una escala diferencial semántica para recoger la información requerida. Para analizar los resultados de la escala diferencial semántica se utilizaron técnicas de estadística diferencial, desviación estándar y el coeficiente de correlación de Spearman. Los resultados muestran que los participantes no tienen una respuesta afectiva negativa hacia ninguna actividad de pronunciación en general. Sin embargo, la segunda actividad (escuchar y repetir) es la que obtiene respuestas afectivas más positivas y con la que los estudiantes se sienten más a gusto.

Palabras claves: Pronunciación- Enseñanza- Respuesta afectiva- Actividades.

Chapter I: Introduction



The impact of English has increased worldwide through the years. A simple fact is that English has become the main international language. The reasons for English to become so dominant are various: colonialism, military power, commerce, industry, trade, technology, media, the cinema and other arts, popular music, while, more recently English has become the predominant language of the internet with some 80% of the internet developments being conducted in English (Ingram and Sasaki, 2003).

Five hundred years ago, between five and seven million people spoke English, almost all of them living in the British Isles. Now, anywhere up to 1.8 billion people around the world speak English. Since English is so widely spoken, it has often been referred to as a *world language*, the lingua franca of the modern era, and while it is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language (Crystal, 2003).

Chile is not an exception. Chile leads Latin America in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, economic competitiveness, income per capita, globalization, economic and political freedom, human development, low perception of corruption, and an overall state of peace (BBC, 2012). As Chile embraces economic development more and more, a lingua franca (currently English) has become more and more necessary in order for the country to participate in the global market.

Consequently, Chilean leaders have highlighted the need for Chilean citizens to become bilingual in order to attract foreign investment and further integrate into the world market. Unfortunately, Chile is yet far behind from this objective. Despite the country's relative prosperity and the general understanding that English is becoming increasingly important, English levels are perceived to be low overall. At the 2012 census, just 16 percent of young Chileans could communicate in English, and at the last national SIMCE¹ English test under the English Opens Doors

¹ SIMCE is an exam that students from primary and secondary schools take in order to measure their skills in different areas such as Spanish, Mathematics, English, etc.

Program, which tests Grade 11th students, 82 percent failed to reach B1² (*British Council, 2015*).

One of the changes made in order to improve those numbers, was to emphasize the English curriculum on receptive skills (reading and listening) rather than productive skills (speaking and writing) (*British Council, 2015*). The rationale was that for most Chileans, English would predominantly be used to access the growing amount of (often technical) information available in that language and that English was needed mainly to participate in the global economy and information network (Mckay, 2003).

Nonetheless, this approach has been criticized as treating English as a one-way means of communication - from the more advanced, outside world to Chileans - rather than acknowledging potential Chilean contribution to the world. On the other hand, as the productive skills are not being emphasized in the teaching of English, we encounter a new problem: pronunciation.

Pronunciation is a prominent factor in foreign language teaching. Since sounds play an important role in communication, foreign language teachers must attribute proper importance to teaching pronunciation in their classes. In addition, pronunciation is of great importance for successful oral communication to take place, since it is an important ingredient of the communicative competence. Even though it is quite evident the importance that pronunciation has in foreign language teaching, it has been neglected. As grammar and vocabulary have been studied for a longer period of time, pronunciation tends to be undervalued. Kelly (2000) explains that many teachers of English do not have a good knowledge of the theory of pronunciation, being the main reason why pronunciation tends to suffer from neglect. However, there is a wide variety of activities which teachers can use depending on their students' interests in order to improve the role that pronunciation has in the classroom.

² B1 is part of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, which is an international standard for describing language ability. B1 is the required level of English that students from elementary to high school students should reach.

The following research aims to determine the affective response that pronunciation activities produce on 9th graders from two semi- public schools. The intervention consisted of applying two different pronunciation activities, these activities were chosen from the book *Adventurers - Student's book Pre- Intermediate* (Wetz, 2008) and from the *Travelers - Student's book* (Alvarado, 2015). After each activity, a semantical differential scale was given to students. This scale consisted of a chart of nine pairs of bipolar adjectives, which describe the students' emotions.

In Chapter two, the theoretical framework is presented. In this part, it is explained the literature review of our research. We divide this section into two main topics. Firstly, we cover pronunciation, what pronunciation is, how pronunciation teaching is. The reality of pronunciation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, and word-stress, and listen and repeat activities. The second topic is the affective factor. We talk about the learning domains in general. Secondly, we write about what the affective domain is, and finally we deal with emotions in English language teaching.

In Chapter three, we organize the research design. In this chapter we explain what kind of research we have conducted, a non-experimental research study, and everything that deals with the research itself: participants, questions, objectives, and hypotheses. It is also presented the definition of variables, the definition of the instruments, the procedure we follow at schools, and finally we talk about the type of data analysis.

In Chapter four, we report the results obtained from the data collected. Here we show the statistical analysis of the first specific objective and the results from the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient of the second and third specific objectives.

In Chapter five, there is a full discussion of the results presented in Chapter four.

In Chapter six, we draw conclusions. In addition, we comment on the limitations that we had to face while executing the study, and we refer to research that can be approached in future studies.

Chapter II: Theoretical framework



2.1 Pronunciation

What comes to our minds when we hear the word pronunciation are vowels and consonant sounds. Others may think of rhythm and intonation. While, others believe it is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is pronounced or articulated. To be honest, there is no right or wrong answer, since there are different perceptions for this single concept. The *Adult Migrant English Program Research Centre* (2002) states that pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language. On the other hand, pronunciation according to The Free Dictionary (as cited in Novio, 2013) is the following: the act or manner of pronouncing words; utterance of speech; a way of speaking a word, especially a way that is accepted or generally understood and a graphic representation of the way a word is spoken, using phonetic symbols.

2.1.1. Teaching pronunciation

Teaching pronunciation in an EFL classroom has always presented some difficulties for teachers as well as for students. According to past studies (Derwing and Munro, 2005; Gilner, 2008; Baker and Murphy, 2011), pronunciation teaching is ignored within the English as a foreign / second language (EFL/ESL) classroom context, teacher training programs, course materials, and applied linguistics studies. However, pronunciation is regarded as extremely beneficial from learners' perspective (Barrera, 2004). It plays a prominent role in EFL/ESL learners' perception and production of oral communication skills (Macdonald, 2002). According to Darcy, Ewert and Lidster (2011) some difficulties are due to teachers' unclear guidelines to follow at the moment of including pronunciation into their lesson plans, and the missing suggestions of when or how to start teaching pronunciation.

On the other hand, Kelly (2000, p.13) states that there are two key problems with pronunciation teaching. “Firstly it tends to be neglected. And secondly when it is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being strategically planned”. For Kelly, several factors are responsible for the neglecting of pronunciation, such as: its complexity, dearth of scientific foundation, insufficient teaching materials, absence of non-native teachers with formal expertise in pronunciation, and opposing ideas concerning the teaching of pronunciation. Therefore, the neglecting of pronunciation in language classrooms, as Kelly puts it, arises from teachers’ question of how to teach it rather than their lack of interest in the topic.

In addition, Kelly (as cited in Hosseini, Pishghadam and Seyedabadi, 2015) poses a paradox between the mutual enthusiasm of both teachers and learners concerning pronunciation and the dearth of theoretical foundations for the topic; explaining that while teachers feel it quite essential to upgrade their practical skills in pronunciation teaching, language learners are also inclined towards pronunciation as a tool for better communication.

2.1.2. Pronunciation in the EFL classroom

Pronunciation, the neglected area in English language teaching (ELT), is regarded as the *Cinderella* of the language teaching family (Kelly, 1969). It has been an area of neglect compared to other language skills and sub-skills, because in foreign language teaching, the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing have been the focus when teaching English. In addition, pronunciation is emphasized only on the first year of study through the introduction of the target language alphabet and sound system, but it is given least importance after the introductory level. In this regard, Gilbert (2010) refers to it as *an orphan* in English language classrooms around the world. Nevertheless, pronunciation must be considered certainly not as the correct production of phonemes or isolated words at any language proficiency level, but as an essential part of communication which must be implemented in classroom activities. Pronunciation is the basis of

communication and should be valued in the same weight as other components and skills of language, such as reading and writing; and learning vocabulary and grammar (Gilakjani, 2012).

According to Hacikyan and Cochrane (1969), pronunciation must be taught as an activity, or as skills, to be performed, perfected, and practiced until they become involuntary and automatic. Talking about the pronunciation activities' perspective, we could say that there are several activities which can be used for teaching or practicing pronunciation. For this purpose, Kelly (2000) describes the following activities:

1. Drilling: It is one of the most common ways in which pronunciation is practiced in the classroom. The teacher says a word or structure, and the students repeat it. This activity is a basic and fundamental language teaching skill. It has its roots in behaviorist psychological theory and audiolingual approaches. Drilling aims to help students achieve better pronunciation of language items, and to help them remember new items. It is also fundamental to the teaching of word stress, sentence stress and intonation (p.16).

2. Chaining: It is often used for sentences which prove a major complexity for students to pronounce, since they are long, or because they include difficult words and sounds. In this activity, the sentence is drilled and built up from the start or the end, gradually adding to its length. If there are parts which present a problem, they can be drilled separately (p.16).

3. Substitution drilling: This involves drilling a structure, but substituting items of vocabulary into the sentences being taught (p.17).

4. Minimal pairs: These are pairs of words or utterances which differ by only one phoneme. Teachers take advantage of using minimal pairs when

there have been sounds which have been causing difficulties for students, since they can focus on those sounds only (p.18).

5. Pronunciation and spelling activities: In this kind of activities, the teacher relates sounds with the possible ways in which they can be represented on writing. Homophones and homographs are used in order to work with these activities (p.20).

6. Taping students' English: In this activity, tapes can be made while students are engaged in language practice activities, and used for all manners of language difficulties, but especially those concerned with pronunciation (p.21).

7. Reading activities: Pronunciation can be successfully integrated here, although the medium is the written word. When a text is read aloud either by the teacher or the students, pronunciation can be integrated. Like listening, reading is a receptive activity which provides a suitable means of bringing language features to students' attention. A text for pronunciation work has to avoid mechanical and monotone recitation. Tongue-twisters and rhymes are a fun way of practicing the production of difficult sounds (p.22).

2.1.2.1. Word stress activities

It is known that in English we do not say each syllable with the same force or strength. The English language stress is quite variable and not predictable unlike other languages (Törkenczy, 2013), as Spanish, for example, where the accent of the word is graphically expressed. In linguistics, stress is the relative emphasis that may be given to certain syllables in a word, or to certain words in a phrase or sentence. It is usually signaled by an increased loudness and vowel length, full articulation of the vowel, and changes in pitch. Taking this into account, we could define word stress as the manner in which stresses are distributed on the syllable

of a word. Besides, a word stress activity can be understood as a task given to a learner, which focuses on exercising his or her knowledge on the adequate oral production of words, isolated or within a sentence.

