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**READING OUT LOUD AS A CORRECTIVE TECHNIQUE
OF PAST TENSE ENDING OMISSION IN FIFTH GRADERS
AT LA SABANA SCHOOL DURING THE III QUARTER OF
2019**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

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Abstract

The present research studies how effective the implementation of Reading out loud as a technique to improve past tense ending omission in fifth graders at La Sabana School. The students were evaluated through different instruments in order to measure their knowledge with the regular past tense endings. The research was divided into a series of stages: an initial checklist to get to know students difficulties with the accurate pronunciation of the past tense endings, interaction with the teacher, and the English language proficiency level. Second a pre-test to identify students' problems with the correct pronunciation of the past tense while reading out loud a passage. Third, different activities were applied to the student within speaking, listening and most importantly reading. Finally, to evaluate the effectiveness of the technique a post test-test and observation check list were applied. Through the result analysis it was concluded that reading out loud was effective in improving students' pronunciation of the regular past tense endings.

Resumen

La presente investigación estudia que tan eficaz es la implementación de la lectura en voz alta como una técnica para mejorar la omisión final en tiempo pasado en estudiantes de quinto grado en la escuela La Sabana. Los estudiantes fueron evaluados a través de diferentes instrumentos para medir su conocimiento con las terminaciones regulares del pasado. El trabajo se dividió en una serie de etapas: una lista de cotejo inicial para conocer las dificultades de los estudiantes con la pronunciación precisa de las terminaciones en tiempo pasado, la interacción con el maestro y el nivel de dominio del idioma inglés. En segundo lugar, una prueba de diagnóstico para identificar los problemas de los estudiantes con la pronunciación correcta del tiempo pasado mientras lee en voz alta un pasaje. Tercero, se aplicaron diferentes actividades al estudiante de hablar, escuchar y, lo más importante, leer. Finalmente, para evaluar la efectividad de la técnica, se aplicó una observación con lista de cotejo y un examen posterior a la observación. A través del análisis de resultados, se concluyó que leer en voz alta era efectivo para mejorar la pronunciación de los estudiantes de las terminaciones del tiempo pasado regular.

CHAPTER I

Introductory Framework

Throughout the years, teachers have been providing students with different strategies and techniques to help them acquire a new language. This study is directed to evaluate the process of implementing and increasing the effectiveness of improving the pronunciation of past tense omission in fifth grade students at La Sabana School located in Tarrazú by using reading out-loud as a technique in the learning process.

1.1 Problem Statement

Reading out-loud is essential when it comes to acquiring a new language, since it improves the pronunciation and more specifically, helps to identify where the students are mispronouncing a word, as well as to acquire meaningful knowledge, which is apprehension organized through connections to other understandings. According to Pourhosein (2016), many students acquiring the English language refer to pronunciation as one of the most difficult areas of language to acquire, as they feel that they are not being understood and that their message is unclear. When people make mistakes in other language areas, they may be understood; however, while speaking if a student mispronounces a word, the message is not understood correctly.

Most of the teachers in the educational system do not focus on the importance of pronouncing words correctly. This is why their students have issues knowing how to pronounce accurately. As long as the teacher understands the students, pronunciation is fine. Nevertheless, if these students encounter an average person or native speaker, they can

be unable to be understood. Another reason why students stay in their comfort zone is because they are surrounded by other English language students, who have similar pronunciation patterns and make the same mistakes. Therefore, it is easier for them to understand each other. Consequently, by applying reading out-loud technique will students improve their pronunciation? What is the effectiveness of implementing reading out loud technique in the classroom when trying to improve past tense endings omission in fifth grade students at La Sabana School during the III Quarter of 2019?

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

1.2.1 General Objective:

To investigate the effectiveness of reading out loud as a technique to improve the pronunciation of the past tense endings in the target language

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

- To identify pronunciation problems students encounter when reading out-loud
- To apply the read out-loud technique to contribute with the correct pronunciation of the past tense endings in the target language
- To evaluate the effectiveness of reading out-loud as a technique to acquire the correct pronunciation of the past tense endings in the target language

1.3 Justification of the Study

The present investigation will focus on studying the effectiveness of the reading out-loud technique to correct fifth grade students' omission of sounds. According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d.), out-loud means "loudly enough to be heard." This

phrase is a synonym to aloud, which the Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d.) defines as “With the speaking voice in a way that can be clearly heard.” The purpose of the students using this specific technique is to improve their pronunciation when they encounter an oral exam, a classroom conversation, or an outside school situation.

The fifth grade students at La Sabana School who are learning English as a foreign language will be the beneficiaries of the present investigation. The aim is to explore the improvement of the pronunciation of the past tense while reading a specific story through the reading out-loud technique during the English classes with the purpose of enriching their self-monitoring skills in the learning process. It is important to emphasize that making mistakes is important when acquiring a new language, since mistakes are unavoidable during the learning process. In other words, students need to make errors in order to learn, to truly accept the language.

This being said, it is necessary for the teacher to make sure students feel secure when expressing their opinion in English because they might make one or two mistakes and they need to understand that it is part of the learning process; therefore, they need to internalize why they made the mistake and they can correct it. The teacher is responsible of not humiliating students when they mispronounce a word. The error should be seen as part of the learning process. According to LearnPick (2016), mistakes should be done by students because this is the only way they will work on correcting the pronunciation mistakes. Learning to accept these mistakes teaches students patience and experience.

According to Turner (n.d.), correct English pronunciation is indispensable to have a clear communication; otherwise, the listener will have a misconception of the message that

the person is trying to give. Additionally, Turner expresses “That it is important to identify and fix common pronunciation mistakes to create smoother relationships.” (para. 5). This should be corrected since the first mistake a student makes because in this matter that student will not repeat the mistake and will have the mispronunciation corrected for future communication.

Consequently, reading out-loud will help students to identify the error and self-correct themselves. This technique will not only improve the student’s pronunciation, but also fluency and intonation. Additionally, teachers will also learn from this technique to give students the adequate opportunity to improve their pronunciation. This will not only contribute to the educational system, but also to society because students will be involved in the classroom by having the necessity to express among themselves, as well as outside the classroom.

1.4 Antecedents

In the beginning of 1845, a foreigner named Eduardo W. Trotter came to Costa Rica to offer private English lessons at a cost of five colones, which was equivalent to one hour daily of lessons, in his house. This practice was very common in foreigners who resided in the country, since they received extra money for food and lodging. Already by 1850, the search for an English tutor was facilitated. In these years, people could find ads to learn English, whether for teenagers or children. In this way, it was how the English language became known in the capital and later, in the whole country.

Thanks to the ads in the written press at the Josefino School, which were essential to the teaching of English, it was like educational institutions of Costa Rica years later began

to teach English lessons throughout the year for their students (The Nation Newspaper, 2016). At that time, the first principal at Escuela del Norte Marian Le Capellain, proposed helping to teach English to the youth of Costa Rica. In 1859, Santo Tomás University decided to teach English classes again, as they had to cancel the lessons due to the lack of students.

In the following section, it will be provided the antecedents, which deal with are the theses related to the investigation. It goes from the most general to the most specific investigation. The antecedents consist of these studies: *Teaching Pronunciation at Secondary Level* by Jana Mikuláščíková, *Teaching Pronunciation through Experiential Learning, and Pronunciation Techniques* by Cristian Martinez Castellanos, which are international investigations. Moreover, it will be also considered national investigations, such as *Anxiety as a Factor Affecting the Pronunciation of the English Vowels / æ, a, ɔ, ʌ / on EFL Adult Learners of 7-3 at Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados during the First Quarter of 2017* by Maria Paula Fallas and *Strategies to Teach and Improve Pronunciation in Students of Seventh Grade at Centro Educativo Cristiano Reformado during the Second Quarter of 2017* by Luis Daniel Madrigal.

The investigation conducted in Czech Republic by Jana Mikuláščíková (2012), expressed that the English language is growing, as well as the necessity of knowing it. Therefore, it is essential to acquire not only the grammar and the vocabulary, but also the correct pronunciation in order to be able to communicate with our society. The investigator stated that the problem is a worldwide requirement that has the necessity to be solved because of the impact of the English language as a Lingua Franca.

In addition, Mikuláščíková (2012) stated that “As the global character of the English language is strengthened every day, a great number of its speakers start realizing that the

importance of English grammar and vocabularies is getting overshadowed by the desire to sound intelligible.” The researcher insisted on knowing if the lack of implementing techniques to improve pronunciation were the reason why the students showed difficulty to have a good pronunciation of the language.

The investigation done by Cristian Martinez Castellanos in the year 2016, entitled *Teaching Pronunciation through Experiential Learning and Pronunciation Techniques* aimed to give teachers another approach related to English Phonetics and Pronunciation Techniques based on experience and observation. This research was focused on fifth grade students at Luigi Pirandello School in Bogota and had as main purpose to teach them how to pronounce English phonemes in an essential manner when they were trying to acquire speaking and listening skills.

Martinez claimed to implement an alternative technique to help students to improve their pronunciation with specific minimal pairs of some phonemes. The investigator continued to explain that not many teachers focus on pronunciation because they lack material and the amount of time per lesson is not enough. Additionally, teaching English through phonetics and phonology techniques help students to understand how phonemes are produced in a linguistic context. Furthermore, the need to have a teacher with full knowledge of the topic about phonetics is key to have better results in the classroom.

Many times, the teacher focused more on other areas; therefore, pronunciation tended to be overlooked most of the time, and the times when pronunciation was addressed, the teacher just corrected the students orally, but she did not provide a further explanation. In addition, it was concluded that the students who took part of the study improved

significantly. They still committed errors, but they surpassed what was expected. Students were more conscious about the English sounds and that their pronunciation was different to the one of their mother language. Additionally, they realized the importance of acquiring good English skills in order to have good communication techniques. The topic focused on students living meaningful experiences to acquire the language fully; since students needed to have a life changing experience for them to understand the necessity of the English language in their lives.

The investigation carried out by Maria Paula Fallas (2017) had as a purpose to analyze how anxiety affected the pronunciation of / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ / in adult learning, as well as to help teachers to identify the most useful techniques to reduce the students' anxiety when it came to speaking and pronouncing correctly. Fallas (2017) concluded that the majority of students always felt panic when it came to speak in public, which led to mispronunciation words. This was due to their native language was Spanish and not English.

When students had to speak in the target language they got anxious, nervous, and scared to speak in the classroom or in public making this the main cause of anxiety. Another reason to this was the lack of preparation of each and every student when that had to speak in English in public. Finally, the researcher concluded that anxiety affected students' pronunciation and fluency, which led to a misconception of the message because it was constantly interrupted.

Additionally, in the thesis entitled *Strategies to Teach and Improve Pronunciation in Students of Seventh Grade at Centro Educativo Cristiano Reformado during the Second Quarter of 2017* written by Luis Daniel Madrigal (2017); it is stated the following:

In the case of the speaking skill, pronunciation is one of the most outstanding aspects to be taught when learning a second or foreign language due to some reasons. Nevertheless, this language element is not an emphasized area in English teaching at Costa Rican schools. Because of this, students may have a certain level in some other language skills, but not in pronunciation.

For example, the difference between a Costa Rican person speaking to a native English-speaking person will be very notorious because the pronunciation and intonation will differ from the native speaker. In some cases, the words will be mispronounced, and the message will be unclear. This is where the need to implement more speaking techniques is required to level students according to their ages. If students are afraid to speak in front of their classmates, there should be an opportunity for them to read a story or talk to the teacher in small groups where they are not humiliated by the rest of the class.

1.5 Scope

The purpose this study is to apply the reading out-loud technique to help students to obtain a better pronunciation, not only of the omitted past tense, but also the language in general. Pronunciation is one of the sub-skills which should be mastered by the English language learners, as it is known that the primary purpose of any language is to communicate. Students graduating elementary school should be able to have a conversation with an English-speaking person, and not only with their teacher. Thus, the goal is to improve the omission of the past tense ending sounds of fifth grade students at La Sabana School located in Tarrazú by implementing the reading out-loud technique during the third quarter of 2019.

CHAPTER II

Theoretical Framework

Teaching pronunciation has been left aside by teachers and institutions; one of the reasons is because teachers do not have the, strategies, and techniques available to teach it properly. The investigator discovered that it is necessary to find the easiest strategies to improve students' pronunciation of past tense endings. To solve this problem, the investigator will try to provide alternative solutions to improve such skill. In the following section the reader will find different theories, topics, and content related to reading out loud and pronunciation.

2.1 Literature Review

The acquisition of a new language always has barriers; however,-depending on the students' motivation and attitude their learning process will become smoother. Moreover, it must be stated that the use of their native language interferes in the acquisition process. Reading out-loud as a corrective technique to improve past tense omission, has been set aside by many teacher due to the lack of time, lack of students' interest, and lack of material to improve pronunciation. There is no excuse, but the public educational system in Costa Rica limits teachers to implement the speaking skill in the classroom because at the end, their interest is for students to pass the written exams, as well as the bachillerato exam at the end of high school.

Reading out-loud has not been present in the classrooms, especially in the English lessons. Reading out-loud, according to Writing Explained (n.d), means "loud enough to be heard;" nevertheless, this is not accustomed to do, as students are asked to reading silently or in a very low voice, so the teacher is unable to comprehend what the student is saying in the

classroom. This frequently occurs because students are shy and scared to be criticized because of their pronunciation.

Due to the lack of phoneme similitude between Spanish and English, learners tend to make more mistakes while talking in the past tense. Hence, the importance of teaching a lesson corresponding to the past tense; in other words, to focus on the pronunciation of the past tense of the regular verbs, the rules, and practice. Reading out-loud helps to develop better communication skills because in the learning process every student or learner goes from nothing to everything, in a scaffolding manner. Oral communication is the basis for any language due to the necessity to express opinions, information, feelings, and emotions, among others.

2.2. Sociocultural Theory

The sociocultural theory, originally proposed by Lev Vygotsky and according to Poehner (as cited by VanPatten and Williams, 2012), it states that language acquisition emerges from social interactions, more specifically human mental functioning is mainly a mediated process that is organized by cultural artifacts, concepts, and activities. Sociocultural is defined as related to the different groups of people in society and their habits, traditions, and beliefs (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). People in society create new cultural artifacts that allow them to monitor and control their behavior. In addition, Poehner (2010) added that developmental processes take place through the participation in the cultural group; for example, family, school, social activities and others.

Vygotsky (2000) came up with the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) that makes reference to the area of exploration in which the student is cognitively prepared but needs

help and social interaction to fulfill the development. Moreover, the students with the guidance of the teacher will be able to scaffold in the language acquisition to understand knowledge domains or development of complex skills taking the base from the skill and knowledge they have already acquired. The zone is regarded as a remarkable contribution to the field of education and learning process (Arecls, 2008). A student cannot go outside the ZPD until they begin to receive help from a teacher or parent in the development of new skills and knowledge. Vygotsky considered that the use of tools is important in social interactions and in the development of human consciousness. He referred to tools as signs and symbols used to solve problems that could not be solved without them.

In the present research, the investigator will use small groups to read out-loud in order for students to interact with each other and hear the other students' accents and ways of expressing themselves. The researcher will be their guidance in the process. The help provided will allow them to further understand the language as a whole and not only focusing on the oral skill. Interacting with other students in the learning process facilitates learners with more experience and provide a conscious usage of the structures of the language. Through the utilization of images with verbs, the instructor will explain the students the past tense endings for them to get the word in relation to the image and be able to use it within a context.

2.3 Skill Acquisition Theory

The Skill Acquisition Theory, in simple words, is the transition from effort to a more automatic use of the language, in this case English. DeKeyser's (as cited by VanPattern and Williams, 2012) process of Skill Acquisition Theory, goes through three stages: declarative, procedural, and automatic. All of the stages have their differences in how each student acquires

and uses the language. The first stage of the theory is acquired through perceptive observation and analysis of other students engaged in a skilled behavior; that is, the skill will be transmitted. In addition, each student will acquire the knowledge of different skills without even trying to use it. In the case of language acquisition, the majority of skills are acquired will be through the verbal form; in other words, from a person who knows to another one who does not. In some cases, the combination of both will be used. For example, the teacher articulates or pronounces a sound correctly; consequently, the teacher demonstrates the correct position of the lips and the pronunciation of the sound, so the learner can do exactly the same. Additionally, to have a better perception, it can be stated that declarative knowledge is knowing that something exists or that a word is pronounced a certain way.

The next stage is the procedural or acting on the declarative knowledge. DeKeyser (2001) expresses that a student passes from the declarative stage of knowledge to act out what he/she remembers. Once knowledge is proceduralized, piece by piece of information is accessible to assemble, as DeKeyser considers, a “program,” but as a whole program available to use for a specific behavior. It involves knowing how to produce language correctly without being able to explain why it is produced that way; moreover, it emphasizes on how to do something in specific.

Lastly, for the automatic stage, relevant behavior is consistently shown with complete frequency and fluency with little to no errors. In order for a student to get to this stage, he or she requires a lot of patience and practice to achieve the skills. For a teacher to notice if a student is at this stage, the students’ reaction time would be low and students’ error rate will be decreased. It is important to take into consideration that errors will be present because even in our native language, we stumble from time to time to utter a word or sentence correctly. The intensive

practice, according to DeKeyser (as cited by VanPatten and Williams, 2012), on a task in specific is only useful if learners go through-all three stages because it brings benefits to the learner in near and future time.

In order to identify the automatization of students' progress, it is used a curve line to represent the amount of time taken to solve a specific amount of problems. The purpose of the three stages is, for learners, to reduce the reaction time and to decrease the error rate. Through time, the knowledge acquired is more specific and less broad. For example, in the domain of language learning, to transfer from comprehension versus production, deals with understanding a text or a story in specific and explaining it with proper and own words orally, and transferring it from speaking to writing. In this last transferring, many learners have problems because the English language is not written the same way as it is pronounced. For this reason, everything has its process and the learner cannot jump a phase or stage because the little improvement made will not be noticeable (Håkan, 2006).

Automaticity benefits learning because the more the learner can process in the phonology and syntax of the language being acquired, the more attention he/she pays to processing the semantic and pragmatic levels of communication; furthermore, the information will be processed quicker and more precisely (Robinson, et al. 2012). When automaticity is reached, the improvement in fluency is noticeable because phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics are already comprehended and applied. In this stage, there is no need to go back and think about the little details on the language, as because they come as natural as they can. Thus, to collect data to prove this theory, it is necessary to observe behavior in nature; in other words, the learners' reaction to the learning process, error rates, and interference from a second task. (DeKeyser, as cited by VanPatten and Williams, 2012). Skill Acquisition Theory applies well for students that

have a natural ability to acquire a language and are involved in the learning of simple structures since the very beginning. For this reason, it is that all three stages must occur in order for skills to be acquired.

2.4 Input, Interaction and Output Theory

As Krashen (as cited by Bougia, n.d.) expresses, students can improve their speaking ability and expand their vocabulary by exposure to the comprehensible input through extensive reading. Reading helps students to improve their language development inside and mainly outside the classroom, as it does not require an instructor. Furthermore, Krashen (as cited by Bougia, n.d.) states that the difference between acquisition and learning process, is that the first is a subconscious process of language similar to how children learn their first language, and the latter, is a conscious process involving ruled knowledge. Moreover, the students' learning is not automatically acquired. Input, interaction, and output have formed an important role in second language acquisition.

Input, according to Gass and Mackey (as cited by VanPattern and Williams, 2012), refers to the language that a learner is exposed to in a communicative context and from which she/he learns; for example, from reading or listening. This is derived from Krashen's theory, which states that a second language is acquired through comprehensible input, specifically comprehensible input slightly above the knowledge the learner already has. For instance, Krashen (1989) expresses that it is "i+1," i referring to the knowledge already acquired and 1, meaning a level higher than the one the learner has.

Some years later, other theorists stated that comprehensible input is not efficient by itself, as-it needs more to it. This component is crucial in second language acquisition because it

provides enough evidence for learners to form a linguistic hypothesis individually, which is information about what is possible within language. The input each learner is exposed to, must be comprehensible; hence, if the learner does not understand it, it will be complicated to acquire the language correctly. There are times in which the input received by any foreign language learner is often modified by a native speaker facilitator in order for the language to be more comprehensible and make the process fluent and smooth and thus, less stressful.

There are two different types of input: simplified and elaboration. The first refers to the omission of words to make the statement comprehensible for all learners; and the second one, makes reference to repetition, to paraphrase words, to paraphrase sentences, and to cut the length of the sentences for the learner to decode the original message. Taking into consideration all of the previous information, it is important that learners acquiring the language are immersed in an English spoken classroom, while receiving the corresponding lesson. The second, which is elaboration, refers to the usage of synonyms and heteronyms for the words that are not understood by the learner. Repetition, paraphrasing, clarity, and explicitness are characteristics of this type of input and it is believed that it promotes second language acquisition (Bougia, n.d.).

Input itself will not help a learner to acquire a language; therefore, interaction and output are also part of the hypothesis because all the three complement each other to give support to the acquisition of the language. After the learner is exposed to the English language, interaction comes in handy. Gass and Mackey (as cited by VanPatten and Williams, 2012) states that interaction refers to the conversations in which the learner participates in. In this stage, the learner receives information on the correct use of the language; in other words, correction of the learners' own mistakes in their utterances. Learners receive negative evidence through

interactional feedback following problematic utterances. This is to provide the learner with productive information about the linguistic and communicative success or failure of the learners' production of the target language. Correcting students' errors helps them understand what is being mistaken or mispronounced in order for evidential improvement to be registered; meaning, in further practice the teacher is able to observe if the student has recognized the mistake and has corrected it.

The output, according to Swain (as cited by Zhang, 2009), is the most influential figure for the output hypothesis. Swain states that output is the language which learners produce, at least "Only when learners are "obliged" to produce comprehensible output, otherwise comprehensible input alone is insufficient to second language acquisition learning process." In other words, in order to produce correctly, the learner first must have the input clear. She added that to test a learner's knowledge is to have them use their knowledge. For example, to ask the to explain orally a concept or an idea to another person or reading a text in order to express ideas. In this way the learner might modify a previous utterance or mistake from the past or try to use a new form that has never been used before. Therefore, output is the production part of what has been already learned and acquired, and it is comprehended by the receiver.

Gass (as cited by VanPatten and Williams, 2012), states that there are four functions to the output hypothesis in second language acquisition. First, testing hypothesis about the structures and meaning of the second language; second, receiving crucial feedback for the verification of the hypothesis; third, heading to a more syntactic mode of the second language, by leaving behind the meaning-based processing; and finally, concentrating in developing the fluency and automaticity of the second language in interlanguage production. Moreover, the output hypothesis is centered on the creation of automaticity, which is when the learner is able to

do a task in specific without awareness or attention; meaning that the routine has become automatized. It has been achieved by the consistence of the same input to the same pattern over and over. For instance, when it comes to speaking fluently, it is a challenge for the learner to automatize the oral skill, because the lack of automatization in other areas harms the ability to speak. Furthermore, the lack of practice makes it more difficult for learners to achieve the oral part of the language. This being said, teachers need to implement the reading out-loud technique in the classroom to improve students' sound omission.

The instructor needs to take into consideration the learners' age, language aptitude, motivation, personalities, and learning strategies, which are part of the language acquisition process. All the previous aspects mentioned will make the difference, as they are very noticeable when a teacher is giving the lesson. On the other hand, if there are students' with no motivation and lack of interest in the matter, this will make the process even harder not only for the learner, but also for the teacher because the more interested a person is on something, the easier it is to fully receive the class material; thus, the acquisition is smother and less stressful.

Input, interaction, and output are essential in the acquisition of a foreign language, as they help the reader to make a prediction about the text when he or she is unfamiliar with the words within it. The association input, interaction, and output hypothesis is relevant for the present investigation, since the learner has to proceed in a scaffolding manner to obtain the correct usage of the rules for the past tense. Students will be first immersed in the language. Second, they will be asked to read a text out loud in front of small groups, and finally their knowledge will be tested. In other words, they will have to read in front of the teacher to find out if the reading out-loud technique was effective. The acquisition of the target language is a

process in which many areas are involved, but the purpose of any language is to communicate and it has to be orally.

Reading, in general, is a task which requires the usage of semantics, syntax, and pragmatics, among others to fully comprehend the text. Therefore, reading out-loud provides readers with the opportunity to improve pronunciation, fluency, stress, intonation, and other factors that compose the language to be understood. The importance of reading not only silently, but also out loud is the acquisition of more vocabulary and the correction of the mispronunciation of the regular past tense.

2.5 Interactive Theory of Reading

The goal of this theory is for students to use both, word structure knowledge and background knowledge, to give a brief explanation of what they have read. According to the theory, the top-down and bottom-up are both valid approaches to facilitate the reader with a prediction of the text (Adams, as cited by Sharpe, 2013). The focal point of the theory is the readers' interaction with the text through three main elements. These are prior identification of the authors' purpose during the reading, followed by addressing the message the author gives to the reader, and finally, identifying how the reader constructs meaning from the text and makes connections to prior knowledge related to what they read.

According to Adams (2004), there are four processors to the model of the reading system. The first is the orthographic model, known as the readers' knowledge of the visual images of words; this means that the reader identifies that words are composed by letters. Secondly, the phonological processor, which involves the complexity of sounds and the pronunciation of words. Third, the meaning processor involves the meaning of familiar words; in other words, it is

to break down the letters of the words to make simpler meaning elements. Fourth, the content processor, which is the biggest knowledge of the text, as it holds message coherence. These processors are used in combination all the time a learner is reading, by giving to the text the coherence and fluency that the reader needs.

Unlike other reading theories, the Interactive Reading Theory focuses not only on reading comprehension (Top-Bottom Theory), but also on phonics and word recognition (Bottom-Up Theory) working simultaneously during the reading process. This theory takes ideas from both theories and the readers' interaction with the text. Furthermore, the theory can be explained as to the fact that the reading process has theoretical and practical points of view. For example, when the teacher intends to apply this theory in the activation of the student's prior knowledge in relation with the title and the application of activities related to the text during the English classes.

The interest a learner has regarding reading has to do with the language acquisition because the more interested a learner is in the language, the better they will learn, and the learning process will be smoother not only for the learner, but also for the teacher. The role of the teacher in the Interactive Reading Theory is to be a mediator by assisting students in becoming aware of the knowledge they have already processed (Adams, 2014). In addition, it searches for the student's self-improvement in the acquisition of vocabulary, fluency, and other aspects. The teacher must see the students, as people who are learning individually because each student learns at a different pace with distinct strategies. Additionally, the teachers' role is to help students using their own skills and prior knowledge to discover new information by their own.

One of the most important aspects of the theory is the students' background knowledge, so in order for students to start reading, they can make connections between the text and what they already know; for instance, it could be something that has happened to them or something they already know is relative to the topic. For example, the teacher may give the learners a graphic organizer for them to arrange their ideas on the topic they are going to read. This prior knowledge activity could be done in small groups, pairs, or individually.

