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The use of TikTok as a tool inside the classroom to improve the speaking skills of eighth grade students from the San Rafael of Alajuela High School during the III quarter of 2022.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this work to Senna and both of my Schumis, all my love, heart and soul are with you three. Also, to Andrés, there are no words to describe my admiration for you. Thank you for continuously inspire me to be a better person.

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Abstract

This investigation project has as a main objective to introduce the use of new technology in the classroom to improve the speaking skill of the students. In this opportunity, the identified problem with the students of the eighth grade of the San Rafael of Alajuela high school was the lack of use of the English language in class. After the group observations, it was decided to try a different methodology to improve their speaking skills by using videos from the mobile application TikTok.

This paper demonstrates how effective is the use of TikTok as a tool inside the classroom to improve the speaking skills of these students during the application process. To achieve that, it was decided to evaluate the student by creating a point of comparison at the beginning of the learning process. Then, apply the suggested methodology in classes and evaluate the students through observation checklists to verify their accomplishments. Finally, revisit the first practice to evaluate their performance after the newly implemented teaching strategy.

Remarkably, this methodology application was successful in terms of improving the proficiency of the language of the students. However, the implementation of TikTok videos in the classroom might turn very time-consuming for the professor and it might require them to learn how to create specific content for each individual group.

At the end of this research, it is concluded that it is possible to use TikTok as a teaching strategy and improve the speaking skills of the students in the classroom. It is an effective methodology, although time-consuming. Nevertheless, future researchers are encouraged to apply this methodology to improve any other skills of the English language to verify its effectiveness in other areas.

Resumen

Este proyecto de investigación tiene como objetivo principal introducir el uso de las nuevas tecnologías en el aula para mejorar la habilidad oral de los alumnos. En esta oportunidad, el problema identificado de los estudiantes del octavo grado del liceo San Rafael de Alajuela fue la falta de uso del idioma inglés en clase. Después de las observaciones grupales, se decidió probar una metodología diferente para mejorar sus habilidades de habla mediante el uso de videos de la aplicación móvil TikTok.

Este documento demuestra cuán efectivo es el uso de TikTok como herramienta dentro del aula para mejorar las habilidades de expresión oral de estos estudiantes durante el proceso de aplicación. Para lograrlo, se decidió evaluar al alumno creando un punto de comparación al inicio del proceso de aprendizaje. Luego, se aplicó la metodología sugerida en las clases y se evaluó a los estudiantes a través de listas de verificación para comprobar sus logros. Finalmente, repasar la primera práctica para evaluar su desempeño luego del uso la nueva estrategia didáctica que se implementó.

Cabe destacar que la aplicación de esta metodología fue exitosa en términos de mejorar el dominio del idioma de los estudiantes. Sin embargo, la implementación de videos de TikTok en el aula puede llevar mucho tiempo para el profesor y puede requerir que aprenda a crear contenido específico para cada grupo individual.

Al final de esta investigación se concluye que es posible utilizar TikTok como estrategia de enseñanza y mejorar las habilidades orales de los estudiantes en el aula. Es una metodología eficaz, aunque requiere de mucho tiempo. No obstante, se anima a los futuros investigadores a aplicar esta metodología para mejorar cualquier otra habilidad del idioma inglés para comprobar su eficacia en otras áreas.

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

The students are learning a language they need to learn how to use. On the other hand, the professors need to try to teach them how to use the language. This investigation will cover one of the most important skills of learning a new language: speaking. This paper will review the basics of how speaking is taught, the use of videos to teach students how to speak, and the incorporation of the teaching skill methodology with the use of the TikTok app. The main goal is to incorporate the mobile application TikTok to get the students' attention so that they want to use the language.

1.1 Problem Statement

Learning English is just as important as any other subject the students learn in high school, but the teachers and the system need to do more to get the student's attention. Unfortunately, the pandemic complicated the process even more. This is the context where the author of this investigation carried over two class observations and performed over 200 hours between planning and teaching lessons of a professional practicum.

That experience showed the need to adapt the traditional teaching English strategies and create new ones. It was also noticeable that the San Rafael of Alajuela High School students are far behind in their English level compared to the kids of their same age in private schools. From this teaching experience, the idea of trying a new methodology to help the students develop their speaking skills was born.

The topic of this investigation was created from a set of needs identified from the February to May 2022 period. The feedback received from the students was positive every time they were encouraged to use the English language in classes. They liked to have a new teacher who used

the language to build trust and engagement in the English lessons. Most importantly, the students responded positively to the variety of activities brought by the student-teacher during her professional practicum. The students liked to interact with the student-teacher. They liked to have common interests with her because they found the interaction relatable, making the code, meaning the English language, more interesting. Let us now mash their interest to learn with the most popular media app available to this target population: TikTok (Store Intelligence Data Digest, 2022).

This phone app was selected for this research due to its unstoppable growth and reach to young people. Even though using social media in the classroom might appear risky and well-directed, it can become a powerful tool to teach speaking and other language-related skills while keeping the experience innovative and fresh for the students. This investigation is expected to prove whether implementing new technologies, such as TikTok, is useful. It is also the main goal to determine if the format of short videos appeals to the student interest to start or improve their speaking skills and the effect this might have outside the classroom.

To summarize these objectives, the following research question is proposed: How effective is the use of TikTok as a tool inside the classroom to improve the speaking skills of eighth grade students from the San Rafael of Alajuela High School during the III quarter of 2022? Despite the challenge of including new technologies in the classroom, TikTok might become a powerful tool to grab the students' interest to develop better English skills and communication.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 General objective

- To evaluate the use of TikTok as a teaching strategy for the speaking skill of eighth grade students from the San Rafael of Alajuela High School during the III quarter of 2022.

1.2.2 Specific objectives:

- To identify the shortcomings of the speaking skills of the students.
- To apply the use of the TikTok app in the classroom as a mediation strategy of the speaking skills to the students.
- To compare the results of using TikTok as a tool in the classroom when working the speaking skills of the students.

1.3 Justification

Implementing new technologies to the student learning process should be considered a default trend among college professors. The reason is that the public educational system of language teaching in Costa Rica has fallen behind its counterpart private educational institutions. The Public Education Ministry has even updated its English lesson planning to a higher standard, but in the classroom is not possible to observe that expectation being matched. It is important to understand that some public institutions are economically challenged, and the possibility of accessing technology is limited due to a lack of budget. That might be the case of the institution selected as the subject of this investigation project.

Additionally, from class observations done during 2021 and 2022, another relevant aspect that inspired the subject of this paper was the urgency to create an updated environment for the students. Different seventh and eighth-grade groups were observed during the previously

mentioned period under both modalities, virtual and presential. From these interactions, it was easy to conclude that the English level of the students, needs improvement for their grades and age. Undoubtedly, those students are at a different level of language proficiency than the lesson planning from the Public Education Ministry says. Unfortunately, all these conditions add to the teachers' disinterest in making lessons more appealing to the students. The traditional approach in this context is no longer working. The students have stopped learning: They fear the language. They fear the teacher. With this thought in mind, it would be a good idea to review three important characteristics of the population subject of this investigation: The School profile, the student's profile, and why TikTok is a good idea in this community. Up next is the high school profile.

Founded in 1975, the San Rafael of Alajuela high school, a public institution, opened its doors to community service. It is an academic high school, and classes are given during the daytime. It belongs and works under the Public Education Ministry. This high school brings education to a population of low-income families, according to the INEC (Índice de Desarrollo Social 2017, 2018). Now let us learn more about the target population of this investigation: the students and their learning environment.

The classroom deterioration is noticeable. Two years of absence in the classrooms has passed the bill for the infrastructure of the high school. The English classrooms count on a TV to connect to a laptop provided by the institution. Starting the 2022 school year, the classrooms were crowded, meaning that each section had more than 30 students attending. Typically, two or three students are good at English, like the language, or are at a more advanced level than their classmates. A small group of students is shy, so they are uncomfortable speaking in English, and the majority have almost no knowledge of the language. Overall, the students kept a low profile,

answering questions and not giving further information or showing their personalities. It is understandable, given their circumstances.

On top of this situation, the English lessons are usually the same structure: the teacher explains the topic, writes the theory on the whiteboard, shows a video on the TV, and the students work individually on worksheets. Day after day, the students are subject to this monotony. In most cases, the students need the workbook or the worksheets because they can afford to buy them. No interest whatsoever from the institution to bring support to these students. They deserved better, and the idea to bring something new to the class was born here.

As a professional practicum requirement, the teacher-student was required to record one of her lessons. To do it, the teacher-student brought to the classroom a ring light, so it was easier to set the cell phone and record the piece of lesson needed. Seeing the students excited to have this equipment in the classroom was a surprise! A huge deal of speculation was created to see the ring light. Were they going to record something? Was it a dance? Or teacher, are we going to do a TikTok? All those questions and all that excitement were enough evidence to understand that something in the classroom needed to change.

The use of videos as a teaching strategy has been introduced previously. However, educational videos follow a script that no longer causes surprise. TikTok, on the other hand, is what is trending. It has been one of the most popular cellphone applications (Store Intelligence Data Digest, 2022) since 2020, and it has only gained more popularity. The teachers need to pay close attention to the needs of the students, their interests, and what sparks joy in them. In class, it is necessary to use whatever resource is available to reach the students' minds and help them lose that fear of speaking in English. Bringing together both parties' main interests will make the teaching-learning experience more enjoyable.

This investigation project's main objective is to prove the effectiveness of thinking outside the box. Doing so may result in a new teaching strategy that could be implemented in the classrooms. Understandably, teachers may want to avoid using this app, which has the fame of just being a hobby in the classroom, but the risk is worth taking. The teaching vocation should drive that urgency to help the kids learn in a way they can enjoy, even if it means going outside their comfort zone.

1.4 Antecedents

The construction of the antecedents for this research project is linked to the main three fields of investigation of this topic: Speaking skill teaching strategies, the TikTok app, and the use of videos in the classroom. From this delimitation, a complete recompilation has been done from databases and websites such as Google Scholar, Costa Rica's University repositories: Kérwá and Latindex, to further understand the studies on these fields of research to determine the conclusions previously accomplished from these studies.

Following this literature review, this antecedent structure has been proposed for this investigation: theoretical background, international background, and national background.

Theoretical background

Teaching strategies to enhance oral skills and public speaking

Speaking is the main goal of learning a new language. Speaking is usually perceived as a given since most students know how to communicate in their native language. However, why is it common to hear people say things like: I can read it, I can write it, but I cannot speak it? From a teaching point of view, developing the students' speaking skills should be ranked higher in the list of the four main English skills to learn.

Book author Bygate (1996), in his work: *Speaking: Language teaching: A scheme for teacher education*, offers an analysis based on a three-part process where he defines the nuances of using language to accomplish simple tasks that involve talking to another person. In the second part, he reviews the function of the most common speaking exercises. Finally, in the third part, Bygate offers different options for the teachers to identify students' learning and what else they can learn from different teaching strategies. The information in this book is important for this research to understand the process of teaching speaking using the English language to adjust this theory to the main purpose of this investigation.

International background

The other paper relevant to this investigation, related to a specific technique to teach speaking, was carried out by Bahrani and Soltani (2012). Their study was done for the Islamic Azad University. It is very interesting to realize that developing speaking skills is difficult, no matter the native language of the students. This study, although small, is included in this research. They also include an activity that, at least in their educative context, can be used to teach speaking in the classroom. Some of their recommendations are carefully preparing the activity, setting a goal outcome, keeping groups small, and brainstorming. In their conclusion, they discovered that most of the teachers would devote excessive amounts of time to immerse the students in non-communicative activities and the effects of only including the students in vocabulary and grammar practices (Bahrani and Soltani, 2012, p29)

In addition to the Bahrani, T. and Soltani paper, it would be important to mention the study published in New South Wales, Australia, by Huining Yang (2020). The title of their work is *Secondary-school Students' Perspectives of Utilizing Tik Tok for English learning in and beyond the EFL classroom*, which is almost a perfect match to the topic of the current

investigation. Yang's (2020) study is relevant to this investigation as it sets an excellent antecedent in terms of the specificity of the topic and the use of TikTok as a learning tool or strategy. This study contains valuable information for the current investigation regarding acceptance, public reception, and expected success. However, Yang approached the platform with the broad objective of learning a second language and developing several different skills. The study shows the process taken to understand the student's perspective on using TikTok as a part of their learning process. Yang (2020) carried out a survey where the results can be used in this research as a guide to use the platform in the classroom. Conveniently, this investigation showed that the student population from this study expected to improve mainly their listening and speaking skills from this teaching technique. Although Yang did not explain how to use TikTok in class, they explained the pros and cons of implementing the strategy in the classroom.

Thanks to the analysis done by Yang in their study, it was possible to find a study, *The Emerging Technologies: Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)*. The author Atef Odeh AbuSa'aleek (2014), wrote about using mobile devices as a tool for language learning. The relevance of his study to this investigation will be the objective presented by the author as the impact on the student's learning process, the drawbacks, and the future of education. One of the main concerns in the investigation that will continue this antecedent was the students' access to technology. AbuSa'aleek (2014) did not focus the study on the negative aspects but emphasized the benefits and potential of using mobile phones in terms of a learning strategy.

National background

Including national studies for this research is very important since it will set up this study in the reality of the Costa Rica educational system. Also, national researchers approach their studies from the context of the teaching process in public education, which relates to the spatial of this

paper. In 2015, Professor Maria José Quesada Chaves published the article: *The creation of educational videos as a teaching strategy in the training process of future English teachers*.

Quesada (2015) talks about the creative factor in the teachers to improve and adapt new technologies to create attention-catching teaching materials. The challenge presented by Quesada is to forget the old methodology and apply the current technologies to the classroom. In her investigation, the author uses the creation of videos as projects for the students but let us not forget that the subjects of her paper are indeed student-teachers. She concludes that her work presented challenges, such as students not knowing how to use the editing tools and a lack of experience in video developing or filming strategies. However, she values that this investigation developed another set of skills teachers need to offer quality materials to their future students. Although the investigation of TikTok as a teaching tool in the classroom does not have the goal of involving the student in creating videos, it might light up their creativity. Hopefully, some will get enough motivation to break the ice and start talking in English.

1.5 Scope

For this research project, the following goals are expected to be accomplished:

1. Test the use of TikTok in at least five English lessons so that the author of this paper can gather a fair amount of time to understand the effectiveness of the implementation of this tool.
2. Learn about the shortcomings of the speaking skills of the students subject to this investigation. This point, in specific, will help both the investigator and the high school teacher to understand the student's needs and how to improve their knowledge.
3. Get the students as involved as possible in interacting with the TikTok videos during the English lessons.

4. Carry this investigation on more than 25 students during the third quarter of the 2022 school year.

Given this scope, this research project would shine a light on the future generations of English professors that are ready to explore new technologies to help their students feel confident in their use of the language.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

Traditionally, when a student is exposed to learning a new language, the main goal of learning should be how to use it. However, in the San Rafael of Alajuela high school classroom, the students learn in a way that would not prepare them to use the language. Speaking should be ranked higher on the list of skills to develop in the classroom for the student to become more language proficient. That is the reason for this study to focus on developing the speaking skills of young students. The method proposed in this research uses a traditional learning strategy like videos but with a twist: TikTok videos. The next part of this investigation project will analyze how speaking has been taught, how TikTok could be adapted for educational purposes, and how to create or identify videos within the platform to use as a mediation strategy in teaching the speaking skill.

2.1 Literature Review

Speaking has been used in classes as part of oral expression practices such as scripted dialogs, reading texts aloud, or asking the professor for permission to use the restroom. In said scenarios, the use of the language is mostly mechanic instead of spontaneous and natural. Additionally, as proposed by the Public Education Ministry, the students need to start using the language at these early stages to achieve proficiency at the end of their high school years. However, the expectation has yet to be met, and only a handful of students can speak basic English once they finish high school. The traditional approach to teaching speaking is now outdated, and professors ought to explore other alternatives to make the use of the language more appealing to the students. This investigation will encompass the theory and methodology to teach

and improve speaking skill in class and merge it with the use of TikTok videos as part of its mediation strategy towards reaching the students' improvement of their speaking abilities.

