

# MASTER'S THESIS

## The Sound of English

### The Effect on Dutch Preschool Pupils' Pronunciation by implementing an English Articulation Training for Teachers

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# The Sound of English

The Effect on Dutch Preschool Pupils' Pronunciation  
by implementing an English Articulation Training for  
Teachers

## Engelse uitspraak

Het effect van een Engelse Articulatietraining voor  
Leerkrachten op de Uitspraak van Leerlingen van Groep 1  
en 2

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Master Onderwijswetenschappen

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Date: July 2019

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## Contents

Contents.....	2
Summary.....	3
Introduction.....	5
Method.....	9
Participants.....	9
Materials.....	9
EATDPT.....	10
Design.....	10
Procedure.....	11
Experimental Group.....	12
Experimental and Control Group.....	13
Statistical Analysis.....	14
Results.....	14
Discussion.....	21
Reference List.....	23
Appendix.....	25
<i>Appendix 1</i> .....	25
<i>Appendix 2</i> .....	26
<i>Appendix 3</i> .....	26
<i>Appendix 4</i> .....	27
<i>Appendix 5</i> .....	28
<i>Appendix 6</i> .....	29
<i>Appendix 7</i> .....	29

## Summary

### *Background*

The Dutch government encourages English at all levels of education. English is compulsory at high school and the highest classes of primary school. Pronunciation is often ignored and many pronunciation errors persist, as it is one of the most difficult features of the language. Hermans developed a computer assisted tool to teach pronunciation at Dutch high schools. He addressed pronunciation in six categories. The results were positive, but the sustainable effect thereof inconclusive, because teachers experienced lack of time to implement the tool added to the fact that there was a lack of support from school leaders. In this study we duplicated Hemans's study with preschool teachers who experience more support from educational institutions to enhance the sustainable effect.

### *Aim*

The aim was to improve preschool pupils' pronunciation by training the preschool teachers. We developed an English articulation training for Dutch preschool teachers (EATDPT) in which six pronunciation categories were taught: aspiration, linking r, th-unvoiced, th-voiced, English e, English oak.

### *Participants*

The participants were four preschool teachers and 50 preschool pupils. Their native language is Dutch.

### *Procedure*

We conducted an experimental design in which two teachers with 18 pupils were in the control group and 32 pupils in the experimental group. All teachers read English literature books to the pupils, six lessons of 15 minutes each, during a period of three weeks. The objective was to increase correct English vocabulary usage. Therefore, the teachers in the experimental group joined the EATDPT to improve the pronunciation within six categories.

### *Design*

Using a Switch Design, all teachers could join the EATDPT. The second round of the Switch Design is beyond the scope of this research.

### *Measures*

Basing our observation on pupils' progress, a Repeated measures was carried out, using SPSS to establish the effect of EATDPT on correct pronounced English vocabulary usage within six categories. The effect of EATDPT on pronunciation within six categories of Dutch preschool pupils is significant, for the categories as a whole and on the categories aspiration, th-unvoiced, English e and English separately.

### *Results*

The findings showed a significant increase in English vocabulary usage by preschool pupils after reading English books. Furthermore, we established that reading of English books by preschool

teachers in combination with the training English articulation to Dutch preschool teachers (EATDPT) will lead to an increased correct English vocabulary usage by pupils. This means that EATDPT has a positive effect on Dutch preschool pupils' pronunciation. We presented in this study that preschool pupils whose teachers followed the training English articulation to Dutch preschool teachers had more correct English vocabulary usage than those whose teachers did not.

#### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, this study provides strong evidence that pupils, whose teacher participated in the EATDPT increased the correct English vocabulary usage.

Tags: pronunciation, preschool pupils, articulation training, English vocabulary usage

## Introduction

When one is learning English as a foreign language, pronunciation is one of the most difficult features of the language (Yule, 2006). ‘Making the sound of a word or part of a word in the correct or a particular way’ (Oxford dictionary, 2019) is a vital aspect of the language, heavily influencing communication and credibility; The sounds are vibrations that travel through the air and can be heard when they reach a person's ear. When people do not produce the correct English sounds, thus not pronouncing English correctly, they are taken less seriously than those expressing the native language (Hermans, 2018). Dutch speakers of English often overestimate their English pronunciation skills (European Commission, 2006; Hermans, 2018); this can have effect on for example businesses; they put themselves at a disadvantage because of poor pronunciation skills. This is not surprising as teaching pronunciation is an often-neglected aspect within the Dutch school system. For instance, six years of high school training does not alter the most common pronunciation mistakes Dutch speakers of English make. Hermans (2018) notices that while pursuing intelligibility and communication, pronunciation is ignored and errors persist.

As high schools’ students are in the critical period of learning a foreign language, Hermans examined the effect of addressing articulation to high school- and higher education students. Articulation is ‘The formation of a speech sound by constriction of the air flow in the vocal organs at a particular place for example the tongue, teeth, or palate and in a particular way for example as a plosive, affricate’ (Oxford Dictionary, 2019). He collected data from students before and after addressing articulation. He analysed the data and assigned them into categories. Hermans developed learning material, a computer-assisted pronunciation teaching tool (CAPTT), to address each of these categories. He rated the improvement of the experimental group who did receive articulation lessons. After Hermans evaluated the programme, less pronunciation errors occurred. It had a positive effect on the students, though one year later the sustainable effect thereof had diminished. Lack of time to implement CAPTT in the lessons and lack of support of school leaders was the reason posed by teachers not to continue with CAPTT in their lessons. With implementation we mean that the intervention tool is put into effect.

Considering the beneficial effect of CAPTT on pronunciation, a duplicate of Hermans’s research was preferred. To secure the sustainability effect, teachers were selected who enjoyed support from school leaders and for whom time was not an obstacle. The prerequisite was that the learning capability of pupils could be compared with that of the high school students. We selected Dutch preschool teachers as they are supported by government and commissions. Their pupils are open to language acquisition (Yule, 2006). Describing the levels of support from macro-, to micro level, the European Commission

encourages multilingualism among their member states (European Commission, 2012). More than 90% of European high school students learn English as a foreign language, i.e. a ‘language not spoken in the surrounding community’ (Yule, 2006, p. 162). On national level the Dutch government encourages English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at all levels of Education (Dekker, 2013). English is a compulsory subject in high schools (Rijksoverheid, 2019). The former Minister of Education, Bussemaker, plead for Internationalisation in Education as it enhances knowledge, creativity, professional skills, innovation, entrepreneurship, and personal growth (Bussemaker, 2014). Today, subsidies are available for schools offering English lessons to young pupils (Algemene Vereniging School Leiders, 2019). An increasing number of primary schools are offering English to preschool pupils, as an option. There is not yet a fixed English curriculum for preschools, they are free to choose the method of their choice. On that account, we presumed preschool teachers would be willing to invest their time in implementing pronunciation in their lessons.