According to Anthony (2018), the most evidential benefit students have from this theory is differentiation because each student will have their way to interpret a text. Bringing background knowledge to reading and interacting with the rest of the class, can help the learners to build meaning and memory from the text they read. The relationship this theory has with the past tense is that there is always a need for students to have prior knowledge in order to comprehend the text, even if the student has little relation with the language. Through reading out-loud students will be aware of the correct pronunciation of the past tense after the researcher facilitates them the correct usage and rules of pronunciation. It is important for students to take into consideration that the learning process is a series of actions in order to achieve the acquisition of the target language, and that those series of aspects make up the basis for oral communication.

2.6 What is Pronunciation?

Richard and Schmidt (2002) defined pronunciation as the method of producing certain sounds. Additionally, pronunciation is the production of a sound system in which the speaker makes the message clear and the listener receives it perfectly, with no interference.

Pronunciation is an important element to a successful communication. Sounds are necessary for

transmitting and understanding the message. Pronunciation can go hand-in-hand with reading out-loud, as through this technique students will be able to acquire the correct pronunciation of the omitted past tense sounds; in other words, they will differentiate the three different ending rules applied to regular verbs. When students have an accurate pronunciation of words, despite their accent, they will be able to communicate in English wherever they are. Reading out-loud provide students with the opportunity of having not only a better pronunciation, but also better speaking skills.

English pronunciation is considered as one of the most difficult sub-skills to acquire, since it requires practice in order to improve. Bad pronunciation leads to good pronunciation because the persistence of a learner is what makes the difference. According to Farhat and Dzakiria (2017), “Pronunciation has been overlooked and no serious attempt has been made to indicate its worth for both, teachers and learners.” For this reason, the researcher is looking for implementing the reading out-loud technique in order for students to have the opportunity to practice their speaking skills if they do not have any English speaking person with them. Furthermore, if the learner is determined to acquire accurate language skills, it is necessary to practice reading out-loud outside the classroom, as well. If learners acquire the perfect communication skills, they will have no problem in understanding people speaking in English with any accent.

Gilakjani (2016) states that there is no need for learners to pronounce like a native speaker, but instead, to apply intelligible pronunciation to be understood while transmitting a message, is the first point of the language. There is a variety of accents according to regional or social factors. Depending on where the speaker lives, the socio-economic status, social class, or

the influences the speaker has from their native language will affect their accent, while communicating with others.

Prodanovska (2017) states that one of the very first obstacles a language learner encounters in the learning process is speaking as a productive skill, since there are many factors that intervene in the correct acquisition of the language. For example, anxiety and nervousness, among other; however, through practice and determination students could use reading out loud as a corrective technique to improve. In addition, knowing a language does not mean that the learner will have proper and accurate pronunciation. Furthermore, Prodanovska (2017) states that pronunciation is an inevitable element of the speaking skills, and improper pronunciation can cause problems such as lack of self-confidence to speak, restraining from speaking in front of a group, and not participating in social interactions. Moreover, there are times in which the teacher plans a role play or speaking in front of the class activity and no one participates because there will be students that know a little more English than others.

2.6.1 Pronunciation Instruction

Pronunciation is a fundamental feature of language instruction; therefore, the teacher needs to have good pronunciation to be able to teach students the correct manner of the language structure. The lack of pronunciation instruction in the classroom is notorious, as teachers tend to teach the four language skills reading, writing, speaking, and listening, voiding pronunciation at all times. The main reason pronunciation is not present in class is because the lack of time and the amount of lessons provided, since it is not enough to provide all the necessary information to implement pronunciation instruction.

“Through pronunciation instruction, students not only learn different sounds and sound features, but also improve their speaking skill” (Hammer 2001, Gilakjani 2016). Therefore, this increases student’s awareness to stress, intonation, punctuation, and it will help them to acquire the language as a whole and not as separate parts. Native-like pronunciation is the aim of language acquisition, but understandable pronunciation should be the main goal of a language learner. Pronunciation instruction needs to be emphasized in order for the learner to develop communicative competence, as it aims to help learners to achieve language acquisition, spoken English easy for listeners to comprehend, functional spoken language to satisfy communicative needs, self-confidence to create a good image, and speech-monitoring abilities. These four aims are to encourage the learner to develop intelligibility, communicability, and confidence outside the classroom. Classroom scenarios are not compared with the real world, because in class the learner feels comfortable with the teacher and classmates because they are used to hearing the mispronunciation of words and are still able to perceive the message, but when the learner is faced to a real life situation, they doubt their knowledge and thus, they lack the accurate speaking skills.

The goals of teaching pronunciation, as claimed by Wrembel (as cited by Gilakjani, 2016), are to improve personal speech monitoring skills, speech adjustment strategies, develop speech consciousness, develop self-awareness in oral communication, and develop English to fulfill the listeners’ needs. These goals are not only meant for the English classroom, but also for the real world, when the learner needs to deal with real situations. Pronunciation is just not the ability to utter sounds, but productive communication.

2.6.2 Factors that Affect the Learning of Pronunciation

The factors that affect the correct acquisition of pronunciation depends on each student, but it is important to take into consideration that there are factors which eventually make the learning process difficult; for example, students' motivation. The lack of motivation intervenes if the interest in the language is absent from the learning process, as it will not be proactive and it will be painful for the student to go through it. Learners' attitude is crucial because if it not appealing, the teacher can be indisposed when teaching the lesson because of the bad attitude coming from a student in specific. On the other hand, if the teacher achieves to convince the student that everything being learned is beneficial, the lesson would be smoother for the teacher and the students.

Students' can lose motivation quickly, due to the lack of interest students may have towards language. Many students feel like they do not have the necessity to communicate with others in another language, because they have an easy access to technology which helps them to be understood. Motivation also goes together with the teacher. If the lesson does not have relevant material, students will lose interest, causing them not to pay attention and fail the given tasks. Likewise, the learner's attitude goes in hand with motivation. Many times, negative thoughts attract negative behaviors that lead to pessimistic attitude. There are students who do not realize the powerful tool they have until they have lost it. This makes reference to the times in which student does not appreciate all the knowledge a teacher can help them to acquire until they face the real world and have to pay for the information they need. For example, a students' attitude towards reading is fundamental in wanting to read a text or a story. There will be times in which the student can choose what he or she wants to read and that motivates them to continue

reading, but there will be occasions in which the teacher has to propose the text and it might not be as interesting for the student.

When trying to acquire a new language, many people compare their mother tongue with the target language. There will be times in which there can be many similarities, but in the case of Spanish speaking people, comparing is not valid because there are little to no similitudes. English phonetics has sounds that are not in Spanish, so, for this reason, many English learners have some difficulties acquiring the sounds when speaking.

Students' acquisition of the pronunciation of a new language depends on the teacher who is imparting the classes. Why? The way a student may pronounce is due to how the teacher pronounces. It depends on the input the student is exposed to. If the student is exposed to well pronounced words and a well pronounced past tense, then the learner would have a suitable pronunciation despite the accent the student may have. Contrary to that, the exposure a student has to the bad pronunciation of the teacher, may lead him/her to the mispronunciation of words. By improving the teachers' pronunciation, the better the students will pronounce and less difficulty when acquiring the language. Despite all the factors that affect pronunciation, it is important that the instructor has charisma to face all of them and have the enthusiasm to help the learner in the acquisition process. Furthermore, when a teacher loves what they are doing, there is no factor that intervenes in the learners' learning.

2.6.3 Pronunciation to a Better Communication

If a person has full clarity of a message, he or she can respond correctly; however, if the message is not given with clarity, the listener would be unable to give a correct answer. Hence, the importance of having an accurate pronunciation of the words, as well as the correct

intonation and stress to fulfill the listeners' necessity to having full comprehension of the message. Communication is the conscious action of exchanging information among two or more participants in order to transmit or receive information. Furthermore, opinions are also transmitted or received.

For example, if a student, in the process of acquiring the language or goes to another country for vacations and if he/she tries to speak to a native speaker, the latter may be unable to identify what the student is saying, as the student might have the correct grammar structure, but lacks intonation, stress, and pronunciation. Something so simple, yet so complicated. The phrase makes reference to the fact that many people tend to omit pronunciation as an important aspect of the language and for oral communication, it is the basis to having good communication. The previous example tries to give a brief situation in which many people can be faced to because they never had the intention of acquiring good pronunciation habits.

2.6.4 Accuracy and Fluency

Accuracy and fluency are two elements which determine the success of English language students in the future. In other words, they go together in order to have a comprehensible message for the receiver. The Cambridge Dictionary (2019) defines accuracy as the fact of being correct. In relation to the investigation, the researcher is searching for students' ability to produce correct sentences using the adequate grammar and vocabulary while speaking in relation to the past tense endings using the reading out loud technique. Moreover, the researcher seeks to evaluate if students have content comprehension, communicability, understanding of, and errors self-correction. On the other hand, fluency is defined as the quality of being fluent (Merriam Webster, n.d.); that is, the ability the students have to produce language easily and

smoothly, while reading out loud sentences that contain the simple past tense endings /t/, /d/, and /id/.

If a student is fluent, he/she might present few grammar mistakes and still be understood; nevertheless, accuracy, on the other hand, does not allow students to make any mistakes because it is the ability to use the necessary vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation. Hence, the importance of reading aloud in order to improve fluency and accuracy, as through this technique the learner is capable of perceiving their mistakes and will avoid making them in the future. For the learner, to be a good English speaking, it is necessary to be fluent and accurate, for both of these aspects to be taken into consideration.

The activities in which the teacher promotes accuracy need to be different from the ones to achieve fluency. The activities based on accuracy are grammar exercises that promote the adequate sentence structure with punctuation and vocabulary, and make reference to how students are communicating. On the other hand, fluency activities focus on what they are communicating. For instance, the activities could be a conversation, debates or role plays. The purpose of them are to promote students speaking skills. (Torricco, 2015)

2.6.5 Corrective Techniques

With use of correction techniques, students will sooner acquire the adequate pronunciation of the phonemes individually for a later use in context. Through practice and determination, this process can be later unconscious, as this is how language works, when the learner is able to use it without having to double check the rules and position of the mouth. Mouth gymnastics and minimal pairs are two techniques that will help students acquire the appropriate pronunciation of the regular past tense verbs.

2.6.5.1 Mouth Gymnastics

Mouth gymnastics consists on doing exercises with your mouth in order for the muscles to obtain the proper form of a phoneme in particular. According to Sakshi Khemka, Nilima Thosar, Sudhindra Baliga (2015), the goal of mouth gymnastics therapy is to promote a lip seal, palatal tongue rest position, a proper swallow, and facilitating nasal breathing; as well as in the correction of dysfunctional habits patterns. For example, a student who was taught since first grade that three was pronounced like *tree*, he or she will have a dysfunctional habit of mispronouncing the word and when this student gets to fifth grade or in high school the pattern will be hard to break; therefore, mouth gymnastics is a good technique to apply to the student to improve. Another reason why a student may have problems is due to malocclusion which according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d.), is the abnormality in the coming together of the teeth. Also, the muscles of the tongue, lip and cheeks are indispensable in guiding the teeth to their final position for the proper function in order to articulate the phoneme correctly.

2.6.5.2 Minimal Pairs

Minimal pairs as a correction technique is used when the students present phonological disorders. Minimal pairs are words that vary one phoneme (Lalbakhsh, 2014); that is, two words that sound alike, but have different meanings. This technique is used to train students to discriminate phonemes in the target language. Minimal pairs are a useful technique to highlight a sound in a meaningful context and to show how important correct pronunciation is. For instance, bat and pat, the difference in this minimal pair is that one word is written with /b/ and the other with /p/. Students may have confusion between two vowel sounds, consonant sounds, initial consonant sounds, and final consonant sounds.

2.6.5.3 Sound Omission

During the acquisition of a new language, the omission of different sounds takes place; the reason why the regular past tense is omitted is because there are differences in the regular past tense between Spanish and English. In phonetics and phonology, elision is the omission of a phoneme in speech, according to Nordquist (2019). The frequency of elision is very high in everyday conversations, as in English there are words that are not pronounced the same as they are written, causing a misunderstanding. The omission of any sound in general, when a student is acquiring the English language, is very common because of the uncommon grammar structures that the language has.

The past tense of the regular verb forms is always written –ed; however, it is pronounced in three different forms, /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/. Its pronunciation depends on the sound in which verbs end in their basic form. For example, if the word in the basic form ends with /k/, as in walk then the past tense is pronounced as /t/. The variation of the regular past tense will always depend on the last phoneme in which the verb ends, this is what determines the usage of the rules of the past tense. To determine the correct pronunciation of the past tense, whether it is /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/, the learner must first identify the rules. For using /t/ as word must end in a voiceless phoneme, when using /d/ the word ends in a voiced phoneme, and to determine if it is with /ɪd/ the verb must end in /t/ or /d/.

Through a game of hot potato, students sit in a circle and toss a small round object to each other, while the music plays. When the music stops, the student with the ball or “hot potato” has to take out a piece of paper containing a sentence with a regular past tense verb related to the topic Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty. Furthermore, oral presentations are going to be used. Students in small groups of 4 have to draw a national park with a weather condition, then they have to

present in front of the class, and they have to say one activity each they can do, using the past tense.

2.7 Reading Out Loud Technique

Reading both, silently and loudly, brings many benefits to students who are inside or outside the classroom. Reading out loud gives students an opportunity to learn how to use the language, improves their information processing skills vocabulary and comprehension of the text being read. (University of Texas, 2017). There are students who retain more information by reading out loud to themselves or other people, the more words and structures are pronounced the better the learner will acquire the new language. Along the reading, the learner will encounter new words and his or her curiosity will lead to searching for the meaning and/or synonym of the word. Also, the learner can look for context clues, referring to the words surrounding the new word to help him/her understanding the meaning of the new word.

Making mistakes is a part of learning. When acquiring a language, as well as any other subject, your brain goes through a task of processing information and there are times in which the learner forgets and starts confusing elements of the language, in this particular case (Szynalski, P. (n.d.) will help the learner to be aware of the errors being made and internalize the correct form and usage of the language. Nevertheless, pronunciation is more than the correct production of sounds. It is part of communication in order to be understood. When a learner acquires the correct pronunciation of the words, despite the accent, he or she will master the language and will be able to communicate. Moreover, reading is an opportunity for the learner to enrich the knowledge in every aspect of the language, because the student that reads knows more about the language.

Reading out loud is to guide yourself with a text and utter it loud enough to be heard. Not only this will be helpful to have a better comprehension, but also to allow yourself to hear what you are reading to identify errors. There are some activities for students to improve their language skills through reading out loud in order to promote shared reading; in other words, giving students a space in the classroom to read out loud a short story to each other and have a practice after the activity to evaluate their reading comprehension. Additionally, teachers have to promote students' participation during the class to read the information about the unit or topic. Some students will be more than glad to help the teacher.

Moreover, reading is an opportunity for the learner to enrich their knowledge in every aspect of the language because the student that reads knows more about the language. The improvement students, regarding fluency and accuracy, will be noticeable, but also pronunciation is going to be fundamental in the learning process. Pronunciation is more than the correct production of sounds or words; it is part of communication in order to be understood.

CHAPTER III

Methodological Framework

This chapter gives an outline of the research methods that were followed in the investigation. The researcher describes the research approach and the research design that were chosen for the purpose of this investigation. The instruments that were used for data collection, as well as the procedures that were followed to carry out this investigation, are explained. The researcher also explores the method used to analyze the data.

3.1 Research Approach

As for the research approach, and investigation can be either quantitative or qualitative. Regards to the first one, according to Hernández, Fernández, Baptista (2014), the quantitative approach is defined as, “Sequential and probative. Each stage precedes the next and we cannot “jump or elude,” steps the order is rigorous, although, of course, we can redefine some phase.” This approach is based on statistics and numbers.

According to Hernández, et. al (2014, p.7), the qualitative approach “Is guided by areas or significant research topics [...] uses data collection without numerical measurement to discover or refine research questions in the interpretation process.” For purposes of this research, the use of both of the approaches mentioned before are going to be used. Having mentioned this, a data collection and analysis will be carried out to answer the questions that arose from the work on the effectiveness of applying reading out-loud as a technique to fifth grade students at La Sabana School. In order to make an analysis of the research, sources such as books and theses will be used to support the collection of information on the topic of investigation.

The skill to be improved in the present investigation is the oral skill. It has to be stated that one of the many purposes of a language is to communicate and for people to speak and to be understood. Many fifth grade students at La Sabana School lack of the correct pronunciation of the language, especially the past tense. Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. Speaking includes; lecturing, interviewing, reading and some other aspects. Pronunciation is one of the guidelines to speaking. The speaker has to take into consideration speed, clarity, punctuation, familiarity, fluency, and expressions. This to give a clear and comprehensible messages to the listener. A speech must be successful in conveying the ideas or emotions, facts or arguments to the listener in order to fulfill the listener's necessity.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is the general manner that the researcher will use in the investigation process. Moreover, the design emerges from the problem statement, the initial immersion, and the work field. During the process, it will undergo modifications, even though it is rather a way of approaching the phenomenon of interest; in this case, it would be the effectiveness of acquiring the correct pronunciation of the omitted past tense sounds while speaking. Therefore, it be stated that this is an action research.

The research design of an investigation consists on procedures used to collect data and analyze the measures of the variables implied in the study depending if the investigation has a quantitative or qualitative approach, the design will vary. Since the present investigation has a qualitative approach, the design used for the study will be action research. An action research, according to Ferrance (2000, p.7), is defined as "A process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research." It is

designed to diagnose problems or weaknesses and to help professors develop solutions to address them in the shortest amount of time. Furthermore, the action research will allow the researcher to be part of the process, as well the students' participation to examine their own awareness of the mistakes they make regarding the pronunciation of the past tense endings. Moreover, it is important to take into consideration that the present investigation will implement several quantitative instruments, but the analysis is not based on statistics.

In addition to the action research, there are other research design types that can be used along with the qualitative approach; therefore, they will be explained. The case study intends to study and understand one situation, which could be a person, a group of people, or a process activity. This research approach allows the investigator to take a complex topic and narrow it down to a manageable research question (Heale, 2017). The benefit of using this approach for an investigation is that it allows the investigator to have a depth analysis of a single topic or phenomena in a question.

Phenomenology is another research design related to the qualitative research approach. It has the intention of describing how human beings experience a certain phenomenon. It tries to understand the meaning of the experience (Neubauer, B., et al. 2019). It is usually applied on a small group of people, often 10 or less, it has open-ended interview questions for the person or people to fully describe the experience from their own perspective. Most of the information is gathered through depth conversations and interviews, but the investigator can also get information through diaries, drawings, or observations.

3.3 Information Sources

The information sources allow the researcher to be able to obtain a clear explanation of information gathered and to have theoretical support of the topics related to the investigation, since this way, the researcher can have a vision of the answers and reach a conclusion through the analysis of the information collected. However, there are several ways for an effective data collection; in the present investigation three types of sources will be taken into account, which will be explained below.

3.3.1 Primary Sources

Primary sources are considered as the first hand evidence left behind during a certain period of time (University Library, 2019). For purposes of the investigation, books that have necessary information about reading out loud, pronunciation and how their combination works, will be used as primary sources. Furthermore, the description of the institution, population, and participants will be part of the primary sources.

3.3.1.1 Institution

The investigation is held at La Sabana School. It is a public elementary school founded in 1962. This educational institution consists of preschool and primary levels. The institution on a regular schedules works from 7:00 am to 2:20 pm. La Sabana School is located 100 meters east from the Y Griega in the district La Sabana in Tarrazú, San José. Moreover, Roy Castro is the principal of the institution. He has been working in this school for over two years and has worked in the Ministry of Public Education for the past ten years. Additionally, in terms of infrastructure the school consists of twenty three classrooms and two administrative offices. Each classroom has a medium size whiteboard, a desk for the teacher, and enough desks for the

students. The school also has a computer laboratory, a cafeteria, a gymnasium, green areas, and separated areas for preschool and elementary school.

3.3.1.2 Population

The majority of the students who attend La Sabana School belong to a low to middle class. They are students who live in the Sabana and its surroundings. Every level has two or three groups with approximately twenty-seven students; however, some groups may have less and some others, may have more students. The groups that have more students tend to be considered difficult groups due to the lack of opportunities that the teacher has to fulfill their individual needs.

3.3.1.3 Participants

The study will be conducted with a group of sixteen students who are currently in fifth grade; there are eight girls and eight boys. Since is a primary school, the students are accustomed to having one teacher for the basic subject as Mathematics, Science, Spanish, Social Studies, and Civic Education. When it comes to English, they have another teacher to give them the respective lesson.

3.3.2 Secondary Sources

In addition, the present research will use several secondary source, as for example various theses, magazines, and articles, among others. According to Hernández et. al (2014, p.397), secondary sources are compilations, summaries, and lists of references published in a particular area of knowledge, such as books, web pages, among others. Using secondary sources will give support to the present investigation due to the information found in sources. Articles

will be used to foment the usage of proper pronunciation of the past tense endings to have a full communicative message.

3.3.3 Tertiary Sources

According to Yale University Library (n.d.), a tertiary sources is “Information which is a distillation and collection of primary and secondary sources.” This includes glossaries, encyclopedias, dictionaries, manuals, among others. Dictionaries will be used in this investigation for giving reliable definitions and reliable examples of the information. In the present investigation, definitions will be used to describe specific aspects of implementing and evaluating reading out loud as a technique to improve the past tense omission.

3.4 Analysis Categories

To gain a better understanding of the investigation topic, is it important to subdivide the topic into parts. Implementing and evaluating reading out loud as a technique to improve past tense omission, the importance of the problems, the reading out loud technique, the omission of sounds, the past tense, and the effectiveness, are to take into consideration to provide the enough information to support the topic.

3.4.1 Reading Out Loud Technique

Many teachers avoid students to read aloud due to the lack of time and opportunity provided in each lesson. Nevertheless, when students read aloud, they improve not only their pronunciation, but also their fluency, intonation, grammar structure, and other important aspects of the language. Reading out loud is the action of reading a specific text or story in a loud manner to be heard by the rest of the people, in this case, their classmates.

3.4.2 Omission

The basis of oral communication is a suitable pronunciation in order to express a clear message. Sometimes, a teacher, a friend, or a sibling can understand the message because they are not used to identifying or recognizing a mispronounced word, and besides all they care is to understand the message. On the other hand, there can be people that do not understand the message or they may have a misconception of what it was said. For this reason, it is important to have a good pronunciation.

3.4.3 Past Tense Endings

The past tense is an action that expresses that something has happened in the past and has already finished. Fifth grade students at La Sabana School present problems when it comes to pronouncing the past tense of a verb. This may be due to the lack of help to improve this mistake. Furthermore, the lack of opportunities given to the teacher to focus on the specific skill. For this reason, the investigation aims to help such students, so they can have a better understanding of the rules of the past tense endings; as a result, the researcher wants to help them not only improve their grades, but also to improve their pronunciation.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Collecting data involves designing a detailed plan of procedures that help the researcher gathering the information to fulfill the objectives of the investigation. This section of the chapter shows the choices the investigator took to plan the procedure in order to collect data, as well as the instruments used to collect the information to give support to the investigation. The population aimed for this investigation are fifth grade students ages from ten to eleven years old at La Sabana School located in Tarrazú.

3.5.1 Observation Checklist

Through an observation checklist, the researcher will not only observe, but also will use all of senses to perceive what is going on around the classroom. During the observation, the investigator will have a sheet of paper in order to check the aspects to consider during the activity. The main purpose of this instrument is to collect data in regards to the teacher's strategies to implement oral communication skills and how they are given and received by the students. The observation checklist intends to identify how the teacher gives the lesson and the reaction students have towards the lesson. The information obtained through the observation checklist will be important for the investigation process and the results, conclusions, and recommendations, since it will determine if only some students mispronounced the past tense or if the whole class is still making such mistakes.

The elements in the observation checklist are content, communicability, grammar usage, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation of /t/, /d/, /ɪd/, questions understanding, and errors self-correction. Therefore, by implementing the observation checklist will help the researcher to identify the problems that come to light when the teacher is teaching the lesson and why students lack the correct pronunciation of the past tense endings.

3.5.2 Pre-Test

The pre-test consists, according to Dictionary.com (n.d.), to "a test given to determine if students are sufficiently prepared to begin a new course of study." In relation with the investigation, the pre-test will show the lack of knowledge that students have concerning the accurate pronunciation of the past tense endings of regular verbs. The pre-test aims to evaluate the student's prior knowledge and their vocabulary competence before implementing the reading out loud technique.

The pre-test will be carried out individually and will read a short story out loud to the investigator, and the investigator will keep track of the words the students mispronounce. In order to have an accurate result, the students will be given the short story in a sheet of paper with the instructions, the purpose, and the amount of verbs in the past tense. On the other hand, the investigator will have a running record sheet with the same short story as the students and while they read the researcher will take notes according what is being read. To conclude, the pre-test's main purpose is to identify the pronunciation problems students may encounter when they are reading out loud.

3.5.3 Post-Test

The last instrument to be applied in this investigation will be the post-test, which according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d) is defined as, "A test given to students after the completion of an instructional program or segment and often used in conjunction with a pretest to measure their achievement and the effectiveness of the program." It will be applied eight days after the implementation of the reading out loud technique in the classroom. This test will be similar in design to the pre-test; the difference between them is that the text will be different and there will be more regular verbs in the past tense. Additionally, the text will have a higher reading level because students are required to have better reading skills after the investigator applies the reading out loud technique in class. The aim of the post-test is to evaluate if the strategy was effective or not.

3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis

Regarding the purpose on which the qualitative analysis is based, Hernández et al. (2014) state the exploration of the data; that is to develop a structure (generating the categories); proceed

with the description of the answers of the respondents indicating their points of view, as well as the expressions used; make the description of the concepts of the categories giving them a sense for their interpretation and explanation depending on the planning of the problem; understand the context surrounding the data; make a link of available knowledge with the results found and generate a theory supported by the references found (p. 418).

In this investigation in order to obtain information or data from the students, the researcher first has to explain the purpose of implementing and evaluating reading out loud as a technique to improve the past tense omission to the school staff and principal and have the approval. After that, the researcher will proceed with the observation checklist of the class and pre-test previously explained. Once the data is collected in the first class, the researcher will then plan the classes according to the necessities of the students. The researcher will then proceed to teach classes implementing reading out loud technique in improving the pronunciation of the regular verbs in the past tense. The researcher will teach around five to six lessons with a duration of an hour and twenty minutes each. Each lesson taught will have its own lesson plan and the chronogram of activities. There will be a variety of topics to be covered; for example, types of family around the world and Costa Rica and the English speaking countries: customs and traditions. The last class or lesson, the post-test will be applied for the later evaluation by the researcher.

The qualitative data is varied, as it could be visual, for example; photographs, videos, among others; auditory that include recording, reading aloud by the teacher; as well as verbal and non-verbal expressions, for instance; oral responses and gestures. In addition to the observations and note taking of the researcher. The importance of applying a satisfactory research design is to fulfill a necessity the society is facing. Therefore, this investigation aims to identify the

weaknesses or problems that the group may have to help the specific population overcoming the issue. The implementation of reading out loud as a technique will help fifth grade students at La Sabana School to improve the pronunciation of the past tense endings of regular verbs, as well as the implementation of various activities to help them with their communication skills.