2.1.2.2. Listen and repeat activities

Listening comprehension exercises in coursebooks are often designed to sound as realistic as possible, with the participants talking at a normal speed and using natural language. These can play a key role in helping students notice the existence of a pronunciation feature. When choosing a listening activity, the teacher must take into account his or her knowledge of the students, their language skills, and how well he or she feels they would be able to perform the various tasks. Besides, the combination of pronunciation study with listening activities involves getting students to notice features about the language and its use.

2.2. Learning domains

According to the Emporia State University web page (2015) “*learning* is not an event. It is a process. It is the continual growth and change in the brain's architecture that results from the many ways we take in information, process it, connect it, catalogue it, and use it”. The process of learning has been a matter of study for many scholars throughout the years. It was at the 1948 conference of the *American Psychological Association* that a call was made to develop educational taxonomies or classification schemes of the learning domains (as cited in Gano-Phillips, 2015). The first and most influential taxonomy covered the cognitive domain and it was introduced in 1956. “Over the intervening years, Bloom’s Taxonomy for the Cognitive Domain (Bloom et al., 1956) has been the subject of much research. To this day, it continues to influence curricular development and assessment practices worldwide” (Gano-Phillips, 2015, p.2). Apart from the cognitive domain, there are two other main domains of learning which are: the

affective and the psychomotor domain. Additional taxonomies were developed for these domains of learning in subsequent years: The affective learning taxonomy (Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia, 1964; as cited in Gano-Phillips, 2015) and the taxonomy of psychomotor domain (Harrow, 1972; as cited in Owen, 2015).

Currently, learning can be categorized into three main domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. In the acquisition of a second language, it is very important for teachers to manage these domains. According to Owen (2015, p.1) “this diversity helps to create more well-rounded learning experiences and to meet a number of learning styles and learning modalities”. Having this into consideration, the researchers of the current study want to conduct their study in one of the three learning domains, choosing the affective domain and students’ affective responses as the main concern.

2.2.1. The affective domain

When talking about the affective domain, we are referring to one of the three categories of learning domains, the one associated with emotions and feelings. According to Gano-Phillips (2015), the emotional area of learning is reflected by beliefs, values, interests, and behaviors of learners. This domain is concerned with how learners feel they are learning. Affective activities are processes that deal with emotions, feelings and values; they lead to perceptions of learning tasks (or moods) that help to determine students’ approach to learning activities (Boyle et al., 2007).

The affective domain has a taxonomy associated with it. According to Krathwohl, Bloom and Massia (1964; as cited in Gano-Phillips, 2015) the affective objectives in this domain are divided into a hierarchy. There are five major categories from the simplest behavior to the most complex (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Affective Learning Taxonomy³.

The hierarchy begins with the ability to listen to ideas. When *receiving*, learners are discovering new concepts from their environment and are showing a willingness to learn about them. The next level refers to *responding* in interactions with others and demonstrating values or attitudes appropriate to a particular situation. At this level of affective learning, students participate in learning experiences and selectively attend to course material, as compared to alternate ideas that might capture their attention or interest. At the third level, *valuing*, affective learning occurs when a learner shows definitive involvement in or a commitment to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior. The fourth level of the taxonomy, *organization*, reflects the integration of a new value into one's general set of values. In *organizing* values, learners must resolve conflicts between various values and begin to rank them according to their priorities. The highest levels involve displaying a commitment to principled practices on a day-to-day basis, as

³ From "The basis for affective-domain classification," by D. R. Krathwohl, B. S. Bloom and B. B. Masia, 1964, *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook II: Affective domain*, pp. 36–38. (as cited in Gano-Phillips, 2015).

well as a willingness to revise one's judgments and change one's behavior in the light of new evidence (Gano-Philips, 2015).

2.3. Emotions in English language teaching

According to Scherer (2005, p.2), "the concept of *emotion* presents a particularly thorny problem. Even though the term is used very frequently, to the point of being extremely fashionable these days", it is not really easy to define. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2015), an emotion is defined as "a conscious mental reaction (as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling usually directed towards a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body". According to *Emotions and Moods* (2015) "emotions are intense feelings that are directed at someone or something". Scherer (2005, p.2) states that the number of scientific definitions proposed is so enormous that "counting seems quite hopeless".

Some of the characteristics that make an emotion different from another concept such as affect and mood are that emotions are caused by specific events; they are brief in duration (seconds or minutes); they are usually accompanied by distinct facial expressions; and they are action-oriented in nature (Emotions and Moods, 2015).

The concept *affect* tends to be confused with the concept of *emotion*. According to Arnold and Brown (as cited in Benesch, 2012) "...affect will be considered broadly as aspects of emotion, feeling, mood, or attitude which condition behavior" (p.22).

When talking about emotions in ELT, a main distinction important to mention is the division of emotion into two categories: negative and positive. This distinction is based on the cognitive perspective that, according to Benesch (2012), is the one that "examines the partnership between emotions and cognition" (p.20). According to Benesch (2012) positive emotions are seen as facilitators and associated with learning. Whereas negative emotions are associated with impaired learning and seen as impediments.

Schumann (1999, as cited in Benesch, 2012) based on a neurological model distinguishes negative and positive emotions correlated to language learning. According to this model: “the brain evaluates the stimuli it receives via the senses from the language learning situation..., and this appraisal leads to an emotional response” (Schumann 1999, p.28, as cited in Benesch, 2012). He states that appraisal leading to emotional responses is along the following dimensions of experience: novelty and familiarity; pleasantness; goal or need significance; coping potential; and self and social image (Benesch, 2012). Even though there is no association between any particular dimensions with either positive or negative appraisal, Schumann, (as cited in Benesch, 2012) claims that “positive appraisals along any of the five dimensions promote SLA” (p.23).

When talking about negative emotions on the one hand, “anxiety is a highly influential factor in language learning” (Benesch, 2012, p.23). This emotion is also a non-linguistic variable of the Affective Filter Hypothesis from the second language acquisition theory that Krashen proposed in 1982 (as cited in Benesch, 2012). Oxford (as cited in Benesch, 2012) states that there is “a negative relationship between anxiety and performance” (p.23), some suggestions for teachers in order to reduce anxiety in the ELT classroom include: reducing competition, being clear about classroom goals, and encouraging moderate risk taking.

Motivation, on the other hand, is strictly related to positive emotions. This emotion is viewed as a learning facilitator. According to Krashen (as cited in Benesch, 2012) high motivation is one of the three attitudinal factors that contribute to successful language, altogether with strong self-confidence and low anxiety.

An important aspect to mention is that many authors, Krashen (1982), Oxford (1999), Shumann (1999) (as cited in Benesch, 2012), have a binary perspective of emotions, classifying them into positive or negative. Benesch (2012) claims that she does not characterize emotions monolithically. She considers them as *shifting* or *interacting*, being the social context in which emotions are felt or expressed the cause for successful or unsuccessful language learning.

2.4. The semantic differential scale as a tool for researching emotions

The semantic differential scale is “a very general technique of measurement that has to be adapted to each research context, depending on the goals and aims of the study” (Verhagen and Meents, 2007; as cited in Ciabuca, 2014, p.2). This scale measures the connotative aspect of meaning, which, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015), is “the suggesting of a meaning by a word apart from the thing it explicitly names or describes”. It has to do with the cultural or emotional association that some word or phrase carries.

According to Ciabuca (2014) this rating scale was originally proposed by Osgood (1957) and it consisted of three dimensions: Evaluation, Potency and Activity. “Evaluation relates to goodness or badness, morality, utility, etc., Potency to magnitude, social power, strength, expansiveness, etc., whereas Activity relates to speed, animation, spontaneity, etc” (Heise, 2010; as cited in Ciabuca, 2014 p.2). Ciabuca (2014) states that the semantic differential scale is not only useful in measuring meaning of concepts or the meaning of words but also in many areas including the assessment of organizational image, corporate image, advertising image and brand or service image.

“In order to measure the meaning of the concept, the semantic differentiator usually uses a five or seven point scale, based on a list of bipolar paired terms, with opposite meaning” (Ciabuca, 2014, p.2). According to Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis and Sam (2011) this scale gives the most accurate respondents’ emotional feedback due to the questions asked where the respondent’s position is on a scale between two bipolar adjectives. Consequently, “each interval is expressed by quantifiers with certain magnitudes, with a neutral point as central quantifier” (Lopes, Nogueira, Martins, Andrade and Barros, 2011; as cited in Ciabuca, 2014, p.2).

2.5. Empirical studies on affective domain and pronunciation

Boyle (2007, p.2) conducted a research study which tried to give an answer to the question “What leads students to adopt a deep approach to learning?”. The study aimed to connect college students’ affective domain to their performances at different mandatory fieldwork courses. Approximately 300 students from different UK universities and programs participated in the study answering surveys about how they felt. The surveys were applied before and after the lessons, and in the article that followed the study, it was revealed that several experiments proved approaches to learning are associated with different forms of motivation and feelings. Most of the students who had a positive answer in the surveys before taking the lesson had a better performance than the ones who felt scared or unprepared. Thus, the way in which students were able to perceive a learning situation did have an influence on the way they learnt and how successful this learning was. In addition, the way the lesson was conducted also represented in some cases obstacles for content acquisition, as in cases in which the environment looked pacific and relaxed, students had shown a more self-confident attitude towards learning activities, giving positive results. On the contrary, when activities were accompanied by excessive assessment, students had shown an increasing anxiety related to the fear of failure and they presented a decreasing understanding shown in their task performances. Oxford (as cited in Benesch, 2012) also agreed with this fact, saying “there is a negative relationship between anxiety and performance” (p.23).

Furthermore, a longitudinal study took place during the 70s, 80s and 90s in Poland and it was about analyzing students’ second language acquisition experiences and their connection with emotions. Even the people involved in the investigation made personal contributions to the data. Based on previous theories (Gardner and Lambert 1972; Krashen, 1982), the study conducted by Grabys-Barker and Bielska (2013) reached three different conclusions. First, positive attitudes towards the L2 and its speakers, an integrative motivation or identification with the L2 group, and willingness to communicate, facilitate L2 acquisition and lead to better outcomes.

In the second place, high levels of foreign language anxiety, negative attitudes towards the language and its speakers and counterproductive beliefs about language learning lead to lower levels of achievement. And finally, personality factors that correlate with L2 achievement include openness to experience and willingness to communicate.