The differences between the two groups were first taken into consideration to know if a duplicate of Hermans’s research was feasible. The substantial difference in age between students, aged 12 years and older, and preschool pupils, aged four and five, called for reconsideration of learning method and the teaching tool. Different levels of teacher’s proficiency are related to their level of education; university, higher education, and teacher training college. The language level of the preschool teachers and pupils needed to be reviewed. Taken into consideration these differences, students and young children have in common that both groups do range within the critical period for language development (Yule, 2006); Teenagers are open to learning a language and young children are open to acquiring languages (Yule, 2006) The literature distinguishes between learning and acquiring. Acquiring a language is ‘a gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situations with others who know the language’ (Yule, 2006, p. 162). Learning a language involves accumulating knowledge at schools or other organisational settings. The acquiring and learning will be explained by three models of language theory and linked to both Hermans’s and this current research.

The first model, based on behaviourism and widely used in the 50s and 60s is, the contrastive analysis hypothesis (Mahmood & Murad, 2018). It describes foreign language acquisition as habit formation and imitation. The mother tongue (L1) is compared with the foreign language (L2). Language families are categorised. Languages belonging to the same language family are more similar than languages belonging to different families. The degree of difference between L2 and L1 explains the obstacles experienced by the L2 learner. Thus, areas of difficulty can be predicted for the learner. Both teachers and learners can easily see what part of the language is mastered and what still needs to be addressed.

The second model is the error analysis. This foreign language model is based on behaviourism. It describes clearly the areas of difficulty for learners. Errors occur when learners do not know the correct pronunciation and mistakes occur when the learner occasionally pronounces a word incorrectly. This model provides teaching materials and syllabi. It encourages feedback to prepare students for assessments.

The third model is the interlanguage theory. This theory, based on cognitivism and constructivism focuses on language acquisition. In the contrastive analysis hypothesis and the error analysis, the obstacles learners experience is related to L1 as no other possible influences are considered. The interlanguage theory describes various variables effecting language acquisition: language transfer, training transfer, learning strategies. The training is successful when learners are able to transfer what is being taught to real-life situations. Learners use cognitive-, metacognitive-, memory-, compensation-, social-, and affective strategies in the learning process (O'Malley, Chamot, 1990 as described in Mahmood, 2018). Language learning is described as a linguistic system with its own sets of rules that occurs between L1 and L2 (Cook and Newson, 2007 & Yule, 2006). This could be observed when listening to young children, as they naturally acquire the language (Lenneberg, 1967, as described in Mahmood, p.99). Young children are able to draw from a universal latent language structure which Chomsky has described in his well-known theory of universal grammar and language acquisition.

Comparing the three models, the first two models focuses on performance and accuracy, with feedback and assessment as central aspects, the third model focuses on competence and fluency (Alkhresha, 2016, as described in Mahmood p. 98; Lightbown & Spada, 2006b, p. 140).

Hermans's research contains aspects that could be recognized in the contrastive analysis hypothesis and error analysis. He addresses pronunciation errors for Dutch speakers of English, thus comparing the English language to Dutch to be able to clearly describe the areas of difficulty for learners. At a later stage of second language learning, exercises are designed for the specific error categories. Furthermore, Hermans developed a teaching tool addressing accuracy as a separate aspect of pronunciation, feedback as an essential means of improving teaching materials. It focuses on pronunciation errors. Essential in analysing the features of L2 are the cognitive skills. CAPPT is a well-designed cognitive teaching tool for the advanced learner (Yule, 2006).

The error analysis and contrastive analysis is used to design a teaching tool for the current study: English Articulation Training for Teachers (EATDPT). Six pronunciation categories, aspiration, linking r, th-unvoiced, th-voiced, English e, English oak are addressed in six online lessons, implementing the stories and vocabulary from the CAPPT. In the



EATDPT the British English sounds are taught, according the pronunciation described and heard in the Oxford

Dictionary. The interlanguage theory is used to develop learning strategies for young children, as we do not expect the pupils to rely on their cognitive skills to learn a language, but to rely on acquisition. This requires communicative situations with others who know the language' (Yule, 2006, p. 162). The challenge in this research is to create communicative situations for pupils to introduce them to a high standard of English. The teachers and pupils have to absorb new vocabulary in a period of three weeks.

Pupils will score higher marks at school, can absorb more information, will be more creative and flexible provided their basic needs of autonomy, competence and connectedness are not ignored (Reeve, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2002). These basic needs are permanent (Stevens, 1997) and universal (Gillet, Vallerand, & Lafreniere, 2012). Autonomy is provided when a child may choose to take part in an activity (Roth, Assor, Niemiec, Deci, & Ryan, 2009). This does not mean that pupils are always permitted to choose their activities as a certain amount of guidance enforces the autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Reeve, 2004). Connectedness is provided as young children connect to people they know and experience a sense of safety; young pupils are in normal circumstances naturally connected to their parents and teachers. This provides the pupils with the possibility of investigating new skills (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Bretherton, 1987). The final basic need is competence; the pupil experiences positive learning situations, the pupil is able to extend and refine the existing knowledge (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Taking into consideration the three basic needs to support the acquiring of the language, reading of English classical literature by preschool teachers was chosen with a high level of English vocabulary as learning tool. Reading to young pupils enhances autonomy, connectedness and competence and is an effective way to enhance vocabulary (Krashen, 2004). To summarize, in this study we designed a cognitive training for the teachers, based on contrastive analysis and error analysis for learning the language. We chose reading two English books by preschool teachers for pupils, based on the interlanguage theory for acquiring the language.

We want to examine if reading of English books by preschool teachers will lead to an increased English vocabulary usage by pupils. Furthermore, we want to ascertain whether reading of English books by preschool teachers in combination with the training English articulation to Dutch preschool teachers (EATDPT) will lead to an increased correct English vocabulary usage by pupils. We wish to calculate the effect EATDPT has on Dutch preschool pupils' pronunciation. We make the following hypothesis: preschool pupils whose teachers followed the training English articulation to Dutch preschool teachers will use more

correct English vocabulary usage than those whose teachers did not. The sustainable effect of this study is beyond the scope of this research.

## Method

### Participants

Four female preschool teachers and 50 pupils aged four and five, participated in this study. The native language of both teachers and children is Dutch; English is their foreign language. The two intact classrooms a number of 18 pupils joined their two teachers in the control group and the two intact classrooms, with a total of 32 pupils joined their teachers in the experimental group. Teachers were allotted to either the control or the experimental group by the researcher.

### Materials

The CAPPT, the pronunciation categories of Hermans's research were duplicated whenever feasible. New material was developed as Hermans developed CAPTT for students and in this study, we developed EATDPT for preschool pupils. Although initially Hermans (2018) detected seven error categories, he only used six of them in the CAPTT. He left out the error category 'gradation' as it was considered too difficult for secondary school students. In this research we use the same six error categories Hermans has used (Hermans, 2018, p.51), see Table 1.

Table 1

### Pronunciation Categories

These are six categories based on the main error types in the English pronunciation of the standard Dutch students as concluded by Hermans (2018).

