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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

TOPIC:

A PROPOSAL TO OVERCOME THE SPEAKING-RELATED PROBLEMS OF NINTH-GRADERS IN ESCUELA REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL URUGUAY IN SAN SALVADOR IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2015

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

    A. Appendix A: Questionnaire for student.

    B. Appendix B: Questionnaire for teachers.

    C. Appendix C: Survey.

    D. Appendix D: Observation guide.

I. ABSTRACT

The following research project presents an investigation regarding a proposal to overcome speaking-related problems on students from ninth-grade in the academic year of 2015 in Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay, Mejicanos, San Salvador. First of all, the research team observed the subjects under study for three weeks in order to identify the most troublesome speaking-related problems regarding pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and stress. After that, the researchers 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 researchers to get a better and deeper understanding of the situation that ninth-graders encountered in the speaking skill. Finally, the data analysis and its interpretation allowed the researchers to determine the main troublesome factors that prevent ninth-graders from having a good speaking skill performance.

II. INTRODUCTION

The research team aims at developing their research project "A proposal to overcome the speaking-related problems that ninth-graders in Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador have''. The researchers consider that speaking English represents one of the most important tools to succeed in today´s society. Besides other skills and knowledge, the researchers consider that speaking is one of the most influencing factors while applying for a job or sustaining a particular work position under the condition of advancing in the language level. According to the last statistics from the employment ministry of El Salvador, there were more job opportunities for people who speak English during the year 2014 than in the past years. Indeed, nowadays knowing and managing a foreign language is a necessity for Salvadoran people.

The main reason for working on this research project development is to find the most troublesome speaking-related problems and to consult experts, resources, and bibliographical pieces of information that help the researchers not only to deal with the problem under study, but also to suggest solutions to improve the speaking–related situations. Undoubtedly, speaking English plays a crucial role at the present time in El Salvador. Therefore, in this research project the researchers concentrate on speaking–related problems 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 theoretical part and the second one is the practical part. In the theoretical part, the researchers deal with the difference between speaking and conversation. By doing so, the researchers explain the practical use and the importance of speaking in everyday life. As to the practical part, the

researchers prepare and administer such tools as questionnaires, tests, interviews and a checklist.

The researchers also aim at highlighting the importance of motivation in teaching practice and the techniques and approaches used by others to enhance students´ desire to speak a foreign language. While dealing with communicative activities, the researchers focus on distinguishing them either as pronunciation, fluency, intonation, and stress, activities and also they provide definitions of these terms.

The researchers consider that the role of a teacher is crucial to make speaking lessons as effective as possible. Furthermore, the researchers consider 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 lessons. That is why there is a special summarized section but at the same specific for this purpose addressed to English teachers called "A proposal to overcome the speaking-related problems of ninth-graders in Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador in the academic year of 2015."

Finally, the researchers provide the results of their research project based on the data analysis and the pieces of information decoded to reveal the findings, and give some conclusions and recommendations at the end of the research project.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Learning English as a foreign language is something difficult for some people, and one of the hardest things to deal with is the speaking skill. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). The purpose of this project was to identify how to overcome the speaking problems that ninth-graders have regarding English at Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador.

The research team considers that ninth-graders experience different problems while learning English as a foreign language, but the most worrying situation to care about is the English speaking skill because it affects the performance of the students in the English subject. Yet, to date, there are so many ways to learn or improve English but it is still being hard for ninth-graders to learn or improve it.

Concerns like ¨Am I speaking with the adequate intonation? ¨ or ¨Am I speaking as I am supposed to?¨ may be in the students' mind when students are putting into practice the English speaking skill and may be due to the fact that students are having some issues specifically with that skill. But in order for the researchers to discover and understand the reasons of why ninth-graders have problems regarding speaking skill a case study was carried out in Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay in Mejicanos, San Salvador. By observing and being in contact with the subjects under study, the researchers determined factors that cause the students´ speaking-related problems and in that way they can suggest solutions to improve these problems as much as possible.

A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

General Research Question:

What are the most appropriate ways to overcome the speaking-related problems of ninth-graders at Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador in the academic year of 2015?

Specific Research Questions:

•   What are the most appropriate techniques to overcome the pronunciation- related problems that students under study have?

•   What are the most appropriate techniques to overcome the intonation-related problems that the students under study have?

•   What are the most appropriate techniques to overcome the fluency-related problems that the students under study have?

B. OBJECTIVES

1. **General Objective:**

   ➢ To determine the most appropriate ways to overcome the speaking-related problems of ninth-graders at Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador in order to suggest solutions.

2. **Specific Objective:**

   ➢ To identify the students` most troublesome speaking sub-skill so as to propose solutions.

   ➢ To determine the most appropriate techniques to overcome the students` problems with regard to pronunciation so as to improve their English pronunciation.

   ➢ To discover the most appropriate techniques to improve the students fluency so as to contribute to their English learning process.

   ➢ To determine the most appropriate techniques to solve the students' intonation-related problems so as to improve their speaking skill.

   ➢ To identify the most appropriate techniques to solve the students` problems regarding stress in order to help them reduce this problem.

C. JUSTIFICATION

Taking into account the fact that speaking English is opening more and better job opportunities to all Salvadoran people, but most of all to young Salvadorans, it can be established that the importance of the project 'A proposal to improve English speaking related problems in ninth-graders of Escuela República Oriental de Uruguay' lies on the following facts :

- While the researchers were ninth-graders and were studying English at that point, they faced problems when learning English and they have determined that the most difficult skill for them was the speaking skill. That is why this research project focuses on ninth-graders, because the researchers have noticed that nowadays the problem with the English speaking skill while learning English persists. Ninth-graders still face different problems with language skills while learning English, but the researchers think that the main problem that those students face is with the English speaking skill and its sub-skills.

- Getting information as to how to solve speaking-related problems can help the researchers to contribute solutions to those problems.

- The researchers not only seek to do this research project with the intention of doing their thesis project, but also with the intention of discovering why ninth-graders have more problems with the English speaking skill than with the other skills. The aim of this research is to show others the results at the end of the investigation. Also with the intention of putting into practice what they consider can be done to improve ninth-graders English speaking skill, the researchers will provide their experience and knowledge to the teachers of the school under study.

D. LIMITATIONS

During an investigation process not all things are covered completely or as expected by the researchers and, therefore, there are certain limitations to proceed with the research project. And this project was not an exception; the researchers faced/encountered the following limitations:

- At the moment of data collection some students acted reluctantly to fill out the questionnaire. Some students as well took a lot of time filling out the questionnaire or giving a second thought to their answers.

- One of the teachers in charge of ninth-graders could not be in the school attending them for two weeks and, due to that factor, the researchers had some delay in the data collecting process.

- The research team considers that there was not enough time provided by the ninth grade teachers to fill out some of the instruments.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Background

The English language is of great importance nowadays. In fact, it is a major international language spoken worldwide. In public, or private schools English is taught as a foreign or second language. What happens in other contexts regarding English teaching and learning also happens in our country.

Speaking English is hard for teachers and students. In fact, speaking English is difficult due to several factors the learning of the sub-skills such as pronunciation, intonation, stress, fluency and accuracy among others. Indeed, the pronunciation of English words becomes the hardest challenge not only for students but also for teachers from time to time.

In addition, to speak English, teachers and students agree that they need to manage pronunciation. Since pronunciation is the hardest sub-skill to achieve for educators and learners, it becomes a necessity for teachers to reinforce the pronunciation area so they can make students overcome their speaking fears, and to gain confidence to speak in English.

Moreover, due to the fact that speaking is the hardest and meaningful ability to master in every single language, it requires time and efforts. Indeed, it becomes the biggest challenge to gain confidence to master a foreign language.

Since speaking plays an important role in the teaching and learning areas, it is important to illustrate ourselves through definitions stated by some researchers about speaking. The following are definitions and important pieces of information related to speaking stated by some authors.

Lawtie (2007) states that speaking is fundamental to human communication. Widdowson (1984:58) adds that communication through speaking is performed face- to - face interaction and occurs as part of a dialogue or other form of verbal exchange.

Mead and Rubin (1985) say that speaking is an interactive process in which an individual alternately takes the roles of speaker and listener, and which includes both verbal and nonverbal components.

Chaney and Kanyi (2006) add that Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. It means speaking is interaction between speakers and listeners.

Furthermore, according to O'Malley (1996:59) speaking means negotiating intended meanings and adjusting one's speech to produce the desired effect on the listener. In addition, Widdowson (1984:58) says that speaking is the active or productive skill.

Moreover, according to Cruttenden, (2001), pronunciation, that is related to intonation, fluency, and stress is of great importance for communicating in an effective manner of verbal exchange.

Intonation is defined as the modulation of the voice, which is accompanied by the sequence of speech sounds, and that can reflect differences in sense, intention, emotion and origin of the speaker (Diccionario Word Reference de la Lengua Española)

Fluency is defined as the easiness or agility of speaking, while pronunciation is the emission and articulation of sounds in speech. It is the way of pronouncing sounds in a language (Diccionario Word Reference de la Lengua Española, 2005).

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

Stress: The prominence given to certain syllables within words, and to certain syllables or words within utterances (Gilbert 1994 and Hancock 1995).

Like any other ability, speaking requires certain important things to be considered as Fonocchiaro and Bonomo (1970:32) explain below:

A) To decide what the learners want to say.

B) To select words that fall into the pattern they are going to use.

C) To select words that fall into a pattern conveying the meaning.

D) To use correct arrangement of words.

E) To make sure of the appropriate situation.

F) To place tongue and lips in certain position to produce sounds.

Since every single language has its components, it is important to highlight and take into account the speaking components. In fact, according to Harris (1974: 81) the five Components of language that influence speaking ability are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

A. Pronunciation

Hornby (1995: 928) defines pronunciation as 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.

In fact, according to Hornby, pronunciation is very important in speaking. He considers that if we do not manage appropriate pronunciation, it can influence the meaning of a word.

B. Grammar

Mastering grammar knowledge will help one in speaking English, because he/she will know how to arrange words in sentences, what tenses will be used, and how to use

appropriate utterances. In other words, grammar is an important role to master the spoken form of the language.

C. Vocabulary

Mastering vocabulary is the first step to speak in English.

D. Fluency

In speaking, we must speak with fluency. In that way listeners are able to response to what we say.

F. Comprehension

In speaking, comprehension is needed. If not so, misunderstanding will happen between speaker and listener and the communication cannot run well.

Since dealing with speaking requires identifying different speaking styles on the part of teachers and learners, it is important to notice that there are two types of language: formal and informal.

In general, someone uses formal speaking in the teaching learning with the students and someone who has a higher status processes it like the teacher. On the other hand, informal speaking is used when someone speaks with friends and family. Therefore, language learners need to recognize that speaking involves three areas of knowledge as shown below:

A)   Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary): Using the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation.

B)   Functions (transaction and interaction): Knowing when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is not required (interaction/relationship building).

C)   Social and cultural rules and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants) understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason.

In addition, educators and learners agree that the speaking ability becomes the hardest obstacle to overcome in order to gain confidence to succeed in mastering English as a foreign language.

Since speaking implies pronunciation that is important in the field of English as a second or foreign language, the necessity to manage competitiveness in speaking English is crucial and it involves seeking for methods of teaching pronunciation.

In fact, some English teachers have a rich variety of opinions on the importance of including more pronunciation practices in their lesson plans.

However, not all the teachers want to implement pronunciation tasks in their lesson plans because they think that there is some other English areas which students need to pay attention to. According to Gilbert (1984), this attitude denies the students the opportunity to gain precise command of the English language.