Lesson 1

After applying the observation checklist, the researcher had an idea of how the students' behavior was like, as well as the language skills. Therefore, the researcher started to teach the first lesson. The students were a little scared of finding another person teaching a lesson, despite that they had already seen the investigator during the observation. To start the lesson, the investigator introduced herself to the class, explaining why she was there with them. After that, they had a little bit more of confidence. The warm-up consisted of pasting flashcards of the weather conditions of Costa Rica such as, windy, cloudy, sunny, stormy, rainy, hot, and cold on the white board. The investigator said the words twice and she had the class to repeat after her. She later associated the weather conditions to a province of Costa Rica. For instance, the weather in Guanacaste is sunny. Furthermore, she also made questions in relation to the weather in other provinces of Costa Rica; for example, is the weather cold in Limon? Students, in this part, were excited because they were able to make the relation with the weather in Costa Rica, as the weather is varied because some days it was hot and the next it would be cold, despite in the season.

In the presentation part, the investigator introduced the topic by telling a short story regarding a day she went to the beach, this in order for students to understand that the verbs used were in past,. Then, through flashcards, the investigator showed the activities that could be done

in certain weather conditions. Next, the investigator would say, “jumped” and they would repeat after the teacher. Some students said the translation of the words in Spanish. After that, the investigator would say a sentence combining weather conditions, provinces, and verbs in past tense by writing them on the white board. The students had to write them on their notebooks.

The practice given to the students consisted on a worksheet with a matching exercise. In column A, they had the sentences and in column B, they had an image representing one of the sentences in column A. More than half of the group finished fast and was able to do it correctly; however, the other half had problems doing it and required the investigator’s help. The investigator proceeded to help them and so, they were able to do the practice. After everyone was finished, the researcher checked the practice orally. The investigator chose one student and they had to say the letter corresponding to the image and to read the sentence within the option.

For the evaluation activity, students were requested to get together in a small circle to play hot potato students; therefore, they had to pass the ball around while the music played and when the music stopped, the student who had the ball had to pull out a piece a paper from a bag and had to read the sentence in it. The sentences were about Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty, along with some activities they could do in the different provinces of the country. During the game, some students were motivated to participate and wanted the music to stop when they had the ball and others passed the ball quickly in order to avoid having to read. Every student was given a prize at the end of the class for their participation.

Lesson 2

To start of the lesson, the researcher introduced a review of a topic that the students already learned the class before by playing a game. The game was hangman in relation to

weather conditions. Through the use of the white board, the researcher drew spaces needed according to the number of letters the word had. The first word was sunny, so the investigator pasted two images on the board, one corresponding to sunny and the other to rainy. The students who raised first their hand had the opportunity to guess a letter guiding themselves with the images. At first it was difficult because they had trouble remembering the name of the letters, but they still guessed the words. Some students were shy and did not say any letter, so the investigator asked the next student. Within the first tries, the word was guessed and the investigator did the same for the next two words.

Keeping the guidelines of the teacher's topic, students were presented with some questions in relationship to the weather forecast of Costa Rica. For example, what activity did you do on a _____ day? The blank space refers to the weather condition. These questions were written on the board and when the students were able to say the correct answer, the investigator wrote them down along with the questions. The majority of the students said the answer in Spanish, but the investigator reminded them that the answers needed to be in English; therefore, only one or two students were able to answer in the required language correctly.

Additionally, practice came along. It consisted of short story called "Martin's Vacation." It was a reading comprehension with regular verbs in the simple past. With the guidance of the investigator, the students had to read a sentence of the passage out loud. The students were corrected when it was needed. In this part, it was notorious that the students were afraid or nervous to read in front of the class, as they were afraid that other classmates would make fun of their pronunciation. The investigator told them that there was no need to laugh, criticize, or judge the person who was reading because they were all there to learn and make the learning process fun. After this was said, the students were more opened about reading out loud.

Despite the mispronunciations of the words, their overall results were very positive because more than 10 students were able to read correctly. After the reading was discussed and all the doubts were clear, the investigator asked the students some questions regarding the text on the usage of the past tense endings. For instance, one of the questions was, why did he arrive late at the airport?, the students answered first by giving only the reason; however the investigator was looking for complete sentence, so the investigator proceeded to say out loud the long form of the answer, in this way the student were obligated to use the past tense ending of the verb.

The investigator gave each student two flashcards with an image in which a verb was represented. Each student had at least one different flashcard. The investigator went through the flashcards and asked the students what verb was represented in the picture. After, the researcher proceeded to pronounce the verb in past tense out loud in order for students to have a better idea of what they might hear. When she read a sentence loud enough for the class to hear, the student who had the verb had to raise the flashcard that had the image of the verb. For example, the teacher read the sentence: They studied before going to the beach. So, the flashcard who had the image representing the verb *studied* had to raise the card. During this activity, the majority of students had problems identifying the verb in the sentences. For better comprehension, the investigator wrote on the white board the verb and this made the activity easier for them.

Lesson 3

Giving students a brief introduction to the new topic, the researcher wrote on the board the names of national parks such as Santa Rosa National Park, Tortuguero National Park, Irazu Volcano, Chirripo National Park, Carrillo beach, Arenal Volcano, among others, as well as nature resources like, sea, forest, mountain, monkey. The pronunciation of the words was

checked before starting the activity with the students. Then, the researcher proceeded to divide the class into two groups or teams, in order to form 2 lines. The investigator said a word from the list on the board in a sentence using the regular past tense ending. Then, she would count to three and the student who arrived at the board first had to point out the words used, so this gave one a point to the team. Any of the students wanted to lose, so they worked hard as a group to get as much points as possible, but sadly team 1 could win.

For further understanding of the national parks, beaches, volcanos, among others, students had to read different characteristics of the places out loud, and to give a brief definition of each natural beauty of Costa Rica.

Keeping the same two groups from the warm-up, they had to form two parallel lines to each other. One group had the picture representing the national parks, beaches, or volcanos and the other group had the name corresponding to the image. The students that had the flashcard with the name had to read out loud what was written on it. When the names and pronunciation were accurate the teacher called a name and they had to pair up with their corresponding image. This game generated emotion because they were anxious to know when their name was going to be called. The investigator had to call their attention in various occasions because they tended to talk to their classmates or share an experience related to their flashcard. The investigator continued to do so until all the students had a pair. Moreover, at the end, they had to hold up high the image and say out loud what place they had.

The activity that corresponded to the evaluation was a short story that was divided into three fragments. The students had to cut out the three different parts. When they were already, the investigator started to read the short story. In this part, the students were only allowed to

follow what the researcher was reading. Next, the investigator read slowly and told them were to put each of the fragments after they showed her the part of the story they understood was read. Some students required help, but they were too shy to ask the investigator, so they asked the classmate next to them.

Lesson 4

On the fourth lesson given to the fifth grade group, the teacher started with the warm-up that consisted of the investigator reading the characteristics of Costa Rica's Natural Beauty, such as beaches, rivers, forest, volcano, mountain, and waterfall, and students had to identify which definition was given. For instance, the researcher read, a cascade of water falling from a height, some of the students were able to recognize the correct answer because the investigator saw many hands in the air, while the majority had issues answering the question. They showed interest in this activity.

The following part of the lesson was a presentation; the investigator wrote on the board a list of activities they could do in the natural beauties of Costa Rica, then she showed them flashcards, and read the past tense of each activity. A few students started to say an anecdote in relation to the activities demonstrated. It was noticeable for the investigator which students had an improvement in the pronunciation of the past tense endings because throughout the lessons they participated and were really excited about learning new things, despite that the rules could not be given explicitly due to MEP's program, but they were explained through activities, examples, and stories.

To combine weather conditions, provinces, and the natural beauty of Costa Rica, the investigator divided the class into four groups of four and gave each a place and a weather

condition to draw on a poster. While they were drawing, the investigator gave them some sentences containing regular verbs in the past tense and asked the students to look for the information in the pages they had in order to present it orally in front of the class. Some students were able to read and pronounce correctly, while others had difficulties to achieve the goal. Additionally, most of the students were scared that other classmates made fun of them, so the teacher had to remind them that everybody was there to learn and that bullying was not allowed. This being said, they were more confident and tried to read with more security.

For the evaluation part, the investigator used the material given previously by the teacher and asked students questions in relation to the topic. The researcher gave prizes to the students in order to motivate their participation. This strategy was useful because students wanted to answer, as they knew that they were going to be given a prize. Even the students who had a low English level participated and answered correctly. This activity was really nice due to all the enthusiasm that they showed.

Lesson 5

To start of the class, the investigator played a video called “Essential Costa Rica.” Students stayed silently during the video and when it stopped, they started to make comments about it. Furthermore, the investigator asked them “what animals were you able to observe in the video?” and “what activities did you see?” Some students responded in Spanish, so the investigator reminded them that they had to answer in English. They enjoyed watching the video.

Next, the investigator proceeded to make a list of the animals that were found in Costa Rica by asking the students “what animals can you see when you go to visit Manuel Antonio Beach?” or any other place in Costa Rica; as well as the resources found in these places such as,

water, plants, animals, among others. Students related this information to the video because it showed a lot of animals and resources. Students asked questions in relation to the pronunciation of the name of the animals because some of them knew them but in Spanish and they wanted to say it in English. The investigator indicated one or two animals per province and the resource that mostly identified each of them. For instance, sloths and monkeys represent Guanacaste and the natural resource that is abundant in this province is water. Moreover, the investigator added sentences in relation to the past tense endings and the activities these animals can do.

In the practice, the investigator pasted images of the different national parks, volcanos, rivers, and beaches of Costa Rica. Each student had an animal or natural resource that represents the province. After they had finished, the investigator chose two students to present what they had drawn and to read 2 sentences that they had previously written about the activities animals do. Students enjoyed drawing, but they disliked the reading out loud because they are shy students; more specifically, that they are afraid of being a target for bullying.

The students were organized in groups by the investigator. They were divided in four groups of four and they had to write a short story in past tense about a time they visited a natural beauty in Costa Rica. The researcher asked the students to use regular verbs in the past tense because it was an activity that they have already done. They wrote the stories in their notebook and read the story to the investigator from their desks. They did not have to go present it in front of the whole class. In this way, the students had more confidence. Students tended to get distracted, since they were in groups but the investigator went around the classroom to get them back on track.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis of the Results

In this chapter, the information analyzed has been gathered during the investigation. Data analysis is defined, according to Wong (2008), as the process of systematically searching and arranging the observation notes or any other material the researcher has accumulated to increase the understanding of the phenomenon. The analysis and explanation of the collected data will be represented through tables, figures, and their respective explanation and results. This chapter is formed by several sections dedicated to the observation checklist, pre-test, and post-test with the collected information to fulfil the objectives mentioned.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

In this section, the analysis and interpretation of the information gathered will be explained. The instruments used in the investigation were observation checklists, a pre-test, and a post-test.

4.1.1 Observation Checklist 1

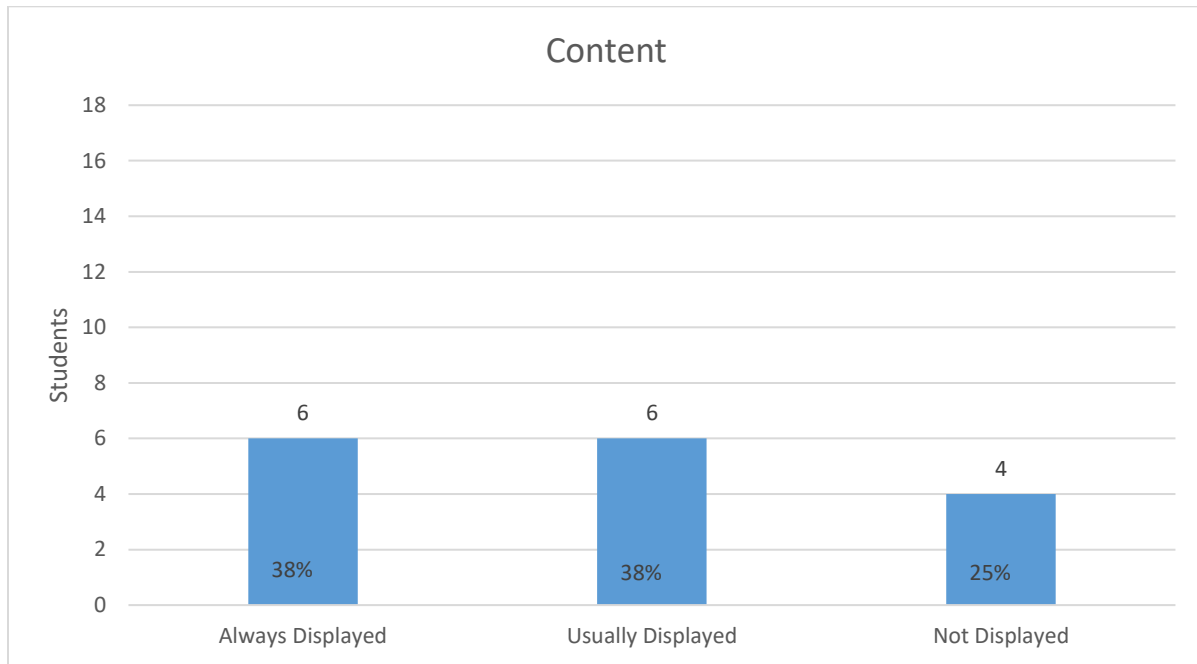
An observation is defined as an act of recognizing and noting a fact or occurrence often involving measurements with instruments, this according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d.). The researcher considers that the observation is essential to the investigation because it allowed her to notice students' pronunciation deficiencies during the English class. Furthermore, it permitted the researcher to have records for further evolution of the students on how they have improved their simple past tense omission, while reading out loud.

A checklist, according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d), is a list of things to be checked. In the case of the present investigation, such instruments consists on ten different criteria that the researcher is going to observe and give each student a score from one to three, where three is the maximum. These criteria referred to content, communicability, grammar usage, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation of /t/, pronunciation of /d/, and pronunciation of /ɪd/, understanding of the questions, and errors self-correction. This instrument was applied before doing any type of activity involving reading out loud.

Additionally, the researcher was able to take notes about how well students pronounced words related to the topic “Costa Rica Natural Beauty.” In this case, the majority of the students had good pronunciation of words in isolation, and a few were able to make sentences with the correct structure. The teacher corrected students’ mispronunciation mistakes and the majority accepted the correction and repeated the words after the teacher; the rest just nodded their head saying yes. The main goal of the observation checklist was to collect data in regard to the student’s reaction and their pronunciation.

From this observation checklist, the following analysis was produced. The fifth grade group showed a low level of pronunciation of past tense endings; in other words, the pronunciation of /t/, /d/ and /ɪd/. The information collected is explained as follows. Additionally, the figures had to be subdivided in order to explain the information smoothly and easier, due to concerns of organization layout.

4.1.1.1 Topic Understanding

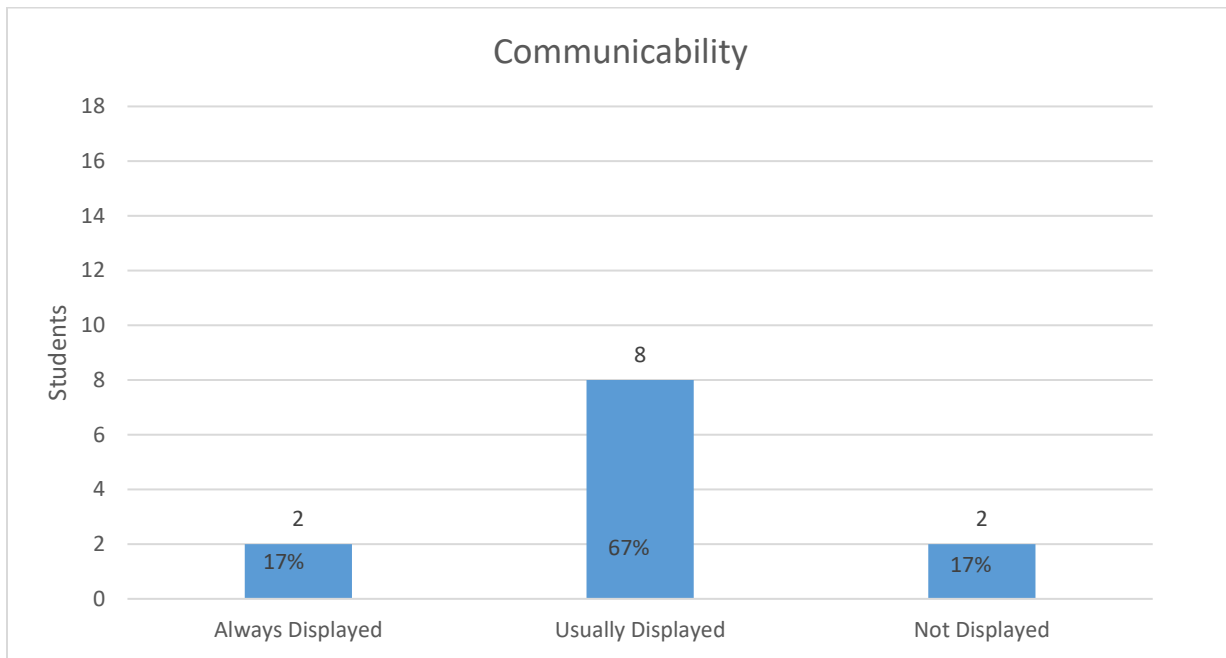


*Figure 1 represents topic understanding related to the simple past tense endings usage
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

This figure interprets the understanding students had about the topic. The majority of them usually displayed understanding of the topic; 6 students out of 16, usually showed understanding of the content. The researcher was able to notice their understanding when the teacher asked them questions and some knew the answer in Spanish, but not in English. They demonstrated that they knew what the teacher was explaining. Students made the connection of the topic because it was about Costa Rica's Natural Beauty and they associated the name in Spanish. For example, the teacher would ask "what is the name of this national park located in Puntarenas" along with the image, so some of the students answered in Spanish avoiding English, completely.

Moreover, 6 students understood the content because they were able to respond in short sentences in English; in other words, 6 out of 15 students from the class demonstrated they had knowledge on the content. Finally, 4 students did not show understanding of the content because when they were asked they were not able to respond correctly or they would nod their head indicating they did not know. The teacher proceeded to use other words and reorganize the sentence, but they still had problems identifying what they were supposed to answer.

4.1.1.2 Communicability

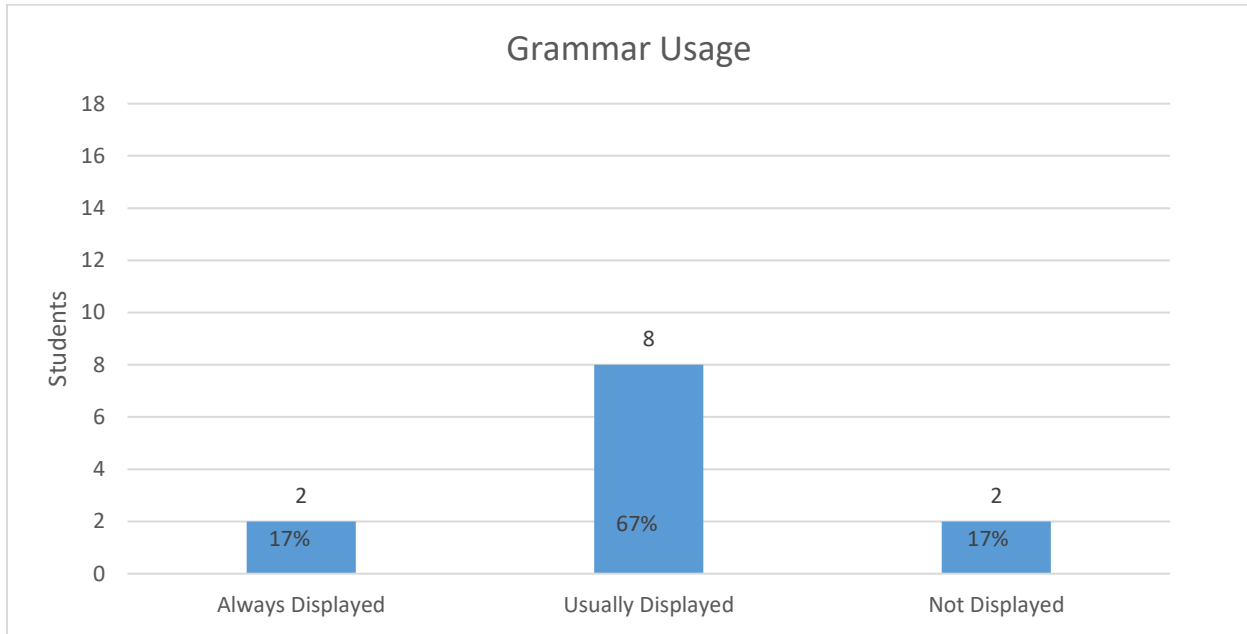


*Figure 2 illustrates message clearness, organization, and logic delivery
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

The figure represents how students answered the questions asked by the teacher, and if the information was presented in a clear, organized, and logical order during and after a video played by the teacher. In the previous figure, it can be observed that 8 learners usually displayed the information presented as it should be structured. Moreover, 6 students responded by using isolated words; for example, if the teacher asked “Where is Corcobado National Park located?”

the students would answer only “Alajuela.” Finally, these students always presented the information in a clear, organized, and logical order. This means that 2 students were able to speak using the correct information.

4.1.1.3 Grammar Usage

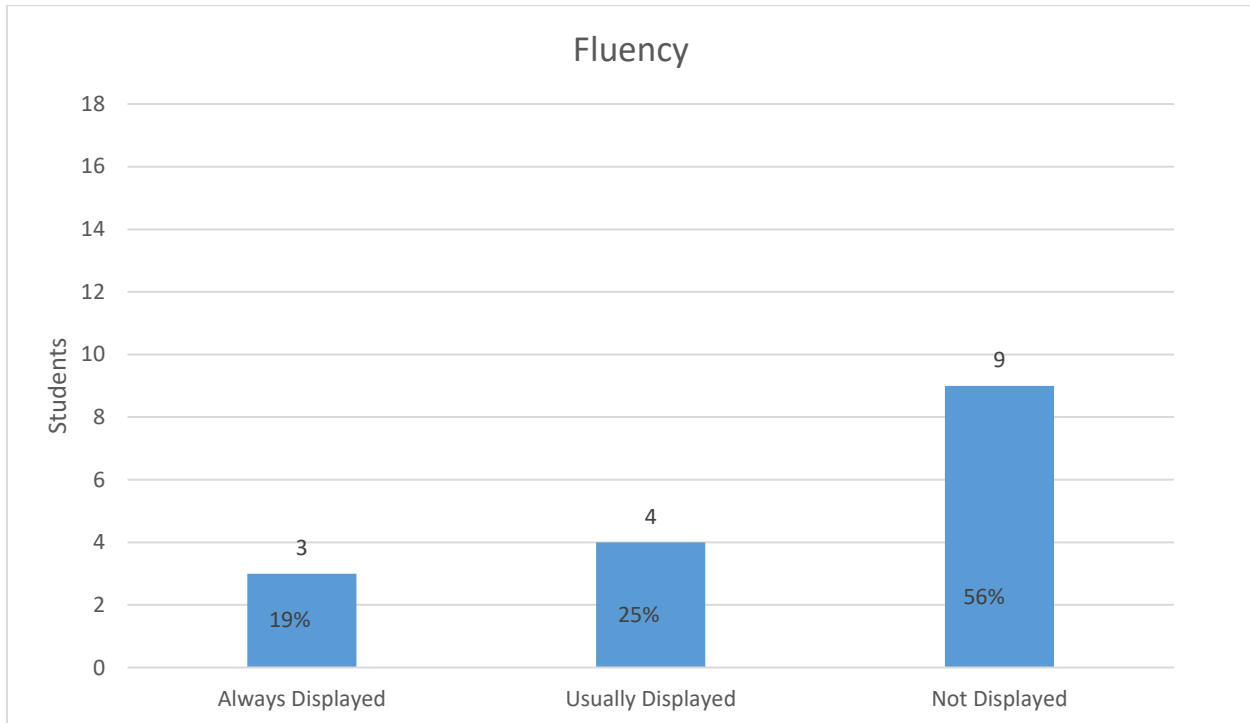


*Figure 3 represents students’ grammar correctness frequency
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

Due to the old English program implemented in the school, the focus on grammar is not specific. For better understanding, grammar is related to the construction of sentences and how words are combined to make correct sentences and its usage. In figure 3, 9 students did not use grammar in a correct way, while expressing an idea. This could be because of nervousness or distractions such as, playing with classmates’ hair or grabbing their classmates’ school supplies. On the other hand, part of the group usually had a good command of grammar because 6 students used to double-thinking what they were going to say and when they said it, it was correct.

Finally, it was noticeable that only one student knew how to use grammar correctly while speaking, as this student knew how to use the correct placement of words to form a sentence.

4.1.1.4 Students' Fluency

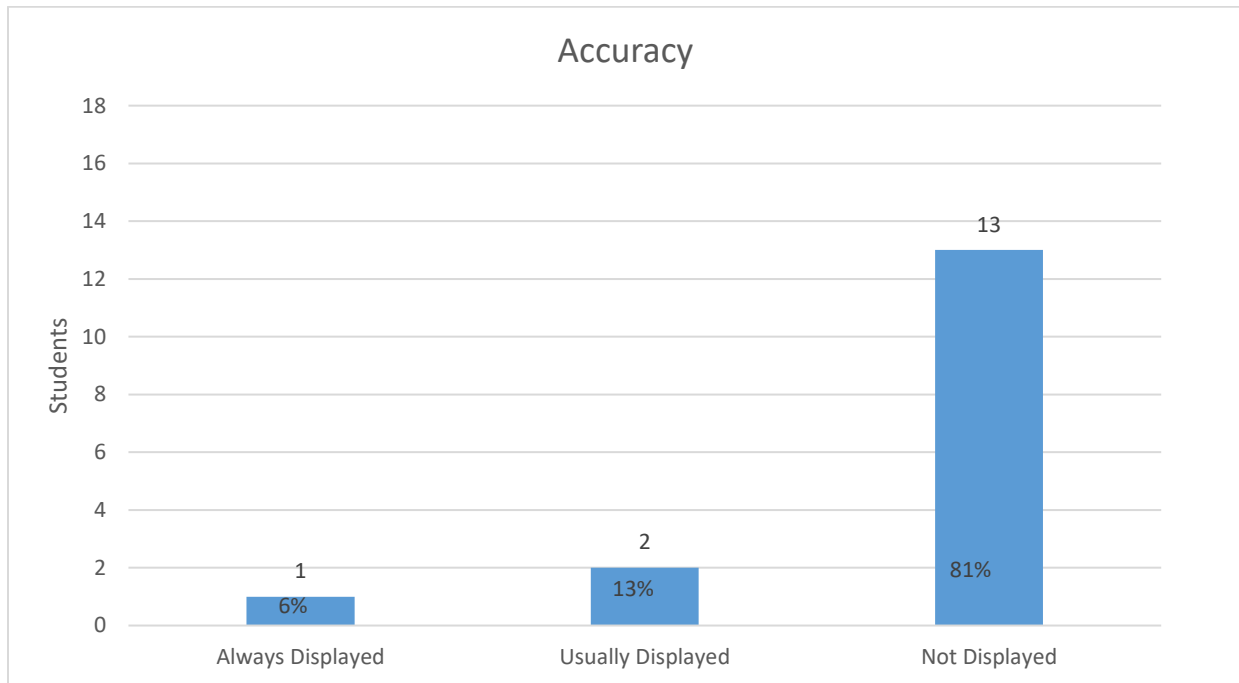


*Figure 4 illustrates student's fluency while discussing Costa Rica's Natural Beauty
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Figure 4 represents the percentages of how fluent students are. Fluently allows the message to be comprehensible. 9 students did not speak fluently, while expressing an opinion or answering a question because they lacked the vocabulary related to the topic in order to give a full answer using what they had in mind. Furthermore, 4 students in this investigation, usually spoke fluently in English, but they tended to make reference to their native language when speaking. For example, a student said a few words and when she forgot how to say the rest of the words, she stumbled across to deliver the message clearly and said the rest in Spanish, making the message incomplete and incomprehensible. Only 3 students were able to speak without

hesitation and answered correctly. This being mentioned, it was noticeable the effort made by 3 students to be understood and to speak fluently because they took their time to analyze what they were going to say and avoided making mistakes, not only regarding grammar, but also fluency.