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Aspiration:	No aspiration after initial /p/t/k/
No linking –r	R followed by a vowel is pronounced R followed by a consonant not
Th-unvoiced voiced ð = d	Th-unvoiced θ Three, sixth, teeth Th Mother, their, they
ε = æ	Distinction between 'bad' and 'bed'
'Go' is pronounced as 'gəʊ'	Go, one

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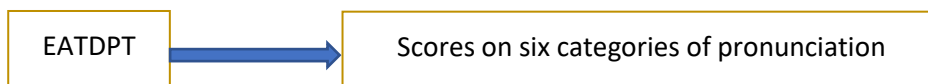
### *EATDPT*

The EATDPT consists of six lessons in which each of the following categories were taught: aspiration, English r, th-unvoiced, th-voiced, English e, English o. The lessons are based on

Appendix E ‘Aspiratie en de Engelse r’, for lesson one and two (Hermans, 2018). ‘De stemloze th-klank, stemloos en stemhebbend, de stemhebbende th-klank’ for lesson three and four. ‘Bad klinkt als bed, de Nederlandse -e- en de Engelse -e-’ for lesson five and various sounds for the letter o for lesson six. The stories and wordlists in these paragraphs are duplicated from Hermans’s research. Each lesson consisted of an introduction of the pronunciation difficulty, explanation of the correct pronunciation and exercises. The observation form consists of six columns with reference to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA, 2019). 18 Words were detected within the book categorised as aspiration, 21 words as English r, six words as th-unvoiced, eight words as th-voiced, three words as English e and six words as English o. For each category a percentage was calculated for using the results in the analysis. Two observational forms with a table for each form were designed for this study. The six categories were categorised and inserted into the table. These forms were used as an observational tool.

### *Design*

Because the purpose of this study is to examine the effect of EATDPT on Dutch preschool pupils’ pronunciation a quantitative design was chosen. EATDPT is the independent variable and the six categories of pronunciation the dependent variable as shown in Figure 1.



*Figure 1*  
Graphical Design Variables

An experimental design was set up as shown in Table 2. The teachers in the experimental group received EATDPT prior to the reading of English books by preschool teachers.

*Table 2*  
Experimental Design

Group	Pretest	EATDPT	Reading	Post-test
Control group	O1		R	O 3
Experimental group	O2	X	R	O 4

O= observation

EADPT= English Articulation Training for Teachers

R=

reading

The dependent variable pronunciation consists of six categories: aspiration, linking r, th-unvoiced, th-voiced, English e, English oak. In this design all groups took part in reading of English books by preschool teachers. The experimental group received EATDPT. Since the purpose of this study is to understand what effect EATDPT has on Dutch preschool pupils' pronunciation, convenience sampling was preferred for the teachers. Cluster sampling was preferred for the pupils, as they were assigned to the intact groups (Creswell, 2012; McMillan, 1996). To enhance internal and external validity, i.e. the possibility to generalize, we propose a Switch Design (SRM, 2019; Field, 2009). The Switch Design will have two rounds and three observational moments in such a way that both groups could take part in EATDPT. The second round is beyond the scope of this research.

#### Procedure

The Research Ethics Committee Open University (cETO) approved this current research as minors were involved. Prior to the research a native English Speaker and teacher of the Cambridge Course was asked to teach EATDPT. The native speaker understands Dutch fully, but was asked to speak solely in English during the EATDPT. He was asked to read Hermans's research and to study the Appendixes before conducting the lessons. In this research the native English speaker will be referred to as trainer.

Primary schools, that did not provide English lessons for preschool pupils, were contacted either by phone or visit. Four primary schools showed interest and information about the research was sent by mail (Appendix 1). More information was provided by visiting one teacher twice, by contacting one teacher by mail and the other two by phone. Four preschool teachers agreed to cooperate. The researcher was transparent to the teachers about the Switch Design. The researcher allotted two of them to the control-, and two to the experimental group, which they agreed upon. The directors consented that the research took place at their school (Appendix 2).

### Experimental Group

A consent document with information about the research was sent to the teachers by mail (Appendix 3). In the document the parents were asked to sign the letter (Appendix 4). The teachers copied the documents and handed it to the parents. Teachers were instructed to hand in the signed documents before the pretest. The parents could contact the researcher via mail and were informed of the possibility to withdraw anytime. None of the parents have contacted the researcher or have withdrawn from the research.

Dates for EATDPT and pre- and post-test were scheduled in mutual arrangement; the dates for the six lessons of EATDPT were scheduled within a nine-day period, immediately followed by the pretest, three weeks reading of English books, followed consecutively by a post-test. A mail or app was sent to confirm the dates. The teachers were asked to install GoToMeeting on their computer as was explained in an information letters sent to them by mail (Appendix 5). A webcam and a speaker were required for GoToMeeting conferencing. EATDPT was taught within a period of nine days. The lesson duration was on average 30 minutes. The lessons were made in PowerPoint (Appendix 6). In every lesson the rules concerning the English pronunciation were taught. A document, requiring their written consent and provided them with information about the research was sent to the teachers by mail (Appendix 7). In the document the parents were asked to sign the letter (Appendix 8) The teachers copied the documents and handed the documents to the parents. Teachers were instructed to hand in the signed documents before the pretest.

Dates for EATDPT and pre- and post-test were scheduled in mutual arrangement; Dates for six lessons of EATDPT were scheduled within a nine-day period, immediately followed by the pretest, three weeks of reading of English books, the post-test followed consecutively. A mail or app was sent to confirm the dates. The lessons duration was on average 30 minutes. The lessons were made in PowerPoint. In every lesson the rules concerning the English sounds in six categories were explained. The trainer explained six categories as was explained by Hermans

(2018) in Appendix E 'Aspiratie en de Engelse r' 'De stemloze th-klank, stemloos en stemhebbend, de stemhebbende th-klank' 'Bad klinkt als bed, de Nederlandse -e- en de Engelse

-e' The stories and wordlists in these paragraphs are duplicated from Hermans's research. Each lesson consisted of an introduction of the pronunciation difficulty, explanation of the correct pronunciation and a time to practice of specific words within the category. Each lesson was conferenced by GoToMeeting. The differences between EATDPT and CAPTT are: EATDPT is an online training designed for teachers while CAPTT is not an online

training but instead a computer tool designed for students. CAPPT is self-explanatory, EATDPT's lessons are explained by the trainer. Students can work at their own pace; teachers may ask questions during the personal lesson. Despite the difference in approach, EATDPT's content is similar to CAPPT.

#### *Experimental and Control Group*

All four teachers received prior to the reading of English books the following instructions: The illustrated book had to be read six times during three weeks for 15 minutes, b) the teachers had to speak English as much as possible, although Dutch was allowed c) the reading of English books were taught in a relaxed atmosphere; they should discontinue the reading of a English book whenever they thought necessary. The teachers had to report when they read less than the allotted six times for 15 minutes, without giving details to the researcher. We motivated this choice by explaining that the pupil's welfare was more important; we encouraged the teachers to use their own teaching method and pedagogically approach to ensure that the reading English books would resemble reading Dutch books. The teachers received children's classical literature, *The Ugly Duckling* by H. C. Andersen and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney (1999) before the first lesson. We stimulated the teachers to schedule reading English books within their time schedule.

