

COMPARING LANGUAGE TEACHERS' VIEWS ON LEARNING
AND TEACHING PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH AND SPAN-
ISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN FINLAND

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Tiivistelmä <p>Suullinen kielitaito on avainasemassa modernissa kielenopetuksessa. Tämä asettaa uudenlaisia tarpeita ääntämisen opetukselle. Myös ymmärrettävyys tavoitteena luo uusia haasteita ääntämisen opettamiselle perinteisen natiivinkaltaisen ääntämisen tavoittelun sijaan (ks. esim. Derwing ja Munro, 2011: 316-317). Vaikka englanti on edelleen suosituin vieras kieli suomalaisissa kouluissa, espanjan suosio on ollut nousussa viime vuosina. Englannin ääntämisen opettamista on tutkittu hieman suomalaisessa kontekstissa, mutta opettajien kokemusten tutkimus on vähäistä. Espanjan opettamista ei ole tutkittu Suomessa juuri ollenkaan.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää Suomessa työskentelevien englannin opettajien ja espanjan opettajien ajatuksia liittyen ääntämiseen ja ääntämisen oppimiseen. Tavoitteena oli myös selvittää, miten nämä ajatukset eroavat englannin ja espanjan opettajien välillä. Tutkimus toteutettiin haastattelemalla kahta englannin opettajaa sekä kahta espanjan opettajaa. Haastattelun teemoina olivat yleiset näkemykset ääntämisestä, ääntämisen opettaminen sekä ääntämisen oppiminen.</p> <p>Tutkimustuloksista kävi ilmi, että ääntämistä pidetään tärkeänä ja ymmärrettävyys on tärkein käsite ääntämisen opettamisessa ja oppimisessa. Espanjan ja englannin opettajien välillä oli kuitenkin eroja. Esimerkiksi englannin opettajat olivat tyytyväisempiä opetussuunnitelmiin ja vähemmän tyytyväisiä eurooppalaiseen viitekehykseen. Espanjan opettajat olivat taas vähemmän tyytyväisiä valmiisiin oppimateriaaleihin. Englannin opettajilla ei ollut selkeää varieteettia, vaan heidän ääntämyksensä oli kokoelma erilaisia varieteetteja. Espanjan opettajat mainitsivat käyttävänsä selkeästi mannerespanjaa. Toisaalta ääntämisen opettamisen tärkeyteen vaikutti enemmän opettajan oppilaiden luokkaste kuin opetettava aine. Tulosten perusteella erityisesti espanjan opettajat voisivat hyötyä tarkemmasta opetussuunnitelmasta ja paremmista opetusmateriaaleista.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Teaching pronunciation is a task language teachers face in their everyday work. It can be direct and conscious pronunciation teaching, reacting to learners' speech, or providing a model for pronunciation by speaking the target language in front of learners. Some teachers might even teach three foreign languages demanding great control over the target languages. Especially pronunciation demands a great amount of practise. Furthermore, teaching pronunciation is a complex task. Some aspects, such as suprasegmental features like stress and rhythm, are considered unteachable (Laroy 1995: 39). Teachers might also encounter other issues such as the effects of the learners' first language or the learners might have personal and sociological obstacles that could prevent the learning of pronunciation. Also, teachers' own personal views on pronunciation affect pronunciation teaching.

There is plenty of research on pronunciation teaching (see e.g Tergujeff 2012, Lintunen 2005). Especially teaching methods have been an area of continuous research. Other areas of pronunciation research are also beneficial to teaching it such as intelligibility, segmental and suprasegmental features, and the aspects that affect pronunciation learning. Thus, there is a solid theoretical framework for pronunciation teaching. Still, there is little research on teachers' perceptions on pronunciation teaching. Moreover, while there is some research on English teachers, research on teachers of other languages, including Spanish, is limited. Especially in the Finnish context, the research on Spanish teachers is minimal.

The aim of the present study is to shed light on how in-service English and Spanish teachers' view pronunciation teaching. In more detail, the study aims to discover how the teachers view the importance of pronunciation teaching, how they feel about the goals set for the learners, and what type of challenges they face. Furthermore, the purpose of the study is also to discover how they teach pronunciation and what type of models they use to teach pronunciation.

Another goal of the study is to see whether these views differ between English and Spanish teachers since English and Spanish have different positions in the Finnish society, and they are from different language families. English is a commonly studied foreign language in Finland, often services are provided also in English, and English can also be seen in stores and restaurants. On the contrary, Spanish is a rarely heard and seen language in the Finnish society compared to English. In addition, English is highly irregular considering the relationship between orthography and pronunciation while Spanish is more regular.

The study was conducted with semi-structured interviews. The questions of the interview focused on how the teachers view pronunciation teaching and pronunciation in general, how they teach pronunciation and what possible challenges they might encounter. There were four participants: two English teachers and two Spanish teachers. All participants were in-service teachers during the time of the interviews.

The present study begins with introducing theoretical framework for teaching and learning pronunciation. The first section discusses aspects of pronunciation teaching including the goals of pronunciation teaching, segmental and suprasegmental features, pronunciation teaching and methods, and possible challenges of learning pronunciation. The second section presents the goals of pronunciation teaching in Finland. The third section introduces the methodology of the present study describing the process of data collection and analysis. The fourth section presents and discusses the findings of the present study. The fifth section concludes the study and provides suggestions for further research.

2 TEACHING AND LEARNING PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH AND SPANISH

2.1 Aspects of pronunciation teaching

In this section, I first introduce the principles of nativeness and intelligibility. Then, I examine the choice of pronunciation models. To continue, I introduce the segmental and suprasegmental features. Finally, I discuss pronunciation teaching and teaching methods, the challenges of learning pronunciation, and teachers' views on pronunciation. It should be taken into account that there is less research on teaching Spanish pronunciation, and that reflects into the present study. Still, many of the principles of English pronunciation teaching and learning can be utilised also in teaching Spanish pronunciation.

2.1.1 Principles of nativeness and intelligibility

Lewis (2005: 370) introduces two opposing principles which influence pronunciation teaching: the nativeness principle and the intelligibility principle. According to the nativeness principle, learning native-like pronunciation is achievable and desirable. On the other hand, the intelligibility principle describes the goal of pronunciation learning to be understandable. While nativeness was the goal of pronunciation teaching especially during the audiolingual era in the mid-20th century, modern teaching, and research place emphasis on intelligibility (Derwing and Munro 2015: 6). For example, the Common European Framework of Reference for

languages highlights the importance of conveying meaning and intelligibility in assessing language skills (Council of Europe, 2020: 133). Still, the nativeness principle affects the teaching and learning of pronunciation (Lewis, 2005: 370). Many learners want to eliminate their foreign accent. In addition, many teachers might consider native-like pronunciation as an ideal (Lewis, 2005: 370).

Derwing and Munro (2011: 316-317) argue that there is a discrepancy between research and practice. For example, identifying working pronunciation teaching methods from research literature that is heavily driven by theory is not always viable. While intelligibility is the key for successful communication in L2, research has focused heavily on the strength of foreign accent. Furthermore, the great focus on error prediction appears to be of limited pedagogical importance because advanced knowledge of learner errors is not necessarily significant if the aim is intelligibility. Moreover, if a phonological structure poses a difficulty for a learner, it does not signify that the structure is worth teaching or even teachable (Derwing and Munro, 2011: 317).

Understanding intelligibility is key for teaching pronunciation with intelligibility as the goal. According to Derwing and Munro (2011: 317), until recently a conceptualisation of intelligibility, which would help instructors with setting goals, was missing. Furthermore, the empirical evidence which would help identify effective teaching methods was also missing. In the broad sense, intelligibility is the extent to which a message of a speaker is actually understood by the listener (Derwing and Munro, 1995: 37). Also, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages describes intelligibility as “how much effort is required from the interlocutor to decode the speaker’s message (Council of Europe, 2020: 133). Still, there is no way of assessment of intelligibility that is universally accepted (Derwing and Munro, 1995: 37).

2.1.2 Choosing models for pronunciation

Choosing models for pronunciation can be a complicated and even a confusing task. According to Lintunen and Dufva, (2017: 42), a model refers to a form of the target language that is somewhat idealised and perhaps not even the actual goal of pronunciation learning. While all languages often have multiple varieties, there is usually a model which is called a standard

language. The formation of the standard language is often related to political and economic power focusing on a certain area (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 42).

There can be many different reasons for choosing a model for pronunciation teaching. Lintunen and Dufva (2017: 46) argue that one of the most important criteria is intelligibility. Therefore, the standard language pronunciation is often chosen as a model: it is pronounced clearly, and it is widely understood. A good model is often considered to be something neutral, but it has positive connotations related to it (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 43). For example, language teaching often aims to provide an image of one being educated. Thus, clearly regional features are not often chosen as a model (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 43). Also, the geographical location can be the reason for the chosen model (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 43).

Castilian Spanish is a popular model for Spanish pronunciation teaching in Finland. Often the chosen model comes from a nearby region due to the close geographical distance (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 43). Thus, Castilian Spanish would be chosen over Latin American Spanish. Also, Kallio (2017: 172) informs that Castilian Spanish is the commonly used pronunciation model in Finnish textbooks. On the other hand, the rise of Latin American culture, such as music and television series, could affect the choice of pronunciation model.

American English might be more commonly chosen model over RP in Finland. RP or Received Pronunciation refers to a standard form of spoken British English. While the United Kingdom is closest English as a native language speaking country to Finland, RP might not the most popular model chosen for pronunciation teaching. RP was traditionally chosen as a model in the past but now attitudes towards different varieties and accented speech are viewed more positively (Tergujeff, 2012b: 33). Moreover, American English might be the more commonly chosen model due to the growing global power of the United States of America (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 43). Also, the rise of North American and Latin American culture globally could affect the choice of pronunciation model.

Native-like pronunciation models have been criticised because they can provide unrealistic goals for the learners (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 49). Instead of choosing a native-like pronunciation as a model, it has been proposed that pronunciation where non-nativeness can be

heard, similarly to lingua franca, could be chosen as a model (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 49). Also, Li (2009: 82) highlights the importance of English as a tool for international communication and thus calls for the use of a variety better adjusted for it.

2.1.3 Segmental and suprasegmental features

According to Yates and Zielinski (2009: 11), pronunciation can be divided into three parts: segments, suprasegmental aspects, and voice quality. Segments refer to the particular sounds of a language. Suprasegmental aspects go beyond the singular sounds such as stress, timing, rhythm, intonation, and phrasing. Voice quality refers to how the voice is projected (Yates & Zielinski, 2009: 11). Pronunciation teaching focuses on the segmental and suprasegmental features which are closely connected. This is because suprasegmentals have an effect on the quality of segments (Laroy, 1995: 39). Because pronunciation teaching focuses on segmental features and suprasegmental features, it is beneficial to discuss segmentals and suprasegmentals for the present study.

