

Actualidad Educativa

LATINOAMERICANA

ISSN 1959-1887

Mes, Vol. 9 N° 1, 2018

Universidad  Tecnológica
Oteima

PMRO
Enfoques Multisectoriales
para la Erradicación de
la Pobreza Rural en
Panamá

Laboratorio
demostrativo el
OTEIMOSO:
Técnicas de
Producción
Agrícola

Nuevos
Docentes
para
Incentivar
el Estudio
de las
Ciencias

Immediate
Corrective
Feedback
and its
effect on
the
pronunciation
of sentence
stress and
intonation
patterns

Plan Maestro
del Agro de la
Región
Occidental

"Plan Maestro del Agro"

Programas y Proyectos Verticales con Inversión
Privada de 402 Millones de Balboas



IMMEDIATE CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK AND ITS EFFECT ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF SENTENCE STRESS AND INTONATION PATTERNS

.By. FELIPE IVAN DE GRACIA PINTO, M.A.

Institution: Centro Regional Universitario de Veraguas (Universidad de Panamá)

RESUMEN

Panamanian learners of English have got some competence in intonation after they have been taught through theoretical sessions in which they do not receive an appropriate feedback or any feedback at all. The present work was an action research; an intervention developed under the qualitative paradigm that was carried out with junior students of the B.A. program at C.R.U.V. At the end of the intervention, the researcher could notice that the use of immediate corrective feedback had a positive effect on the students' speaking skill. Many of them changed from having an average and good level of performance to a good and very good level of speaking proficiency in terms of intonation. After this, the researcher could conclude that the constant practice of intonation helps to distinguish between different types of sentences; and that some students need to be exposed to the explanation of every type of intonation pitch.

KEY WORDS:

Feedback, Intonation, Pronunciation, Rehearsal, Speech.

INTRODUCCIÓN

For many years people have been discussing about pronunciation issues when learning new languages. It's critical for our purposes to distinguish between the written and the spoken systems of English. People are usually so familiar with the written form of English that it can mislead anybody into making wrong assumptions about the sound system. Teachers should pay considerable attention to different approaches when teaching speaking because many learners have struggled with the pronunciation of English. Like many languages, English has wide variation in pronunciation, both historically and from dialect to dialect. In general, however, the regional dialects of English share a largely similar (though not identical) phonetic system. (McCully, 2009)

Correct intonation and stress is the key to speak English fluently with good pronunciation. Intonation and stress refers to the music of the English language. Words that are stressed are the key to understanding and using the correct intonation brings out the meaning. After students have learned basic consonant and vowel sounds, they should move on to learning to differentiate between individual sounds by using minimal pairs. Once they are comfortable with individual words, they should move on to intonation and stress exercises such as sentence markup. (LANGUAGE, 2013)

Decades of education research support the idea that by teaching less and providing more feedback, we can produce greater learning. Compare the typical lecture-driven course, which often produces less-than-optimal learning, with the peer instruction model developed by Eric Mazur (2009) at Harvard.

He hardly lectures at all to his 200 introductory physics students; instead, he gives them problems to think about individually and then discuss in small groups. This system, he writes, "provides frequent and continuous feedback (to both the students and the instructor) about the level of understanding of the subject being discussed", producing gains in both conceptual understanding of the subject and problem-solving skills. Less "teaching," more feedback equals better results. (Bransford, 2004)

This study helps professors to know whether the use of immediate corrective feedback, under which students of the B.A. program, at C.R.U. Veraguas, were exposed to, may help them pronounce sentence stress and intonation patterns correctly.

This article is important because through it professors and students may find how feedback and technology are influencing the world in at least two aspects: one related to pedagogical aspects and another to changes in skills as required competences. In that sense, the results of this research may help students develop pronunciation skills and overcome pronunciation when speaking English.

In addition, teachers may see the teaching approaches from other perspectives; that is, they can find different ways to make their teaching more appealing to the students, and with the possibility to get better results.

The type of research developed in the present work is an action research, in which the situation in question was interpreted in detail. Not limited to collecting and tabulating data, but it includes the interpretation of the meaning and importance of what was developed. This study was developed under the qualitative paradigm.

METODOLOGÍA

The type of research of the present work is an action research developed under the qualitative paradigm, in which the situation in question was interpreted in detail. Not limited to collecting and tabulating data, but it includes the interpretation of the meaning and importance of what was developed during seven weeks. This study took into consideration a sample of 26 junior students of the B.A. program in English at C.R.U. Veraguas.

These students were applied a pre-test based on the sentence stress and intonation patterns using 20 different sentences of common topics of conversation. After, they continued developing fluency through individual and group activities that promoted the effective use of semantic knowledge, pragmatics, phonology and grammar in conversational act.

While the speaking skill was being developed through the discussion of different topics, students were corrected or given a corrective feedback every time they committed any mistake in pronunciation, grammar, sentences stress or intonation.