A Brazilian research study about integrating pronunciation activities in the EFL classroom detected that results would always depend on students' motivation. The study included elementary level students only, divided in two groups: the children group (9-14), and a couple of private adult students (30 and 40). Firth says (as cited in Da Silva, 2013, p.15) "students' attitudes towards pronunciation might be affected by their level of proficiency in the target language. Thus, it is crucial to remember that the main goal of pronunciation teaching in EFL and ESL classrooms is to make students feel more confident and comfortable in their attempts to communicate in English". The study proved that pronunciation activities were useful not only for developing their speaking ability but also for their verbal and written grammar. In addition, the children group showed an improvement in terms of participation and speaking performance.

However, Darcy, Ewert and Lidster (2011) explained the difficulties of teaching pronunciation in a regular EFL classroom mentioning that teachers were often left without clear guidelines, and were confronted with contradictory practices for pronunciation instruction. They remarked the fact that to date, there was no well-established systematic way of deciding what to teach, when or how to do it. In addition to this challenge, there was also the lack of immediate visible results, or a lack of carry-over, as very often, students who practiced a given pronunciation feature in class do well, but as soon as they turned their attention to the message content, the practice effect vanished. As a result of these difficulties, teaching pronunciation was often secondary, and teachers did not feel comfortable teaching it.

Besides, Lynch and Anderson (2012, p.3) suggested that the non-native accent was also an obstacle which deprived students' willingness of participating in oral

production and pronunciation activities. “Many international students were nervous about speaking and believe their pronunciation of the sounds of English was an obstacle to effective communication”. They remarked on the fact of reminding EFL learners that their aim was to produce a comfortably intelligible message, referring with this to Kenworth’s (1987) explanation of how pronunciation must be understandable for the listeners rather than the speaker and that the important part of communicating was not in the native like pronunciation but in the speaking habits in general.

Khamkhien (2010) proved in a research study conducted in Thailand that EFL learners were limited in English pronunciation terms because they did not have enough exposure to the language and that it could only be acquired by getting used to it through a real context in everyday life. The task to obtain this information consisted of a list of 40 words that participants must pronounce. Words were divided into 4 groups of 10 words each according to their number of syllables. The research study involved 90 Thai university level students who had approximately 12 years of mandatory English language at school. However, most of the students had serious problems related to word stress and were not able to achieve the correct pronunciation. In addition, the study remarked important differences between sexes, showing that women were able to produce better pronunciation faster than men.

Gilakjani (2011, p.8) drew the attention to students’ level of English, misconceptions about pronunciation and external factors, added to their personal needs. He stated that “the teaching of ESL pronunciation was currently less than optimally effective, and certainly it was wrong to blame anyone group”, clarifying this way that the learning process involved all participants equally, and all the factors around it contributed the same way. Not only the methods, the school environment, the security of the teacher at the moment to teach or the curriculum guidance, but students’ social background, interests and English level, and above all, the misconception that pronunciation referred to a word stress in isolation instead of a crucial and integral part of communication that must be included into

classrooms as much as possible. He recommended modifications principally on the curriculum design and the teachers' training to provide students the necessary confidence, and explicit information related to suprasegmental elements in the pronunciation field.

Baker's study (2011) looked for effective factors within teachers at the moment of teaching pronunciation. The research consisted of interviews and recorded lessons from 5 different teachers who volunteered to participate. The results established that there was a direct connection between teachers' self-confidence with their own knowledge at the moment of teaching pronunciation, and the final production of their students. For this reason, Baker insisted on how necessary it was to develop programs for helping teachers to master their pronunciation and the way they should make it appealing to students for a better acquisition.

Nonetheless, Gordon, Darcy and Ewert (2011) carried out a study which proves that the explicit teaching of phonetics could make a major difference in students' pronunciation. The study involved a 90-student course divided into 3 experimental groups of L2 learners. One of the groups received segmental phonetics teaching and the other two suprasegmental phonetics, all of them using the same teaching sequence within a communicative methodology (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin, 2010). After three weeks of short lessons, it was proved that the second and third group, although they had major complexity in the learning process, also had better results at the moment of being analytical and self-critical about the production of their own pronunciation. They became aware of details that the other group still did not notice. Despite the first group was more fluent at first, until the end, their pronunciation was still mistaken with details they were not able to detect, and they did not improve as fast as the explicit teaching method that group two and three received. This proved that making noticeable pronunciation features provokes a better understanding and production of oral communication in EFL learners.

To sum up chapter two, researchers have focused on two big areas: *the affective domain* in second language learning and *pronunciation* in an EFL classroom. After

clarifying and giving explicit information about these two fields of study, the following chapters will narrow the research down taking it to a real context with regular learners from two semi-public schools in Chiguayante and Concepción. The aim of this study is to determine the affective response that pronunciation activities produce on 9th graders from two semi-public schools.



Chapter III: Research



3.1. Type of study

This is a non-experimental research study, in which no external variables are included. It is a cross-sectional study because the researchers will collect the data needed in only one period of time. In addition, the type of study is descriptive as the researchers want to describe school students who participate in this investigation through surveys.

3.2. Research participants

This research was carried out in two educational establishments; both of them were semi-public schools. The first school was in Chiguayante and the second one in Concepción. The participants were from five different ninth grade groups respectively.

In the first semi-public school from Chiguayante, there were three ninth grade groups. The first class group consisted of thirty-five students. The second class group consisted of thirty-two students, and the third class group consisted of thirty students.

In the second semi-public school from Concepción, there were two ninth grade groups. The first class group consisted of thirty-four students. The second class group consisted of thirty-nine students. There were one hundred and seventy students participating in this research.

Nevertheless, during the coding of the data, some information was found missing. A few students did not answer some information requested in the differential semantic scale instrument. In such cases, it was considered better to exclude the subjects concerned from the sample as some essential information was missing. The analysis of the data was therefore for only one hundred and fifty three of the subjects.

3.3 Research question

What are the affective responses that pronunciation activities (*Word stress and Tongue twister*) produce on 9th graders from two semi-public schools?

3.4. Objectives

3.4.1. General objective

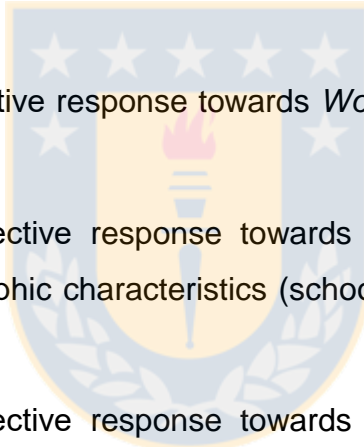
-To determine the affective response that pronunciation activities produce on 9th graders from two semi- public schools.

3.4.2. Specific objectives

-To describe students' affective response towards *Word stress and Tongue twister* activities.

-To correlate students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with participants' socio-demographic characteristics (school grade group, age, sex and school vulnerability index).

-To correlate students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with participants' grade point average in the English subject.



3.5. Research hypotheses

- 1) *Tongue twister* pronunciation activities provoke a more positive affective response than *Word stress* pronunciation activities.
- 2) Socially underprivileged 9th graders from the two semi- public schools show a more negative affective response towards pronunciation activities than socially privileged 9th graders.
- 3) There is a direct relationship between students' affective response towards pronunciation activities and their grade point average in the English subject.

3.6. Definition of variables

3.6.1. Pronunciation activities

3.6.1.1. Conceptual definition

According to Richards (2014) the term activity refers to any type of purposeful classroom procedure that includes learners doing exercises related to the goals of the course. In these exercises the main focus is the pronunciation of the English language.

Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language (Adult Migrant English Program Research Centre, 2002).

3.6.1.2. Operational definition

Pronunciation activities are defined as the type of activities that students do in order to experience an affective response. *Tongue twister* is the first pronunciation activity and *Word stress* is the second one.

3.6.2. Affective response

3.6.2.1. Conceptual definition

The word *affect* has been used in a number of overlapping but slightly different ways in the literature. For the purpose of our investigation, the term *affect* will refer essentially to the “area of emotions, feelings, beliefs, moods and attitudes, which greatly influences our behavior” (Arnold, 2009, p.1.). In addition, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (as cited in Arnold, 2000) stated that one’s *affect* towards a particular thing or action or situation or experience is how that thing or that action or that situation or that experience fits in with one’s needs or purposes, and its resulting effect on one’s emotions. Therefore, an affective response can be defined as how people react emotionally to certain criteria.

3.6.2.2. Operational definition

Affective response is defined as the answers the students give to a semantic differential scale. Students choose between different pairs of adjectives and mark the ones which resemble the feelings that the two pronunciation activities provoke on them.

3.6.3. Students’ socio-demographic characteristics

3.6.3.1. Conceptual definition

According to Koukouli, Vlachonikolis and Philalithis (2002), socio-demographic characteristics are a combination of several variables including: sex, age,

educational level, employment status, profession, total number of persons living in the house and living arrangements.

Dividing the concept, demographic characteristics can refer to age, sex, place of residence, religion, educational level and marital status. While, sociological characteristics are more objective traits, such as membership in organizations, household status, interests, values and social groups.

3.6.3.2. Operational definition

According to these researchers' view, the students' socio-demographic characteristics consist on the traits that reflect their interest towards the English subject based on their school grade group, sex, age and vulnerability index.

3.6.4. Grade point average in the English subject

3.6.4.1. Conceptual definition

A grade point average (GPA) is a simple numerical index which summarizes a student's academic performance in a course in either a single teaching period, over a year, or for the duration of the student's enrolment in the course ("Grade point average", 2014, para.1) . Hence, grade point average in the English subject is defined as the numerical index that summarizes students' performances specifically in the English subject.

3.6.4.2. Operational definition

From the researchers' point of view, the grade point average in the English subject will be understood as the final mark obtained from the previous term in the English subject.

3.7. Instruments

3.7.1. Semantic differential scale

This scale is based on the model developed by Osgood (1957) and consists of a chart of nine pairs of bipolar adjectives which describe the emotions/attitudes of the students meanwhile they are executing a specific activity. The scale has the model of a chart and shows a first column of nine positive adjectives, seven columns of blank squares listed from 3 to -3 (in which they must mark the feeling experienced during the activity) and the final column of nine negative adjectives acting as antonyms of the ones in the first column. In addition, at the top of the worksheet, students must complete the information required with their full name, age, grade, sex and their grade point average in the English subject. This can be seen in Figure 2.



Nombre: _____ Edad: _____ Curso: _____ Sexo: M __ F __
 Nota el semestre pasado en la asignatura de inglés: _____

ESCALA DIFERENCIAL SEMANTICO
Actividades de Pronunciación

¿Cómo te sentiste después de realizar esta actividad?

Instrucción: Marque con una X en el nivel de **emoción/actitud** que más sientes después de realizar la actividad, siendo 3 mayor emoción, 1 menor emoción y 0 neutro (no se siente ni una ni otra). Sólo se puede marcar una vez por emoción. Sea honesto en sus respuestas, esta actividad no será evaluada.