4.1.1.5 Students' Accuracy



*Figure 5 illustrates students' accuracy while discussing Costa Rica's Natural Beauty
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

In figure 5, it can be observed that 10 out of 15 students lacked of accuracy because they had problems regarding grammar usage, fluency, and content together to form a sentences. Moreover, 3 students who were usually accurate while responding the teacher's questions; in other words, they were accurate in speaking and in general, as they only talked when the teacher asked them to. While students were speaking in English class, they found it complicated to answer the questions correctly because they did not have the knowledge to respond. The students

did not participate in class, unless the teacher asked them individually they remained in silent. However, only 1 student was able to answer slowly, but with the required accuracy.

4.1.1.6 Pronunciation of Past Tense Ending /t/

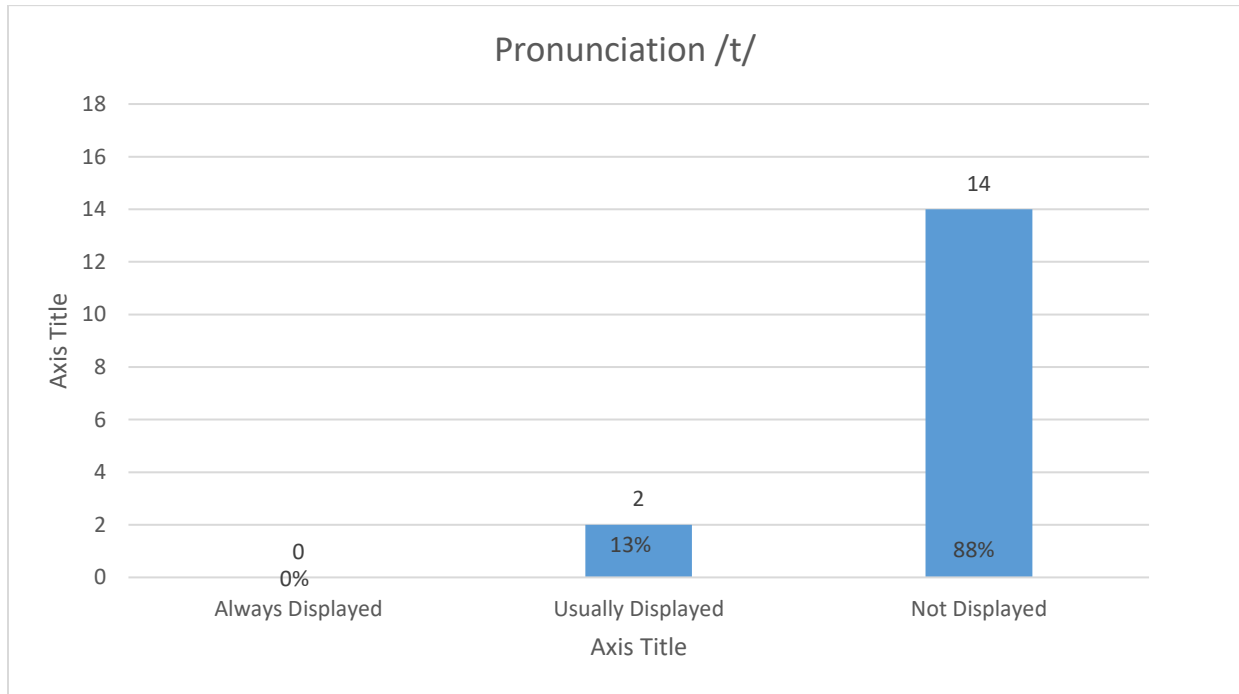
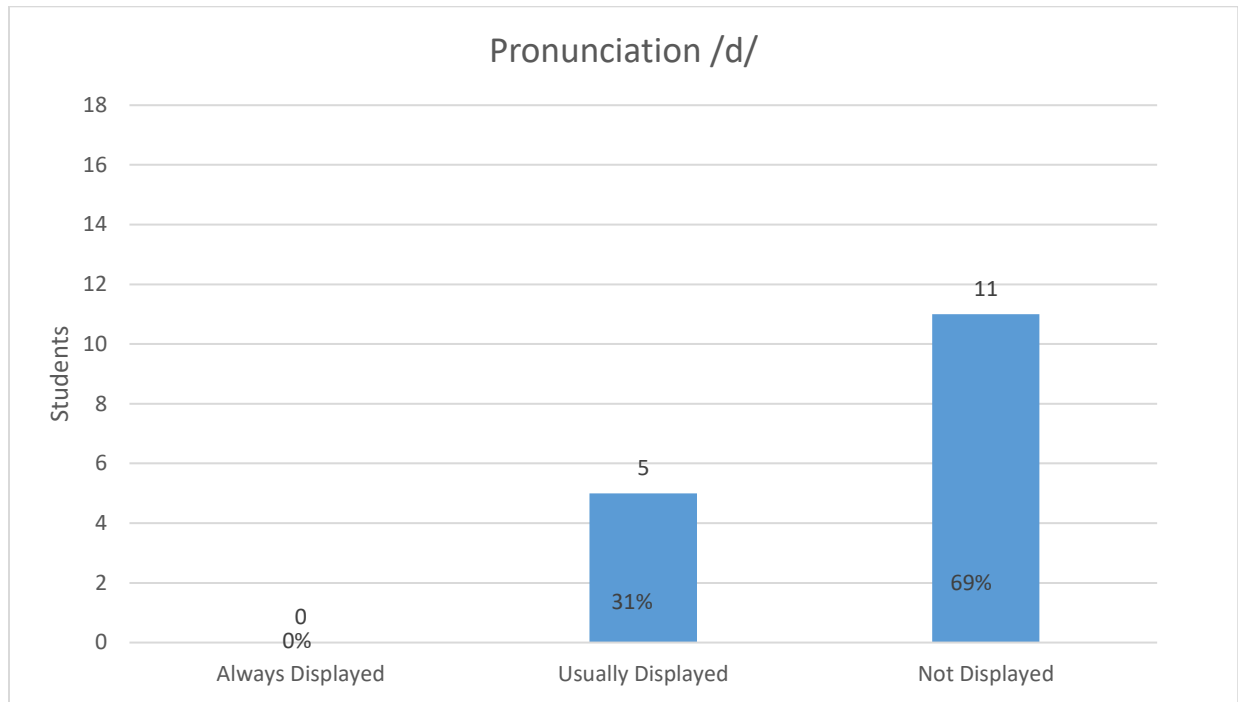


Figure 6 represents student the pronunciation of regular verbs ending in /t/

Source: Researcher’s own creation.

Figure 6 represents the pronunciation of the past tense /t/. 13 out of 16 students were not able to achieve it, since they pronounced all the –ed endings as /d/. Only 2 out of 16 students usually showed evidence of the specific past tense. This shows that the majority of students, in both questions have difficulty. Finally, none of the students was able to always display the correct pronunciation of the past tense pronounced as /t/.

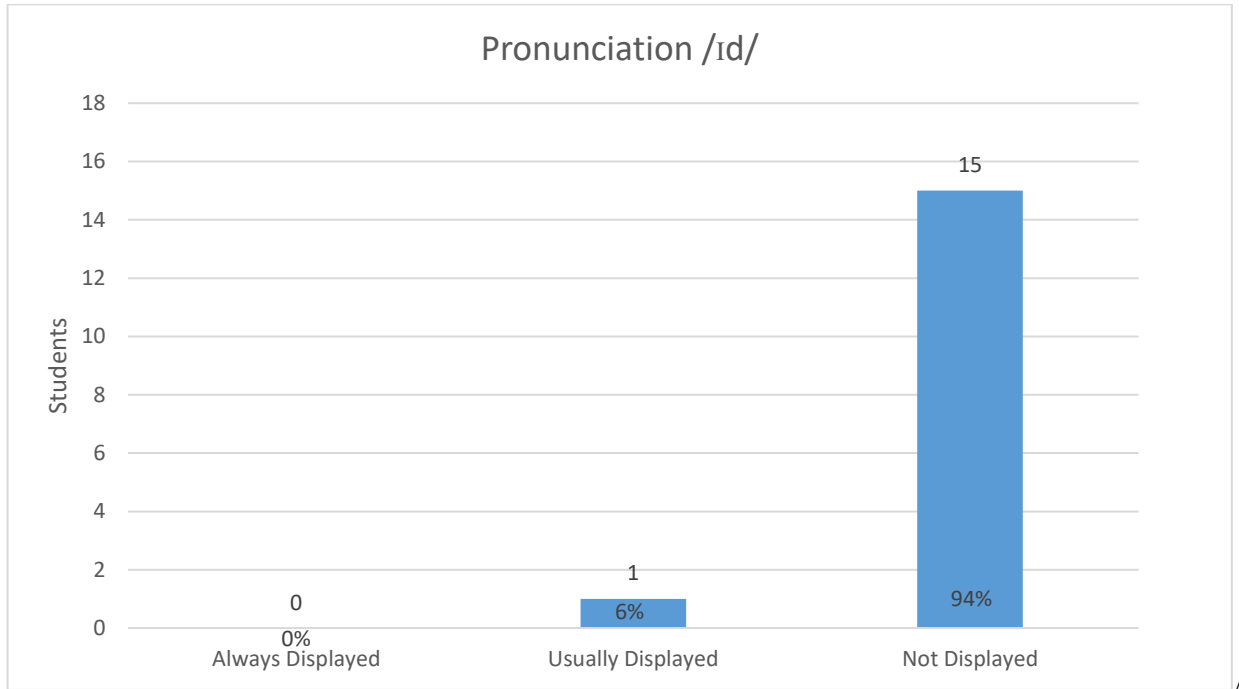
4.1.1.7 Pronunciation of /d/ Past Tense Ending



*Figure 7 represents students' pronunciation of past tense ending /d/
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Regarding this figure, it can be observed that 10 students did not pronounce correctly the /d/ endings. Moreover, 5 students who usually used at least two words, entered in this category because they knew that the past tense was pronounced with this final phoneme. Furthermore, some students identified the past tense because they saw or heard the –ed, but they pronounced all the endings as /d/, which led the researcher to know that they identified it, but did not know the correct rules. None of the students pronounced in a correct way the past tense of regular verbs ending in /d/.

4.1.1.8 Pronunciation of Past Tense Ending /ɪd/



*Figure 8 represents the students' pronunciation of the past tense ending /ɪd/
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

The issue with the pronunciation of /ɪd/ is that the students saw the –ed past tense and they associated with the phoneme /d/, but still they were not able to get the rules clearly. When it came to the past tense /ɪd/, students had difficulties pronouncing it correctly; for this reason, the figure refers to 100% of the students, as neither was able to this past tense ending correctly. This corresponds to almost the entire class; in other words, fifteen students.

4.1.1.9 Questions Understanding

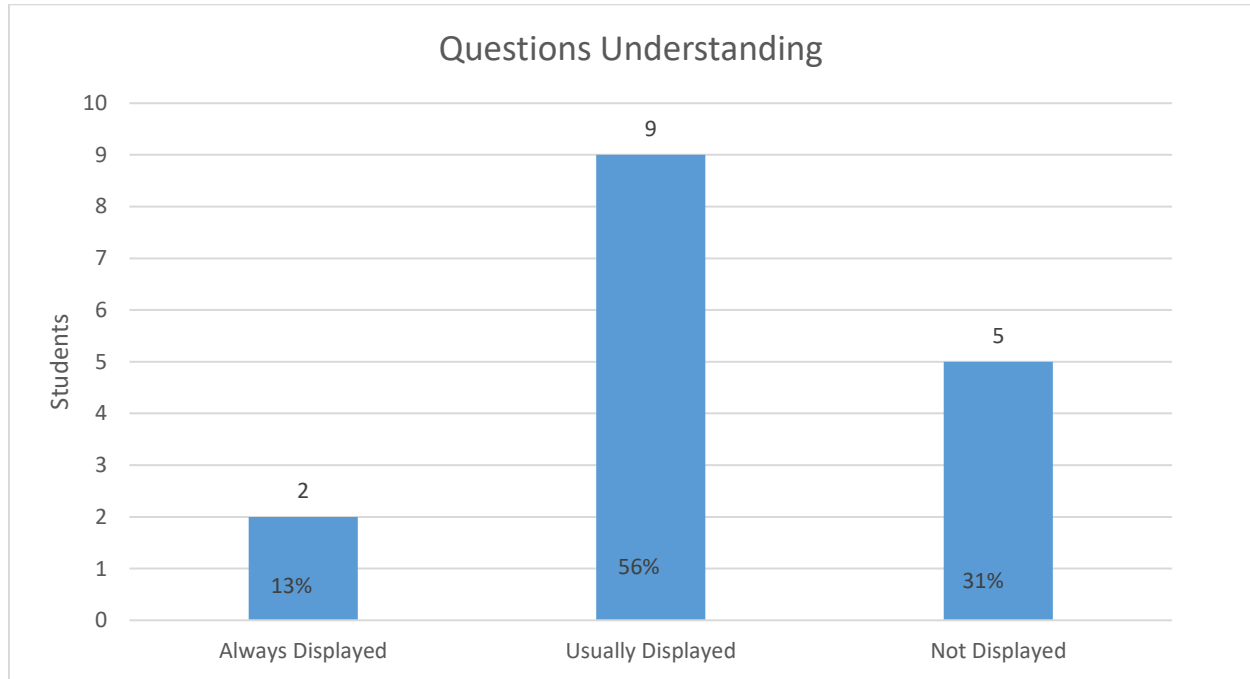


Figure 9 illustrates students' understanding of questions about Costa Rica's Natural Beauty
Source: Researcher's own creation.

According to figure, 9 students occasionally showed understanding of the question that the teacher asked each student individually according to the topic and then, they had to respond correctly with a complete sentence. Sometimes, the students did not understand the question, so the teacher asked the same question in a different form, which helped them understand better. On the other hand, 5 out of 15 students did not understand the question, even though the teacher would rephrase the question. They would just nod their heads or lifted their shoulders indicating that they had no idea what they were supposed to answer. Finally, only two students were able to understand the questions and answered correctly each question with a complete sentence.

4.1.1.10 Errors Self-Correction

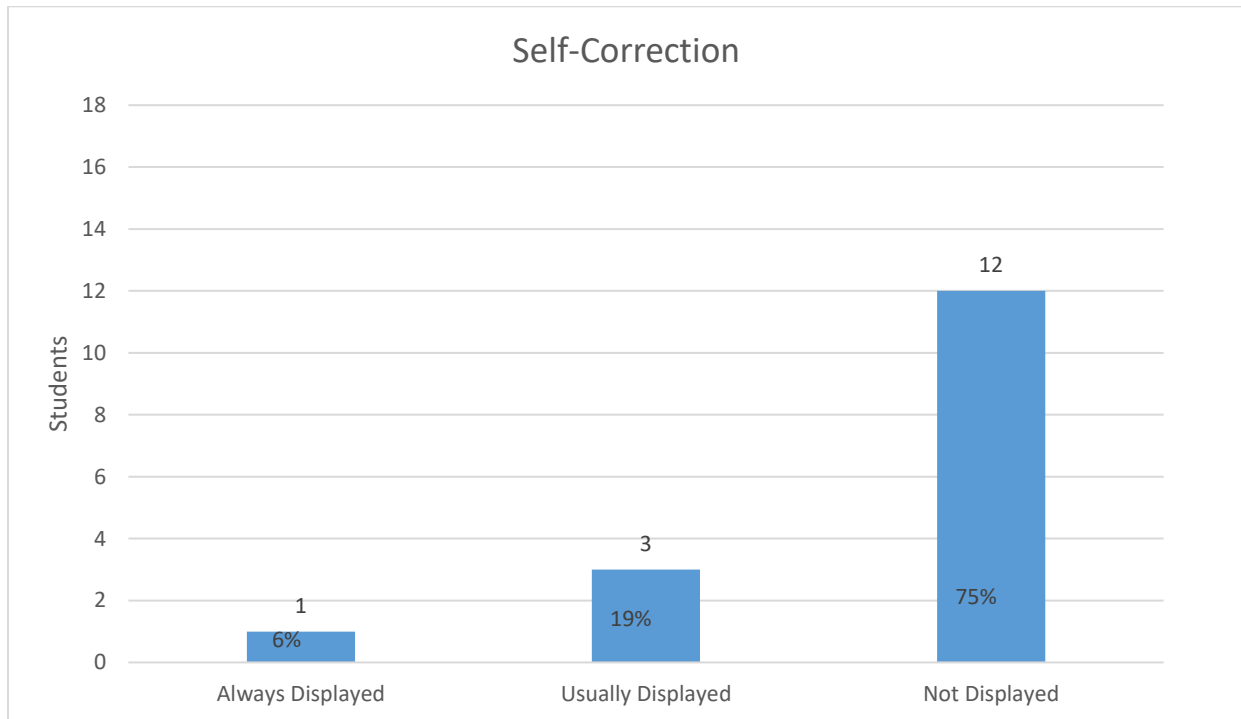


Figure 10 illustrates students' mistake corrections about Costa Rica's Natural Beauty

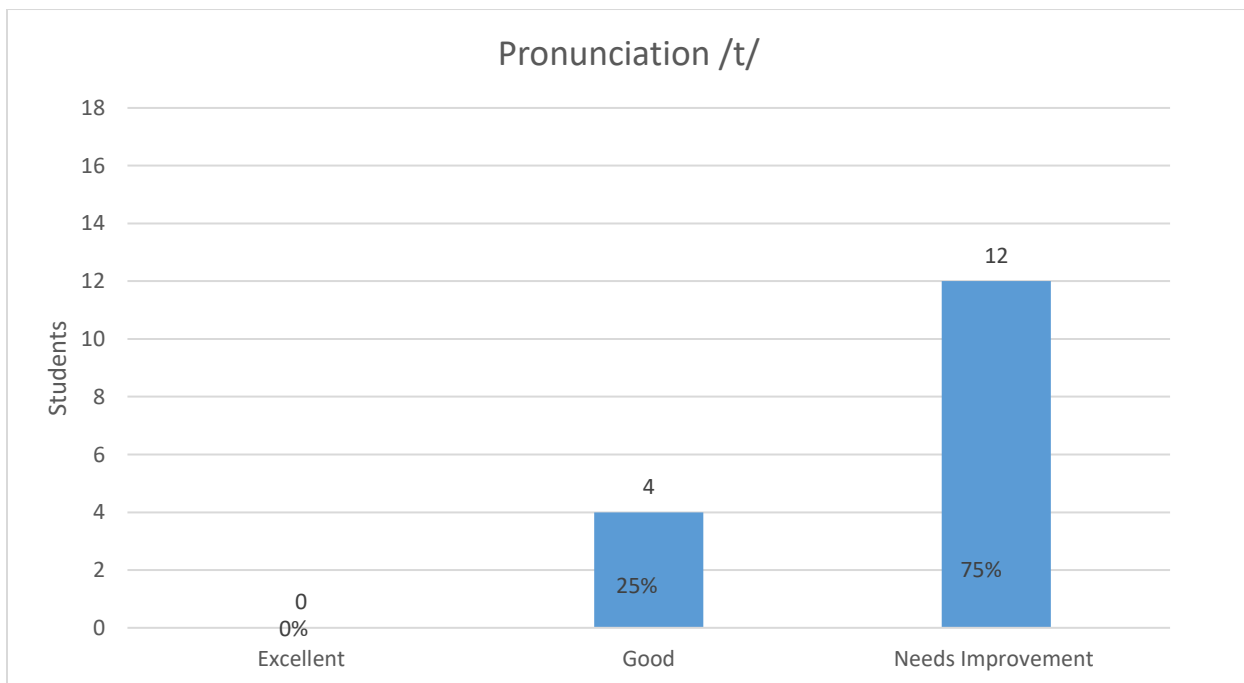
Source: Researcher's own creation.

When students realized, while speaking, that they made a mistake is when they have internalized a language function. The majority of students, which is 11 out of 15 were not use the self-correction technique while speaking. The problem is that they thought twice what they were going to say and did not trust themselves. It was noticeable that students wanted to say something, but they were not sure if the pronunciation was right or the general answer was correct or not. In addition, 3 students usually self-corrected themselves, there were times in which students noticed that they have made a mistake and started to say other variations until they got the right answer. Finally, only one student was able to self-correct immediately after the mistake.

4.2.2 Pre-Test Results

The pre-test was applied to 16 fifth grade students. They had to read out loud a short story individually only to the investigator. The students did not receive any formal preparation before they were evaluated. Each student was evaluated with their individual rubric, as for example pronunciation of /d/, pronunciation of /t/, pronunciation of /ɪd/, fluency, communicability, and content in a scale from 1 to 3 (3 was the maximum score). The investigator gave a score depending on their development during the reading. For a better interpretation of the chart, the number of students is represented on the left side and the aspects at the bottom, each assigned with a different color.

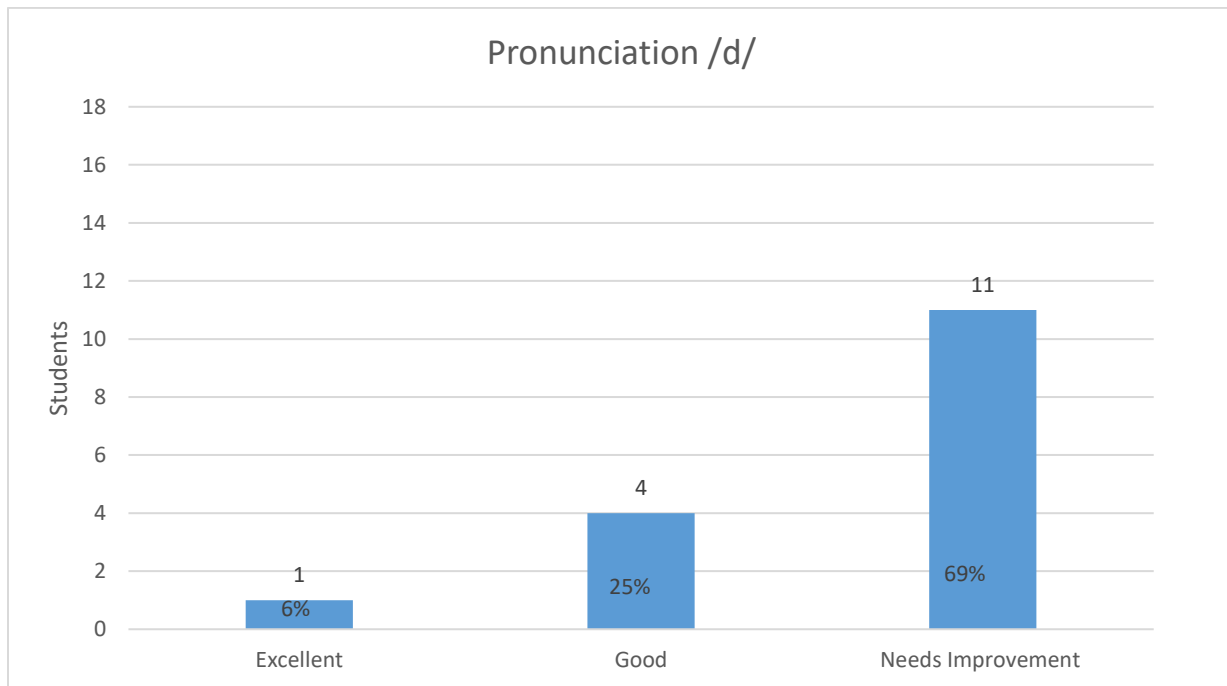
4.2.2.1 Pre-Test Results of Pronunciation Past Tense /t/



*Figure 11 illustrates students' pronunciation of past tense ending /t/
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Figure 12 represents the results of the students’ ability to pronounce correctly the past tense ending /t/. The majority of students, which is 12 out of 16 needed improvement, which meant that these students were not able to pronounce correctly the regular verbs in the short text that corresponded to the past tense ending /t/. The words that they had issues pronouncing correctly were: walked and jumped; the first word was pronounced as /walkid/ and the other word was /humpid/. This was followed by 4 students that did good because they only mispronounced 1 out of the 2 words that corresponded to the sound. None of the students was able to pronounce this phoneme correctly because the majority mispronounced at least one word. These students showed lack of interest and did not effort themselves when carrying out the pre-test

4.2.2.2 Pre-Test Results of Pronunciation Past Tense /d/



*Figure 21. Pre-Test pronunciation of past tense /d/ results
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

Figure 11 represents the rubric on content of the pre-test. The students had to read out loud a short story individually to the researcher. The evaluation rubric aimed at measuring students' pronunciation of the regular past tense ending /d/. 11 students out of 16 needed improvement because they lacked the adequate pronunciation of this phoneme in specific. 4 students did good, due to that they only made 1 mistake. Finally, only 1 student was able to get excellent. This student showed the ability to pronounce correctly the words which were being asked in the short story and demonstrated a high level of the target language pronunciation.

