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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACIÓN
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**“THE HOOKED ON PHONICS APP AND THE ENGLISH
PRONUNCIATION”**

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2020

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CERTIFY:

I, Chicaiza Redín, Verónica Elizabeth PhD., holder of the I.D. 1715106322 in my capacity as superior of the Research dissertation on the topic: “**THE HOOKED ON PHONICS APP AND THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION**” investigated by Miss Gabriela Fernanda Sánchez Villegas, with I.D. 1804172292, confirm that this research report meets the technical, scientific and regulatory requirements, so the presentation of it is authorized to the corresponding organism in order to be submitted for evaluation by the Qualifying Commission appointed by the Directors board.



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I declare this undergraduate dissertation entitled: **“THE HOOKED ON PHONICS APP AND THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION”** is the result of the autor's investigation and has reached the conclusions and recommendations described in the present study.

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DEDICATION

First, I dedicate this research work to God who blessed me and allowed me to finish my university degree.

To continue, I also want to thank the most important people in my life: my parents Teresa Villegas and Edgar Sánchez; who gave me their unconditional support to finish my university career, the strength to face the obstacles of life day by day, not to decline and emerge victorious from every adversity.

To my son Matias because he is my inspiration and my constant fighting engine to achieve my dreams. Finally, to my siblings Carlos and Santiago who have always been present to offer me their advice and unconditional support.

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Gabriela Fernanda Sánchez Villegas

TABLE OF CONTENT

TUTOR APPROVAL	ii
DECLARATION PAGE.....	iii
TO THE DIRECTIVE COUNCIL OF THE FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES AND EDUCATION.....	iv
COPYRIGHT REFUSE	v
DEDICATION	vi
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
TABLE INDEX	x
FIGURE INDEX.....	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER I.....	1
THEORETIAL FRAMEWORK.....	1
1.1 Investigative Background.....	1
1.1.1 Theoretical framework.....	7
1.2 Objectives.....	9
1.2.1 Process of achieving the objectives:	9
CHAPTER II.....	11
METHODOLOGY.....	11
2.1 Resources:	11
2.2 Methods.....	12
CHAPTER III.....	20
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	20
3.1 Results.....	20
3.3.1 Pretest results.....	20
3.3.2 Post-test results.....	22

3.3.3 Comparative results	24
3.3.4 Activities evaluation	26
3.2 Verification of hypothesis	28
3.3 Discussion of results.....	29
CHAPTER IV	31
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	31
4.1 Conclusions	31
4.2 Recommendations	32
REFERENCES.....	33
ANNEXES	35

TABLE INDEX

Table 1 Pretest.....	20
Table 2 Post-test.....	22
Table 3 Pretest and post-test	24
Table 4 Activities evaluation.	26
Table 5 Paired Samples Test.....	28
Table 6 Cambridge Criteria for evaluating pronunciation (KEY for school) used as Pretest and Post-test	35
Table 7 Criteria for grading activities	36
Table 8 Rubric for evaluating activities	37

FIGURE INDEX

Figure 1 First activity	15
Figure 2 Second activity.....	15
Figure 3 Third activity	16
Figure 4 Third activity reinforcement	16
Figure 5 Fourth activity.....	17
Figure 6 Fifth activity	17
Figure 7 Fifth activity reinforcement	17
Figure 8 Sixth activity	18
Figure 9 Sixth activity reinforcement	18
Figure 10 Seventh activity	18
Figure 11 Eighth activity.....	19
Figure 12 Initial pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.	20
Figure 13 Final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.	22
Figure 14 Initial and final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.	24
Figure 15 Final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.	26

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TOPIC: “THE HOOKED ON PHONICS APP AND THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION”.

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ABSTRACT

The current research had the objective to demonstrate how the Hooked on Phonics application influences the English pronunciation development, considering that the speaking ability is one of the most complex to acquire, and has an extraordinary importance in communication because it plays an important role in listening comprehension, oral expression and oral interaction. For the development of the research, it was necessary to use a qualitative and pre-experimental approach methodology, where 17 third-year students of basic education from Private Education Unit “Jerusalem” participated, with ages between 7 and 8. The intervention process lasted 2 months and involved performing 8 activities to improve pronunciation, evaluated at the beginning and end of the mediation.

After the development of the research, it was possible to conclude that Hooked on Phonics app was effective because the final level of students' pronunciation was satisfactory since the majority (59%) was at level 3, several of them were at level 4, being very good; and some of them at level 5, considered excellent. Observing a greater familiarization with English language sounds and improvement intonation, fluency and self-confidence.

Key words: Mobile Application, Hooked on Phonics, pronunciation.

CHAPTER I.

THEORETIAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Investigative Background

To initialize, the following bibliographic review shows a synthesis of the main authors immersed in the pronunciation and the use of strategies to improve this ability, among the main ones are the next:

In the publication **“Pronunciation problems: a case study of English language students at Sudan University of Science and Technology”** developed by (Elkhair, 2014) the author investigated about the problems in English pronunciation that students experience, concluding that the factors such as interference, differences between the mother tongue sound system and English, inconsistency in the English sounds and spelling that limit the development of this important skill.

This publication addresses every factor that influences pronunciation, and how they can be solved by the teacher. The author also stated that pronunciation must be worked in conjunction with productive skills, making emphasis on grammar, vocabulary, structure of sentences, intonation and others.

The information presented serves as contribution because not only are judgments made on the importance of pronunciation in learning the English language, but how to work on it based on resources such as audios, cassettes, CDs, sound dictionaries and digital resources.

To continue, in the research titled **“English pronunciation instruction: a literature review”** developed by (Abbas, 2016), the author mentioned that pronunciation should be seen as more than the correct production of individual sounds or words, but rather as an important part of communication that joins classroom activities. For this reason, pronunciation is conceptualized as the production of sounds used to make sense of the communication process.

This research contains relevant information about pronunciation, as it conceptualizes it, highlights its importance and difficulties at this level. The research notes that teachers should encourage their students to control their own pronunciation and practice their speaking skills as much as possible inside and outside the classroom, establishing objectives that are applicable and appropriate to the communication needs of each student.

This study served as support because it emphasizes that teaching pronunciation is very important because it is the main source of understanding, since, if the students cannot pronounce the words properly, they cannot communicate correctly. Therefore, teaching pronunciation helps students better understand native speakers and improves their ability to communicate easily and effectively.

A significant impact regarding English pronunciation problems is the research developed by (Ehrlich, 2013) entitled “**Teaching American English pronunciation**”. The document mentioned that teaching pronunciation is useless after a certain age due to the decrease in the ability among students to develop a native pronunciation, therefore highlights the importance of working in this area since childhood.

This scientific paper considers that any type of pronunciation teaching should consider biological, sociocultural, personality, and linguistic factors known to affect second language sound system acquisition. In addition, it is mentioned that among the main pronunciation difficulties is the lack of vocabulary. Secondly, difficulties can arise because the rules for combining sounds in words are different in the native language, thirdly, stress and intonation patterns.

The information presented acts as sustenance because it exposes that the native language of a student is not the only factor that affects the ability to pronounce in a second language, but that there are other factors such as personal or sociocultural, must be considered to work with greater emphasis on pronunciation. However, it has to be practiced from an early age that is where schemas or patterns can be broken. Therefore, with this investigative document, it is clear that the propitiation in the English language must be enhanced from children to achieve better results.

Besides, in the research titled **“Teaching pronunciation at the secondary level”** written by (Mikulastiková, 2012) the main pronunciation problems in learning the English language were investigated, which are of two types: internal and external.