Actividad n°1

	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	
Eficiente								Ineficiente
Competente								Incompetente
Sabio								Ignorante
Seguro								Inseguro
Relajado								Tenso
Importante								Insignificante
Satisfecho								Frustrado
Productivo								Improductivo
Activo								Lento

Figure 2: Semantic differential scale worksheet.

3.7.2. Word stress activity

This activity is composed of a two-part activity which is taken from the book *Adventurers* - Student's book Pre- Intermediate (Wetz, 2008). The first part consists of giving students six different written words classified in three columns representing types of stress: two words with one syllable, two two-syllable words stressed on the first, and two two-syllable words stressed on the second. The main idea is for students to recognize the difference between the three types of words and read and repeat each one after they listen to them. The second part consists of giving students a new group of six words written inside a box at the left-

3.7.3. Tongue twister activity

This worksheet is inspired in an activity taken from the Chilean Ministry's book for seventh grade, *Travelers - Student's book* (Alvarado, 2015) The activity consists of a written tongue twister that students will hear twice, to later practice it for three minutes and read it to the person next to them. This can be seen in Figure 4.

Silly Sally is shaking some sugar on her shiny shoes.

Figure 4: Tongue Twister.

3.8. Procedure

At the moment of collecting the data, researchers followed the steps listed below:

- ✓ The researchers attended two different semi-public schools to visit five groups of 9th grade students.
- ✓ The researchers introduced themselves and briefly explained their purpose there and what the complete visit would consist of.
- ✓ Researchers gave students the first worksheet with a two-part activity about *word stress*.
- ✓ Before students started, researchers checked how much students remembered about syllables and *word stress* and explained every detail of the activity (part 1).
- ✓ Researchers checked understanding using concept check questions and modeled the activity.
- ✓ Once students had finished the activity and successfully repeated the six words given, recognizing the three types of stress patterns presented, researchers moved to the next step (part 2) in which students had to classify the six new words given and put them into the corresponding columns based on the type of stress pattern.

- ✓ The audio of the second part was reproduced twice and students had approximately 30 extra seconds to complete the task.
- ✓ When the time was over, all the worksheets were collected by the researchers and immediately they gave students the first differential semantic scale related to activity one.
- ✓ Researchers read the instructions aloud and paraphrased them, checking understanding through the use of concept check questions.
- ✓ Researchers gave examples and some definitions of the words presented that students might not have known.
- ✓ Researchers reminded students how important their honesty was at the moment of marking each emotion in the scale. They ensured none of the activities would be graded and that all the results would remain confidential and only used for study purposes.
- ✓ Students had three minutes to complete the chart and give it back to the researchers.
- ✓ Researchers gave students the third piece of paper with the second pronunciation activity based on a short tongue twister.(corresponding to a listen and repeat activity).
- ✓ Students heard the correct pronunciation from the audiotape twice and then practiced it for three minutes in pairs.
- ✓ Researchers monitored and gave feedback on their pronunciation.
- ✓ Researchers collected the worksheets.
- ✓ Students received a second semantic differential scale, exactly the same as the first one but labeled with activity number two. They were told to answer according to their feelings/attitudes at the moment of practicing the tongue twister.
- ✓ Students had three minutes to answer.
- ✓ Researchers collected the scales.
- ✓ When time was over and after making sure nobody else was left with any of the required worksheets, researchers thanked the collaboration of students and teachers, said good bye and left the room.

3.9. Type of analysis

The types of analysis that will be used in this study will be descriptive and based on Inferential Statistics. Descriptive analysis will operate in specific objective one, including the Mean Score and Standard Deviation. On the other hand, for the inferential analysis in specific objectives two and three, the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient will be applied, and will be based on participants' socio-demographic characteristics such as: school grade group, age, sex and school vulnerability index.



Chapter IV: Results



Chapter 4 will focus on reporting the results obtained from the data collected. This will be done based on the specific objectives (mentioned previously on Chapter 3 section 3.4.2). In order to obtain a more detailed view of the findings, each specific objective will be examined separately.

In addition, graphics are included to show the research findings in a panoramic view. Each color represents a group of the five chosen grade groups to participate in the study. All the groups belong to the same grade and come from two different semi-public schools. Three of them belong to one school which from now on will be identified as *School I* and the other two belong to a second school which will be identified as *School II*. In order to produce a better understanding, each group will be mentioned in the study as 9-A,B,C,D next to its school of origin number.

4.1. Results by specific objectives

4.1.1. To describe students' affective response towards *Word stress* and *Tongue twister* pronunciation activities.

Figure 5 shows the mean score obtained from the five 9th grades from the two semi-public schools according to the *Word stress* pronunciation activity.

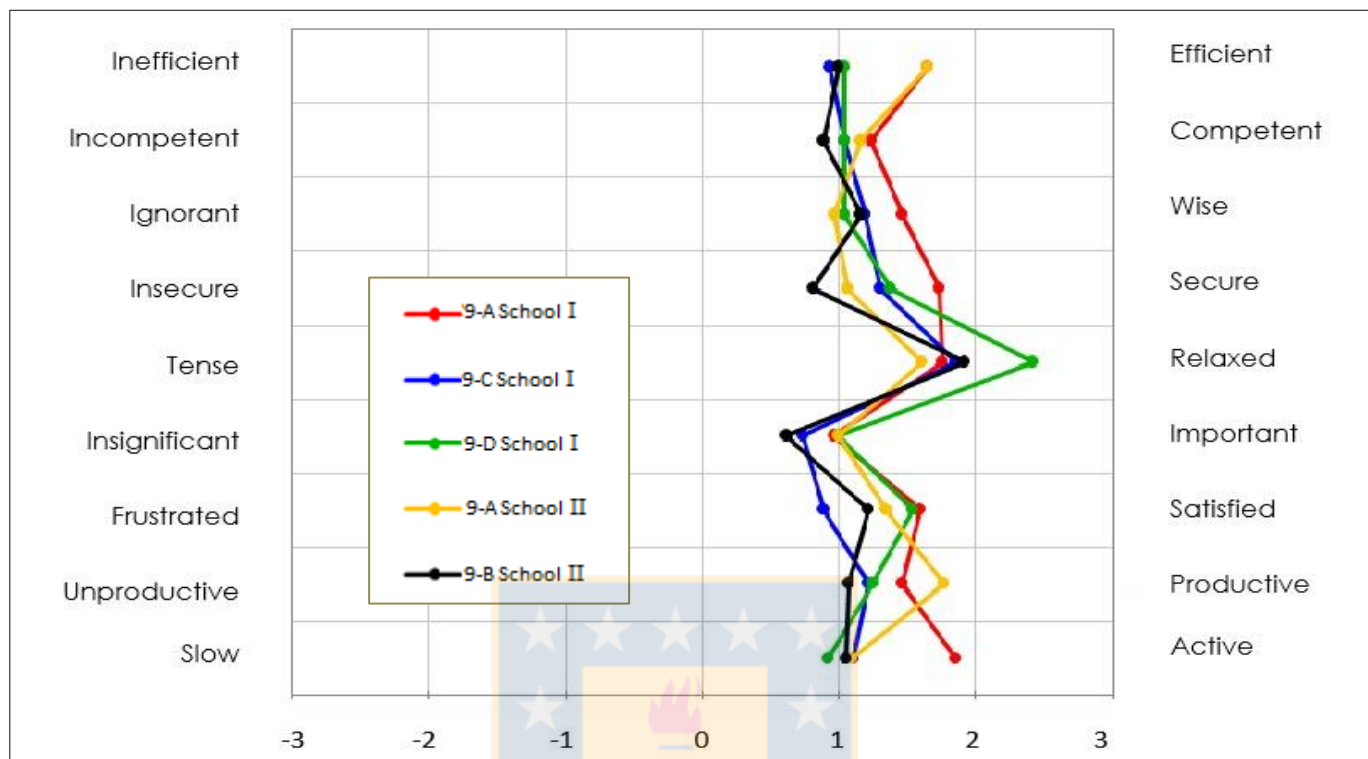


Figure 5: Mean score for activity 1: *Word stress activity*.

What Figure 5 shows is almost none of the students feels a negative response to this first activity. Furthermore, the students' affective responses oscillate only in the positive side of the scale. Looking at Figure 5, it is evident that the students' emotions change from one adjective to another, which results in a graphic with several variations and non linear. Nevertheless, this variation is maintained between the degrees of intensity one and two in most cases. The only two school grades that are outside this range are *9-D School I*, which reaches almost three in the *Relaxed* adjective. Meanwhile, *9-B School II* marks less than one in the *Important* adjective.

On the other hand, most of the 9th graders state that the *Word stress* pronunciation activity produces high feelings of *Relaxation*, whereas, the lowest and closest emotion to one and neutral (0) is *Important*. The two school grades (*9-A and 9-B*) from *School II* do not have a similar result in their mean score. While *9-*

A maintains its range between one and two, 9-B varies between less than one and almost two. In the case of the three school grades from *School I*, there is also a variation in their mean score. The only school grade that marks between the range of one and two is 9-A, whereas, 9-C and 9-D fluctuate between almost one to more than two.

Another aspect that caught the researchers' attention is that there are more similarities in the mean score of two school grades from two different schools than within the same school.

Figure 6 shows a chart with several pairs of adjectives. These adjectives are the ones with the highest mean scores and the lowest mean scores with their corresponding standard deviation per school grade group in the *Word stress* activity.

GROUP GRADE	ADJECTIVE PAIRS WITH HIGH MS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING SD	ADJECTIVE PAIRS WITH LOW MS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING SD
School I: 9-A	ACTIVE - SLOW Mean score: 1.85 Standard Deviation: 1.3	IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 0.97 Standard Deviation: 1.5
School I: 9-C	RELAXED - TENSE Mean score: 1.85 Standard Deviation: 1.3	IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 0.74 Standard Deviation 1.5
School I: 9-D	RELAXED - TENSE Mean score: 2.42 Standard Deviation: 1.1	ACTIVE - SLOW Mean score: 0.92 Standard Deviation: 2
School II: 9-A	PRODUCTIVE - UNPRODUCTIVE Mean score: 1.77 Standard Deviation: 1.1	IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 0.97 Standard Deviation: 1.3
School II: 9-B	RELAXED - TENSE Mean score: 1.92 Standard Deviation: 1.4	IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 0.62 Standard Deviation: 0.9

Figure 6: Comparative chart of adjective pairs with high mean score and low standard deviation and adjective pairs with low mean score and high standard deviation from activity 1.