4.2.2.3 Pre-Test Results of Pronunciation Past Tense /ɪd/

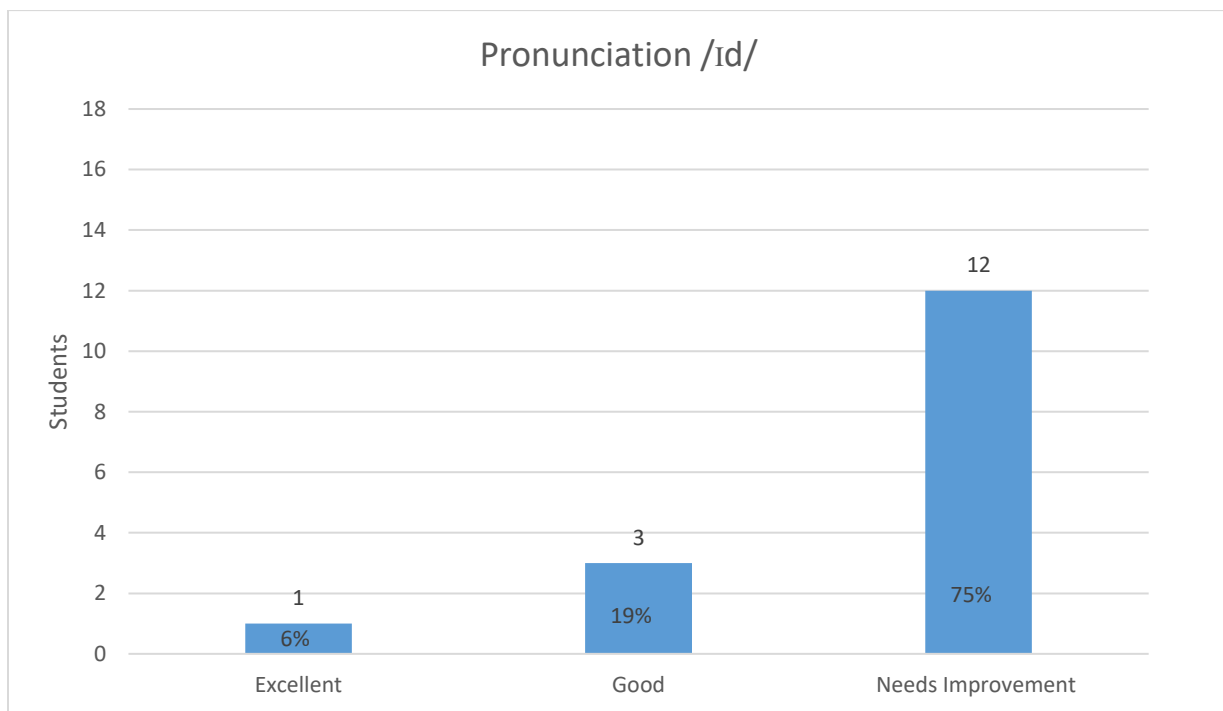


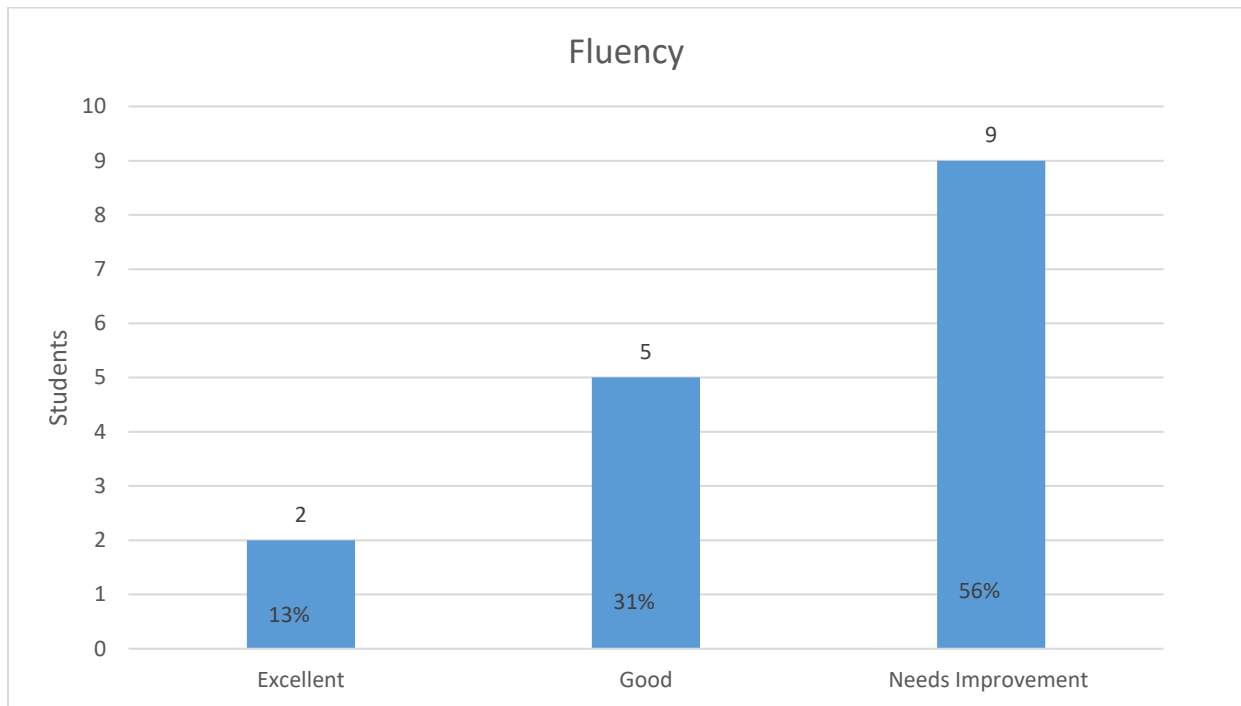
Figure 13 represents the pre-test result of pronunciation of the past tense ending /ɪd/

Source: Researcher's own creation.

In the previous figure, it is shown that the majority of students, which represents 12 out of 16, needed improvement because the researcher was able to observe that they mispronounced

the 2 words that evaluated this specific phoneme. Furthermore, 3 students demonstrated to the researcher that they were able to pronounce correctly at least 1 of the words evaluated. The only student who read and pronounced correctly both of the words was a girl, who showed passion for the language as her face had many expressions of love and excitement when reading out loud. It was later commented by the teacher that this student receives English classes outside of school, and that is why she has a higher level of the target language than the rest of her classmates.

4.2.2.4 Pre-Test Results of Fluency

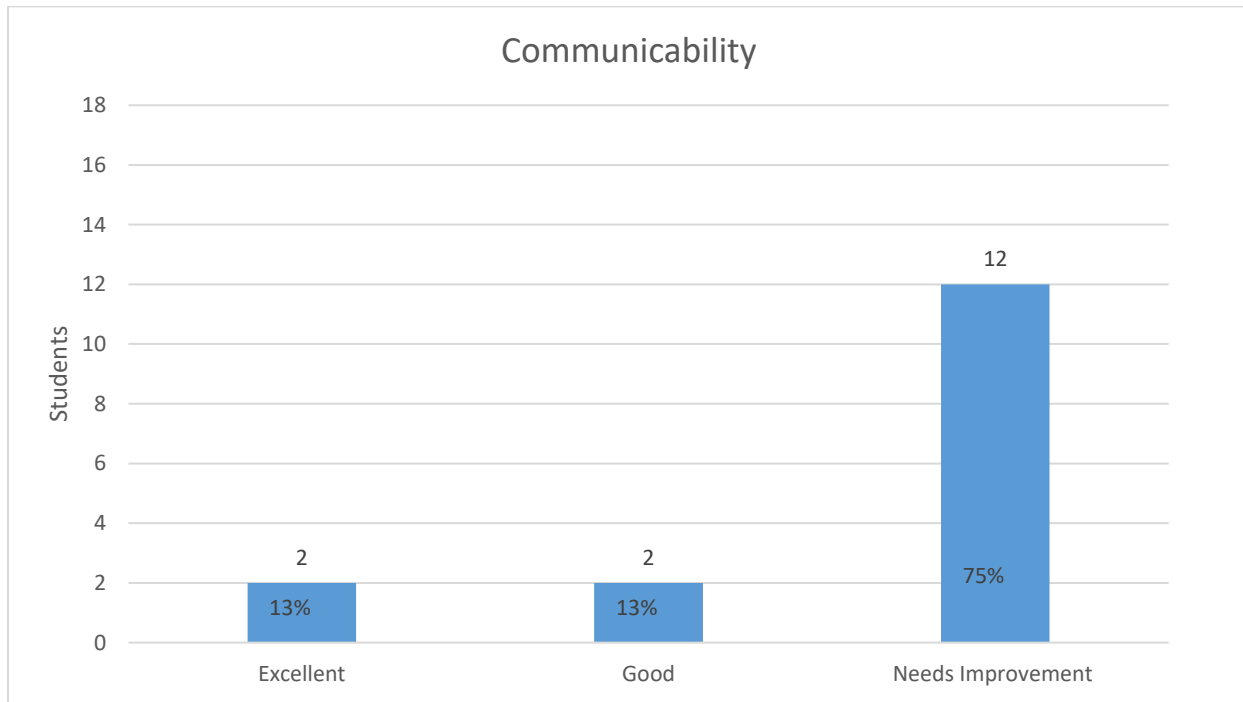


*Figure 14 represent students' results on fluency in the pre-test.
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Figure 14 represents the part of the pre-test focused on fluency. The purpose of this aspect was to measure the students' fluency levels while reading out loud. 9 out of 16 students were classified as needs improvement because when they read, they were not free of unnatural pauses. Followed by 5 students, classified under the category of good, who only made 1 error by

making an unnatural pause. Moreover, 2 students showed confidence while reading, as despite their-errors in pronunciation they kept reading free of unnatural pauses Even though, one student was receiving extra-curriculum classes there was another student who was able to pronounce the words because; she was practicing during the class.

4.2.2.5 Pre-Test Results of Communicability

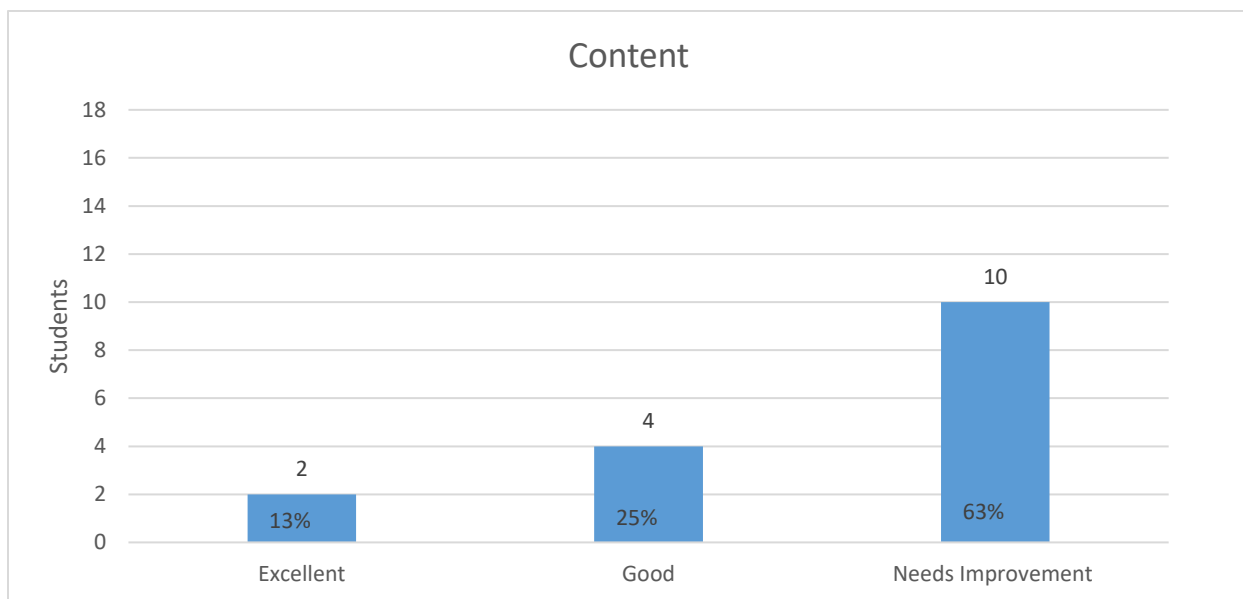


*Figure 15. Results of communicability obtained in the pre-test
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Figure 15 represents the results students had regarding communicability; in other words, if the information was clear and that any of the words in the sentences were omitted. For communicability, 12 out of 16 students failed this aspect. The majority omitted a word in the sentence either because they did not know how to pronounce it or they were not concentrated as to pay attention to the words. Another reason why this could have happened is because other classmates were laughing, joking, or talking, so they distracted the students Only 2 students

stumbled across 1 mistake; meaning that the researcher was unable to comprehend 1 sentence. The other 2 students were able to read the text without making any mistakes and the information in the short story was clear and organized. The researcher was able to comprehend what they were reading because they had the ability to focus on fluency, intonation, stress, and punctuation, as well.

4.2.2.5 Pre-Test Results of Content



*Figure 16 represents the rubric on content of the pre-test
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

Figure 16 represents the results obtained regarding content on the pre-test. This aspect of the rubric aimed at understanding the text; in other words, if the researcher was able to comprehend the short story that every student read. Therefore, 10 out of 16 students were not clear when reading the short story; for example, the investigator did not get the message, but when the students were asked about the short story, they did not answer because they just read

without paying attention. From the other 6 students left, 4 students only made 1 mistake and the other 2 students were able to make the researcher to comprehend the entire short story.

4.3.1 Post-Test Results

For this part of the investigation 16 students carried out the post-test. Each student was evaluated with their individual rubric, based on: pronunciation of /d/, pronunciation of /t/, pronunciation of /ɪd/, fluency, communicability, and content in a scale from 1 to 3 (3 was the maximum score). The investigator gave a score depending on their development in the pronunciation of the past tense endings /t/, /d/, /ɪd/, fluency, communicability, and content while reading. For a better interpretation of the figure, the number of students is represented on the left side and the aspects at the bottom, each with a different color.

4.3.1.1 Post-Test Results of Pronunciation /t/

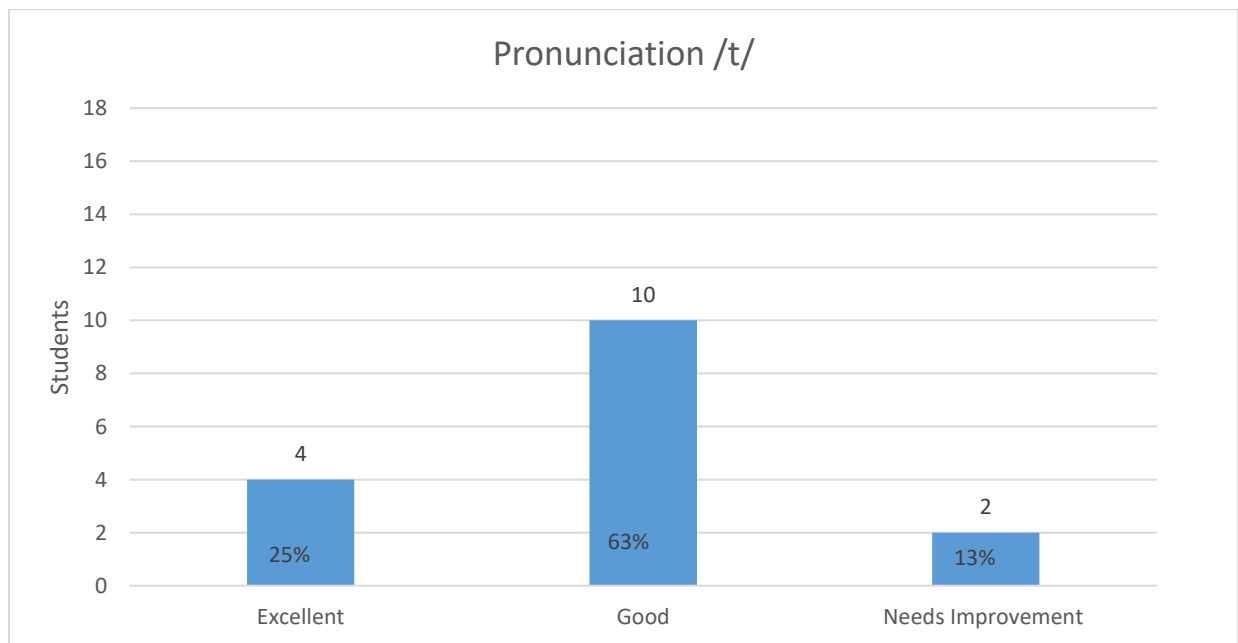
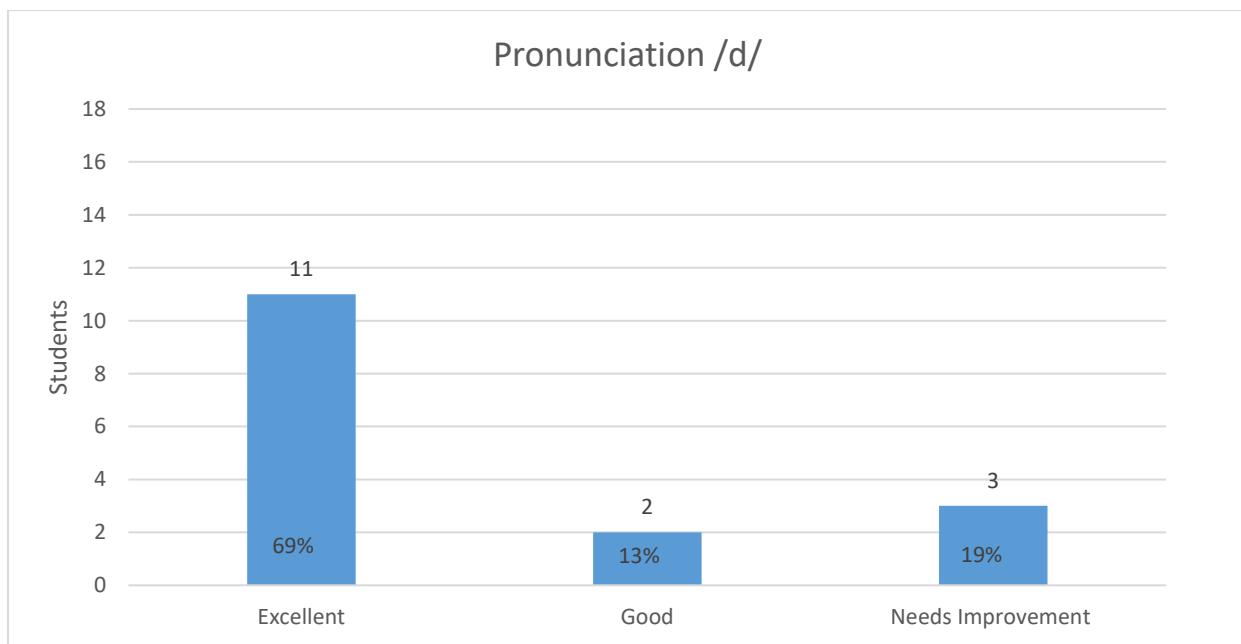


Figure 17 illustrates students' pronunciation of past tense ending /t/
 Source: Researcher's own creation.

The figure represents students' improvement of the pronunciation of past tense ending /t/. The majority of students, that is 10 out of 16, scored a 2 which represented good. Moreover, 4 students fell on the category of excellent. These students were able to show ability in the pronunciation of /t/ throughout the reading; in addition, they demonstrated that the read out loud technique helped them to improve not only their pronunciation, but also their confidence because they no longer doubted their knowledge. Only 2 students needed improvement because they read 2 or more regular verbs incorrectly

4.3.1.2 Post-Test Results of Pronunciation /d/



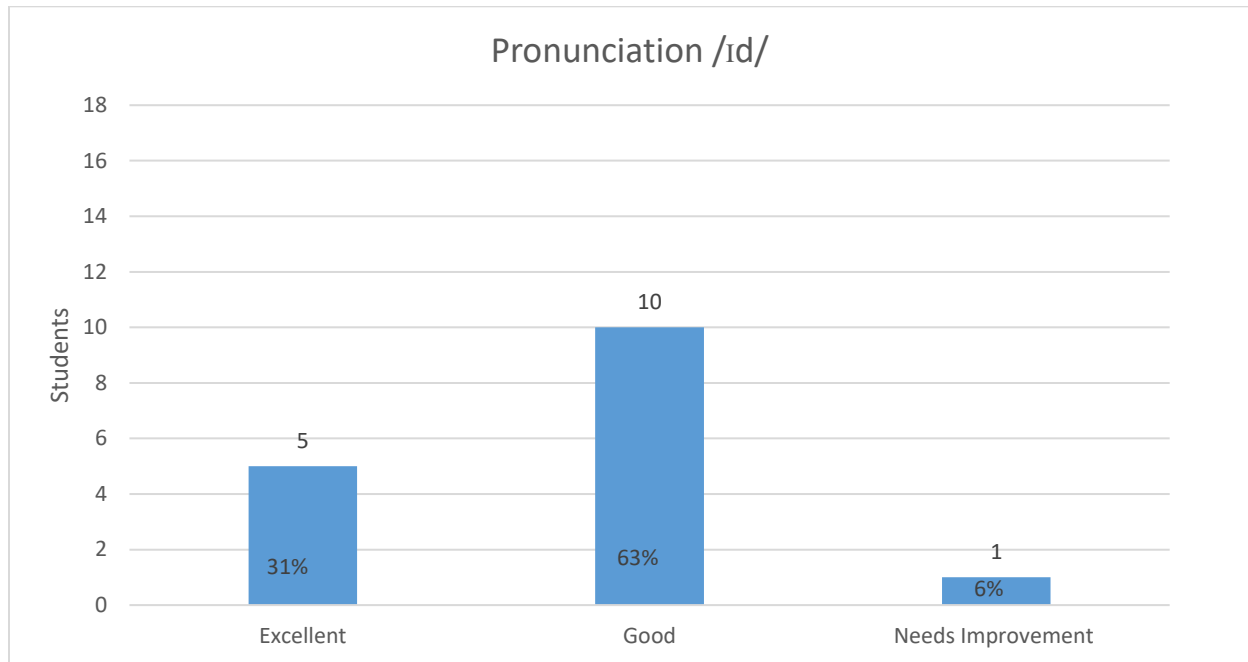
*Figure 18 represents students' pronunciation of past tense ending /d/
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

In figure 18, the majority of students demonstrated an improvement in the pronunciation of the past tense /d/, as they were able to identify the past tense regular verbs whose ending was pronounced as /d/. 11 out of 16 students were categorized under excellent with 3 points. These

students not only paid attention to the investigator, but also participated and asked questions related to the topic using indirectly the past tense. Figure 18 also represents that 2 students scored a good in the post test because they mispronounced one of the words with this specific past tense ending. Due to the fact that students only received five lessons regarding the topic under investigation, they had a significant improvement at identifying the correct pronunciation.

Finally, only 3 out of 16 students did not show understanding of the past tense, as they made more than 2 mistakes while reading. One of the student in this category has Attention Deficit Disorder. This student needed more time and required help from a classmate to fully comprehend the instructions. When this occurred, the investigator took her time to sit and help him, but he was very shy and insecure that he did not allow her to help him much. The other student also has a non-significant curricular accommodation of time, but she was sitting in front of the classroom away from any distractions, so she put more effort into the work she did. The third student in this category is a student from another country, who did not receive English classes in his hometown. What caught the investigator's attention was that this boy was very enthusiastic to do the activities and participate, despite his low English level.

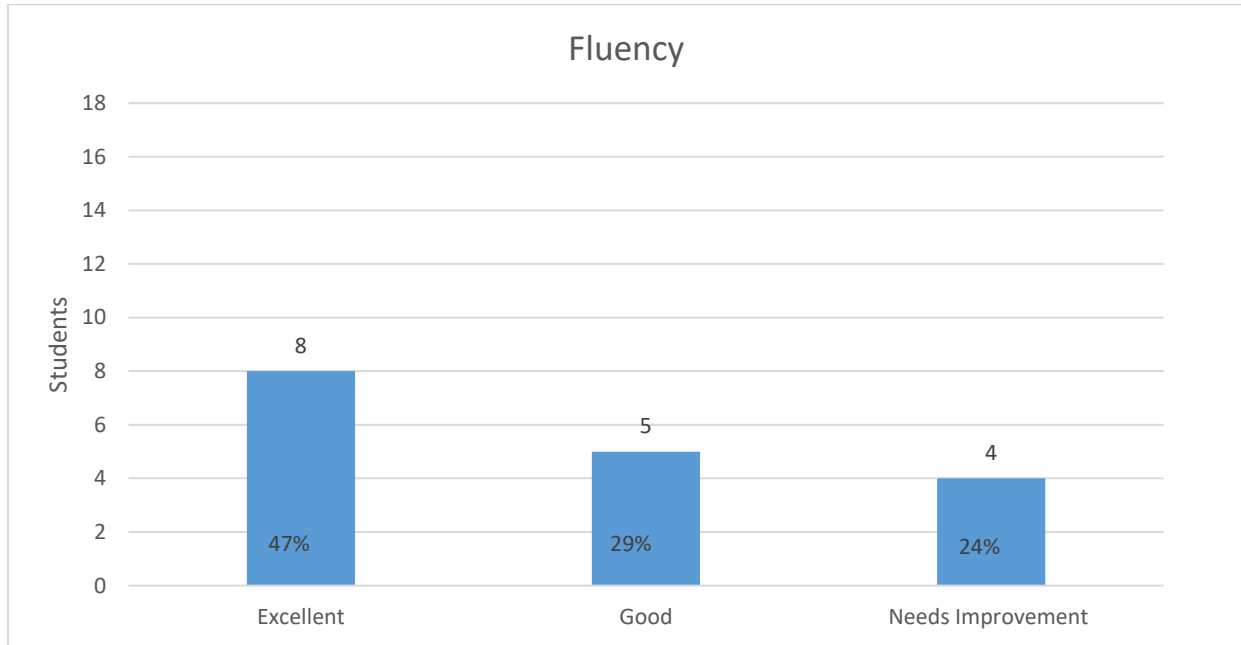
4.3.1.3 Post-Test Results of Pronunciation /ɪd/



*Figure 19 represents students' pronunciation of past tense ending /ɪd/
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Figure 19 illustrates that 10 out of 16 students were categorized under good because they only mispronounced one regular verb pronounced in the past tense with /ɪd/. The majority of students tended to pronounce most of the -ed endings with /ɪd/, but they self-corrected themselves and changed according to the accurate pronunciation. The second most scored category was excellent, as 5 students demonstrated they had acquired the correct pronunciation of /ɪd/ without mispronouncing any of the verbs. These students demonstrated participation and love for the language in the learning process.