In fact, ninth-grade teachers from Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay face some difficulty in their pronunciation. They attribute their pronunciation problems to the lack of teaching training in the English area. The methodology they use in class is traditional, one teacher centered where output is more that input and where students are listeners. The book they use to teach is the one suggested by the National curricula ("Welcome to the English Language," by R. Aquino, 9th grade, text/workbook 3.)   They have to prepare two classes of forty five minutes each distributed during each week of the academic year. However, they recognize that unfortunately they do not possess much knowledge of teaching techniques to help them improve their performance in their English

classes. Therefore, ninth-graders from school Centro Escolar República del Uruguay are aware of the necessity to acquire a reasonable knowledge of English in order to speak it. It leads them to improve their English pronunciation. In fact, in a recent survey ninth- graders mentioned the most common difficulties that they face to speak English. These difficulties are listed below:

A) Mother tongue interference while learning the foreign language (English)

Students consider that their mother tongue language interfere while learning the English language due to the differences and interpretation of each language structure. Students tend to associate words from their mother tongue language with the ones of the English language.

B) Lack of time to make oral practices

Students think that they do not have enough time to develop speaking activities.

C) Lack of vocabulary to express complete thoughts

Students do not have enough vocabulary to express their ideas so they feel afraid of speaking and making mistakes.

D) The lack of motivation due to their low self-esteem

Students feel that they are not motivated enough to have an active role in the speaking area.

E) Fear of committing mistakes and being victims of bullying by their classmates

Students consider that committing speaking mistakes can make them feel uncomfortable and victims of bullying in front of their teachers or classmates.

F) Mispronunciation of words

Students think that the variety of English sounds confuse them and make them feel insecure while pronouncing some words.

G) Nervousness and anxiety

Students consider that the lack of confidence in the speaking area make them doubt of themselves while having oral practices.

H) Lack of English materials

Students think that the lack of English materials make them unable to have an active participation in the English class.

I) Lack of interest in some topics

Students find some topics difficult and some others uninteresting; therefore, they do not play an active role in class.

Penny Ur (1991) carried out a similar study related to speaking problems of 9th grade High School Turkish learners of English as a second language and possible reasons for those problems as shown below.

Exploring the Teachers and Students' Perspectives.

The researcher found that according to the results, the students commonly believed that they could not speak English fluently. Therefore, these results gave ninth grade teachers some reasons to think the students were aware of the problem.

The majority of students thought that the main problem of their inability to speak English was because of their fear of a limited vocabulary in which students could not describe the expression they would like, and they gave up speaking.

Furthermore, the study also revealed a very surprising result: Thirty-one (31%) percent of   the students believed their speaking problem was not related to poor pronunciation even though it was seen through the observations that most of the students

had trouble with pronouncing some vowels, consonants and intonation. Nearly twenty-five percent of the students did not have any idea about whether the classroom environment was appropriate to speak the language. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the students claimed that their teacher did not motivate them to speak in English, whereas many educators advise teachers to encourage learners to use the target language to interact with the students.

However, the findings showed that they disagree with these results, based on their experiences with EFL learners' speaking problems. The main issue was that lessons basically relied on grammar and vocabulary knowledge.

The data obtained through observation sessions provided different evidence. The teachers were not aware of this problem as the teacher asked a student to read the text; the other students were distracted with unknown words and structures of the language in the classroom.

The result of the study showed that half of the teachers were not sure about the amount of L1 use in the classroom. It has been suggested that there should be a balance in the use of L1 in the classroom but how should the teachers decide on this balance? Harmer (2007) advises EFL teachers that a balanced use of the first language really depends upon some factors such as age, background of the students, context, and level of the learners.

Consequently, all participant teachers seemed to share a common view that their students could not speak English and these problems were derived from limited vocabulary, anxiety, and poor pronunciation, insufficient knowledge about the topic, peer pressure, uninteresting topics, and lack of motivation.

Half of the teachers thought that the students were studying English as a compulsory course, which discouraged them to learn a foreign language.

Most teachers (75%) stated that their students get overly excited while speaking English and are afraid of being laughed at in front of their friends because of mistakes in pronunciation.

Most students complained that their language was limited to mechanic vocabulary and grammar structures. The major reasons behind this problem might be having low language and/or content knowledge and the methods and materials of the classroom and considerable affective and personal factors.

Thus, teachers should build a supportive climate by considering the factors stated in this finding to encourage learners to participate in classroom activities. Ur (1991) suggested how EFL teachers may in some ways overcome speaking problems with strategies that place students in small groups to maximize the amount of their involvement in the classroom. Teaching essential vocabulary before starting the activity may help learners to produce some talk.

According to Ur (1996), there are four main elements, as shown below, that trigger difficulties in speaking.

A) Inhibition: Students are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism, or simply shy.

B) Nothing to say: Students have no motive to express themselves.

C) Low or uneven participation: Only one participant can talk at a time because of large classes and the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

D) Mother-tongue use: Learners who share the same mother tongue tend to use it because it is easier and because learners feel less exposed if they are speaking their mother tongue.

To summarize, speaking is the most under developed part of the language leaning.

It is surely one of the important elements of communication that needs to be taken into a careful consideration by EFL teachers. They should examine their students' real needs.

Scrivener (2005, 160-162) declares that 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 teacher´s contribution. The teacher is expected to be able to concentrate on student's mistakes in order to correct them.

Moreover, according to Samira Al Hosni (2014), the minister of Education in Oman, there are three major speaking difficulties and they are linguistic difficulties, mother tongue use, and inhibition. During a class observation, Samira Al Hosni observed the following speaking difficulties among students.

A) Linguistic Difficulties: Data collected through observation showed that students struggle to find the appropriate vocabulary item when trying to speak in English, which reflects their insufficient vocabulary repertoire. Data collected from the student interview supported this because one of the students reported that he and his classmates wanted to speak, but they didn´t know the word. The interviewed students also pointed out that they find it difficult to build sentences when they try to express their ideas. One of them said, "We do not know how to say it". Although teachers spend a long time teaching grammar rules, students still cannot form short sentences when they try to speak in English.

B) Mother Tongue Use. This problem is strongly related to the previous one, which is linguistic difficulty. During his class observation, he noticed that students tend to speak in Arabic when they discuss the rubrics of different tasks, and when he asked them about the reason for that in the interview, they explained that by saying, ¨we do not know how to say it¨. They meant how to discuss their ideas in English, so they shifted to Arabic. Therefore,

the inadequate vocabulary repertoire and weak sentence building skills are the reasons for using the mother tongue.

C) Inhibition: It was noticed during the class observations that students' participation was very low. This is because of the previously mentioned reasons to inhibition. Students explained that their fear of making mistakes in front of their classmates was the reason for not speaking in the class. They expressed that, saying, they would laugh at us if we make mistakes.

As noted by Shoe Bottom (2012), some of these factors that affect acquiring pronunciation skills can be distinguished in two main groups: internal and external.

Internal Factors

These are the factors which are incorporated into students' individual language.

A) Age: It is proved that children are the most talented ones in terms of acquiring EFL. However, adults can achieve a reasonable progress in obtaining pronunciation skills successfully if they are well motivated and determined.

B) Personality: Students who are of introvert character are usually afraid of expressing themselves orally; they do not rather look for any opportunities to speak.

On the other hand, students who are of extrovert character are usually seeking to take part in every conversation possible, ignoring their mistakes.

C) Motivation: It is important to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Students who are intrinsically motivated exhibit greater interest and enjoyment in their English language development. Students who need to study English in order to take a better job or to communicate with relatives who live in an English speaking country (so they are extrinsically motivated) are also likely to achieve better results.

16

D) Experiences: Students who have already been exposed to some foreign language have greater chances to learn a new language easier than students who have never encountered one.

E) Cognition: It is believed by some linguists that the cognitive abilities that are stronger with some students than with some others can lead to faster language progress.

F) Native language: Students who try to learn a foreign language which belongs to the same language family as their native language have greater chance than those students who try to master a language from a family group that is different from their native tongue.

External Factors

These factors characterize the particular language learning situation.

A) Curriculum: It is important to expose students of ESL to such a workload which is appropriate for their studying needs.

B) Instruction: It depends also on teacher's teaching skills and abilities how successful students are in terms of their language development. In addition to this, students who are exposed to some ELT also in other subjects reach greater progress.

C) Culture and Status: It has been noticed that students whose culture possesses a lower status than the culture whose language they are exposed to achieve the language skills slower.

D) Motivation: It is proven that students who are continually supported to improve their language skills by their families or teachers reach a greater success.

E) Access to native speakers: Students who have the possibility to meet with native speakers lose the fears to communicate. Native speakers provide a linguistic model and an appropriate feedback for students.

In a research paper, Zamzam (2011) points out that most problems of speaking are related to the classroom procedure. Through speaking activities these problems can be identified as:

A) Student inhibition: Speaking activities require a student to have all eyes on him and exposure to an audience can often give students stage fright.

They may also be worried about making mistakes, being criticized or losing face in front of the rest of the class.

B) Some students do not have anything to say on a particular topic: In reality, they may be bored or feel that the topic is unrelated to anything they know. If this is the case, they will have no motivation to speak other than the fact that they know they should be participating in the speaking activity. Libyan students often lack confidence in their speaking ability and feel they have insufficient language skills to express exactly what they want to say.

C) Students interrupt each other: There will always be dominant students in an English class making it difficult for more reserved students to express themselves freely. Dominant students who interrupt frequently or who constantly look for the teacher's attention tend to create an environment in the English class where more timid students are quite happy to sit back and watch the lesson unfolding instead of participating.

D) The use of the mother tongue: Students who insist on using their mother tongue are students who are fearful of criticism and need to be encouraged to speak English. Students must understand that they cannot revert to their mother tongue as this will take away precious speaking practice time during lessons and slow down oral progress.

Zamzam (2011) makes the following suggestions to minimize the speaking problems already mentioned above.

A) Group work:

Group work increases the amount of time available for oral practice and allows more than one student to benefit from speaking time. Working in groups also lowers the inhibitions of shy students who are not comfortable speaking in front of the whole class.

B) Easy language:

Simple language makes it easier for students to speak more without hesitation and gives them a sense of accomplishment. Essential vocabulary can be pre-taught or reviewed before the activity enabling students to fill-out their speech with more interesting sentences and rich language.

C) Clear guidelines:

Stating clearly what is expected from each student is essential in ensuring that everyone in the group contributes towards the discussion. Appointing a chairperson to each group to regulate participation is a way to make sure that dominant students leave discussion opportunities open to more reserved students. Feedback reveals the results of the discussion and motivates each student to follow the guidelines.

D) Rich mount of vocabulary:

Teachers must help students to gain a good amount of vocabulary that is needed to be able to form sentences and to help the students to interact confidently and orally with other students and with the teacher.

E) Encouragement

The teacher must encourage the students to speak and to use the language in and out the classroom room and teachers should help students to build confidence by saying to

students that if you make mistakes you are not criminal but if you make mistakes you can be corrected in a constructive way.

F) Correct use of Language

The teacher must teach students how to use language in its appropriate way by showing and giving examples of what situations are best to use some words and phrases. According to Nunan (20003:54-56) there are five principles for teaching speaking:

A) Be aware of the difference between second language and foreign language in learning context.

B) Give students chance to practice with both fluency and accuracy.

C) Provide opportunities for students to talk by using group work or pair work.

D) Plan speaking task that involve negotiation for meaning.

E) Design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interaction speaking.

In addition, Richards and Renandya (2002:12) add that there are principles of language teaching such as:

A) Automaticity

B) Meaningful learning

C) The anticipation of reward

D) Intrinsic motivation

E) Strategic investment

F) Language ego

G) Self- confidence

H) Risk taking

I) The language-culture connection

J) The native language effect

k) Inter-language

L) Communicative competence

In addition, Harmer claims that one of the best ways of helping learners to activate their knowledge is keep 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 under pressure.