During the pretest, the observation forms were filled in for both teachers and pupils. One teacher organized the pupils in three groups, three teachers opted for one group. The teachers in the control group did not use one correct pronunciation within the six categories and the teachers in the experimental group pronounced two words correctly. The size of the groups varied from five to seven pupils. Teachers discussed the pupils' clothes and showed six pictures to stimulate the pupils to speak. In Hermans's study the errors were counted and in the present study the correct words were counted; pupils who do not speak English cannot produce words they have not heard before. The words were marked as correct with a 100% score, as no errors were allowed. Words that were irregularly pronounced correctly, were not reported as correct. We contacted the teachers once during the three weeks by phone or mail, to encourage them and present them the opportunity to ask questions. Two teachers have responded.

The instruction prior to the post-test was that teachers were free to organize the size of the groups. They were encouraged to relax and speak English, but could use Dutch to help the pupils understand the story to foster their competence. Prior the post-test the teacher received the *Ugly Duckling* (2006) to read. During the post-test, the same observation forms were filled in for the second time for both teachers and pupils. During the post-test one of the pupils' group was cancelled due to the teacher's decision. Prior the post-test the teacher

received *The Ugly Duckling* retold by Suzanna Davidson (2006). We explained that this book is an easier book to read with fewer words on each page. They could read as long as they wanted. Furthermore, the teacher called each child aside to foster connectedness. The teacher discussed one of the pictures of the child's choice to foster its autonomy. The teachers in the experimental group increased their correct English vocabulary usage: In the post-test, they pronounced 51 words correctly and the control group two words. The observations varied from 20 to 40 minutes.

The pupils of the teachers who participated in the EATDPT were assigned to the experimental group and the pupils of the teachers who did not participated in the EATDPT were assigned to the control group. We thanked the teachers, directors for their cooperation and informed them about a comeback moment in which the results will be presented to the director, teacher, and parents.

#### *Statistical Analysis*

Hermans's statistical analysis was duplicated in such a way that for the six categories a one-way ANOVA with repeated measures was carried out, using SPSS as the same pupils were measured in two different conditions. Duplicating Hermans (2018) analysis, a Mauchly's test for sphericity was not carried out, for there are two conditions in this experiment (Field, 2009). Furthermore, a multivariate analysis of variance was omitted, as the purpose is not to measure an underlying construct (Hermans 2018), but each category had to be examined on its own. New variables Percentage Pretest and Percentage Post-test for each category were computed to calculate the percentage of an increased correct English vocabulary usage by pupils. Repeated measures was carried out, using SPSS. The general linear model was carried out to establish the effect of EATDPT on correct pronounced English vocabulary usage within the six categories. We used an alpha level of 5%; when the p-values are smaller than .05 it was regarded as significant.

#### Results

Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations of the number of English spoken words, the number of correct spoken words in the experimental and control group. The mean difference between the number of words spoken in the experimental group is 5.06 and in the control group is 2.66. The mean difference for the number of correct words spoken in the experimental group is 3.28 and in the control group is .48.

Table 3

Comparison English vocabulary usage control group and experimental group

Group	Number of English words pretest M (SD)	Number of English words post-test M (SD)	Number of correct English words pretest M (SD)	Number of correct English words post-test M (SD)
Pupils in experimental group	.75 (1.22)	5.81 (2.40)	.25 (.72)	3.53 (2.23)
Pupils in control group	.28 (.46) –	2.94 (2.19)	.17 (.38)	.65 (.86)

Comparing correct English vocabulary usage at each category, aspiration is the category with the most correct English words spoken, followed by the category linking r and th-voiced for the experimental group as shown in Table 4. The order in which the control group progressed is linking r, aspiration and th-voiced.

Table 4

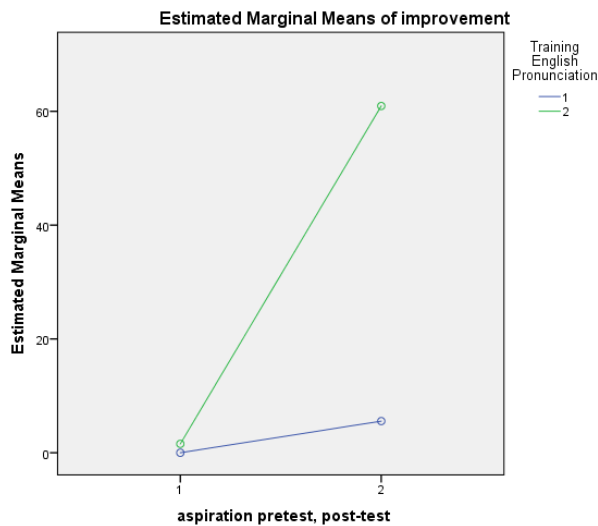
Comparison % correct English vocabulary usage control group and experimental group

category	Exp pre M (SD)	Exp post M (SD)	Control pre M (SD)	Control post M (SD)
% aspiration	1.56 (8.84)	60.94 (47,26)	.00 (0.00)	5.56 (23.57)
% linking r	21.88 (65.92)	53,65 (46,71)	5.56 (23.57)	8.33 (25,73)
% th- unvoiced	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
% th-voiced	.25 (.44)	.56 (.56)	.06 (.24)	.41 (.80)
English e	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
English oak	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)

Repeated measure analyses showed that a main effect was found for the factor aspiration ( $F(1,48)=30.20$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta=.39$ ). It means that the whole group, experimental and control



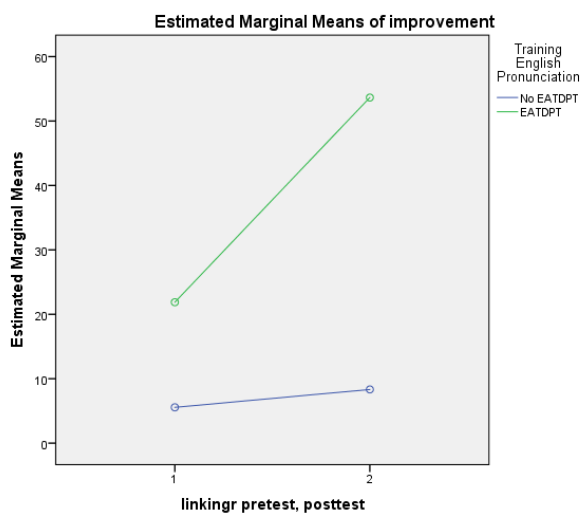
together did gain from pre to post. Also, a main effect was found for the factor condition.  $F(1,48)=30.13$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta=.39$ ). It means that the experimental condition overall (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group. But most important the interaction between EATDPT and aspiration was significant  $F(1,48)=20.75$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta=.30$ ). It means that the experimental condition gained significantly more from pre to post-test than the control condition, as seen in Figure 2.