While learning suprasegmentals is somewhat more difficult than learning segmentals (Kuronen, 2017: 68), suprasegmentals are not taught to the same degree as segmentals. Tergujeff (2012: 605) found in their research on English pronunciation teaching in Finland that teachers neglected the teaching of suprasegmental features. In addition, suprasegmental features are sometimes seen as something that cannot be taught (Laroy 1995: 39). Perhaps teachers feel that it is not comfortable to teach suprasegmentals due to the lack of background knowledge necessary for teaching or they do not have access to for further professional development (Derwing and Munro, 2015: 80). Baker (2011) interviewed 5 in-service English instructors from advanced, intermediate, and beginning levels. The sixth informant was Baker themselves due to their teaching positions. Also, in Baker's (2011: 281) research, a participant mentioned that suprasegmental features are more difficult to teach. In addition, teachers seem to be quite well aware of the possible segmental issues of the learners (Tergujeff, 2012: 606). Although suprasegmental features might be considered as unteachable, it might not directly mean that it is something that cannot be learnt (Laroy, 1995: 39).

Although suprasegmentals are not taught to the same degree as segmentals, they are crucial to intelligibility. According to Pennington and Richards (1986: 211), interfering with suprasegmental features affects comprehension more than interfering with segmentals. Tergujeff (2013: 26) also highlights that, instead of the accurate production of segmentals, suprasegmentals affect intelligibility to a greater degree. Most of the participants acknowledged the importance of suprasegmental features. In addition, intonation is an important part of “prosodic continuity” which makes speech coherent (Pennington and Richards, 1986: 211). For example, intonation is essential in communication because it conveys attitudes, interest, and emotions. It also signals emphasis, assists in turn-taking and recognising grammatical structures. Thus, challenges in intonation can lead to disrupts in communication (Rogerson-Revell 2011: 192.)

However, the importance of suprasegmental features has also been challenged. In Lewis’ (1999: 377) research on the importance of intonation on yes/no questions, changes in intonation did not seem to be an essential issue of intelligibility for most learners. Moreover, Lewis suggests that the grammatical form and communicative use of yes/no questions are more important to learners instead of the intonation focused English teaching of yes/no questions. In addition, Jenkins (2002: 96-97) found in their study that the greatest issues for communication due to pronunciation originated from certain consonant sounds, consonant clusters, vowel sounds and the production and placement of tonic stress. Jenkins (2002: 98) also suggests that the items that are excluded from the core features are not crucial for intelligibility. For example, this includes “other features of connected speech, especially assimilation...”. Still, the majority of research calls for the importance of suprasegmental features, especially for intelligibility, and their teaching as mentioned above.

2.1.4 Teaching pronunciation and teaching methods

Kuronen (2017: 64-65) introduces a few important aspects that should be considered when teaching pronunciation according to research. First, it is important to teach pronunciation with consciousness and explicitness in mind by explaining and demonstrating the phonetic features of pronunciation. A learner is more likely to learn if they are aware of their pronunciation and of the phonetic features of the target language. Second, the phonetic differences between the target language and the learner’s first language should be taken into account. As a child, the

ear becomes accustomed to the learner's first language, and it can affect how they hear the target language's pronunciation. Last, it is essential to practise pronunciation on word level and on sentence level. Practising pronunciation on a word level is an easier way for a learner to practise the phonetic features, and thus a good place to begin learning pronunciation. Still, it is important to move to phrases and sentences since speech usually does not exist only on word level. Furthermore, many important suprasegmental features cannot be practised with words only.

Pronunciation can be taught with many different methods. Language teaching is heavily based on textbooks especially in Finland (Tergujeff, 2017: 85). Thus, the phonetic alphabet is familiar to many learners of foreign languages from the school textbooks (Tergujeff et al. 2017: 106). According to Tergujeff et al. (2017: 106), there is no evidence that learning the phonetic alphabet would hinder learning writing skills for young children. Furthermore, the phonetic alphabet can help with learning pronunciation of languages where the orthography is less regular. Furthermore, Lintunen (2005) found in their study that phonemic transcription is an effective way to learn pronunciation of English with more complicated grapheme-to-phoneme rules. In addition, teaching phonetic concepts such as aspiration and showing pictures of the vocal tracts can help learn pronunciation by offering information on how speech is actually formed (Tergujeff et al. 2017: 106-107).

Different methods of teaching pronunciation are more useful for different goals. Tergujeff et al. (2017: 109) argue that versatility and using different senses is key in learning oral language skills. Listen and repeat tasks are a relevant choice when practising singular aspects of pronunciation according to Tergujeff et al. (2017: 107). Drilling and tongue twisters are a good way to move from practising singular words to using words in context. Also, reading aloud is also a great way to practise pronunciation as it is good mechanical practice and provides a way to practise suprasegmental features as well (Tergujeff et al. 2017: 107). Music can also be utilised to teach pronunciation: song games, rhymes and poems, and rap music can be effective and motivating tools. In addition, playing with pitch and using a kazoo can help especially with intonation (Tergujeff et al. 2017: 109). Tactile reinforcement and kinaesthetic teaching methods can also be utilised: tapping rhythm and practising long vowel sounds by stretching rubber bands can help to learn pronunciation (Tergujeff et al. 2017: 111).

In Finland, English pronunciation education is often taught using traditional methods. Tergujeff (2012: 602) discovered, by observing four English teachers, that the majority of the pronunciation related activities were very traditional. These activities included listen and repeat tasks, reading aloud, providing rules, and teachers correcting and pointing out how to pronounce. In addition, rhymes were used occasionally, and tactile reinforcement was used once. Course books also played an important role in pronunciation teaching (Tergujeff, 2012: 602-603). The course books were used to read aloud and listen and repeat tasks, and teaching methods varied greatly among teachers. Furthermore, Tergujeff speculates that the age of the learner and/or the proficiency level affected the choice of teaching methods for pronunciation.

There is no research on Spanish teaching methods in the Finnish context, but perhaps the research on English pronunciation teaching can provide some insight to foreign language pronunciation teaching in general in Finland.

2.1.5 Challenges of learning pronunciation for Finnish learners of English and Spanish

Learner's first language can affect foreign language learning. Children spend countless hours speaking and practising their first language pronunciation even unconsciously. When a young learner has achieved control over their first language, the pronunciation mechanisms become automatic. Therefore, the learned mechanisms can sometimes be heard when learning and using a foreign language as an accent (Ullakonoja and Dufva, 2017: 24). In addition, Peltonen & Lintunen (2016: 230) conducted research on the fluency of Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking learners of English. They discovered that Swedish upper secondary school students were more fluent when compared to their Finnish counterparts suggesting that the cross-linguistic similarities between Swedish and English were beneficial. This could mean that the lack of similarities between Finnish and English could often be disadvantageous. On the other hand, the difference between university students was marginal in Peltonen and Lintunen's study (2016: 230). This could imply that once a high enough proficiency is achieved, the effect of one's first language is lesser or diminished (Peltonen and Lintunen, 2016:230).

A learner might also have personal and sociological obstacles preventing pronunciation learning. Laroy (1995: 6) introduces factors that could affect pronunciation learning. The communities around the learners can affect the learners' willingness to learn pronunciation. For example, adolescents might actively try to be not as good in order to form better relationships with their peers. They might also feel ridiculous when trying to pronounce bizarre sounds or they may feel like trying to pronounce sounds of another language might make them look awful (Laroy, 1995: 8). On the other hand, learners might desire to display their origins by keeping their pronunciation (Laroy, 1995: 6).

Consonant sounds can cause problems for Finnish learners who learn English. Pronunciation of the English voiced consonant sounds /b, d, g/ can be challenging since they are being added to the Finnish phonetic system with the introduction of loan words. Thus, their pronunciation may result in sounding more like the voiceless sounds /p, t, k/. Another issue might be the lack of aspiration with the plosive sounds. For example, the sound /p/ in the word “*pea*” would be aspirated while aspiration does not happen in Finnish (Ullakonoja and Dufva, 2017: 24). According to Morris-Wilson (1992: 62, 98), the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ and the fricatives /ð/ and /θ/ can be challenging for Finnish learners. This could be because the Finnish phoneme inventory includes only one sibilant, /s/, and no affricates (Tergujeff, 2012: 603). Also, Lintunen (2013: 57) discovered that the biggest problem for Finnish university students was consonants. Especially sibilants, affricates, and dental fricatives caused issues for the students. The most challenging aspect was the phonemic opposition /v/ - /w/ but the consonant cluster /ŋg/ proved to be difficult as well. Overall, voiced consonants were more challenging than the voiceless consonants (Lintunen, 2013: 57).

Although pronunciation is a skill connected to spoken language directly, written language can still affect pronunciation. Especially in schools and other forms of formal education, languages are studied with written materials. Thus, understanding and interpretation of writing is necessary for learning pronunciation (Ullakonoja and Dufva, 2017: 27). The regular orthography of Finnish might mislead with other languages like English. For example, the pronunciation for the Finnish vowel “y” cannot be found in English. Furthermore, there can be multiple pronunciations in English: /i/, /aɪ/ or /j/ (Ullakonoja and Dufva, 2017: 28, 29). Ullakonoja and Dufva (2017: 29) also mention that these types of mistakes are relatively easy to correct, and Lintunen

(2005) found in their research that phonemic transcription can greatly assist to improve pronunciation with these types of errors.

The orthography of Spanish, on the other hand, might be more regular and, thus, easier for Finnish learners. Still, there are some elements that might be challenging. Kallio (2017: 173) mentions that even though the sounds might be familiar, the spelling might lead the learners astray. For example, the consonant pair “ll” is often pronounced /j:/ which is a familiar sound (Kallio, 2017: 173) but the spelling might confuse initially Finnish learners. This is because the consonant pair can also be found in Finnish words pronounced differently as in “*pallo*” for example. Also, the letter “ñ” is similar to the Finnish letter combination “nj”. Another example would be the letter “u” which is mute in the following combinations: “que”, “qui”, “gue”, and “gui” (Kallio, 2017: 173).

Spanish consonant sounds can cause issues for Finnish learners learning Spanish. There are six consonant sounds that could cause problems for Finnish learners of Spanish (de la Torre Moral, personal communication, February 4, 2024). The most difficult sound is the palatal approximant [ʎ] which can be found in words like “*lluvia*” and “*Sevilla*” represented by the consonant pair “ll”. On the other hand, the consonant pair is often pronounced /j:/ (Kallio, 2017: 173) The second most difficult sound is the nasal palatal [ɲ] written with the consonant “ñ”. It can be found in words like “*España*” and “*cañon*”. The third most difficult sound is the bilabial fricative [β]. It can be represented in written language with the consonants “b” or “v” in words like “*cabaña*” and “*devenecia*”. The next most difficult sounds are the dental fricative [ð] and the velar fricative [x]. [ð] can be found in words like “*cada*” y “*lodo*” represented by the consonant “d”. The velar fricative [x] is written with the consonant “j” and in some cases with the letter “g”. Examples can be found in words like “*caja*” and “*gente*”. Finally, the palatal affricate [tʃ] can cause issues for a Finnish learner learning Spanish. It can be found in words like “*chico*” and “*cacha*” represented by the consonant pair “ch”. None of the sounds can be found in the Finnish phonology (see eg. Savolainen, 2001).