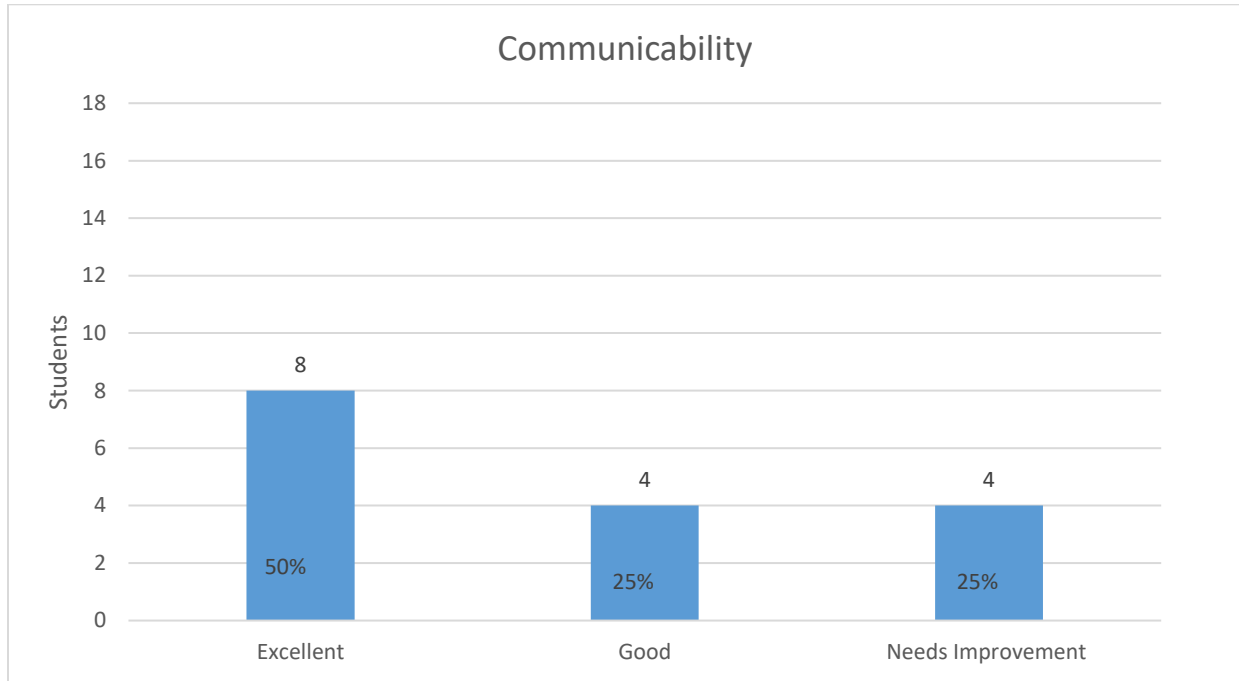
4.3.1.4 Post-Test Results of Students' Fluency



*Figure 20 represents results of fluency in the post-test
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

The majority of students demonstrated that they improved in comparison to the post test. 8 students out of 16 were categorized under excellent. These students were able to read fluently without any unnatural pauses; some read slowly and other a little bit more quickly. This aspect is important to oral communication because the more fluent a speaker, the clearer the message to the receiver will be. Furthermore, 5 out of 16 students obtained the category of good. These students made one error regarding unnatural pauses while reading because they did not know how to pronounce the following word and stayed in silent, asked the investigator for the correct pronunciation, or just skipped the word. In this aspect, 4 students read with more than 2 mistakes regarding unnatural pauses, leading to a less clear message.

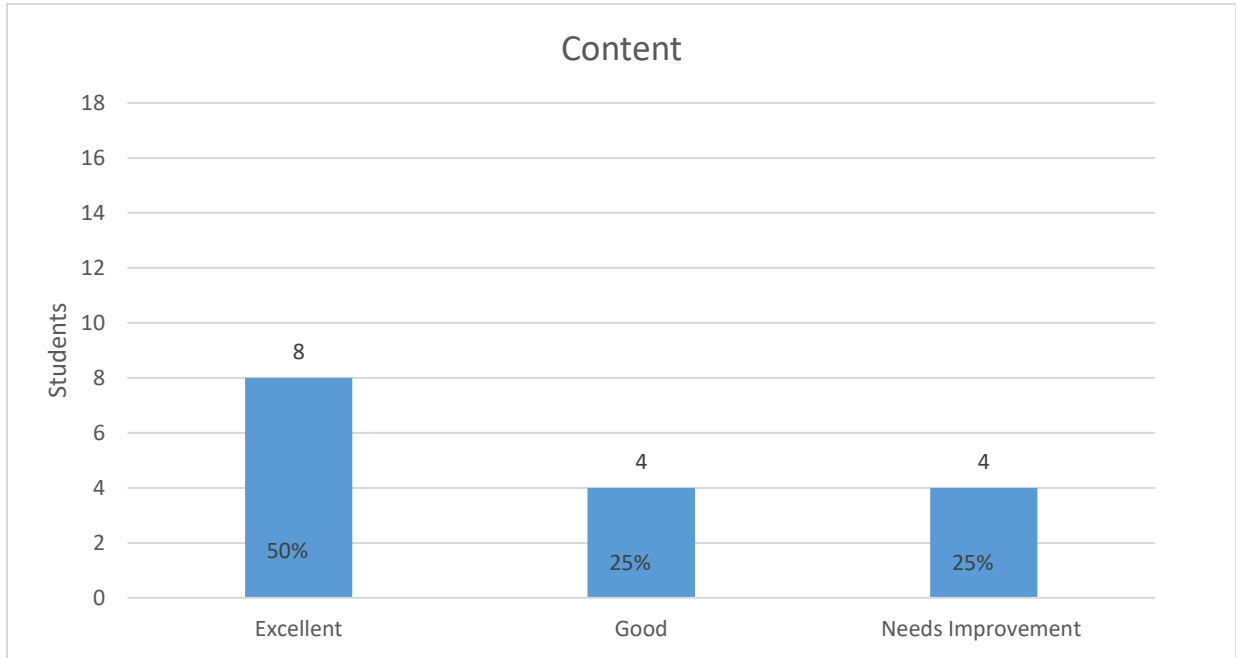
4.3.1.4 Post-Test Results of Student’s Communicability



*Figure 21 illustrates message clearness, organization, and logic
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

Communicability does not only mean how clear the message was, but also how organized and logical it was. Despite that the post-test was a reading out loud, the students during the activities were ought to speak in English, as they were required to give an opinion or an answer; however, the majority failed to do so. Nevertheless, when it came to reading out loud, these students took their time and read without difficulties to show the aspects of communicability. 8 out of 15 students were able to do both. Moreover, 4 out of 16 students demonstrated they still struggled to get upon this aspect and made at least one mistake. The other 4 students showed that they still need improvement because they lacked communicability, but they still tried to read correctly.

4.3.1.5 Post-Test Results of Content



*Figure 22 represents the results of content in the Post-Test
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

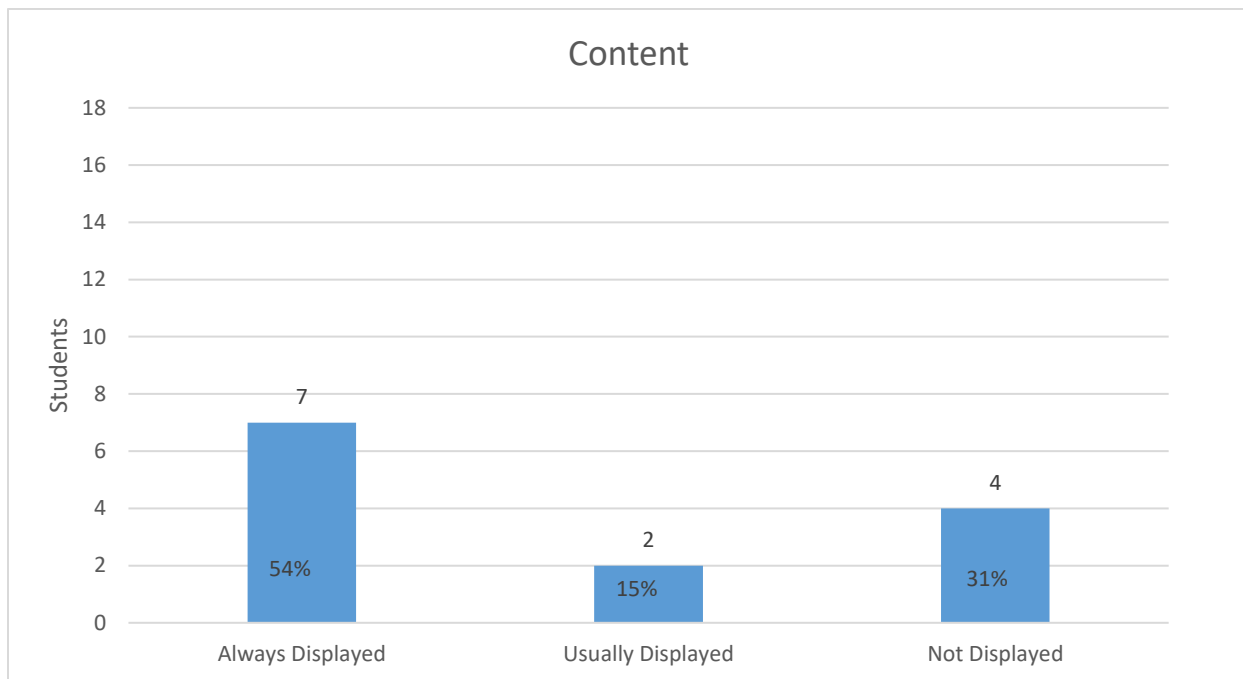
Figure 22 represents the understanding students had about the short story “A Day at the Beach.” 8 students out of 16 showed comprehension of the topic, so they were categorized under excellent as they lacked mistakes while reading. The investigator asked the students what they understood from the short story and they answered with key words that summed it up.

4.4.1 Observation Checklist 2

This instrument was applied after developing activities involving reading out loud. Additionally, the researcher was able to observe how effective was the reading out loud technique related to the topic “Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty,” in which the majority of the students had a good pronunciation and were able to make sentences with the correct structure. The main goal of the second observation checklist was to collect data in regard to the students’ improvement.

The investigator took notes and evaluated each student individually while their English teacher was giving the lesson of the day. The aspects to be evaluated were content, communicability, grammar usage, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation of the simple past tense endings /t/, /d/, /id/, understanding of the questions, and errors self-correction. Throughout the lesson all of these aspects were covered and reviewed at least one time.

4.4.1.1 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Content

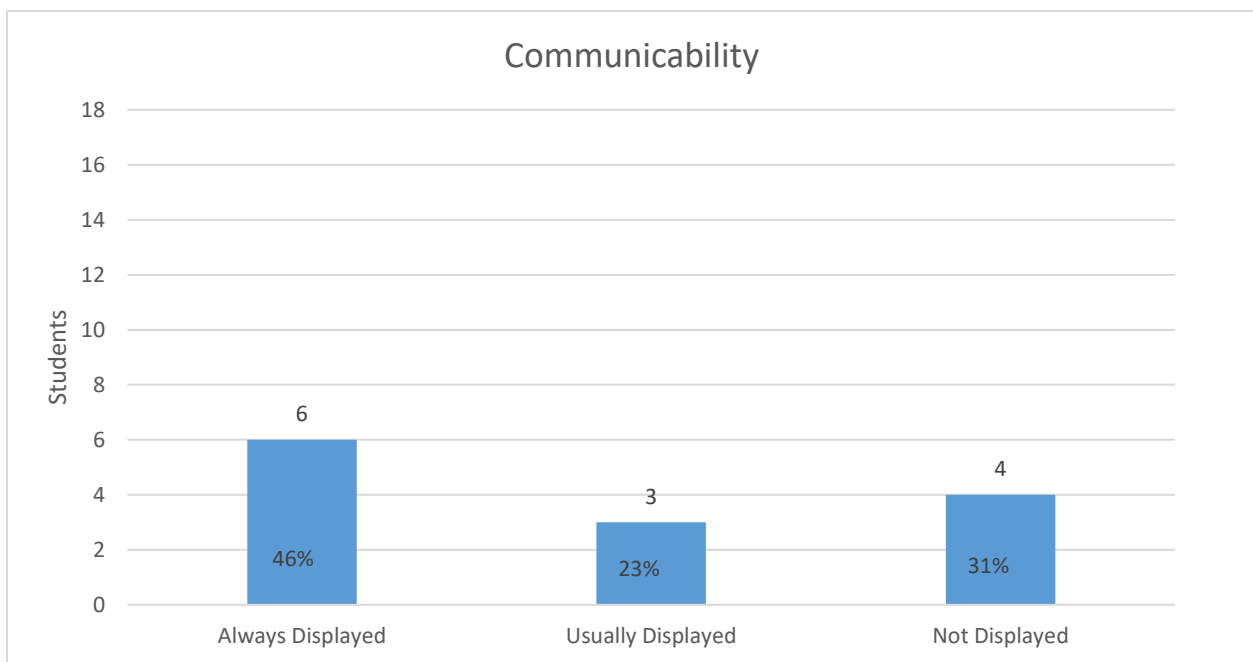


*Figure 23 represents the students' comprehension of the topic
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

The day in which the second observation was carried out, the English teacher reviewed the topics related to Costa Rica's Natural Beauty because the unit was finished, and she was going to be missing the following two weeks. Only 13 students out of 16 were present the day of the observation. The highest column represents that students that always displayed comprehension of the topic, that is 7 out of 13 students. This was noticeable because they always

participated, showed enthusiasm when the teacher asked a question, and they were always paying attention. 4 out of the 13 students did not display understanding of the topic, because they were entertained talking or making comments out of topic, and they were not interested in what the teacher was saying. Finally, only 2 out of the 13 students usually displayed comprehension. They did not always participated or answer the questions.

4.4.1.2 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Communicability

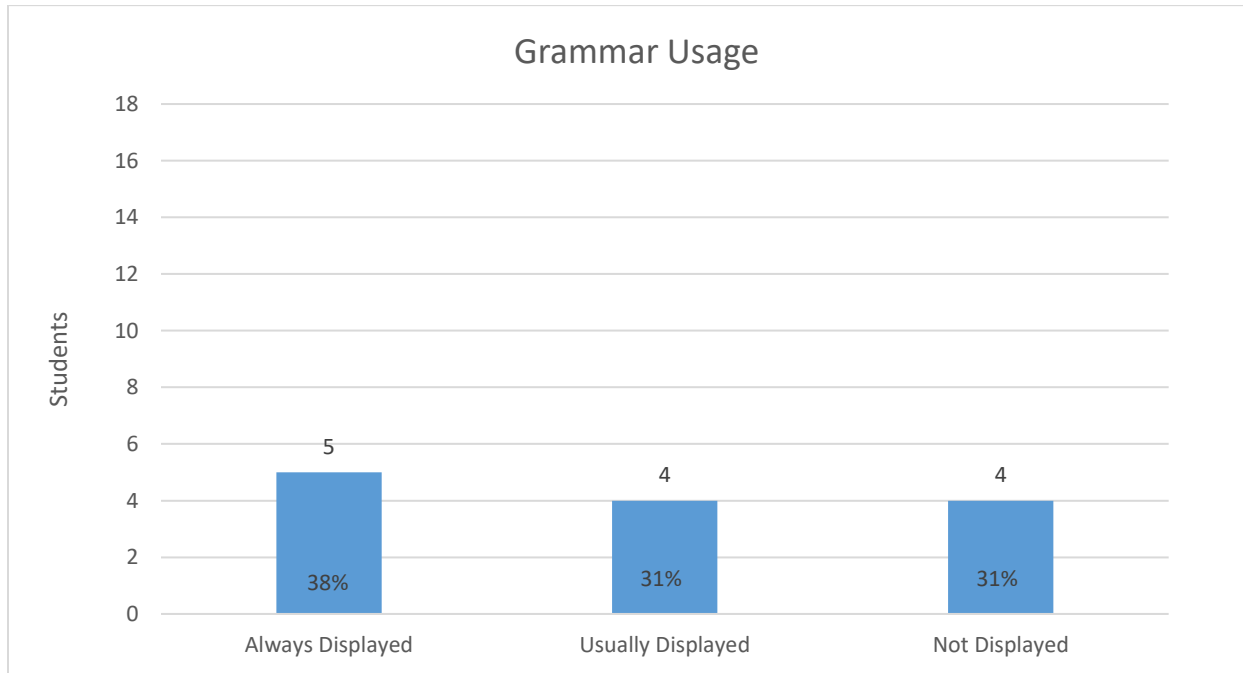


*Figure 24 illustrates message clearness, organization, and logic
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

While students were expressing an idea in English, 6 out of 13 of them were able to say they message clear, organized, and in a logical way because the sentence had a subject, a verb in past tense, and a complement in relation to the topic. Next, 4 out of 13 students did not give the complete message. Finally, only 3 students out of 13 usually displayed a clear, organized, and

logical message because in times they forgot vocabulary or they completely omitted a part of the sentence, but they paid attention and put effort into what they were learning.

4.4.1.3 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Grammar Usage

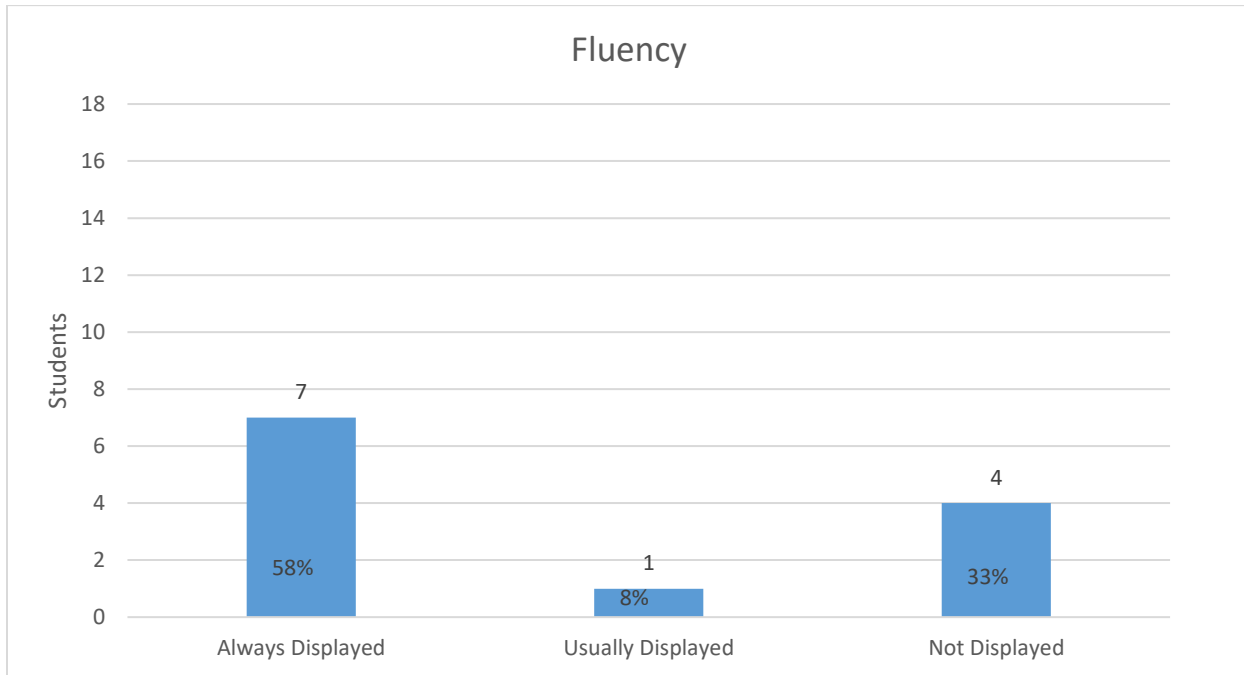


*Figure 25 represents students' grammar correctness frequency
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

This figure illustrates how frequently students used grammar correctly. The investigator wanted students to express their ideas using subject, verb in past tense and complement correctly. Only 5 out of 13 students were able to express their message using these three aspects. They were paying attention and asking questions in relation to the sentence structure. Moreover, 4 out of 13 students usually showed correct grammar usage because they had a little bit more difficulty to express themselves. The remaining rest 4 students did not use grammar correctly. This is because 1 of the students have a non-significant curricular accommodation of time and the other has Attention Deficit Disorder, so they got dispersed easily. The other 2 students did not pay

attention during the class, so they were not able to respond; therefore, these students had difficulties because they had not been paying attention in classes before.

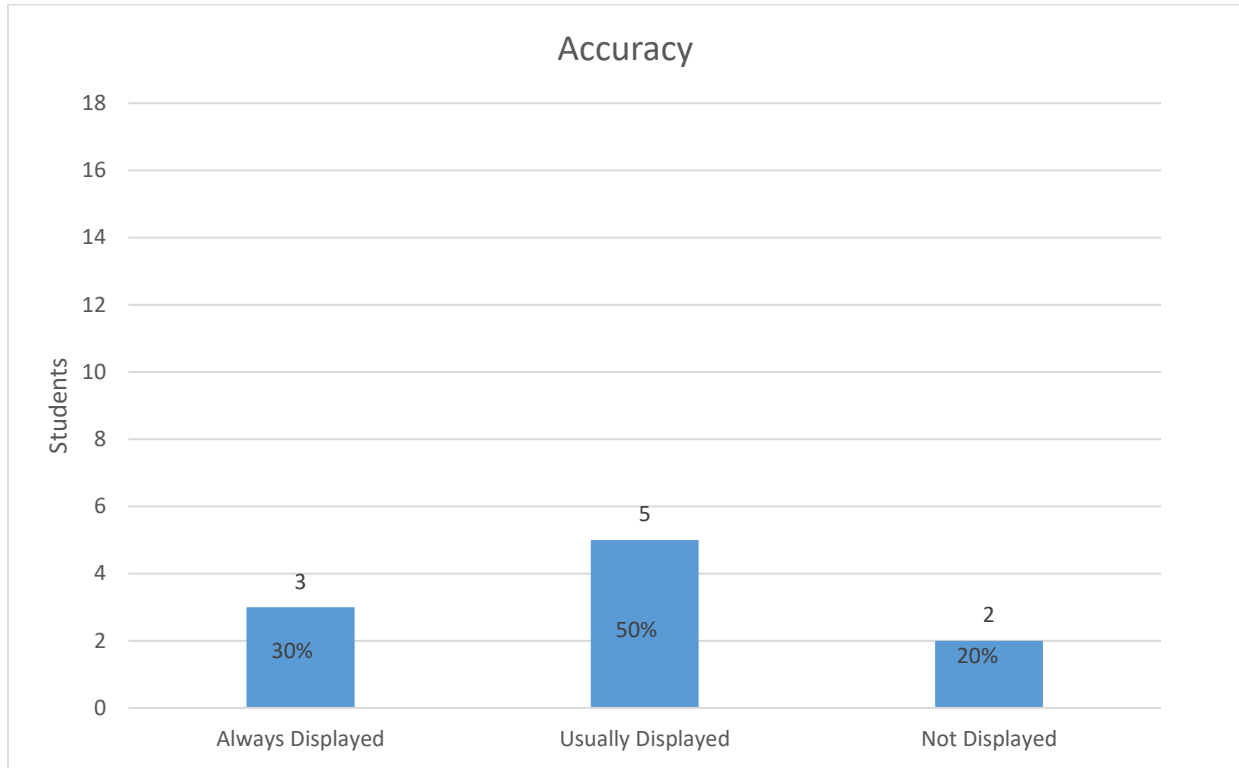
4.4.1.4 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Fluency



*Figure 26 represents students' fluency while reviewing Costa Rica's Natural Beauty
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

The majority of students obtained the highest score, since they were fluent. Moreover, 7 out of 13 students improved their fluency throughout the activities. They were able to express their idea with unnatural pauses despite they mispronounced certain words. In addition, 4 students were evaluated under the category not displayed, as paused in between words, leading to the misunderstanding of the message, The teacher repeated what they said, but with fluency and sometimes they repeated after her. Only 1 student out of 13 usually displayed fluency while speaking. This learner spoke very little, but the sentences uttered had only one mistake.

4.4.1.5 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Students' Accuracy



*Figure 27 demonstrates students' accuracy while reviewing Costa Rica's Natural Beauty
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

The majority of students, that is 5 out of 13, usually displayed accuracy because they did not combine suitably all of the aspects evaluated such as content, communicability, grammar usage, and pronunciation of the simple past tense endings in order to fulfill the complete message. 3 students always displayed accuracy, as they combined all of the aspects to have a precise message without going around words. These students demonstrated they were secure of what they were saying. Finally, 2 students of 13 did not display accuracy because the little they said lacked the aspects evaluated in this specific criteria.

4.4.1.6 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Pronunciation of the past tense ending /t/

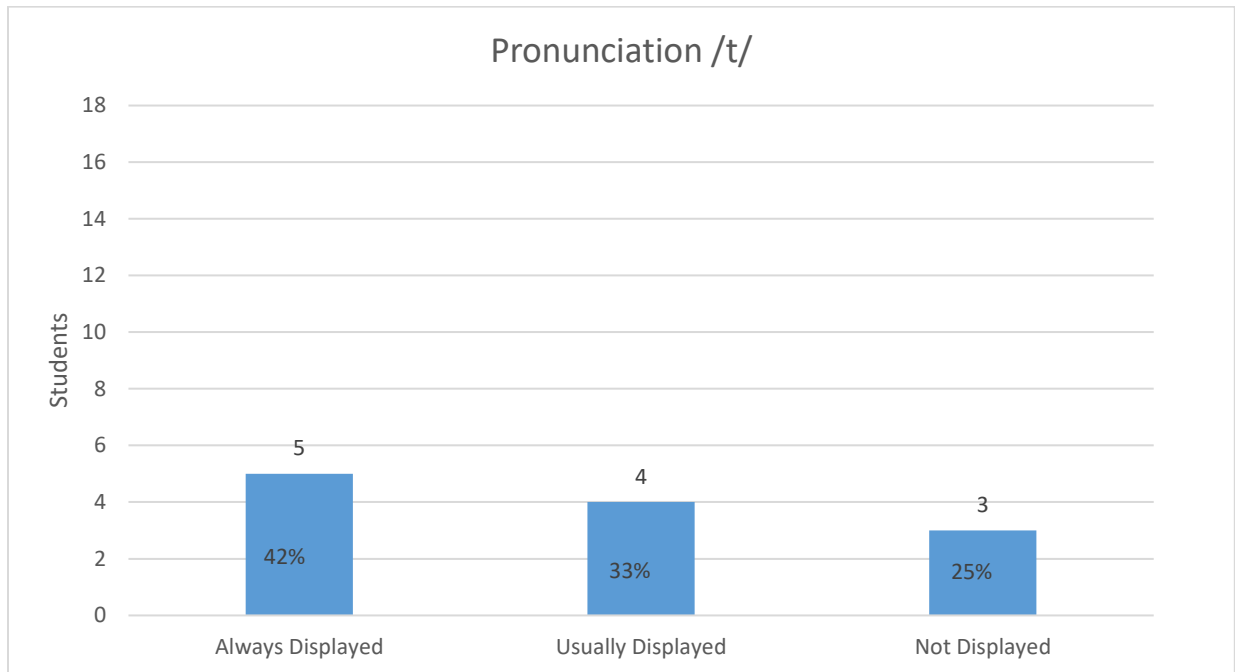
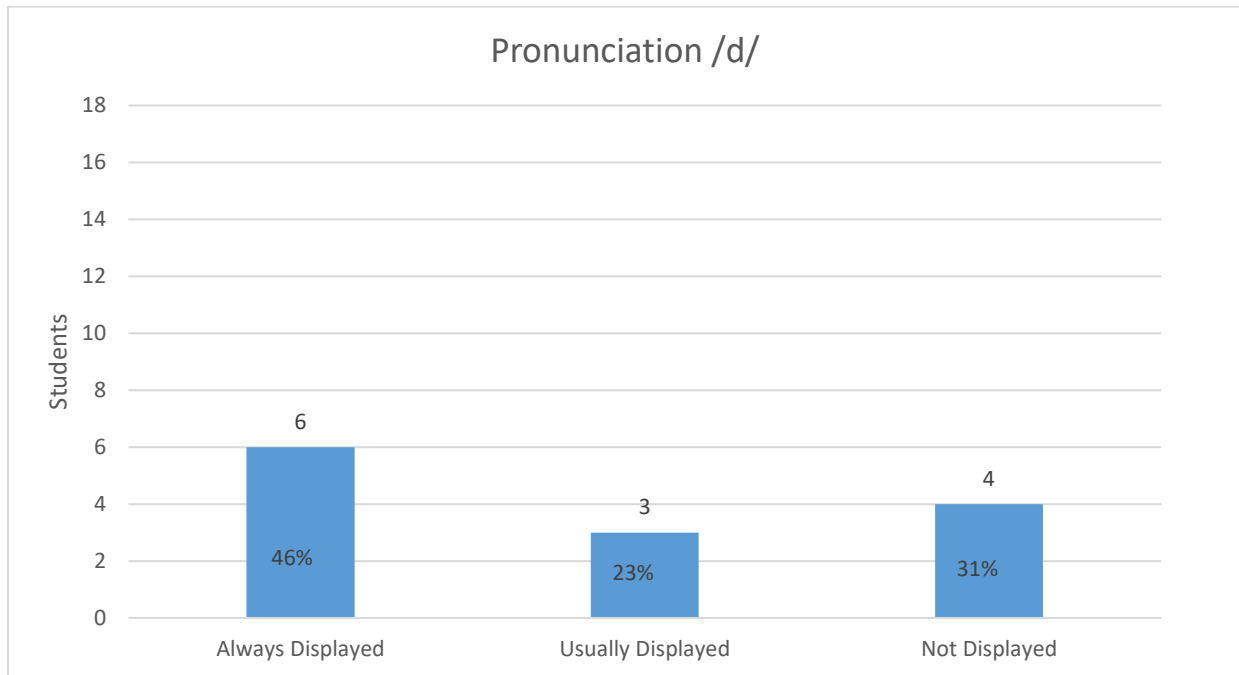


Figure 28 illustrates students' pronunciation of past tense ending /t/
Source: Researcher's own creation.