2.1.1 What is speaking?

Speaking is the ability to communicate using a language. It involves developing skills to produce and interact with the world. Mastering speaking skills is important because it enables learners to express their ideas accurately at any given time. Also, speaking is one of the most critical skills for those learning a second language. The reason being is that one person knows the language when considered a "speaker." However, professors usually focus on teaching grammar and vocabulary since those skills are easier to assess. Grammar is the system that gives structure to the language, and every language has said guidelines. Understanding a new language from a grammatical point of view is important because it determines how it should be used. Grammar rules also indicate the meaning of the spoken words (Khan Anmol et al., 2020), which will help the language user communicate clearly and effectively.

English grammar is often one of the most common limitations people have when learning the language. Although it is usually the main focus of several English courses, the grammar rules intimidate the students to a point where they will not speak in English out of fear of making grammar mistakes. Any skill needed to speak a second language shares the objective of conveying meaning and achieving fluent language production. The second most teach a skill is the acquisition of vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of those skills that help the student to comprehend the language. Lack of vocabulary is usually noticed in the students when they need help finding the words to name an object, an action, or a noun, generally speaking.

Teaching and learning vocabulary is often classified under the theories of cognitivism and nativism. Cognitivism states that only one cognitive capacity is responsible for all human

learning. Hence language acquisition is achieved the same way as a person learns other cognitive skills such as math, drawing, or signing. Nativism explains the learning process of children who have no clear understanding of the complexity of the rules of the mother tongue but master the use of it in a natural way (Alagözlü & Kiymazarslan, 2020). In their book, *Current perspective of vocabulary learning and teaching*, the authors mention that learning vocabulary cannot be reduced to the action of memorizing words. Unfortunately, this skill has been limited to lists in the classroom and extends only to the current environment of the students. Blake (2019) wrote about the constant change in vocabulary and its social, cultural, and age differences. He mentioned the use of slang, the inclusion of technology, and how this affects how vocabulary should be taught. The problem with only working on these skills is that students learn to use the language to obtain good grades in high school. That makes a point that learning a second language is not worth it.

Mastering speaking skills presents lots of challenges. Under the stigma of using the language as the ultimate goal of learning it, most students find speaking in English frightening. Author Alireza Jamshidnehad (2020) said that even after years of learning semantics, syntaxis, vocabulary, and grammar, students would experience frustration in real oral interactions. One of the biggest complaints this author found was the lack of opportunities to interact and communicate effectively with the students. Costa Rica ranks 44 out of 120 countries in the region with moderate English proficiency ("EF EPI 2021 – EF English Proficiency Index – Costa Rica", 2021), and it is still common to hear people express their fear of talking in English. Teachers can help avoid this outcome by providing good feedback and improving students' self-confidence and self-esteem so that English learners can use the language more confidently.

Another way to help the student is by teaching more than just grammar and vocabulary. Speaking involves two other skills: fluency and pronunciation. Fluency, according to the definition by the Cambridge Dictionary (2022), is "the ability to speak or write a language easily, well, and quickly." Certainly, fluency is a key component of the proper development of speaking skills, but why is it too hard to achieve? To answer this question, it is important to understand what limits the learners from achieving a certain level of fluency. Author Whitney Nelson (2019) explains that English language students are set to believe "language myths." These limiting beliefs hold the learners back in developing their speaking ability, with no reason other than "I cannot" or "this is just not for me." Nelson then invites the students to confront those barriers and work towards the next level of fluency. However, it should not be disregarded whom this responsibility falls. Probably, teachers have been promoting and pushing those limiting beliefs in the students without even noticing. Achieving higher levels of fluency is indeed part of a long process for the students, and it can be affected by causes beyond the teacher's control. However, it should be achievable for second-language learners. The invitation for the professors regarding the development of fluency is to be mindful of the expectations set in classes. One clear example of a limiting belief pushed to the students is that one will only achieve a "native-like" fluency if one can live in an English-speaking country. This type of statement in the classroom does not motivate the student to pursue this goal, quite the opposite. Some students will find it discouraging and feel defeated from the very beginning.

The fourth speaking skill is pronunciation. From a teaching and learning standpoint, pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to develop. The English lesson planning of the Public Education Ministry of Costa Rica contemplates the awareness of the pronunciation but not its full understanding in the students. No specific lessons are dedicated to producing sounds,

phoneme/grapheme relationships, or spelling patterns. No wonder why pronunciation teaching has been set aside along with fluency lessons. It is a shame that this skill has been left out because good pronunciation is needed to convey meaning to the speech. The correct production of the sounds ensures the clarity of the message in oral interaction. Enunciating and pronouncing words correctly is the "foundation of messaging in speech." The words, the grammar, the discourse, and the projection of different facets of social contextual meaning (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019) set an English learner for success in speaking ability. No matter how difficult it to teach pronunciation could be, teachers should not leave this aside as it has been because it is a very important aspect of language use. It provides the speaker with cultural background and social and personal identity. It is a definitive resource that ensures better communication, according to Pennington & Rogerson-Revell.

Nowadays, proficiency in speaking English is required to have better educational opportunities, find a job, or even create successful relationships overall (Baker & Westrup, 2003). So why are professors choosing to teach grammar and vocabulary instead of including the other skills that complement the use and understanding of speaking ability in the curriculum? To understand the reasoning behind this deliberate decision, one must understand how speaking is taught in the classroom—this a continuation of a brief introduction to teaching methodologies related to the use of the language.

2.1.1.1 How to teach speaking?

Teaching speaking is just as important as teaching grammar and vocabulary. In order to teach speaking, the professor must understand the levels and expectations of the class, as Brooks (2015) states in his book. Brooks recommends having the students practice speaking as much as possible to learn how to use the language better. He also mentions the importance of using grammar and vocabulary combined with speaking to support one another.

There are several approaches to teaching speaking. The most efficient way to teach how to speak in English would depend on the language functions to focus on. According to Van Ek and Trim (1991), language functions are organized into six general categories: Imparting and seeking factual information, expressing and finding attitudes, deciding on courses of action (Suasion), socializing, structuring discourse, and communication repair. Casta & Hufana (2016), two students from the St. Theresa International College, wrote a paper comparing the most common language functions in English as Second Language textbooks. Their study showed that "imparting and seeking factual information" and "expressing and finding out attitudes" are the two functions that take the lead in how speaking is taught, whereas "communication repair" has almost no representation in any of the textbooks compared.

Here are some examples of the uses in speech or oral communication of the language function that is expected from the learners:

- Imparting and seeking factual information is the use of language where the speakers need to identify, define, describe, asking or answering questions to get the information needed.

- Expressing and finding out attitudes is the use where one person shows agreement, knowledge, and trying to understand an obligation or responsibility.
- Suasion or deciding courses of action would help the speaker to communicate/receive instructions, provide warnings, and encourage or accept/decline invitations.
- Socializing attracts attention, introduces people, reacts to social interactions, and properly responds to social queues.
- Structuring discourse is the knowledge to create conversations, express hesitation, use social conventions to ask people to follow a set of rules, and overall gain credibility through the use of the language.
- Communication repair, the least included ability in English textbooks, and ironically one of the most important abilities to develop, is the use of the language to express non-understanding, asking for repetition/clarification, wrapping up conversations to show understanding, and paraphrasing.

Language functions should be considered by every professor any time they are planning a speaking-focused English lesson. Knowing the goal of each of these six categories, a lesson can be designed to focus on any of the four speaking skills: grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. For the students, the knowledge that language function provides enables them to interpret and react appropriately to what is being said in the interaction. More importantly, it lets them structure their ideas, internalize speech patterns and identify the language demands of the conversation (Kinsella, 2010).

Another variable to teaching speaking is the types of activities that can be done while learning to use the language: conversational English and controlled speaking activities. Conversational activities are classes of small groups. These classes have almost no structure and are often theme-based, proposed by the teacher or the students. Its main goal is to use language completely focused on conversation rather than correct grammar use (Ching, 2019). Also, these activities can be controlled or authentic. The author suggests that controlled activities help the students practice grammar or pronunciation, whereas authentic activities help the students interact with each other. The teaching method will depend on how the professor approaches a topic in addition to the combination of language function and the type of activity. Historically the two main teaching methods used to teach speaking are the Direct Method and the Audiolingual Method. However, these methods are outdated now for their pedagogical limitations. In Costa Rica, the Public Education Ministry has designed the English curriculum to be taught under the communicative language teaching method. Here is a description of the three methods to help the reader understand the methodology used to teach speaking.

The Direct Method does not include any translation. The goal is to get the student to develop conversational skills and learn a new language based on everyday interactions. In the book, *The Foundations of Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, the author Paul Lennon (2021) summarizes the Direct Method as using English as the language of instruction for the students to understand and talk with native speakers using everyday language. Lennon also highlights that grammar is taught implicitly, and the vocabulary is demonstrated but never translated. The teacher corrects grammar and pronunciation; however, there is no further explanation. The main goal is to mimic the instructor as

much as possible hence inherently improving the ability of the students to use and understand the language more easily. The disadvantages of using this teaching method are easy to identify, especially in the new currents of education where the students need to learn by their own experience and not by imposition. At this moment, some common disadvantages: Disregards the reading and writing skills altogether. Mostly useful for basic vocabulary lessons. For instance, in advanced vocabulary classes, the teacher would need help to point objects from abstract concepts. It is time-consuming since it is based on real-life experiences. To mention a few.

The Audiolingual method, explained by Bailey (2020), focuses on speech to master the language by using structures given by the facilitator. She explains that the student would learn basic grammar patterns from repetition until they gain enough confidence to use them independently. For this investigation, Spanish will not be allowed to follow the Audiolingual method. However, its main focus is to improve English oral and aural skills. The main drawback of using the audiolingual method is that it limits the amount of vocabulary and the spontaneity of the use of the language. Other disadvantages are the passive role taken by the students. Reading and writing should be reinforced in this methodology. Communicative skills need to be developed more efficiently. This methodology is also teacher-dominated.

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method, presented in the 1970s, has influenced the teaching methodology up to this day. Its main goal is to achieve communicative competence, meaning that students will not receive direct commands from the teacher but will develop critical thinking to understand communicative utterances (Lennon, 2021). This methodology aims for the students to understand and

express themselves using the language. Grammar, reading, and writing are complementary skills in this teaching methodology. The expected functions of language in the CLT are using the language to get things, control other people's behavior, create interactions and express creativity through communication (Ratu Bangsawan, 2020). The major disadvantage of this methodology is creating the need for the student to use the language outside the classroom. Another disadvantage is transmitting seriousness to the activities carried in classes since students tend to see them as "role-playing" and "pretending." The teacher should consider the students' personalities before preparing the speaking lessons using this methodology.

2.1.1.2 How is speaking improved in the classroom?

The group subject to this investigation is expected to have a basic knowledge of the English language, according to the language proficiency expected from the English program of the Public Education of Costa Rica. However, due to the academic delay occasioned by the pandemic, it is expected to work with students that would be under their expected English level. Nevertheless, that experience, no matter the level accomplished by the students, will be considered a starting point to measure the improvement of their speaking skills.

In addition to the teaching methodology, speaking can be improved by several activities encouraging the student to use grammar, and vocabulary, express themselves fluently with correct pronunciation, and the function required for a given scenario. Here are some examples from the book Emotional intelligence speaking activities for ESL classrooms (Victoria, 2021), where the author not only incentives the use of the language but gives examples of activities for the students to develop more than just their English-

speaking skills. In this book, Victoria expresses her interest in enriching the curriculum by adding to the academic side the tools to improve personal competencies, hence self-confidence, which translates to students being comfortable using the target language. One of the strategies presented in this book that could be implemented in this investigation is number 2 *All beginners*. In this activity, the students share their favorite song. Then the teacher projects the song's video. The students will work in groups to form opinions and express what they like. In this part of the activity, the students will talk as much as they want. The purpose is to break the ice and not evaluate the communication. The importance of this activity is to bring emotion to the speech, which is a function of the language. Music has that factor to it and is worth taking advantage of.

When teaching speaking, the work of a professor must move from just academics to exploring and finding ways to overcome the challenges that speaking a new language has. Moving, singing, lip-syncing, creating, and repeating can be amazing strategies to teach speaking, but the teacher can figure out what is best for their classroom. Sometimes, the students will need to practice listening before engaging in a speaking activity; some examples are listening to a conversation, associating words or actions with images, video observation, interpreting instructions, or following recipes. In other situations, the students will need a device to use the language without being too obvious, for instance, working in groups to complete a scavenger hunt, creating an advertisement for a product, creating a YouTube channel, or asking for instructions. The professors indeed want to encourage their students to use the language, but it needs to be evaluated somehow. Let us think of “using the language” as a goal. Then the learning process

should follow at least five stages: pre-teach, teaching, post-teaching, evaluation, and finally, improvement: a continuation, an analysis of speaking evaluation in the classroom.

2.1.1.3 Evaluation of the speaking skill

Assessing speaking includes different variables that must be considered to show improvement in the students. The three dimensions of speaking are delivery, language use, and topic development (Xi & Norris, 2021). Assessing language proficiency can be challenging. Mostly because teachers are used to evaluating other English skills in quantitate ways, whereas speaking must be evaluated qualitatively. In his book *Assessing English Language Learners: Theory and Practice*, author Guillermo Solano explains the challenges of evaluating English proficiency. Solano (2016) says proficiency works in terms of context and how the language is intended to be used. The author indicates that traditional speaking assessments are designed to evaluate native speakers. This could lead to misinterpretation of the results of these evaluations, making the task even more difficult for the teachers to assess their students.

The British council offers a useful guideline of the desired skills that an English learner must have to pass a speaking evaluation. His website listed three components already mentioned in this paper before: clear production of the sounds, the student's understanding of the functions of language, and the social conventions on how a speaking interaction goes (Paul, n.d.). Maureen St. George mentions this in her article. How should I effectively evaluate speaking skills? (n.d.) three different assessment strategies to evaluate speaking. The first on her list is a one-on-one test. Face-to-face interaction can be helpful for the teacher to see the strengths and weaknesses of the students without distractions. This assessment strategy can be structured o just a regular conversation

between the teacher and the student. This strategy is great for small groups; however, a one-to-one interaction can be intimidating to some students, causing nervousness, anxiety, or any other negative feeling that would negatively impact the test. The second strategy she mentions is to give the student tasks and to include other abilities, such as kinetics, so that the students do not feel the pressure on speaking but in the other elements of the evaluation. The third strategy is using games to evaluate how the students interact with each other to complete a task and stand up from the rest. Healthy competition can ease the use of language, and the teacher can observe the students to provide feedback on the three different scenarios. Assessing speaking must fulfill a series of requirements to be effective. From a teaching point of view, the writers Rahmawati & Ertin (2014) discussed the variables of assessing the students' speaking skills in their investigation for the University of Jakarta. When creating an evaluation rubric, they encourage the teachers to ask themselves if the assessment is practical, reliable, valid, and authentic and if it allows the students to understand the received feedback. In this study, the authors suggest using evaluation rubrics for oral presentations to cover any of the uses of language that a professor wants to improve. In other words, these evaluation rubrics should be specific to the skill the teacher is trying to evaluate. A teacher should keep the same skills in the evaluation as it might confuse the students when receiving improvement opportunities. For instance, if the main goal of the evaluation of a speech is to review fluency, then the teacher should not be correcting the student for lack of relevance on the topic of their oral presentation. It is also important, as teachers, to assess the students' speaking skills to help them improve and provide the kids with effective

feedback so they can benefit from the learning-teaching experience and not be scared of being evaluated.

2.1.2 What is Tik Tok

Around the beginning of 2020, the name Tik Tok became more and more popular. However, mostly no one understood what it was nor the purpose of this "dance app." It was certainly a challenge for people above their late 20 getting what Tik Tok was all about. Today, this mobile app has taken over the world, becoming one of the teenagers' most popular cellphone applications (Store Intelligence Data Digest, 2022). It is inevitable to ask: Should you be a professional in education, learning to use TikTok? To answer this question, let us go back to the concept of mobile apps and how it has impacted education.