2.1.6 Teachers' perceptions on pronunciation

Burri and Baker (2021) discovered four factors that affected teachers' practices and cognitions about pronunciation in their research. The research was conducted in Australia, and there were four teacher participants. Qualitative data were collected over six years with interviews, questionnaires, observations, narrative frames, and a course assignment. The participants also attended a 13-week graduate course on pronunciation pedagogy. First, teacher training factors affected the teacher's perceptions. The participants completed a graduate course, and course content, such as assignments and readings, formed the basis for teacher preparation factors. Having access to education about pronunciation and pronunciation teaching assisted the participants in teaching pronunciation. Second, there were personal-professional factors influencing the perceptions and practices. These factors were comprised of, for example, personal interest, teaching experience, and passion for teaching. In addition, one participant was teaching during the graduate course. Having the possibility to immediately apply the new knowledge in practice assisted her in dealing with doubts and fears of kinaesthetic/tactile pronunciation teaching methods. Third, language factors, such as phonological awareness, complexities of intonation, and how participants learnt L2 themselves, also affected the participants' cognitions to some degree. Finally, contextual factors also had an effect on teachers' practices and cognitions. On one hand, the participants' L2 learners' needs shifted their practices and perceptions to meet their learners' needs. On the other hand, the program which was part of the research greatly affected the participants' practices and cognitions.

Intelligibility is an important goal for teachers teaching pronunciation. Couper (2017) interviewed 19 in-service English teachers from different institutions in New Zealand. Couper was also a co-participant. The participants mentioned intelligibility and effective communication as a primary focus. Also, half of the ten Vietnamese EFL teachers in Phuong's (2022) research mentioned that they focused on correcting their learners' pronunciation errors that could hinder intelligibility and comprehensibility in oral communication.

Other goals for pronunciation teaching mentioned by teachers in Couper's (2017) research were accuracy, clarity, and fluency. In addition, teachers in Phuong's (2017) research described how focus points of correcting pronunciation errors were fluency and accuracy. Some participants would minimise or skip giving feedback on pronunciation errors because it could possibly

interfere with fluency. On the other hand, one participant would correct all pronunciation mistakes to achieve accurate and flawless pronunciation. Another participant would correct all errors due to not being able to teach pronunciation frequently. In addition, goals for pronunciation teaching can also be determined in course books and/or curriculum (Couper, 2017). Still, the teachers in Couper's (2017) research did not often have a prepared focus for teaching and the goals were related to observed difficulties of the learners.

Teachers have gaps of knowledge related to pronunciation. Couper (2017) discovered in their research that the participants had limited or no training at all on pronunciation teaching. Moreover, the limited training focused on listen-and-repeat activities. Thus, there were gaps in knowledge on how to teach pronunciation, what to teach, and how much. While having little education on how to teach pronunciation, the participants appeared to have training in phonetics and phonology. Still, there were gaps of knowledge mentioned by the participants in phonetics and phonology as well. The gaps were related to knowledge about stress, intonation, phonemes, and their articulation. Having these gaps in knowledge were often related to lack of confidence or an uncertainty in pronunciation teaching leading to neglect in teaching according to Couper (2017). Some participants ignored stress and intonation since they are not able to teach these aspects or not even describe them.

Identity affects pronunciation. The goals and focus of pronunciation teaching are affected by the teacher's identity (Couper, 2017). For example, the variety of English used by the teacher influences teaching. One participant was worried about imposing a particular model upon their learners since they are English. This would in turn affect the learner's pronunciation. Also, learner's culture and identity affect their pronunciation. According to Couper (2017), it is essential for teacher to understand the influences of identity and culture on pronunciation. One participant mentioned, for instance, the impact of these aspects on male Russians learners because they can sound impolite, flat, and unenthusiastic.

Teachers can feel that the feedback they provide on pronunciation to their learners has little effect. Phuong (2022) interviewed ten Vietnamese EFL teachers, and the teachers believed strongly that the feedback they give is important. Still, most of the participants felt that the feedback has little effect on improving their learners' pronunciation. The limited effectiveness

of the feedback was mainly due to learners not being aware of the importance of learning pronunciation and correcting their own pronunciation errors. Furthermore, poor attention to pronunciation feedback was also attributed to test-oriented learning because some learners wish only to pass a test. Thus, they do not care very much about pronunciation. However, if learners have clear goals for further study or working abroad after university, they tend to focus more on learning from feedback and correcting errors.

2.2 The goals of pronunciation teaching in Finland

In this section, I discuss the National Core Curriculum and then continue to introduce the Common European Framework of Reference for Language.

2.2.1 The National Core Curriculum

The National Core Curriculum or NCC provides the guidelines for teaching on a national level in Finland. The NCC is created by the Finnish National Agency for Education. Their main goal is to “develop education and training, early childhood education and lifelong learning and to promote internationalisation in Finland” (Finnish National Agency for Education, n.d). Thus, they create the base for teaching in early childhood education, general upper secondary education and vocational education and training. These guidelines also include pronunciation teaching. Moreover, they inform of the goals for teaching and assessing pronunciation. These guidelines are then used to create local-level curricula by education providers and schools. Furthermore, NCC does not decide the methods for teaching providing teachers with freedom to decide themselves what are the best methods for their learners.

In Finland, English is the most popular language at schools, but Spanish has been rising in popularity at all school levels.

2.2.1.1 Pronunciation in primary education

Pronunciation practice is mentioned in the NCC for primary school. From 2020, A1 language starts in first grade (Finnish National Agency for Education, b, n.d). The goal for pronunciation in first and second grade is to be able to use the most common words and phrases with

intelligible pronunciation. The pronunciation of the target language should be practised in abundance, and the practice should include word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation. These aspects should also be listened to and observed (Finnish National Agency for Education, c, 2019: 28). Similar practice is mentioned also for grades 3-6 for practising English or other foreign A1 language pronunciation. In addition, learners should also practise recognising the phonetic alphabets of the language they are learning (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2019: 220, 225).

Pronunciation also forms a part of assessment. The criterion to receive the grade 8 in A1 English in sixth grade mentions that learners should be able to apply some of the basic pronunciation rules to also utterances that are not rehearsed (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2019: 223). For other A1 languages, most of the rehearsed utterances are pronounced intelligibly to receive the grade 8.

2.2.1.2 Pronunciation in lower secondary education

Pronunciation is also mentioned explicitly in the NCC for grades 7-9. The curriculum lists objects for teaching A-level English and one of them is to guide towards good pronunciation. Furthermore, students should be able to apply multiple basic pronunciation rules not rehearsed utterances to receive the grade 8 (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2019: 349, 352). For other A-level foreign languages, one of the objects for teaching is to pay attention to the main basic rules of pronunciation. In addition, learners should be able to apply some basic pronunciation rules in other utterances than the rehearsed ones for grade 8 (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2019: 353, 356).

One of the objectives for B1 languages is to practise speaking and focus on pronunciation. The assessment section highlights the intelligibility of rehearsed utterances regarding pronunciation (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2019: 357, 360). The curriculum for B2 foreign languages mentions pronunciation more often. One of the objectives for teaching is to practise speaking while paying attention to pronunciation. Furthermore, learners observe the target language's rhythm, intonation, and other aspects of pronunciation, they practise natural

pronunciation and learn to recognise phonetic alphabets of the language (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2019: 361).

2.2.1.3 Pronunciation in upper secondary education

Pronunciation is also mentioned in the curriculum for upper secondary schools. Oral language skills are assessed similarly to other language skills (Lukion opetussuunnitelmien perusteet 2019: 178). Still, pronunciation is not mentioned explicitly. Pronunciation is mentioned once in the curriculum for A-level English. It is in the main contents of the module ENA2: how different sounds are formed, how speech is produced, different variants of English and comparisons to other languages (Lukion opetussuunnitelmien perusteet 2019: 181). There is a module ENA8 focusing on oral skills, but pronunciation is not mentioned explicitly (Lukion opetussuunnitelmien perusteet 2019: 184). Furthermore, the module is not obligatory. For other A-level foreign languages, the curriculum mentions similar content regarding pronunciation in the modules VKA2 and VKA3 (Lukion opetussuunnitelmien perusteet 2019: 186, 189). B2 and B3 foreign languages do not mention pronunciation explicitly. Still, oral communication is mentioned. Both B2 and B3 focus initially on oral skills (Lukion opetussuunnitelmien perusteet 2019: 190, 193). Furthermore, different modules describe the goals with different proficiency levels from the Finnish proficiency scale which is based on the Common European Framework for Languages. For example, in the module VKB21, the objective is to be able to communicate according to proficiency level A1.2 (Lukion opetussuunnitelmien perusteet 2019: 191).

All in all, the different levels of competency required for English are higher than for Spanish or for other languages. This is due to the position of the English language in Finnish society. English is the most studied foreign language in Finland, and advertising is often done in English. While English is a useful tool for communication even in Finland, there have been public discussion on the role of English and whether it is a threat to the national languages in Finland.

2.2.2 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR “presents a comprehensive descriptive scheme of language proficiency and set of Common Reference Levels (A1 to C2) defined in illustrative descriptor scales, plus options for curriculum design promoting plurilingual and intercultural education...” (Council of Europe, 2020: 27). The Common reference levels are grouped into three categories: basic user (A1 and A2), independent user (B1 and B2), and proficient user (C1 and C2) (Council of Europe, 2020: 36).

One of the scales in CEFR is phonological control. It includes four core areas to be taken into consideration when teaching pronunciation: articulation which includes pronunciation of sounds or phonemes, prosody which includes intonation, rhythm, and stress, accentedness which refers to accent and deviation from a “norm”, and intelligibility. These areas are combined into three categories for the scale: overall phonologic control, sounds articulation, and prosodic features. It is also mentioned that focusing on accent and accuracy, because having an accent is traditionally seen as “a marker of poor phonological control”, is harmful for developing pronunciation teaching. Thus, the focus is on intelligibility and conveying meaning (Council of Europe, 2020: 133).

Intelligibility is used as a key element to differentiate different levels from A1 to C2 (Council of Europe, 2020: 133). Intelligibility is described as “how much effort is required from the interlocutor to decode the speaker's message. Other key concepts used to operationalise the scale are the amount of influence of other spoken languages, control of sounds, and the control of phonetic features. In addition, focus is on the degree of clarity and the degree of precision in the articulation of sounds, and the control of prosodic features, such as stress, intonation, and rhythm. Furthermore, focus is on the ability to modify and exploit stress and intonation to highlight the desired message (Council of Europe, 2020: 133).

3 PRESENT STUDY

3.1 Aim and research questions

The present study aims to shed light on how English teachers and Spanish teachers working in Finland view pronunciation teaching and learning. Furthermore, it aims to discover whether the views differ between English teachers and Spanish teachers. While there exists plenty of research on pronunciation and pronunciation teaching, the research on the views of language teachers is limited. English teachers have been a subject of some research globally and in Finland as well. Spanish teachers, on the other hand, have not been researched to the same degree. Moreover, Spanish teachers have barely been a subject of research at all in Finland. The languages also differ being from different language families and they have different roles in the Finnish society. English has the role of lingua franca and is well spread in Finland. On the other hand, Spanish is not spoken to same degree, especially in Finland, although Spanish is raising in popularity in Finnish schools. Thus, research on the topic is necessary to understand language teachers better, especially in the Finnish context. The research questions to guide the present study are the following:

1. How do English teachers and Spanish teachers in Finland view pronunciation teaching and learning?
2. How do the views differ between English teachers and Spanish teachers?

