

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
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Universidad de El Salvador

Hacia la libertad por la cultura

HOW TO HELP ENGLISH LEARNERS TO IMPROVE THEIR SPEAKING SKILL. CASE OF NINTH-GRADERS IN CENTRO ESCOLAR URBANIZACION LOS ANGELES IN SOYAPANGO, SAN SALVADOR IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2016.

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FINAL RESEARCH REPORT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH WITH EMPHASIS IN TEACHING

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	V
ABSTRACT	VI
II. INTRODUCTION	VII
I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	2
General Research Question:	2
Specific Research Questions:	2
B. OBJECTIVES.....	3
1. General Objective:.....	3
2. Specific Objective:	3
C. JUSTIFICATION.....	4
D. LIMITATIONS	5
II.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	6
III.METHODOLOGY	30
A) Population and Sample	30
B) Research Instruments	30
C) Research Approach: Qualitative and Quantitative.....	31
D) Type of Research: Case Study.....	32
E) Research Techniques.....	32
1. Observational technique	32
2. Survey technique.....	33
F. Research Design:	33
IV. FINDINGS.....	35
A) DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.....	35

B) CONCLUSION.....	56
C) RECOMMENDATIONS.....	57
V. REFERENCES.....	59
A. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	62
VI APPENDICES.....	63
Appendix "A": Questionnaire for students.....	64
Appendix "B": Questionnaire for teachers.....	66
Appendix "C": Survey for students.....	68
Appendix "D": Observation guide.....	70

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ABSTRACT

This research project presents an investigation entitled How to Help English Learners to Improve Their Speaking Skill. Case of Ninth-Graders in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles in Soyapango, San Salvador in the Academic Year of 2016. To conduct this research, the researcher followed these steps: First of all, the researcher observed the subjects under study for four weeks in order to identify the most troublesome speaking-related problems regarding pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. After that, the researcher gathered the data by means of instruments. Those instruments were chosen carefully and also they were designed in order to obtain relevant pieces of information that helped the researcher to get a better and deeper understanding of the situation that ninth-graders under study were encountering in their speaking skill. Finally, the data analysis and its interpretation allowed the researcher to determine the main troublesome factors that prevent ninth-graders from having a good speaking skill performance. This was the basis of the researcher's recommendations on the matter.

II. INTRODUCTION

The researcher's aim was to develop her research project "How to Help English Learners to Improve Their Speaking Skill Case of Ninth-Graders in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles in Soyapango, San Salvador in the Academic Year of 2016." The researcher considers that speaking English is the most influential medium in bridging the global communication.

Learning a new language involves the development of such skills as listening, speaking, reading and writing. But the researcher considers that speaking is one of the most influencing factors because many learners in the world study English hard in order to communicate with native speakers or speakers of other languages and nowadays speaking is the most direct way to talk to people. Indeed, using a foreign language like English is a necessity for any students at any level.

The main goal for working on this research project development was to find the most troublesome speaking-related problems and to consult experts, and bibliographical pieces of information that could help the researcher to propose solutions, appropriate techniques and strategies to improve the speaking-related problems faced by the ninth-graders under study. Undoubtedly, speaking English plays an important role at the present time. Therefore, in this research project the researcher decided to concentrate on how to help learners to improve their speaking skill and on the communicative activities which might be helpful for English teachers to enhance their students' communicative skills.

This research study is divided into two parts. The first one is the practical part. And the second one is the theoretical part. As to the practical part, the researcher prepared and administered such tools as questionnaires, tests, interviews and a checklist. In the theoretical part, the researcher dealt with the difference between speaking and conversation. By doing so, the researcher collected important pieces of information to

explain the practical use and the importance of speaking in everyday life. The researcher focused on distinguishing pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary activities and also she provided definitions of special terms related to the topic.

The researcher considers that the role of a teacher is important for the students because they need to apply activities in which they participate during the class, and not to be afraid. Furthermore, the researcher considers that the importance of the practical part of any communicative activity relies on a set of pre-taught communicative activities that are described minutely and evaluated by other teachers who would like to apply them in their speaking activities.

Finally, the researcher provides the results of her research project based on the data that were collected and the pieces of information to be decoded to reveal the findings. Besides that, the researcher presents the corresponding conclusions and recommendations at the end of the research project.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

English today plays a significant role in the international communication language. A large proportion of learners in the world study English hard in order to communicate with speakers of other languages. The purpose of this research project was to identify How to Help English Learners to Improve Their Speaking Skill. Case of Ninth-Graders in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles in Soyapango, San Salvador.

Speaking is fundamentally an instrumental act. Widdowson (1984:58) says that speaking is the active or productive skill. Based on these two definitions, we can conclude that speaking is an interaction between two people or more. The achievement of good speaking activity is when the people who interact can understand each other.

The researcher considers that teaching and learning English at schools is to bring up students to better understand to use that language. However, they are required to achieve certain scores in order to pass. Not only grammatical aspects are important but also are communicative ones. Besides that, there are so many ways to improve the ninth-graders' speaking skill.

The students can express their ideas a listener, and they regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments on spoken communication. But in order for the researcher to discover and understand the reasons why ninth-graders have problems regarding speaking skill, a case study was carried out in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador. By observing and being in contact with the subjects under study, the researcher was able to identify the factors that are affecting students' speaking-related problems to suggest solutions to avoid these problems as much as possible.

A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

General Research Question:

What are the most appropriate ways to help ninth-graders at Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles Soyapango to improve their speaking skill in English?

Specific Research Questions:

- What are the most appropriate techniques to help the subjects under study improve their pronunciation- related problems?

- What are the most appropriate techniques to help these students to improve their fluency -related problems?

- What are the most appropriate techniques to help them to improve their vocabulary -related problems?

B. OBJECTIVES

1. General Objective:

- To determine the most appropriate ways to improve the speaking skill of ninth-graders at Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles in Soyapango, San Salvador in the academic year of 2016.

2. Specific Objective:

- To identify the students' most troublesome speaking skill so as to propose solutions.
- To propose the most appropriate techniques to avoid the students' problems with regard to pronunciation so as to improve their English pronunciation.
- To improve the students' fluency by applying techniques with the purpose of contributing to their English learning process.
- To determine the most appropriate strategies to solve the students' grammar -related problems in order to improve their speaking skill.
- To identify the most appropriate techniques to solve the students' problems regarding vocabulary to help them reduce this problem.

C. JUSTIFICATION

Speaking English is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face. Besides it is the most important of the four skills. Indeed, one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still they cannot speak it. Moreover, it can be established that the importance of this project lies on the following facts:

- This project was focused on the most troublesome speaking skill problem that ninth-graders have faced during their learning process. The researcher has noticed that nowadays, the problem that students face is English speaking skill. In fact, ninth-graders still face different problems with language skills while learning English, not only pronunciation but also grammar, fluency, and vocabulary.
- Getting suitable information is with the intention of helping students to improve their speaking skill and to help teachers to improve their teaching techniques.
- The researcher has worked with the intention to give some contributions to the teachers where they may choose new alternatives for teaching speaking in English. The aim of this research is to show others the results at the end of the investigation, which will allow the researcher to provide suggestions to help students to develop their speaking skill. Also, the idea is that students are putting into practice their skill during the learning process through some activities and are encouraged to participate not to be afraid of making mistakes in front of the class. Finally, the researcher will provide her experience and knowledge to the teachers of the school under study.

D. LIMITATIONS

During this investigation process, the subjects under study were expected to practice English activities in the classroom. Therefore, there are certain limitations to proceed with the research project. This study was focused on how to improve students' abilities in speaking, especially in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. Indeed the researcher encountered the following limitations:

- At the moment of data collection, some students at the school under study acted reluctantly to fill out the questionnaire, which created problems to the researcher.
- Some teachers in charge of ninth-graders could not attend the school in the test week because they were in a training program, so the researcher had some delay in the data collecting process.
- The researcher considers that there was not enough time provided by the ninth-grader teachers to fill out some of the instruments.

II.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Learning English can be a great challenge for many students. Most of them consider speaking to be one of the most difficult abilities. Nevertheless, they would like to improve their pronunciation as a mean to develop security and fluency during the speaking and, as a means to understand more during the listening sessions.

Although the terms “speaking” and “conversation” may seem clear, they are often misunderstood. Speaking as a skill taught at schools presents the student’s ability to express his or her opinions, thoughts and ideas on a particular matter. Speaking practice, which is usually based on storytelling, giving speech or presentation, is the necessity for later successful conversation. Nevertheless, the focus on speaking activities has diminished in recent years. This has been caused by many factors, especially by realizing the need of everyday communication.