Hammer claims that there are also motivational factors, differing from student to student, which influence their progress in the spoken language. In fact, Harmer distinguishes two types of motivations which are extrinsic and intrinsic 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. In addition, Harmer claims that 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. Their English is good at this stage but they are motivated by a primary goal of achieving a more advanced level of the language.

Lu (2002) insists on the fact that incomprehensible nonstandard pronunciation and intonation will produce psychological nervousness in speakers, which is likely to also block their efforts to seek clarification or to paraphrase using alternative expressions with phonetically different pronunciation and intonation.

In contrast, Bygate and Grice (1975) argue that all communication is intentional communication and that understanding is a matter of interpreting what is intended rather than decoding the referential meaning of utterances.

Concerning techniques in teaching speaking, the English teacher has 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, games.

Debate: It is a competition where two or more speakers present their arguments intent on persuading one another. Branham and Meany (1998) say that 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 participant by challenging them to make defensible judgment in which they must critically investigate complex Issues, question given assumptions debate stimulates and refines communication skill that empower individuals to speak from themselves.

In addition, according to Leo in Azma (2008) there are some objectives to be achieved through a debate, these are the ones:

First: To encourage students to practice speaking.

Second: To give students ample opportunities to speak English during their leisure time.

Third: To increase students' motivation to speak.

Fourth: To make them realize that learning English is not as difficult as they think.

Fifth: To practice English without thinking much about grammar.

Sixth: To let students realize that they can learn English from their parents, friends, classmates and others.

Seventh: To make sure that everybody can learn English at their free time.

Eighth: To develop students' courage to speak English.

There are some problems found in teaching speaking. It is caused by teacher's technique. The teacher still uses conventional technique "imitation and repetition". Imitation, indeed, helps students to pronounce and produce the English utterance they hear from the teacher, as closely as possible to the utterance produced by him or her. On the other side, he/she cannot make students to be interested in studying English. Therefore, the student is bored and poorly motivated in studying English. Meanwhile, the teacher must apply appropriate technique to expand the knowledge and motivation of students.

One of the valuable techniques in teaching speaking is debate. Debate is a communication process in which participants argue for and against a given topic.

In addition, according to Nolasco (1987) being able to speak reasonably correct and even with 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 conscious of what happens within it. However, conversation follows certain rules which should be obeyed in order for students to feel relaxed and be satisfied with it. The aim 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 because they seek to identify the students` most troublesome speaking sub-skill so as to propose solutions.

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. Teachers should be aware of whether their main goal in

a speaking activity is accuracy or fluency and adapt their role in class eligible, because will try to discover the most appropriate techniques to improve the students fluency so as to contribute to their English learning process. If the main aim is to get students to speak, then one way to achieve that would be reducing teacher´s contribution. The teacher is expected able to concentrate on student's mistakes in order to correct them.

However, important speaking without mistakes is a promoted trend at present. It 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.

Scrivener (2005, 162) mentions that 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. Therefore "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 with tag questions, etc. The aim of this encouragement is to make a student speak as much as he or she is able to. Considering a fluent activity, correcting the mistakes should be done after finishing this activity.

Suggested techniques are the following:

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 correction.

C) Inventing and writing down the story that includes some errors the teacher overheard during the activity and students try to find 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.

There are six types of classroom speaking performance. It is useful in guiding teacher in planning speaking instruction. Brown (1994:271-272) list them as follows:

A) Imitative: This kind is carried out not for the purpose of meaningful interaction, but for focusing on some particular element of language form.

B) Intensive: Intensive speaking goes one step beyond imitative to include any speaking performance that is designed to practice some phonological or grammatical aspects of language.

C) Responsive: A good deal of the students' speech in the classroom is responsive: Short replies to teacher or student-initiated question or comment.

D) Transactional (dialogue)

Dialogue conducted for the purpose of information exchange such as information-gathering interview, role play or debate. Interpersonal dialogue to establish or maintain social relationships, such as personal interview or casual conversation role play.

E) Extensive (monologue)

Extended Monologue such as oral reports, oral summary, or perhaps short speeches.

Moreover, Brown (1994:275) 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 meaningful 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.

Furthermore, there are some methods and techniques in teaching speaking. Dobson (1987) says that there are some effective techniques for teaching speaking that can be applied in the classroom such as the following:

A) **Dialogues**: A short conversation between two people presented as a language model-the dialogue-often receives top billing in the manipulative phase of language learning. In repeating dialogue, the students practice pronunciation and memorization and it can help the students develop fluency in English.

B) **Small-group discussion:** Small-group discussion is an excellent way to give students opportunities to speak English.

C) **Debate:** Debate helps students speak more fluently and during a debate they can represent their feelings on an issue.

D) **Songs:** Singing is a popular activity throughout the world and the students often delight in learning English songs. In teaching English songs, it can help students to improve aural comprehension, group spirit is fostered through singing, and singing allows the students a chance to relax from the pressure of conversation, reinforce the students' interest in learning English.

E) **Games:** Language games can add fun and variety to conversation sessions if the participants are fond of games. Games are especially refreshing after demanding

conversational activities such as debates or speeches. A game can help the students to get stimulus in additional conversation.

Thirumalai (2002) states that there are some methods in teaching speaking as follows:

A) Asking and Answering Questions: Asking and answering questions is an essential part of teaching, learning, and using any language.

B) Imitation and Repetition: Imitation helps students to pronounce and produce the English utterance they hear from the teacher as closely as possible to the utterance produced by him or her.

C) Substitution: Substitution of a word, phrase, or sentence by another, which helps students to produce new utterances and to develop speaking skill.

D) Eliciting: Eliciting is an important process which teachers must employ to get the class involved in what is going on in the class. For speaking practice, eliciting is highly essential. It helps students to focus their attention, to think, and to use what they already know. It helps teachers to assess what the class already knew. Speaking through the guessing process, students are encouraged to see the patterns of usage and to invent the correct words and sentences. Students will guess words and sentences that have not yet been taught to them.

E) Role Play; Role play brings situations from real life into the classroom. Students imagine and assume roles.

Moreover, Nunan (2003:56-58) says that there are some techniques in classroom of speaking. These techniques are listed below:

A) Namely information Gap: Information gap is a useful activity in which one person has information that the other lacks. Jigsaw activities are a bidirectional or multidirectional

information gap. Each person in a pair or group has some information the other person needs.

B) Role Plays: Role plays are also excellent activities for speaking in the relatively safe environment of the classroom.

C) Simulation: Simulation is more elaborate than role play. In a simulation, props and documents provide a somewhat realistic environment for language practiced contact assignments.

Contact assignment involves students out of the classroom with a stated purpose to talk to people in the target language.

In addition, Kayi (2006) states that there are some activities to promote speaking as follows:

A) Brainstorming: The good characteristic of brainstorming is that the students are not criticized for their ideas so students will be open to sharing new ideas.

B) Storytelling: Story telling fosters creative thinking. It also helps students express ideas in the format of beginning, development, and ending, including the characters and setting a story has to have.

C) Interviews: Conducting interviews with people gives students a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in class but also outside and helps them become socialized.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to address the following main question: To determine the most appropriate ways to overcome the speaking-related problems of ninth-graders at Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador in order to suggest solutions.

A. Population and Sample

This study is a case of ninth-graders from Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador suffering from English speaking-related problems. The target population to work with on this research project was one hundred ninth-graders and five teachers at Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador in the academic year of 2015. Moreover, the study was conducted in ninth-graders classrooms. The researchers worked with four sections that represent the entire population of ninth-graders, 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

Three instruments were used in the current study, and they are: Observation Guides, Questionnaires and Checklists. Class observations were conducted and field notes were taken in order to find more about the speaking difficulties that are facing ninth-graders in Centro Escolar República del Uruguay.

Furthermore, the observation guides allowed the researchers to know about students' oral accuracy.

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-related problems.

Also, the checklists helped the researchers to determine some important aspects related to their research project and to have control of every single detail related to checking the consistency and completeness in carrying out pieces of information to complete successfully every task during the research project development.

C. Research Approach: Qualitative

The research that was carried is a qualitative research. It sought to build a description about the issue under study. As people may know, qualitative research tries to understand and to give reasons about why something is the way it is, and that is what the researchers sought to do. The researchers also looked forward to using non quantitative methods to know ways and solutions on how to improve speaking-related problems of ninth-graders in Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay.

What the researchers provide is a completed and detailed description of the topic that was investigated, by analyzing, interpreting and diagnosing the data that were collected in the exploratory process that was carried out through the investigation. They clearly identified the problem that they explored and they guided themselves by a theoretical idea a kind of theory which provides a framework for their investigation. It means they created a theory based on the results that were collected out of the instruments they administered to the subjects under study.

The researchers provided to the subjects under study freedom to act as they usually do when they were interacting among themselves, 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. To get that, the researchers used such tools as *checklists, eyes and other senses (watch), questionnaires, and interview guides (for ninth-grades' teachers and students).*

D. Type of Research: Case Study

The following is a case study of ninth-graders from Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador suffering from English speaking-related problems. Ninth-graders not only from República Oriental del Uruguay School, but also from other schools face different speaking-related problems like intonation, pronunciation, stress and fluency, pronunciation being one of the most common problems that English as foreign language students may experience. This is being said because the researchers had this problem in particular when they were studying English in ninth grade. For many English students, including ninth-graders the speaking-related problems may be caused for different reasons, some of them being class participation, being ashamed of making a mistake in front of all the class, not having enough exercises to practice their pronunciation (like dialogues), and the like. The subjects under study were observed and interviewed throughout the collecting data process with the goal of determining the factors of this phenomenon, with the purpose of discovering and giving possible solutions to decrease ninth-graders English speaking related-problems.

E. Research Techniques

The research techniques the researchers used in this study are important aspects of case study for collecting data. The techniques administered are as described below:

1. Observational technique: This is an important aspect of this case study undertaken by outsiders (researchers, no-participants). The researchers had the need to come to the conclusions based on their observation, to generate proposals to improve students´ most troublesome sub-skills. Researchers needed to go beyond the subjective and, if possible, eliminate bias. That is why the researchers designed an instrument to pursuit the aims.

2. Survey technique: The survey used in this project offers, not only quick ways of collecting information but also another way for the researchers, to collect data. 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 and were provided with at least four options per question so as to know the views, experiences and thoughts of individual participants.

F. Research Design:

The researchers developed a suitable plan in order to carry out their investigation. Indeed, the researchers followed some important procedures and they implemented them throughout the research project. Moreover, considering the complexity and the great importance of the research project, the research team followed a research design.

The researchers used a non-experimental design since they relied on interpretation of the problem that was being studied based on what they had observed and interacted while being

in contact with the subjects under study so as to get conclusions about why ninth-graders have more problems with the speaking skill than with the other skills (reading, writing, listening) and recommendations in order to get ninth-graders to improve that skill.

Another reason why they chose to use this research type is because the researchers thought they could be closer to real-life situations than with other types of research designs and obviously, they would get more reliable results.

The type of non-experimental design used by the researchers was the *descriptive exploratory design* because they observed, documented and described the problem under study without manipulating or controlling the environment, in which the instruments were administered to the subjects under study. They did that by identifying and exploring the problem with the purpose of getting more information about *why* they are facing that trouble and *how* they can improve or be better at the speaking skill.

In other words, they did not simply identify the problem, but they did a depth exploration taking into account the factors of this problem so that they could get a better understanding regarding the speaking related problems of ninth-graders.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After having administered four instruments to both students and teachers at the Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay School, the researchers tabulated the data as shown below.

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

Place: Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay School, San Salvador.

The followings graphs show the statistical results obtained from the questionnaires administered to the students from "Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay, en San Salvador in the academic year 2015."