2.1.2.1 What are mobile applications?

Technology has evolved, and now it is possible to learn from the palm of our hands, but can we learn from the mobile app TikTok? Mobile applications, most commonly known as apps, are software designed specifically for smartphones or tablets, according to the article "What is a Mobile Application? - Definition from Techopedia" (2020). There are different mobile apps, such as gaming, business, entertainment, and educational. Afreen (2021) mentions that educational apps let users learn while playing educational games. His book collection *Vida Inteligente (Smart Life)* of Issac Robledo (2017) ranks Duolingo, a language learning mobile app, as 32 as part of 44 apps that will pick your brain, proving that mobile apps can be helpful when it comes to learning. The benefits listed are learning at the user's own pace and the facility to access the app everywhere.

2.1.2.2 What is the TikTok app?

The mobile app TikTok was developed by the company ByteDance in 2018 (Pletl, 2022), and it has been constantly updated to its users' demands and suggestions. TikTok can be used on mobile systems for Apple and Android and is available in over 50 languages. This app falls under the category of a short-form video-sharing app. The author of the New York Times article, Jhon Herrman, 2019 said that TikTok is an app that is different from anything that American users have used before, hence its fast-growing. Herrman also mentions that it is easy to be caught on the screen due to the variety of topics offered to the users. TikTok is indeed an app for entertainment. However, it has become an app where content creators can build businesses, offer help, and teach almost any incredible skill. Virtually everyone can create a TikTok account to watch and post content.

To create videos on TikTok, there are no specific technical requirements. Before starting, it is important to clarify that for this investigation, the reach of the content would not be considered a determinant of this research's success. Having that out of the way, here is a review of the video creation process of TikTok. The content creation is quite simple. The creator, the word used to name the person using the app to create videos for sharing purposes, should use a mobile phone or a regular camera and hit the record button. Music and effects can be added to the video. The platform will let the creator add subtitles to the video and add text, effects, hashtags, descriptions, and filters. TikTok is a complete video editor software that helps people express their creativity in just one place (or app). The general objective is to create engagement with the audience, meaning likes, comments, shares, and interactions with content. The TikTok user will prefer content that

makes them smile, have a positive sentiment, and why not leave them with a nice lesson (Nicholas, 2022).

Searching for content in TikTok is even more so easy. TikTok works under an algorithm. According to the article, The TikTok algorithm, explained by Jacqueline Zote (2022), the TikTok algorithm "is a system that makes content recommendations personalized for each user." The app will decide what videos a user might like based on their online profile. On the app, the person will see these recommendations on the "home page" called on TikTok, the "For you page." As mentioned before, this research would not use TikTok to create content for the student; its objective is to gain popularity on the app by creating content. The goal is to find resources within the app to teach the four speaking skills. The adjacent benefit of using TikTok in the classroom is introducing the students to educational content, transforming screen time into learning time. So why should teachers not use this app's appeal to the younger generation to help them improve their speaking skills?

2.1.2.3 How to use TikTok to teach speaking?

The idea of microlearning exploded when the internet became popular in the late 1990s. Here is the definition of microlearning according to the book *Microlearning: Short and Sweet* by Kapp & Defelice (2019) says "Microlearning is an instructional unit that provides a short engagement in an activity intentionally designed to elicit a specific outcome from the participant." Microlearning is defined as material that can be consumed in up to five minutes. It can be used to prepare, support, follow up, or just standalone material for educators and learners (Torgerson & Iannone, 2020). TikTok will be the perfect platform to deliver microlearning content to students. The short-video format of

TikTok can be easily absorbed by the students, be theme-specific and, most importantly, be attractive to young learners.

Six elements construct this definition. We can adjust to this research to use TikTok to teach English in combination with the microlearning theory. The authors explain that the videos should be a "start-to-finish" learning experience starting with the instructional unit. The video could be an animated flashcard, a behavior example, but it should be able to stand by itself. Engagement is a word that, when it comes to social media, is quite common. Short engagement is having the student interested in the video for its duration. The content selected for this investigation must comply with this specific point as it is needed to stimulate the student's curiosity. The videos should contain some activity or call to action. Microlearning's main objective is to gain something from the information presented and not just mindlessly adsorbing information with no point. The format of the TikTok videos usually contains some call to action as it is expected for the viewers to react to the content in some way, whether to like, comment, or follow more good call to action such as "repeat after me," "duet this video" and "how many answers you got correct."

The content design must be intentional to the target skill, meaning that for this investigation, the goal is to enhance the student's speaking skills, so the selected content must fall under the categories of pronunciation, fluency, diction, rhythm, mimicking, and so on. The specific outcome is undoubtedly having the students use the language, so the TikTok videos should focus on this result. Lastly, the last element is the participant. Kapp and Defelice stand in this section that the purpose of microlearning is not about the theory learned but what to do with that theory as a result of the learning experience.

Therefore, TikTok videos can help teach speaking skills in the classroom because following the elements of the microlearning theory will give the students the tools to use the language more confidently.

The goal is to expose the students to educational material in the platform and for the teachers to create a more immersive learning experience using the language.

2.1.3 The use of TikTok videos as a speaking teaching strategy

While using cell phones in the classroom might seem controversial, as mentioned before, the goal is to get the students more interested in using the language. A fifteen-second video, yet carefully planned and produced video, can create enough engagement (Stay, 2021) in the students to make them interested in the English language. There are two approaches: the students create the content to put the language to use, or the teacher exposes the students to videos that enhance their speaking skills. This paper will focus on the second one. Professor Carlos Linda (2020) wrote a comprehensive guide to using TikTok as a mediation strategy. Returning to the guide by Linda, he points out that using TikTok is just too effective with the students, especially for students where interaction with native speakers is almost nonexistent. In this guide is mentioned the hashtag #edutok, which is the platform segment that groups the content by categories, is pretty self-explanatory #Edutok refers to educational content.

Under this category, students and teachers can find over 10 million educational videos to learn and practice English in almost all aspects. At the same time, Linda expresses his concerns about using the platform in the classroom. The first is the history of students making fun of another student for trying to use the platform to learn English. The most relevant concern is the students' privacy when using the platform, especially if they are underage. The major challenge would be setting the students' minds to see the app as a tool, not a distraction. At the end of this

guide, the author says that technology is growing rapidly, and soon enough, English classrooms will have holograms to help the student learn the language, so there is nothing to be scared of. For this investigation, the biggest problem identified by the target audience is a need for more interest in using the language. However, this approach is expected to have the kids want to interact with their instructor, react to the content, or at least help them understand that the language is not just a worksheet in classes. The use of video in the classroom is familiar but selecting the right content for the students is. It is imperative to understand what kind of videos work for improving speaking, a continuation of that analysis.

2.1.3.1 How do videos work to enhance the speaking in the students?

Any English student will confidently ensure they have seen videos in classes at least once. Videos are a great resource. Typically for speaking lessons, videos are used to model interactions, and present vocabulary in addition to images of objects and actions, as part of predicting practices and several more applications. It is safe to say that videos are a fundamental part of the language proficiency development of the students as audio CDs once were. Videos allow the students to listen to different accents and pitches of voices different than the teacher. This is very important because most of the time, students get used to the professor's clear and well-enunciated English and need help understanding basic instructions from a different person. The use of multimedia also benefits the learners' listening skills. For those with kinetic memory, it would be very helpful to listen to videos to replicate the sounds with their vocal cords.

Currently, one of the biggest video-sharing platforms is YouTube. YouTube channels are dedicated to creating video materials to teach English and other languages. The videos on this platform can easily be adapted to the classroom. The disadvantage of

using YouTube or any other online platform would be the elements needed in the classroom to access these videos, such as a computer, internet, and television, as well as the time consumed by the teacher to find the perfect video for a specific lesson. However, YouTube videos, specifically captioned videos, have been proven to help learners to gain a more accurate oral speech and identify errors in pronunciation; over time, it has helped the student to have a better understanding of the topics of the videos, and it has been reported to help a student to correct grammar and vocabulary (Tso et al., 2022).

Most of the time, students will react positively to a well-selected video in the classroom. In a way, videos make the students feel like they are not studying but have a small amount of entertainment. Videos are fun to watch, and the language in videos tends to be used more naturally. The videos can be as specific as needed. Let us say, for instance, that the class needed to reinforce the sound of diphthongs. There will be a video for that. Those examples mention some benefits of using videos to enhance speaking. It has been mentioned a couple of times in this literature review the importance of selecting the right material for the classroom. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that videos should meet the student's age, level, and topic to staying relevant and interesting.

2.1.3.2 How is video technology used in the classroom?

Creating an appropriate integration of the new technologies with traditional learning and teaching methodologies is imperative. Naidoo (2021) introduces us to keeping education relevant and competitive. The goal is to follow the ideology of having the students learn by experience and not from memorization, as it has been done until now. The author explains that effective implementation of well-designed online educational learning programs can help teachers to achieve and follow the ideology of

teaching experiences. The challenge is understanding how technology can be integrated into the classroom and the meaning of learning when the students have constant online access to information (Kucirkova & Falloon, 2017). In their book, the writers commented that even though technology can be challenging to implement, it is worth trying since the benefits received outweigh any presented challenge. TikTok will be used as the technology element for this investigation, so the focus will be to use the features and the functionalities that add value to the pedagogical purposes of the app.

2.1.3.3 What video formats are more effective for teaching speaking?

Any video that encourages the use of the language is good. However, some techniques can be applied to achieve a specific goal. Here are some examples taken from the ESLactivity.org site of using videos to teach different competencies of speaking skills. These were selected as possible video formats for this investigation when the implementation stage started.

Dubbing: When the students watch a video, they associate sounds and body language, especially if they see a cartoon or TV series clip. In this video presentation, the goal is for the students to reenact the dialogue considering voice modulation, intonation, breathing, and pausing, among other skills. Direct learning is indeed the use of language. The indirect learning goes from the function of language to learning vocabulary and using correct sentence patterns without even noticing.

Video challenges: Most students will engage in a good challenge. These types of videos are made to include questions and answers. The goal is for the student to get the right answer before anyone else. Here the students need to use the vocabulary to give answers, but indirectly they are training their brains to think in English, and their

listening skill is being stimulated. The third type of video will be included in the prediction type. Although prediction is a more intermediate skill, the students can still work in these activities due to its multiple benefits. Prediction is a function of language that is very important to train. Stimulates the critical thinking of the students.

Additionally, predictions help students understand social queues regarding every action's consequence.

Including TikTok as a teaching strategy in the classrooms is a great idea in addition to the different methodologies discovered in this literature review. Academic research has been done about using videos to enhance students' speaking skills. Also, there is evidence of the disadvantages of traditional teaching methodologies, such as focusing only on teaching grammar and vocabulary and using direct and audio-lingual methods. On the other hand, using technology is an effective way to gain interest from students in developing their speaking skills. Overall, the information gathered in this chapter offers a clear vision of what is needed to be done to answer the main question of this research on the effectiveness of using TikTok as a teaching strategy.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the use of TikTok videos in the classroom to help the students to improve their English-speaking skills. This chapter includes an explanation of the research approach to achieve the main goal of this investigation. It also includes a brief description of the research design, the information sources, and the data collection methodologies selected to gather information to answer the research question of this paper.

3.1 Research approach

This investigation will follow the qualitative method since the literature review main purpose was to understand the current theories on teaching and improving speaking skills. The qualitative research is composed by the collection, observation, and analysis of non-numerical data (Bhandari, 2020). This data is descriptive, and it cannot be measured as language for instance. This type of investigation is created as a result of dissatisfaction of pre established process, not achieving an expected level of knowledge or just out of curiosity for social behaviors; therefore, the goal of these research is to understand the reality of the individuals subject to the investigation in reaction to the analysis categories proposed by the researcher.

The author Minichiello (1992) conceptualizes the qualitative research as one investigation generated by the concern of understanding the behavior of the human from the investigator perspective. He also explains that the data collection is made through observation and interviews of the participants. In this approach the researcher is a key participant because without them the data would not exist.

The book *Qualitative versus Quantitative Research* by Sonyel Oflazoglu (2017) guides the researchers and the people interested in carrying a qualitative investigation, through a flow

chart that explains the investigation process in a simple yet effective manner. Oflazoglu indicates that qualitative investigations are inductive, subjective, and narrow in terms of the subjects of investigation. The population is purposely sample; quality has importance over quantity. The data collection consist of less structured observations and interviews since the authenticity of the interactions is desired by the researchers. The interpretation of the collected data is made taking into consideration the analysis categories and the results are deeper but less generalized; more often the results cannot be predicted.

The limitations of the qualitative approach are usually related to the reliability and validity of the study. Due to its subjective nature, standardizing the interpretation of the collected data can be difficult and not reliable to the readers of these type of investigation. Also, the time and the cost to carry this research is considered a limitation. Another disadvantage of this approach is the unlikeliness to replicate the study by other researcher because of the context conditions and interaction at the time of the previous investigation, making the studies unique and almost not comparable (McLeod, 2019).

The advantages of this type of investigation are the detail obtained from the data collected. Given the researcher unique point of view and interpretation of the data, the qualitative research often allows to find issues that are lost in macro investigations. Additionally, this approach offers meaningful insights to the readers, promotes the generation of new ideas and it is flexible, meaning that the research can be adapted to any sudden change in the research environment. Prove of that adaptability in the qualitative research approach are the different research analysis techniques that can be used for interpretation. In this chapter, it will be explained the narrative research and the action research.

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Narrative research

This is a form of qualitative research where the primary goal of the researcher is to analyze data collected from case studies, observation, surveys and personal interviews in regards to a specific topic. From these data collecting methods, the investigator writes their findings, compares them with the existing theory and then analyzes the data ("Narrative Analysis: Methods and Examples", 2021).

In order to perform the narrative analysis, the researcher must understand the social and cultural context of the research subjects. In chapter one of this research, it was stated that this investigation will be carried out in a group of 30 students from the San Rafael de Alajuela high school. The social and economic background of this population was identified as challenged since the community of San Rafael is a socioeconomically developed area. The age of the students ranges from 12 to 14 years old, and the level of English is below basic.

In narrative research, having this information helps in building a more complete analysis of the data as it provides a deeper understanding of the reactions and interactions of the research subjects in relation to the investigation topic.

3.2.2 Action research

This type of research is used by the investigator to solve the problem stated in the research question during a specific time. The main purpose of this type of research is to learn through action. This approach provides the researcher with the ability to suggest lines of action and learn from the decisions made. Action research is often used in classrooms to observe changes in the behavior of the subjects, to identify issues or problems that need to be solved.

("Action Research vs Case Study: Know the Key Difference Between Two Qualitative Research Methods – Five Vidya", 2019).

The action research method will be applied in this investigation by testing the use of TikTok videos to help the students to improve their speaking skills. Some problems that are easy to predict are, bad internet connection, complete disengagement of the students to the lesson planned or a power outage. The challenge will be to solve these problems while the investigation is done on order to collect data and prove whether the implementation of these videos was effective or not. This method collect data from surveys, questionnaires focus groups and interviews. This way the researcher would be able to tabulate the data in order to interpret it and come up with solutions to the presented issues. These instruments also give a broader understanding of the reception of the methodologies implemented in the classroom for the investigator to conclude its effectiveness.

Some advantages of this research methodology are providing social reality to the study by linking the theory with the practice and it gives the students a voice on their preference to the teaching methodologies that they are being exposed. One factor to consider when using the action methodology is being careful of the ethical considerations of privacy and confidentiality. In these modern days, the data ownership should be negotiated between the investigator and the participant to avoid any problem in this area (Qualitative Study Design: Action research, 2022). For instance, in this investigation, it is required to ask permission to the parents of the students to complete any surveys.

3.3 Information Sources

Any investigations must be referenced from previous writers of the topic. The information sources are classified in primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. One of each has a

different value to the biographical references of the investigation. Here is the definition of these sources according to the books *Introduction to Writing in College* by Melanie Gagich and *ENG 102: Reading, Writing and Research* by Emilie Zickel.

3.3.1 Primary sources

Primary sources are text produced directly from a particular topic. It can be a letter, a book to a tweet or a post in social media. Its main characteristic is that this source has not been subject of critics. These sources can be academic and/or popular, meaning popular use. Another main characteristic of a primary source is that it is preserved in its original form, and it has not been translated.