Finally, at the end of the seven weeks, the researcher applied a post-test based on the sentence stress and intonation patterns using common topics of conversation.

For pre-test and post-test, the researcher used a rubric to evaluate students' performance. That rubric took into consideration the following criteria:

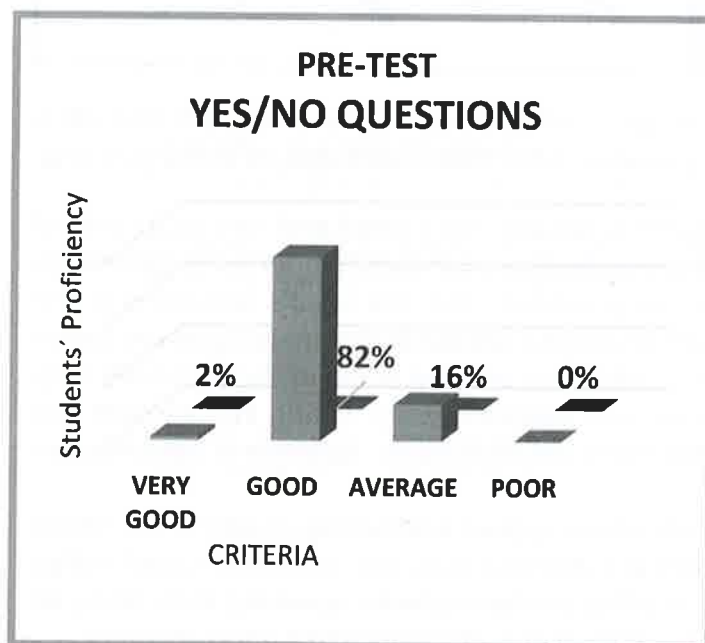
VERY GOOD: more than 90% accuracy.

GOOD: with 70-89% accuracy.

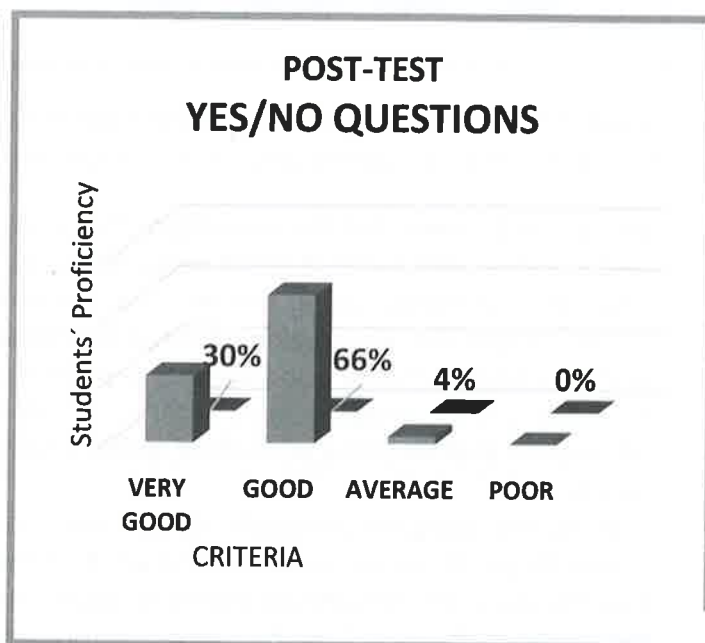
AVERAGE: with 51-69% accuracy.

POOR: with 50% or less accuracy.