To specify, internal factors include age, personality, motivation, experiences, cognition and the mother tongue. On the other hand, external factors include curriculum, instruction, culture, motivation of the environment, and access to native speakers or media where they can interact with themselves.

This research work contributes to the current one because it contains valuable information about the difficulties that children have in the pronunciation of the English language, in addition to the aspects of pronunciation that must be taught such as: phonetic letter, examples of pronunciation by areas, identification of words and sounds, stress of words and sentences, intonation, use of connectors and other aspects.

Due to the multiple problems that arise at the pronunciation level, several authors have proposed strategies to improve this skill, but whose had the most impact are those that support the use of ICT Information and communication technologies. One of them is titled **“Improving student's English pronunciation ability through go fish game and maze game”** developed by (Dwi, 2015), where the author mentioned that pronunciation problems in children are various; the first one originates because spelling and pronunciation are different, the second one is due to the lack of knowledge of the language because learning is passive, and the third problem is the lack of practice because the activities are monotonous.

This article highlights that, due to pronunciation problems, it is appropriate to implement game-like activities, because these arouse the interest of the students and with this the pronunciation ability can be improved, since these resources use all the senses and the students can learn in many ways: listening to what people say, observing what they do, copying them, experimenting, discovering things and specially practicing various skills.

This article contributes significantly to the current study because it notes that pronunciation must be worked dynamically, being prudent to use audiovisual resources based on the game so that students can experiment, rehearse without fear of error, and thus, be able to learn.

In the publication entitled “**Advantages of the use of ICT for foreign languages teaching**”, written by (Ruiz, 2014), there is an analysis referring to the use of information and communication technologies within the learning context of English, making an emphasis on fluency and correction of pronunciation during oral expression. The use of ICT as a tool to promote and improve the assimilation of learning has become clear since they help students to better understand what the teacher wants to transmit because they allow more experimentation.

In this research work, the author mentioned that the strategies that promote fluency, improve the quality of oral expression and increase the confidence level of every student when communicating, involve the use of rhythms and rhymes in content, so it is appropriate the use of simple songs or repetition activities, audios, videos, and others.

Additionally, this work provides interesting and simple ideas to work developing and perfecting pronunciation in children. The importance and ease of applying ICT to language teaching is highlighted, but it is also expressed that everything should go hand in hand with the teacher who must control the process.

Other research related to the topic of study is the next titled “**Teaching the English language through apps**”, developed by (Montiel, Enseñanza del idioma inglés a través de apps, 2017), where several applications were analyzed as alternatives to traditional teaching models in children. Apps are good resources for teaching English, because they include more explicit content and because the forms and teaching-learning processes that appear are convenient and easy to learn for children who want to try English at an early age.

This work contains important information about the pros and cons of using apps in children. On the one hand, these resources arouse an extra interest in children and motivate them towards new learning styles by incorporating elements with which they

are accustomed to living together. However, on the other hand, this digitization is producing an addiction to these new technologies in children. Therefore, the author recommends the use of apps as a complement and not as the main learning resource.

Consequently, according to this investigative work, apps are a very good resource for language learning by helping gestures, accents, allows to develop tests, check pronunciation and learn interactively without fear of making mistakes. However, it should be considered that the use of apps is a complement to formal education because only when the person interacts with another human being or is instructed or guided by an expert person, such as the teacher, can improve this skill.

Other research focused on the use of apps to improve pronunciation is “**Application available on mobile devices for learning English as a second language for preschool children**” developed by (Rodríguez, 2015), where it is mentioned that the application of technology of an Android mobile system in education has the potential to enrich the learning environments in which children and young people are educated.

The implementation of information and communication technologies (ICT) has generated a change in the current education model, revolutionizing the pedagogical strategies used for the development of the teaching process and the way of acquiring concepts in the learning model. The implementation of information systems and mobile environments can support and improve the scheme used by teachers for the development of their classes.

This research serves as a contribution because it details the importance of using technological resources and especially mobile applications as resources for learning the English language. In addition, it presents a strategy with a simple but appropriate theme for children, and furthermore, the teacher role for managing applications to support learning.

To continue, other of the relevant investigations is “**Mobile applications in the teaching-learning process of the English language in students of ninth year of basic general education of the Los Shyris Educational Unit**”, developed by (Barahona, 2017). Where mobile applications in the English teaching-learning process were analyzed to complement and strengthen listening and speaking skills, concluding

that apps are beneficial because they serve as educational support, allow greater interaction and diversity of individual and collective activities.

This article mentions that mobile applications are important for learning a language due to their interactivity. However, there are disadvantages such as the price, screen size or insufficient memory. Therefore, it is necessary a pedagogical criteria for their selection such as: the use objective, the methodology, the price, the accessibility, but the most important, that they are safe for the students.

Additionally, it is supportive because the research reflects the problems in learning English and how mobile applications can help solve them. Nevertheless, it also addresses in detail the advantages, disadvantages, selection criteria and characteristics of the most widely used apps at the educational level.

In the publication titled **“Using apps for pronunciation training: an empirical evaluation of the English file pronunciation app”**, developed by (Fouz, 2020), the writer mentions the potential of apps in English pronunciation. Mastering the pronunciation of a second language is an extremely difficult task for students, since success depends not only on student effort or declarative knowledge, but also on an interaction of perception, psychomotor, cognitive, and affective factors.

The results of this study suggest that the mobile applications use for perceptual training may be particularly suitable to help students improve their perception and production of difficult pronunciation characteristics because the apps allow them to become familiar with sounds and phonetic symbols, allowing a better performance.

This research serves as a reference for the current one because it shows that there is no definitive tool capable of helping students work on all their pronunciation needs (segmental and suprasegmental) and offer them precise comments on spontaneous production. Therefore, technology should be understood as a facilitator that can improve the way that problematic aspects of learning the English language are presented and practiced, allowing teachers and students to use different tools for different purposes depending on their needs and goal characteristics they want to improve.

It is important to mention that each one of the exposed investigations contributes to the development of the current project because they focus on the pronunciation problems, they detail the influencing factors and the strategies that can be used, including the use of apps that have shown great effectiveness for the pronunciation training in children because of the methodology they present.

Throughout this literary review, it was possible to document the effectiveness of apps in pronunciation. However, there is no studies focused exclusively on Hooked on Phonics, which makes the topic interesting, innovative and beneficial since the effectiveness of a new pedagogical strategy will be documented in order to improve students' pronunciation level.

1.1.1 Theoretical framework

Hooked on Phonics

In last years, the internet has evolved many fields, including education. It specially promoted distance learning, rising new forms of learning and new concepts of teaching - learning; new methodologies such as virtual campuses, online learning or e-learning. Inevitably, all these reasons manage to much more evolution in the educational field that, at the present time, it is conceived as an innovative way of learning, a different methodology. According to several authors, the m- learning (mobile learning) or mobile learning is in accordance with the new educational realities (Bustillo, Rivera, Guzmán, & Ramos, 2017).

These authors mentioned that the use of educational apps in the school environment has numerous advantages:

- They allow learning in any context, inside and outside the classroom, where the barriers of time and space are blurred.
- The great popularity of mobile devices among people of all ages means that educational apps have a positive influence on student motivation.
- Educational apps usually have an important playful component, since starting from gamification, they integrate the typical game dynamics and reward to achieve the learning objectives, allowing the student to learn while playing.