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

a) Using the dictionary

b) Asking someone

c) Using online translator

d) Reading (Associating words with the context)

e) All of the above

f) Other/s: _____

e) All of the above 17%
a) Using the dictionary 22%
b) Asking someone 26%
c) Using online translator 35%
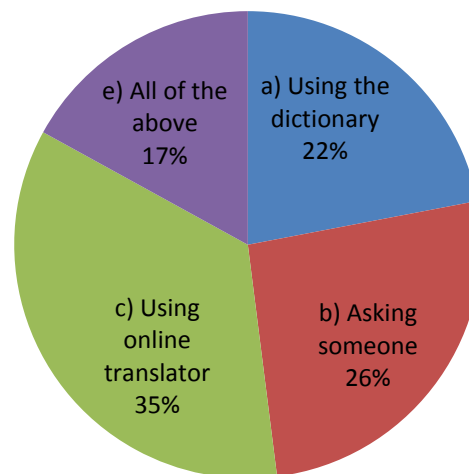
ANALYSIS

The results obtained for question 1from sections: A, B, C, D, of ninth-graders in Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay, en San Salvador show that 35 percent of students find it useful to use online translators. On the other hand, 26 percent of students consider that for them it is important to ask someone when they do not know the pronunciation of a word in English; contrary to these results, 22 percent of students consider that the use of the dictionary is important for them. Finally, 17 percent of students agree that it is of great importance to take into account all the learning strategies for them to know the pronunciation of a word in English.
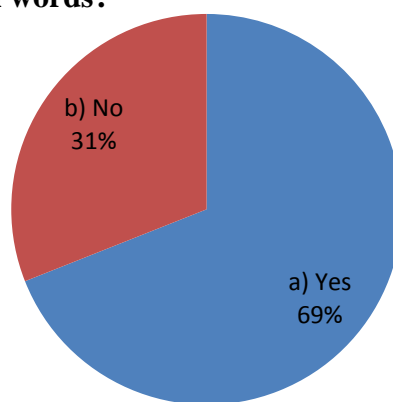
INTERPRETATION

As stated by the subjects under study, *using online translator* and *asking someone* are their favorite English learning strategies. The *use of a dictionary* is also a strategy favored by them.

2) Are you having difficulty pronouncing English words?

a) Yes

b) No

b) No
31%

a) Yes
69%

ANALYSIS

According to the data obtained for question 2 from sections: A, B, C, D, of ninth graders in Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay, en San Salvador; a high percentage of students, specifically 69 percent of them, strongly agree that they are having difficulty pronouncing English words; on the other hand, 31 percent of students consider that they are not having difficulty with that practice.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the data, there is a considerable tendency on the students' part to admit that they have pronunciation problems. Only thirty percent of them do not have any problems regarding pronunciation.

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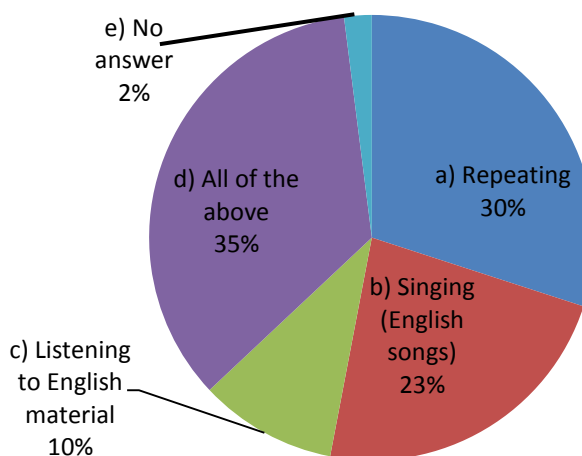
a) Repeating

b) Singing (English songs)

c) Listening to English material

d) All of the above

e) No answer

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for question 3 , from sections: A, B, C, D, of ninth-graders in Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay, en San Salvador; 35 percent of students consider that all of the techniques (ways) provided by the researchers are appropriate to improve their English fluency. Following the previous percentage, 30 percent of students think that *repeating* is helpful to improve their English fluency, 23 percent of them consider *singing English songs* as the best option to improve their English fluency. Finally, 10 percent consider that *listening to English material* is an important tool to improve their English fluency, and only 2 percent did not provide any answer.

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, even though the students favor using all the techniques mentioned, *repeating*, *singing,* and *listening,* **repeating** and **singing** are their favorite ones.

4) Which of the following activities do you consider appropriate to improve the intonation of English words?

a) Practicing punctuation marks

b) Repeating what the teacher says

c) Listening to recordings
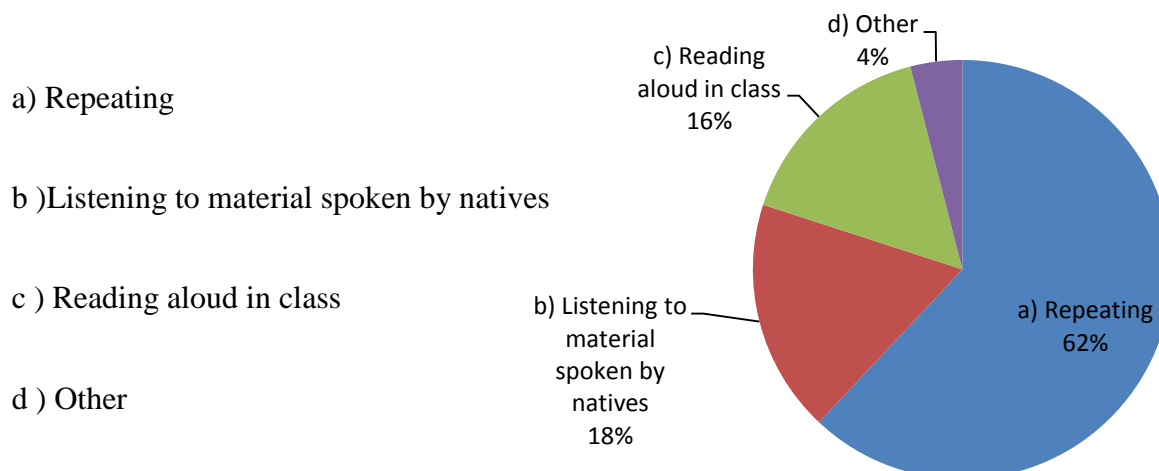
d) All of the above

e) Other
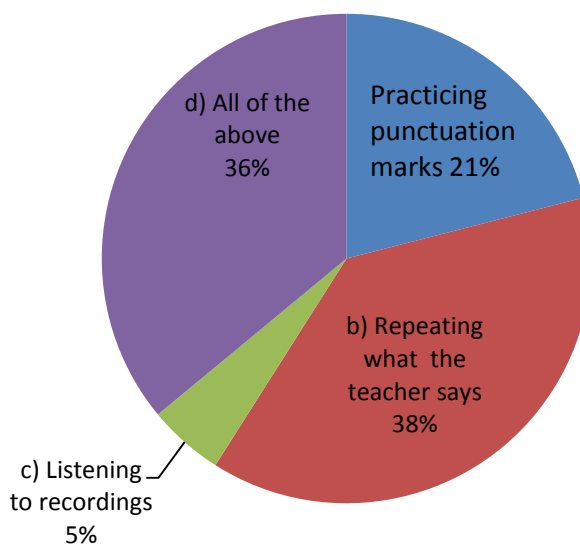
ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for question 4, 38 percent of students consider that repeating what the teacher says is important to improve the intonation of English words; following the previous percentage, 36 percent of students agree that all of the activities provided in the questionnaire are important to improve the intonation of English words whereas, 21 percent think that practicing question marks is the best option to improve the intonation of English words. Finally, only 5 percent of students consider listening to recordings of great importance to improve their intonation of English words.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the graph, there is a moderate tendency on the students' part to favor repetition alone whereas almost the same percentage of them consider them all, *practicing punctuation marks*, *repeating the teacher's model* and *listening to recording* as appropriate learning activities.

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

a) Repeating

b)Listening to material spoken by natives

c) Reading aloud in class

d) Other

d) Other
4%

c) Reading
aloud in class
16%

b) Listening to
material
spoken by
natives
18%

a) Repeating
62%

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for question 5, 60 percent of students strongly agree that repeating is the most appropriate option to improve the emphasis of English words in a proper way; following the previous chart, 18 percent of them consider that listening to material spoken by natives is of great importance to them. 16 percent of them think that reading aloud in class is important to improve the emphasis of English words in a proper way, and only 4 percent of them consider that other options are better to improve the emphasis of English words in a proper way.
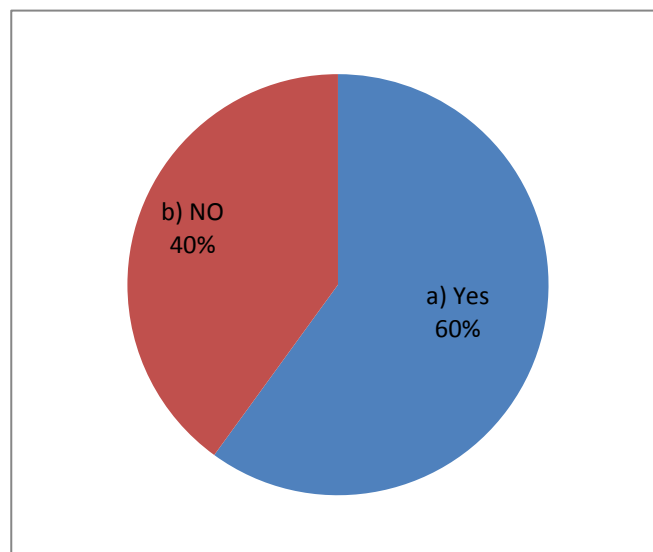
INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the data, most students favor *repetition* as the most appropriate activity in their English learning process.

6. Do you consider that you are having a good performance as a student in the English field?

a) Yes

b) No

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 60 percent of the subjects under study strongly agree that they are having a good performance as students in the English field; however, the other 40 percent consider that they are not having a good performance as students in the English field.

INTERPRETATION

The results show that students under study have a considerable degree of self- reliance on their English learning process. Only 4 out of ten admit that they have problems regarding their performance in that language.

2. Instrument: Questionnaire

Subjects under study: Five English ninth-graders' teachers.

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

Place: Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay school, San Salvador.

The followings graphs and charts show the analysis and interpretations of the results obtained from the interviews administered to the English ninth-graders' teachers from Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay, Centro Escolar España, Centro Escolar Miguel Pinto and Centro Escolar Francisco Morazán, all of them located in San Salvador, in the academic year 2015.

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

Assign numbers in order of priority (1 for the greatest acceptance, and so on).

a) Repeating

b) Singing songs

c) Practicing of dialogues

d) Listening to authentic material (Spoken by native speakers)

Specification Table 1.1

Activities \ Ranking	1 (10 points)	2 (7.5 points)	3 (6 points)	4 (5 points)	Points for each Activity
Listening to authentic material	2	1	-	2	37.5
Singing songs	2	-	1	2	36
Repeating	1	1	2	1	34.5
Practicing of dialogues	-	3	2	-	34.5

ANALYSIS

According to the results, expressed by four out of five teachers, *Listening to Authentic Material* and *Singing Songs* are the most important activities and only one out of five teachers thinks that *Repeating* has importance.
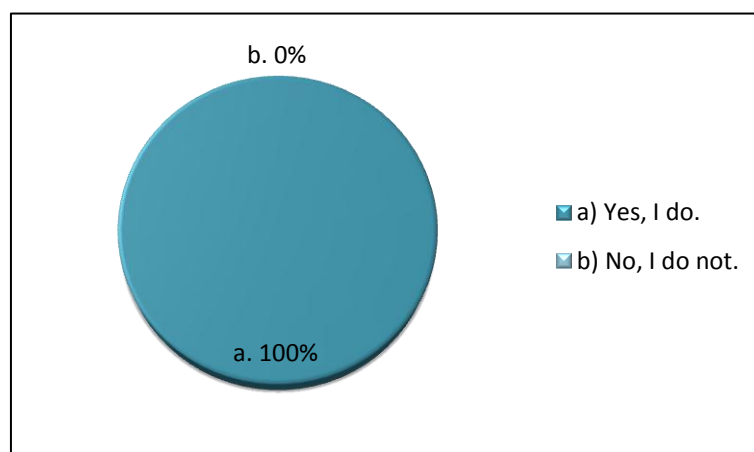
INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the specification table, there is a high tendency on the teachers' part to favor *Listening to Authentic Material and Singing Songs,* as the most appropriate activities. On the other hand, *Repetition and Practice Dialogues* have the same percentages and are the least important activities in their opinion.