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 Participants

The participants of present study were in-service English teachers and Spanish teachers. In total, there were two female English teachers and two female Spanish teachers interviewed. One English teacher worked in an elementary school and the other English teacher taught at a school which had both lower and upper secondary school. Similarly, one Spanish teacher taught elementary school and lower secondary school while the other Spanish teacher taught lower and upper school students. Being an in-service English or Spanish teacher was a requirement to participate in the present study. English teachers were given traditionally more English pseudonyms, and Spanish teachers were given traditionally more Spanish names to make it easier to follow who of the participants is an English teacher and who is a Spanish teacher in the current study.

Alice is 53 years old, and she works as an English and German teacher in an elementary school. She has been teaching English for 18 years and German for three years.

Hailey is 30 years old, and she is an English and math teacher. She has been working with lower and upper secondary school learners for four years. She has taught English for two years and mathematics for two years. At the same time, she has worked as a resource teacher for three years. Resource teacher works alongside other teachers in order to improve the quality of teaching. For example, the resource teacher works with a small group of pupils from a class to better meet their needs while the other teacher works with the bigger group.

María is 35 years old, and she teaches mainly Spanish for lower and upper secondary school learners. Furthermore, she has qualifications to teach German, French, and Swedish. Previously, María has taught Spanish, Swedish and some English.

Lucía is 32 years old, and she is currently teaching Spanish for elementary school and lower secondary school students. Also, she has the qualifications to teach English. Previously, Lucía has taught English and Spanish at an adult education centre and at summer university.

3.2.2 Data collection and method of analysis

The data were gathered by conducting semi-structured interviews. The goal of the present study was to collect data on personal views of participants on pronunciation. Thus, conducting interviews was the chosen method. Being an in-service English or Spanish teacher with at least some teaching experience was a requirement to participate in the study. This ensured that the participants have knowledge and experience in teaching pronunciation to provide necessary data. The selection of participants was done through convenience sampling. Interviews were chosen as a method because it allowed to easily choose participants with necessary knowledge, and it provided flexibility to obtain as much data as possible (Tuomi and Sarajarvi, 2009: 73). The participants were given the topic and themes of the interview beforehand, but they were not given the actual interview structure with questions. This was a conscious choice due to wanting to learn about their authentic views and to avoid planned responses.

The interviews were conducted during the months of February and March of 2024. The participants were sent a consent form and a privacy notice via email before conducting the interviews. They also had a chance to opt out of the study at any time. One interview was conducted online and the other three were conducted face-to-face. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed to text to facilitate the management of the data. The shortest interview lasted 50 minutes and the longest interview lasted 80 minutes.

It is worth mentioning that all four participants were acquaintances of the researcher of the present study, which could have an effect on the interviews. For example, interviewing someone close to the researcher can distract from the main goal of collecting data (Hyvärinen et al. 2017). Furthermore, the close relationship between the researcher and the participants can hide information if there are assumed similarities between them (Johnston, 2010, as cited in Hyvärinen et al. 2017). On the contrary, interviewing someone close to the researcher can be beneficial. The shared interest on the topic of the interview can assist both the interviewer to listen and the participant to share their experiences (Hyvärinen et al. 2017). Moreover, the shared experiences, code, and language between the two can facilitate communication (Johnston and Rowlands 2012: 102-103; Hintsala 2012: 33 as cited in Hyvärinen et al. 2017).

Data-driven content analysis was used as a method of analysis in the present study. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009: 95), the goal of the data-based analysis is to create theoretical understanding of the data without the reliance on earlier knowledge or observation. After transcribing the interviews, the three-stage process of analysis described by Miles and Huberman (1994, as cited in Tuomi and Sarajärvi, 2009: 108-112) was applied. First, irrelevant data were eliminated in the reduction stage. Second, the remaining data were clustered. This means that the data was grouped into themes and subthemes connected to the goals of the research. Finally, the clustered data were abstracted which means moving from the empirical data to theoretical concepts and conclusions.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents, analyses, and discusses the interviews conducted on the four participants. The interviews were conducted in Finnish. The interview structure can be found in the Appendix. First, the participants' views on pronunciation in general are explored. Second, the participants' views on teaching pronunciation are examined. Finally, how the participants view learning pronunciation is presented.

4.1 Views on pronunciation

All participants considered pronunciation to be somewhat important or very important. Especially Alice thought that pronunciation is very important due to her role as a teacher for very young learners in elementary school. Learning a foreign language starts with a heavy focus on oral skills when the learners are very young and still learning to read and write (1). Thus, pronunciation is important. Lucía also teaches children and considers pronunciation to be important, because there are many unfamiliar sounds in Spanish for Finnish children. Still, it is not necessary to try to achieve natively like pronunciation (2). Hailey thought that pronunciation is an important part of being understood, avoiding misunderstandings, and providing self-confidence as a speaker. Similarly, María highlighted the importance of intelligibility when considering the importance of pronunciation. This reflects the idea that intelligibility is the key element in modern language teaching (see eg. Derwing and Munro 2015: 6).

- (1) Alice: Se on suullista. Ei kirjoiteta vielä ollenkaan, niin silloin on aikaa niinku käyttää tosi paljon siihen ääntämisen harjoitteluun ja äänteiden makusteluun ja intonaatioon...

Alice: It is oral. We don't write at all so there is so much time to like use practice pronunciation and trying out sounds and intonation...

- (2) Lucía: Mun mielestä on se tärkeä. Kyllä mä annan sille niinku painoarvoa, mutta mä en ajattele siitä, että se on jotenkin, että matkitaan semmoista natiivin omaisuutta, että se olisi jotenkin pakollinen, että silleen.

Lucía: I think it is important. I think it is, like, valuable but I don't think that it is like that somehow imitating that nativelikeness, that it would be somehow mandatory, yeah.

Segmental features and suprasegmental features are equally important in pronunciation according to the participants. Alice and Lucía, who teach elementary school learners, considered segments as a necessary starting point in pronunciation which are then connected together to create words and sentences. Thus, suprasegmental features are equally necessary. María, as well, thought that segmental features and suprasegmental features are inseparable. Suprasegmental features are necessary to convey meaning. For example, raising intonation towards the end of a sentence changes a statement into a question. On the other hand, if the listener cannot comprehend the words in the sentence due to segmental errors, correct intonation does not convey the full meaning according to María. Hailey thought that errors in both segmental and suprasegmental features intervene with intelligibility (4). Still, she did mention how fluency and fluent speech could compensate for small segmental errors but concluded that she would not consider one to be more important than the other.

- (3) María: Jos et osaa kiekaista sitä kysymystä niin ei espanjalainen tajua, että se on kysymys, vaikka kuinka hyvin osaisit ääntää ne sanat. Mutta että sitten jos et osaa ääntää niitä sanoja oikein, niin et sä tule ymmärretyksi, vaikka sä osaisitkin kiekaista sen.

María: If you cannot raise the intonation at the end of a question, a Spaniard does not understand that it is a question no matter how well you pronounce the words. But if you cannot pronounce the words correctly, you would not be understood even if you could raise the intonation.

- (4) Hailey: Mä yritän miettiä ymmärrettävyyttä. Mut niinku molempien puute hankaloittaa sitä kyllä.

Hailey: I try to think about intelligibility. But like the lack of both does make it more difficult.

Still, all participants thought that it is easier to learn segmental features. Alice, Hailey, Lucía, and María agreed that teaching singular sounds is easier when compared to teaching suprasegmental features. Hailey and María considered that because singular sounds can be practised very easily with drilling, they are easier to learn. Hailey also considered the effects of the monotone Finnish intonation which, in turn, could cause more challenges for Finnish learners trying to learn suprasegmental features. Alice and Lucía thought that it is easier to internalise smaller parts, such as sounds, when compared to bigger entities such as intonation. Alice continued that segmentals can also be physically demonstrated with pictures of the mouth or using a piece of paper to test air flow from the mouth.

- (5) Hailey: No yksittäisiä äänteitä on helpompi oppia. Mä oletan, että niitä voi silleen niinku drillaa, mutta varsinkin just suomen kieli, kun on tosi semmoinen tasainen ja meidän korva ei ole tottunut analysoimaan semmoisia asioita.

Hailey: Well, singular sounds are easier to learn. I think that they can be like drilled, but especially the Finnish language is so like flat, and our ears are not accustomed to analysing such things.

- (6) Lucía: No helpompi jotenkin, kun mitä pienemmäksi palastelemaan niin sitä helpompi on sisäistää. Kyllä mä koen, että yksittäisistä äänteistä on helppo lähteä liikkeelle.

Lucía: Well, it is easier to somehow to divide into smaller bits, so it is easier to internalise. I do feel that singular sounds are an easy starting point.

Segmentals are also easier to teach according to all except one participant. Teaching a bigger concept such as prosody requires more focus and time according to Hailey. Thus, highlighting and teaching singular sounds is easier. María argues that the “monotone” pronunciation of

Finnish causes the teaching of intonation to be more challenging. Therefore, segmental features are easier to teach (7). On the other hand, Lucía thought that the relatively easy rules of Spanish sound system make it easier to teach. On the contrary, Alice considered that there is no difference between teaching segmental and suprasegmental features (8).

- (7) María: Ehkä se semmoinen espanjalainen sävelkulku on vaikeampi opettaa, että se niinku koko puheenparsi oli semmoista... Koska suomalaiset muutenkin puhuu niin monotonisesti niin sitten, että siihen saisi semmoisen niinku sävelkulun ja soinnin siihen puheeseen. Se on vaikeampi opettaa.

María: Maybe the kind of Spanish intonation is harder to teach so the whole speech would be like... Because Finns speak in a very monotone manner anyway so that you could get like intonation and melody to the speech. That is harder to teach.

- (8) Alice: Ei kumpaakaan (ole vaikeampi opettaa) kun ne kulkee käsi kädessä. En ole koskaan miettinyt, että onpas tää nyt vaikeeta opettaa.

Alice: Neither is more difficult to teach because they go hand in hand. I have never thought that, oh, this is so difficult to teach.

While all participants agreed that pronunciation is important and that segmental features are as important as suprasegmental features, the majority also agreed that segmental features are easier to learn and teach. Derwing and Munro (2015: 80) suggest that the lack of background knowledge could cause teachers to not feel comfortable teaching suprasegmental features. Still, none of the participants mentioned this as the reason. The reasons behind this were time restrictions, the complex nature of suprasegmental features, the relative easiness of segmental features, and the differences between Finnish and the target language. Furthermore, even though none of the participants mentioned explicitly neglecting the teaching of suprasegmentals, these views could suggest that the focus is on teaching segmental features similarly to Tergujeff's (2012: 605) research.