Our accents can pose some problems when we want to communicate: misunderstandings can appear on both sides. That is why it is very important to pronounce well and to improve pronunciation day by day in order to communicate better.

According to O’Malley and Pierce (1996) enabling students to communicate effectively through oral language is one of the major responsibilities of any teacher working with English language learners. Furthermore, they explain that in order to help the students to ease their process of developing their speaking performance, teachers as the primary figures in the classroom have to put much more effort in raising the students’

motivation and interest in class. It can be done by establishing a good relationship between the teacher and the students. The teacher should create a low anxiety classroom atmosphere.

As mentioned above, giving speeches or presentations is not what we concentrate on in our lessons. Even though these are crucial prerequisites for later conversational practice, the teachers tend to focus on communicative activities as the main goal of speaking lessons. For this reason, it is very important for teachers to think through the purpose of speaking and communicative activities being prepared for lessons and also the target group of learners.

Nolasco (1987) mentions that being able to speak reasonably correct and even fluent English is one thing, but being able to engage in on-going, interactive, mentally satisfying conversation is another. Conversation is such a natural part of our lives that many people are not aware of what happens within it. However, conversation follows certain rules which should be obeyed in order for participants to feel relaxed and be satisfied with it.

According to Arthur (1987) the main purpose of conversation is the exchange of information among people. While communicating, our students may find themselves in different social situations playing various social roles and the main task for language teachers is to prepare them for these real situations they might participate in. This also includes leading students to develop the ability to initiate and sustain conversation whenever it occurs.

Furthermore, when students learn a foreign language, they very often accumulate a lot of knowledge (grammatical rules, lists of vocabulary items), but then they find out that they cannot actually use this language to communicate when they want to.

Moreover, according to Scrivener (2005) there seems to be some difficulty in moving language from passive knowledge into active usage. Without experience in using the language, learners may tend to be nervous about trying to say things. Partly they may fear seeming foolish in front of others, they may worry about getting things wrong they may want to avoid teacher's comments or correction and so on. It takes quite a long time for some students to express themselves, which leads to long embarrassing pauses while learners are trying to find out how to say what they really want to say.

Cunningham & Edmonds (1999) believe that speaking is more than producing words. It means that the speaker should know which words should be used at an appropriate moment, the amount of stress and intonation in a sentence, to use grammar forms exactly, to make use of the appropriate lexicon that is comprehensible for the listeners, to use gestures and body language, to determine the adequate vocabulary, rate of speech, and to check the listeners comprehension of the discourse. This is why speaking is not considered as an act of merely producing words, but a more complex skill that involves many actions, such as turn taking, questioning, adequate use of stress and intonation.

Luoma (2004) states that speaking contains phrases and clauses, dialogues that were previously prepared, and spontaneous dialogues. Also there is a variation in speaking, because there is a difference between formal speech and casual speech. The speaking roles, the purpose of speaking and the context where there is oral interaction may also change.

According to Clark and Clark (1977) speaking is fundamentally an instrumental act. Widdowson (1984) says that speaking is the active or productive skill. Based on these two definitions, we can conclude that speaking is an interaction between two people or more. The achievement of good speaking activity is when the people who interact can understand each other. One obvious example of speaking activity is any interaction between teacher and student. In the interaction, the teacher should have a good speaking competence because he has to bring all of his/her students to understand the material through his/her speech.

Moreover, one of the weaknesses which students have in learning English, according to the researcher's observation is speaking ability. Their English speaking ability is still low. The indicators of the problems are as follows: first, the students feel shy to express their ideas in English. Second, the students seem to be doubtful and nervous to speak English; third, the students do not know how to apply different transactional and interactional expressions in different situations. Fourth, the students are afraid of making mistakes in grammar, pronunciation, and intonation. Fifth, the students are afraid to be laughed at by others and they have no courage to express their own English ability. Finally, they never use English in their daily communication either inside, or, moreover, outside the class because of their limited vocabulary.

In fact, one of the best ways of helping learners to activate their knowledge is to put them in "safe" situations in class where they are inspired and encouraged to try to speak a foreign language. Teachers should try to create such activities in which learners feel less worried about speaking and less nervous under pressure.

Nevertheless, the teacher is not the only one whom the students' success in speaking is based on. There are also motivational factors, differing from student to student, which influence his/her progress in the spoken language.

Harmer, (1991) distinguishes extrinsic and intrinsic types of motivation. He claims that students' attitude to speaking the language may be affected by different factors from the outside, such as people in close surroundings, previous speaking experience in a foreign language or the job opportunities offered after mastering foreign language communication. All of these represent extrinsic motivation. Although extrinsic motivation is nowadays a driving force for most students, without intrinsic motivation no goal in improving the speaking skill could be achieved. Success is also based on students' willingness to learn to speak a foreign language, which may be influenced by the teacher's methods used in teaching communication and, above all, his or her personality. Considering these, teachers should realize how important role they play in encouraging the students to learn to speak a foreign language.

Students' personalities also play an important role in determining how quickly and correctly they will manage a speaking task. Those students who are risk-takers, unafraid of making mistakes, are generally more talkative but usually make many errors. Those who are shy may take a long time to speak confidently, but when they finally manage it, their English contains fewer errors. The aim of both types of students is the same, indeed – to use the language correctly and fluently.

To achieve this goal, the teachers should try as much as they can to break the silence in the classroom and get the students speak no matter how many mistakes they make or how long it takes them to produce sentences. In order to decrease shyness while

speaking in front of the whole class, students may be offered the opportunity to work in groups or pairs, which is a suitable approach for enhancing the active language use.

Harmer (1991) defines points out different motivational factors depending on the age and level of the students. Students' motivation to speak a foreign language is irrelevant for the purpose of this thesis because, as mentioned above, the researcher deals with adult English learners and their motivational needs for a foreign language communication are substantially different from the others. Their English is good at this stage, but they are motivated by a primary goal of achieving a more advanced level of the language.

The subjects under study already know a lot and are able to have a conversation about every day matters, but sometimes there might have some problems. One of them is often the feeling that they are flooded with the new complexity of the language and cannot cope with it. Teachers, when having found this out, should focus on building up the knowledge students already have and assure them they can speak the language well enough to understand and be understood.

Ur (1991) declares that "motivation is very strongly related to achievement in language learning." This statement results from teaching practice showing that eager learners willing to invest effort in speaking activities are likely to make greater progress. On the contrary, those sitting silently at the desk without desire to be involved in any kind of speaking activity may find themselves stuck to be able to improve their speaking skill. Having noticed this, teachers should encourage low-motivated students to develop the interest in communicative activities.

Ur (1991) describes some strategies to enhance students' motivation to speak in a lesson. The principal one is selecting the topic carefully to make it as interesting for students as possible. If the teacher's choice fails in the class, there should be no panic or embarrassment. The possible solution to this situation may be asking the students to vote for a topic they would be interested in talking about.

However, varied tasks are also suggested for a successful and efficient speaking lesson as well as using visuals to enhance students' motivation to speak. Average pictures copied from different sorts of textbooks and workbooks do not encourage adult learners to speak anymore. Based on the researcher's teaching experience, adult learners prefer to be set into real situations, dealing with real and current news items concerning today's world and society.

Moreover, due to the fact that ninth-grade teachers from Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles face some problems in their pronunciation, but it is important to mention that they have problem with the other sub-skills. In addition, they accept the necessity to help English learners to improve their performance in their English classes. Therefore, ninth-graders from the school under study must receive sufficient authentic materials to solve their speaking-related problems.

The speaking tasks could be based on describing the photos to each other and guessing the place in the world where the action has happened. Connection between the picture and reality makes it even more tempting for students to express their points of view to a particular event and, at the same time, the teacher's goal is achieved as well – getting students to speak and communicate with each other.

Speaking requires certain important aspects to be considered and eventually, aspects of the speaking skill need to be closely scrutinized and put into consideration. These aspects pose some challenges and identify some guidelines for understanding this skill and hence design instructional activities to prepare learners to communicate effectively in real life situations as shown below.

✓ **Pronunciation:** Pronunciation refers to the way in which a language is spoken, the way in which a word is pronounced, the way a person speaks the words of language. Hornby (1995) includes such categories as:

A. Individual sounds (mainly phonemic distinctions)

B. Stress and rhythm.

C. Intonation.

D. Linking/elision/assimilation.

Sounds: These include consonants, vowels and consonant clusters. **Intonation:** This refers to the pattern of pitch changes. There are two basic patterns: rising and falling.

Rhythm: It is created according to the position of stress within a single word or a group of words. Within words stress has fixed positions, but stress within a group of words can move according to meaning.