2. **Do you consider that your students have problems with fluency in English?**

c) Yes, I do.

d) No, I do not.

b. 0%

a. 100%

a) Yes, I do.
b) No, I do not.

ANALYSIS

When asked about their students' problems with fluency in English, all the teachers interviewed admitted that their students have such a problem.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the pie chart, there is a total tendency on the teachers´ part to admit that their students have fluency-related problems.

2.1 If your answer was yes, which of the following strategies do you use to improve the fluency of your students? Assign numbers in order of priority (1 for the greatest acceptance, and so on).

a) Contracting

b) Using the union of the sounds (sounds linking)

c) Singing Lyrics

d) Repeating material spoken by native speakers

Specification Table 2.1

Activities	1 (10 points)	2 (7.5 points)	3 (6 points)	4 (5 points)	Points for each activity
Using the union of the sounds	5	-	-	-	50
Repeating Authentic Material	-	3	-	2	32.5
Singing Lyrics	-	1	3	1	30.5
Contracting	-	1	2	2	29.5

According to the results gotten, the use of linking sounds is the most important activity to improve students´ fluency in English.
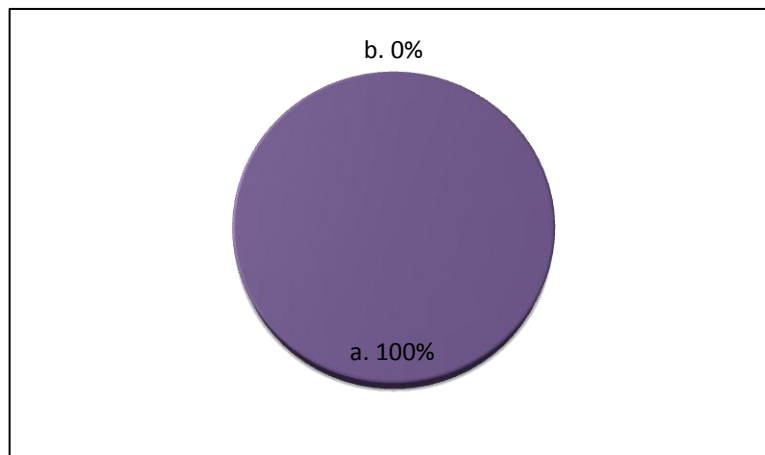
INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the teachers' interview, there is a high tendency on the teachers' part to favor the use of linking sounds and repeating authentic material as the most appropriate activities. Singing lyrics is also important whereas contracting is considered as a less important activity.

3. **Do you consider that your students have problems regarding intonation?**

a) Yes, I do.

b) No, I do not.

ANALYSIS

When asked about their students' problem regarding intonation, 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 intonation.

3.1 If your answer was yes, what are the most appropriate ways to improve intonation-related problems of your students?

Assign numbers in order of priority (1 for the most widely accepted, and so on).

a) To practice reading emphasizing punctuation

b) To read short paragraphs

c) To repeat (words, sentences, etc.)

d) To pursue dialogues after the teacher

Specification Table 3.1

Activities \ Ranking	1 (10 points)	2 (7.5 points)	3 (6 points)	4 (5 points)	Points for each activity
To read short paragraphs	4	1	-	-	47.5
To practice reading emphasizing punctuation	1	1	1	2	33.5
To pursue dialogues after the teacher	-	2	-	3	30
To repeat (words, sentences, etc.)	-	1	4	-	31.5

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 4 out of 5 teachers consider that *reading short paragraphs* is the most important activity to improve students´ intonation of words. Only one out of five considers *practice reading emphasizing punctuation marks* as the most appropriate activity so as to improve students´ intonation. On the other hand, *repeating (words and sentences, etc.)* and practicing dialogues of sentences after the teacher have a considerable importance for this group of teachers.
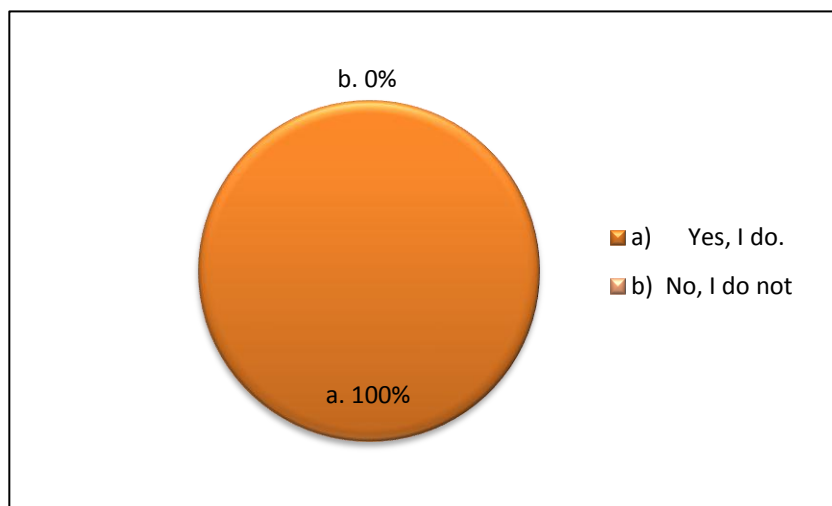
INTERPRETATION

As revealed by the specification table there is a high tendency on the teachers´ part to favor *reading short paragraphs* as the most appropriate learning activity to improve their students´ intonation of English words. On the other hand, *practice reading emphasizing punctuation* has a minor importance.

4. **Do you consider that your students have problems regarding stress in English?**

c) Yes, I do.

d) No, I do not.

ANALYSIS

When asked about their students' stress-related problems, all of them answered that their pupils have difficulty regarding this sub-skill.

INTERPRETATION

The pie chart shows that ninth-graders´ teachers absolutely agree that students have stress-related problems.

4.1 If your answer was yes, what are the most appropriate ways to improve the problems of stress of your English students? (Assign numbers in order of priority, 1 for the most widely accepted, and so on).

a) Repeat after the teacher

b) Listen to native spoken material (recordings)

c) Read aloud in class

d) Model the stress for students

Specification Table 4.1

Ranking Activities	1 (10 points)	2 (7.5 points)	3 (6 points)	4 (5 points)	Points for each Activity
Listen to native spoken material	3	1	1	-	43.5
Read aloud in class	1	3	1	-	38.5
Repeat after the teacher	1	1	3	-	35.5
Model the stress for students	-	-	-	5	20

ANALYSIS

When asked about the best activity to improve stress-related problems, 3 out of 5 teachers consider that *listening to native speakers´ material* is the best one, whereas *reading aloud in class* and *repeating after the teacher* have considerable importance.

INTERPRETATION

As the specification table shows, there is a considerable tendency on the teachers part to favor *listening to native spoken material* as the most important activity for students to improve English stress of words. On the other hand, *reading aloud in class and repeating after the teacher* are less important in the teachers' opinion.

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

(Assign numbers in order of priority, 1 for the most widely accepted, and so on).

a) Pronunciation

b) Intonation

c) Fluency

d) Stress

Specification Table 5.1

Activities / Ranking	1 (10 points)	2 (7.5 points)	3 (6 points)	4 (5 points)	Points for each activity
a) Pronunciation	5	-	-	-	50
b) Intonation	-	2	3	-	33
d) Stress	-	2	-	3	30
c) Fluency	-	1	2	2	29.5

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten for this question, all of the teachers agree that their English students´ most troublesome sub-skill is pronunciation, whereas intonation and stress have considerable place as the second more troublesome sub-skill their students have.

INTERPRETATION

As revealed on the specification table, there is a complete tendency on the teachers' part to identify pronunciation as the most troublesome sub-skill for their students. On the other hand, intonation, stress and fluency continue to be difficult for their students in a lesser way.

3. Instrument: Survey

Subjects under study: Forty Students.

Grade level: Ninth-graders.

Place: Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay school, San Salvador.

This survey consists of 'The aspects that influence on ninth-graders' correct English language pronunciation', in Escuela Republica Oriental de Uruguay in San Salvador.

What are the obstacles that you face in your English pronunciation? If you have not reached an objective like the *correct English pronunciation,* which of the following aspects do you consider influence on it?

SURVEY
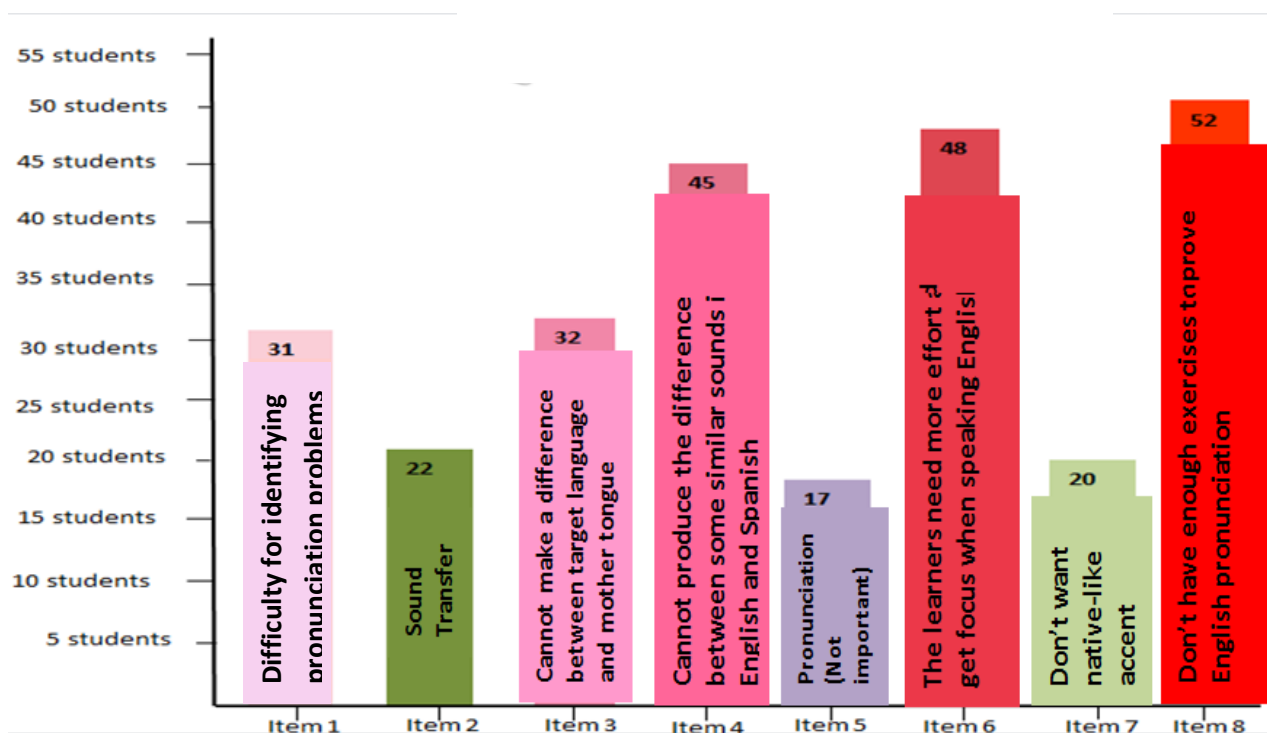
According to the results obtained in the questionnaire, the researchers can conclude that:

1. The most remarkable problems for students are:

- **I*tem 8*** ('*I do not have enough exercises to improve my English pronunciation´),* with 52 out of 83 student*s.*

- **Item 6** ('*Even though I can pronounce some sounds in English, I need too much effort and I need to get to focus on it while I am speaking English'),* with 48 out of 83 students.