- These apps promote a great users' interaction, breaking with the classic passive learning experience and allowing a richer and more effective learning, where the student is also an active participant throughout the process.
- Educational apps are multimedia programs with an important graphic content consisting of videos, images, audios, etc., increasing attractiveness for students is multiplied and favoring the maintenance of their attention.
- They allow the creation of a more personalized learning environment, adapted to the specific needs of each student, promoting self-directed learning.
- Additionally, they favor the participation and empowerment of students, creating interesting spaces for teamwork in collaborative environments.
- The educational apps allow to apply the new skills or knowledge acquired at the time of their acquisition, leading to a more experiential and significant learning.

One of these mobile learning modalities is Hooked on Phonics, which is an application of a commercial brand of educational materials that was designed for reading education through phonetics. First marketed in 1987, it used systematic phonetics and tiered stories to teach letter-sound correlations (phonetics) as part of children's literacy. Since then, the program has expanded to encompass a wide variety of media, including books, computer games, music, videos, and memory cards, as well as, to include other subject areas (Hooked on Phonics services, 2020).

Pronunciation

Pronunciation in the English language is extremely important because it is closely related to the meaning of words, and the information that is provided in oral speech. It plays an important role in listening comprehension, oral expression and oral interaction. Hence, the relationship between pronunciation and communication in the teaching of English. Communication is not always effective, because sometimes the message loses the communicative quality, due to the fact that there are certain sounds transferred from the mother tongue that affect or hinder the information transmitted, becoming a language barrier in teaching the language (Texidor, Reyes, & Echevarría, 2016).

Pronunciation plays a key role in successful communication, both productively and responsively. It is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and students must spend a lot of time improving their pronunciation. This ability is one of the basic requirements of the students' competence while learning a second language, and, it is also one of the most important characteristics of language teaching since good pronunciation leads to learning, while bad pronunciation creates great difficulties in language learning (Zulqarnain & Muhammad, 2015).

According to the above, understandable pronunciation should be the main objective of language teaching because, being a necessary component of communicative competence, it must develop: functional intelligibility, functional communicability, greater self-confidence, speech monitoring skills and speech modification strategies (Zulqarnain & Muhammad, 2015).

1.2 Objectives

General Objective:

- To demonstrate how the Hooked on Phonics application influences the English pronunciation development.

Specific Objectives:

- To analyze the benefits of mobile applications, especially Hooked on Phonics in the English pronunciation development.
- To evaluate students' pronunciation level to know their initial and final level.
- To determine the effectiveness of the Hooked on Phonics app in the students' English pronunciation development.

1.2.1 Process of achieving the objectives:

- To analyze the benefits of mobile applications, especially Hooked on Phonics in the English pronunciation development.

To achieve this first objective, a search, review and analysis of various bibliographic sources available on various platforms were developed to record the importance and effectiveness of mobile applications including Hooked on Phonics in pronunciation, with special emphasis on children, which is the population addressed in this study.

- To evaluate students' pronunciation level to know their initial and final level.

To satisfy this second objective, there was an instrument selected and validated that served to determine the students' English pronunciation level. Then, based on these results, students utilized the proposed application. After experimentation, this instrument was applied again to verify the advances in this field.

- To determine the effectiveness of the Hooked on Phonics app in the students' English pronunciation development.

In order to complete this objective, field work (experimentation) was developed, including, in the first instance, a training plan about the operation and use of the Hooked on Phonics app, following by the evaluation of students' initial level of pronunciation. After applying various activities on this platform, the evaluation process was repeated because in this way, a comparative analysis of results could be developed and thus, the effectiveness of the proposed app could be determined.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Resources:

For the project fulfillment, the following resources were used:

Human Resources:

- Researcher
- Research tutor
- Students

Office Supplies:

- Sheets of paper
- Pens
- Photocopies

Bibliographic Resources

- Books
- Journals
- Articles
- Reports

Technological Resources

- Computer
- Internet
- Printer

Institutional Resources

- Technical University of Ambato
- Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”

Economic Resources

The development of the project did not involve mobilization costs or material purchase, however, due to certain items, an approximate economic cost of \$ 50 dollars is estimated in terms of printing resources and administrative procedures.

2.2 Methods

Qualitative approach

The researcher used qualitative approach to develop the research because interpretive techniques to analyze and describe the main pronunciation problems that third-year students from the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen” have.

Research modality

Bibliographic Research

In the research, the bibliographic modality allowed to collect information from books, magazines, reports, periodicals, publications, scientific articles and among other sources of information to review, select and analyze them in order to act as support and foundation of the current research, being a guide.

Applied Research

The researcher used applied research type because its objective was to resolve the pronunciation difficulties that third-year students from the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen” had, using the Hooked on Phonics digital application during English classes by Zoom.

Research level

Descriptive

The descriptive level allowed characterizing the study population and the reality that occurs in its natural context to describe the approach of pedagogical work through the proposed application, controlling the difficulties that students have at the level of pronunciation.

Pre-experimental

The research was pre-experimental because a new pedagogical strategy for pronunciation was experimented through the use of a digital application applied to a group of third-year students of basic education from Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”, during eight weeks to check its effectiveness on the pronunciation.

The experimentation process involved the development of 8 activities, 1 for each week lasting 40 minutes each approximately. Prior to the first activity, an assessment (pretest) was applied regarding pronunciation through the presentation of charts, evaluating pronunciation with Cambridge pronunciation criteria (speaking section), with a score from 0 to 5 (Annex 1). At the end of the 8 activities, the initial activity (use of charts) was repeated as a post-test to evaluate again and compare the initial and final results.

Population and sample

The research included the participation of 17 third-year students of basic education from Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”, aged between 7 and 8. It is important to highlight that the group of students to work with, was assigned by the educational institution.

Considering that the study population is small and accessible entirety, the sample was not calculated and the investigation worked with the 17 children under the following criteria:

- Students who participated in school online education modality and who were involved in it.
- Students whose parents consented to participate in it.
- Students who participated in at least 80% of the activities proposed in the digital application.

Technique and instruments for data collection

The following data collection techniques were used:

Psychometric technique: this technique was used to evaluate the pronunciation in third-year students of basic education from Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”, under pre-established criteria. the psychometric technique allowed to apply a pretest and a post-test through using charts.

Observation technique: it was applied in The Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”, based on an observation sheet, to assess students’ pronunciation (Annex 2). This sheet was quickly applied after the completion of each activity in order to demonstrate the progress of each student.

Research intervention

The intervention had 4 stages:

Phase #1

- Request to the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen” for the research execution.
- Assignment of the study group and coordination of curricular activities and schedules with those of the research.
- Explanation to parents about the research to ask for their approval and commitment to participation.
- Instruction to the English teacher about the use of the proposed application because during the 8 activities they act as support and monitoring.

Phase #2

- Application of the pretest through an activity, asking the student to read some words presented in charts. This activity was evaluated in the range of 0 to 5 points as established in the pronunciation section of the speaking test for schools from Cambridge.

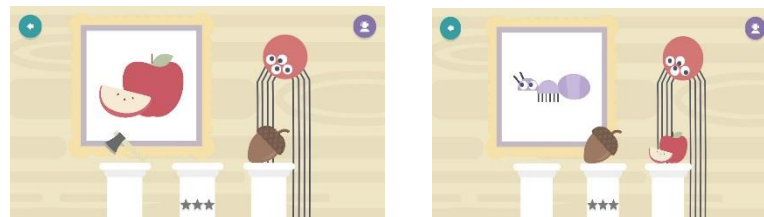
Phase #3: Intervention

- Explanation to students about the use of the digital application, type of activities to develop and the results expected.
- Application of the 8 activities detailed below:

Activity 1: the researcher made a description about the vowel / æ / short vowel. Students became familiar with the sound production, and the instructor made a demonstration of the lips and tongue position to pronounce.