4.2 Views on teaching pronunciation

4.2.1 Role of pronunciation in teaching

Thoughts on the role of pronunciation in teaching varied slightly between the participants. Alice and Lucía teach elementary school learners, and they viewed that pronunciation has a greater role. Especially Alice thought that pronunciation has an important role in teaching because young learners adapt to the sounds around them. Furthermore, she considered it to be important to give the younger learners models of pronunciation since they do not know the phonetic alphabet yet. Lucía mentions that she tries to use Spanish in the classroom as much as possible because a teacher inherently functions as a model of pronunciation for the learners (9). Pronunciation is also practiced in every chapter of the schoolbooks used in the classroom.

- (9) Lucía: No mä yritän aina niinku käyttää mahdollisimman paljon espanjaa ihan vaan siinä luokkahuonepuhumisessa, että he kuulee sitä tavallaan koko ajan ja oppii tavallaan toimimaan sen mukaan, että jo ymmärtää niitä perusjuttuja

Lucía: Well, I always try to like use as much Spanish as I can in just speaking in the classroom that they kind of hear it all the time and learn to function according to the fact that they understand the basics.

On the contrary, Hailey and María, who teach lower and upper secondary school students, did not highlight a greater importance of pronunciation in their teaching. Hailey mentioned that pronunciation teaching happens along other activities, and there is not a specific time of the lesson allocated for pronunciation similarly to other activities, such as grammar (10). María did not place a special emphasis on pronunciation teaching especially with lower secondary school students, since they are often not too interested in pronunciation. Upper secondary school students, on the other hand, are usually more willing to learning pronunciation. Also, Hailey mentioned that learners in upper secondary school want to learn more about nativelike pronunciation.

(10) Hailey: Mutta sille [ääntämiselle] ei ehkä ole samalla tavalla näkyvästi varattu niinku omaa aikaa aina oppitunnin suunnitelmasta, että se on vähän semmoinen asia mikä tapahtuu siinä sivussa.

Hailey: But there is not always kind of visibly reserved its own time for it [pronunciation] in the lesson plan, so it is a kind of a thing that happens on the side.

Considering the role of pronunciation, the age of the learners seems to have a bigger role than the target language. Alice and Lucía who teach elementary school gave pronunciation teaching more importance than María and Hailey who teach lower and upper secondary school learners. While the sample in the present study is small, this could suggest that the target language does not affect the importance teachers place on pronunciation teaching. Moreover, the younger age of the learners, their needs and lack of experience seems to highlight the importance of pronunciation in teaching.

4.2.2 Goals of pronunciation teaching

All participants considered intelligibility to be the main goal of pronunciation teaching. María reported that she focuses mainly on intelligibility since nativelikeness as a goal is too high. Furthermore, she considered intelligibility to be extremely important because a language is a tool for communication (11). Lucía considered Spanish pronunciation to be relatively simple for Finnish learners due to the similarities of Finnish and Spanish in their relationship with orthography and pronunciation. Still, nativelike pronunciation is not a goal in her classroom. Hailey thought of intelligibility as a first goal. Afterwards, nativelikeness can be approached (12). She continued that intelligible pronunciation is more motivating goal for elementary school and lower secondary school learners and perhaps in upper secondary school learners could reach higher. Still, understanding what sounds nativelike is important according to Hailey. Alice pondered on nativelikeness as a term. It could mean British English, American English or perhaps Indian English. Alice concluded that she would choose intelligibility over nativelikeness if she had to choose between the two. Similarly, in Couper's (2017) study, English teachers reported intelligibility as a main focus. It is also a key element in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020).

(11) María: Mä vaadin, että se on ymmärrettävää, että jos ne [oppilaat] puhuisi espanjalaisille, joka ei ymmärrä suomea eikä tiedä mitään suomen ääntämisestä niin ne ymmärtää mitä sanaa ne yrittää sanoa tai mitä lausetta niinku yrittää ääntää.

María: I require that is intelligible that is if they [students] spoke to Spaniards who don't understand Finnish or know anything about Finnish pronunciation, so they understand what words they are trying to say or what sentence they are like trying to pronounce.

(12) Hailey: No mä luulen, että ymmärrettävyys on ensimmäinen tavoite ja sitten sen jälkeen voi ehkä niinku lähestyä sitä toista [natiivinkaltaista ääntämistä].

Hailey: Well, I think that nativelikeness is the first goal and then afterwards the other [nativelike pronunciation] could be approached.

The goals of pronunciation teaching are based primarily on communication and intelligibility. The participants were first asked what their goals are for pronunciation teaching. Afterwards, they were asked what the basis for these goals were. María mentioned that her base for teaching pronunciation is that she views language as a tool for communication. In addition, the matriculation exams are currently based on mainly written skills with listening comprehension section according to María (13). Thus, she felt that she cannot demand more than intelligible pronunciation from her pupils. She concluded that she does try to reach a higher level of pronunciation with pupils by giving further feedback. Communication as a base for the goals on pronunciation was also highlighted by Hailey. She also wanted to base the goals on motivation. By not demanding too much in the beginning, she hopes to create an environment where pupils are encouraged to speak and practice communication. Also, Lucía's primary basis for her goals is intelligibility: to understand and to be understood. She thought that oral skills are the focus in teaching languages, and she, as a teacher, also emphasises oral skills. On the other hand, Alice bases the goals of pronunciation teaching in the national core curriculum. Pronunciation teaching is mentioned in the core curriculum, so it has to be a part of the teaching, according to Alice. She also mentioned that the core curriculum states the goals of oral skills: to be understood in the target language (14).

(13) María: [Tavoitteet perustuvat] siihen että kieli on kommunikaation väline ja meillä ei ole suullisia kokeita.

María: [The goals are based] in that a language is a tool for communication, and that we do not have oral exams.

(14) Alice: [Tavoitteet perustuvat] OPS:iin, OPS:iin, joo OPS:iin. Siellä sanotaan ihan selkeästi niinku suulliset tavoitteet. Että tulee ymmärretyksi niinku sillä kielellä.

Alice: [The goals are based] In the OPS (or the core curriculum), in the OPS, yes, in the OPS. It is clearly said in there that like oral skills. To be understood in that language.

The goals for pronunciation in the core curriculum divided opinions among the participants. The Spanish teachers were not impressed with the core curriculum. Lucía thought that the content is quite vague regarding Spanish oral skills (15). She continued that a great part depends on the teacher. For example, there are no guidelines on what to teach of pronunciation on each grade on a national level, and there are many things that the teacher has to decide. María, as well, thought that the core curriculum is vague regarding Spanish since it is an optional subject in school, and sometimes the goals are not realistic. Furthermore, pupils from different schools are on different levels of proficiency even if they started at the same time and receive similar grades. Thus, when María teaches pupils in upper secondary school, and they come from different lower secondary schools, some learners might not know anything, and others are very proficient.

(15) Lucía: Espanjassa suullisen kielitaidon ops on mun mielestä... Se on aika niinku ympäröörä.

Lucía: I think that the core curriculum for oral skills in Spanish is... It's pretty like vague.

On the contrary, Alice was quite satisfied with how the oral skills are included in the core curriculum. Still, she mentioned worrying about how teachers might not internalise the contents of the curriculum (16). For example, some teachers might think that pronunciation teaching is

done by letting pupils read the texts from the textbook out loud. Thus, teachers skip the pronunciation exercises, for example minimal pairs, from the book because they feel that they are not relevant at the moment. She also wondered whether teachers are willing to change when the core curriculum changes. Furthermore, teachers tend to interpret the core curriculum as they desire highlighting certain areas and diminishing others. Hailey, on the other hand, admitted that it has been a while since she read the core curriculum regarding oral skills. She mentioned that she has spent some time reading the criterion regarding final assessment and how it mentions intelligibility and the number of mistakes.

(16) Alice: No se on hyvä, että ne [tavoitteet] on siellä. Mä vaan vähän pelkään, että ne voi jäädä niinku opettajalle... Jos se ei niinku sisäistä mikä se ajatus siinä on, niin ne voi jäädä vähän silleen ulkokultaisiksi.

Alice: Well, it is good that they [the goals] are there. I am slightly afraid that they can be, for the teacher, a bit... If they do not internalise what the idea is, so they can stay a bit hollow.

Goals in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR raised mixed feelings among the English teachers. Alice mentioned that she views the CEFR critically even though it is directly linked to the goals in the core curriculum. She continued that while the CEFR is meant to unify goals in Europe, teachers from Finland tend to be more critical than, for example, teachers from Italy (17). Hailey, on the other hand, thought that the goals in the CEFR are somewhat realistic although sometimes it is hard to know how realistic they actually are due to her experience as a teacher. For example, the goals seem sometimes modest because she describes her pupils to be often very talented and above their required level.

(17) Alice: Että se yhteismitallisuus eurooppalaisessa viitekehyksessä ei ole välttämättä sama. Jos ajatellaan viitekehystä itsessään. Että niinku osaa kertoa kuka on, kertoa harrastuksestaan blaa blaa blaa. Italialainen opettaja voi olla että "joo, totta kai se osaa sitä ja tätä ja on tuolla tasolla" kun taas suomalainen ajattelee, että no siinä se tekee kyllä virheitä ja tuo se ei ole ihan...

Alice: That the comparability in the CEFR could be limited. If one thinks of the Framework in itself. That, like, you can tell who you are, tell about your hobby, bla bla bla. Italian teacher can be like "yeah,

of course they can do this and that and they are at that level” when a Finnish teacher, on the other hand, thinks that, well, there they are making mistakes and that is not quite...

The Spanish teachers viewed the CEFR more positively. Lucía thought that it provides good guidelines that would benefit especially new teachers. On the other hand, she raised the question of interpreting the guidelines and the lack of a unified interpretation (18). Similarly to Alice, Lucía mentioned worrying about Spanish teachers in Finland. She described that they tend to focus on grammar especially in the fifth and sixth grade, which could, in turn, limit the time from practising oral skills. María would like language teaching to rely more on the CERF. Using the current grading system does not provide a comparable baseline. Thus, María would prefer to use the descriptive levels from the CEFR and not give traditional grades. In addition, she hoped that AI would bring a solution to this in the future (19).

(18) Lucía: ...kun pyörittelee vaikka Cervantes, sitten tää viitekehys ja sitten ops. Kun sä jotenkin katsot sitä kaikkea ja sitten kaupunki on tehnyt oman tulkintansa, miten vaikka A2 espanjan ops:ia tulkitaan. Siihen vielä oppikirjat niin välillä se linja ei oo niinku yhteinen.

Lucía: ... when you read, for example, Cervantes, then there is the CEFR, and then the national core curriculum. When you look at all of that, and then the city has done its own interpretation of how, for example, the national core curriculum of A2 Spanish is interpreted. When you add the schoolbooks, the sometimes the line is not like unified.

(19) María: Tekoälytutori sitten niinku veisi tavallaan sitä oppilasta niin niissä asioissa eteenpäin omaa taitiaan ja sitten se kertoisi että “hei, olet nyt saavuttanut tämän tason B1.1” ja mun ei tarvitsi antaa mitään niinku semmoista kouluarvosanaa niille...

María: AI tutor would, like, take the pupil at their own pace forward and then it would tell like “hey, you have achieved the level B1.1” and I would not have to give them any, like, school grade to them...