*Figure 2*

Graph of the correct English vocabulary usage within the category aspiration observed before and after reading English books for the control- and experimental group.

Repeated measure analyses showed that a main effect was found for the factor linking r.  $F(1,48)=2.61$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta=.05$ ). It means that the whole group, experimental and control together did gain from pre to post. Also, a main effect was found for the factor linking r.  $F(1,48)=22.92$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta=.32$ ). It shows that the experimental condition overall (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group. The interaction between EATDPT and linking r was not significant  $F(1,48)=20.751.84$ ,  $p=.18$ ,  $\eta=.04$ ), as seen in Figure 3.



*Figure 3*

Graph of the correct English vocabulary usage within the category linking r observed before and after reading English books for the control- and experimental group.

Repeated measure analyses showed that a main effect was found for the factor th-unvoiced. ( $F(1,48)=6.51$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.01$ ). It means that the whole group, experimental and control together did gain from pre to post. Moreover, a main effect was found for the factor 'condition ( $F(1,48)=6.51$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.01$ ). It demonstrates that the experimental condition overall (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group. But most important the interaction between measurement and condition was significant ( $F(1,48)=6.51$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.01$ ). It shows that the experimental condition gained significantly more from pre to post-test than the control condition, as seen in Figure 4.

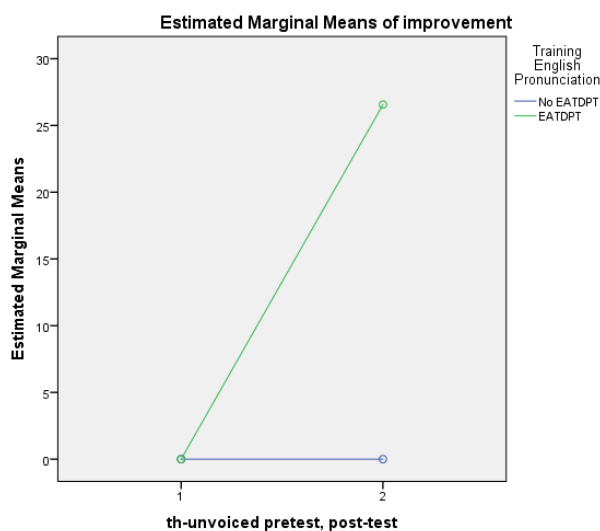


Figure 4

*Graph of the correct English vocabulary usage within the category th-unvoiced observed before and after reading English books for the control- and experimental group.*

Repeated measure analyses showed that a main effect was found for the factor th-voiced.

$F(1,48)=7.43$ ,  $p=.01$ ,  $\eta^2=.13$ ). The whole group, experimental and control together did gain from pre to post. Furthermore, a main effect was found for the factor th-voiced.

$F(1,48)=7.43$ ,  $p=.01$ ,  $\eta^2=.13$ ). This shows that the experimental condition overall (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group (Figure 5). The interaction between EATDPT and thvoiced was not significant  $F(1,48)=3.01$ ,  $p=.09$ ,  $\eta^2=.06$ ).

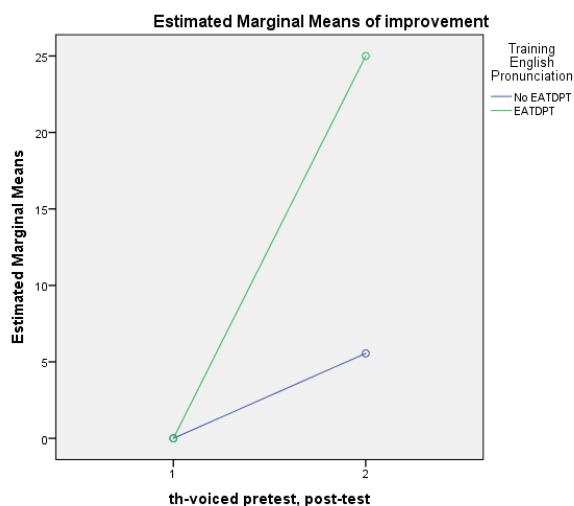


Figure 5

*Graph of the correct English vocabulary usage within the category th-voiced observed before and after reading English books for the control- and experimental group.*

Repeated measure analyses showed that a main effect was found for the factor English e.  $F(1,48)=14,78$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.24$ ). It is shown that the whole group, experimental and control together did gain from pre to post. The main effect for English e  $F(1,48)=14,78$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.24$ ). It means that the experimental condition overall (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group. The interaction between measurement and condition was significant ( $F(1,48)=14,78$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.24$ ). The experimental condition gained significantly more from pre to post-test than the control condition, as seen in Figure 6.

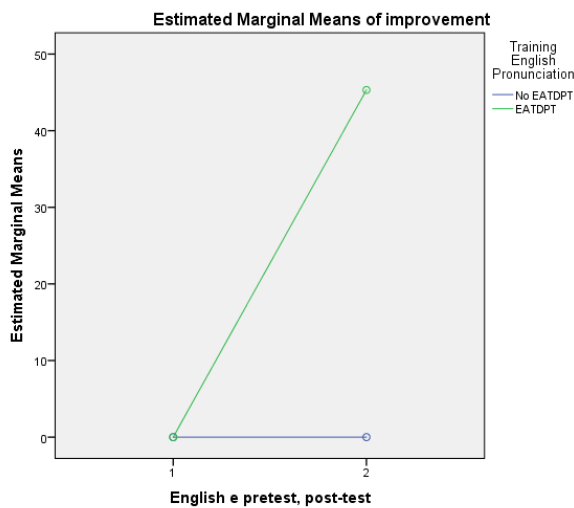
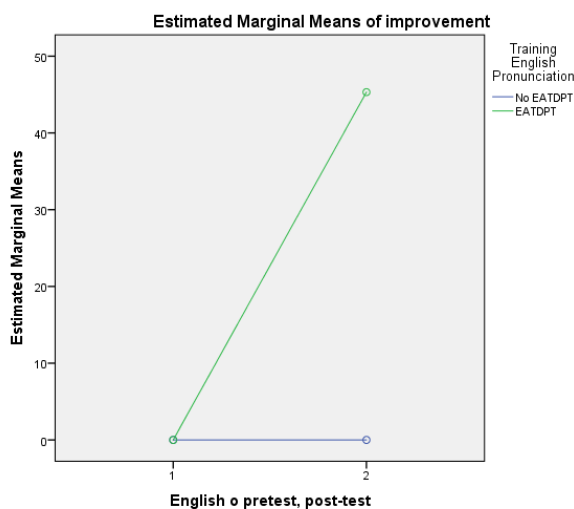


Figure 6

*Graph of the correct English vocabulary usage within the category English e observed before and after reading English books for the control- and experimental group.*

Repeated measure analyses showed that a main effect was found for the factor English o.  $F(1,48)=14,78$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.23$ ). Both groups did gain from pre to post. A main effect was found for the factor English o  $F(1,48)=14,78$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.23$ ). The experimental condition English o (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group. Crucial is that the interaction between EATDPT and English o was significant  $F(1,48)=14,78$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $\eta^2=.23$ ). It means that the experimental condition gained significantly more from pre to post-test than the control condition, as seen in Figure 7.