Linking and assimilation: When sounds are linked in spoken language, changes occur because of the influence of neighboring sounds.

- ✓ Grammar: Grammar is an important role to master the spoken area of a language. (Harris, 1974). Grammar has such important categories as :

- a. Range
- b. Accuracy

Using grammar correctly in speech implies the ability to produce the distinctive grammatical structures of the language and to use them effectively in communication taking into consideration the characteristics of spoken grammar. For example, spoken clauses, rather than complete sentences, are often joined with coordinators like "and" or "but", or not joined through conjunctions, but simply uttered next to each other, with possibly a short pause between them. Thus simple phrasal structure and purposeful repetition can often be markers of high proficiency (Hughes, 2002 and Luoma, 2004).

- ✓ Fluency: The smoothness or flow with which sounds, syllables, words and phrases are joined together when speaking quickly. (Zutell and Rasinski, 1991).

- A. Speed of talking.
- B. Hesitation while speaking.
- C. Hesitation before speaking.
- D. Accuracy.
- E. Automaticity.
- F. Prosody.
- G. Intonation.
- H. Phrasing.

Fluency, although not a main component either in communicative competence models or conversational models, is adopted in the current study. Fluency is

related to using all speaking skills in the context of the time-bound nature of speaking. It relies on the speaker's ability to use facilitation skills (fillers, lexical phrases, ellipsis...etc.) and compensation skills (self-correction, rephrasing, or repeating) to cope with ongoing fast communication (Widdowson, 1998 & Segalowitz, 2000).

- ✓ Vocabulary: vocabulary is the first step to speaking English. If we do not master vocabulary, we cannot produce an utterance, which is our purpose (Harris, 1974-81). Vocabulary is made up of two elements.
 - a. Range
 - b. Accuracy

Using vocabulary adequately implies the ability to recognize and use words in the way that speakers of the language use them. It implies using the common collocations of words and fixed phrases. This includes also the use of vague language (Luoma , 2004).

Speaking English requires techniques in teaching speaking. The English teachers have to be aware of innovative ways and well selected techniques in teaching especially in teaching speaking skill. According to Dobson (1987), there are some techniques in improving speaking such as dialogues, small-group discussion, debate, song, and games.

Consequently, debate is a competition where two or more speakers present their arguments or intent on persuading one another. Branham and Meany (1998) say that a

debate has been long a vital part of speaking. Training in debate improves speaking skill, whether scientific, historical, religious or political. It can contribute to the intellectual and ethical development of its participants by challenging them to make defensible judgment in which they must critically investigate about complex issues, and a debate stimulates and refines communication skill that empower individuals to speak from themselves.

As noted by Fonocchiaro and Bonomo (1970) there are six important things to be considered in speaking ability. These are as shown below.

- 1) To decide what the learners want to say.
- 2) To select words that fall into the pattern they are going to use.
- 3) To select words that fall into the pattern conveying the meaning.
- 4) To use correct arrangement of words.
- 5) To make sure about the appropriate situation.

6) To place tongue and lips in certain position to produce sounds. Moreover, Renkema (1993) says that speaker and listener are more involved in communication than writer and reader.

In general, speaking happens when two or more people interact. When speaking the speaker can express his/her ideas to the listener and, they maintain social relationship. Shumin (1997), says that the functions of spoken language are interaction and transactional. The primary intention of the former is to maintain social relationships, while that of the latter is to convey information and ideas.

Moreover, Brown (1994) says there are seven principles for designing speaking techniques. It is important to guide the teacher in planning speaking instruction as follows:

- a) Use techniques that cover the spectrum of learner needs, from language based focus on accuracy to message based focus on interaction, meaning, and fluency.
- b) Provide intrinsically motivating techniques.
- c) Encourage the use of authentic language in meaning full contexts.
- d) Provide appropriate feedback and correction.
- e) Capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening.
- f) Give students opportunities to initiate oral communication.
- g) Encourage the development of speaking strategies.

When using communicative activities, it is important to make students feel comfortable and confident, feel free to take risks and have opportunities to speak. According to Pica, Young and Doughty (1987), there are two kinds of classroom available to second language learners:

Input has been modified or simplified such as a traditional “teacher-fronted” classroom; and authentic students-to-student interaction is emphasized. It provides the learners more opportunities for speaking since the learners try to achieve mutual understanding and modify their language according to the demand of the situation.

Objectives for speaking are often given by the particular program in which the teacher must work. In some cases, the syllabus will consist of a list of grammar structures

to be taught. The teacher needs to be flexible in making best use of what is available for teaching purposes. In other words, the teacher must have some freedom in deciding what objectives to meet, what content to cover, and what activities to use. In this case, the teacher can go beyond the more specific goals and objectives of the particular program to the speaking needs that the students have in the “real world”.

There are many speaking activities can be used in classroom such as scrambled sentence, language games, role-plays, problem-solving, discussion, cued story, picture story, etc. Many language learners consider speaking ability the measure of knowing a language. As for them, fluency is the ability to converse with others much more than the ability to read, write or comprehend oral language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments on spoken communication.

Therefore, if learners do not learn how to speak or do not get any opportunities to speak in the language classroom, they may soon get de-motivated and lose interest in learning. On the contrary, if the right activities are taught in the right way, speaking in class can be a lot of fun, raising general learner motivation and making the English language classroom a fun and dynamic place to be.

Moreover, according to Brown (1994) the characteristics of spoken language that makes speaking skills difficult are as follows:

- ✓ **Clustering:** In order to speak fluently, speakers have to select from their store of language clusterings, that is, groups of words, not word by word.

- ✓ **Reduced forms:** Contractions, elisions, reduced vowels, etc. create difficulties in teaching and learning spoken English. If learners do not learn colloquial contractions, they can develop the kind of speaking that is stilted, bookish.
- ✓ **Colloquial language:** Colloquialism appears both in monologues and dialogues. If learners are only exposed to Standard English and/or “textbook” language, they sometimes find it hard to understand and produce words, idioms and phrases of colloquial language.
- ✓ **Stress, rhyme and intonation:** Learners of English often find it difficult to pronounce English words, to stress the right syllables, to follow the stress-times rhythm and intonation patterns of spoken English.
- ✓ **Affective factors:** Learners learning to speak often encounter the risk of saying out things that may be wrong, stupid and incomprehensible. At those times, they tend to be anxious because they do not want to be judged by other learners.
- ✓ **Interaction:** The greatest difficulty that learners face in learning to speak originates from the interactive communication. It engages in the process of negotiation of meaning with many discourse constraints, learners have to do the complex task of choosing what to say, how to say, when to speak, etc. Learners are affected by their interlocutors’ performance.

However, it is important to mention that both accuracy and fluency play an important role in language speaking for learners. Accuracy and fluency are terms characteristic for a successful and fecund conversation. Scrivener (2005) declares that accuracy is the ability to speak correctly without making serious mistakes and, therefore, a

greater use of instant teacher's correction within a speaking activity is appropriate. On the contrary, fluency is the ability to speak confidently without irrelevant pauses or hesitation. However, often with making major mistakes. In this case, instant correction may be inappropriate and could interfere with the aims of the activity.

Teachers should be aware of whether their main goal in a speaking activity is accuracy or fluency and adapt their role in class eligibly. If the main aim is to get students to speak, then one way to achieve that would be reducing the teacher's contribution. The less he or she speaks, the more time and space he or she will allow the students to. If the main aim is accuracy, the teacher should concentrate on students' mistakes and devote time to their correction.

Also, it is important taking into account the speaking without mistakes is, a promoted trend at present seems to be to lead students to a fluent conversation in everyday situations. Taking this into consideration, this approach best fits the needs of today's society, which is based on fast exchanges of information. Nevertheless, it would be injudicious to qualify accuracy as less important in communication and underestimate its importance. It is also essential for the ability to speak a foreign language well.

In a fluency activity the teacher is expected to monitor the class and encourage the students to speak with minimum interfering and correction. This technique is called scaffolding. Scrivener (2005) states that "it is a way a competent language speaker helps a less competent one to communicate by encouraging and providing possible elements of conversation." In practice it means to encourage the weaker one by nodding, eye contact, repeating the last word in order to encourage the speaker to continue, asking tag

questions, etc. The aim of this encouragement is to make a student speak as much as he or she is able to.

In a further analysis, Judy (1984) claims that fluency requires from the speakers to use the language that they already know, but in an spontaneous way when conversations appear and speakers find themselves in a situation where they have to listen, comprehend, and to respond spontaneously. Hartmann & Stork (1972) propose that when a person is able to use patterns and units of language at a normal speed in a conversation, and can use structures appropriately; this person is considered to be a fluent speaker in the target language.