The National Core Curriculum and The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages caused mixed feelings among the participants. The Spanish teachers viewed the NCC

in a more negative light compared to the English teacher. The main reason Lucía and María discussed was vagueness of the NCC. The reason for these views would require further research. Perhaps, this could be connected to the nature of the languages in the core curriculum. English as a language has its own section in it while Spanish shares the curriculum with other foreign languages. Thus, it cannot be too detailed to apply for many different languages causing the NCC to seem vague.

On the contrary, the Spanish teachers viewed the CEFR more positively than the English teachers. Lucía mentioned using different guidelines like the levels of reference from the Instituto Cervantes, which are based in the CEFR, the CEFR itself, and the curricula on a national and regional level. This could show that the vagueness of the core curriculum makes Spanish teachers more accustomed to using different sources for reference. Therefore, they view the CEFR more positively while English teachers view it more critically.

4.2.3 Methods of pronunciation teaching and teaching materials

The participants use a variety of teaching methods for teaching pronunciation. All participants mentioned using listen and repeat activities. Lucía and María mentioned also teaching basic pronunciation rules. Other methods used by Lucía included reading aloud exercises and teacher correcting and pointing out how to pronounce. Also, Hailey and Alice use reading aloud exercises. These traditional methods show support to Tergujeff's (2012) study on teaching methods. Alice also teaches sounds using the phonetic alphabet (20). She mentioned an exercise where she writes a word on a board with the phonetic alphabet and the pupils need to find the word from the vocabulary and write it in Finnish and English to whiteboards. Alice also mentioned listening to the chapters from the book and singing songs. Hailey reported using discussion exercises and speaking English in class as methods for practicing pronunciation.

(20) Alice: Mä opetan niitä äännteitä. Mä opetan niitä foneettisia merkkejä, että ne oppii niinku lukemaan sitä kirjoitusta.

Alice: I teach the sounds. I teach the phonetic alphabet, so they learn to, like, read the writing.

Here, the language the participants teach does not seem to have a great impact on the methods. The greatest difference between English teachers and Spanish teachers was the teaching of pronunciation rules. For example, some letter combinations cause differences in pronunciation, but there are rules in that can be easily taught. In English, the rules for pronunciation are more complex which could be the reason why they are not taught in English lessons. On the contrary, Alice mentioned teaching the phonetic alphabet which is widely used in English teaching while in Spanish it is used perhaps in tertiary education in Finland.

Hailey and Lucía highlighted the importance of positive atmosphere in the classroom for teaching and learning pronunciation among teaching methods. Hailey thought that it is important to use as much English as possible to get the pupils accustomed to speaking and making mistakes. Thus, a positive and relaxed atmosphere is key. Furthermore, it is essential to make the pupils feel like it is normal to make mistakes, so they are not afraid to speak (21). Lucía also emphasises positivity in the class by giving positive feedback and by intervening if pupils make negative comments about the pronunciation of others. She also corrects mistakes she hears by addressing the whole class together after a reading exercise to avoid calling out one pupil.

(21) Hailey: Kun kehittyy se kieli[taito] niin se ajatus päässä miltä se kuulostaa on hyvin eri monesti, kun se sitten kun sen suun avaa niin sieltä tulee joku ihan, ihan erilainen ääni kuin oli ajateltu. Niin silleen siedätetään ja tehdään sitä aika paljon. Ehkä semmoinen niinku just virheitä salliva, rento ilmapiiri.

Hailey: When the language [skill] develops than the idea in your head what it sounds like is often very different than, when you actually open your mouth, out comes some completely, completely different sound than you thought. So, like that we desensitise and do it a lot. Maybe just like a relaxed atmosphere where it is ok to make mistakes.

English teachers were more satisfied with the already existing teaching materials than the Spanish teachers. Alice felt that there are enough materials in the schoolbooks, but it depends on the teacher whether the materials are utilised. Hailey also thought that there are enough materials, and they are quite versatile. Still, she mentioned that sometimes the materials feel artificial. On the contrary, Lucía argued that the schoolbooks do not have materials to teach pronunciation. Moreover, she criticised the contents of materials in the book series *Cometa* because they teach

pronunciation with words that elementary school learners do not understand. María thought that the amount of pronunciation teaching materials depends on the book series used (22). These views could imply a difference between the Spanish and English teaching materials. Maybe the contents in the teaching materials do not fulfil the teacher's needs for teaching. On the other, there could be a difference between the quality in the teaching materials since both Spanish teachers felt great discontent with the teaching materials. Moreover, Spanish is studied to lesser degree in Finland compared to English leading to a higher quality in the English teaching materials.

(22)María: Ja niinku riippuu kirjasarjasta hirveesti. *Mi Mundossa* on hyvin. Opetushallituksen materiaaleissa... *Estrellas*. Niissä ei ole yhtään mitään. Lukiolaisilla on huonot materiaalit.

María: And it really depends on the book series. *Mi Mundo* has quite a bit. Materials from the Finnish National Agency for Education... *Estrellas*. They have nothing. Upper secondary school learners have bad materials.

The participants had different wishes for pronunciation teaching materials. María mentioned wanting generally good quality materials. Furthermore, she would like the materials to have a lot of recordings. She gave an example of an exercise where the pupils must add missing verbs to a conversation. Having a recording of the exercise for the pupils to hear would support the learning of pronunciation according to María. Lucía, on the other hand, would like to have more support in assessing oral skills from the teaching materials (23) and that the materials would use words that the pupils already know to teach pronunciation. Alice would like to see an app that uses AI so pupils can practise speaking. Hailey thought that the materials should have a section where all the pronunciation rules would be compiled. She also wished that there would be more tongue twisters since they create humour (24).

(23)Lucía: Ääntämisen arviointiin harvemmin oppimateriaaleissa on että "ok hei, näin voit lähteä arvioimaan tätä suullista tota osaamista". Niin se voisi olla ehdottomasti yksi tuki.

Lucía: In the teaching materials there are rarely like “ok, hey, this is how you can assess the oral umm... skills. So that could absolutely be a support.

(24) Hailey: Mä toivoisin tongue twistereitä ja kaikkialle. Ne on hauskoja ja niissä kaikki mokaa niin sitten niissä saa mokaa ja sitten kukin voi vähän mokaa.

Hailey: I wish for tongue twisters and everywhere. They are fun, and everyone makes mistakes with them so then you are allowed to make mistakes and then everyone can make some mistakes.

While all participants reported a variety of teaching methods, the majority could be considered as traditional teaching methods. The greatest difference between the English and Spanish teachers was the teaching of pronunciation rules. Considering teaching materials, English teachers were more satisfied with the teaching materials. Still, all participants had some wishes for teaching materials. There was not clear combining element between the wishes which could suggest that there are some personal preferences and desires for the teaching materials.

4.2.4 Models in pronunciation teaching

Both Spanish teachers speak Castilian or Spanish from Spain in the classroom. Lucía explained that she speaks Castilian because that was the model used in upper secondary school by the teacher and in the teaching materials when she was in school. She has also wondered about switching the variant, but she has chosen to use Castilian for a few reasons. She thought that most likely her pupils are going to Spain for a vacation where Castilian or a variant closer to Castilian is spoken. Thus, Castilian would benefit her pupils more. Often, the closer geographical distance affects the choice of models (Lintunen and Dufva, 2017: 43). Furthermore, Lucía argues that it is clearer for the learners to start with one variant, which is the main variant used in schoolbooks, and branch out along their learning journey (25).

(25) Lucía: Joo, että ensin antaa tavallaan yksi malli. Niin, en mä tiedä onko sekään nyt oikein, mutta ehkä ettei ne huku siihen suohon, että asia voidaan sanoa kymmenellä tavalla.

Lucía: Yes, that first give one model in a way. Well, I don't know if that is the correct way, but maybe they don't get confused with that a thing can be said in ten different ways.

María also speaks Castilian but with intonation from Galicia. Originally, she spoke Latin American Spanish because that is what she heard until going to Spain as an exchange student. After that experience, she has only spoken Castilian and trying to speak Latin American Spanish in class is difficult (26).

(26) María: No mä siis puhun Espanjan espanjaa ja niinkuin galicialaisella sävelkululla. [...] Yleensä mä yritän aina välillä sanoa joitain sanoja silleen niinku s:llä [niin kuin Latinalaisen Amerikan espanjassa], mutta se on mulle aivan järkyttävän vaikeaa.

María: Well, I speak Spanish from Spain and with like Galician intonation. [...] Usually, I try to say sometimes some words with like "s" [like in Latin American Spanish], but it is very difficult for me.

English teachers do not clearly select one variant that they use. Hailey mentioned that even though her English is closer to American English, it is often a mix of different variants. Moreover, she would like to think that she offers a global model similar to lingua franca. She thought that it is closer to American English because that is what she heard the most when she was in school. Still, the English she used in school varied and was not clearly one or the other. Similarly, Alice did not report having a clear variant she uses (27). Furthermore, she mentioned that the variant depends on her level of energy although admitting that her pupils keep claiming that she speaks British English.

(27) Alice: No, tarjoan just semmoisen sekaisen, semmoisen brittienglanti, amerikanenglanti, rallienglantivirtelmän. Riippuu ihan vireystason mukaan.

Alice: Well, I offer a mixed, like British English, American English, rally English system. Depends completely on my level of energy.

According to the participants' views, there seems to be a clear difference between the participants related to the language they teach. English teachers do not have a clear variant they use, while the Spanish teachers have a clear choice of variant which is Castilian. This could be related to the current role of English as a lingua franca and English as world language. Therefore, the English teachers may not feel a need for choosing a variant. While there has been some discussion of a "neutral Spanish", there is no clear and well spread variant. Thus, the Spanish teachers could have a clear choice of variants. On the other hand, María mentioned that her previous experiences affected her choice of variants. Lucía also mentioned that her choice of variant could benefit her learners.

All participants mentioned that the materials used in school provide input from different varieties of the target language. Alice explained how new varieties are introduced in different grades like starting with British English in third grade and the main characters in book travel America in the fourth grade. Similarly, Hailey mentioned how different varieties appear in different chapters in the book according to the geographical location explored. María, as well, mentions that the book series *Mi Mundo* introduce different varieties but sometimes the speakers do not sound authentic (28). Still, some varieties are often ignored in the materials such as Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina. Lucía explained that in the new Spanish books they will be using will include a character from a Latin American country alongside Spanish characters.

(28) María: Kyllä siellä tulee aika monenlaista, että siis *Mi Mundossa* on. Siinä on niin kun meksikolaisia ja sitten se yksi on... Siinä sanotaan, että se on kuubalainen, mutta en ole ihan varma on se ihan kuubalainen. [...] koska tunnen myös yhden kuubalaisen niin epäilen sitä.

María: Yes, there are quite many different varieties, that in *Mi Mundo* there are. It has Mexicans, and then there is one... It is said that they are Cuban, but I am not really sure that they are Cuban. [...] because I know a Cuban person, so I doubt it.

Hailey, Alice, and María also highlighted the importance of using other materials outside the school materials to provide examples of different variants of the target language. All three

teachers mentioned using videos, movies, and series as tools of giving examples. María thought that showing different variants of Spanish is important to provide exposure to her pupils (29). In addition, she mentioned using music to explore varieties. Hailey and Alice, while using materials to show different foreign varieties, also discussed listening to Finnish people speaking English to discuss and analyse the samples with their pupils (30).