Subsequently, the researcher project charts, so, students could read the words with this sound and repeat them until the sound is consolidated. To reinforce, it was used one of the Hooked on Phonics activities where the students had to listen and drag the object that has the vowel sound / æ /, for example /'æp.əl/ , /ænt/, /'æɪ.ə.ɡeɪ.tə/

Figure 1 First activity



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Activity 2: In the second week, the researcher started the class with the song “short vowel” in order to reinforce the knowledge acquired the previous week. Following this, students were asked to use the Hooked on Phonics application to read a list of words /mæt/, /ræt/, /bæt/, /sæt/, /mæp/, /fæn/; and then, form words.

Figure 2 Second activity

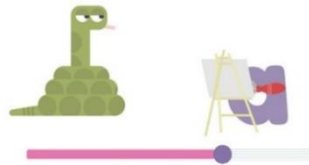


Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

As a final activity, the researcher used a reading from the Hooked on Phonics application where the students had to listen and pronounce the words in the reading.

Activity 3: The researcher began his class with the explanation of the long vowel sound /ei/, and, in the same way, she taught how the sound is produced and the correct position of both the lips and the tongue. Subsequently, there was a reinforcement using the song "long vowel sound".

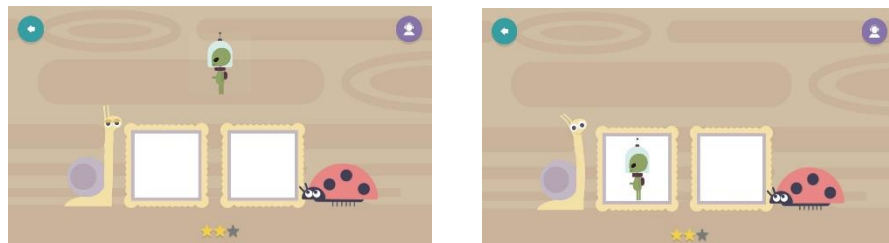
Figure 3 Third activity



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

To continue with the reinforcement, the teachers supporting students, developed the activity “Same sound picture frame” of the Hooked on Phonics application, where the students had to listen to drag the object that has the same sound as the painting.

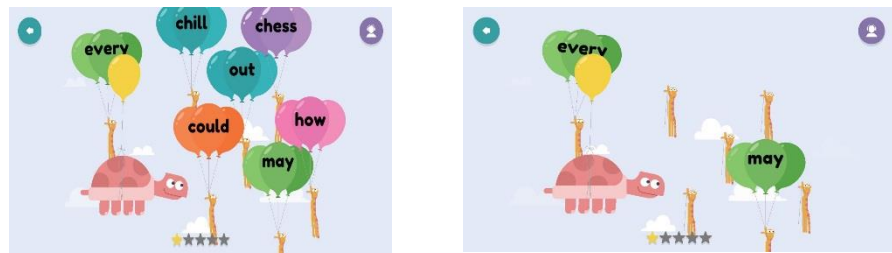
Figure 4 Third activity reinforcement



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Activity 4: In the fourth week, the investigator proceeded to project charts, the students read words with this sound and repeated them several times. For the reinforcement, the researcher used the Hooked on Phonics application activity where the students had to listen, visualize and touch the balloon with the word and the respective sound /ei/.

Figure 5 Fourth activity

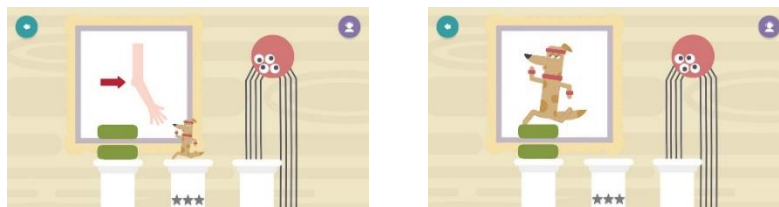


Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

To reinforce what they learned, a letter soup was used that contained words with the long and short vowels, where the students had to read the words found.

Activity 5: In the fifth week, the researcher explained once again that the vowels have different sounds, however, this time, it was about the second vowel / e / short vowel. She proceeded to project charts, the students read words with this sound and repeated them. Subsequently, the Hooked on Phonics application activity was used where the object with the vowel sound was heard and dragged / for example /'el.ə.fənt/, /'ek.sə.saɪz/, /'el.bou/.

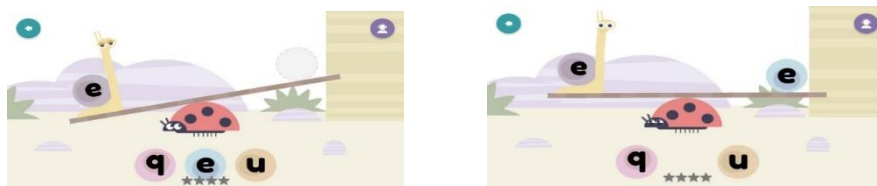
Figure 6 Fifth activity



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

As reinforcement, students read letters using the activity called “Balance the snail”.

Figure 7 Fifth activity reinforcement



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Activity 6: In the sixth week, the researcher started her class with the song short vowel /e/, and, the students repeated the song twice.

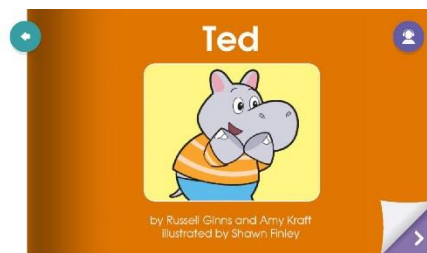
Figure 8 Sixth activity



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

As a reinforcement, the reading "Ted" from the Hooked on Phonics app was used and in the order of name roll list, the students were asked to read or repeat certain words of the rea

Figure 9 Sixth activity reinforcement



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Activity 7: The researcher started his class in the seventh week with a tongue twister to familiarize students with the long sound of the second vowel /i/. The students repeated the tongue twister 3 times, at the beginning slowly, and then the speed increased. As a way of reinforcing, the application activities where students had to repeat the words displayed on the screen.

Figure 10 Seventh activity



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Activity 8: Finally, the eighth week, the researcher started the class by briefly presenting the words with the respective sounds of the vowels taught and asked the students to write as many words as possible, each student had to read them. As a last activity, tongue twisters and songs were repeated at the students request.

Figure 11 Eighth activity



Source: Hooked on Phonics
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Phase # 4

- Post-test application: where the same activity and the same pre-test evaluation rubric were applied because the level of progress and consequently, the effectiveness of the application could be known based on the initial and final results.