First of all, it can be noted that the pairs of adjectives with high mean score have low standard deviation. Whereas, the pairs of adjectives with low mean score have high standard deviation. In the first case, the standard deviation of the pair of adjectives is low, since its value varies between 1, 1 and 1, 4. We know that a standard deviation close to 0 indicates that the data tend to be very close to the mean score. Even though the standard deviation is not 0 in these cases, it still indicates that the majority of data is positioned close to the mean score. Hence, the mean score is reliable.

In addition, regardless of the school origin, three out of the five grade groups have the *Relaxed-Tense* pair of adjectives as the one with the highest mean scores. Likewise, as their standard deviation is low, it can be said these grade groups tend to answer similarly.

Unlike the first case, the standard deviation of the pair of adjectives in the right-hand column in Figure 6 is higher. It varies from 0, 9 to 2. Even if the standard deviation values are not far from 0, since the mean score is lower than the standard deviation, it can be said that the data is spread. Even though four out of five grade groups, regardless of their school origins, have the pair of adjectives *Important-Insignificant* as the lowest, this is not relevant due to the high value of the standard deviation. A high standard deviation means that the data are widely spread, therefore results are less reliable.

On the other hand, the global standard deviation of the *Word stress* activity is 0, 17. The closer the standard deviation is to 0, the more reliable the mean is. Hence, this low SD means that the global mean score of this first activity (1, 27) is reliable. Therefore, it can be said that 9th graders show consensus at the moment of doing the *Word stress* activity, and they tend to answer similarly.

Figure 7 shows the results of the *Tongue twister* activity according to the mean score of the five 9th school grades from the two semi-public schools.

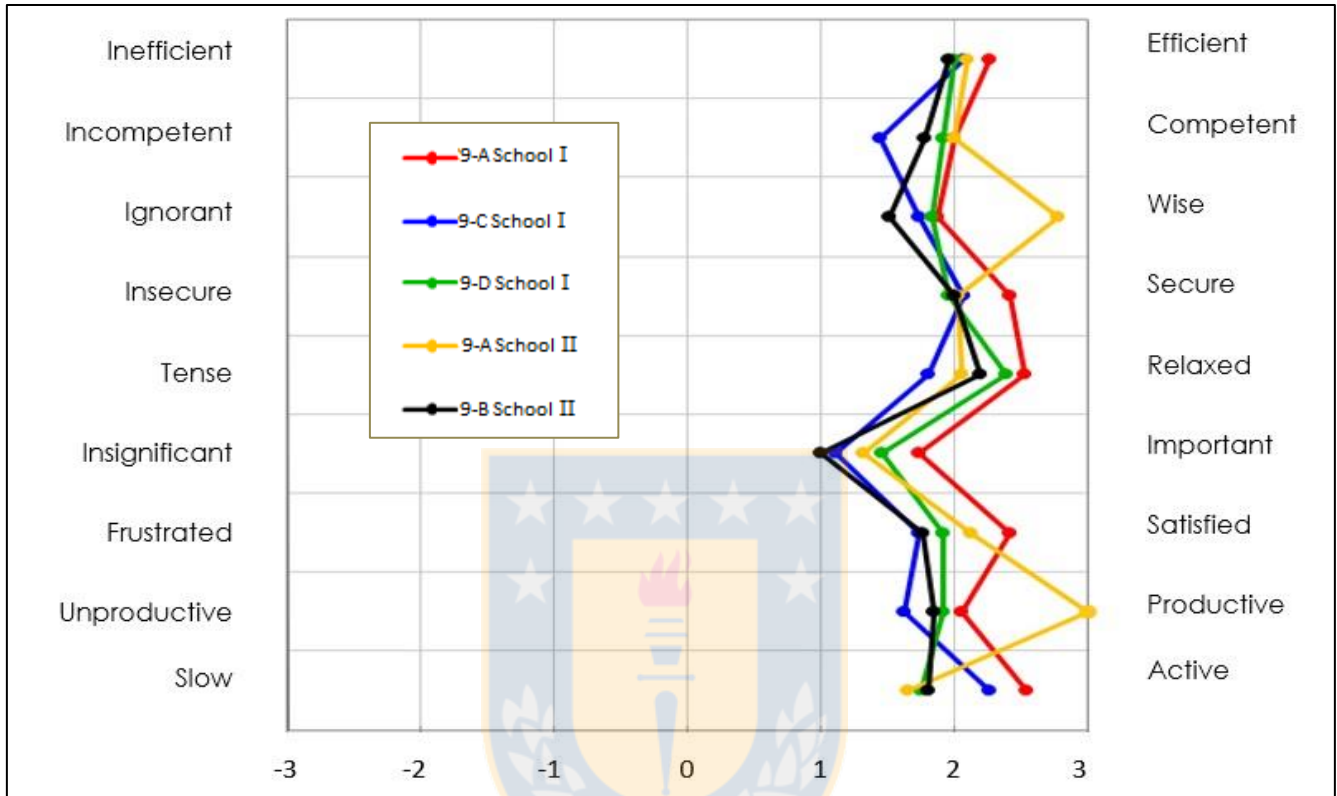


Figure 7: Mean score from activity 2: *Tongue twister* Activity.

In the same way as in the first activity, the participants do not mark any negative affective response. Their mean score varies from one to three focusing also on the positive feelings. In this activity, students have more similar mean scores. For example, they have close mean scores in seven of the nine adjectives. Similarly to what was observed in the first activity, the majority of the 9th school graders show that the *Tongue twister* pronunciation activities produce high feelings of *Relaxation*, while *Important* is the least valued feeling. The only school grade that slightly differentiates from the rest of the school grades is the *9-A School II*, which reaches almost three in the pair of adjectives *Ignorant-Wise* and marks three in the pair *Unproductive-Productive*.

Figure 8 shows a chart with several pairs of adjectives. These adjectives are the ones with a high mean score and a low mean score with their corresponding standard deviation per school grade group for the *Tongue twister* activity.

GROUP GRADE	ADJECTIVE PAIRS WITH HIGH MS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING SD		ADJECTIVE PAIRS WITH LOW MS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING SD
School I: 9-A	ACTIVE – SLOW Mean score: 2.53 Standard Deviation:0.9	RELAXED - TENSE Mean score: 2.53 Standard Deviation:0.9	IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 1.74 Standard Deviation:1.2
School I: 9-C	ACTIVE - SLOW Mean score: 2.26 Standard Deviation: 0.9		IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 1.11 Standard Deviation: 1.4
School I: 9-D	RELAXED - TENSE Mean score: 2.4 Standard Deviation: 1.2		IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 1.46 Standard Deviation:1.4
School II: 9-A	EFFICIENT - INEFFICIENT Mean score: 2.1 Standard Deviation: 1.2		IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 1.32 Standard Deviation: 1.5
School II: 9-B	RELAXED – TENSE Mean score: 2.19 Standard Deviation: 1.02		IMPORTANT - INSIGNIFICANT Mean score: 1 Standard Deviation: 1.02

Figure 8: Comparative chart of adjective pairs with high mean score and low standard deviation and adjective pairs with low mean score and high standard deviation from activity 2

Figure 8 reflects the most representative positive and negative adjective pairs for the *Tongue twister* activity. However, it is important to mention that 9-A from *School I* chose two different adjective pairs with the same mean score and the same standard deviation. As in activity one, once again the most frequent positive adjective is *Relaxed* which is chosen by three different groups (*School I* 9-A, 9-D and *School II* 9-B), followed by *Active* chosen in two grade groups (*School I* 9-A and 9-C), and *Efficient* chosen by *School II* 9-A. In all cases, answers are closer to the highest indicator (+3), going from 2,19 to 2,56. However, the standard deviation

is still low and does not go over 1, 2. Again, choosing positive adjectives seems an activity of major consensus among students regardless of their school of origin.

On the other hand, negative responses from the five different grade groups towards activity two indicate that the least positive feeling experienced is the *Important – Insignificant* pair. However, all the answers are still closer to the positive reaction (+3) than to the negative one (-3,) with mean scores that range from 1 up to 1, 74. In addition, all the groups present less agreement. Thus, it can be assumed that not all students agree on their answers and that probably the not so positive feelings are not perceived by the entire groups in the same way.

In addition, the global standard deviation for the *Tongue twister* activity is 0, 21. Similar to what was observed in the first activity, there is a low SD, which means that the data are closely around the global mean score of this second activity (1, 91). Since the standard deviation is closer to 0, there is very little disagreement in the sample, being the global mean score of this activity reliable. Just as in the *Word stress* activity, 9th graders show consensus at the moment of doing the *Tongue twister* activity, and they tend to answer similarly.

4.1.2. To correlate students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with participants' socio-demographic characteristics.

The results that will be shown in answer to this and the following specific objective are obtained from the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (r_s). Figures 9 and 10 below depict the correlation and the statistical significance index. In terms of the correlation, its interpretation is that the closer r_s is to +/- 1, the stronger the monotonic relationship. Correlation is a size effect, so we can verbally describe the strength of the correlation using the following guide for the absolute value of: r_s

Value	Strength
0.00 – 0.19	Very weak
0.20 – 0.39	Weak
0.40 – 0.59	Moderate
0.60 – 0.79	Strong
0.80 – 1.0	Very strong

Figure 9: Interpretation of strength according to the value based on Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.

On the other hand, *Significance* is a statistical term that tells how sure you are that a difference or relationship exists ("Statistical significance", n.d.) In other words, the results obtained are not due to chance or any sampling error. For the purpose of this study, the researchers will seek to find a declaring statistical significance of a p-value of less than 0.05. Hence, if the p-value is less than the significance level, the researchers may conclude that the variables observed actually reflect the characteristics of the sample, being the information obtained reliable.

In addition, the socio-demographic characteristics chosen by the researchers to be analyzed are the school grade group, which consists of five 9th school grades; age, which fluctuates between 14 and 17; sex, and each school vulnerability index which corresponds to 61% in *School I* and 27,5% in *School II*. The highest the score, the more vulnerable the school is.

	School grade group	Age	Sex	School vulnerability index
Activity 1 <i>Word Stress</i>	Correlation 0,134 Significance 0,099	Correlation 0,026 Significance 0,747	Correlation 0,020 Significance 0,802	Correlation 0,096 Sig 0,236
Activity 2 <i>Tongue twister</i>	Correlation 0,124 Significance 0,126	Correlation 0,070 Significance 0,391	Correlation 0,018 Significance 0,825	Correlation 0,050 Significance 0,542

Figure 10: Correlation between affective response and their socio-demographic characteristics according to Spearman.

As it can be seen, and based on the fact that correlation between variables is produced only if the results given by equation are up to 1,00 in correlation number and inferior to 0,05 in significance value, none of the variables is really affecting students' emotions when performing the *Word stress* or *Tongue twister* activities.