Considering a fluent activity, correcting the mistakes should be done after finishing this activity. Suggested techniques are presented as follows:

- a) Writing the sentences used during the activity on the board and discussing them with the whole class.
- b) Writing incorrect sentences used during the activity on the board and encouraging the students to make corrections.
- c) Inventing and writing down the story that includes some errors the teacher overheard during the activity and students try to find them and correct them.
- d) Writing out two lists A and B – each list contains ten sentences from the activity but some of them are correct, some of them incorrect. Students work

in two groups and their task is to decide if the sentences are either correct or incorrect and why.

In an accuracy-based activity the teacher is required to correct students' mistakes whenever possible. While practising accuracy, students become aware of their own mistakes in speaking straight away because the teacher does not wait until finishing the task. This approach is suitable while focusing on grammar mainly and enables the students to realize and correct their mistakes and also prevent their recurrence.

In fact, the teacher is a facilitator of students' learning and as such he has many roles to fulfill. According to Freeman (1986) teacher acts as *a manager* of classroom activities. In this role, one of his major responsibilities is to set up activities that promote communication. During the communicative activities he/she acts as *a consultant* answering students' questions, offers advice and provides necessary language items.

One of the most important roles is to make sure that students know what they are supposed to practice and check if they do it effectively. These roles are called *a conductor* and *a monitor*. Although there is a great number of various activities which may be used in speaking lessons, their use would be confusing and pointless if they would not be logically organized. Being a good *organizer* should be an ability possessed by every skillful teacher.

Considering the facts mentioned above, we can conclude that the teacher's personality in a learning process is very important not only while participating in the activity but also while monitoring the students. The teacher's less dominant role in communicative activities offers the students the opportunity to be involved in

conversation and improve their speaking skills to be able to cope with the real-life situations.

For Ur (1996), there are some speaking problems that teachers can come across in getting students to talk in the classroom. These are: inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low or uneven participation and mother-tongue use.

The first problem that the students often encounter is inhibition. When students try to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, they are often inhibited. They are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face. They are shy of the attention that their speech attracts. Littlewoods (2007) asserts that a foreign language classroom can create inhibitions and anxiety easily.

Secondly, learners often complain that they cannot think of anything to say and they have no motivation to express themselves. Rivers (1968) believes that the learners have nothing to express maybe because the teacher had chosen a topic which is not suitable for him/her or about which he/she knows very little. It is difficult for many students to respond when the teachers ask them to say something in a foreign language because they might have little ideas about what to say, which vocabulary to use, or how to use the grammar correctly (Baker & Westrup, 2003).

Another problem in speaking class is that participation is low or uneven. In a large group, each student will have very little talking time because only one participant can talk at a time so that the others can hear him/her. There is a tendency of some learners to dominate while others speak very little or not at all.

Finally, when all or a number of learners share the same mother-tongue, they tend to use it because it is easier for them. Harmer (1991) suggests some reasons why students use mother-tongue in class. Firstly, when the students are asked to have a discussion about a topic that they are incapable of. If they want to say something about the topic, they will use their own language. Another reason is that the use of mother-tongue is a natural thing to do. In addition, using the first language to explain something to another can happen if there is no encouragement from the teachers. Finally, if teachers frequently use the students' language, the students will feel comfortable to do it.

In addition, speaking requires that learners understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language, that is, sociolinguistic competence (Burns & Joyce, 1997; Cohen, 1996 and Harmer, 2001). A good speaker hence synthesizes this array of skills and knowledge to succeed in a given speech act. Flores (1999) highlights the following skills underlying speaking:

- Using grammar structures accurately;
- Assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge, status and power relations, or differences in perspectives;
- Selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs;
- Applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener's comprehension;

- Paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener's comprehension and involvement.

However, in spite of the importance of the speaking skill at the secondary stage, students suffer weaknesses in their speaking performance. This can be attributed, in the light of the researcher's experience, to the prevailing traditional methods of teaching speaking. Students most of the time are rarely required to say more than a few words in response to some 'display' questions raised by the teacher. Moreover, the methods adopted rarely offer students a clear explanation or instruction of what constitutes speaking and how native speakers actually speak. Thus, the speaking skill remains a far-fetched goal or an ambiguous entity that is assumed to be hard to reach by students like other skills.

Speaking, also, is not given enough time or attention while teaching English to first year secondary stage students. This may be due to the evaluation system adopted that focuses only on reading and writing while neglecting listening and speaking skills.

Teachers should be aware of whether their main goal in a speaking activity is accuracy or fluency and adapt their role in class eligibly. If the main aim is to get students to speak, then one way to achieve that would be reducing teachers' contribution.

However important speaking without mistakes is a promoted trend at present seems to be to lead students to a fluent conversation in everyday situations. Taking this into consideration, this approach best fits the needs of today's society which is based on fast exchanges of information. Nevertheless, it would be injudicious to qualify accuracy as

less important in communication and underestimate its importance. It is also essential for the ability to speak a foreign language well.

Bygate makes a basic distinction between the knowledge base that enables learners to talk on the one hand, and the skills that are involved when they are engaged in interaction on the other. Accordingly, Bygate divides speaking skills into planning skills, selection skills and production skills. To enable planning in an interactive speaking situation, learners need to know "information" and "interaction" routines. Information routines may be identified as either expository or evaluative. The principal types of expository routines are narration, description, and instruction. For example, narrative routines consist of essential components: setting; time; participants and events (Albert, 2004). Evaluative routines typically involve explanations; predictions; preferences and decisions (Foster, 2001).

Actually, information routines suggested by Bygate correspond in part to discourse competence adopted by Canale and Bachman. Moreover, it is clear that they are similar to speaking genres suggested by Carter and McCarthy (1997).

Interaction routines, on the other hand, include the learner's knowledge of the kinds of turns typically occurring in interactional situations. Eventually, this does not necessarily mean knowing a text off by heart, but just knowing what expectations and possibilities can be realized in a given situation (Foster, 2001). Thus, in message planning, the underlying knowledge of routines enables learners to predict what might happen and pre-plan their contributions and interaction management skills (Bygate, 1987).

Selection skills encompass the learners' ability to build on their knowledge base of lexis, phrases and grammar to choose how to say what they want to say. The skills related to this ability have to do with negotiation of meaning by choosing an appropriate level of explicitness and ensuring understanding on the part of the listener. Productions skills are closely related to the time-bound nature of speaking. The related skills are facilitation and compensation to produce speech in real time.

Speakers can facilitate their speech production by simplifying structure using ellipsis, formulaic expressions, fillers and hesitation devices, ex: "well, you see, right". They can compensate for difficulties by using self-correction, and repeating. Having a ready stock of these markers, sound fluent even if the speaking situation is demanding (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001).

Evidently, for genuine communication to occur in the language classroom, teacher-student (and student-student) exchanges must go beyond display questions and should be based on the gap that occurs between interlocutors when one does not know in advance what the other is going to say (Liao, 2001).

Thus, there has been a strong movement, over the last decade, away from the highly structured, teacher-oriented foreign language instruction in favor of a task-oriented, communicatively based, and learner centered teaching. This was influenced by the communicative approach to language learning (Thomson, 1992). Accordingly, the fundamental concept underlying communicative tasks is that the teacher does not predetermine what linguistic forms will be learned (Yule & Powers, 1994 & Hedge, 2000). The underlying assumption is that tasks will engage naturalistic acquisition mechanisms, and drive language development forward.

Furthermore, although tasks seem to support only interactional purposes of speaking which consist mainly of short turns, tasks can be developed to cater for long turns and transactional talks as well (Ur, 1996 and Zacarian, 1996). Thus, in more details, tasks offer the following advantages for the EFL speaking classroom:

1. When tasks are the means of learning, the target language takes on meaning as students try to focus on actual problem solving. Instead of the TENOR situation (Teaching English for No Obvious Reason), students have a reason for learning (Norman, 1996, Willis, 1996, and Hedge, 2000).
2. Ownership: If students are allowed to see the task through all of its stages(task completion), without the teacher playing an interventionist role, they can achieve a valuable (and motivating) sense of fulfillment and heightened self-confidence that comes from understanding, performing, and reflecting on the task by themselves. In other words, tasks transform the curriculum from one that is teacher –based to one that is learner-centered (Lee, 2000 and Furuta, 2002).
3. Learning levels: Learners take on content matter (input) that is appropriate to their current stage. In this way, students are allowed to progress through tasks at their own rate, and this helps them to concentrate on aspects that are suitable for their learning level (Ellis, 2003).