Information processing plan

The information processing plan involved the following steps:

- Information review
- Information classification
- Processing through Excel
- Design tables and graphs with the results obtained
- Analysis and interpretation of results
- Hypothesis verification
- Presentation of conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

3.3.1 Pretest results

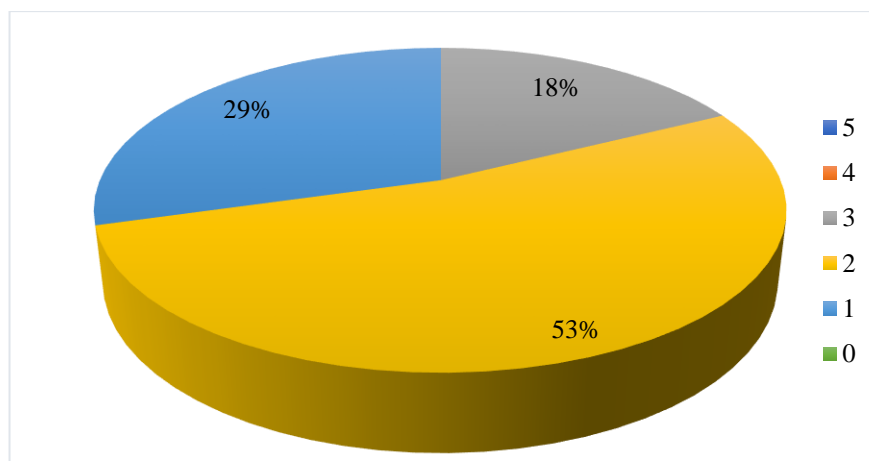
Table 1 Pretest

Score	Frequency	Percentage
5	0	0%
4	0	0%
3	3	18%
2	9	53%
1	5	29%
0	0	0%
TOTAL	17	100%

Source: Initial pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Figure 12 Initial pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.



Source: Initial pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Analysis and interpretation:

In the pretest, the 53% of third-year students from the Private Education Unit “Jerusalén” reached a score of 2 out of 5 points because pronunciation was not

appropriate, the 29% reached only one point since pronunciation was unintelligible, and, only the 18% achieved three points, considering it satisfactory.

The pretest results showed the shortcomings that most of the children from the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen” had, regarding pronunciation. Among the problem found, one of them was the lack of knowledge of certain sounds because in the English language there are sounds that are not in the mother tongue, generating great difficulties. Another one was the errors or confusions evidenced around the way the word is written and how it should be pronounced. The other one was a marked maternal (Hispanic) pronunciation style. Finally, a great effort to speak accompanied by insecurities and fears.

Based on the aforementioned, when starting with experimentation, the majority of third-year students in basic education did not achieve a comprehensible pronunciation because there were notable phonological limitations, therefore, it was necessary to work during the intervention.

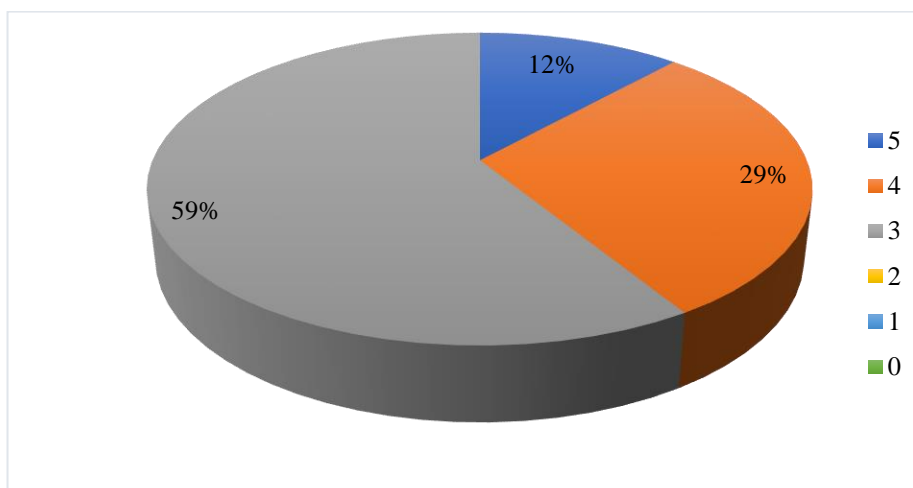
3.3.2 Post-test results

Table 2 Post-test

Score	Frequency	Percentage
5	2	12%
4	5	29%
3	10	59%
2	0	0%
1	0	0%
0	0	0%
TOTAL	17	100%

Source: Final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Figure 13 Final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.



Source: Final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Analysis and interpretation:

When applying the post-test, an improvement in the pronunciation of the third-year students of basic education could be seen, since the 59% reached three points, that means, the pronunciation understood. In addition, the 29% obtained 4 points because their speech was more appropriate, and finally, the 12% reached 5 points since they accurate an appropriate intonation, precise words and a clear articulation.

Therefore, there was a marked improvement in the students because most of them managed to place themselves in an average grade (3 points), considering it satisfactory. However, in addition, it was possible to observe a progress on the pronunciation ability in a considerable number of students who to placed themselves at a level 4 and 5, demonstrating greater articulation of words and a clear and intelligible speech.

After the intervention, it was possible to show a development in the students' pronunciation, who through practice became familiar with English language sounds, allowing to improve intonation, fluency and safety. Additionally, the students also showed more active and participatory in class and during the evaluation.

3.3.3 Comparative results

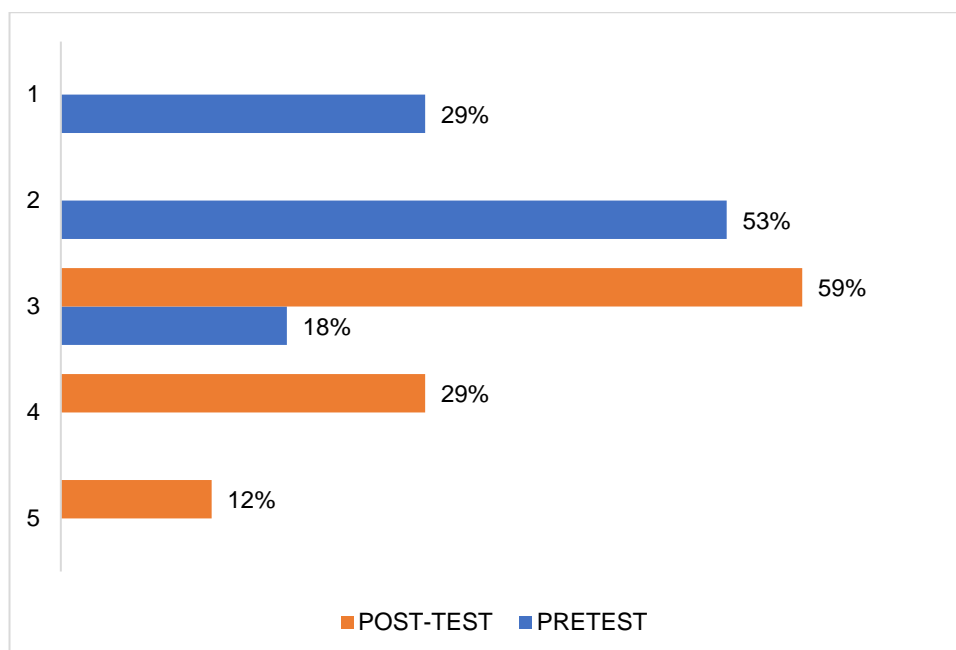
Table 3 Pretest and post-test

Score	PRETEST	POST-TEST
5	0%	12%
4	0%	29%
3	18%	59%
2	53%	0%
1	29%	0%
0	0%	0%

Source: Initial and final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Figure 14 Initial and final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.



Source: Initial and final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Analysis and interpretation:

As part of the process of meeting the objectives and in order to verify the effectiveness of the proposed strategy, it was necessary to compare the initial and final results of the pretest and post-test. At the beginning of the experiment, the 53% of the students were at a level 2, therefore, they presented considerable difficulties in terms of

pronunciation, the 29% presented an unintelligible pronunciation, being at level 1, and only the 18% achieved a satisfactory level.