- And ***item 4*** *('I cannot produce the difference between some similar sounds in English and Spanish')* with 45 out of 83 cases.

2. The average problems or obstacles that the subjects under study have are as follows:

- **Item 3** ('*I cannot make a difference between some English sound and my mother tongue, Spanish'),* with 32out of 83 cases.

- **Item 1** ('*I do not know where my English pronunciation problems/s is / are '),* with *31 out of 83 cases.*

3. On the other hand the least troublesome situations for ninth-graders are the following:

- **Item 2***('Sound transfer'),* with 22 out of 83 cases.

- **Item 7** ('Native-like accent), which is not indispensable in their opinion (20 out of 83 cases.)

- **Item 5** *('Pronunciation'),* which is not important for them as long as they can communicate with others (17 out of 83 cases).

4. The most troublesome situation for students is ***Item 8,*** which means that they do not have enough exercises to be better at English pronunciation and, most probably, that is why **item 5** is the least troublesome situation because what the subjects under study think is that they do not care about how they pronounce the words. They only care about their desire to communicate the message in the English language.

4. Instrument: Observation Guide.

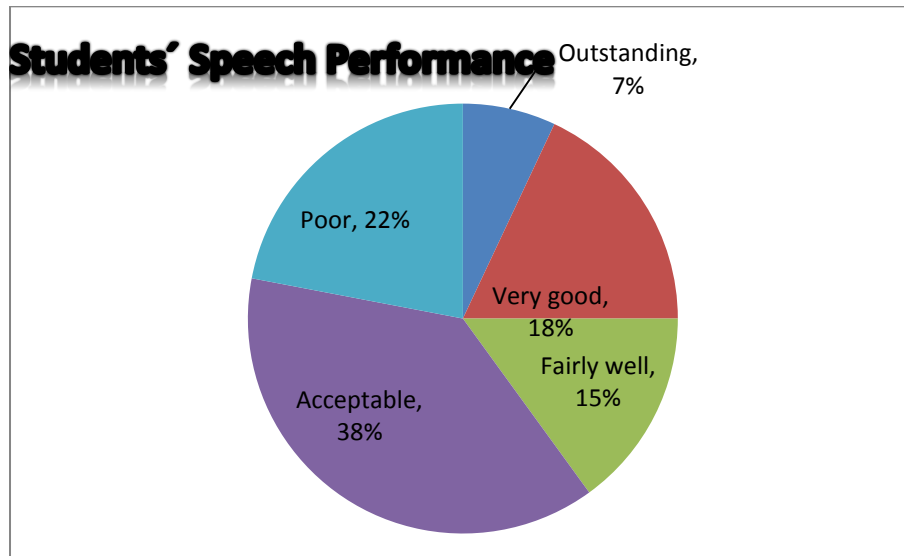Subjects under study: Forty Students.

Grade level: Ninth-graders.

Place: Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay school, San Salvador.

Sub-skill tested: Speech Performance.

The following graphs show the results obtained from the observation guides about forty students from "Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay, en San Salvador in the academic year 2015" during their English classes in a period of three weeks (i.e. six hours per each of the four groups.)

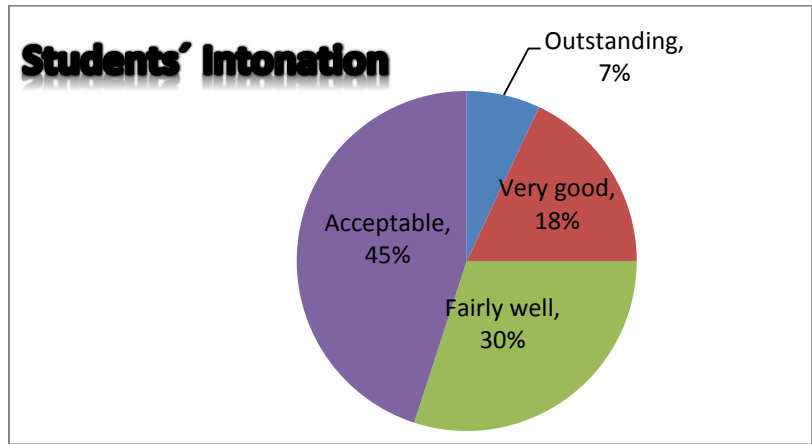| INDIVIDUAL STUDENT'S SPEECH PERFORMANCE				
CRITERIA REGARDING STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE				
Outstanding 5 (The student's speech is clearly understandable.)	**Very Good 4** (The student's speech is somehow understandable.)	**Fairly well 3** (The student's speech is fairly understandable.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student's speech is confusing and, therefore, difficult to understand.)	**Poor 1** (The student's speech is not understandable at all.)

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 38% percent of the subjects under study had an *acceptable performance,* 22% had *poor performance*, 18% had *very good performance,* 15% *fairly well performance* and 7% had *outstanding performance.*

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, students' oral performance in English is mainly low in quality. In fact, only four out of ten students showed some progress in their oral production. In other words, the students under study need to be guided by their teachers to get some oral improvement.

Sub-skill tested: Intonation.

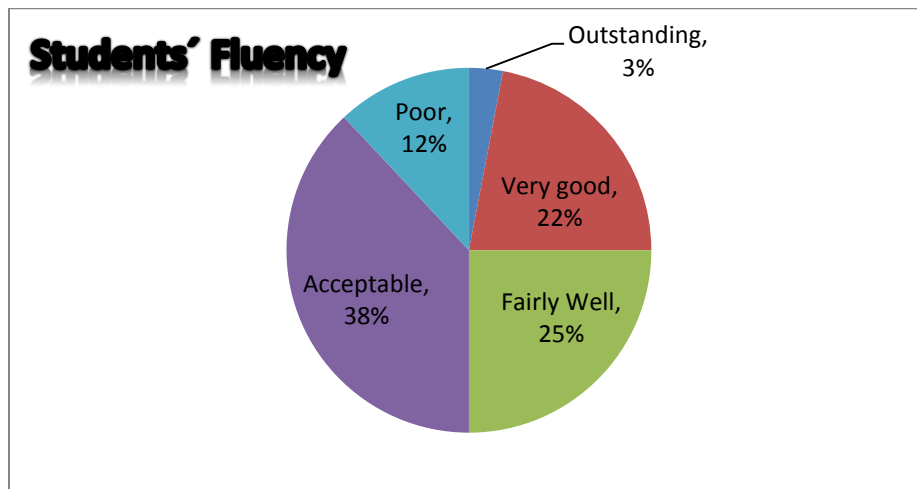| CRITERIA REGARDING INTONATION				
Outstanding5 (The student respects punctuation marks while reading, so his/ her reading is understandable.)	**Very Good 4** (The student makes some pauses while reading. His/ her reading is good.)	**Fairly well 3** (The student makes a few pauses, but his/her reading is understandable.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student makes little pauses, and does not respect punctuation marks.)	**Poorl** (The student does not make any pause while reading, and it makes his/ her reading confusing.)

ANALYSIS

According to the results gotten, 38% percent of the subjects under study had an *acceptable intonation*, 22% had *poor intonation*, 18% had *very good intonation,* 15% *fairly well intonation* and 7% had *outstanding intonation.*

INTERPRETATION

As shown by the data, students' intonation in English is mainly acceptable. In fact, fifty-five percent of the students under study showed some progress in the intonation of words. It means that the subjects under study need to be guided by their teachers to get some improvement in intonation sub-skill.

Sub-skill tested: Fluency.

CRITERIA REGARDING FLUENCY				
Outstanding 5 (The student reads complete sentences in a normal manner.)	**Very Good 4** (He/she reads some sentences correctly and his/her reading is suitable to understand.)	**Fairly Well 3** (The student reads a little slowly and makes a few pauses.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student reads little slowly and does not read complete sentences.)	**Poor 1** (The student reads with difficulty and does not make any pause.)

Students' Fluency

Outstanding, 3%
Poor, 12%
Very good, 22%
Acceptable, 38%
Fairly Well, 25%

ANALYSIS

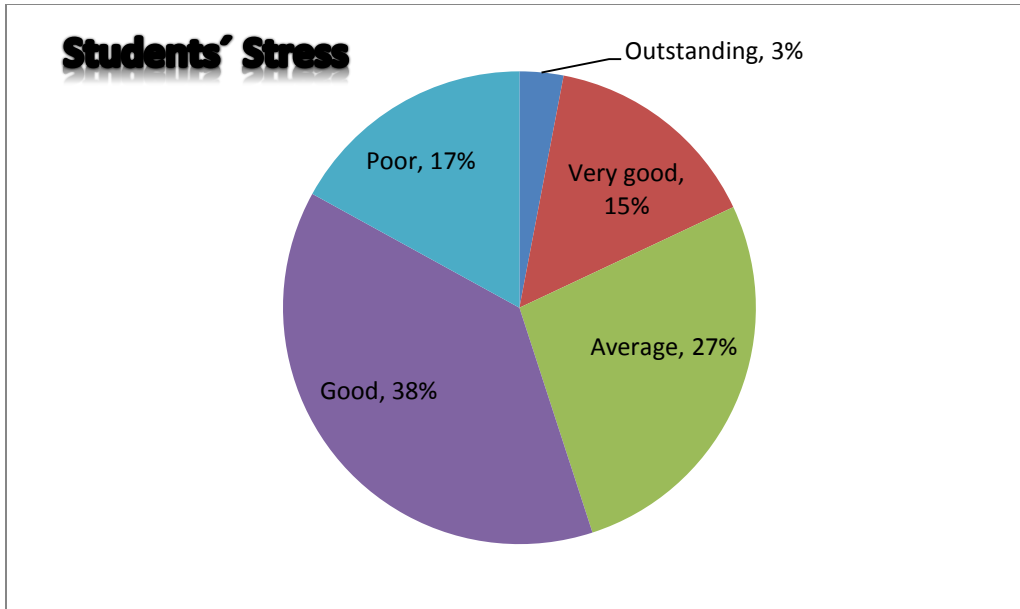38% of ninth-graders had an *acceptable fluency,* 25% had a *fairly well fluency,* 22% had a *very good fluency,* 12% had a *poor fluency level and 3%* had an *outstanding fluency.*

INTERPRETATION

In terms of *fluency,* the researchers can say that half of the subjects under study have a good pronunciation, and the other fifty percent of them need to improve this sub-skill.

Sub-skill tested: Stress.

CRITERIA	REGARDING	STRESS		
Outstanding 5 (The student puts stress on the right syllable while reading.)	**Very Good 4** (The student somehow recognizes the stress in each word.)	**Fairly Well 3** (The student puts stress on some syllables correctly.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student puts stress on a few syllables correctly.)	**Poor 1** (The student does not stress any syllable correctly.)

ANALYSIS

38% of ninth-graders had an acceptable stress, 27% had a *fairly well stress,* 17% had a *poor stress,* 15% had a very good stress level and 3% had an outstanding stress.