4. Assessment: Tasks help students focus on outcome, show them their learning needs, and help them evaluate their communicative competence (Finch, 1997 & Ellis, 2003).

5. Error-correction: When students are conducting problem solving in groups, errors in communication become evident to the whole group, and the teacher (functioning as a language resource) can be asked to supply the necessary language, giving "the right information to the right people at the right time"(Ellis, 2003).

6. Skills integration: tasks always imply several skills areas, not just one. In this way the four language skills are approached in an interconnected way (Brown, 2001).

III.METHODOLOGY

This study was focused mainly on the following main question: To determine the most appropriate ways to improve the speaking skill of ninth-graders at Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles in Soyapango, San Salvador in order to suggest solutions as much as possible.

A) Population and Sample

This study is a case of ninth-graders from Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles in Soyapango, San Salvador, who have some difficulties with pronunciation. The target population to work with this research project was one hundred ninth-graders and two teachers at Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles in Soyapango, San Salvador in the academic year of 2016. Besides, in this investigation the researcher worked with four sections that represent the entire population of ninth-graders of which ten subjects were taken per section randomly; the same ten students per section were asked to participate during the data collection process.

B) Research Instruments

In this investigation, three instruments were used and they are the following: Observation Guides, Checklists, and Questionnaires. These instruments helped the researcher to know the teachers' ability to conduct the learning process. Moreover, the field notes were taken in order to resolve this problem as much as possible because the ninth-graders from school Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles are facing some difficulties to improve their speaking skill. The observation guides allowed the researcher to know the English related-problems the students under study faced especially with their fluency and accuracy. Also, one of the questionnaires was addressed to the teachers in charge of ninth-graders and the other one was addressed to ninth-graders in order to determine the

possible causes of students' speaking skill problem. This questionnaire was applied to know how students respond in teaching speaking through debate activities in order to give a solution to this problem.

The checklists helped the researcher to determine some important aspects related to her research project so as to have control on every single detail. In this case, were used important tools were used and they checked the consistency and completeness in carrying out pieces of information to complete successfully every task during the research project development.

C)) Research Approach: Qualitative and Quantitative.

The research that was carried is a qualitative research. But it is important to mention that it is also quantitative. It sought to build a description about the issue under study. It is important to mention that qualitative research tries to understand and to give reasons about why something is the way it is, and that is what the researcher sought to do. The researcher also looked forward to using quantitative methods because they allow to know the important data in this investigation to know ways and solutions on how to improve speaking-related problems of ninth-graders in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador.

The researcher provides a completed and detailed description of this investigation that was investigated, by analyzing, interpreting and diagnosing the data that were collected during this process that was carried out through the investigation.

In this project the researcher tried to identify the problem to suggest solutions. It means the researcher collected important results from the instrument that was administered to the subjects under study. So ninth-graders were spontaneous and were not forced to

follow certain guidelines. In that way ninth-graders could produce a natural communication when speaking with the researchers.

D) Type of Research: Case Study

This investigation is a case study of ninth-graders from Centro Escolar - Urbanización Los Ángeles, Soyapango, San Salvador. Moreover, other schools face different problems related to speaking skill such as grammar, vocabulary, and fluency but pronunciation is the most common problem that students may experience in the classroom and other place that they want to speak. For some English students, including ninth-graders, the speaking skill problems may be caused for different reasons, such as being ashamed of committing mistakes, because the teacher cannot make students to be interested in studying English. Therefore, the student is bored and has low motivation for studying English. Meanwhile, the teacher must apply appropriate technique to expand the knowledge and motivation of students, e.g, dialogues or debates, and the like. The subjects under study were carefully observed with the goal of determining the factors that are affecting the students' speaking development.

E) Research Techniques

The researcher used techniques in this study which were very important taking into account aspects of case study for collecting data. The techniques administered are as described below:

- 1. *Observational technique:*** Observation is used to know the teacher's ability in the learning process. Moreover, the researcher considers that the observation gives the study one of the most important tools —the Facts . Through participant

observation, researchers can also uncover factors important for a thorough understanding of the research problem but that were unknown when the study was designed. Thus, what we learn from participant observation can help us not only to understand data collected through other methods (such as interviews, focus groups, and quantitative research methods), but also to design questions for those methods that will give us the best understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

- 2. *Survey technique:*** In this case the researcher not only collected important information. The questionnaires that were passed to the ninth-graders and to their teachers (one designed for the students and the other one for the teachers) were designed with closed-ended questions in order to determine the possible causes of students' speaking skills problem .

F. Research Design: The researcher developed an appropriate plan .Also she followed some important steps and implemented them in her research project. Besides, the complexity and the great importance of the research project will follow a research design.

Moreover, the researcher worked on this project because she considers that the big problem that affects ninth-graders is pronunciation and nowadays they are facing in their real life situations and they need to improve that skill. In fact, the researcher considers that one of the most troublesome areas of learning English is the one related to the speaking skill and that is why she decided to work on this area because it is an important process in which teachers must get the class involved in what is going on in the class.

This design was non-experimental related to the descriptive exploratory type because the researcher administered, observed, and collected important information during her investigation without any problem. Besides she administered the tools to the subjects under study with the purpose of collecting important data and also improve their speaking skill. At the beginning of this study, it was difficult for the researcher to identify the problem that ninth-graders were facing, but at the end she understood the real problem that the students were facing in their life.

IV. FINDINGS

A) DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After having administered three instruments to both students and teachers at the Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles School, the researcher tabulated the data as shown below.

1. Instrument: Questionnaire. Subjects under study: forty ninth-graders.

Place: Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador.

The followings bar graphs show the statistical results obtained from the questionnaires administered to the students from “Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles, in San Salvador in the academic year 2016.”

1) Which of the following learning strategies do you use when you do not know the pronunciation of a word in English?

a) Listening to English Authentic Material. b) Seeking native speakers.

c) Using the internet and dictionary. d) Seeking advice for any question.



ANALYSIS

The results obtained for question 1 with from sections A, B, C, and D, related to learning strategy of ninth-graders in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles, in San Salvador show that 33 percent of students find it useful to use the internet and dictionary. On the other hand, 28 percent of students consider that for them it is important to seek advice for any questions related to their pronunciation. Contrary to these results, 22 percent of students consider that Listening to English authentic material is very important for them. Finally, 17 percent of students agree that it is important to have contact with native speakers.

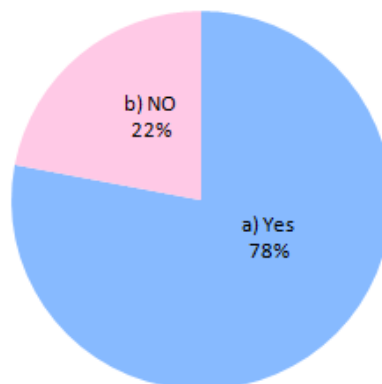
INTERPRETATION

As stated by the subjects under study, the students consider that the most important English learning strategies are for example using the internet and dictionary and finally seek advice for any question.

2) Are you having difficulty pronouncing English words?

a) Yes

b) No



ANALYSIS

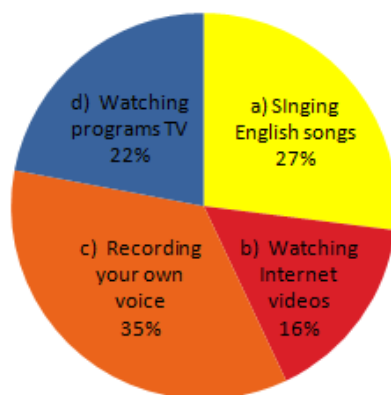
According to the results gotten, 78 percent of the subjects under study strongly agree that they are having difficulty pronouncing English words. However, the other 22 percent consider that they are not having difficulty in pronunciation the English field.

INTERPRETATION

The results show that the students under study have a considerable difficulty pronouncing English words because the result gotten for a question number 2 the 78 percent show that they have problem.

3) What techniques do you consider the most appropriate to improve your English fluency?

- a) Singing (English songs)
- b) Watching Internet Videos
- c) Recording your own voice
- d) Watching programs TV



ANALYSIS

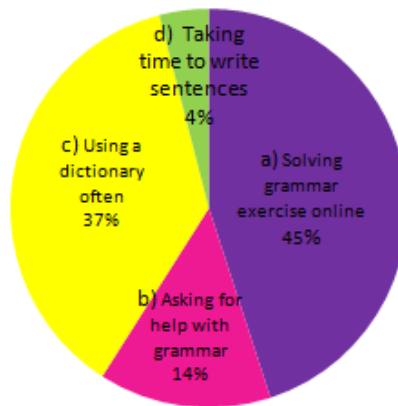
When asked about the most appropriate technique to improve their English fluency practice 35 percent of the students admit that recording your own voice is the high tendency, 27 percent of them say that it is singing English songs, watching TV programs is favored by 22 percent and watching internet videos is the most appropriate technique for the remaining 16 percent.