However, in the post-test it is shown that the 100% of the students were at adequate levels of pronunciation. The percentage of students at low levels was eliminated and an increase in optimal levels is seen. The 59% was located at level 3 considered satisfactory, the 29% at level 4, which translates to very good, and what was much more encouraging, there were the 12% of students at level 5, which is excellent.

Hence, the level of improvement achieved by the students is evident, since in the pretest the majority is between 1 and 3 points, denoting the existence of phonological deficiencies and an unclear speech. However, in the post-test, the students managed to rank between 3 and 5 points, that means, the pronunciation managed to be intelligible, with an appropriate and precise intonation where the individual sounds were clearly articulated. In addition, greater safety was evident in the students when they became familiar with the taught sounds.

Based on these results, it is clear that the application of Hooked on Phonics was effective in the development of pronunciation because the low percentages (0-1-2) found in the pretests were reduced, while in the post-test, there were satisfactory scores from 3 to 5 points, with discourses clearer and more precise, and greater security was noted in the students.

3.3.4 Activities evaluation

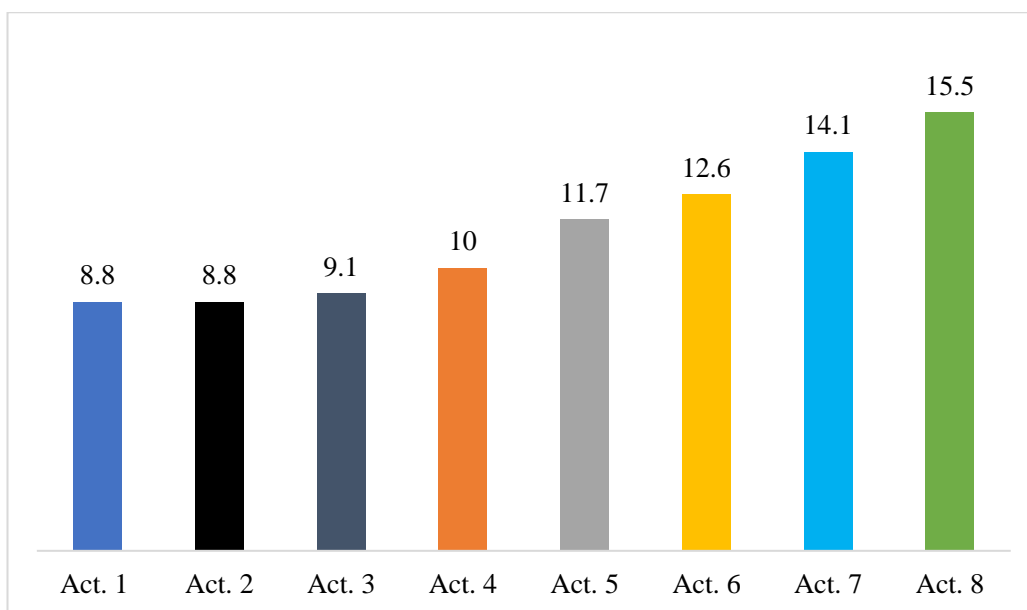
Table 4 Activities evaluation.

Activities	Average
Act. 1	8,8
Act. 2	8,8
Act. 3	9,1
Act. 4	10
Act. 5	11,7
Act. 6	12,6
Act. 7	14,1
Act. 8	15,5

Source: Rubric for pronunciation in Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Figure 15 Final pronunciation assessment under Cambridge criteria.



Source: Rubric for pronunciation in Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Analysis and interpretation:

The 8 activities developed with Hooked on Phonics were similarly evaluated, with a scale of 1 to 20 points (ANNEX 2) and averaged to verify the level of progress in them.

In the first and the second activity, an average of 8.8 was achieved, which is considered regular because there was an inadequate pronunciation with a marked influence on the mother tongue and required a lot of effort for comprehension.

In the third activity, a regular pronunciation level was appreciated because the average was 9.1 persisting the aforementioned pronunciation problems.

During activities 4, 5 and 6, there was an evident progress, since an average of 10, 11.7 and 12.6 respectively was achieved, considering them as sufficient because the pronunciation was intelligible despite the existence of certain errors in accent, intonation and rhythm, within the norms.

However, the most marked progress was around the seventh and eighth activity, where averages of 14.1 and 15.5 were obtained, considering them as good because there were few pronunciation errors in commonly used words, the pronunciation is intelligible and the accent, rhythm and intonation are suitable, despite the influence of the mother tongue.

Therefore, there was a progress in the pronunciation throughout the intervention performance because, at the beginning, the speech was incomprehensible, slow, with excessive pauses, there was lack of autonomy, excessively effort, in addition to a vocabulary limited, words repeated and a little variety in the use of syntactic structures and morphological elements. Nevertheless, with the development of the proposed activities, improvements were observed because the speech was clearer and more understandable, there were greater fluency and autonomy, fewer pauses, better handling of vocabulary and in general, an comprehensible pronunciation with the use of accents and intonation.

3.2 Verification of hypothesis

Null hypothesis: Hooked on Phonics app does not favor the development of pronunciation in third-year children of Basic education from Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.

Alternative Hypothesis: Hooked on Phonics app favors the development of pronunciation in third-year children of Basic education from Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”

To verify the research hypothesis, the statistical T-Student test was used, determining if there is a significant difference in the group before and after applying the strategies. For this analysis, the IBM SPSS statistical program was applied, getting the following results:

Table 5 Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre-test group & post test group	-1,64706	,60634	,14706	-1,95881	-1,335	-11,20	16	,000

Source: Software IBM SPSS Statistic

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

According to the results obtained, it can be seen that the p. value is less than the level of statistical significance that is equal to $\alpha = 0.05$; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, that is: Hooked on Phonics app favors the development of pronunciation in third-year children of Basic education from Private Education Unit "Jerusalem".

3.3 Discussion of results

Pronunciation in the English language has an extraordinary importance, since it is closely related to the meaning of the words, with information provided to the oral discourse and consequently, for efficient communication, because, if the student does not produce understandable sounds, will not be able to communicate or will do with difficulties, resulting in communication interference. (Texidor, Reyes, & Echevarría, 2016).

Considering the importance of pronunciation in communication, the present investigation was developed, working on this skill through the use of Hooked on Phonics app. Achieving very good results because throughout the development of various activities on this digital platform and the teaching guide, a much clearer and intelligible pronunciation was achieved and with positive results in terms of intonation, rhythm and accent.

These results are supported by several studies, where the author claimed that the use of digital platforms is beneficial to develop pronunciation in students, especially when they are children, since interactivity with images, text, audios, videos and other elements manage to capture their attention, allowing more rehearsal and exercise of the skills. One of these studies is the one developed by (Barahona, 2017) who stated that the use of mobile applications for teaching-learning English is adequate because they serve to complement and strengthen the students' language skills.

Likewise, Montiel (2017) assumed that mobile applications are extraordinary resources for learning English pronunciation because they allow students to practice as many times as desired, therefore, they can listen, record and repeat all sounds several stages, which motivates students to learn through interaction and fun. However, to be successful with the use of apps for learning English, it is important to develop activity planning because they cannot be spontaneously and risky performed, but must start from an educational model that guides them and gives them coherence.