RESULTADOS Y DISCUSIÓN

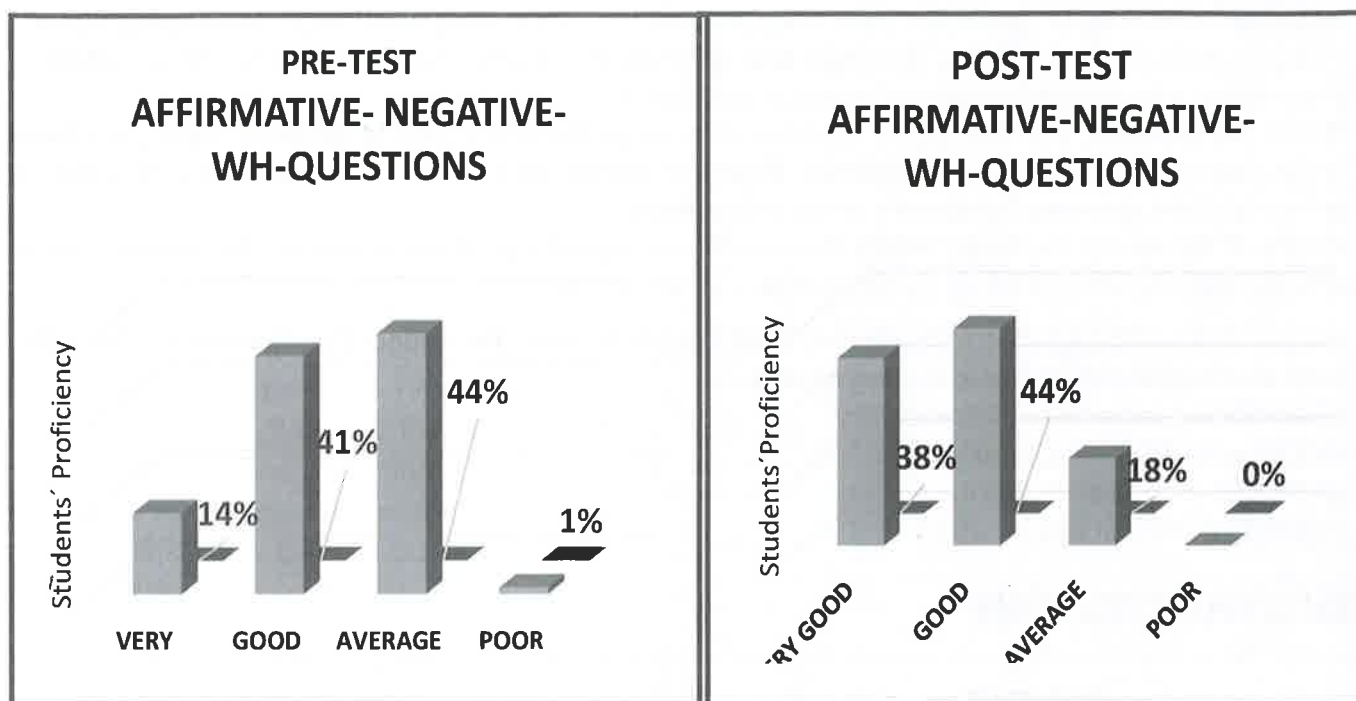


Graph 1 Yes/No Questions provided in the Instrument applied as the pre-test.



Graph 2 Yes/No Questions provided in the instrument applied as the post-test

In the graph1, we can see that at the moment of applying the pre-test, most of these junior students had a good level of pronunciation for Yes/No Questions in English according to the sentences provided in the instrument. On the other hand, the results shown in the graph 2 imply that at the moment of applying the post-test, most of the students had reached a very good and a good level of pronunciation proficiency in giving the corresponding intonation and sentence stress to the Yes/No Questions provided and; after being exposed to the immediate corrective feedback.



Graph 3 Affirmative, Negative and Wh-Questions provided in the instrument applied as the pre-test. Graph 4 Affirmative, Negative and Wh-Questions provided in the instrument applied as the post-test.

This graph 3 shows that the majority of the junior students already had a good and very good level of performance, and some of them needed help to improve their pronunciation in terms of intonation and sentence stress, taking into account the sentences provided. But, the results presented in the graph 4 mean that after being exposed to immediate corrective feedback, the majority of the junior students had reached a good level of pronunciation proficiency, and just some of them needed help to improve their pronunciation in terms of intonation and sentence stress, taking into account the Affirmative and Negative sentences, and the Wh-Questions provided at the moment of applying the post-test.

After having analyzed the graphs gotten from the instrument applied and having shared seven weeks of teaching with junior students of the B.A. in English at C.R.U.Veraguas, the researcher could notice that the use of immediate corrective feedback had its effect on the students' speaking skills. Many of the students changed from having an average and good level of performance to a good and very good level of speaking proficiency in terms of intonation.

The findings of this research are closely related to what Juliana Perez presented in her thesis "The Importance of Feedback in Teaching English as a Second Language to Students of Public Elementary School. Santiago-Veraguas: Universidad De Panama, CRUV. 2003. She said that feedback is very important for the students because it serves the purpose of making them remember concepts or phrases; also, feedback motivates the students' learning process while at the same time it reinforces what they have learned in class. (PEREZ G., 2003)

CONCLUSIONES

The constant practice of intonation helps to distinguish between different types of sentences. Some students have a good level of the speaking skill, but commit mistakes in intonation and word stress. That is why some students need to be exposed to the explanation of every type of intonation pitch.

It is recommended to look for updated material to work in class and also the ones that call students' attention; as well as to work with information from different English accents because, until now, most of the junior students have problems understanding English accents different to standard or American English.

In order to develop a similar research, it is suggested to take command and exclamation sentences into account.

In spite of the clear improvement of the junior students, it is considered that this technique (Immediate Corrective Feedback) should be more appropriate for sophomore students.

REFERENCIAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS

Bransford, B. &. (2004). How People Learn. Washington D.C.: National Academy Press.

Language, E. A. (2013, May 24). About.Com. Retrieved From Intonation And Stress: <http://Esl.About.Com/Od/Speakingadvanced/A/Timestress.Htm>

McCully, C. (2009). The Sound Structure Of English. The Netherlands: Cambridge University Press.

Perez G., J. (2003). The Importance Of Feedback In Teaching English As A Second Language To Students Of Public Elementary School. Santiago-Veraguas: Universidad De Panama, CRUV.