Primary source example from this investigation: Lindae, C. (2020). Using TikTok to promote speaking skills [Ebook]. University of Vigo.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348447003_Using_TikTok_to_promote_speaking_skills?enrichId=rgreq-cbb38ea9cecc9cf06328946d38714559-

3.3.2 Secondary sources

This is information that has been already analyzed or interpreted by other researchers or authors. In this type of sources, the author expresses the data or information from an indirect point of view and not from its own experience. Some examples of secondary sources are movie adaptations from books, biographies, and analysis of other people investigation work.

Secondary source example from this investigation: Bolen, J., 2020. How to Use Video in the ESL Classroom | Videos for ESL Students. [online] Available at:
<<https://www.eslactivity.org/use-video-in-the-esl-classroom/>>.

3.3.3 Tertiary sources

Lastly, the tertiary source is those that synthesizes primary and secondary sources, The authors of these sources usually based their work from summaries, compilation or paraphrasing of others' work. Some examples of these type of sources are textbooks, encyclopedias, and dictionaries.

Tertiary source example from this investigation: Dictionary.cambridge.org. 2022. fluency. [online] Available at: <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fluency>>.

3.4 Analysis Categories

For this research there are only two analysis categories: TikTok and speaking. A continuation the operation definition of these two concepts.

TikTok: “is a massively popular app that lets users create and share videos up to 60 seconds long. Lip-synced music videos are especially popular on it. The app has given rise to a number of young social media influencers (Science, 2019)”.

Speaking: “is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal cords, tongue, teeth and lips (What is Speaking? | Speaking | EnglishClub, n.d.)”.

3.5 Data collection Instruments

Considering the nature of this investigation, it has been decided to utilize two different data collection instruments: the survey and the observation. There are two types of surveys: written also known as questionnaire and the oral survey known as an interview (Barrantes Echavarria, 2018). It is intended to use a written survey to collect data about the access to new technologies from the students, since it is important to understand if the students are familiar

with the TikTok mobile application. This way the investigator can decide the correct approach to introduce this app to the students.

The other instrument to be applied in this research would be observation. Echavarría (2018) defines the observation as the “process in which the specialist collects, by themselves, information related to a certain issue.” This instrument was selected to diagnose the shortcomings, the reception of the teaching methodology to be applied and the results afterwards.

3.6 Collection data process and data analysis

The written survey will be conducted at the beginning of the data collection process, and it will be answered anonymously by the students. From this survey it is expected to know the number of students who have access to a mobile device, to internet service, and their interaction with the TikTok app. A five-question form will be used in this stage of the investigation so that the class can start immediately after the form is completed. There is no preparation required by any of the parties involved. The only thing the students will need to complete the survey will be a pencil. The answer to the question in the survey can be easily analyzed by tabulating the data to identify the percentage of this population that has access to said technology.

The observation will be applied during the pre-test, application and post-test phases of the investigation. The observations are structured, carried in the natural environment of the students as a group and the investigator is not a participant. The data will be collected by using checklist for each teaching stage. The Checklist includes two set of criteria where the concepts and the aspects of evaluation are specified so the investigator can diagnose and evaluate the improvement of the students. The checklists are based on a point system, meaning that the highest number of points will show the completion of the objectives while a lower score would demonstrate the shortcomings or improvement opportunities of the group.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process where the investigator discover, identifies, and describes the components of any determine information unit, that information should be arranged and tabulated so that its presentation provides meaning to the data collected (Masters, *Análisis de datos de una investigación cualitativa 2022*). In a qualitative investigation, the researcher focuses on the experiences, interactions of the subject in its natural environment so that the particularities in the behavior of the subjects are showed with no alterations whatsoever. The most important aspect of the data analysis on qualitative investigations is description and the interpretation of the observations and data collections made by the investigator to present the data and the findings of the research (Gibbs et al., 2012).

In this chapter, the information gathered from the data collection instruments will be analyzed in order to confirm or disprove the main objective of this research: The use of TikTok as a tool to improve the speaking skills of the students of eight grade from the Highschool of San Rafael of Alajuela. The analysis of this data is important so that the effects of the strategies applied in classes to understand the results of the made efforts are quantified.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

This section will review the outcomes of the collected data during the different phases carried for this research. The data will be analyzed in phases: Class observation, pre-test, application and post-test. These stages were selected to identify the shortcomings and the outcomes of the teaching strategy applied during the investigation. In the stage of class observation, it will be reviewing the interaction teacher student, with no interaction of the

researcher. The rest of the stages will follow the researcher teaching methodology and guidelines to prove the hypothesis stated at the beginning of this paper.

4.1.1 Class Observation

The class observation was made to this group when the professor was teaching the middle part of the Unit 2 of the Public Ministry of Education of Costa Rica. The topic seen in class was sports vocabulary. The students were working in a speaking activity where they needed to ask to their classmates whether or not they meet certain descriptions from the given exercise. The interaction between students was mostly made in Spanish, even though the list of descriptions was written in English. The students relied on translation to complete this practice and the professor in charge did not encourage the students to speak in English to communicate between them. In this lesson, the grammar topic was review by watching YouTube videos where the person on the video explained the negative form of the verb be (don't, didn't, wasn't, weren't). The students watched the video, but there was no further interaction with the content, there was no follow up of the topic by the professor. The students are expected to understand the topic by memorizing the grammatical form that is stated in the booklet. The purpose of the class observation was to identify how the students are using the language in class, and to identify what creates engagement or disengagement from their current learning process. Also, the researcher needed to have an overall perception of the English level of the students in this section, to design a lesson plan aligned with their use of the language. It was also important to introduce the researcher, and the research purpose, so that in the next lesson they were to expect a change in the classroom dynamic.

4.1.2 Pre-test

This phase was designed to have an overall appreciation of the proficiency of the speaking skills of the group. In this stage, the main goal was to identify the language use shortcomings of the students so that the investigator would be able to adjust the lesson planning to tackle these improvement areas. The pre-test part in this research has two sections: the first one to understand the access to technology that the students have and the second part to observe and diagnose the current level of speaking of the class. A continuation, an analysis of the results of the pre-test phase.

4.1.2.1 Questionnaire (Tech survey)

The next lesson was assigned as part of the pre-test stage of this investigation. In this phase the researcher applied a questionnaire for the students to complete with the intention to determine how many students have access or know about the TikTok app. This data is important for this research to understand how the students are interacting with the proposed tool before the application of the teaching methodology started. The applied questionnaire consisted of 5 questions, 4 of them are yes/no questions and the last question was multiple choice. The survey has no grading, it was just a probing instrument. The information collected from this instrument is completely confidential and it will be used only for the purposes of this investigation. The survey was taken by a total of 25 students. The following images will analyze the results of the pre-test survey.

Figure 1

Age range of the students in this group.

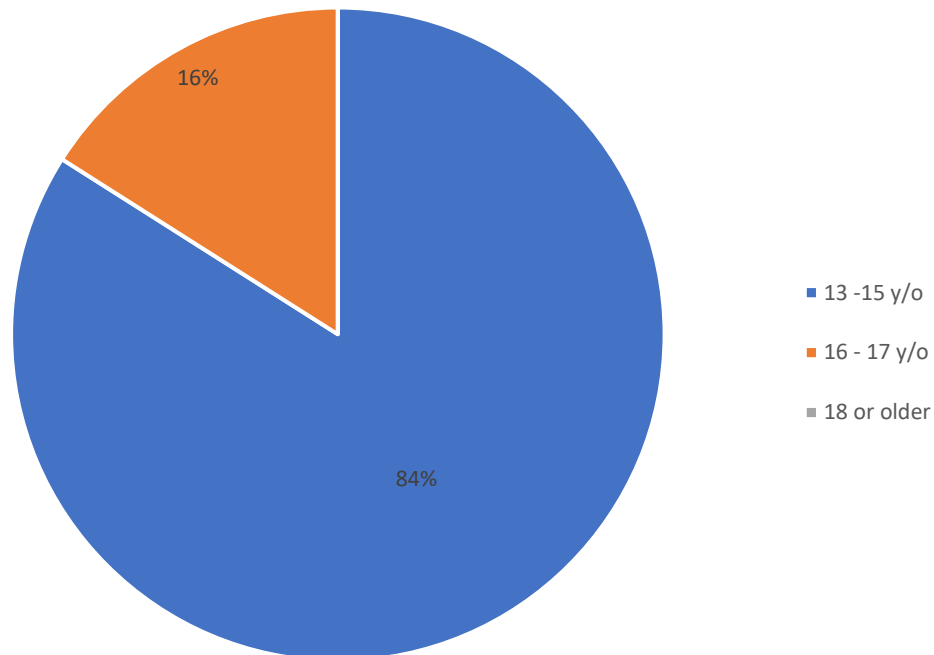


Figure 1 illustrates: Age range. Source: Tech Survey, researcher's creation

This group complies with the national expected age range for students of eight grade. This information is relevant to understand the shortcomings in the English level of the students, given the fact that, in terms of age, grade and academic development the language proficiency is below of what is expected for this group.

Figure 2

Total students in this group that has mobile device.

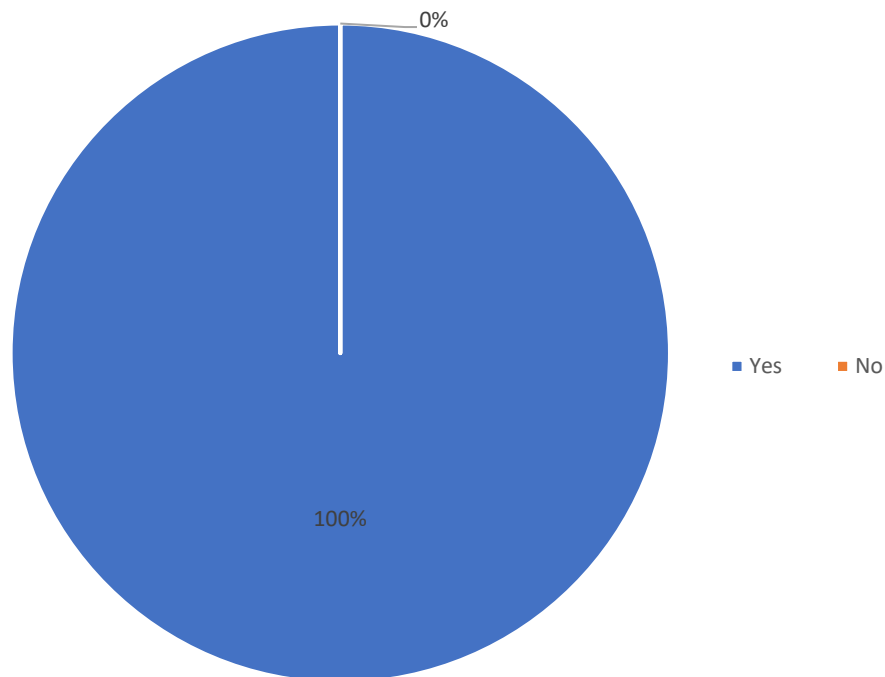


Figure 2 illustrates: Students with mobile device. Source: Tech Survey, researcher's creation

This research wants to introduce the use of a mobile app as a teaching and learning strategy for the students. The answer to this question proves that all of the students are already using a mobile device, meaning that they might feel comfortable or even excited to use it while in classes.

Figure 3

Access to mobile data (internet) from the mobile device of the students.

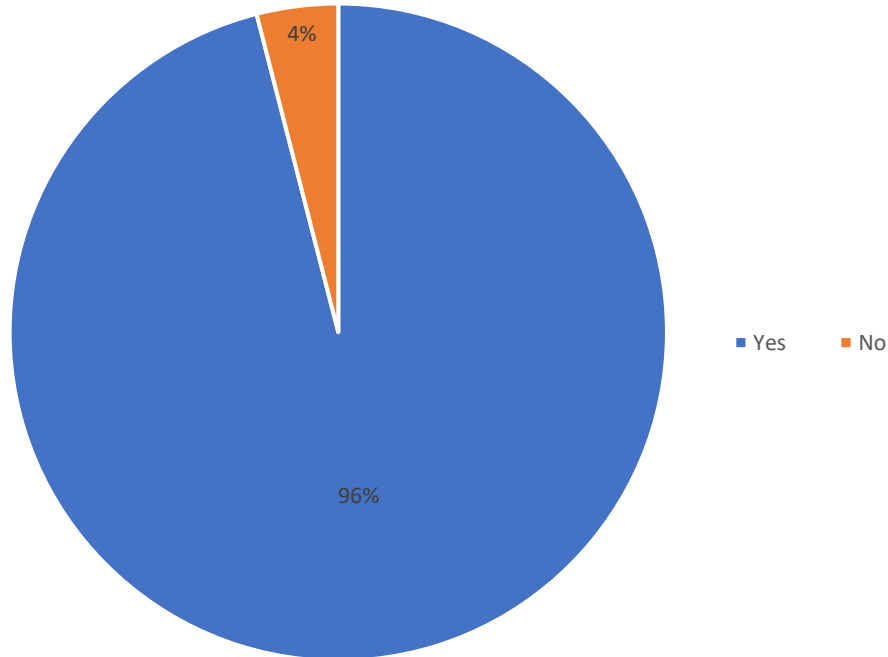


Figure 3 illustrates: Students with access to mobile data (internet use). Source: Tech Survey, researcher's creation

From 25 students, only one student reported to not have access to mobile data from their mobile device. However, many students reported to have internet access form Wi-Fi connections whether at the high school or at home. Since TikTok is a mobile data usage app, this investigation needed to confirm if the use of the app would be accessible for the students.

Figure 4

Number of students that have a TikTok account.

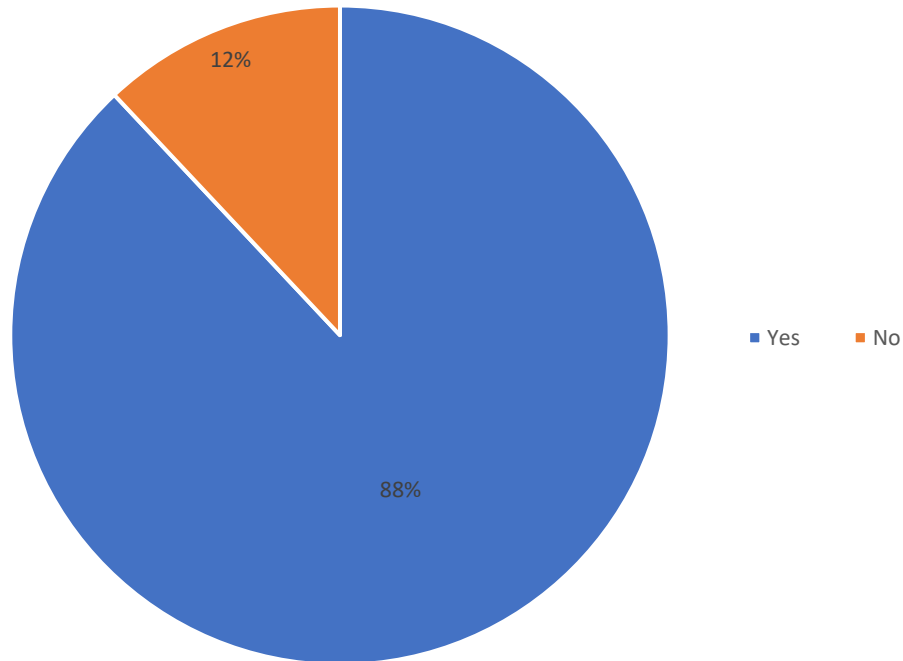


Figure 4 illustrates: Students that have a TikTok account. *Source:* Tech Survey, researcher's creation

TikTok is an app targeted to a specific demographic, this one being a younger public in which for the purpose of this investigation this data was needed only to have a better understanding if the students were familiar with the app. Otherwise, it would have been necessary to first introduce the app to the students and then proceed to use it in classes. The results of the survey reveal that 88% of the students have a TikTok account, but for the rest 12% we can conclude that, students may not have permissions from their parents to use the app, or that the students are simply not interested on the platform.