According to Valeriano (2017), mobile applications are very well designed and structured to contribute to a better learning of the English language, however, they are not effective on their own since the teaching-learning process in the classroom is a communication situation between teacher - student who can never be replaced by electronic devices; these are means of support that contribute to better language learning. In addition, he maintains that the teacher in the classroom is the person in charge of creating a healthy and motivating climate for learning and becomes a learning model for the pronunciation of the language.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

- Pronunciation is a skill that must be improved through teaching support and the use of high-impact resources such as Hooked on Phonics. It is an interactive platform that allows the exercise of oral skills exploiting observation, repetition, recording, rehearsals and games. This ability has an extraordinary importance in communication and plays a relevant role in listening comprehension, oral expression and oral interaction.
- The initial pronunciation level of the students from the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen” was insufficient, as the majority (53%) were at level 2 due to phonological deficiencies, word confusion, marked mother tongue and poor clarity in speech. However, the final level of pronunciation was satisfactory since the majority (59%) was at level 3, several students were at level 4, being very good and some of them at level 5, considered excellent. Observing a greater familiarization with English language sounds and improvement intonation, fluency and security.
- The Hooked Phonics app is a good tool to develop pronunciation in children. Progress was evident because it went from an incomprehensible, slow speech, with excessive pauses, lack of autonomy, excessively effort, repetition of words and a little variety in the use of syntactic structures and morphological elements to a clearer and more understandable speech, with greater fluency and autonomy, fewer pauses, better handling of vocabulary and, in general, an comprehensible pronunciation with the use of accents and intonation.

4.2 Recommendations

- It is important that teachers update their knowledge about the use of digital platforms and mobile applications because there are excellent options that can be successfully used for the development of receptive and productive skills. Additionally, this kind of resources serves as an academic reinforcement of the contents taught in class where time is an important limitation to improve pronunciation.
- It is imperative that teachers pay special attention to pronunciation, evaluate it and plan specific activities for this skill. Pronunciation is the key to communication, because a poorly pronounced word will create confusions and misunderstandings in the receiver, while a good pronunciation will denote mastery of language.
- Although the use of digital platforms have revolutionized the teaching-learning processes in all English language skills, it is necessary to consider that they are not effective by their own. They always require the support, guidance and supervision of a teacher who must review and select the appropriate resources for the individual or social characteristics of the students: the level of skills development or existing deficiencies.

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ANNEX

ANNEX1:

Table 6 Cambridge Criteria for evaluating pronunciation (KEY for school) used as Pretest and Post-test

SCORE 0-5	CHARTS
	
	
	
	
	

TOTAL.....

SCORE	CRITERIA- KEY CAMBRIDGE PRONUNCIATION
5	Is intelligible Intonation is generally appropriate Sentence and words stress is generally accurately placed Individual sound are generally articulated clearly
4	Performance shares features of bands 3 and 5
3	Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features
2	Performance shares features of bands 1 and 3
1	Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible
0	Performance below band 1

Source: Cambridge

Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

ANNEX 2:

Table 7 Criteria for grading activities

	Adecuación a la tarea y cohesión (4 puntos)	Fluidez e interacción (4 puntos)	Repertorio gramatical (4 puntos)	Repertorio léxico (4 puntos)	Pronunciación (4 puntos)
Very Good / Excelente 17-20	Perfectamente comprensible. Trata todos los puntos de la tarea. Contenido muy relevante. Registro perfectamente apropiado para el nivel y la tarea. Ideas perfectamente organizadas.	Dentro de su nivel, sigue perfectamente la conversación. Expresa sus ideas con muy buena fluidez y autonomía para el nivel. Reacciona perfecta y rápidamente a preguntas y opiniones. Cumple perfectamente la tarea asignada.	Utiliza con corrección y sin apenas errores, un repertorio de estructuras sintácticas y elementos morfológicos adecuados al nivel y la tarea.	Muy variado y apropiado para el nivel y la tarea. No hay repeticiones. Ausencia de expresiones / exclamaciones en castellano.	No hay errores de pronunciación en las palabras de uso común. Su pronunciación es perfectamente inteligible. Escasa o nula influencia de la lengua materna en el acento, ritmo y entonación.
Good / Bien 13-16	Discurso comprensible. Trata la mayoría de los puntos de la tarea. Contenido bastante relevante. Ideas bien organizadas.	Sigue adecuadamente la conversación. Se expresa con notable fluidez y autonomía. Reacciona bien a preguntas y opiniones. Pocas pausas.	Utiliza con notable corrección, sin errores sistemáticos, un repertorio de estructuras sintácticas y elementos morfológicos adecuados al nivel y la tarea.	Vocabulario variado y apropiado para el nivel y la tarea, aunque con algunas repeticiones. Aplica estrategias de compensación.	Escasos errores de pronunciación en palabras de uso común. Su pronunciación es claramente inteligible. Acento, ritmo y entonación buenos aunque con influencia de la lengua materna.
All right / Suficiente 10-12	Discurso comprensible aunque hay que pedir alguna aclaración. Contenido suficientemente relevante. Ideas suficientemente organizadas lógicamente. Consigue cumplir la tarea asignada.	Discurso bastante fluido aunque con pausas. Entiende las preguntas y responde adecuadamente. Suficiente organización de la información y las ideas como para mantener el discurso.	Utiliza con suficiente corrección un repertorio de estructuras sintácticas y elementos morfológicos adecuados al nivel y la tarea. Aunque comete errores éstos no afectan seriamente a la comunicación.	Muestra suficiente control del vocabulario necesario para el nivel y la tarea. Tiene recursos para expresar ideas aunque no conozca el vocabulario. Repeticiones frecuentes y algunas interferencias con la lengua materna.	Pronunciación suficientemente inteligible para un nativo de la lengua. Algunos errores en palabras de uso común que no impiden la comunicación. El acento, el ritmo y la entonación no se alejan demasiado de la norma.
Weak / Regular 8-9	Discurso comprensible haciendo algún esfuerzo. Contenido poco relevante. Ideas desorganizadas. No se corresponde totalmente con la tarea.	Discurso lento, con excesivas pausas y falta de autonomía. Algunas dificultades para seguir la conversación o pedir aclaraciones. Expresa sus ideas con notable esfuerzo. Resulta difícil la comunicación.	Escasa variedad en el uso de estructuras sintácticas y elementos morfológicos con errores importantes que pueden afectar seriamente la comprensión.	Vocabulario limitado, inferior al correspondiente al nivel. Repite mucho las mismas palabras y conectores. Invención de palabras. Las limitaciones léxicas dificultan seriamente la comprensión.	Inadecuada pronunciación con errores que comprometen la comunicación. Marcada influencia de la lengua materna que exige un esfuerzo de comprensión por parte del interlocutor.
Very poor / Nivel muy bajo 1-7	Discurso incomprensible. Contenido irrelevante. Ideas muy desorganizadas. No se corresponde con la tarea.	Discurso muy lento con largas pausas y sin autonomía. Serias dificultades para seguir la conversación o pedir aclaraciones. Se limita a respuestas breves y muchas veces inapropiadas. La comunicación es mínima.	Falta considerable de variedad, complejidad y corrección de estructuras sintácticas y elementos morfológicos para el nivel que pueden hacer la comprensión casi imposible.	Vocabulario tan reducido que no puede expresarse más que con frases cortas y sin cohesionar. Difícil de comprender.	Muchos errores de pronunciación que hacen que la comprensión sea casi nula.

Source: Private Education Unit “Jerusalén” (https://www.educantabria.es/docs/planes/potenciaci3n_lenguas_extranjeras/estandarizadas/guia_apli_A1_6EP.pdf)
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Table 8 Rubric for evaluating activities

	ACTIVITIES SCORE							
Student name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								

Source: Private Education Unit “Jerusalen” (https://www.educantabria.es/docs/planes/potenciacion_lenguas_extranjeras/estandarizadas/guia_apli_A1_6EP.pdf)
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)





ANNEX 3: INVESTIGATION EVIDENCE

Evidence 1 Socializing about Hooked on Phonics.