(29) María: Mutta että kyllä mä koitan aina tuoda vähän erilaisia (varieteetteja), että he joutuisivat altistumaan niille erilaisille aksenteille.

María: But that I try to bring a bit different (varieties), so they would get exposed to the different accents.

(30) Hailey: Laidasta laitaan. Suomalaisia poliitikkoja soitin yksin päivä. Analysoitiin heidän ääntämistä. Saitvat risuja ja ruusuja.

Hailey: Many different kinds. I played Finnish politicians one day. We analysed their pronunciation. They got positive and negative feedback.

The Spanish teachers reported using Castilian Spanish clearly indicating a clear choice of variant. On the contrary, the English teachers reported using a mix of variants while there might be a focus on one variant. Considering teaching materials, they provide many models of variants of the target language. Still, Alice, Hailey, and María considered it to be important to use also other materials besides the textbook to provide models for their learners.

4.2.5 Possible challenges in pronunciation teaching

Participants reported many different challenges when teaching pronunciation. Lucía discussed possible feelings of insecurity when teaching pronunciation of a foreign language (31). Also, Alice mentioned that a lack of knowledge in classroom can cause issues. Another difficulty Lucía mentioned was the limited time in the classroom. For example, longer texts and the fluency of reading requires more time. On the other hand, María focused on the challenges the pupils and their age bring. A major issue she discussed was the unwillingness of pupils to speak

in class. Thus, teaching pronunciation is challenging. Perhaps the unwillingness originates from avoiding embarrassment or trying to form better relationships with their peers (Laroy, 1995: 8). Hailey thought that a great challenge in teaching pronunciation is moving the act of practising outside the classroom (32). While Lucía and Alice shared the view on how the lack of knowledge can be challenge in teaching pronunciation, there seems to be no clear united issues among the participants related to the age of the learners or the language they teach.

(31) Lucía: Ehkä siinä on aina semmoinen tietynlainen epävarmuus sen suhteen, että tavallaan, koska se itsellekin se vieras kieli, että kuinka niin sanostusti oikeaoppisesti se nyt oikeasti menee.

Lucía: Maybe there is always a specific kind of insecurity regarding, in a way, because it is that foreign language for oneself, so how does it go correctly.

(32) Hailey: Tai en ole itse keksinyt, että miten sen niinku harjoittelun voisi viedä sen luokkatilanteen ulkopuolelle.

Hailey: Or I still have not figured out how to, like, take the practise outside of the classroom.

4.2.6 Education on pronunciation teaching

Only Hailey reported having any education on how to teach pronunciation. She mentioned that, in her studies, the role of a teacher as a model for pronunciation was highlighted. Furthermore, different types of pronunciation exercises were introduced, and how important it is to teach pronunciation consistently. Other participants like María reported not having been taught how to teach pronunciation (33) similarly to Couper's (2017) research. Still, Alice and Lucía discussed having courses on pronunciation but no education on pronunciation teaching.

(33) Hailey: Varmaan on ainakin opetettu olemaan niinku itse mallina ja kiinnittää paljon huomiota siihen, miten puhuu, jotta niinku tuli mahdollisimman vähän virheitä tai niinku epäjohtonmukaisuutta siinä puheessa mitä oppilaat kuulee. Sit varmaan aika perinteisiä niinku just tehtävätyyppejä esiteltiin, että mitä luokassa voi tehdä.

Hailey: Most likely we were taught to be like a model ourselves and pay attention to how one speak so there would be as few mistakes as possible or inconsistency in the speech that the pupils hear. Then most likely pretty traditional like types of pronunciation exercises were introduced, what could be done in class.

(34) María: Ei mitenkään [ole opetettu opettamaan ääntämistä].

María: I was not [taught how to teach pronunciation].

The participants had a few desires for further education on pronunciation teaching. Even though all except one of the participants reported having no education on pronunciation teaching, they did not feel a need for more education on pronunciation teaching methods. Hailey and Lucia wanted more education on assessment of pronunciation. Lucía was also interested in the assessment of oral skills in general. On the other hand, Alice discussed an interest for more knowledge on different varieties of languages she teaches. Similarly, Hailey wanted to know more about a specific variety and how to present it to her pupils: English as lingua franca (35). Moreover, she mentioned being interested in the possible expectations Finnish speakers could meet in the English-speaking working world. On the contrary, María did not have any desires on further education (36) feeling it would not be necessary on the level of education she works at.

(35) Hailey: Lingua franca-tyyppisestä, että miten sitä voisi ottaa nykypäivä jotenki enemmän esille. [...] Arviointi kiinnostaisi, että nyt just noi viitekehykset on muuttunu ja opetussuunnitelmat elää jatkuvasti, että miten se ääntämyksen asema päättöarvioinnissa tai kaikessa arvioinnissa.

Hailey: About lingua franca-type of English that how it could be presented more in the modern day. [...] Assessment would interest me, that just now the frameworks have changed, and the curricula are in constant change, that how is the role of pronunciation in the final assessment or in all assessment.

(36) María: En mä tiedä kaipaisinko mä mitään niin.

María: I do not know if I would need anything so.

While only Hailey mentioned having any education on pronunciation teaching, the participants did not desire to have further education on the topic. There were desires for education on assessment and for learning about different varieties. María was the only participant who thought that further education on pronunciation teaching would be unnecessary.

4.3 Views on learning pronunciation

English teachers considered teaching pronunciation to be a positive experience. Hailey and Alice, who teach English, saw pronunciation teaching as something meaningful, fun, and easy. Hailey viewed pronunciation teaching as a chance for positive and fun experiences for the learners. On the other hand, Alice highlighted how the activities to teach pronunciation can be made fun and action-based (37).

(37) Alice: On (mielekästä) ja helppoa. Musta niistä (tehtävistä) saa kivoja ja toiminnallisia esimerkiksi joku /p/ ja /b/ äänteiden opettaminen. Kun saat konkreettisesti laittaa paperit käteen ja sitten ne puhaltelee ja sanoo /p/ ja /b/ ja tuleeeko ilmaa...

Alice: It is meaningful and easy. I think that the activities can be fun and action-based, for example, teaching sounds like /p/ and /b/. When you can give them pieces of paper in hand and then they start blowing air and saying /p/ and /b/ and is air coming out...

Spanish teachers had mixed feelings about teaching pronunciation. Initially, Lucía reported having neutral or somewhat positive feelings. Although, she continued that the activities are fun especially for the young pupils and practising with them is fun. María felt that the age of the learners in lower secondary school sets limits on how willing the pupils are to practise pronunciation. While in lower secondary school, the teaching does not feel meaningful but teaching in upper secondary is more positive as an experience (38). There was no clear indication why English teachers viewed pronunciation teaching in a more positive way compared to the Spanish teachers. According to María, the age of the pupils affects it greatly. Still, Hailey,

who teaches pupils of same age, did not share María's views. The participants' personal experiences could affect these views, and further research is necessary to explore these views.

(38) María: Sitten taas lukiossa on niin paljon mielekkäämpää, koska lukiossa pystyy itse myös niinku elehtimään tosi voimakkaasti ja sitten kun teen sen myös yläkoululaisille niin ne ei ota sitä vastaan.

María: Then, in upper secondary school it is a lot more meaningful, because in upper secondary school I can gesture myself really strongly and when I do it for the lower secondary school pupils, they do not accept it.

Three participants thought that their pupils view pronunciation teaching positively. Hailey argued that, even though the pupils might be shy, they are eager to learn about pronunciation. Alice reported that she has never noticed that the pupils would actively dislike pronunciation teaching. On the contrary, the pupils seem to enjoy action-based pronunciation exercises, and they have fun with them (39). Lucía also shared these feelings of pupils enjoying pronunciation exercises even though they might feel nervous. Moreover, the learners often achieve a state of flow and feelings of success while doing pronunciation activities. On the other hand, María argued that the age of a learner heavily affects how they view pronunciation teaching (40) which could be connected with her personal mixed feelings on pronunciation teaching.

(39) Alice: Niistä toiminnallisista [tehtävistä] ne tykkää. Aina kun ne pääsee äänittää kaverin kanssa luokan ulkopuolelle niin ne tykkää.

Alice: They like the action-based [activities]. Always when they get to record with a friend outside the classroom, they like.

(40) María: Mut sitten niinku mitä isompia tavallaan on, että yläkouluikä niin se on niinku pahin, että sitten se ei niinku... Se on vaan niinku että ei oo kivaa kaikkien mielestä ja ehkä jonkun mielestä ei olekaan, mutta eihän uskalla näyttää sitä että, ei, tää on olisi mun mielestä (kivaa).

María: But then like the older they are in a way, that the age at lower secondary school is the worst that then it does not like... It is like that is is not fun for everyone and maybe for some it is not, but they do not dare to show it that, no, this would be (fun) for me.

The participants reported a great variety of reasons for why learners could have challenges in learning pronunciation. Most common reason among the participants was the challenges in speech production. Hailey and Alice discussed speech disorders or challenges in the ability to produce specific sounds. Also, Lucía mentioned the possible inability to produce specific sounds. These possible challenges in production can also originate from challenges in the perception or processing of segmentals and suprasegmentals (Moilanen, 2017: 142). In addition, Alice mentioned dyslexia as a possible challenge, and how the lack of connection between the orthography and pronunciation in English might cause issues (41). On the other hand, Hailey and María highlight the possible effects of the learners' background. In addition, the effects of the learners' age were raised by Alice and Lucía who teach elementary school learners. Alice discussed how realising the difference between the orthography and pronunciation of English is easier for some children and requires more time for others. She concluded that with age this problem is usually eliminated. On the contrary, Lucía argued that becoming a teenager can cause problems with learning pronunciation (42) similarly to Laroy's (1995: 8) views.

(41) Alice: Mä en osaa niinku selittää, että miksi joskus lapset niinku tosi nopeasti hiffaa sen esimerkiksi että kun kirjoitusasu on erilainen, kun se ääntämisasu. [...] Sitten osa edelleen tukeutuu siihen kirjoitusasuun ja niinku lukee niinku suomeksi englantia. Että ei uskalla päästää irti siitä, että niinku luottaisi siihen niiden korvaan.

Alice: I cannot explain why sometimes children like really fast realise that, for example, that when the orthography is different from the pronunciation. [...] Then, some keep relying on the orthography and like read like English as Finnish. That they are afraid to let go of that they would rely in their ear.

(42) Lucía: Sitten alkaa tippumaan silleen, että ei tee läksyjä ja ei oikein tunnilla kuuntele ja tekstit alkaa olemaan pitkiä ja alkaa vähän tippumaan kärryiltä kun motivaatio ja elämä on vähän myllerryksessä. [...] Kun tulee se teini-iän semmoinen, että kiinnostaa aika vahvasti että mitä toiset ajattelee

Lucía: Then you start dropping out like that you do not do homework and do not really listen in class and the texts start to be longer, and you start to lose track when motivation and life are in a bit of turmoil. [...] When comes the thing of being a teenager that you care quite a bit about what others think.