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, the students' prevailing tendency is recording their own voice and singing English songs. On the other hand, such receptive activities as watching TV programs and watching internet videos have a secondary importance for the subjects under study

4) Which of the following activities do you consider appropriate to improve your English grammar?

- a) Solving grammar exercises online. b) Asking for help with grammar.
c) Using a dictionary often. d) Taking time to write sentences.



ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for question 4, 45 percent of students consider that solving online grammar exercises is important to improve their English grammar following the previous percentage, 37 percent of students agree that using the dictionary often helps them to improve their English grammar whereas 14 percent think that asking for help with grammar is the best option to give solutions as much as possible. Finally, only 4 percent of students consider that taking time to write sentences is important for them to overcome this problem.

INTERPRETATION

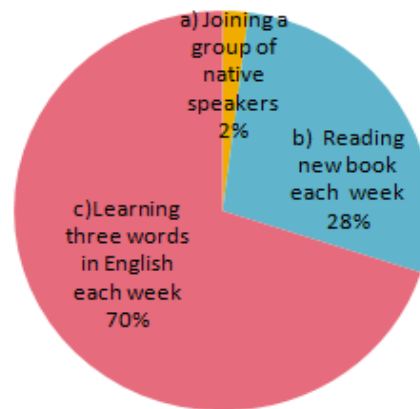
As revealed by the data, there is a strong tendency on the students' part to admit that solving grammar exercises online and using a dictionary help them to improve their English grammar.

5) Which of the following activities do you consider most appropriate to improve your English vocabulary in a proper way?

a) Joining a group of native speakers.

b) Reading a new book each week.

c) Learning three new words a week.



ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for question 5, 70 percent of students strongly agree that learning three words in English each week is the most appropriate option to improve their vocabulary of English words in a proper way 28 percent of them consider that reading a new book each week is of great importance to them and the remaining 2 percent of them

that joining a group of native speakers is important to improve their vocabulary during their learning process that they have in their real life.

INTERPRETATION As revealed by the data, most students favor learning three new words a week as the most appropriate activity in their English learning process and reading a new book each week. As shown by these data, learning new words and reading are highly related to enriching English vocabulary in their opinion.

2. Instrument: Questionnaire

Subjects under study: English ninth-graders' teachers.

Grade level: Profesorado en Idioma Inglés (English Language Teaching Degree).

Place: Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles, San Salvador.

The followings graphs show the analysis and interpretations of the results obtained from the interviews administered to the English ninth-graders' teachers from Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles, located in Soyapango, San Salvador, in the academic year 2016.

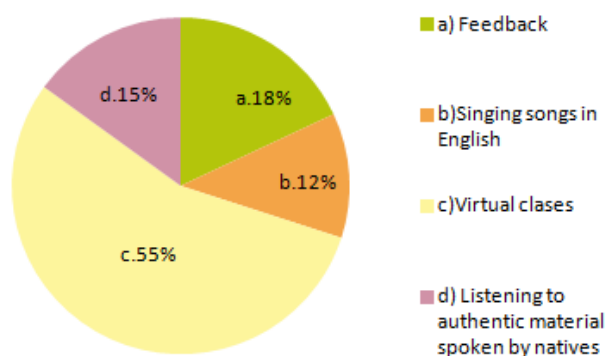
1. What are the most appropriate techniques to improve the English pronunciation of your students?

A) Feedback.

B) Singing songs in English.

C) Virtual classes.

D) Listening to authentic material spoken by natives.



ANALYSIS

According to the results, expressed by two teachers, they consider that virtual classes and feedback are the most appropriate techniques for the students to improve their English pronunciation.

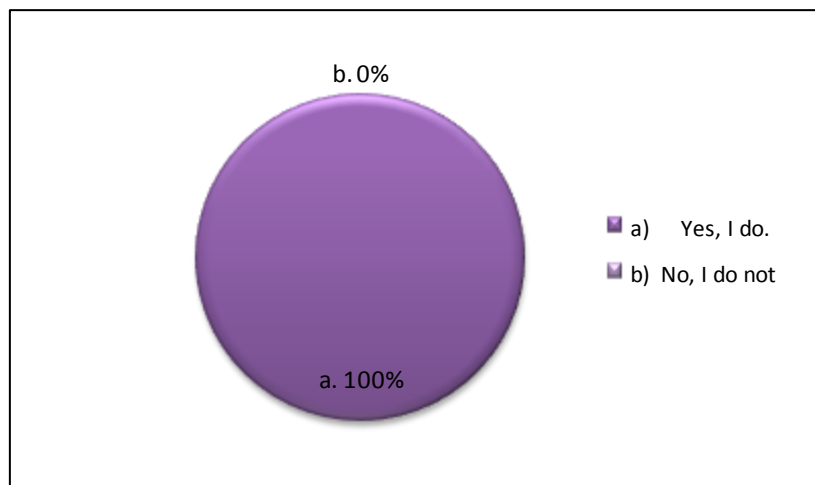
INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the data obtained from the subjects under study, there is a high tendency on the teachers' part to favor virtual classes and feedback as the most appropriate activities. On the other hand, listening to authentic material spoken by natives and singing songs in English are the least important activities in their opinion.

2. Do you consider that your students have problems with English grammar?

a) Yes, I do.

b) No, I do not.



ANALYSIS

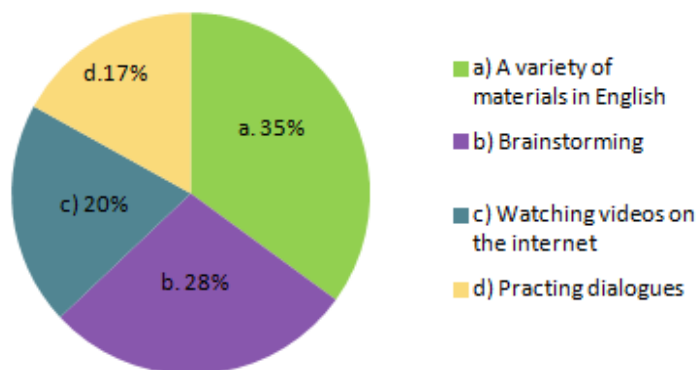
When asked about their students' problem regarding English grammar, unanimously the teachers admitted such a situation in their students.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the pie chart, there is a total tendency on the teachers' part to admit that their students have problems regarding English grammar.

3. What are the most appropriate ways to improve the vocabulary in English?

- a) A variety of materials in English.
- b) Brainstorming.
- c) Watching videos on the Internet.
- d) Practicing dialogues.



ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, the teachers consider that a variety of materials in English and brainstorming are the most important activities to improve their students' vocabulary.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the specification table, there is a considerable tendency on the teachers' part to consider a variety of materials in English and brainstorming as the most appropriate learning activities to improve their students' vocabulary of English. On the other hand, watch videos on the Internet their opinion the practice of dialogue have a minor importance in their opinion.

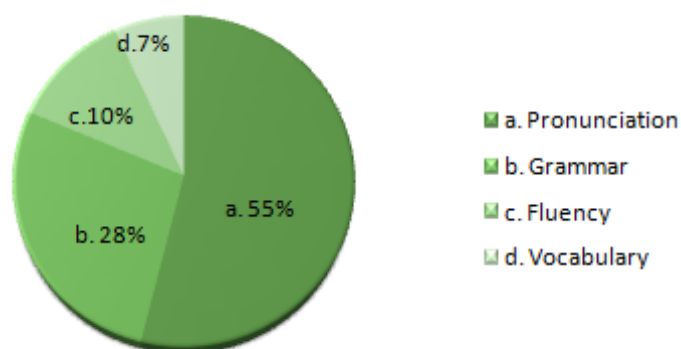
4. In which sub-skill do you consider that your English students present greater difficulty?

a) Pronunciation

b) Grammar

c) Fluency

d) Vocabulary



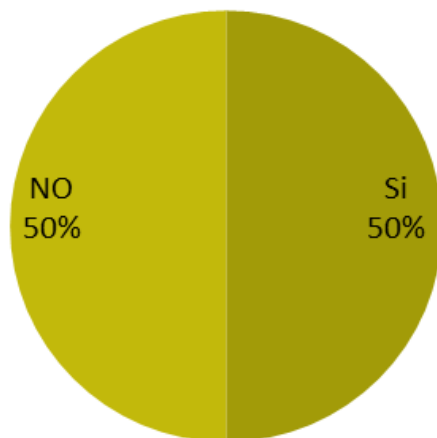
ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for this question, the teachers agree that their English students' most troublesome sub-skill is pronunciation, followed by grammar. Fluency and vocabulary have considerable place as the third and fourth more troublesome sub-skills their students have.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the data, there is a high tendency on the teachers' part to identify pronunciation and grammar as the most troublesome sub-skills for their students are facing nowadays. On the other hand, fluency and vocabulary continue to be difficult for their students but in a lesser way.