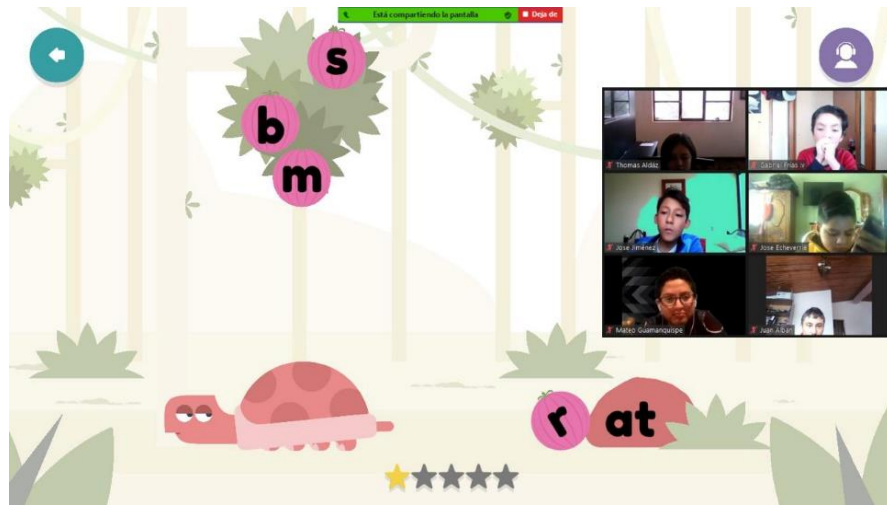
Source: Execution of the investigation in the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Evidence 2 Pronunciation Assessment.

SCORE	CHARTS
0.5	 Alligator
	 Alien
	 2020 MAY
	 Bee
TOTAL.....	

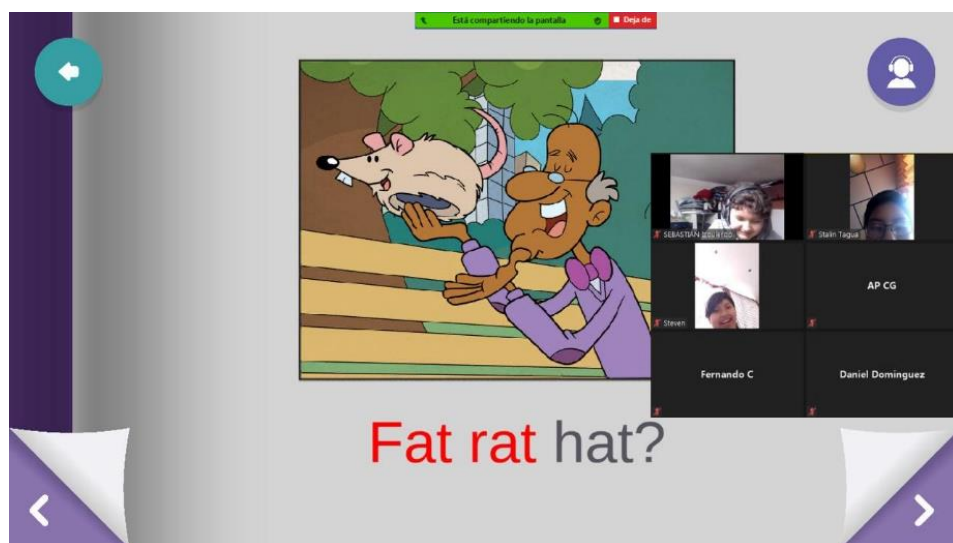
Source: Execution of the investigation in the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Evidence 3 Application of pronunciation activities.



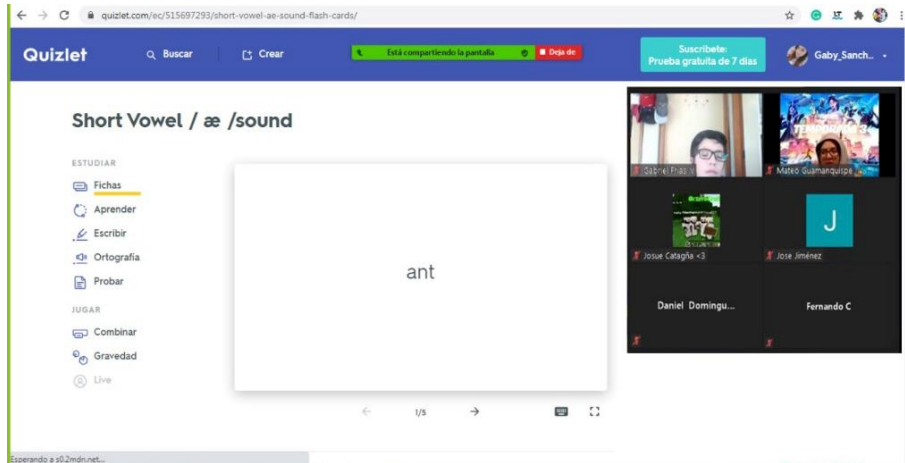
Source: Execution of the investigation in the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Evidence 4 Pronunciation reinforcement.



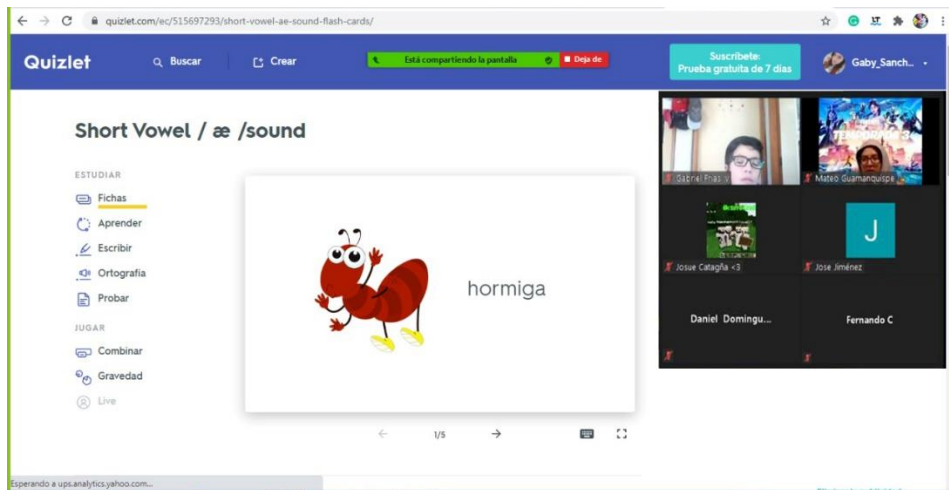
Source: Execution of the investigation in the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Evidence 5 Pronunciation explanation.



Source: Execution of the investigation in the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

Evidence 6 Repeating words.



Source: Execution of the investigation in the Private Education Unit “Jerusalen”.
Prepared by: Sánchez, G (2020)

ANNEX 4: AUTHORIZATION TO DEVELOP EVALUATIONS

Yo,con cédula de identidad N., autorizo que mi hijo/representado forme parte de la investigación titulada “HE HOOKED ON PHONICS APP AND THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION”, realizada por la señorita Gabriela Sánchez, egresada de la Carrera Idiomas de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato y acepto:

- Que mi hijo/representado participe de las evaluaciones
- Que mi hijo/representado participe de las actividades propuestas

Pues, una vez que se me ha informado de las implicaciones de la investigación creo conveniente que mi hijo/representado forme parte de la misma.

.....

Firma