The feedback the participants provide for their pupils focuses on positivity and encouragement. Alice and Lucía, who teach mainly elementary school students, highlighted the importance of providing feedback in a way that avoids possibly embarrassing the learners like avoiding correcting them while they are reading (43). Similarly, María provides feedback for the whole group. She listens to the pupils reading something out loud, collects the parts that caused the biggest issues, and provides corrections to the whole group. In addition, Hailey raised a point of not allowing mean comments when the pupils provide peer feedback. On the other hand, María and Hailey also provide feedback of possible mistakes to singular students of critical mistakes when they hear them (44). This could be because they teach lower and upper secondary school learners. Perhaps the older learners do not become embarrassed of such feedback in their view. Further research would be necessary to discover reasons behind this difference between elementary school teachers and lower and upper secondary school teachers.

(43) Alice: Mä päätin hyvin alussa, että mä en korjaa lasta. [...] Positiivinen kannustus ja sitten semmoinen yhteinen korjaaminen.

Alice: I decided very early that I will not correct a child. [...] Positivise encouragement and then, in a way, making corrections together.

(44) María: Kun ne lukee jotain sanoja ääneen, mä kiertelen siellä ja sitten mä kuulen, että ne sanoo jonku vaikka “qu”[-yhdistelmä]ssä sen “u”:n, niin sitten mä kuiskaan sen että “tuota ei sanota tuota “u”:ta.

María: When they are reading some words out loud, I go around and then I hear that they say “u” in [the combination] “qu”, then I whisper that “you do not say the “u”.

The participants reported also other methods of providing feedback. Alice, Hailey, and Lucía mentioned using recordings that the pupils make to provide further and more detailed feedback. Furthermore, all participants said that they assess the recordings (45). Hailey was the only

teacher that mentioned peer-feedback regarding feedback on pronunciation formally and informally (46).

(45) Lucía: Siis ihan kirjoitin palautteen jokaiselle henkilökohtaisesti siitä lukemisesta keskittyen siihen positiiviseen eli vaikka että “hei, että tosi hienosti vaihtelet intonaatiota ja ja selkeä puhe” ja mä aina kerron niinku ensin ennen kuin me tehdään, että mitä tässä äänityksessä arvioidaan.

Lucía: I wrote feedback for everyone personally about the reading focusing on the positives like that “hey, that you change intonation very well, and, and clear speech”, and I always tell like before we do that what this is being assessed in the recording.

(46) Hailey: Kavereilta saavat myös palautetta. Sekä että [muodollisesti ja epämuodollisesti].

Hailey: They get feedback from buddies. In both ways [formally and informally].

Spanish teachers reported having mixed feelings about teaching pronunciation while English teachers viewed pronunciation teaching in a positive way. Still, Lucía, as well as the English teachers, thought that their pupils view pronunciation teaching in a positive light despite their possible challenges. The participants also reported many possible challenges what learners might have in learning pronunciation. These included challenges in producing specific sounds or speech disorders, the effect of the learners’ background, and the learners’ age. Finally, the participants give feedback on pronunciation that focuses on encouragement and positivity. The feedback is given by addressing the entire class when providing corrections on mistakes they hear by all participants. Hailey and María also give feedback on singular students. Giving feedback on pupils’ recordings was also mentioned by Alice, Hailey, and Lucía. Hailey also mentioned using peer feedback as a method of giving feedback.

5 CONCLUSION

In the present study, the aim was to examine the views of in-service English teachers and Spanish teachers on pronunciation teaching and learning. Furthermore, the aim was to discover whether these views differ between the two target groups. The study was conducted with interviews which is also the greatest strength of it. It provided a deeper understanding of the participants' subjective views. Oral skills, including pronunciation, are in key position in modern language education. Thus, the topic at hand is worth of research. In addition, while there is research in English pronunciation teaching and learning, there is limited research regarding Spanish pronunciation especially in the Finnish context. Moreover, language teachers' views have been a target of limited research.

All participants considered pronunciation to be important. Lucía and Alice, who teach elementary school, highlighted the younger age of their pupils as the reason why pronunciation is important. On the other hand, María and Hailey, who teach older learners, saw the importance of pronunciation in achieving intelligibility. In addition, segmental features and suprasegmental features are equally important to the participants. Still, all participants considered that it is easier to learn segmental features. Moreover, Hailey, Lucía, and María thought that learning segmental features are easier to teach while Alice considered them to be equal. Similarly, a participant in Baker's (2011: 281) mentioned that suprasegmental features are more difficult to teach. The participants also agreed that intelligibility is the goal of pronunciation teaching. Furthermore, the goals of pronunciation are based on intelligible pronunciation and on communication. These findings show support to Couper's (2017) research, and they also reflect the contents of CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020). The teaching methods

reported by the participants relied heavily on traditional teaching methods such as listen and repeat similarly to Tergujeff's (2012) research.

There were also differences between the English teachers and the Spanish teachers. First, the NCC and the CEFR divided opinions. English teachers viewed the core curriculum with more positivity and, on the contrary, the CEFR raised mixed feelings among them. Second, the Spanish teachers were more displeased with the already existing teaching materials when considering pronunciation. Third, there is a clear difference in the choice of variants. The Spanish teachers have a clear choice, which was Castilian in the present study. Similarly, Lintunen and Dufva (2017: 43) argue that a chosen model often comes from a nearby region. On the contrary, the English teachers reported not having a clear variant they use. Lintunen and Dufva (2017: 49) inform that choosing a model similar to lingua franca is possible. Finally, the English teachers considered pronunciation teaching to be a more positive experience while the Spanish teachers had mixed feelings on teaching pronunciation.

Some differences in the participants' views were related to the grade the participants were teaching. Lucía and Alice, who teach elementary school, placed more importance on pronunciation while María and Hailey, who teach lower and upper secondary school, did not place special emphasis on pronunciation in teaching. Similarly, Ullakonoja and Dufva (2017: 32) argue that children seem to learn pronunciation quite effortlessly which is possibly due to the development of the brain and the process of social development. This reflects Lucía and Alice's views in the present study. In addition, Hailey and María reported providing feedback on pronunciation to singular students in class while Lucía and Alice did not report doing this. Tergujeff et al (2017: 100) argue that teachers should not avoid giving feedback in the fear of increasing anxiety. Although, feedback provided should be encouraging, and correcting mistakes should not be the only form of giving feedback. Alice mentioned explicitly that she would not correct mistakes explicitly in order to avoid embarrassing her pupils. Still, further research is necessary to discover how and why teachers provide feedback.

The findings of the present study could indicate a need for improvements for teachers. Especially Spanish teachers considered the core curriculum to be vague. Perhaps, further support could improve how Spanish teachers view teaching pronunciation. In addition, Hailey and

Lucía desired more knowledge on how to assess pronunciation and oral skills. Still, even though the participants, excluding Hailey, mentioned having no education on pronunciation teaching, the participants had no desires for further education on how to teach pronunciation. Similarly, the participants in Couper's (2017) study had limited or no training on pronunciation teaching. Another issue raised by the Spanish teachers were the teaching materials. This could indicate a need for improvement on Spanish teaching materials regarding pronunciation teaching. Also, the clear difference between the English teachers and the Spanish teachers was the choice of variants. The English teachers had no clear choice of variants and reported using a mix of different variants. The Spanish teachers had clearly chosen one variant which was Castilian in the present study. Lucía mentioned that one reason why she uses Castilian is because it is more likely that the pupils would travel to Spain instead of Latin America. Also, Lintunen and Dufva (2017: 43) inform that the chosen model often comes from a nearby region. It would require further research to discover why this is and whether other English and Spanish teachers share the same view.

Still, there are limitations to the present study. The sample size was small which prevents generalisations. Furthermore, a larger sample size would present a larger variety of views and experiences teaching pronunciation. Still, the current study provides a basis for further research on pronunciation teaching and learning. In addition, while this study is interested in the subjective views of teachers, the participants could have been especially interested in the topic. Therefore, it is possible that this affected the views of the participants. Moreover, the participants of the present study were acquaintances of the researcher. This could have affected the interviews negatively like hiding information (Johnston, 2010, as cited in Hyvärinen et al. 2017). Still, it could have been a benefit since the aim was to discover the subjective views of the participants on pronunciation teaching and learning. For example, the shared elements like experiences, code, and language can facilitate communication (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 102-103; Hintsala 2012: 33 as cited in Hyvärinen et al. 2017).

The findings of the present study also call for further research. Understanding the mixed feelings related with the NCC and the CEFR would require more research. Furthermore, finding the reason why English teachers view pronunciation teaching more positively than the Spanish teachers would need further research. Also, Spanish teachers were less satisfied with the

teaching materials. Understanding why they felt this and discovering the differences between English and Spanish teaching materials calls for more research.

To conclude, the findings of the present study shed light on how English teachers and Spanish teachers view teaching and learning pronunciation. Furthermore, they provide a view on the differences of these views between English and Spanish teachers. While the participants focus on intelligibility in pronunciation teaching, which can also be considered the focus of modern pronunciation (see e.g. Council of Europe, 2020), the teaching methods rely heavily on the traditional methods similarly to Tergujeff's (2012) research. The findings of the current study could also indicate Spanish teachers could benefit from further support from the core curriculum and teaching materials. While there were differences between English and Spanish teachers, the age of the learners can also affect the teachers' views. Overall, the findings of the present study provide a glimpse on the views of English and Spanish teachers in Finland, a base for further research and how to provide support for language teachers on teaching pronunciation.

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APPENDIX: THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERVIEW

1. Kuinka tärkeänä pidät ääntämistä?
2. Millainen rooli ääntämisellä on opetuksessasi?
 - 2.1. Painoarvo?
3. Millaisena koet ääntämisen opettamisen?
 - 3.1. Onko opettaminen mielekästä?
4. Mitä tavoitteita asetat ääntämisen opettamisessa?
 - 4.1. Ymmärrettävyys vai natiivinkaltainen ääntäminen?
 - 4.2. Mihin nämä tavoitteet perustuvat?
 - 4.3. Mitä mieltä olet opetussuunnitelmassa asetetuista tavoitteista?
 - 4.4. Entä Eurooppalainen viitekehys?
5. Kummat ovat mielestäsi tärkeämpiä ääntämisessä: yksittäiset äänneet vai prosodia?
 - 5.1. Onko toista helpompi oppia?
 - 5.2. Entä opettaa?
6. Millaisia ääntämisen malleja opetuksessasi tarjotaan? (RP/amer) (Castellano/amer)
 - 6.1. Opettaja/valmiit materiaalit/muu?
 - 6.2. Miten valitset mallit?
7. Miten tunneillasi opitaan ääntämistä/Miten opetat ääntämistä?
8. Onko valmiissa materiaaleissa eväitä, mitä toivoisit?
9. Miten sinua on opetettu opettamaan ääntämistä?
 - 9.1. Opettajan koulutus, uran aikana?
 - 9.2. Kaipaisitko täydennyskoulutusta/millaista?
10. Miten oppijat saavat palautetta ääntämisestä?
11. Mitä ajattelet, miten oppilaat suhtautuvat ääntämisen opettamiseen?
12. Millaisia haasteita ääntämisen oppimisessa voi olla?
13. Millaisia haasteita voi olla ääntämisen opettamisessa?