Figure 5

How students that have a TikTok account are using it.

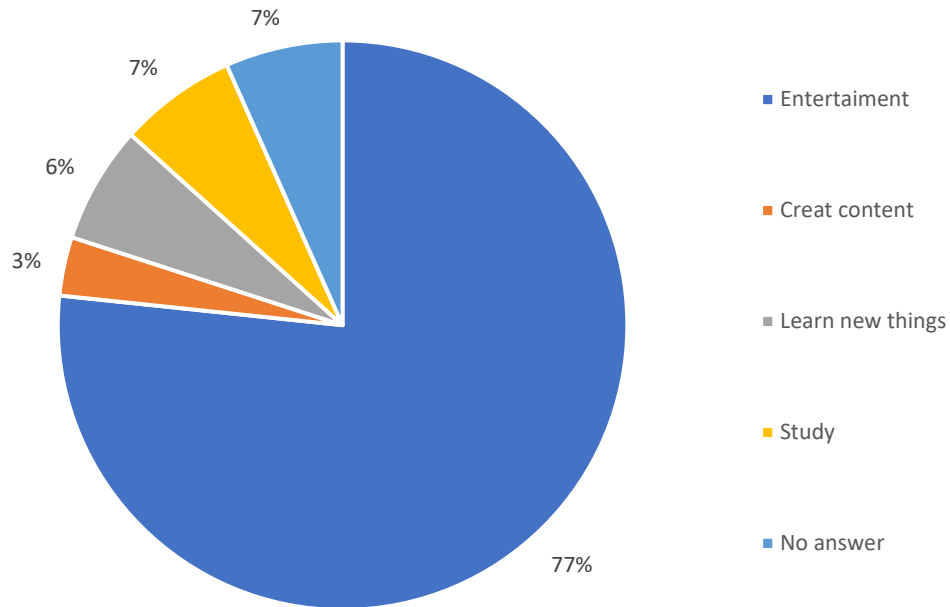


Figure 5 illustrates: The use of TikTok by the students. *Source:* Tech Survey, researcher's creation

The great majority of the students that have a TikTok account are using it for entertainment purposes. No significant data collected as per the study category, just two students answered that they use TikTok to study. This data was used to present TikTok as a teaching strategy to the class. In fact, the premise created expectation among the students to see something that only meant leisure to them, work in the classroom.

4.1.2.2 Observation checklist

The second instrument applied during the pre-test stage was an observation checklist where the expected outcome was to identify the shortcomings of the speaking skills of the students when finalizing the topics of the Unit 2 of the booklet in classes. In this phase, the researcher was actively participating introducing the last section of the Unit 2: Sports vocabulary, past tense of regular and irregular sport verbs. The main focus of the researcher was to emphasize the correct pronunciation for the -ed ending of the regular verbs, and the change of the pronunciation of the irregular verbs. The lesson setting was using a list of verbs and a YouTube video to get the student to mimic and repeat the correct pronunciation of the verbs in the list and the video. The list was written in the whiteboard, and it would be read aloud two times by the researcher, the students would repeat each word after the teacher. By the third time going through the list, the students should be able to pronounce the verbs without the teacher modeling the pronunciation. The observation checklist would evaluate three different criteria and assigns a level depending on the compliance of the proposed criteria. The pre-test stage criteria are: correct pronunciation of the past tense verbs, general pronunciation accuracy and fluency. The levels of compliance are classified as follows: Level 1 means the students made from 0 to 5 mistakes and had a few minor difficulties. Level 2 goes from 6 to 10 mistakes made by the students and some effort to maintain the reading flow. Level 3 more than 11 mistakes were made, and it was needed much effort to speak fluently. The highest possible score achievable is 15 points.

A continuation the data collected from the observation of this interaction where the teaching methodology utilized is considered traditional. A total of 25 student were observed during this phase. Here below the results and comments from the observation checklist.

Figure 6

Speaking activity. Pre-test observation checklist results.



Figure 6 illustrates: Points achieved by the students during the pre-test.

During the pre-test phase, the students were expected to read the verb list from the whiteboard aloud after a second listening of the correct pronunciation of the verbs. The teacher pointed at the verbs and the students read aloud the verb. The observation checklist evaluated the correct pronunciation of the regular and irregular verbs in its past form, the pronunciation accuracy, and the fluency of the students during the exercise. From this exercise the students had trouble pronouncing the regular verbs and the -ed syllable in final position, on the other hand, the irregular verbs were pronounced correctly except for a couple of words that were read using the Spanish vowels. The students were graded by the investigator with a total 11 points out of 15 possible points. There was a good participation of most students in the class.

4.1.3 Application

4.1.3.1 Observation checklist

During the application stage, the researcher was able to introduce to the students the TikTok videos in class. The objective of the following three lessons was to create engagement with the students by using TikTok videos as a teaching strategy to improve the speaking skills of the class. In these lessons, the topics reviewed were simple past tense of regular e irregular sport verbs, the use of these verbs in sentences and its respective translation in Spanish. The videos selected for these classes were designed for the students to repeat and mimic the pronunciation, each video was played a total amount of three times due to its short format. The application stage was used to work the theory of the verbs, but strongly leaning in the students oral and speaking production. Writing and reading was discouraged during this stage, since all the theory is already written in the booklet. In this phase the observation checklist would evaluate three different criteria and assigns a level depending on the compliance of the proposed criteria. The application stage checklist criteria are: students are engaging to the videos, students are participating in the activities from the videos (repeat, guess, talk) and students ask questions, participate in class more. The levels of compliance are classified as follows: Level 1 means the students very engaged, fully interacted with the content and the majority was participating. Level 2 applied for those who were not as much engaged with the video, few students were not interacting with the content and participating, finally Level 3 were students completely disengaged with the content, without interaction and not participating after the videos. The highest possible score achievable is 15 points. The analysis of this data would be separated in three different lessons in order to compare the observed reaction of the students in each case. Each lesson observed was attended by 25 students subjects of this observation rubric.

Figure 7

Lesson 1 (40 min). Application observation checklist.

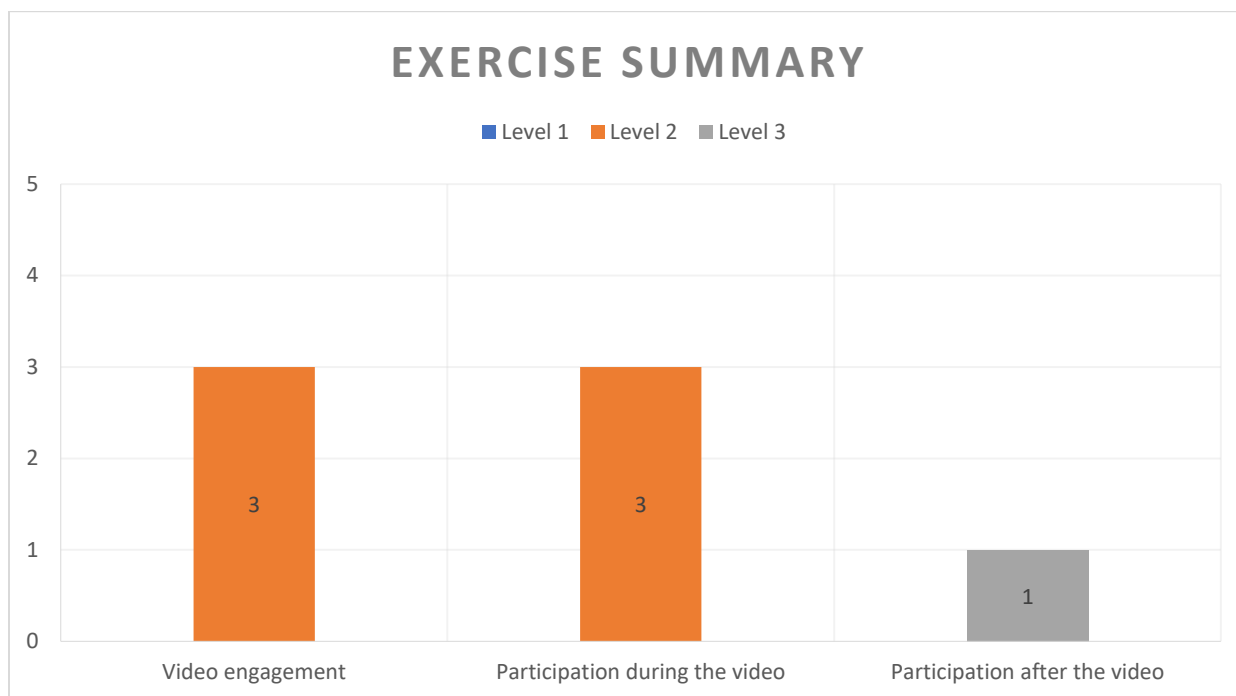


Figure 7 illustrates: Points achieved by the students during the Lesson 1 of the application stage.

In the first lesson, the students learn the theory of sports verbs in past tense (regular and irregular) from two different TikTok videos. From this observation checklist, it is observed that it did not cause a big impact in the students. At the beginning of the activity, in the first time seeing the video, most of the students did not participate at all, although it was expected since the videos are one minute long. After seeing the videos for the second time, the students started to engage with the activities and followed the instructions from the TikTok video. However, most of the students disengage from the activity completely right after the videos ended. The students were graded by the investigator with a total 7 points out of 15 possible points.

Figure 8

Lesson 2 (40 min). Application observation checklist.

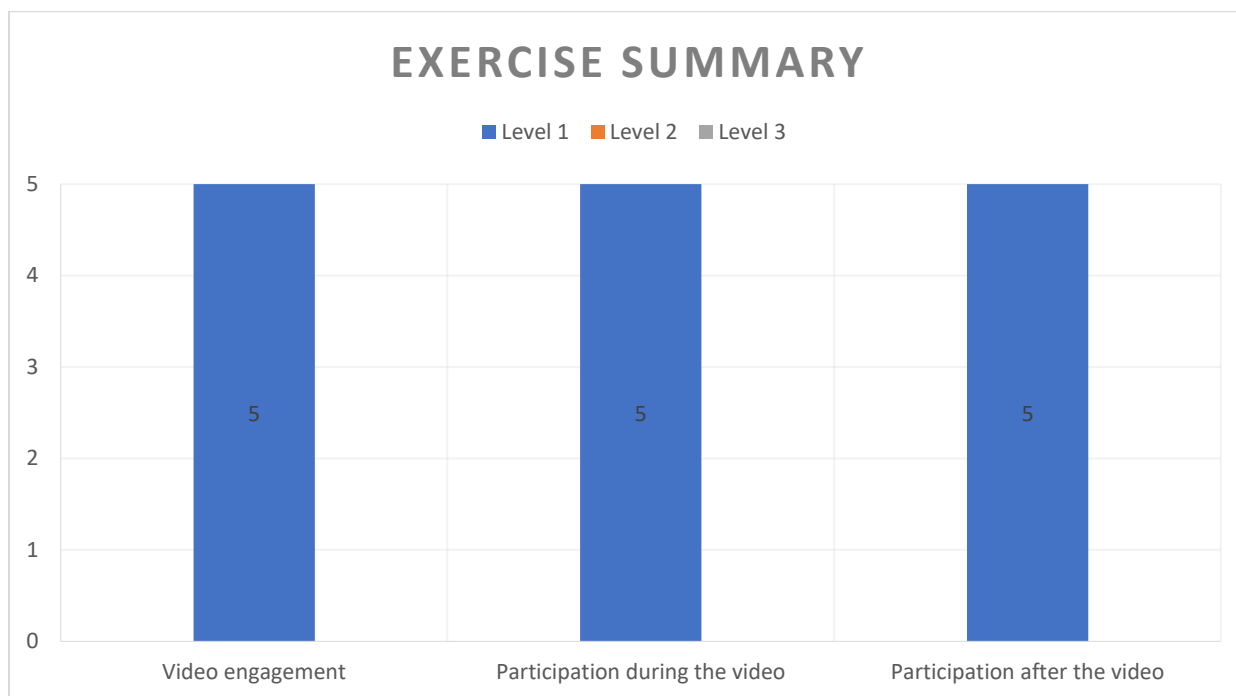


Figure 8 illustrates: Points achieved by the students during the Lesson 2 of the application stage.

For lesson 2, the videos presented to the students were completely interactive. The videos were designed for the students to listen and repeat. The videos presented both forms of the sports verbs in simple present and its simple past form. In this lesson the videos were played 3 times each. The students showed interest and were engaged to the activity and the content of the video every single play. It was possible to observe that the students wanted to interact more with the teacher, started to ask questions about the use of the verbs, the meaning and the students were requesting feedback from the teacher to check if they were repeating the verbs correctly. In this lesson, only 2 or 3 students out 25 were not paying attention at all, although this is somewhat expected in big groups of public high schools. The students were graded by the investigator with a perfect score of 15 points.

Figure 9

Lesson 3 (40 min). Application observation checklist.

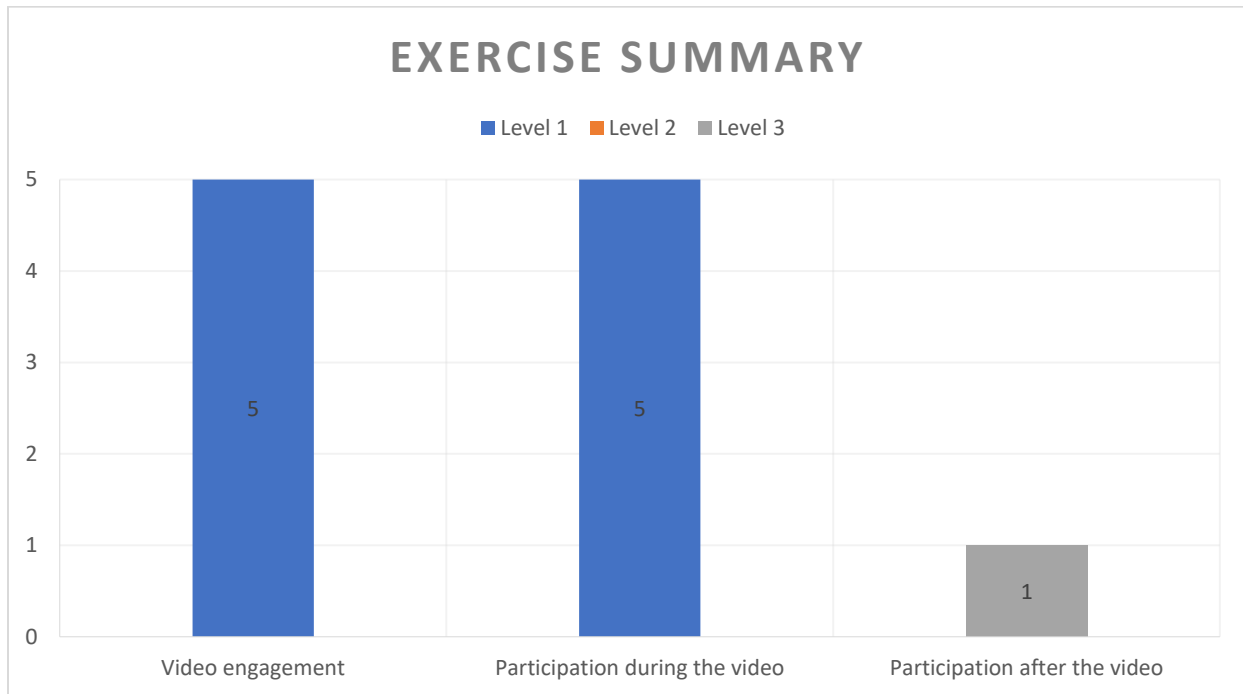


Figure 9 illustrates: Points achieved by the students during the Lesson 3 of the application stage.

The lesson 3 took a turn in the expected outcome. It was possible to observe a loss of interest from the students once the activity was over. However, the students continue to participate and engage to the speaking activities presented in the videos. For this lesson the videos were designed for the students to guess the correct form of the past tense of the verbs and the format had a good reception from the students as they felt challenged to score more points in the video. The students were graded by the investigator with a total 11 points out of 15 possible points.

Figure 10

Lesson 1 to 3 (120 min). Observation checklist summary.