4.1.2.1. Scores by each socio-demographic characteristic

The following figures are meant to illustrate the collected data for the second objective which will be analyzed in the following chapter.

4.1.2.1.1. Age

Figure 11 shows participants' age.

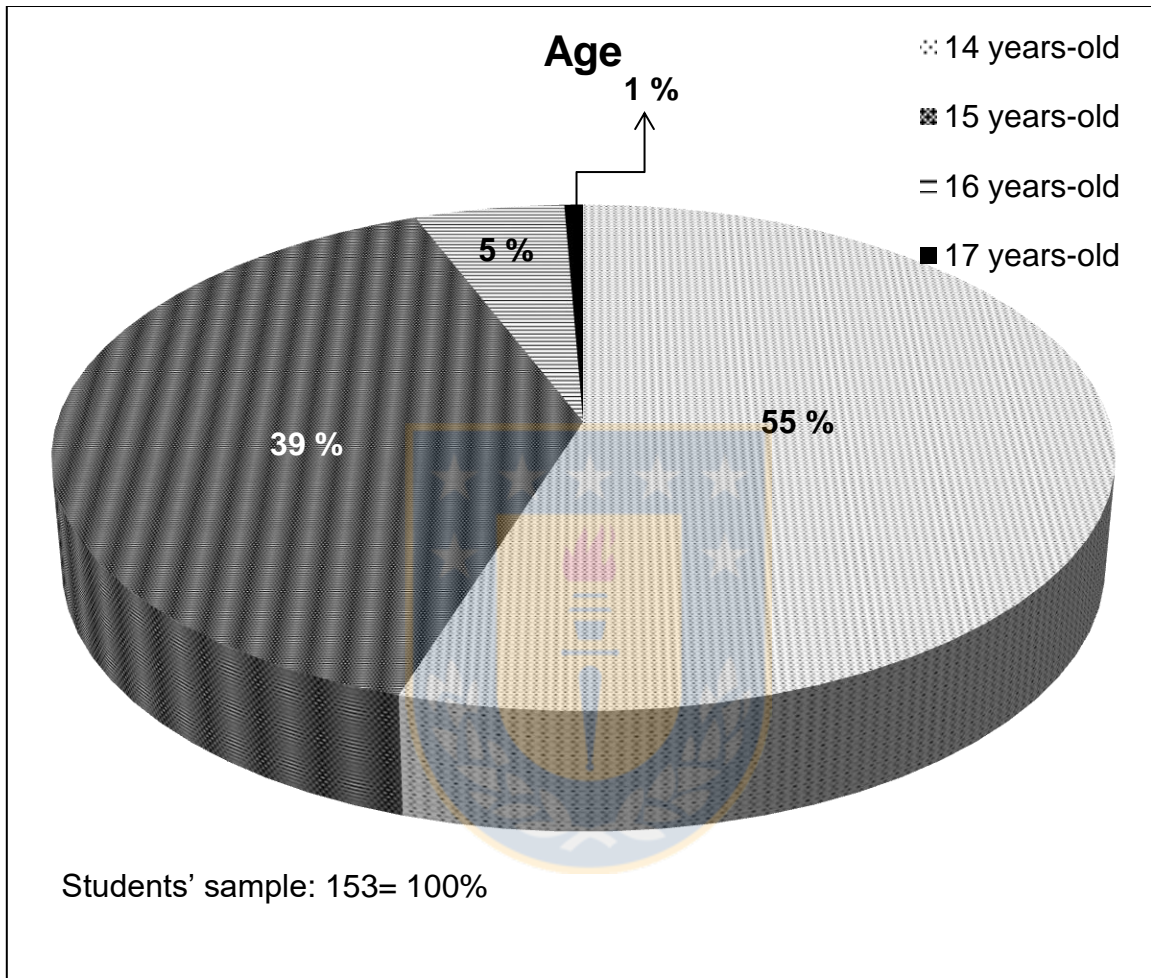


Figure 11: Participants' age.

4.1.2.1.2. Sex

Figure 12 shows participants' sex.

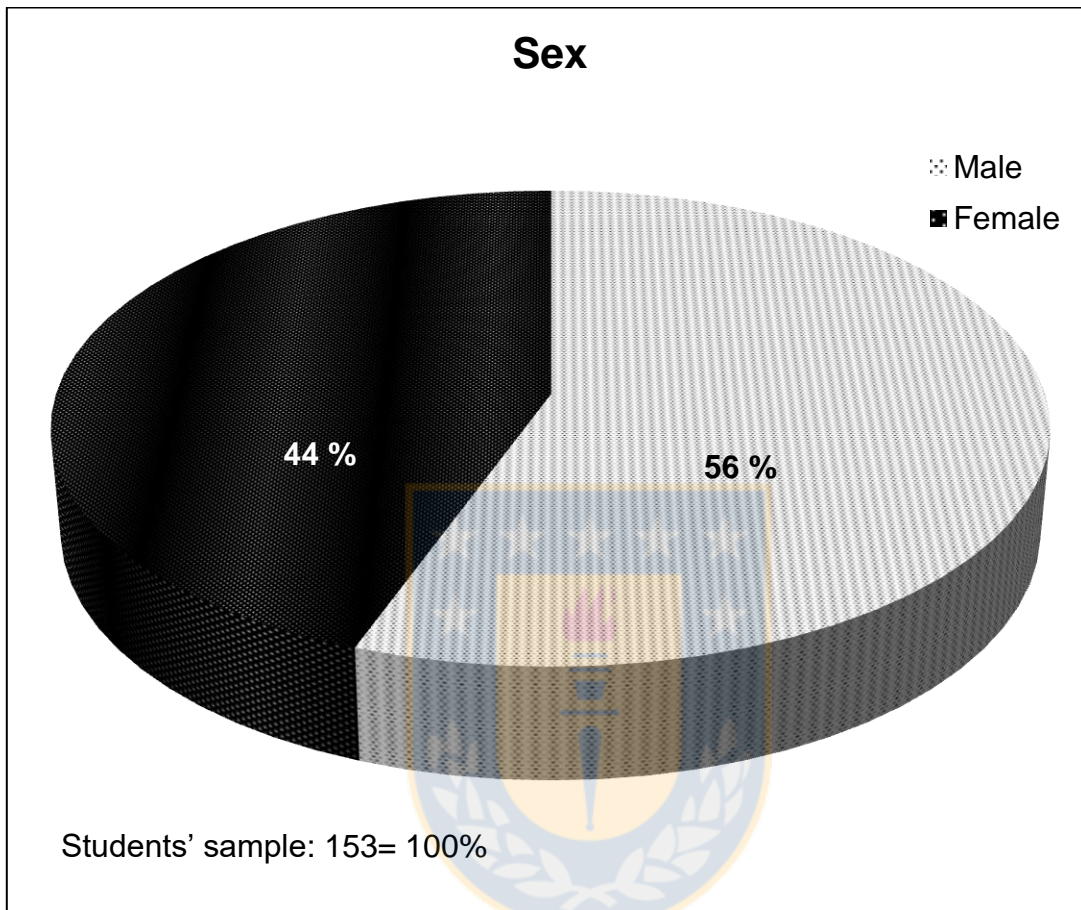


Figure 12: Participants' sex.

4.1.2.1.3. School grade group

Figure 13 shows how many students are per each school grade group.

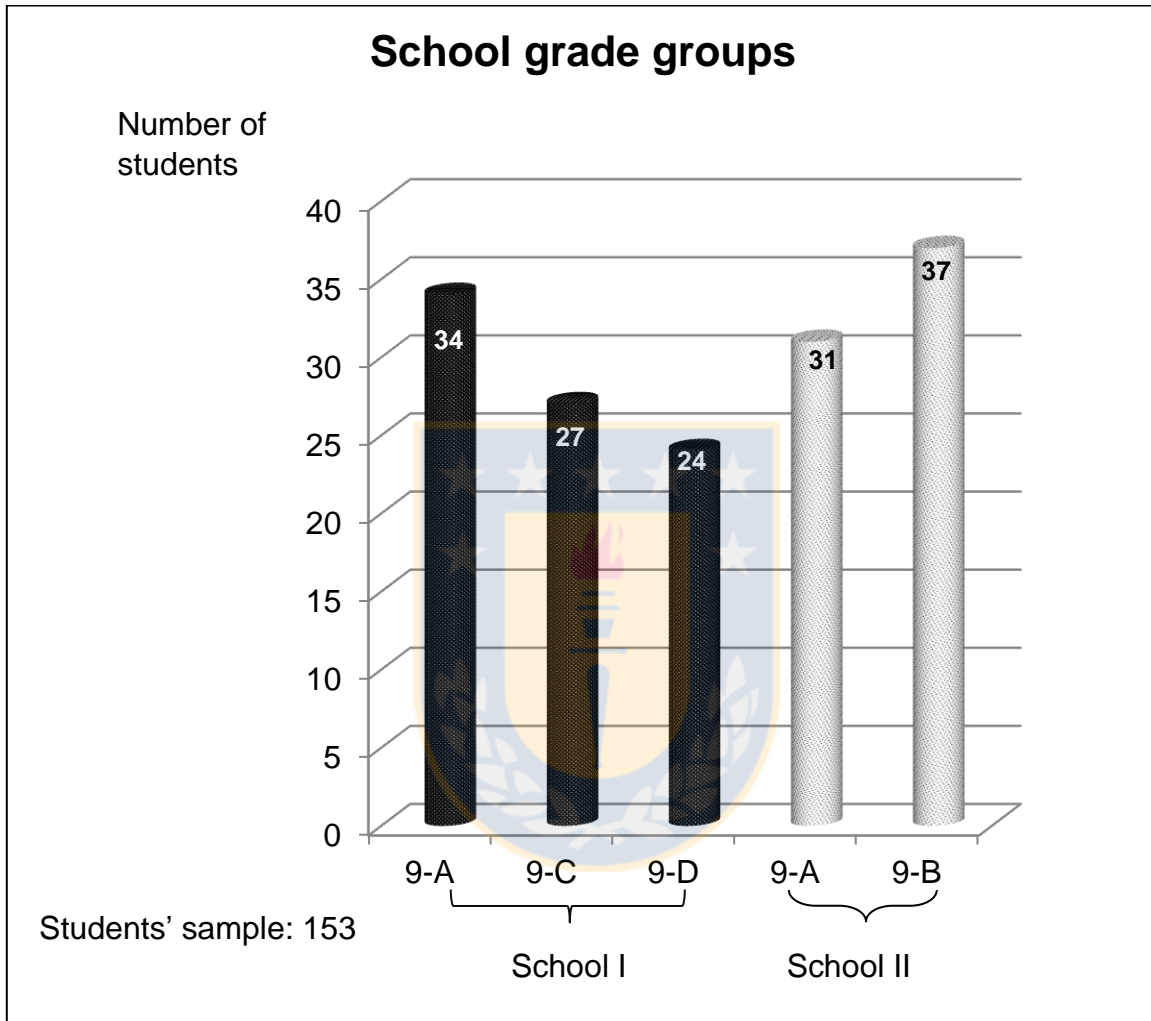


Figure 13: Participants per school grade group.