5. Do you consider that your students have problems regarding fluency in English?



A) Yes, I do.

B) No, I do no

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 50 percent of the subjects under study admit that their students are not having a good performance in terms of the fluency. On the other hand, 50 percent of them admit that their students have good fluency.

INTERPRETATION

The results show that the teachers interviewed have a divided opinion with regard to their students' fluency in English.

3. Instrument: Survey

Subjects under study: Forty Students.

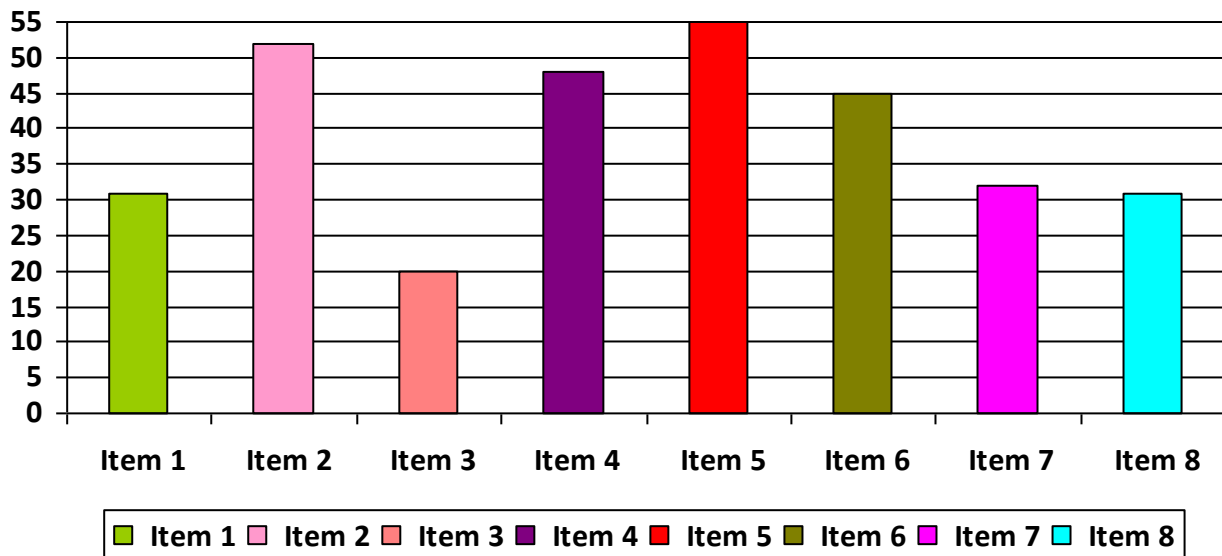
Grade level: Ninth-graders.


Place: Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador.


This survey was about the aspects that influence on ninth-graders' correct English language pronunciation', in Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles Soyapango, San Salvador.


General Objective: To identify the main factors affecting the English learners' pronunciation to improve their skills in order to provide solutions for this problem.


SURVEY





 **Item 1.** The results obtained were that *31 out of 83 students said* they do not really hear their pronunciation if it is correct or not when talking with others.


 **Item 2.** The most remarkable problem for students is that they do not speak with native English speakers to improve their pronunciation. This was admitted by 52 out of 83 students don't have the opportunity to talk with native English speakers so they need it.


 **Item 3** When asked about seeking counseling from others to verify their ability to pronounce English words, only 20 out of 83 students said that they do it.

 Then item **4** More than half of students admit that it is difficult for them to pronounce sounds that are similar in English and Spanish (45 out of 83 students).

 **Item 5** When asked about their pronunciation, only 55 out of 83 students said that they do not know if they pronounce English in a correct way, but they stated that listeners understand the message they want to convey.

 **Item 6** With regard to access to technology, 48 out of 83 students admitted that they do not have access to it to listen to their pronunciation.

 **Item 7** Only 33 out of 83 students have enough materials such as Magazines, Newspapers, TV broadcasts, Recorded real telephone conversation, and they like which allow them to improve their English pronunciation.

 **Item 8**, when being asked about speaking English in front of others, only 33 out of 83 students admitted that they like their accent but, on the other hand, they are ashamed of being wrong when speaking to others.

4. Instrument: Observation Guide.

Subjects under study: Forty Students.

Grade level: Ninth-graders.

Place: Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador.

Sub-skill tested: Speech Performance.

General objective: To identify the most troublesome situation faced by ninth-graders, when studying English in terms of speaking to propose solutions.

Specific Objective: To identify the main problems faced by ninth-graders in English in terms of fluency, vocabulary and grammar order to recommend solutions.

The following graphs show the results obtained from the observation guides in this case is talking about the fluency from “Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles Soyapango, San Salvador, in the academic year 2016”.

Fluency



ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 22 percent of the subjects under study had an outstanding fluency, 38 percent had poor fluency, 15 percent had very good fluency, 18 percent fairly and 7 percent is an acceptable fluency that the student has in the English field.

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, the students under study need to be guided by their teachers to overcome fluency as much as possible.

VOCABULARY



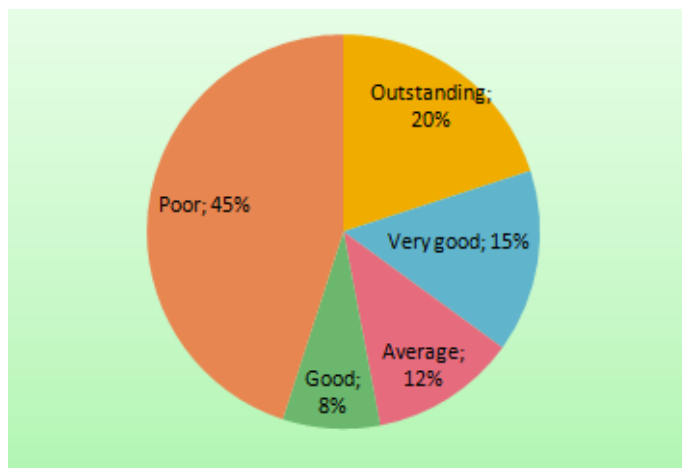
ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 32 percent of the subjects under study had an outstanding performance 29 percent had a poor performance, 18 percent had a very good performance, 12 percent had a fairly well performance and 9 percent had an acceptable performance.

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, the students under study showed some progress in their English vocabulary. It means that the subjects under study need to be guided by their teachers to consolidate their improvement in English vocabulary.

PRONUNCIATION



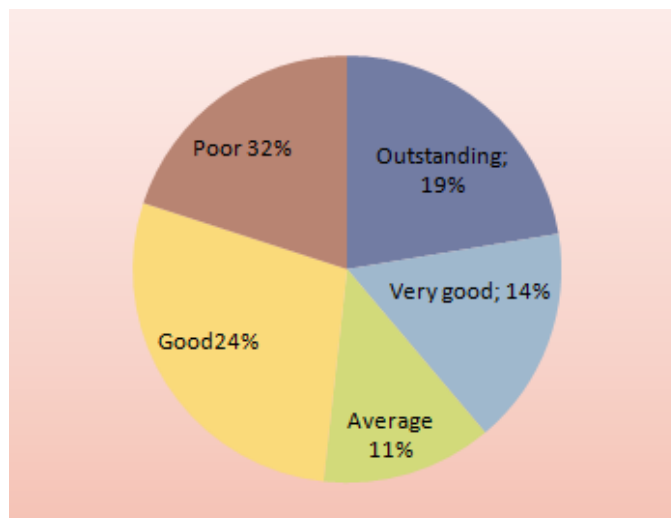
ANALYSIS

20 percent of ninth-graders had an outstanding pronunciation, 12 percent had a fairly well, 45 percent had a poor pronunciation, 15 had a very good pronunciation level and 8 percent had a good pronunciation.

INTERPRETATION

Based on the results from this observation guide, the researcher consider that the most troublesome sub skill for the ninth-graders is pronunciation, which means that they do not pronounce words correctly and they need to overcome this problem.

GRAMMAR



ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 32 percent had poor grammar, 24 percent had a good grammar level, 19 percent of them had an outstanding grammar, 14 percent had a very good, and 11 percent had a fairly level.