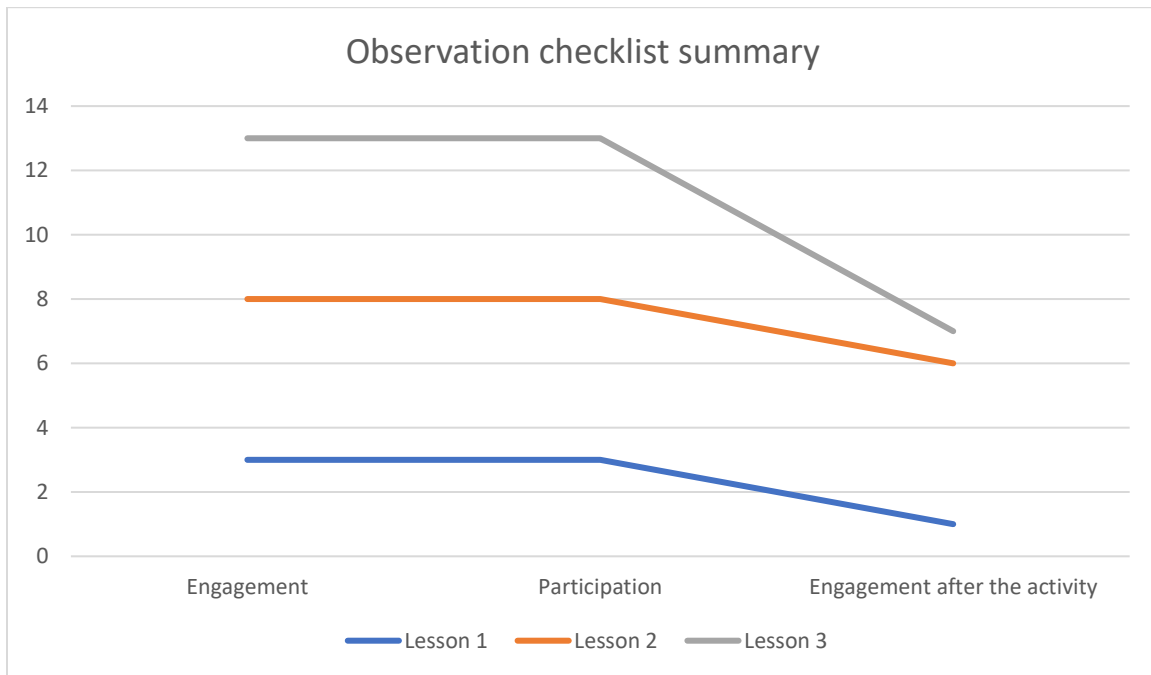


Figure 10 illustrates: Comparison of the points achieved by the students during lessons 1-3 of the application stage.

Figure 10 shows as an overall good result of the use of TikTok to improve speaking in class in terms of creating engagement and getting the students to participate. The graphic also shows the tendency of the students to disengage from the lesson as soon as the videos stop playing. At this point in the lesson plan, this disengagement is not a significant variable because the application phase was focused to encourage the group to speak more in classes because as a consequence of the videos while delivering the theory.

4.1.4 Post-test

The post-test stage was divided into three parts, a final evaluation from the researcher to the students with the intention to compare the results of using TikTok as a teaching strategy in class. The second part included a last TikTok video for the students to go back to the list of verbs at the beginning of this research so that the investigator can compare the results after the application of the teaching strategy. This second part was evaluated using an observation checklist to track the improvement of the speaking skill of the students. Additionally, the final stage of this investigation it was designed to collect information as an overall conclusion on how TikTok was received by the students in class to improve their speaking skills.

4.1.4.1 Observation Checklist

In the first part of the post-test phase, the students needed to put into practice the theory learned in the application phase. The way to evaluate the students for this exercise was to complete a chart where they needed to explain a situation in the past that it is related to the sports topic. After they completed the chart, they needed to work in pairs to ask and answer the questions of this exercise. The post-test stage criteria are: SS completed the chart, pronunciation and fluency. The levels of compliance are classified as follows: Level 1 means the students completed the chart with almost no grammar mistakes, few pronunciation and fluency mistakes. Level 2, the chart had from 3 to 4 grammar mistakes and from 6-10 pronunciation and fluency errors. Level 3 more than 5 mistakes were made, and it was needed much effort to pronounce and speak fluently. The highest possible score achievable is 15 points. This exercise was completed in pairs, so a total of 12 pairs were evaluated, only one student interacted with the teacher in order to be evaluated. A continuation the data analysis for this exercise.

Figure 11

An important event - Lesson 4 post-test exercise summary.

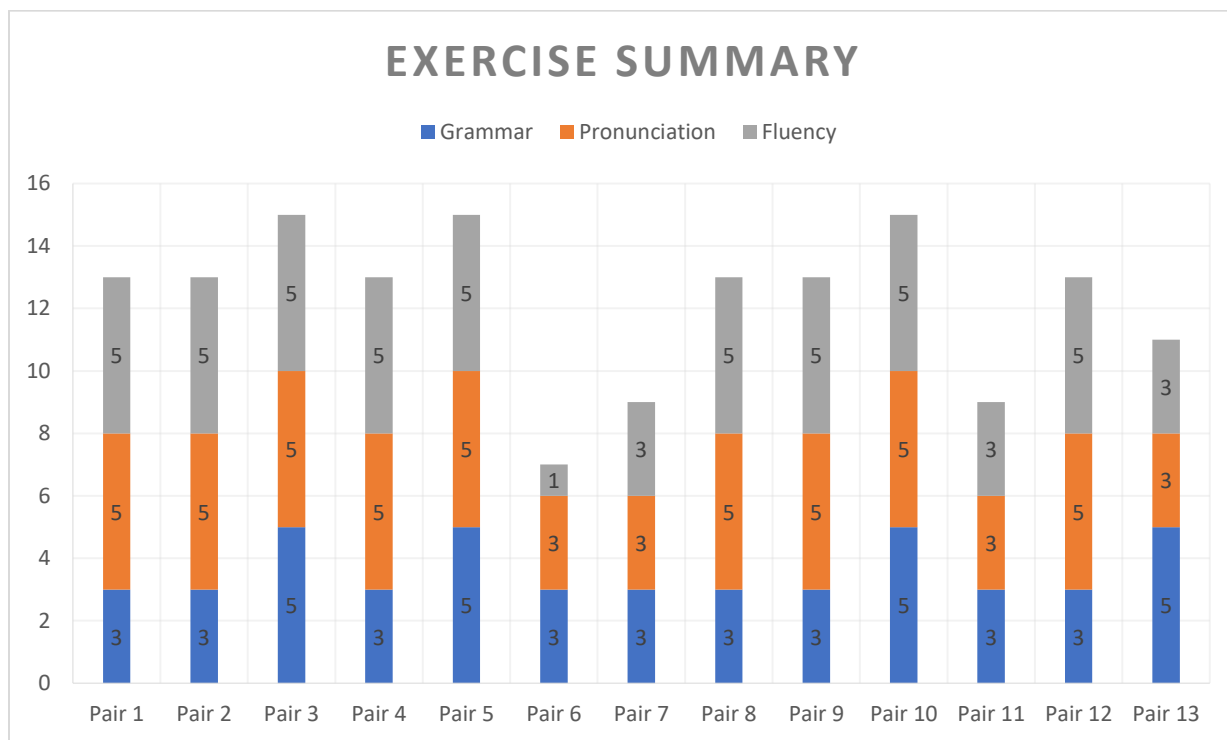


Figure 11 illustrates: Points achieved by the students during the Lesson 4 – exercise of the post-test stage.

A total of 13 pairs were evaluated during the post-test stage. The graphic shows the point achieved by each couple. For the purposes of this investigation, the errors in grammar will not be given as much importance, however the use of the correct tense form of the verb was evaluated successfully. In terms of pronunciation and fluency two main subskills of speaking, most of the students were able to succeed in this exercise. An interesting fact noticed during this practice was that the students that wrote more than one sentence tended to make more mistakes in grammar and pronunciation, whereas the students that worked in one single event were able to create and orally execute the exercise more effectively.

In the second part of the post-test phase. The students completed a speaking activity. This activity was the same activity from the pre-test stage where the students would need to read aloud from the whiteboard the same list of verbs than before. The purpose of repeating this exercise, was to compare the performance of the students after the application stage so that the researcher can identify the differences or similitudes between each stage. The post-test stage criteria are: correct pronunciation of the past tense verbs, general pronunciation accuracy and fluency. The levels of compliance are classified as follows: Level 1 means the students made from 0 to 5 mistakes and had a few minor difficulties. Level 2 goes from 6 to 10 mistakes made by the students and some effort to maintain the reading flow and Level 3 were more than 11 mistakes were made, and it was needed much effort to speak fluently. The highest possible score achievable is 15 points.

Figure 12

Speaking activity. Post-test observation checklist.

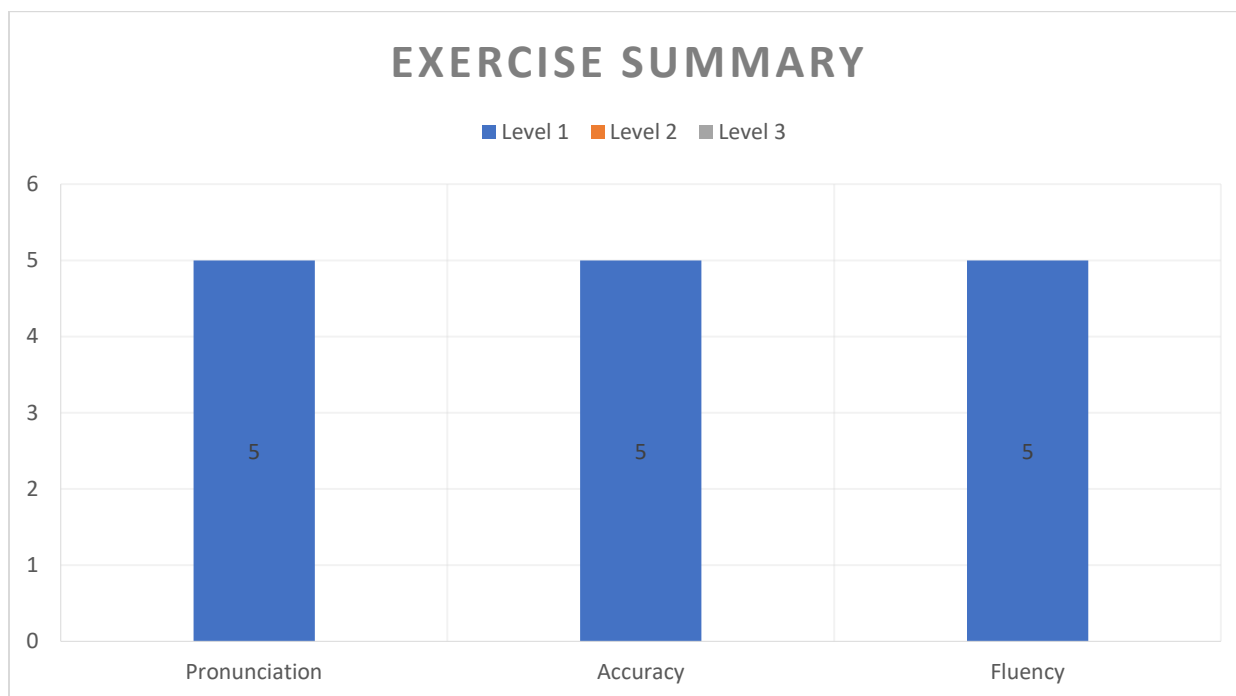


Figure 12 illustrates: Points achieved by the students in comparison with the pre-test exercise.

The final practice and observation carried in this research, consisted in performing the same exercise done in the pre-test stage. The students were asked to read the verbs from a list in the whiteboard and mimic the pronunciation of the teacher. In the post-test stage, the students read the verbs when the teacher pointed at it, but this time it was done on the second reading. The chart shows the improvement of the students to pronounce correctly the regular/irregular verbs with one repetition less than before and execute it better than the first time. The students were graded by the investigator with a perfect score of 15 points.

Figure 13

Pre-test & Post-test results analysis.

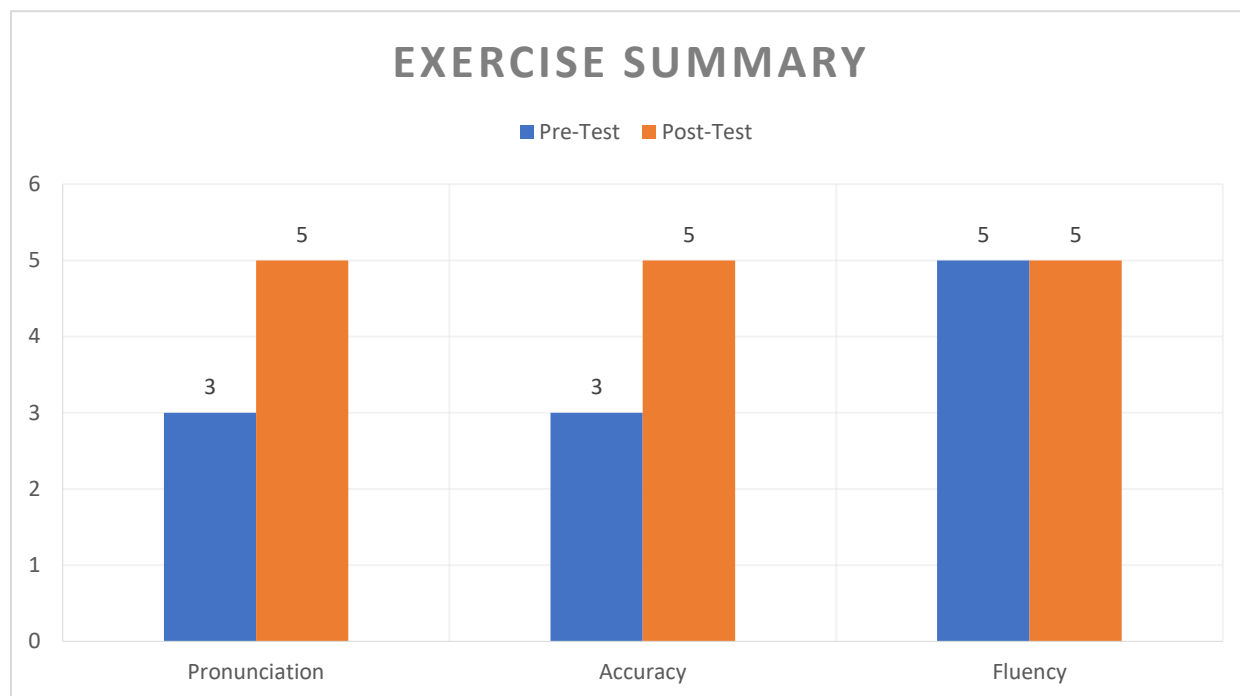


Figure 13 illustrates: Comparison of points between the pre-test stage and the post-test stage.

This graphic shows a comparison between the total points achieved by the students during the pre-test phase and the score from the post-test phase. In both stages, a total of 25 students participated of this activity, also all 25 students were part of the application process and teaching methodology proposed in this investigation. It was possible to observe an improvement in the pronunciation of the past form of the verbs. Also, the accuracy improved significantly after the application stage. Lastly, the fluency stayed the same as in the pre-test phase.

4.1.4.2 Questionnaire (Final Survey)

The final phase of the post-test stage was concluded with a questionnaire to evaluate the perception of the students about the use of TikTok as a teaching strategy to improve their speaking skills of English. The students were expected to anonymously answer five unique option questions. The intention is to identify if the methodology was effective in the students, taking into consideration the format, the platform, and the use of the app in a different perspective. In this final survey a total of 25 students completed the questionnaire.

Figure 14

Speaking improvement perception by the students.