4.1.2.1.4. School vulnerability index

Figure 14 shows the school vulnerability index of both semi-public schools.

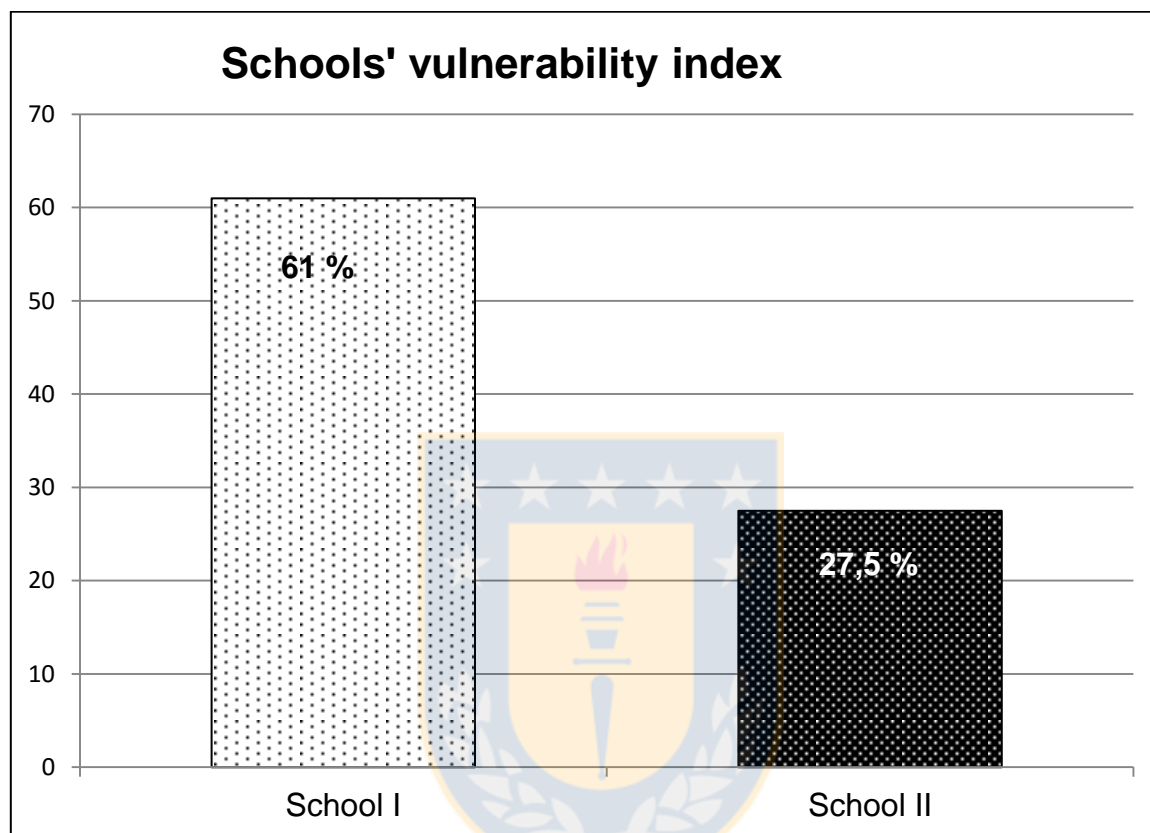


Figure 14: Schools vulnerability index.

4.1.3. To correlate students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with their grade point average in the English subject.

Research has shown that cognition and affection are indeed inextricably linked. An extensive review of the latest brain-based research has clearly shown the critical links between emotions and cognition and has concluded that in a positive state of mind, the learner is able to learn and recall better (De Andres, 2002). Therefore, researchers decide to include the grade point average in the English subject from the first 2015 school semester as a variable in order to see if there is a relationship between students' academic performance and students' affective responses.

	GPA in the English subject
Activity 1 <i>Word Stress</i>	Correlation 0,290 Significance 0,000
Activity 2 <i>Tongue twister</i>	Correlation 0,297 Significance 0,000

Figure 15: Correlation between affective responses and participants' grade point average in the English subject according to Spearman.

According to Figure 15 and based on the previous explanation, researchers make the following assumption: the participants' grade point average in the English subject does have significance on the emotions they experience at the moment of participating in both pronunciation activities. The correlation number shows that the relationship between these variables is not very high weak.

Figure 16 shows students' performance in the English subject from the last school term.

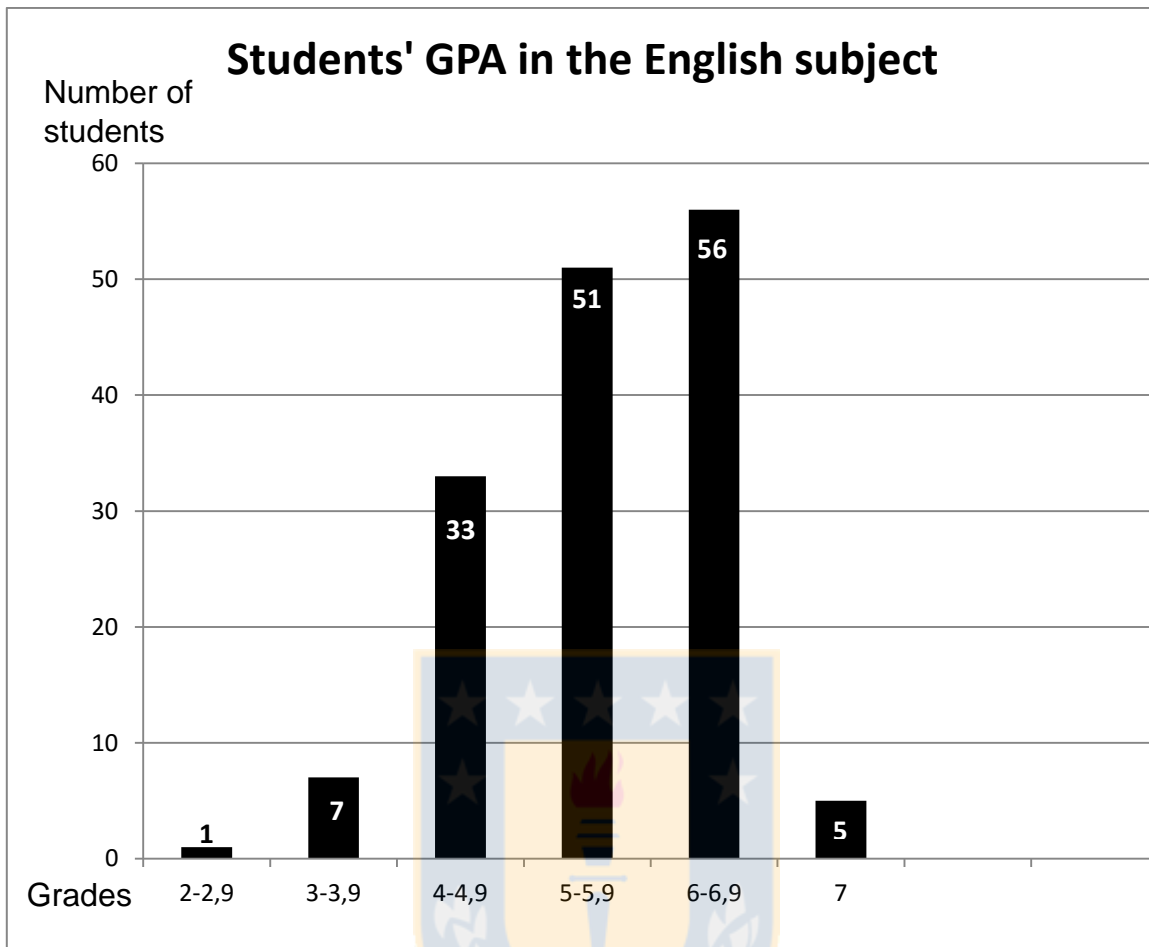


Figure 16: Participants' grade point average in the English subject.

Chapter V: Discussion



In chapter five, the researchers will discuss in more detail the results obtained and reported in the previous chapter.

The study shows that students have more positive affective responses towards *Tongue twister* activities rather than *Word stress* activities. After analyzing these answers, researchers believe that this difference could be related to the absence of direct teaching of pronunciation at schools. Students may feel more at ease in situations they are used to, just repeating specific words or sentences. Furthermore, most of the exercises according to the current Chilean English language curriculum are *Listen* and *repeat* oriented and include examples that make students feel more familiarized with the target language, as songs, movies or TV shows. However, if they start analyzing stress position, the task turns out quite difficult taking into consideration they have never had the opportunity to study phonetics features before. This last fact is remarked by Darcy, Ewert and Lidster (2011) and their idea of how difficult it is for teachers to integrate pronunciation in their lesson plans as there is no clear guide of how or when to start doing so.

Consequently, the first research hypothesis, *Tongue twister* pronunciation activities promote a more positive affective response than *Word stress* pronunciation activities, is accepted. According to what is shown in Figures 5 and 6, students from both schools had a more positive response in activity two rather than activity one. So we can confirm this first hypothesis.

On the other hand, the *Word stress* activity shows an unimportant correlation between students' age and their performance this first activity. However, this relationship is not significant, since the statistical significance is more than 0,05. This indicates that the existent correlation must have been due to chance or a sampling error. In addition, the same goes for the second activity *Tongue twister*. There is a very weak positive correlation between students' age and their performance in the second activity. Nevertheless, as in case of the first activity, the statistical significance is more than 0,05. Hence, this observed relationship occurs due to sampling error alone or chance. Based on these findings, it can be said that

in this study, age is not a variable that influences students' affective response in any of the pronunciation activities.

Nevertheless, several hypotheses state that age-related factors are linked to the difficulties that a person can experience in learning an L2. According to Flege (1987), the *Critical Period* hypothesis makes two important predictions concerning the pronunciation of foreign languages. "First, to be entirely effective, speech acquisition must occur prior to the establishment of hemispheric specialization for language functions. Second, speech learning that occurs after the critical period has passed, will proceed more slowly, and ultimately be less successful, than learning which occurs before the critical period has ended" (p.162).

However, even if some students have been studying English for a longer period of time than others, (in School II students started learning English around the age of 6 at primary education, whereas in School I the participants started around the age of 11,) this was not a factor for students themselves to take into consideration when they performed in any of the pronunciation activities, since there is no correlation found. Therefore, the *Critical Period* hypothesis cannot be applied in this study.