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, the students under study showed some progress in English grammar. It means that the subjects under study need to be guided by their teachers to get some improvement in grammar sub-skill.

B) CONCLUSION

In a few words, based on the results gotten during this investigation on ninth-graders and their teachers, the researcher can conclude the following:

The findings of this study show that the fundamental troublesome sub-skills for students are pronunciation, grammar, fluency and vocabulary but using the language in order to have a more successful learning, was necessary the implementation techniques or strategy for the speaking skill, allows the students to put in practice the speaking skill, and also to improve the speaking skill of course.

The teachers in their opinion the best techniques for the student improve their fluency were that they singing English songs because allowed listening their mistakes and try to improve this problem as much as possible.

However, the teachers that were interviewed in this study consider that ninth-graders needed an appropriate strategy to improve their speaking skill as pronunciation, for example, the virtual class because. It is a strategy that has a positive impact on learners' speaking skill as it gives the students a chance to explore different situations of real life and enables them to speak accurately and confidently in that situation in the target language.

C) RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher during her investigation obtained important data. It is important to mention that from the results of the study, both the teachers and students have difficulties nowadays when teaching and learning English. The researcher would like to put forward some recommendations to improve students' speaking skill. The techniques suggested hereafter hopefully can serve as a tool to enable both the teachers and students to become more successful.

- To work in pairs or in groups, which helps to bring an exciting speaking atmosphere. Also it gives students the opportunity to communicate in different social contexts and different social roles.

- To implement the online course for the students to improve their speaking skills with other students especially with native speakers.

- To give authentic English material such as Magazines, TV broadcasts, and Newspapers according to students' needs and interests which allow them to improve their speaking skill and its sub-skills.

- To overcome fear of losing face specially when they are talking to people. Find and take advantage of opportunities to use English to communicate with both native and proficient non-native speakers.

- To open English courses or extra classes for the students to reduce their speaking skill problem that nowadays is affecting them in their learning process and give solutions as much as possible.

- To use the new technologies, as computer, tablet, smartphone and the like, which are very useful and motivate the students because they consider them as something different and funny.

- Speak clearly to communicate the message.

- Put words together in correct word order.

- Use vocabulary appropriately.

- To provide the school under study, that is, Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador with suitable activities to overcome the ninth-graders' difficulties for speaking English as a foreign language.

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VI APPENDICES

Appendix "A": Questionnaire for students

Universidad de El Salvador
Facultad de Ciencias y Humanidades
Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros



Cuestionario para estudiantes de 9° grado, Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles Soyapango, San Salvador.

Nombres de la investigadora: Alvarado Linares, Liliana Carolina

Objetivo General: Identificar los factores que afectan a los/as estudiantes de inglés para mejorar sus habilidades con el fin de dar soluciones para dicho problema.

Instrucciones: Subraye la opción que considere conveniente.

1 ¿Es importante para usted tener una excelente pronunciación en inglés?

- a) Escucha autentico Material de Ingles. b) Tiene contacto con hablantes nativos.
d) Usa el internet y el diccionario. d) Busca asesoría para cualquier duda.

2 ¿Considera usted que tiene problemas al pronunciar algunas palabras en inglés?

- a) Sí _____ b) No _____

3 ¿Cuáles son las mejores herramientas que considera usted más adecuadas para mejorar su fluidez en inglés?

- a) Cantar canciones en inglés.
- b) Ver vídeos en internet.
- c) Grabar su propia voz.
- d) Ver programas de TV en Inglés.

4 ¿Cuál de las siguientes estrategias considera usted más adecuadas para mejorar la gramática en el idioma inglés?

- a) Resolver ejercicios de gramática por internet.
- b) Pedir ayuda a expertos en gramática inglesa.
- c) Usar a menudo un diccionario bilingüe (Inglés-Español).
- d) Dedicar tiempo para escribir oraciones en inglés.

5 ¿Cuál de las siguientes estrategias considera usted más adecuada para mejorar el vocabulario de las palabras inglesas de una manera más correcta?

- a) Unirme a un grupo de hablantes nativos.
- b) Leer un libro en inglés cada semana.
- c) Aprender tres palabras nuevas por semana.

Appendix “B”: Questionnaire for teachers

Universidad de El Salvador
Facultad de Ciencias y Humanidades
Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros



CUESTIONARIO PARA MAESTROS/AS DE NOVENO GRADO DEL CENTRO ESCOLAR URBANIZACION LOS ANGELES SOYAPANGO, SAN SALVADOR.

TEMA EN ESTUDIO: “Como ayudar a los estudiantes de noveno grado a mejorar su habilidad del habla en el Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles, Soyapango San Salvador”.

Maestro: _____ Fecha _____

I. ¿Cuáles son las técnicas más apropiadas para mejorar la pronunciación inglesa de sus estudiantes? Subraye la opción que considere conveniente.

- A) Retroalimentación. B) Cantar canciones en inglés.
C) Clases virtuales. D) Escuchar material Auténtico hablado por nativos.

2. ¿Considera usted que sus estudiantes tienen problemas relacionados con la gramática en inglés?

Sí _____ No _____

3. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes estrategias considera útiles para mejorar el vocabulario en inglés?

- A) La variedad de materiales en inglés. B) Brainstorming (Lluvia de ideas).
C) Ver vídeos en internet. D) Practicar diálogos.

4. ¿En cuál sub-habilidad considera usted que sus estudiantes de inglés presentan mayor dificultad?

A) Pronunciación

B) Gramática

C) Fluidez

D) Vocabulario

5. ¿Considera usted que sus estudiantes tienen problemas relacionados con la fluidez?

Sí _____

No _____

Appendix "C": Survey for students

Universidad de El Salvador
Facultad de Ciencias y Humanidades
Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros



Encuesta para estudiantes de 9° grado, Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Ángeles.

Nombres de la investigadora: Alvarado Linares, Liliana Carolina

Asesor de Tesis: Maestro Jorge Homero Llánes Márquez López.

Objetivo General: Identificar los factores que afectan a los/as estudiantes de inglés para mejorar sus habilidades con el fin de dar soluciones a dicho problema.

¿Cuáles son los obstáculos de pronunciación que usted considera que ha enfrentado en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés? Marque la casilla que crea conveniente:

- Realmente no escucho mi pronunciación si es correcta o no cuando hablo con los demás.
- No hablo con nativos de la lengua inglesa para mejorar mi pronunciación por temor a equivocarme.
- No busco asesoría con otras personas para que verifiquen mi habilidad al pronunciar las palabras.
- Se me dificulta pronunciar algunos sonidos similares en inglés y español.

- No sé pronunciarlo bien, pero sí escribirlo, pero de igual forma las personas comprenden el mensaje que quiero transmitir.
- No tengo acceso a la tecnología para poder escuchar cómo es mi pronunciación.
- No tengo materiales suficientes que me permitan mejorar mi pronunciación inglesa.
- Me gusta mi acento cuando pronuncio las palabras en inglés, pero me da miedo y vergüenza equivocarme frente a todo el mundo.

Appendix “D”: Observation guide

Universidad de El Salvador
Facultad de Ciencias y Humanidades
Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros



Observation guide applied to ninthgraders from “Centro Escolar Urbanización Los Angeles.”

Researchers’ name: Alvarado Linares, Liliana Carolina

Thesis advisor: Jorge Homero Llánes Márquez López, M.A.

General objective: To identify the most troublesome situation faced by ninth-graders, when studying English in terms of speaking to propose solutions.

Specific Objective: To identify the main problems faced by ninth-graders in English in terms of fluency, vocabulary and grammar in order to recommend solutions.

Student's Name:			Grade:	Date:	
Language Observed:			Administered By (signature):		
	1	2	3	4	5
B. Fluency	Speech so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible.	Usually hesitant: often forced into silence by language limitations.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion frequently disrupted by the student's search for the correct manner of expression	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions fluent and effortless; approximating that of a native speaker.
C. Vocabulary	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible.	Misuse of words and very limited: comprehension quite difficult.	Student frequently uses wrong words: conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.	Student occasionally uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies.	Use of vocabulary and idioms approximate that of a native speaker.
D. Pronunciation	Pronunciation problems so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently repeat in order to make him/herself understood.	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentration on the part of the listener and occasionally lead to misunderstanding.	Always intelligible, although the listener is conscious of a definite accent and occasional inappropriate intonation patterns.	Pronunciation and intonation approximate that of a native speaker.
E. Grammar	Errors in grammar and word order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Grammar and word order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict him/herself to basic patterns.	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order that occasionally obscure meaning.	Occasionally makes grammatical and/or word order errors that do not obscure meaning.	Grammar and word order approximate that of a native speaker.