INTERPRETATION

Based on the results from the test, the researchers can say that more than half of ninth-graders have a low stress level, which means that they do not stress words correctly. On the contrary, the rest of the students put stress correctly. This means that the students under study need to have more practice and be guided by their teachers so as to improve this sub-skill.
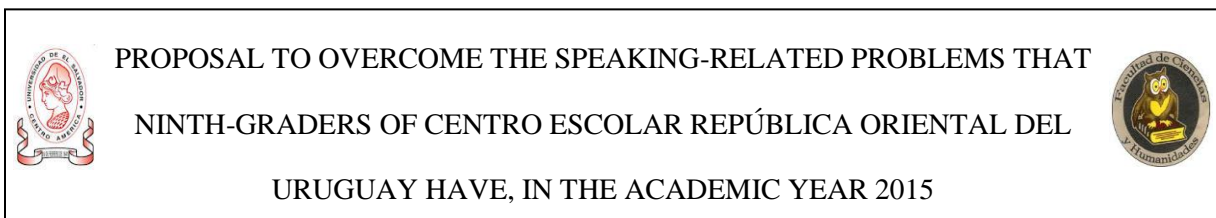
V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results gotten on the data analysis from the instruments that were administered to ninth – graders and their teachers, the researchers can conclude the following:

1. The most troublesome sub-skill for ninth – graders is pronunciation; intonation, fluency and stress continue to be difficult for them too.

2. The majority of the students under study agreed that using an *online dictionary* is the most appropriate strategy (technique) to improve their English pronunciation whereas the ninth-graders teachers that were interviewed in the study consider that *listening to authentic material* and *singing songs* are the most important strategies (activities) to improve it.

3. To improve English fluency the majority of the subjects under study consider that *repeating authentic material* is the best strategy to improve it. But in the teachers' opinion the use of *linking sounds* is the most suitable strategy for that purpose.

4. The majority of the students think that *repeating what their English teachers say* is the most helpful activity to improve their intonation of words; on the contrary, the majority of their teachers say that *reading out loud short paragraphs* is the best way to improve that sub-skill.

5. A considerable segment on the teachers' side favors *listening to native spoken material* as the most important activity for students to improve English stress of words. Yet, on the students' side the most appropriate technique to be better at that sub-skill is *repeating authentic material.*

VI.   PROPOSAL

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

PROPOSAL TO OVERCOME THE SPEAKING-RELATED PROBLEMS THAT

NINTH-GRADERS OF CENTRO ESCOLAR REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL

URUGUAY HAVE, IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2015

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

This is a proposal aimed at helping English teachers of Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay to improve their students' speaking skill. For this purpose, some guidelines are provided by the authors based on their research and experience. In fact, in their investigation after observing the subjects under study, in this case ninth-graders, the researchers realized that the lack of interest and efforts from the students´ part can be constituents of the students´ failure. So to get a crucial improvement, students need to change their attitude and overcome their fears toward speaking in English.

Objectives

General:

To determine the most appropriate ways to overcome the speaking-related problems of ninth-graders at Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay in San Salvador in order to suggest solutions.

Specific:

a) To identify the students` most troublesome speaking sub-skill so as to propose solutions.

b) To suggest   the   most appropriate techniques   for   teachers   to   improve their ninth-graders` speaking-related problems.

Introduction

A foreign language learner usually has problems when dealing with listening, speaking reading, and writing in his/her target language. For the purposes of this paper, the researchers focus their proposal on speaking skill. Now then, this skill has some important sub-skills such as pronunciation, intonation, fluency and stress among others.

This proposal has been prepared to help the English teachers at Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay to overcome speaking-related problems among their ninth-graders. Before preparing this document, the authors did a research in order to identify the most troublesome sub-skill for ninth-graders. After this process, they found out that pronunciation is the most troublesome sub-skill and that is why it needs a little more attention. Moreover, intonation, fluency and stress sub-skills continue to be difficult and also need to be attended.

There are several guidelines or suggestions for the English teachers as shown below.

I.   Suggestions for the English teachers regarding speaking skill in general.

Based on previews knowledge and the pieces of information gathered by the research team about the problem under study, it is possible to suggest the following proposal to English teachers to contribute to decrease the speaking- related problems that their ninth-graders encounter daily.

First, at all, help students to feel comfortable and gain their confidence to speak in English. By doing so, students can overcome their fears toward making mistakes and encountering bullying on their classmates' part.

Second, make students aware about the benefits and usefulness of speaking in English so that they can start looking for manners of enhancing their own learning process.

Third, assure that teachers and learners have strong long lasting bonds of mutual cooperation and interaction during the class time. By so doing, goals can be set by educators allowing them to follow learners' improvement.

Fourth, motivate students to speak English daily, listen to English programs, complete every single activity requested by the teacher, evaluate their own performances, to read aloud, and practice as much as possible. By doing so, students can focus on their pronunciation and concentrate on pronunciation skills so they can improve it.

Fifth, encourage students to record themselves so they can be aware of their performance on speaking skill and therefore ask for feedback to their teachers. The researchers consider that students can greatly develop their speaking skill through activities such as role-plays, speeches, self-monitoring of their speaking, games, movies, songs, authentic English speaking material, and others.

II.   Suggestions for the English teachers regarding pronunciation

English teachers at Centro Escolar República Oriental del Uruguay need to be trained on pronunciation activities and they also need to innovate their English classes as much as possible to help students to improve their pronunciation.

Taking into consideration that this school has some computers, teachers can take advantage of the technology available in the school as well as the correct use of the audio players for students to complete drills (repetition exercises.)

Teachers also can look for a variety of materials for the practice of pronunciation on websites, libraries or institutions where this kind of material is available at a low cost.
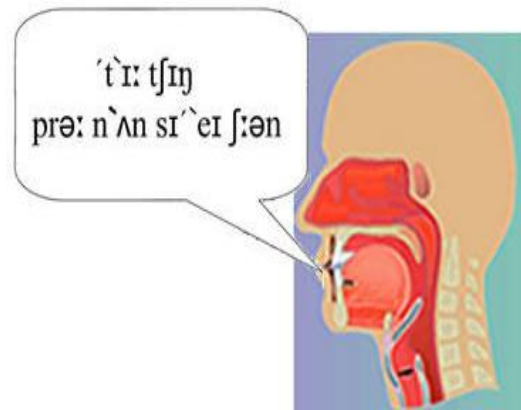
The research team considers that the following methods could enhance students to improve their pronunciation in a great manner.

Imitate: Imitating the teacher and also native speakers can help the students to learn an accent in a proper manner because in that way they will hear natural pronunciation. In this part, feedback is important especially of those words that generate difficulty at the moment students pronounce them. Feedback can be used at the end of a lesson and even at the very beginning during the warm-up about the previews lessons.

Sing: Since music implies rhythm, the researchers consider that students can feel the melody of words. Making students participate by singing songs according to its recorded music is a great idea. In fact, Andrés Roberto Rengifo, a professor from the University of Colombia at Bogotá proposes the use of karaoke in class in order to improve students` pronunciation. This method was used and

students' progress was analyzed with the conclusion of effectiveness of karaoke sessions for his group of students.

Enunciate without over-enunciating: It is a good idea to pronounce words clearly and also to exaggerate only at the presentation time of a new topic, e.g., vocabulary, which will be of great benefit for students to overstress the words giving the right pitch of voice while pronouncing words. Moreover, students need to listen to natural and fast speech, too. This can be taught with the connection of the end of a word with the beginning of the next word, e.g., linking sounds. For instance, the interrogative sentence *How much is it?* sounds like *How muh chi zit?*

Finally we suggest motivating students with activities that include some fun. It is necessary for ninth-graders to be motivated with ways to make pronunciation practice a little more fun. We portray one of some examples provided by busyteacher.org as shown below:

Verb Endings

The pronunciation of *verb endings* is something that is particularly troublesome for some students.The two main problem areas are:

- *Present Simple* – third person singular. There are three possible sounds for the verb ending – [s] as in *talks*, [z] as in *sees* and [iz] as in *confuses*
- The *Past Simple* of *regular verbs*. There are also three possible sounds for the –ed verb ending: [d] as in *stayed*, [t] as in *talked* and [id] as in *wanted*.

After going over the differences, divide the whiteboard into three columns. First practice the verb endings for the third person singular in simple present tense. Place each sound at the top of each column. Say a verb and ask a student to say it in the third person singular. Ask the student which column the verb belongs to.

Finally, walk around the classroom and fire off one verb after another. Students must correctly pronounce the verb ending. If they make a mistake, they must try with a different verb till they get one right.

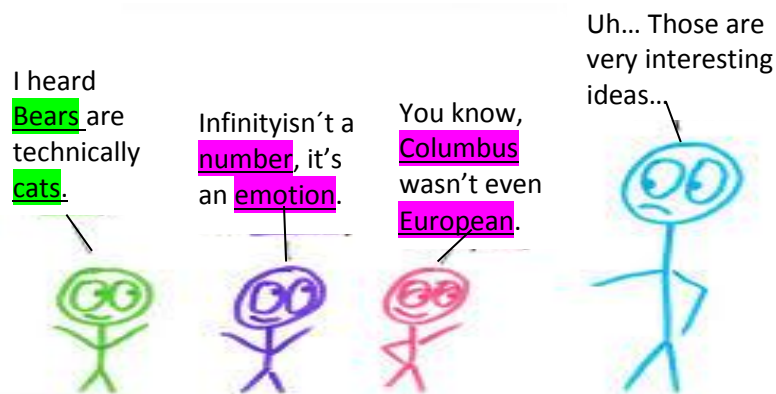Do the same with the –ed ending of regular verbs in simple past tense.

III.   Suggestions for the English teachers regarding intonation

The researchers consider that in order to improve their intonation, it is important for students to gain confidence to have the correct tone of voice when speaking. The research team suggests listening to audio files provided by native speakers as much as possible. By doing so, students will hear proper intonation. After listening to the audio, students can record themselves and listen to it all over again until finding the troublesome words to correct them.

The research team also suggests that in class students imitate the teacher. By doing so, students can notice the rhythm of words. Another suggestion is to encourage students to watch videos in the target language and listen to the narrators, and then imitate the native speakers.

Some researchers as Lin, Fan and Chen (1995) suggest some strategies including drawing pitch lines/curves or arrows and using musical scores. Besides drawing the pitch lines/curves, they suggest that the teacher blacken the last stress syllable and put a do over it. In doing so, students can be expected to produce the appropriate intonation with the correct word stress.

Moreover, Firth (1992) suggests that teachers should check the following questions: Are the students using appropriate intonation patterns? Are yes/no questions signaled through the use of rising intonation? Is falling intonation used with wh-questions? Are the students changing pitch at the major stressed word in the sentence?

I heard Bears are technically cats.

Infinity isn´t a number, it's an emotion.

You know, Columbus wasn't even European.

Uh… Those are very interesting ideas…

Furthermore, teacher Stuart Mill suggests some ways to teach intonation in the classroom and the researcher reflects the following.

Play a game: The concept of intonation can be hard, but students are quick to know what's wrong when they are listening to it.

Dialogue Tree: Lots of times, the teacher can use rising or falling intonation, but the meaning changes. (For example: "I bought a car" –vs– "I bought a car?")

Dialogues: Just for intonation purposes, after students write a dialogue, teachers can ask them to label it in a way that will let them know the intonation patterns. For example, they can put an "up" or "down" arrow on each word. Then, they should cross out all the words and read the dialogue without words. They can just make neutral sounds (e.g. grunts) or hum the sentences.

IV.　　Suggestions for the English teachers regarding fluency.

Students have to speak as much as possible in the classroom. The more they practice, the better they speak. As Mark Anderson, a teacher of EFL middle-school learners in Taiwan, says, ¨ the more they practice, the better they speak, the better they speak, the more confidence they will gain. And this cycle will continue to build fluency¨.

The research team suggests some strategies as important tools the learners need. They must be triggered to the learners by their English teachers. By being aware, students can communicate fluently.

a) Fast speech is not necessarily fluent speech. They have to understand that it is okay if they speak slowly but they do it in an appropriate speed. It will depend on the context in which they use the target language that they need high or low speed at speaking.

b) Students must know that native speakers use pauses and hesitations. Teachers should bring to classes recorded material (audio or video) of native speakers talking in a natural situation for students understand that pauses and hesitations are natural and necessary for people to have time to think what they are about to say.

c) Create as much opportunities for students to practice; encouraging students to make errors as a natural part of the learning process. If students are afraid of making errors they will not develop their fluency.

d) Set up activities where many students can talk at the same time. For instance making students participate in groups to perform dialogues.