With respect to the sex factor, Sadat Mirkamali, Azizmohammadi and Maghsoudi (2014) state that gender differences manifestly influence students' academic interests, needs, and achievements. However, this characteristic seems not to be equally crucial at the moment of measuring participants' emotions towards pronunciation activities, as they did not vary from activity one to activity two. The data show that correlation is almost inexistent between both variables and reflects that there is no direct influence between the participants' sex and their affective responses.

Before the study took place, researchers gathered information about the way students are grouped together by their schools. The findings show that there is no pattern to set students in those groups and the schools create them randomly based only on the number of members in each class in order to have the same quantity of students in all the courses. Thus, after seeing the activities' results, it is

not difficult to understand why their group origin is not meaningful to their performance or their answers.

Researchers found out that both schools have similar answers regarding their emotions despite their school vulnerability index. The reason that would explain this fact is that students from underprivileged school have a major self-demanding study level regarding their socio-demographic environment. This could match with the description of *Effective Schools* (Bitar S, 2004), which is defined as a combination of several factors that motivate students regardless their socio-economic origin and encourage their learning. On the other hand, it is also possible that students feel comfortable with the English subject despite the difference of language contents according to each school, making them feel relaxed towards any activity related to it.

Furthermore, based on the socio-demographic characteristics; age, sex, school grade group, and school vulnerability index in relation to the students' affective response, the researchers found out that socially underprivileged students did not show a more negative affective response towards pronunciation activities than socially privileged 9th graders. Considering what was said before, the second hypothesis is rejected. There is no relationship among socio-demographic characteristics and students' responses.

In terms of students' grade point average in the English subject, it can be said that there is a correlation between students' affective responses towards both activities and their grade point average in the English subject. Taking into consideration that the GPA is a simple numerical index which summarizes a student's academic performance in a course ("Grade point average", 2014, para.1), researchers found this relation conspicuous, as a student who constantly works on improving his performance and keeps good grades would feel relaxed and more prepared to face an English activity. However, based on Krashen's studies about the affective filter on second language acquisition, external factors such as motivation, self-confidence and anxiety may interfere with language learning. According to Johnson (2013), if a student feels that his/her grades determine his performance, variables

such as fear, nervousness, boredom, and resistance to change, can affect the acquisition of a second language by preventing information about the second language from reaching the language areas of the mind (Johnson, 2013).

In addition, due to the existing correlation between students' affective response towards pronunciation activities and their grade point average in the English subject, the third hypothesis, which establishes a direct relationship between these two variables, is accepted.



Chapter VI: Conclusions



The purpose of this study was to investigate the diverse affective responses that students could have experienced when doing different pronunciation activities. The researchers decided to apply two types of pronunciation activities. These activities were chosen according to the activities most commonly used in the Ministry from Education coursebooks. The first activity was *Word stress* and the second one was *Tongue twister*. In order to identify students' affective responses, the semantic differential scale score was used. The intervention was carried out in two semi-public educational establishments among 9th graders. Only one session was necessary in each school. In this session, students did the two activities and completed the semantic differential scale corresponding to each activity. The general aim of this research was to determine the affective response that pronunciation activities produce on 9th graders from two semi- public schools.

The first specific objective of our research was to describe students' affective response towards *Word stress* and *Tongue twister* activities. In order to interpret students' affective response, researchers used descriptive statistics. The mean score of each pronunciation activities and the standard deviation were the main elements to analyze. Having said that, it can be concluded that students did not show a negative affective response towards pronunciation activities. They might have negative feelings towards writing or speaking skills, however, pronunciation activities did not produce negative affective responses on 9th graders from semi-public schools. Besides, as the data show, there were not significant differences between students' affective response in both semi-public schools; it can also be concluded that the type of school did not play an important role in students' affective response because in the five different 9th grades the students' affective response towards pronunciation activities was very similar. In addition, this can mean that students behaved similarly to others from the same school grade. This could be the reason why there were not meaningful differences in students' affective response rather, they were similar.

Furthermore, it serves as evidence that students could tolerate pronunciation activities and that pronunciation itself should take a more important role in the

lesson planning of every single teacher of English as a bridge to more fluent FL communication.

The second specific objective was to correlate students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with participants' socio-demographic characteristics (school grade group, age, sex and school vulnerability index). In this section, the researchers used the SPSS program for statistical analysis. Specifically, the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, which was used to correlate the variables.

According to the results obtained from this, it can be concluded that there was no relationship between students' affective response and participants' socio-demographic characteristics such as school grade group, age, sex and school vulnerability index. In addition, despite the fact that both semi-public schools have students from different social backgrounds, this variable did not cause an impact on students' affective response. Therefore, students' affective responses were not influenced by any socio-demographic variable. Neither the affective response to the first pronunciation activity nor the second one was affected by students' socio-demographic characteristics. Researchers observed that despite some socio-demographic limitations students felt neither intimidated nor uncomfortable with the *Word stress* and *Tongue twister* activities presented.

The third specific objective was to correlate students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with participants' grade point average in the English subject. In this part, as well as in the previous specific objective, the SPSS program was used to correlate the variables above with Spearman's rank correlation was used. In contrast of what was observed concerning the second specific objective, there was a relationship between students' affective response towards pronunciation activities with participants' grade point average in the English subject. Hence, it can be concluded that GPA had an impact on how students felt when doing the first and second pronunciation activities. Furthermore, teachers should include pronunciation activities that make students feel

comfortable in the classroom, since students will have a better performance in activities in which they feel at ease.

6.1. Limitations of the study

Most of the time, there are limitations that arise which investigators do not foresee. Some limitations are solved, whereas others finish impeding the continuation of the study. In this case, there were some limitations which arose during the research process. However, they did not stop the research and it was carried out successfully.

Firstly, we did not have access to students' vulnerability index. Neither *School I* nor *School II* gave us permission to see their records on students' economic background. Both schools forbade the access to this type of information to people who were not hired in the educational establishments. Therefore, we had to work with the general vulnerability index of both schools, which was of unrestricted access. Secondly, we had to reduce the students' sample, since some students did not answer the information requested such as the grade point average in the English subject from the last 2015 term. Hence, although at the beginning of the research, there were one hundred and seventy students, however, we finished analyzing data for one hundred and fifty three participants.

Finally, there were some distracting factors, which researchers had to face with when they went to visit *School I*. First, a student doing her professional practice was present in two visits at the school. She could not go out of the classroom, and therefore her presence distracted some students. Besides, students asked her questions about the semantic differential scale, which she did not know how to answer. Furthermore, heavy rains while the survey was being administered distracted students from what they were doing. Hence, they took more time than the estimated, and researchers had to delay their leaving from the school.

As a closure, researchers would like to highlight the importance that emotions have over learners and how this study has remarked that pronunciation, although it is not a common tool to reinforce, has in overall a positive welcome by the research

participants. This investigation has given a further view of possible activities that may be implemented in future lessons in order to practice pronunciation and improve not only students' fluency at the moment of speaking, but also their confidence to embrace English as a necessary tool for communication nowadays.

6.2. Further research

Based on the findings of this study, some further research can be outlined.

1. The current study can be replicated, either at the same level with more participants or at different levels, so as to verify the findings which have been established in this study and compare the results.
2. Other language skill activities can be looked into with the same approach so as to determine the affective response that those activities have in students from secondary semi-public schools.
3. In addition, other pronunciation activities can be applied in order to set a hierarchy of which activities make students feel more at ease.
4. Finally, activities can be evaluated in a longitudinal study in order to determine if there is a relationship between students' emotions and their performance in pronunciation activities.

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Appendix A



PRONUNCIATION ACTIVITY 1
WORD STRESS

1. Listen and repeat. Pay attention to the number of syllables and the stress on them.

Ex: Hello

a

b

c

1.likes

3.quiet

5 .control

2.calm

4.people

6 .compare

2. Put the words to columns a-c according to the stress in the word. Then listen and check.

- relax

- alone

- does

- doesn't

- active

-thinks

a

b

c

PRONUNCIATION ACTIVITY 2
TONGUE TWISTER

1. Listen to the following tongue twister:

Silly Sally is shaking some sugar on her shiny shoes

2. Practice for 3 minutes, then read it to the person next to you.



Appendix B

The logo of the University of Chile is centered behind the text. It features a shield with a yellow background and a blue border. Inside the shield, there is a red torch with a flame, set against a blue background with white stars. The shield is flanked by two olive branches.

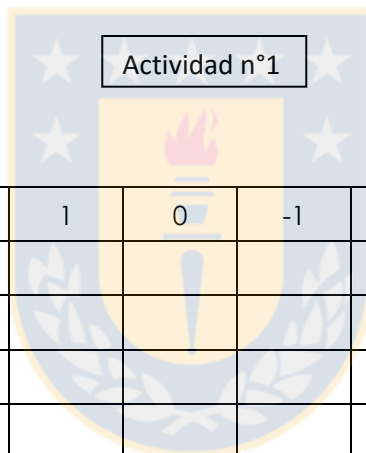


Nombre: _____ Edad: _____ Curso: _____ Sexo: M __ F __
Nota el semestre pasado en la asignatura de inglés: _____

ESCALA DIFERENCIAL SEMANTICO
Actividades de Pronunciación

¿Cómo te sentiste después de realizar esta actividad?

Instrucción: Marque con una X en el nivel de **emoción/actitud** que más sientes después de realizar la actividad, siendo 3 mayor emoción, 1 menor emoción y 0 neutro (no se siente ni una ni otra). Sólo se puede marcar una vez por emoción. Sea honesto en sus respuestas, esta actividad no será evaluada.



	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	
Eficiente								Ineficiente
Competente								Incompetente
Sabio								Ignorante
Seguro								Inseguro
Relajado								Tenso
Importante								Insignificante
Satisfecho								Frustrado
Productivo								Improductivo
Activo								Lento



Nombre: _____ Edad: _____ Curso: _____ Sexo: M __ F __
Nota el semestre pasado en la asignatura de inglés: _____

ESCALA DIFERENCIAL SEMANTICO
Actividades de Pronunciación

¿Cómo te sentiste después de realizar esta actividad?

Instrucción: Marque con una X en el nivel de **emoción/actitud** que más sientes después de realizar la actividad, siendo 3 mayor emoción, 1 menor emoción y 0 neutro (no se siente ni una ni otra). Sólo se puede marcar una vez por emoción. Sea honesto en sus respuestas, esta actividad no será evaluada.

Actividad n°2

	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	
Eficiente								Ineficiente
Competente								Incompetente
Sabio								Ignorante
Seguro								Inseguro
Relajado								Tenso
Importante								Insignificante
Satisfecho								Frustrado
Productivo								Improductivo
Activo								Lento