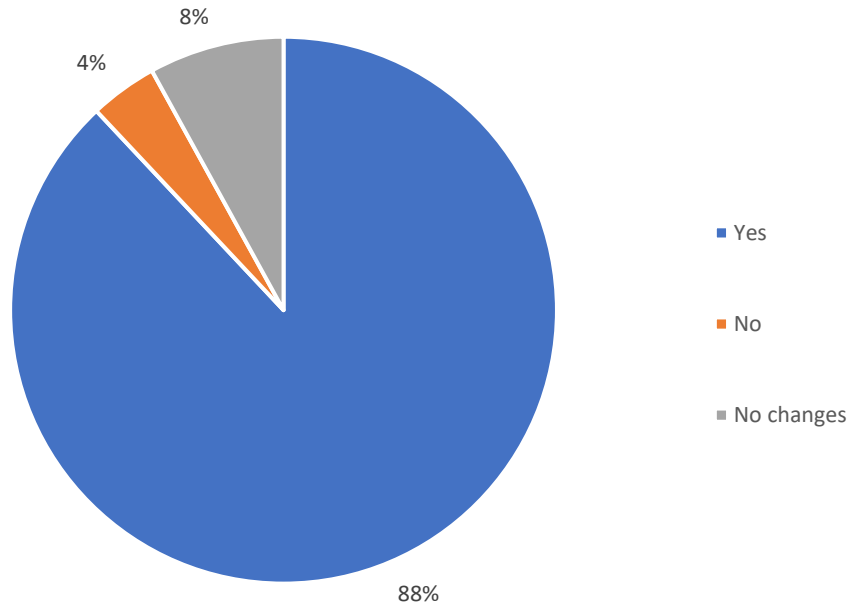


Figure 14 illustrates: Percentage of students that perceived an improvement in their speaking skill after the TikTok teaching strategy. Post-test stage. *Source:* Final Survey, creation of the researcher.

A total of 25 students completed the survey. In this group, there were a couple of students that are above their English level, so it can be deduce that the students that did not perceived any improvement are students that already use the language more proficiently. At the same time just one student stated that there was no improvement on their end after the TikTok lessons, in this investigation percentages under 10% will not be consider relevant.

Figure 15

Preference to use of TikTok to YouTube practice speaking.

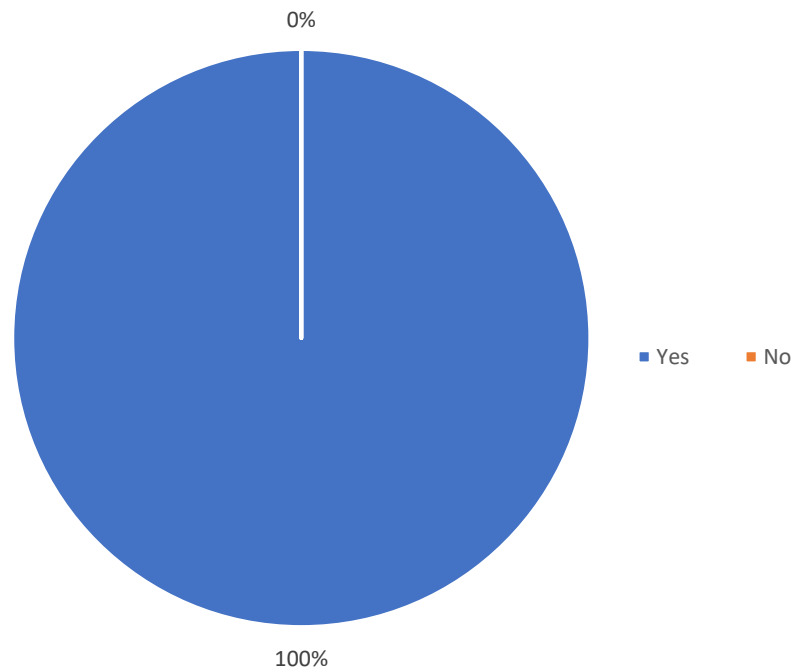


Figure 15 illustrates: Percentage of students that would use TikTok instead of YouTube to practice speaking. Post-test stage. *Source:* Final Survey, creation of the researcher.

The 100% of the students subject to this investigation agreed that they would prefer use TikTok videos to practice speaking in English rather than using YouTube. These results are aligned with the behavior of the students in class. In the pre-test stage the sports topic was presented with a YouTube video and there was no reaction from the students, whereas with the TikTok videos the students were engage a 100% of the time.

Figure 16

Perception of the TikTok teaching strategy to learn about regular/irregular verbs.

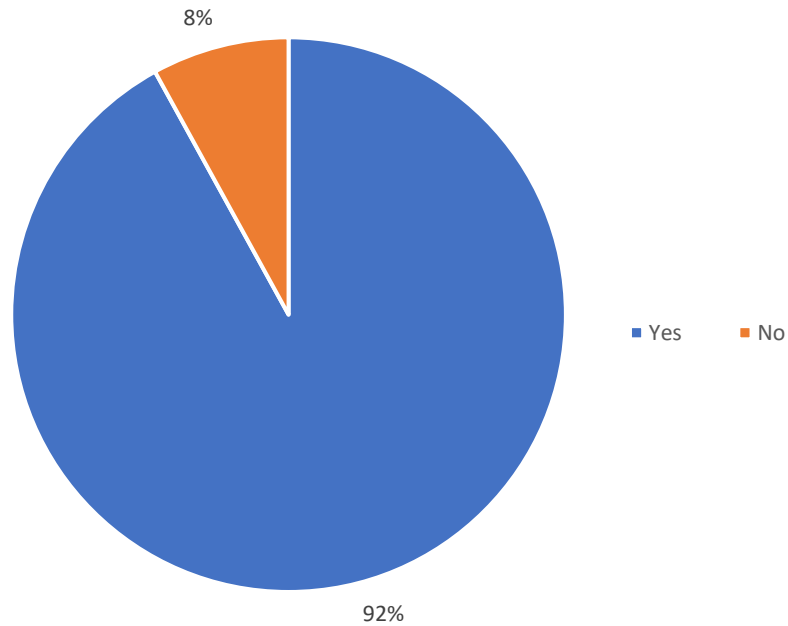


Figure 16 illustrates: Percentage of students that liked the use of TikTok to learn about the regular/irregular verbs pronunciation. Post-test stage. *Source:* Final Survey, creation of the researcher.

Once again, the majority of the group stated that they liked the use of TikTok videos in class as part of the teaching methodology. Only two students out of twenty-five answered that they did not like the use of the app. In this case, there was no further clarification on why they did not like the methodology.

Figure 17

Preference of the students on who they prefer to see in the videos.

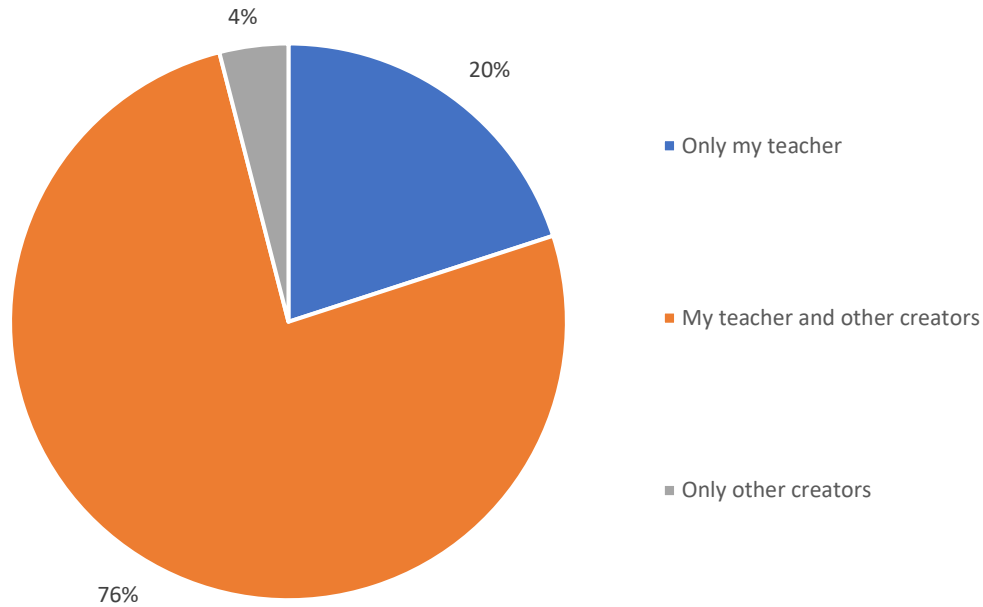


Figure 17 illustrates: Preference of students on who would they like to see in the TikTok videos.

Post-test stage. *Source:* Final Survey, creation of the researcher.

This question was answered by twenty-five students. A total of nineteen students would prefer to see TikTok videos from their teacher and other content creators. The reason being that they prefer variety in the platform, so it does not get boring. Just one student would prefer to see any other creator but their teacher. Lastly, a significant number of students would prefer to see videos only from their teacher, justifying it by saying they would feel more comfortable learning from someone they already know.

Figure 18

Use of TikTok to improve speaking skill.

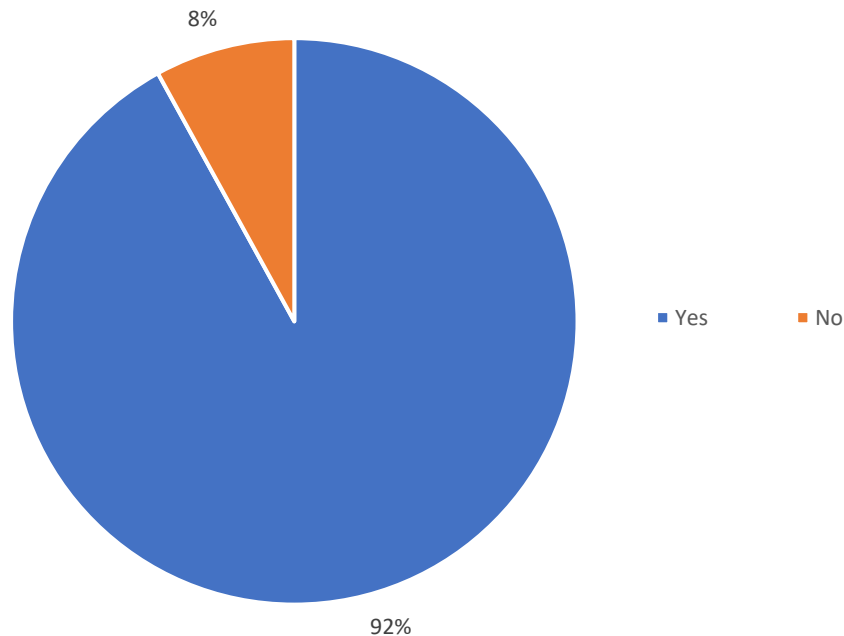


Figure 18 illustrates: Percentage of students that would use TikTok to improve their speaking skills. Post-test stage. Source: Final Survey, creation of the researcher.

A total of twenty-five students answered this question, only 2 of the 25 stated that they would not use TikTok to improve their speaking skills. Since this survey was completed anonymously, there was no chance to identify who those students were, however it can be inferred that these two students are the same that do use the app at all. This is an interesting fact to take into consideration for future applications of this methodology.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

In this section, the conclusions reached as a result of this investigation will be discussed. Foremost, the process of the different stages of teaching in this research will be analyzed and commented so that the results in this paper can be used as a reference for future investigations. Next, the research question would be answered, and it will be substantiated with the data extracted from the observations and the field work carried out by the researcher.

The conclusions section is important because it will allow to summarize objectively the outcomes of the research process. Additionally, the future readers will be able to understand the train of thoughts of the investigator and the reasoning behind the selected processes, teaching methodology and the data collection instruments designed. This research approaches the topic of the use of technology in a creative way, where the tool used to teach English is the mobile application TikTok. Considering that, the use of the videos is not new to the English classroom, the format, and the reach of the TikTok video is. Teachers in Costa Rica need to stay on top of the trends that got the students attention to keep the learning experience interesting and challenging. Hopefully, the topic focus of this paper will spark the curiosity of the members in the national educational system: experienced teachers, students and most importantly the future educators during their career development. The next part would specifically deep dive in the conclusions achieved to each of the specific objectives proposed in this paper. Also, the unexpected results and recommendations will be discussed in the next sections.

5.2 Conclusions

Here below, in the following entries, the outcomes obtained from the data collection process, the different teaching stages and the application of the proposed teaching techniques suggested by the researcher. The analysis would start in the pre-test phase where the objective was to identify and diagnose the group, followed by the application stage. A breakdown of the application process would be discussed, taking in consideration the thing that went well, and the achieved results based on evidence and observation to finally analyze the post-test stage. The conclusions of the final stage would allow the reader to comprehend whether or not the main objective of the investigation was achieved by following teaching methodology of the investigator to improve the speaking skills of the. A continuation, the analysis of the first specific objective: the identification of the speaking skills of the students.

5.2.1 To identify the shortcomings of the speaking skills of the students

The first objective was approached during the pre-test stage of the investigation process. Throughout this phase, the goal was to identify the areas of improvement in the speaking skills of the students. To achieved this, it was necessary to observe the students and test their speaking skills as raw and natural as possible, following the traditional teaching strategy the students were used to received. The topic of regular and irregular verbs in the simple past tense form was introduced using YouTube videos, followed by a repetition practice. With this context in mind, the conclusions are presented:

As it was established on the analysis of figure 6 in chapter 4, most of the students were not able to pronounce correctly the sounds corresponding to the past tense form of the regular verbs. Frequently, is common for people learning the English language, to express that speaking

about the past is one of the most difficult verbal tenses to learn and apply. The identified shortcoming was unfamiliarity with the correct pronunciation of the verbs ending in -ed.

Also, from the observation checklist analyzed on figure 6 of chapter 4, the students that engaged in the repetition exercise, were not capable of mimic the words pronunciation of the teacher, even when the words were repeated three times each. There are multiple reasons why a person is not able to repeat a word even when it is clearly heard. In this case, it is concluded that the students are not used to practice their speaking skills with repetition drills. An important part of learning a second language is to get used to use the language even if it is through repetition. The second shortcoming identified is the lack of use of the oral expression of the language in classes.

Participating students made pronunciation mistakes by reading the words in the whiteboard using the Spanish pronunciation of the vowels. A specific example observed during the pre-test activity explained in figure 6 from chapter 4, was the struggle to pronounce words like *took* and *saw*. During the third time reading the list of verbs, when the teacher pointed at these two words, each time the students would read the vowels as if they were reading them in Spanish. The identified shortcoming is the unfamiliarity with the pronunciation patterns of the English vowels.

These three points observed and evaluated during the pre-test stage allowed to conclude that the students of the eighth grade, subjects of this evaluation, needed to learn and understand the pronunciation of the verbs of -ed ending. It is also needed to include more repetition drills or speaking exercises to get the students to feel more comfortable to hear and use the English language. Lastly, there is a huge need to work in the awareness of the English pronunciation of the vowels, a skill that is considered fundamental to the speaking ability.

The observation methods and the instruments applied fulfilled their purpose of identifying the shortcomings in the speaking skills of the group successfully. Not only to provide a clear understanding of what needs to be improved but the means to achieve that goal.

5.2.2 To apply the use of the TikTok app in the classroom as a mediation strategy of the speaking skills to the students.

The completion of this objective was achieved during the application stage of this investigation. The previous interactions with the students, the observation and the pre-test enable the possibility to create a lesson plan that took into consideration the shortcomings of the students; the adjustments in the teaching methodology to be used and the execution of the new strategy to improve the English skill of the students by using the TikTok videos. In the designing of the section, a Tech Survey was conducted before hand to collect information in regard to the familiarity of the students with the TikTok app and the access that the students have to the technology required to interact with the TikTok content. Primarily, it is necessary to establish that the 25 students that participated in this investigation, have access to a cellphone device and the big majority of them have access to mobile data as well. Again, only 3 students out of 25 do not have a TikTok account and most of them use the app just as a way of entertainment. From this data the following is concluded:

If the teacher were to select an app to use its content as a mediation strategy in the classroom, TikTok is definitely a good option for groups of the students between 13 and 16 years old as it can be observed in figure 18 of chapter 4, where a 92% of the students would use TikTok to improve their speaking skills.

Students are familiar with the use and the format of the content of the app, so that a teacher can take advantage of the fast-paced videos to revisit and reinforce topics without using much time from the lesson.