In the previous figure, the pronunciation of the past tense ending /t/ is represented. It shows that 5 out of 13 students always displayed the correct pronunciation of past tense ending /t/ while expressing an idea. These students did not present any problem to notice the difference between the three different pronunciations of the regular simple past tense verbs. Furthermore, 4 out of 13 students demonstrated that they usually displayed knowledge of the identification of the -ed that is pronounced as /t/. Finally, 3 students out of 13 did not display correct usage of the past tense ending /t/. They got the three rules mixed, but the words that corresponded to the /t/ were not pronounced as it should be, but instead for /d/ or /ɪd/.

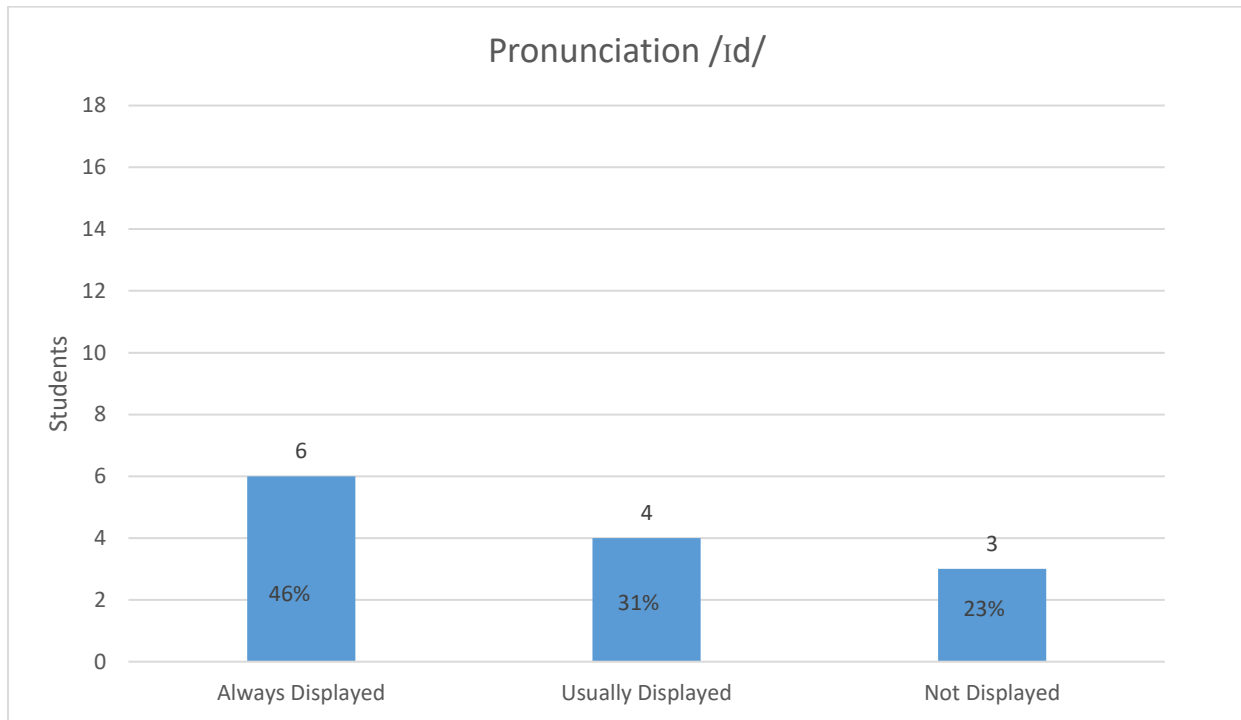
4.4.1.8 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Pronunciation the past tense ending /d/



*Figure 29 represents students' pronunciation of past tense ending /d/
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

The majority of students, that is 6 out of 13 students, were able to identify when to use the past tense ending /d/ while speaking. These students always paid attention and were on task when they were asked to read or prepared themselves for an oral presentation dealing with the simple past tense endings of regular verbs. The 4 students who did not display such knowledge, as they could not differentiate the three rules of the simple past tense were students who never put effort into reading the sentences or short texts given to them. Students must also put effort into what they are learning in order to see positive results. Only 3 students of 13 usually showed correct usage of the past tense ending /d/. They demonstrated that they confused the rules and mixed them up.

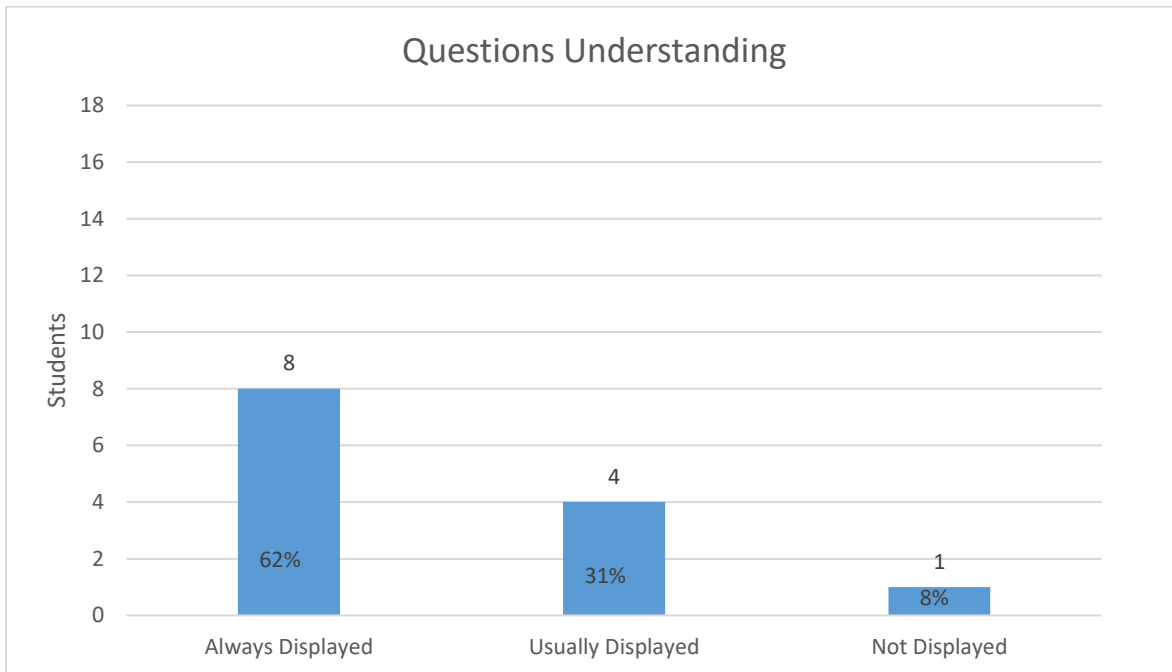
4.4.1.8 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Pronunciation the Past Tense Ending /ɪd/



*Figure 30 represents students' pronunciation of the past tense ending /ɪd/.
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

Figure 30 demonstrates how well students pronounced the past tense ending /ɪd/. The majority of students, 6 out of 13, always presented a correct pronunciation of the past tense ending /ɪd/. Followed by the students that usually displayed the correct pronunciation of the words. The teacher reviewed the topic Costa Rica's Natural Beauty and asked questions related to the activities they could do in the country. The students answered by using the simple past tense. Finally, only 3 students out of 13 did not display the correct usage of the past tense /ɪd/, not because they did not know how, but they had difficulties speaking and pronouncing other words correctly.

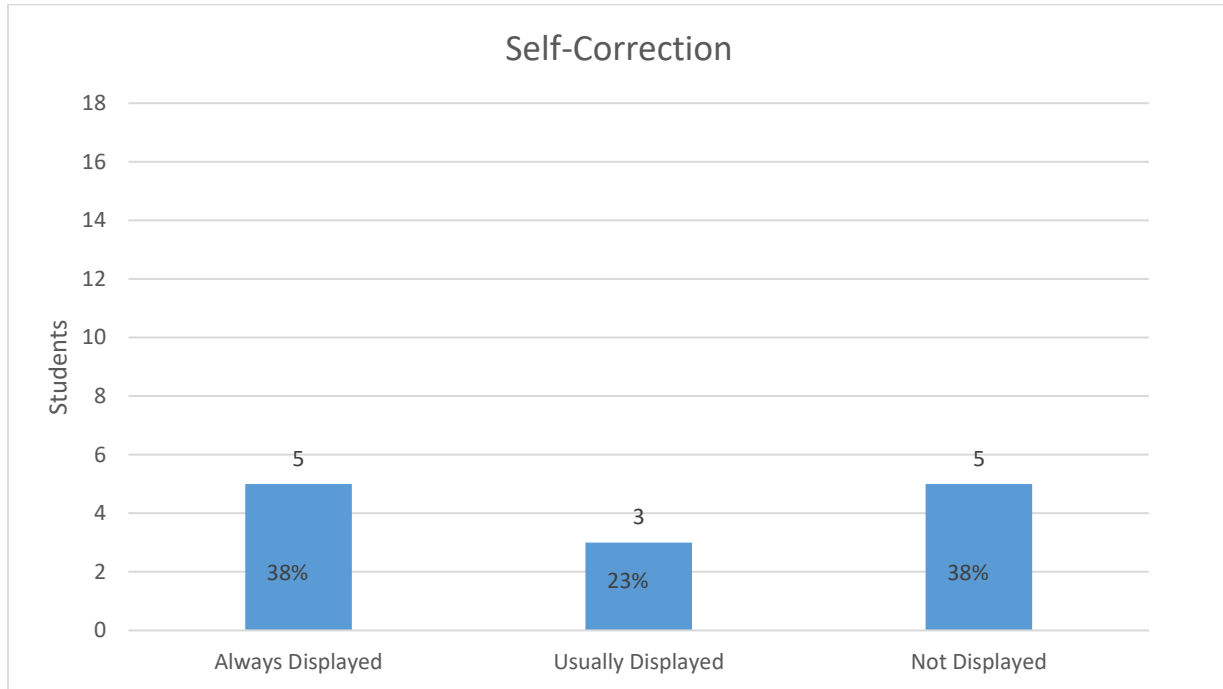
4.4.1.9 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Students’ Understanding of the Questions



*Figure 31 illustrates students’ question understanding about Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty
Source: Researcher’s own creation.*

Figure 31 illustrates how well students understood the questions the teacher asked the students. She did it one by one to verify if they had understood the topic and vocabulary. Furthermore, 8 out of 13 students were able to answer the question correctly, as they comprehended the answer and knew how to respond to it using the complete form such as subject, verb, and complement. Moreover, only 4 students out of 13 usually displayed understanding, because they omitted the subject, verb, or the complement. The only student that did not show understanding was a student that was playing with his school supplies and did not even know what the teacher was asking. He just looked at her and said in Spanish “I do not know” and raised his shoulders.

4.4.1.10 Observation Checklist 2 Results of Students' Error Self-Correction



*Figure 32 represents students' self-correctness sense
Source: Researcher's own creation.*

In the previous figure, it can be observed that the same number of students was able to self-correct their simple past tense ending mispronunciations because they were aware they had made a mistake. On the other hand, 5 out of 13 students were not able to identify when they have made a mistake in the simple past tense endings because they were confused on how to pronounce it, so they just said the word as they thought it was. Moreover, 3 students out of 13 usually displayed self-correction throughout the time being observed because at least one time they were aware of their error.

4.5 Comparison between the Pre-Test and the Post-Test

In the following figures, it can be observed a comparison made with the respective criteria of the pre-test applied before implementing the reading out loud technique and the post-test applied after implementing the technique. The following data was divided into two groups due to layout and for a clearer understanding of the figures.

4.5.1 Comparison of the Pre-Test and the Post-Test

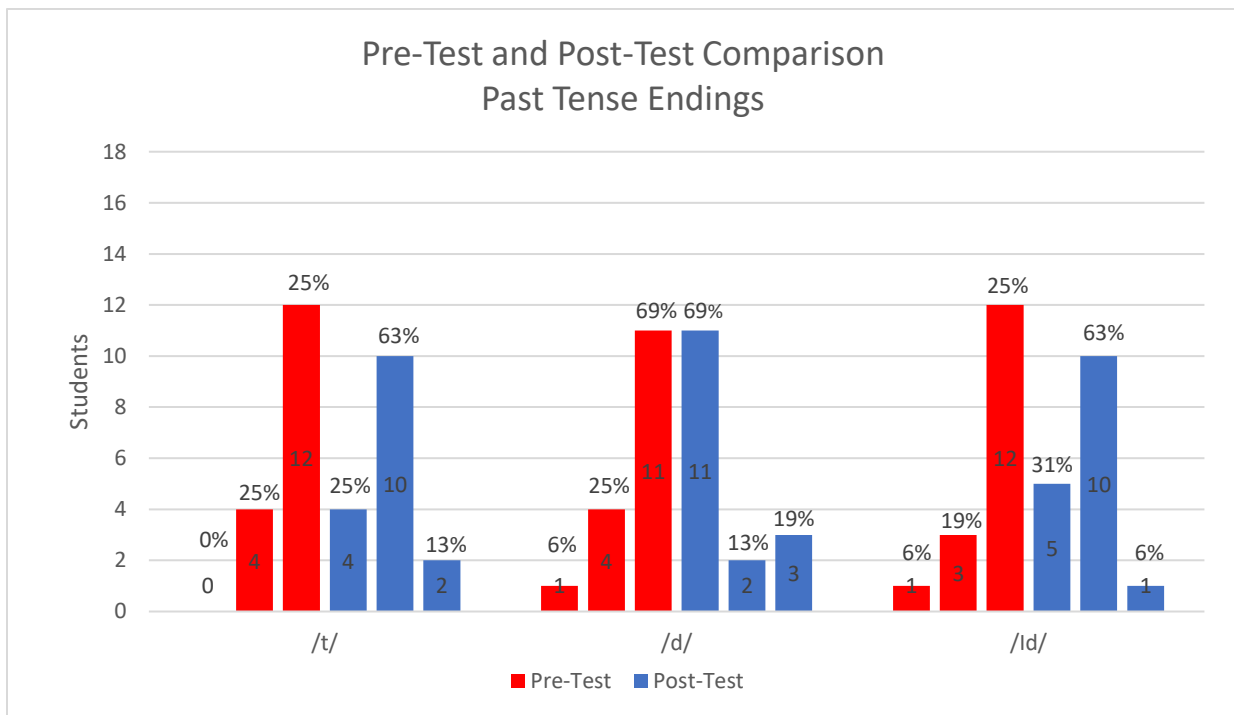


Figure 33 represents the results of the pronunciation of the past tense endings /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/ from the pre-test and post-test.

Source: Researcher’s own creation.

This figure represents the students’ improvement regarding the pronunciation of the past tense endings /t/, /d/ and /ɪd/. For the pre-test, a total of 16 students participated in the activity. On the other hand, for the post-test, only 13 students were evaluated, as the other 3 were absent that day. The reason why they skipped classes that day was unknown. It must be said that there was a notorious improvement in the pronunciation of the past tense ending /t/. In the pre-test, any of

the students was able to obtain an excellent score, but after applying and developing the activities to promote the pronunciation of the simple past tense ending of regular verbs through reading out loud, 4 students were able to be categorized in the maximum score.

In reference to those students who got in the needs improvement category in the pre-test, it can be stated that 10 students improved in the post-test. This demonstrated that through the reading out loud technique these students were able to identify the correct usage of the simple past tense ending /t/. Despite the little lesson taught to the 16 fifth grade students during the month of September, the majority were able to identify the correct rules according to the regular verbs' ending in the simple past tense.

As it is shown in the previous figure, the excellent category went from 1 student in the first test to 11 students in the second exams applied after all the activities were developed. This demonstrated that the technique was effective because it helped students to improve their pronunciation of the past tense ending /d/. Not only did the technique helped them, but also students boosted their motivation and enthusiasm toward learning. Additionally, most of students read the past tense ending as /ed/ and not as /ɪd/, but they showed an improvement in the three different evaluation categories in comparison to the results obtained in the pre-test.

4.5.2 Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

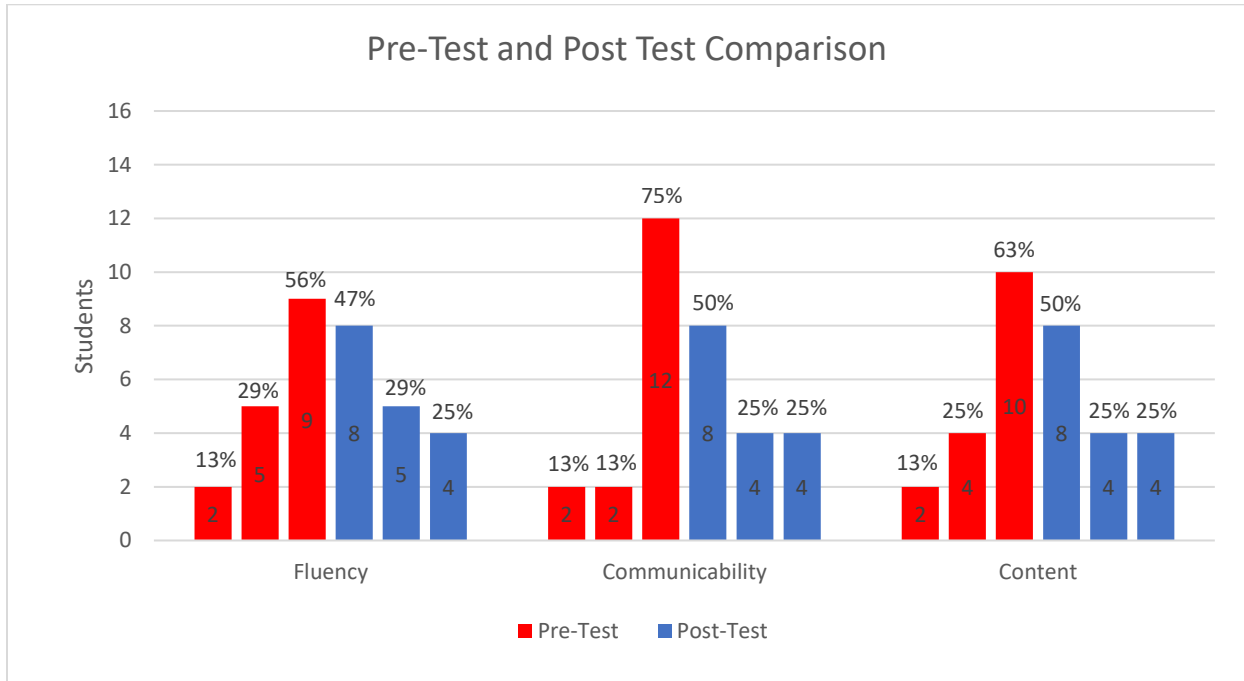


Figure 34 illustrates the comparison of the results between the pre-test and the post-test regarding, communicability, and content
 Source: Researcher’s own creation.

Figure 34 illustrates the results obtained from the different tests applied to the 16 fifth grade students at La Sabana School during the month of September. Only 2 students scored an excellent in the pre-test, before they were instructed on the rules to pronounce the simple past tense ending. After these students were presented with the reading out loud technique and activities, the results improved representing 8 students under the excellent category. The needs improvement category decreased the number of students from the pre-test to the post-test. Depending on the topic evaluated, students’ motivation varied because if the topic of the story was interesting they would put more effort and dedication into what they have to read; otherwise, they would not do it.

The short story in the pre-test was about a man who took his dog out for a walk and ended up being late for work because he forgot his keys. Many students were intimidated by the investigator and were nervous when they had to read it individually leading to low scores. After they had received 5 lessons with the investigator, the results in the post-test improved, further the short story was about Natural Beauty in Costa Rica and some students related to the short story afterwards.

4.6 Comparison between Observation Checklist 1 and Observation Checklist 2

In the following figures, it can be found a comparison between each criteria from the observation checklist 1 and observation checklist 2. This will be done to have a further comprehension of the results obtained.

4.6.1 Comparison of Observation Checklist 1 and Observation Checklist 2

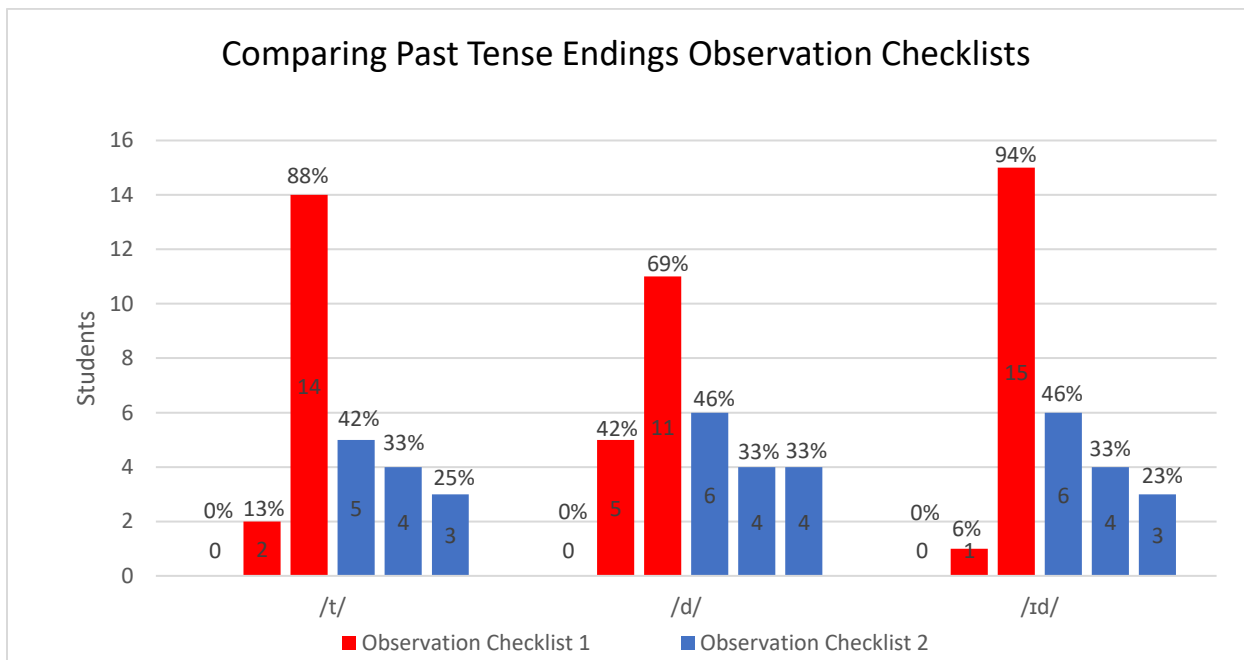


Figure 35 represents a comparison of the results obtained in the pre-test and in the post-test regarding the pronunciation of the past tense endings /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/.

Source: Researcher's own creation.

In the previous figure, it can be observed that in the pre-test the majority of students in the three different categories, were evaluated under not displayed because these students did not know the rules. Regarding the pronunciation of the past tense ending /d/, students improved. The above figure demonstrates that in the pre-test, 14 students did not show the correct use of the rules; however, after applying the reading out loud technique many students not only gained confidence but also self-esteem. This as they had already learned the rules and effort themselves. The researcher observed the students while the teacher was reviewing the topic, and it can be said that the amount of students under this category decreased and now they fall under the always displayed category. Students went from pronouncing the past tense ending /id/ as /ed/ to the correct form.

The investigator in order to achieve this, along with the reading out loud technique, highlighted the verbs that had priority within the text and then, she asked the students to focus on those verbs and asked for their correct pronunciation. There was a student that had no improvement; however, he had enthusiasm after applying various activities and participated by his own. In other words, the investigator did not have to ask his to do something as he was willing to participate and gained love and emotion for the target language. This was visible for the investigator because his attitude during the lessons changed little by little.