V.   Suggestions for the English teachers regarding stress

With regard to stress of words, the researchers suggest to teachers to expose their ninth-graders to native English speakers with the help of technological resources because students must get in touch directly with native English speakers as watching movies and videos and listening to music so as to help the students to find where the word stress is located in words and phrases.

In this sense, the researchers recommend searching for websites where students can find similarities and differences among words, and also to enhance students to learn the rules to stress words correctly; also, encourage students to practice inside and outside the classroom.

Mark Anderson suggests the following graph to explain the stress occurrence in a word:

word	shape	total syllables	stressed syllable
PHO TO GRAPH		3	#1
PHO TO GRAPH ER		4	#2
PHO TO GRAPH IC		4	#3

Moreover, according to an online magazine named BBC Teaching English, there are some manners to help students to improve their manner to stress words. For example, to help students see connections with other word families. Try to use a variety of approaches: helping students to engage with English in different ways will help them in their goal to become more proficient users of the language. This magazine proposes the following approaches for students` stress of words improvement.

Build students' confidence by drawing their attention to the tendencies and patterns in word stress that do exist.

Mark the stress. Use a clear easy-to-see way of marking stress on the board and on handouts for students. Also, students need to be aware of the way dictionaries usually mark the stressed syllable and become independent learners.

Cuisenaire rods. The students build the words using different blocks to represent stressed and unstressed syllables.

Integrate word stress into the lessons. The teachers do not need to teach separate lessons on word stress. Instead, the teacher can integrate it into normal lessons.

Troubleshooting. The teacher can focus on one word putting the stress on its different syllables in turn. For example: Say the word in the different ways for the students, really exaggerating the stressed syllable and compressing the unstressed ones.

    o o 0 compu**ter**   0 o o**com**puter   o 0 o com**pu**ter

Or using peoples` names as in the following question.

"Is it **Ro**bert or Ro**bert**?"

Ask the students which version of the word sounds 'the best' or 'the most natural'.

By hearing the word stressed incorrectly, students can more easily pick out the correct version.

To conclude, certainly, to improve students' speaking skill can take time, but the researchers consider that with effort and dedication from the teachers and students, improvement can be reached. Challenges for both the students and the teacher should contribute to improve students' speaking performance. Also, the researchers consider that adding some fun in the activities as games will help students to lose their fears, to participate actively in class, and to become confident speakers.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcomes obtained from the problem under study, the research team presents the following recommendations to help students to find solutions for their speaking-related problems.

1. To consider the main factors that influence students' speaking –related problems.

2. To raise students' awareness about the factors that cause their speaking – related problems.

3. To implement new speaking strategies based on the students' needs.

4. To increase the number of class hours to more than two hours in class per week in the academic year.

5. To consult authentic English materials from abroad that could help students to improve their speaking skill.

6. To train the teaching staff in the English language specifically in the speaking area for conversational purposes.

7. To create cooperative ties between educational institutions and the Foreign Language Department of The University of El Salvador aimed at training their English teachers in speaking skill and how to help their students to speak English.

8. To take into consideration the results obtained from this research project in order to continue with the investigation in further studies.

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VIII. APPENDICES

A. Appendix "A": Questionnaire for students

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

Cuestionario para estudiantes de 9º grado, Escuela República Oriental de Uruguay

Nombres de las investigadoras:
- Flores Salazar, Irma Beatriz
- Hernández Hernández, Liseth Abigail
- Rodríguez Castillo, Josselyn Beatriz

Objetivo General: Identificar los factores que inciden en el aprendizaje de los/as estudiantes de inglés por parte de los estudiantes bajo estudio a fin de proponer soluciones.

Instrucciones: Subraye la opción que considere conveniente.

1. **¿Cuál/es de las siguientes estrategias de aprendizaje usa cuando desconoce la pronunciación de una palabra en inglés?**

a) Uso del diccionario   b) Preguntar a alguien   c) Uso de traductor en línea

d) Leer (Asociar palabras con el contexto)   e) Todas las anteriores   f) Otra:_____

2. **¿Cree usted que tiene dificultades al pronunciar palabras en inglés?**

a) Sí _____   b) No _____

3. **¿Cuál/es técnicas (maneras) considera usted más adecuadas para mejorar su fluidez en inglés?**

a) Repetición   b) Cantar (canciones en inglés)   c) Escuchar material en inglés

d) Todas las anteriores   e) Otra:_____

4. **¿Cuál de las siguientes estrategias considera usted adecuadas para mejorar la entonación de las palabras en inglés?**

a) Practicando signos de puntuación   b) Leyendo c) Repitiendo   d) Todas las anteriores

e) Otra:_____

5. **¿Cuál de las siguientes estrategias considera usted más adecuada para mejorar la acentuación de las palabras inglesas de una manera correcta?**

a) Repetir   b) Escuchar material hablado por nativos   c) Leer en voz alta en clase

6. **¿Considera usted que tiene un buen desempeño como estudiante en la materia de inglés?**

Sí_____   No_____

7. **¿Qué hace usted para mejorar su aprendizaje del idioma inglés?**

_____
_____
_____.

B. 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 REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL URUGUAY, SAN SALVADOR.

TEMA EN ESTUDIO: *´´UNA PROPUESTA PARA SOLUCIONAR LOS PROBLEMAS DE APRENDIZAJE QUE LOS/AS ESTUDIANTES DE NOVENO GRADO DEL CENTRO ESCOLAR REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL URUGUAY TIENEN CON RESPECTO A LA HABILIDAD DE LOCUCIÓN EN EL IDIOMA INGLÉS, EN EL AÑO ACADÉMICO 2015´´.*

Maestro: _____ Fecha: _____

1. ¿Cuáles son las técnicas más apropiadas para mejorar la pronunciación inglesa de sus estudiantes? Asigne números por orden de prioridad (1 la de mayor aceptación, y así sucesivamente).

A) Repetición B) Cantar canciones C) Practicar diálogos D) Escuchar material auténtico hablado por nativos.

2. ¿Considera usted que sus estudiantes tienen problemas relacionados con la fluidez en inglés?
Sí _____   No_____

2.1 Si su respuesta fue sí, ¿cuáles de las siguientes estrategias utiliza usted para mejorar la fluidez en sus alumnos/as? Asigne números por orden de prioridad (1 la de mayor aceptación, y así sucesivamente).

A) Contractar   B) Utilizar la unión de los sonidos (linking sounds)

C) Cantar canciones D) Repetir material hablado por nativos

3. ¿Considera usted que sus estudiantes tienen problemas relacionados con la entonación?

Sí_____   No _____

3.1 Si su respuesta fue sí, ¿Cuáles de las siguientes estrategias considera útiles para mejorar la entonación en inglés? Asigne números por orden de prioridad (1 la de mayor aceptación, y así sucesivamente).

A) Practicar lectura enfatizando los signos de puntuación   B) Leer párrafos cortos

 C) Repetir (Palabras, oraciones, etc.)   D) Practicar diálogos de oraciones después del profesor

4. ¿Considera usted que sus estudiantes tienen problemas relacionados con la acentuación en inglés?

Sí_____   No _____

4.1 Si su respuesta es sí, ¿Cuáles son las maneras más adecuadas de mejorar los problemas de acentuación que sus estudiantes de inglés tienen? Asigne números por orden de prioridad (1 la de mayor aceptación, y así sucesivamente).

A) Repetir después del profesor   B) Escuchar material hablado por nativos (grabaciones)

 C) Leer en voz alta en clase D) Ejemplificar la acentuación para los estudiantes.

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

A) Pronunciación   B) Entonación   C) Fluidez   D) Acentuación

Universidad de El Salvador
Facultad de Ciencias y Humanidades
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Encuesta para estudiantes de 9no grado, Escuela República Oriental de Uruguay

Nombres de las investigadoras:
- Flores Salazar, Irma Beatriz
- Hernández Hernández, Liseth Abigail
- Rodríguez Castillo, Josselyn Beatriz

Asesor de Tesis: Lic. Jorge Homero Llanes

Objetivo General: Identificar los factores que inciden en el aprendizaje de los/as estudiantes de inglés por parte de los/as estudiantes bajo estudio a fin de proponer soluciones.

¿Cuáles son los obstáculos de pronunciación que usted ha enfrentado en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés? Si usted no ha alcanzado un objetivo como la correcta pronunciación, ¿Cuál de los siguientes aspectos considera usted que inciden en ello? Para ello marque la casilla que crea conveniente:

☐ No sé dónde radica/n mi/s problema/s de pronunciación, no lo/s noto.

☐ Sé que puedo transferir sonidos de mi lengua materna (español).

☐ No puedo distinguir entre algunos de los sonidos de inglés y mi lengua nativa castellana.

☐ No puedo producir la diferencia entre algunos sonidos similares en inglés y español.

☐ El mejorar mi pronunciación no es importante para mí, las personas comprenden el mensaje que quiero transmitir sin problema alguno.

☐ Aun cuando puedo producir algunos de los sonidos en inglés necesito demasiado esfuerzo o concentración cuando estoy lo hablando.

☐ Me gusta mi propio acento, no quiero ser o sonar como un hablante nativo.

☐ No tengo los suficientes ejercicios para mejorar mi pronunciación inglesa.

D. Appendix "D": Observation guide

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Observation guide applied to ninth-graders from "Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay, en San Salvador."

Researchers' names:

- Flores Salazar, Irma Beatriz
- Hernández Hernández, Liseth Abigail
- Rodríguez Castillo, Josselyn Beatriz

Thesis advisor: Lic. Jorge HomeroLlanes

General objective: To identify the troublesome pronunciation problems regarding intonation, fluency, and stress that ninth-graders from Escuela República Oriental del Uruguay have while reading.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT'S SPEECH PERFORMANCE				
CRITERIA REGARDING STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE				
Outstanding 5 (The student's speech is clearly understandable.)	**Very Good 4** (The student's speech is somehow understandable.)	**Fairly well 3** (The student's speech is fairly understandable.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student's speech is confusing and, therefore, difficult to understand.)	**Poor 1** (The student's speech is not understandable at all.)

COMMENTS:_____

_____.

CRITERIA REGARDING INTONATION				
Outstanding5 (The student respects punctuation marks while reading, so his/ her reading is understandable.)	**Very Good 4** (The student makes some pauses while reading. His/ her reading is good.)	**Fairly well 3** (The student makes a few pauses, but his/her reading is understandable.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student makes little pauses, and does not respect punctuation marks.)	**Poor1** (The student does not make any pause while reading, and it makes his/ her reading confusing.)

TROUBLESOME WORDS:

_____

_____.

CRITERIA REGARDING FLUENCY				
Outstanding 5 (The student reads complete sentences in a normal manner.)	**Very Good 4** (He/she reads some sentences correctly and his/her reading is suitable to understand.)	**Fairly Well 3** (The student reads a little slowly and makes a few pauses.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student reads little slowly and does not read complete sentences.)	**Poor 1** (The student reads with difficulty and does not make any pause.)

TROUBLESOME WORDS:

_____

_____.

CRITERIA	REGARDING	STRESS		
Outstanding 5 (The student puts stress on the right syllable while reading.)	**Very Good 4** (The student somehow recognizes the stress in each word.)	**Fairly Well 3** (The student puts stress on some syllables correctly.)	**Acceptable 2** (The student puts stress on a few syllables correctly.)	**Poor 1** (The student does not stress any syllable correctly.)

TROUBLESOME WORDS:

_____

_____.