

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORDS FOR BOTH LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

The foregoing discussion explores the effects of teaching the pronunciation of some commonplace words to a group of 40 Galician 1st year BAC students, with a view to avoiding unintelligible linguistic situations. It is well-known that words such as 'knowledge, debt, yesterday, honour, bury, cut, dirty, aunt and young' among others may cause obstacles to communication when being mispronounced or distressed in a sentence. Sometimes, these errors are due to the fact that learners are not familiar with the meaning of the words, other times they are not sure about the correct pronunciation and sometimes it is because such words have been wrongly taught.

To improve this scenario, contrary to popular belief, we would like to make it clear that pronunciation is teachable and students/speakers can get acquainted with correct pronunciations through mnemonic rules, pedagogical tips, varied games, technological activities and new ideas. Accordingly, we aim at identifying appropriate pedagogical priorities for the classroom, analysing the relation between segmental and suprasegmental features, determining effective approaches to teach pronunciation and recovering the importance of the word as the cornerstone for every language event, every communicative exchange and for the interface linguistics/learning. We conclude by offering some pedagogical implications about the strategic behaviour students should adopt to be successful in language learning, use and practice.

Key words: unintelligible linguistic situations, segmental, suprasegmental, effective approaches, word as cornerstone, strategic behaviour.