4.6.2 Comparison of Observation Checklist 1 and Observation Checklist 2

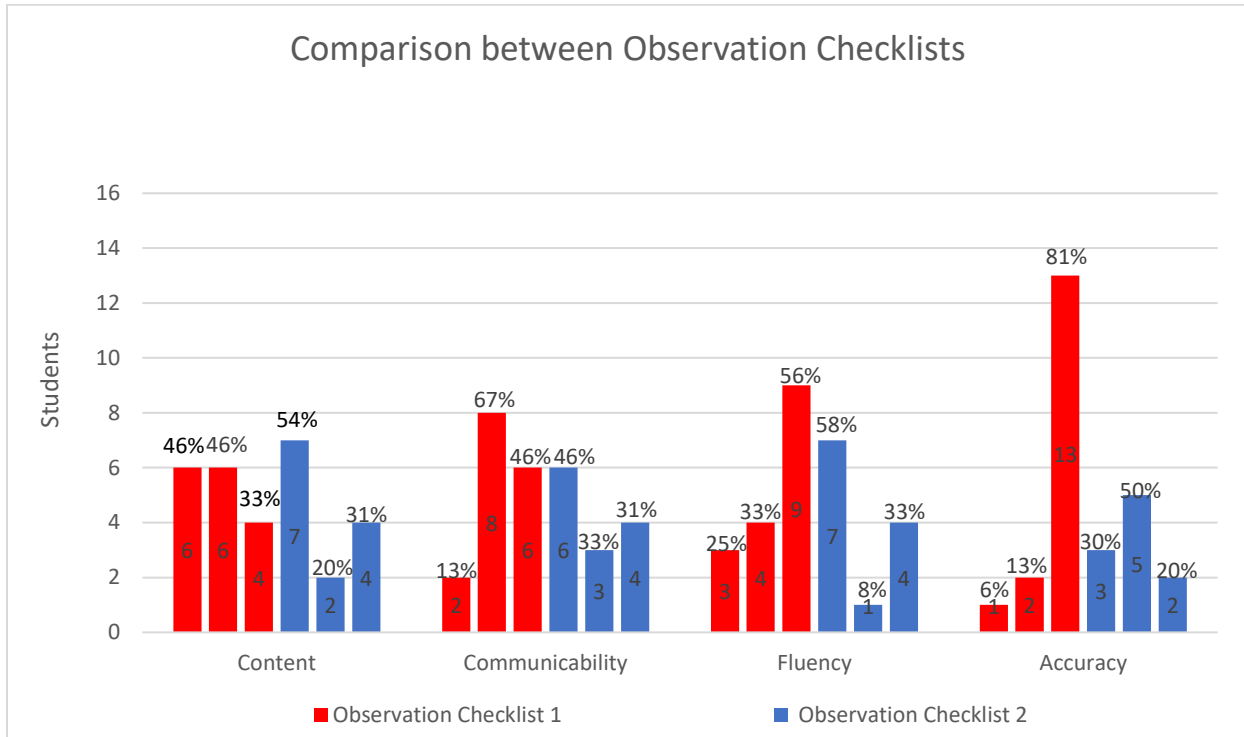


Figure 36 illustrates the results obtained from observation checklist 1 and observation checklist 2
 Source: Researcher's own creation.

The range of students within content, communicability, and fluency did not demonstrate a big improvement because the researcher was able to notice that these students had a better understanding of the topic when they had a text, a worksheet, or the support of a classmate rather than when they had to express an answer without having these resources with them. They doubted a lot, but still gave an answer no matter if it was right or wrong. The number of students under the not displayed category, decreased in observation checklist 2 because despite they had little time to practice, they gained confidence in themselves and started to demonstrate passion for the target language. Students demonstrated fluency throughout their statements, but occasionally lacked other aspects evaluated such as, content and communicability.

4.6.3 Observation Checklist 1 and Observation Checklist 2 Comparison

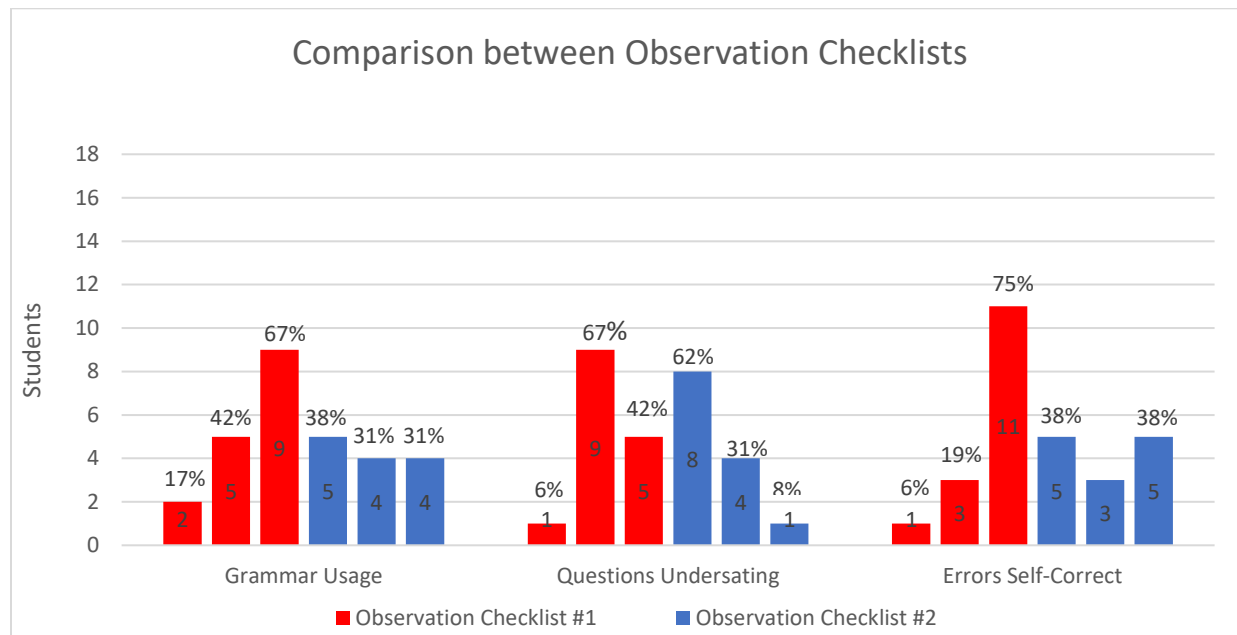


Figure 37 represents the results obtained from observation checklist 1 and observation checklist 2
 Source: Researcher’s own creation.

Figure 37 represents the results obtained from observation checklist 1 and observation checklist 2 regarding grammar usage, understanding of the questions, and error self-correction. Under the category understanding of the questions, there was an improvement because in the pre-test only 1 student was able to achieve what was being requested and in the post test the number of students grew, as this time 7 students were able to answer the questions in relation to the topic Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty without hesitation.

It can be said that the technique not only helped the students to improve their pronunciation of the past tense ending omitted sound, but it also helped in the improvement of other aspects that were evaluated by the researcher. Other criteria in which students improved was self-correction when they identified that they had made a mistake immediately after they had mispronounced a word, but especially a regular verb in the past tense. Some students were able

to notice the mistake, but they did not know how to pronounce it correctly, so they asked the investigator for the correct pronunciation and others were able to correct it by themselves.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

The final chapter of the investigation presents the conclusions obtained throughout the interpretation of the results gathered with the help of the instruments applied. The general objective, each specific objective, and the research question were answered and analyzed in order to find out if they were accomplished. Furthermore, various recommendations are given regarding the present investigation and to future researches to take into account when doing a similar research.

5.1 Purpose of the conclusion

The purpose of the conclusion is to guide the audience through the main points of the investigation, not only to give them a summary on the investigation, but also to restate the purpose of the research and its accomplishments.

5.2 Conclusions

To analyze the effectiveness of reading out loud as a technique to improve pronunciation of the past tense endings in the target language

The technique did not only favor the accurate pronunciation of the past tense endings, but also other areas in which adequate speaking skills are needed for oral communication such as intonation, fluency, and stress. Through a variety of activities which included listening, speaking, and reading, students were able to acquire the use of the three different pronunciation rules for the regular verbs past tense endings. The direct method was the one the researcher considered when teaching the fifth graders at La Sabana School during the third quarter of 2019.

The investigation involved the usage of the target language in the classroom, use of limited vocabulary, and teaching grammar inductively, regarding vocabulary related to Costa Rica's Natural Beauty. Grammar was not taught by telling the students how the rule was, because in the MEP's program that is not allowed; therefore, the investigator used the correct grammar structure and they deduced how it was used. Most of the students understood how it was supposed to be, and it worked. Thus, it was demonstrated that reading out loud was an effective technique for students to acquire the proper pronunciation of the past tense endings and there was a noticeable improvement in their speaking skills.

5.2.2 To identify pronunciation problems students encounter when reading out-loud

The first specific objective consisted on identifying students' pronunciation problems when they read out loud through an observation checklist 1 and a pre-test, which were previously mentioned and explained in Chapter IV. The first instrument allowed the researcher to understand the level of difficulty students presented while reading out loud; in other words, the problems that affected their correct pronunciation. These were anxiety, nervousness, lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, and confusion.

The first problem the researcher found was students' lack of vocabulary when pronouncing correctly the past tense endings. This was shown when they had to answer a question about Costa Rica's Natural Beauty and they wanted to say something, but they did not know the accurate word, so they invented its pronunciation. The second problem was that students felt scared of being bullied by their peers because when they were going to say something and a student started to talk or made any noise they did not want to answer; consequently, they were afraid of other students making fun of their mispronunciation or

mistakes. Additionally, three aspects of the observation checklist 1 (first instrument) consisted on observing the pronunciation of the three different past tense endings /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/; the students demonstrated they had difficulty pronouncing these endings. Other aspects of the first instrument were content, fluency, accuracy, communicability, questions understanding, errors self-correction, and grammar usage. Students' lack of vocabulary was one of the major causes affecting students' pronunciation. They also had more difficulty expressing their opinion than reading a text, because they had more confidence when they had a piece of paper in their hands for support.

Moreover, through the second instrument, the pre-test, which consisted on reading a short text out loud to the investigator related to the topic previously mentioned, the researcher found out that students got nervous when reading. Some students started to shake, hesitate, and overthinking the correct pronunciation of a particular word because they started to mumble the word and then they looked at the researcher to ask for help. Thus, another factor which affected the students' pronunciation was confusion because they did not know if a word was pronounced in a way or the other; therefore, they first said it in the right form and then they said it another, and sometimes the second time was the correct form. So, they tended to get confused regarding the adequate pronunciation of the past tense endings of regular verbs. Thus, it is concluded that students presented problems which affected their accurate pronunciation of the past tense endings. Moreover, these issues were observed through the use of the observation checklist #1 and the pre-test, and such as a matching, put a story in order, oral presentations, and reading while giving a presentation, among others.

5.2.3 To apply the read out-loud technique for contributing with the correct pronunciation of the past tense endings in the target language

There were many factors which affected the students' accurate pronunciation of the words, not only past tense endings. Therefore, the reading out loud technique was used to reduce the occurrence of these factors and improve the pronunciation of the past tense endings. Through diverse activities, it was implemented listening, speaking, and reading altogether for obtaining better results, as it was noticeable that these students did not practice daily reading silently nor out loud.

These activities helped students to gain confidence regarding the language, because the more activities done, the more they got used to the topic and the target language. The majority of students were able to achieve other aspects such as fluency, content, and communicability while reading out loud in front of the class. The results of these activities and reading out loud are that the students' vocabulary increased, their nerves decreased, and their confidence increased, leading to a smoother acquisition of the accurate pronunciation of the past tense endings. This was noticeable because they were more confident while reading out loud and speaking in front of the class. These students improved their pronunciation of the regular past tense endings and the other aspects the researcher was considering. Thus, by the application of the technique, the aspects in which student had major improvement were fluency and the pronunciation of the past tense ending /ɪd/.

5.2.4 To evaluate the effectiveness of reading out-loud as a technique to acquire the correct pronunciation of the past tense endings in the target language

In order to examine if the reading out loud technique was effective or not, the post-test and observation checklist 2 were applied. For the third instrument, students had to read a passage entitled “A Day at the Beach” related to the topic Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty. This passage had seven regular verbs in the past tense. Concerning the past tense endings, the majority of students improved, only a range from 1 to 3 students were not able to achieve the correct pronunciation of the verbs in this specific tense, but they improved other areas such as self-confidence and love towards the language because their participation and motivation increased throughout the lessons. More specifically, these students as an overall result, improved in all the aspects evaluated in the post-test. Thus, the aspects in which student had major improvement were fluency and the pronunciation of the past tense ending /ɪd/, per se.

5.3 Restatements of the research question

Many foreign language learners tend to present difficulties when acquiring the correct pronunciation of the target language because their native language interferes in the learning process. Due to this, many students tend to pronounce as the word is written or as they think it sounds. Some students while reading out loud were able to identify that they were mispronouncing a word, not just the past tense omitted sounds.

Despite all of these difficulties, students showed improvement in the past tense endings /t/ and /d/, but most of all in /ɪd/. These students demonstrated that they were able to pronounce correctly the past tense ending which corresponded to /ɪd/ while reading out loud a passage. To conclude, reading out loud, as a corrective technique, was highly effective by taking into

consideration all of the difficulties students had to overcome in order to achieve the pronunciation of the regular past tense and they did it.

5.4 Unexpected Results

The researcher found improvement not only in the pronunciation of the past tense endings, but also in other areas such as: fluency and error self-correction, through the reading out loud technique, and other activities to promote the students' improvement in the omission of the regular past tense endings. Other aspects that improved were the motivation toward the language; for example, each student had an anecdote to a time they had visited one of the places, in relation to the topic Costa Rica's Natural Beauty. So, this increased students' participation and enthusiasm toward the language and the topic. Finally, it was demonstrated the effective use of reading out loud, as a corrective technique, in the omission of the past tense ending, which was analyzed after the application of observation checklists, a pre-test, and a post-test.

5.5 Recommendations

The following part consists on a series of recommendations for future investigations or to the improvement of this same investigation. Future researchers can analyze other criteria that were used in this present investigation such as, fluency and accuracy, as well as elements such as intonation. For example, this investigation focused on improving the omission of past tense ending while reading aloud; however, future researchers can focus on improving these omitted sounds, but while speaking because it was noticeable that one thing is to read, and another is to speak without any guide.

Also, researchers can analyze the effectiveness of reading out loud on other areas such as the correct pronunciation of other sounds as / θ / and / ð / as these sounds do not exist in Spanish,

therefore students may present difficulties in their accurate pronunciation. Other further investigation could be about the identification of the sound /f/ written -ph. This is a sound which students tend to pronounce as /p/ because English is not pronounced as it is written.

Furthermore, incorrect pronunciation is one of the main reasons for misunderstandings in communication; then, future researchers can also analyze the effect of reading out loud to help students improve their speaking skills (vocabulary acquisition). Through the implementation of this technique vocabulary can be developed, as well. The researcher can find innovative ways to overcome the difficulties which were found in the present investigation or other difficulties students present.

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Appendix A:

Observation Checklist 1 and 2

Teacher’s Name: _____

Date: _____ Class: _____ Number Assigned to Student: _____

Length of Lesson: _____ Content: _____

Purpose: To collect data in regards to the student’s reaction to answering and pronouncing words correctly.

Instructions: The investigator will observe the teacher’s and student’s behavior while the lesson is being given.

Scale: 3 – Always Displayed 2 – Usually Displayed 1 – Not Displayed

	3	2	1	Comments
a. Content				
b. Communicability				
c. Grammar Usage				
d. Fluency				
e. Accuracy				
f. Pronunciation of /d/				
g. Pronunciation of /t/				
h. Pronunciation of /Id/				
i. Questions understanding				
j. Errors self-correction				

Appendix B:

Pre-Test

Student's Assigned Number: _____

Date: _____ Grade: _____ Class: _____

Purpose: The usage of this instrument is to keep record of the mispronunciation and the omission of the past tense made by the student when they are reading out-loud

Instructions: Read the following text out-loud taking special care to the pronunciation of past tense endings.

<p>Criteria 18 points</p>	<p>Excellent 3 points The student did not make any mistakes</p>	<p>Good 2 points The student made 1 mistake</p>	<p>Needs Improvement 1 point The student made 2 or more mistakes</p>
<p>Pronunciation: past tense /d/</p>			
<p>Pronunciation: past tense /t/</p>			
<p>Pronunciation: past tense /id/</p>			
<p>Fluency: free of unnatural pauses</p>			
<p>Communicability: information is clear</p>			
<p>Content: understanding of the text.</p>			

Appendix C:**Pre-Test Reading**

Purpose: To identify student's mispronunciations or omission of the past tense when they are reading out-loud

Instructions: Read the following text out-loud taking special care to the pronunciation of past tense endings.

Ben's Day

We both went out, and **walked** to the park near home. He ran and **jumped**. When my hands were frozen, I **decided** it was time to go back home. Fox didn't want to, but I **pulled** hard and I **started** to walk back home. When we **arrived** at the front door, I **realized** I didn't have my keys with me, so we **stayed** out in the cold for more than an hour. I **hated** that my hands froze because of the cold. Fox was happy, but I was late for work.

Appendix D:

Post-Test

Student's Assigned Number: _____

Date: _____ Grade: _____ Class: _____

Purpose: To identify student's improvement of their mispronunciations or omission of the past tense when they are reading out-loud

Instructions: Read the following text out-loud taking special care to the pronunciation of past tense endings.

Criteria 18 points	Excellent 3 points The student did not make any mistakes	Good 2 points The student made 1 mistake	Needs Improvement 1 point The student made 2 or more mistakes
Pronunciation: past tense /d/			
Pronunciation: past tense /t/			
Pronunciation: past tense /id/			
Fluency: free of unnatural pauses			
Communicability: information is clear			
Content: understanding of the text.			

Appendix C:

Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan 1

Institution: La Sabana School

Teacher: Esmeralda Vargas Zamora

Time: 40 min

Topic: Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty

Level: 5th grade

Objectives	Activities	Procedures	Materials	Time	Evaluation
<p>To identify Costa Rica’s weather conditions while reading simple sentences in the simple past tense /d/, /t/, /ɪd/</p>	<p>Picture and word relation</p>	<p>Warm-Up: The teacher pastes on the white board flash cards of the forecast with the name of the province, and weather conditions.</p> <p>Present through cards what activities in past tense they can do in the different weather conditions.</p> <p>The teacher will say a sentence in the past tense to them out loud and they will have to repeat.</p> <p>Presentation: The teacher will tell a story of a time she went to the beach in order to present the past tense verbs.</p> <p>Practice: Through a matching students will identify the different weather conditions and activities.</p>	<p>Flashcards</p> <p>Images</p> <p>Ball</p>	<p>40 min</p>	<p>Students will play a game of hot potato, when the music stops and whoever has the ball, has to take out a piece of paper from a bag and read the sentence written.</p>

Lesson Plan 2

Institution: La Sabana School

Teacher: Esmeralda Vargas Zamora

Time: 40 min

Topic: Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty

Level: 5th grade

Objectives	Activities	Procedures	Materials	Time	Evaluation
<p>To identify Costa Rica’s natural beauty its resources and weather conditions. while reading simple sentences in the simple past tense /d/, /t/, /ɪd/</p>	<p>Picture and word relation</p>	<p>Warm-Up: Review vocabulary related to weather conditions by playing Hangman. Each student says a letter in order to guess the word or expression the teacher writes on the board. (rainy, sunny, cloudy, stormy, hot, cold). The teacher will paste 2 images on the board, one will be the word.</p> <p>Presentation: Using weather forecast card’s the teacher writes in the board the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What’s the weather like in...? - Is it sunny in San José? - What provinces will be stormy or hot in the morning or at night? - What activity did you do on a _____ day? 	<p>Flashcards</p> <p>Images</p> <p>Text</p>	<p>40 min</p>	<p>The teacher will hand out 2 flashcards to each student. Each flashcard will have the image representing the word. The teacher will read a sentence and they will have to raise a flashcard according to what they hear</p>

		<p>Practice: The teacher will give a short story “Martin’s Vacation” to the students and each have to read a sentence out loud. The text will contain words in simple past tense. Followed by questions.</p>			
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Lesson Plan 3

Institution: La Sabana School

Teacher: Esmeralda Vargas Zamora

Time: 40 min

Topic: Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty

Level: 5th grade

Objectives	Activities	Procedures	Materials	Time	Evaluation
<p>To identify Costa Rica’s weather conditions while reading simple sentences in the simple past tense /d/, /t/, /ɪd/</p> <p>To describe Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty by reading simple statements in the simple past tense /d/, /t/, /ɪd/</p>	<p>Picture and word relation</p>	<p>Warm-Up: Write on the board the name to different national parks or nature resources (volcano, rivers, sea, forest, mountain, monkey, Santa Rosa National Park Tortuguero National Park, Irazu Volcano, Chirripo National Park, Carrillo beach and Arenal Volcano).</p> <p>Divide the class into two teams and Say a word from the list. The two students need to touch the corresponding word on the board. The first one to touch the correct word wins a point for the team.</p> <p>Presentation: Using national park flashcards, students will read aloud</p>	<p>Flashcards</p> <p>Images</p> <p>Worksheet</p>	<p>40 min</p>	<p>Students will be given a worksheet with 3 fragments of the short story. The teacher will read out loud and they will have to put the story in order</p>

		<p>the following descriptions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This place is one of the most visited in Costa Rica. It is located around 32 km from Cartago. 2. The Arenal volcano is one of the ten most active volcanos in the world. It is located close of the town of La Fortuna. 3. The Chirripo National Park protects forested areas. It is located in the southern Talamanca Mountain region. <p>Ask students if they have ever been to any of Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty and if so what activities have they done.</p> <p>Practice: Divide the class in two groups, one will hold the cards with pictures and the other group will have the names, the teacher will call a resource and they have to put them together.</p>			
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Lesson Plan 4

Institution: La Sabana School

Teacher: Esmeralda Vargas Zamora

Time: 40 min

Topic: Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty

Level: 5th grade

Objectives	Activities	Procedures	Materials	Time	Evaluation
<p>To identify Costa Rica’s natural beauty its resources and weather conditions</p>	<p>Picture and word relation</p>	<p>Warm-Up: The teacher will read the characteristics of Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty and the students will have to identify it.</p> <p>Presentation: The teacher will give the students the activities students can do in beaches, rivers, forests, national parks, volcanoes with their natural resources.</p> <p>Practice: The teacher will assign students different places of Costa Rica. They will have to draw the resource and write the three phrases of activities they can do and create a poster. Ask the students to read and present the poster to the class.</p>	<p>Flashcards</p> <p>Images</p> <p>Text</p>	<p>40 min</p>	<p>The teacher asked questions and the students have to respond to the questions in relationship to the class</p>

Lesson Plan 5

Institution: La Sabana School

Teacher: Esmeralda Vargas Zamora

Time: 40 min

Topic: Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty

Level: 5th grade

Objectives	Activities	Procedures	Materials	Time	Evaluation
To identify Costa Rica’s natural beauty its resources and weather conditions	Picture and word relation	<p>Warm-Up: The teacher will play a video related to Costa Rica’s Natural Beauty.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJCbilEqIzE</p> <p>Presentation: The teacher will make a list of the animals and natural resources found in Costa Rica.</p> <p>Practice: The teacher will put images on the board of the different national parks, volcanos, rivers, beaches and each student in their notebook will have to draw an animal or resource that represents each of the images.</p>	Flashcards Images Memory Game	40 min	In small groups the students will write a short story about a time they had went to a national parks, volcanos, rivers, or beaches. They will present orally to the teacher in their desks

Tribunal Examinador

Esta Tesina fue aprobada por el Tribunal Examinador de las Carreras de Inglés de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, como requisito para optar por el grado de Bachiller en Inglés.



MSc. Yanith Delgado Chacón

Tutora



Lic. Leslie Elizondo Mora

Lector



MSc. Dinier Amador Serrano

Director de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Director de Carrera

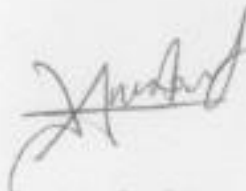
San José, 10 de Diciembre de 2019

Señores
Universidad Internacional de las Américas
Estimados señores:

El suscrito M.Sc. Dinier Amador Serrano, Director de las Carreras de Inglés, hace constar que ha revisado la Tesina del estudiante, Esmeralda Vargas Zamora, portadora de la cédula de identidad no. 3-0498-0468, que ha titulado: Reading Out Loud as a Corrective Technique of Past Tense Ending Omission in Fifth Graders at La Sabana School during the III Quarter of 2019.

La mencionada Tesina, responde a los requisitos exigidos en la Guía que nuestra carrera tiene para estos casos. Por tanto, se autoriza al autor para que lo presente ante el tribunal examinador nombrado para esta ocasión.

Atentamente,



MSc. Dinier Amador Serrano

Director de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Lector

San José, 10 de Diciembre de 2019

Máster
Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés
Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

La estudiante Esmeralda Vargas Zamora, portadora de la cédula de identidad no. 3-0498-0468, ha presentado para su lectura y corrección de estilo la tesina denominada Reading Out Loud as a Corrective Technique of Past Tense Ending Omission in Fifth Graders at La Sabana School during the III Quarter of 2019. He revisado y corregido la coherencia de los objetivos con el marco teórico, instrumentos y resultados, la calidad del trabajo y la relevancia del trabajo. Por lo tanto, hago constar que este se encuentra listo para ser presentado a la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,



Lic. Leslie Elizondo Mora

Lector de Tesis

Carta del Revisor

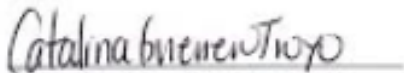
Miércoles, 10 de Diciembre de 2019

Máster
Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés
Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

La estudiante Esmeralda Vargas Zamora, portadora de la cédula de identidad no.3-0498-0468, ha presentado para la respectiva revisión la tesina denominada Reading Out Loud as a Corrective Technique of Past Tense Ending Omission in Fifth Graders at La Sabana School during the III Quarter of 2019. Por lo tanto, se hace constar que el documento fue revisado en lo relativo a la estructura gramatical, ortografía, puntuación, cohesión y terminología. Asimismo, se comprobó que las correcciones sugeridas se incorporaran al documento. Por ende, una vez incorporadas las recomendaciones efectuadas en el documento, el mismo se considera listo para su presentación la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,



MSc. Catalina Guerrero Troyo

1-10120519



Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Código de Ética

La suscrita Esmeralda Vargas Zamora, número de carné: 3-0498-0468 graduada del grado de Bachillerato en Inglés con énfasis en la Enseñanza de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, se compromete a cumplir, durante el ejercicio profesional, con el Código de Ética de la Institución, que se rige por los siguientes principios:

PROBIDAD: actuar siempre con rectitud y honradez.

PRUDENCIA: actuar con pleno conocimiento de la materia sometida a su consideración.

JUSTICIA: permanente disposición hacia las funciones de la profesión, bajo los lineamientos legales que debe respetar todo profesional.

RESPONSABILIDAD: cumplir con los deberes, tanto en calidad como en oportunidad.

DISCRECIÓN: guardar respeto sobre los hechos o informaciones de los que tenga conocimiento con motivo del ejercicio profesional, sin que esto perjudique las funciones y responsabilidades.

INDEPENDENCIA DE CRITERIO: no involucrarse o comprometerse con situaciones, intereses o actividades contrarias a la moral, a la sana crítica y que, por ley, sean incompatibles con las funciones profesionales correspondientes.

DIGNIDAD Y DECORO: actuar con sobriedad y moderación.

TOLERANCIA: evidenciar una actitud paciente y de comprensión ante las opiniones divergentes que puedan expresar otras personas.

EQUILIBRIO: desempeñar las funciones profesionales con sentido práctico, buen juicio y equidad.

ACTUALIZACIÓN: comprometer parte del tiempo en actualizar los conocimientos y adaptarlos en el desarrollo de la actividad profesional.

VOCACIÓN: mostrar siempre apego al trabajo y a la educación recibida, como fundamentos para el desempeño laboral.

BUENA FE: toda conducta o comportamiento, criterio emitido y labor desempeñada debe basarse en los más altos principios éticos y tendrá como fundamento la buena fe.

Esmeralda Vargas Zamora
3-0498-0468