*Figure 7*

*Graph of the correct English vocabulary usage within the category English e observed before and after reading English books for the control- and experimental group.*

To summarize, the whole group, experimental and control together did gain from pre to post on every category. The experimental condition on every category (in the pre and post-test) scored higher than the control group. The interaction between a category and EATDPT showed that the experimental condition gained significantly more from pre to post-test than the control condition on the categories: aspiration, th-unvoiced, English e and English o.

### Discussion

Results from the analyses show that preschool pupils in the control- and experimental group increased English vocabulary usage after reading English books. These results are in line with the theory of Krashen (2004) that reading a book to young pupils enhances their vocabulary. Results from the analyses showed that reading of English books by preschool teachers in combination with the training English articulation to Dutch preschool teachers (EATDPT) will lead to a significant increased correct English vocabulary usage by pupils. There are significant differences between an increased correct English vocabulary usage of the pupils whose teacher participated in the EATDPT and those who did not. These results correspond with the results of Hermans (2018) and the hypothesis in this study that EATDPT has a positive effect on increased correct English vocabulary usage by preschool pupils.

Our results are consistent with the theoretical idea of Reeve (2004) and Deci & Ryan, (2002), that children can absorb new words when their basic needs are met. During the pretest and post-test, the three basic needs were observed; autonomy was observed as some children could choose not to take part in the reading lessons, although the parents had given consent, because of various reasons of a pupil and teacher. The pupils' competence was perceived as they paid attention to the English words and looking at the beautiful and bountiful illustrations, that supported the story. When they endeavoured to speak English, the teachers encouraged them. Connectedness was noted as pupils loved to sit close to their teacher when listening to the story. For both groups there is an increased English vocabulary usage for the pupils. The experimental group increased the correct English vocabulary usage as anticipated. We controlled several variables, such as classroom management, and goal setting etc. by giving teachers pedagogically and didactically autonomy and competence. The results show that EATDPT has a significantly positive effect on the categories, aspiration, th-unvoiced English e and English o.

One limitation was that the classification of the categories could have influenced the results.

Five categories contained a specific English sound not used in the Dutch language, the category English oak did not contain new sounds, thus not requiring that it be specifically taught. This category should be better equally presented into future research or left out.

Another limitation concerned the interpreting of data. Although in both studies the relative frequencies are expressed in a percentage, Hermans percentages were based on the number of errors made in each category. However, in this study we did not base the percentages on the errors made instead on the correct number of words pronounced. For example, in Hermans's research 50 errors could be made in the category aspiration and 58 in linking r, in such a way that a reliable relative frequency could be calculated. In the current research, the words of the illustrated book were categorised; 18 words were categorised in the category aspiration and only 8 in th-voiced; the pupils heard more words within the category aspiration than they did in the category 'th-voiced'. This could have influenced the results. It could explain why the experimental group pronounced more words correctly in the category aspiration than in the category th-voiced.

This brings us to another limitation the interpreting of data is not used consistently across the three language models. Firstly, we developed EATPT, based on the contrastive analysis hypothesis and error analysis; in EATDPT articulation was explicitly taught, distinguishing between correct and non-correct pronunciation. We collected and interpreted the teacher's data accordingly. Secondly, we proposed reading English books, based on the interlanguage theory. According to the interlanguage theory, language learning is described as a linguistic system with its own set of rules that occurs between L1 and L2 (Cook and Newson, 2007 & Yule, 2006). We collected the pupil's data according the contrastive analysis hypothesis and error analysis and

not according to the interlanguage theory. Thus, specific words spoken by the pupils which would be acceptable to the interlanguage theory, were excluded from this research. For example, aspiration is applied, when syllables starting with p, t, k are followed by a vowel. The pupils applied aspiration to Dutch syllables starting with p, t, k followed by a vowel: 'kip', was pronounced as 'khhip', and 'poes' as 'phhoes'. This concurs with the idea of Universal Grammar of Chomsky (Cook & Newson, 2007), enhancing language acquisition. We excluded many words that were not consistently pronounced correctly. For example, the word cat was different pronounced as 'kat' and as 'khhat'. If we would include these words in this study, this data would have influenced the results in a positive way. This could be a reassuring thought for preschool teachers that reading English classical literature to their

pupils, could be rated even more positively if the linguistic system of each child was taken into consideration.

Because of the many differences between Hermans's study and this study, caution is necessary when comparing this research with that of Hermans. Further studies should reconsider the classification of the category English oak, the interpreting of the data, and the consistency of the language theory. We recommend in further studies to employ a larger sample of teachers to improve the generalizability in the design.

In conclusion, reading of English books by preschool teachers will lead to an increased English vocabulary usage by pupils. This study provides strong evidence that pupils, whose teacher participated in the EATDPT increased the correct English vocabulary usage by Dutch preschool pupils, according the contrastive analysis hypothesis and error analyses. This was indeed evident when the needs of pupils regarding connectedness, autonomy and competence were met. Further study could provide linguists and educators insight into the learning possibilities of teaching pronunciation skills of Dutch pupils in a preschool setting, collecting and interpreting data according the interlanguage theory. The sustainability effect could be enhanced when EATDPT is not only related to reading English books but to additional subjects such as music, art, physical education as well. A longitudinal survey design, such as the panel study, could shed more light whether correct pronunciation continues, during primary schooling and high school. In conclusion, this study provides much potential for enhancing pronunciation for young pupils.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1

Info over onderzoek 'The Sound of English' bij jonge kinderen.

### Inleiding

Als Nederlanders Engels spreken hebben ze vaak een 'typisch Nederlands accent'. Dat komt omdat Nederlanders een aantal klanken moeilijk kunnen uitspreken. In een recent onderzoek van Hermans (2018) blijkt dat er 7 categorieën zijn, waar Nederlanders, die Engels als tweede taal spreken moeite mee (kunnen) hebben. Nederlanders denken al snel dat ze goed Engels kunnen spreken en overschatten zichzelf, volgens Hermans. Een voorbeeld hiervan is dat Nederlandse ondernemers zo'n 15% van de internationale opdrachten mis lopen, doordat ze geen goede Engelse uitspraak hebben; ze worden niet als serieuze zakenpartner gezien. Op middelbare scholen wordt nauwelijks aandacht aan deze specifieke uitspraak problemen besteed. Hermans heeft een programma ontwikkeld om zes specifieke uitspraak categorieën aan middelbare scholieren onder de aandacht te brengen. Het programma had succes, maar vanwege werkdruk van de leraren en weinig ondersteuning van het instituut, werd het programma niet gecontinueerd. Uit de literatuur blijkt dat een tweede taal aanleren vroeg moet plaatsvinden. Vooral jonge kinderen beschikken over een indrukwekkend vermogen om een tweede taal aan te leren (Mark Mieras, 2018). In het huidige onderzoek wordt er gekeken of jonge kinderen baat hebben als hun leerkracht een online training heeft gevolgd, waarin de specifieke uitspraak categorieën behandeld worden. We zijn benieuwd of jonge kinderen op een speelse manier de woorden kunnen oefenen, waardoor ze meteen al een voorsprong hebben op hun leeftijdsgenoten. Er is in Nederland nog geen onderzoek gedaan naar de uitspraak van deze specifieke uitspraakmoeilijkheden bij jonge kinderen.

### Voordelen:

*The Sound of English, 2019*

De leerkracht krijgt de mogelijkheid om gratis 6 lessen te volgen, waarin aandacht wordt gegeven aan de specifieke uitspraakcategorie. Bij positieve onderzoeksresultaten wordt het een stimulans voor scholen om kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 meteen de juiste klanken aan te bieden.

### *Appendix 2*

#### *Toestemmingsformulier basisschool*

Ik heb de informatie over het onderzoek per mail ontvangen. Ik ben op de hoogte dat de school zich ten alle tijden kan terugtrekken uit het onderzoek, zonder opgave van redenen.

- Ja ik geef toestemming voor het onderzoek 'The Sound of English'
- Nee, ik geef geen toestemming voor het onderzoek 'The Sound of English'.

Naam:

Functie:

Naam school:

Datum:

### *Appendix 3*

#### *Informatiebrief ouders, versie code 1*

maart 2019

*Betreft: een onderzoek naar de uitspraak van kinderen van groep 1 en 2, die Engels als hun tweede taal aangeboden krijgen.*

#### **Beste ouders,**

Uw kind krijgt Engels op school. De leerkracht van uw kind doet mee met het onderzoek 'The Sound of English'. Er is nog geen onderzoek gedaan naar de uitspraak van Engelse woorden van kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 en hun leerkrachten. Van januari tot juni 2019 wordt er in de klas van uw kind een onderzoek gedaan naar de Engelse uitspraak. In deze brief wordt het onderzoek toegelicht.

#### **Wat is het doel van het onderzoek?**

Nagaan in welke mate kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 vooruitgang tonen in de uitspraak van Engelse woorden na een interventie van de leerkracht.

#### **Wat wordt onderzocht?**

De uitspraak van 21 Engelse woorden door kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 voor en na 6xt voorlezen van het Engelse prentenboek.

#### **Hoe wordt het onderzoek uitgevoerd en wat wordt er van u gevraagd?**

Uw kind krijgt plaatjes te zien en krijgt de kans om de woorden in het Engels uit te spreken. Dit onderzoek vindt twee maal plaats; voorafgaand aan het voorlezen en na afloop daarvan. Er worden geluidsopnamen gemaakt tijdens dit onderzoek. Op deze manier kunnen we nagaan in hoeverre het voorlezen bijgedragen heeft aan de correcte uitspraak. U bent beide keren aanwezig bij de afname van de test. U kan er ook voor kiezen om iemand anders te machtigen om bij het onderzoek aanwezig te zijn. U kunt zelf een machtiging schrijven of een formulier bij de leerkracht vragen. De gemachtigde zal zich moeten identificeren.

#### **Wat gebeurt er met de gegevens?**

De onderzoeker noteert gender, leeftijd, naam van de groep. De geluidsopnamen worden geanonimiseerd. Alleen de onderzoeker kan deze gegevens inzien. Op de Open Universiteit worden de gegevens gedurende de wettelijk voorgeschreven termijnen bewaard (10 jaar).

### **Heeft de ethische toetsingscommissie van medisch onderzoek dit onderzoek goedgekeurd?**

Het Research Ethics Committee (cETO heeft dit onderzoek goedgekeurd.

### **Wat wordt er van u verwacht als u mee wenst te doen met dit onderzoek?**

Om mee te doen is het belangrijk dat u toestemming geeft voor deelname. U kunt hiervoor gebruik maken van het bijgevoegde toestemmingsformulier. Indien beide ouders gezag hebben, dienen beide ouders apart toestemming te verlenen. De toestemmingsverklaring kan aan de leerkracht gegeven worden of opgestuurd worden naar onderstaand adres. Als u zich later nog bedenkt en alsnog wilt stoppen met deelname aan het onderzoek, is dit te allen tijde mogelijk, zonder opgaaf van reden. U kan voor, tijdens en achteraf vragen stellen over het onderzoek. Als u niet wenst deel te nemen, hoeft u niets te doen

### **Gevolgen voor de behandeling van uw kind?**

Het wel of niet deelnemen aan dit onderzoek heeft geen consequenties voor uw kind. Uw kind krijgt net als alle andere kinderen uit de groep dezelfde les. Het geeft de leerkracht wel inzicht of EPDD een meerwaarde heeft voor het geven van Engels.

### **Deelname onderzoek.**

Indien u deel gaat nemen aan het onderzoek, wil ik u vragen om het toestemmingsformulier ondertekend in te leveren bij de leerkracht of op te sturen naar ondergetekende.

### **Tot slot**

De resultaten worden anoniem gedeeld met ouders die toestemming hebben gegeven. Er is sprake van een tweede ronde waarin de leerkrachten van uw kind een interventie krijgt aangeboden. Dit valt echter buiten het onderzoek.

Indien u nog vragen of opmerkingen heeft over dit onderzoek, kunt u contact opnemen met ondergetekende via telefoonnummer 06-20216212 of u kunt een e-mail sturen naar:

Engelsleren@ou.nl

Met vriendelijke groet,

Pia Nicholson

Student Onderwijskunde Open Universiteit

Voor meer informatie over uw privacy rechten; ga naar [www.ou.nl/privacy](http://www.ou.nl/privacy)

### *Appendix 4*

#### *Informatiebrief ouders, versie code 2*

Nieuwkoop, maart 2019

versie code 2

*Betreft: een onderzoek naar de uitspraak van kinderen van groep 1 en 2, die Engels als hun tweede taal aangeboden krijgen.*

### **Beste ouders,**

Uw kind krijgt Engels op school. De leerkracht van uw kind doet mee met het onderzoek 'The Sound of English'. Er is nog geen onderzoek gedaan naar de uitspraak van Engelse woorden van kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 en hun leerkrachten. Van januari tot juni 2019 wordt er in de klas van uw kind een onderzoek gedaan naar de Engelse uitspraak. In deze brief wordt het onderzoek toegelicht.

### **Wat is het doel van het onderzoek?**

Nagaan in welke mate kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 vooruitgang tonen in de uitspraak van Engelse woorden na het voorlezen van een Engels prentenboek.

### **Wat wordt onderzocht?**

De uitspraak van specifieke Engelse klanken door kinderen uit groep 1 en 2 voor en na het voorlezen van een Engels prentenboek door de leerkracht van uw kind.

### **Hoe wordt het onderzoek uitgevoerd en wat wordt er van u gevraagd?**

Uw kind ziet 8 plaatjes en krijgt de kans om de woorden in het Engels uit te spreken. Dit onderzoek vindt tweemaal plaats; voorafgaand aan de training van de leerkracht en na afloop daarvan. De

leerkracht geeft de les en de onderzoeker observeert en schrijft de observaties op. Op deze manier kunnen we nagaan of de EATDPT bijgedragen heeft aan de correcte uitspraak.

**Wat gebeurt er met de gegevens?**

De onderzoeker noteert geslacht, leeftijd, naam van de groep. De observaties worden geanonimiseerd. Alleen de onderzoeker kan deze gegevens inzien. Op de Open Universiteit worden de gegevens gedurende de wettelijk voorgeschreven termijnen bewaard (10 jaar).

**Heeft de ethische toetsingscommissie van medisch onderzoek dit onderzoek goedgekeurd?**

Het Research Ethics Committee (cETO) heeft dit onderzoek goedgekeurd.

**Wat wordt er van u verwacht als u mee wenst te doen met dit onderzoek?**

Om mee te doen is het belangrijk dat u toestemming geeft voor deelname. U kunt hiervoor gebruik maken van het bijgevoegde toestemmingsformulier. Indien beide ouders gezag hebben, dienen beide ouders apart toestemming te verlenen. De toestemmingsverklaring kan aan de leerkracht gegeven worden of opgestuurd worden naar onderstaand adres. Als u zich later nog bedenkt en alsnog wilt stoppen met deelname aan het onderzoek, is dit mogelijk. Als u niet wenst deel te nemen, hoeft u niets te doen.

**Gevolgen voor de behandeling van uw kind?**

Het niet deelnemen aan dit onderzoek heeft geen negatieve consequenties voor uw kind of de aanpak die de leerkracht hanteert om uw kind Engels te geven.

**Deelname onderzoek.**

Indien u deel gaat nemen aan het onderzoek, wil ik u vragen om het toestemmingsformulier ondertekend in te leveren bij de leerkracht of op te sturen naar ondergetekende.

**Tot slot**

De resultaten van het onderzoek worden anoniem gedeeld met de ouders, die toestemming hebben gegeven. Er is nog een tweede ronde, waarin de leerkracht van uw kind een training EATDPT krijgt aangeboden. Dit valt echter buiten het huidige onderzoek. Indien u nog vragen of opmerkingen heeft over dit onderzoek, kunt u contact opnemen met ondergetekende via telefoonnummer 06-20216212 of u kunt een e-mail sturen naar: [Engelsleren@ou.nl](mailto:Engelsleren@ou.nl)

Met vriendelijke groet,

Pia Nicholson

Student Onderwijskunde Open Universiteit

Voor meer informatie over uw privacy rechten; ga naar [www.ou.nl/privacy](http://www.ou.nl/privacy)

*Appendix 5*

Toestemmingsformulier Sound of English

Met dit formulier geeft/geven ondergetekende(n) toestemming voor het onderzoek naar de uitspraak van Engelse woorden van uw kind.

Naam basisschool:

Naam leerkracht van uw kind:

Jongen/ meisje \*

Leeftijd (in jaren en maanden, bv. 4 jaar en 2 maanden)

Ik ben op de hoogte van het onderzoek en heb de informatiebrief over 'the Sound of English' gelezen. Ik geef toestemming dat in het bijzijn van de ouder(s) of een gemachtigde, mijn kind deelt neemt aan het onderzoek " the Sound of English'. Ik geef toestemming dat geluidsopnamen van de uitspraak van

mijn kind worden gemaakt. Ik geef toestemming voor de verwerking en opslag van de gegevens en geluidsopnamen, zoals beschreven staan in de Informatiebrief.

Het is belangrijk dat alle gezag dragende personen akkoord gaan. In geval van ouderlijk gezag door één ouder verklaart u hierbij tevens alleen ouderlijk gezag te hebben.

Ouder/verzorger 1 (naam en handtekening):

Ouder/verzorger 2 (naam en handtekening):

Datum:

Plaats:

### *Appendix 6*

#### *Invitation GoToMeeting Conferencing*

##### The Sound of English

##### Introduction

Mon, Apr 1, 2019 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM CEST

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### *Appendix 7*

23 april 2019 Beoordeling onderzoek 'The Sound of English' Ethische toetsing

ons kenmerk: U2019/03147/MQF

Beste Prof. dr. Saskia Brand,

Op 31 januari heeft de commissie Ethische Toetsing Onderzoek (cETO) het verzoek in behandeling genomen om onderzoeksvoorstel 'The Sound of English' ethisch te toetsen.

Het in de aanvraag beschreven onderzoek heeft als onderzoeksvraag: What effect has EPDD training on English pronunciation of Dutch preschool teachers and pupils in preschool education? Is there a change in the number of pronunciation mistakes Dutch teachers and preschool children learning English make in the error type categories selected, before and after the EPDD-training?

De cETO heeft op 12 maart nog enkele vragen en opmerkingen aan de onderzoeker voorgelegd, die op 16 april beantwoord zijn. Hierop merkt de cETO nog het volgende op: • Gebruik van een live.nl mailadres is niet toegestaan. Voor communicatie kan een OU onderzoek mailadres (onderzoek19.18@ou.nl aangevraagd worden bij servicedesk) of het mailadres van de begeleider gebruikt worden. • In de informatiebrief voor de interventiegroep nog de link naar de privacy disclaimer toevoegen. In de brief voor de controlegroep nog aangeven dat resultaten anoniem gedeeld worden met ouders die toestemming hebben gegeven. Ook in deze brief nog duidelijk aangeven dat de tweede ronde waarin controlegroep interventie krijgt buiten het onderzoek valt.

Op basis van het onderzoeksvoorstel, de additionele informatie en de opmerkingen in dit besluit geeft de cETO een positief advies op de ethische toetsing van het voorliggende onderzoeksvoorstel.

U dient de data die u verzamelt gedurende uw onderzoek op een veilige wijze op te slaan, conform de huidige wet- en regelgeving. Dat betekent dat uw data opgeslagen moet worden op de T-schijf, zodat deze niet toegankelijk is voor anderen, voorzien is van goede beveiliging en verlies van data voorkomen kan worden. Iedere medewerker kan toegang krijgen tot de T-drive via een verzoek aan de servicedesk, onder vermelding van diens acroniem[link: servicedesk@ou.nl].

pagina: 2/2

Als samenwerkingsomgeving met collega's kunt u gebruik maken van SURFdrive. Het is niet veilig om een openbare link aan te maken in Surfdrive. Indien u bestanden wilt versturen of ontvangen kunt u gebruik maken van SURFfilesender. Zo is het bijvoorbeeld mogelijk dat een onderzoeker een map aan maakt en de studenten hierin met behulp van encryption een bestand plaatsen. SURFdrive en SURFfilesender mogen uitsluitend gebruikt worden als omgeving om data met elkaar te delen, de onderzoeker dient met enige regelmaat de data op te slaan op diens persoonlijke map op de T-drive.

We wensen u veel succes met de uitvoering van het onderzoek

Met vriendelijke groet,

Dr. H.M. Jarodzka voorzitter cETO