The application of the use of TikTok videos will be analyzed in this section. As a clarification, whenever it is talked about the students interacting with the content of the video it means that the students were speaking, talking, repeating, guessing aloud and mimicking words, phrases, sounds or vocabulary from the TikTok videos during the application stage. Taking this into consideration as part of the conclusions, these will be presented chronologically in the order in which the three application lessons were given.

During the first lesson the students were partially engaged to the TikTok videos and immediately disengage of the lesson once the videos ended, this behavior was observed and analyzed on figure 7 from chapter 4. This behavior could be considered as expected because it was the first time that the students received an English lesson with a different video format. To take into consideration: The TikTok videos utilized in this first approach, are at most 3 minutes long. The theory is delivered to the audience at a fast pace, and it would summarize the topic as much as possible. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the videos was not affected by its format because the TikTok users are used to the information being delivered this way. Regarding the disengagement of the students to the lesson when the video ended, it would be justified by the nature of this specific theoretical lesson, where almost no interaction was expected from the class.

As it can be observed in figure 8 from the previous chapter, the peak participation of the class occurred when the format of the TikTok videos included challenges, repetition drills and guessing exercises. This behavior was observed during the application of the methodology in Lesson 2. From the beginning the students were expecting the videos of that lesson. The students

were paying attention, interacting with the video instructions, and most importantly speaking in English even more. In Lesson 2, the students asked the teacher for feedback on their interaction with the videos of that lesson.

The engagement of the students dropped again every time the videos ended as observed in figure 9 from chapter 4. A repeated behavior from Lesson 1 over to Lesson 3. In this case, it is concluded that keeping the energy after the videos is going to be the challenge for the teacher when using this mediation strategy. Meaning that a professor planning a lesson using TikTok videos should foresee what would it be the most appropriate next steps in the lesson, in order to avoid the sudden loss of interest of the students. On the other hand, during the last lesson, the student kept the high level of engagement with the videos and the interaction with the showed content.

Due to the format of the video, when planning, the professor would need to consider more video repetitions for the students during the lessons. In the three lessons, a common issue that raised was to get the students to participate and listen during the first reproduction of the videos. For this investigation, it was decided to play each of the video multiple times, so that the students would completely focus on its content. The repetition of the videos worked, and it helped the students to produce and correctly repeat the words in English during the lessons.

From the application stage, it can be concluded that TikTok can be adapted to the class needs, not only to improve the speaking skills of the students but the rest of the language skills also. The TikTok app allows the teacher to create a higher reach within the students to deliver the theory and the practices in a format that is interesting to them. This objective is considered to be successfully achieved.

5.2.3 To compare the results of using TikTok as a tool in the classroom when working the speaking skills of the students

The post-test stage of this investigation was focused to work on proving the third proposed objective. During the post-test the students put into action their newly acquired speaking experience to complete a speaking exercise during Lesson 4. In this exercise, the students completed a chart, where they needed to talk about an important event that happened in the past but that it is also related to the sports topic. The students worked in pairs and once they finished with the writing part, they needed to interact with their classmate. The interaction required asking and answering the question from the activity. The students were evaluated by the professor during this exercise. Here is a compilation of the results:

The students used the verbs that were seen in the TikTok videos to complete this exercise. On figure 11, it can be observed that thanks to the repetition drills, and association videos, the students were able to understand and use the verbs correctly in terms of meaning, form, and verbal time. In this graphic it can be observed that most of the students made a few grammar mistakes, and a total of four couples completed the exercise without any grammar mistakes.

The students were so invested in improve their pronunciation that before being evaluated by the professor, they wanted to be heard speaking to confirm if they were doing it correctly. Achieving this type of commitment from the students in the classroom would be consider the highlight of the investigation. This finding is one of the most relevant in this research proving that the teaching methodology was successful.

The results showed in figure 11 of the evaluation of the exercise showed that, even if the students needed more support in grammar, the speaking skill was graded better. These results will be also considered as desired, since the research wanted to test the use of the video to

improve the use of the speaking skills of the students, goal that was achieved according to the data.

The last exercise of the post-test phase consisted in repeat the first exercise from Lesson 1. By repeating that exercise, the investigator was able to compare the performance of the students from the beginning and at the end when the lessons and the videos where use as a teaching strategy. Below, the most relevant findings of this comparison based in the analysis of figure 13 from chapter 4.

The students were able to pronounce and repeat correctly, almost all the words from the list, using a video repetition less than in Lesson 1. There is an improvement that can be observed from the data, and it is that, the students not only were quicker in their answers, but they also executed the exercise more effectively than the first time.

The students improve in the three evaluation criteria of the exercise, achieving the highest score in each category pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. It was observed from this comparison, better production of the sounds, better pronunciation of the English vowels and overall better fluency as well.

Included in the post-test stage, the students were asked to complete a final survey. The survey wanted to evaluate the perception of the class about the received lessons. The group answered five questions and the results obtained will be shared a continuation.

Figure 14 shows that most of the class noticed an improvement in their speaking skills after receiving English lesson that used TikTok videos. As it could be expected there was one student that did not perceived any improvement, but it can be assumed that this student is probably at a higher English level than its peers. Only 2 students stated that there was no change, but the percentage they represent, is not significant for the purposes of this investigation.

On figure 15 it is stated that a 100% of students prefer to watch TikTok videos instead of YouTube videos in the English lesson. From the class observations it was easily concluded that the use of YouTube videos is no longer being effective as a mediation strategy in the classroom. This was proven by comparing the reaction of the group during the pre-test and the application phase where instead of teaching the theory through YouTube it was done using TikTok videos. This conclusion is sustained with the data collected from the Final survey, where the totality of the participants agreed to prefer TikTok to learn speaking in English than YouTube.

A total of 23 students, as seen on figure 16, agreed in the use of TikTok helped the to learn about the regular and irregular verbs. This was tested by the professor informally, by casually asking the students to say or identify regular or irregular verbs in class. Only a few students doubted at first, but they were able to differentiate and identify these verbs. Even when the correct use of grammar was not the focus of this research, it was also reinforced in the students during the lessons.

From figure 17 it was observed that a total of 19 students would prefer in the videos a mix of their teacher and other creators in class. The least prefer option was to see only other people in the videos. This is a very interesting conclusion given the fact that almost any teacher is doing YouTube videos for their lessons. This could be a root cause on why YouTube is no longer attractive to the students in class. On the other hand, TikTok allow the teachers to create personalized content for their lessons and their target audience.

The students agreed, as seen in the results of figure 18, that they would use TikTok to improve their speaking skills after receiving English lessons that used TikTok videos as a teaching strategy. In the Tech survey at the beginning of this investigation, most of the students answered that they mostly use TikTok as a way of entertainment. Now that the students have

seen the other uses that TikTok has, they expressed their interest to use the app to improve their speaking skills.

The use of technology in the English classroom has always been important, but in this fast-paced times, the English teacher need to stay on top of the most recent updates of that area so that the lessons continue to be interesting and exciting for the students. Although it is true that this investigation focused on a group of teenagers, the theory applied can be adapted to other group ages.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

It is necessary to understand that the lessons are changing even more so after the global pandemic during 2020. The teaching means, the methodologies and the strategies changed abruptly. It was clear then, that the academic system has stayed the same for too long and it was time to make adjustments. In 2020, the application TikTok exploded globally, and it was the way the world stayed connected during those challenging times. An interesting fact is that the majority of the users of this app were teenagers. As the time passed, TikTok changed from being a dancing app to be a social network where people started to share their knowledge with people around the world. It is at this moment when the idea to test the app to teach a language born.

This investigation was the perfect opportunity to test “How effective is the use of TikTok as a tool inside the classroom to improve the speaking skills of eighth grade students from the San Rafael of Alajuela High School during the III quarter of 2022?”. Once the topic of the investigation was clear, creating a plan became mandatory.

Following the feedback obtained from the class observations, it was possible to take this idea to the reality and be tested in a group of 25 students. Thanks to the process of observation, creation and evaluation it is possible to affirm that the answer to the research question of this

paper is affirmative. Using TikTok as a tool inside the classroom helps improving the speaking skills of the students.

5.4 Unexpected Results

In most investigations, one of the most common mistakes is to assume that some behaviors or results are easily predicted. However, whenever a research project depends on variables, to mention a few, age, gender, place, weather or quantity of people, the results will become very unpredictable. With this in mind, an unexpected results section has been prepared for this research project.

During the post-test evaluation, some students were really invested to improve their speaking skill before doing the speaking exercise in pairs. These students asked the teacher to evaluate their pronunciation before the formal evaluation.

Even when grammar was not the focus in the final exercise of the post-test phase, many students used more advanced simple past verbs in the sentences they created. Meaning that the vocabulary seen in the TikTok videos not only help them to improve their speaking skills but also their grammar.

Although the use of TikTok had a good reception from the students, there were 2 to 4 students that did not engage at all with the TikTok videos of any format in the lessons.

The final survey revealed that the students would like to see a mix between their teacher and other creators on the videos. This was an interesting finding because it was assumed that they would rather see other people in the videos as this is the norm of the videos used in English lessons.

5.5 Recommendations

A list of recommendations is included in this section. The purpose of this list is to provide better tools to future readers of this work, to avoid or to take into consideration when working on a similar subject.

For future researchers it would be recommended to find ways to use TikTok other than a mediation strategy, for instance, to use the videos as homework, so that, they can review the topics from class at home.

It is also recommended research the effects of the use of TikTok to teach speaking in older students, as the app is gaining popularity among older generations. This would allow the students to duet or create their own content since this was not possible because the students are underage.

Another suggestion for future researchers is to find ways on how to engage the students after the videos have finished since this was one of the most identifiable problems during this research.

It was assumed that it would be easy to find TikTok videos specific to the topic of the planned lesson. It is recommended to take enough time to do some research before designing the lesson plan, otherwise it would be possible to not find the appropriate resources for the students.

When the resources are not available, it might be needed to start creating the own content of the teacher. In this investigation, it was not possible to find videos that match the group needs in terms of English level, desired skills, or topic. The recommendation for the teachers and researchers would be to be familiarized with the platform and the content creation as new class material would be needed.

Planning lessons only using TikTok videos might turn out exhausting. As mentioned before, searching, or creating material is time consuming. The resource can be included as part of a lesson or as part of supporting material for the students to see at home, however it would not be recommended to only use TikTok as a pedagogic mediation in all lessons.

Annexes

LESSON PLAN

Institution: San Rafael's Alajuela High School

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera

Topic: Sports and past tense

Time: 5 lessons

Grade / Level: 8th grade

Objectives	Activities	Materials	Time	Evaluation
<p>SPEAKING (Spoken Interaction) Interact using basic language, rephrase, repeat, and speak slowly.</p> <p>Grammar Correct use of <u>regular/irregular past tense verbs</u> Verb + -ed Work = worked Verb = new form Run = ran</p> <p>Simple past tense negative form Was not, wasn't, were not, weren't, did not, didn't.</p> <p>Vocabulary Sports verbs: win, lose, get, participate, compete, championship, medal, prize, game, competition</p>	<p>WU: Introducing the simple past tense using the video from page 39 of the booklet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RedB8SSUHQ. The T. will read the explanation on Unit 2 page 39.</p> <p>PRS: Pre-test: The T. will write a list of verbs from page 39 in the whiteboard for the students to match the correct simple past tense form of each verb. Then, the T will model the correct pronunciation of the verbs ending in -ed, the ss would need to repeat the verbs to mimic the T pronunciation. Include leave, feel, bring, fight,</p> <p>Application: The T will play a couple of TikTok videos that emphasizes the correct pronunciation of regular verbs @aromflores.08 & @hi.victor.</p> <p>For irregular verbs the T. will use a couple of TikTok videos for the students to guess and repeat the correct form of the past tense of the irregular verbs. @polibloger The negative past tense will be introduced to the students using a TikTok quiz video to guess the correct negative form. @polibloger</p> <p>PR1: The T will explain the activity in page 41. Using a TikTok video from @polibloger the T will introduce the sports vocabulary and verbs to the students. The ss will complete the "important event chart". The ss will need to create simple past tense sentences using regular or irregular verbs previously studied in class.</p> <p>Then the ss working in pairs will role play the questions and answers from the chart to each other.</p> <p>CLOS: Post-test: T. will ask the students to go over the list from the beginning of the class to say aloud past tense form of the verbs. Also using a TikTok video, the ss will say the past tense of some verbs @englishwithrod_</p>	<p>Booklet</p> <p>Whiteboard, markers, booklet</p> <p>Screen, videos, audio</p> <p>Booklet</p> <p>Work in pairs</p> <p>Screen, videos, audio</p>	<p>10 min</p> <p>40 min</p> <p>30 min</p> <p>40 min</p> <p>20 min</p> <p>20 min</p>	<p>Access to technology survey</p> <p>Evaluation rubric – was the student able to identify the correct form of irregular verb? Was the pronunciation accurate</p> <p>Observation: Was the TikTok video engaging to the ss? Did the ss interact with the video? Did the video make the student use the language?</p> <p>Evaluation of the chart: Did the ss complete the chart correctly? Did the ss use the verb in the correct past tense form? Did the student speak more confidently? Did the student interact with the partner?</p> <p>Evaluation rubric: was the student able to identify the correct form of irregular verb? Was the pronunciation accurate</p>

Encuesta de acceso a tecnología

Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela

English Department

III Trimester, 2022, 8th grade (Tech Survey)

Duration: 10 min.

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera



Como parte del tema de la tesis, el uso de TikTok para mejorar el habla del idioma inglés de los estudiantes requiere que los mismos tengan acceso a un dispositivo móvil donde puedan acceder a la aplicación. Es por eso por lo que se lleva a cabo esta encuesta con el propósito de comprender el acceso a instrumentos tecnológicos de los estudiantes de 8 grado del Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela. Esta información es confidencial y se utilizara para una investigación de la UIA.

1. Rango de edad

13 -15 años

15 -17 años

mayor de 18 años

2. Poseo un dispositivo móvil propio (celular)

Si

No

3. Poseo acceso a internet en mi celular

Si

No

4. Tengo una cuenta de TikTok

Si

No

5. Normalmente uso TikTok para

Entretenerme

Crear contenido

Aprender cosas nuevas

Estudios

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela

English Department

III Trimester, 2022, 8th grade (Pre-test)

Total points: 15 points

Duration: 10 min.

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera

/	
Obt. Pts / Obt. %	Grade



Date: _____ Section: _____

Objective: Diagnose the shortcomings of the speaking skill of the students. Ss should be able pronounce correctly the regular/irregular past tense form of the verbs (Verb + -ed, ex. Work = worked. Verb = new form ex. Run = ran)

Instructions: Ss would need to repeat a list of verbs to mimic the T pronunciation.

Infinitive	Past Tense	Negative
to be	was were	was not were not
to have	had	did not have
to do	did	did not do
to say	said	did not say
to get	got	did not get
to make	made	did not make
to go	went	did not go
to take	took	did not take
to see	saw	did not see
to come	came	did not come

Infinitive	Past Tense	Negative
to ask	asked	did not ask
to work	worked	did not work
to call	called	did not call
to use	used	did not use

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Criteria	Weight	Level 1 5 pts	Level 2 3 pts	Level 3 1 pts	Recommendations
Correct pronunciation of the past tense verbs	5	Pronunciation mistakes 0 - 5	Pronunciation mistakes 6 - 10	Pronunciation mistakes 11 - 15	
General pronunciation accuracy	5	Pronunciation mistakes 0 - 5	Pronunciation mistakes 6 - 10	Pronunciation mistakes 11 - 15	
Fluency	5	Few minor difficulties to maintain the reading flow	Some effort was required to maintain the reading flow	Much effort was required to maintain the reading flow	
Total points	15				

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela

English Department

III Trimester, 2022, 8th grade (Application)

Total points: 15 points

Duration: 120 min.

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera

/	
Obt. Pts / Obt. %	Grade



Date: _____ Section: _____

Objective: Create engagement with the ss by using TikTok videos to teach them the correct forms of past tense verbs with sport application. Ss. would learn the correct past tense form of regular and irregular verbs and its use in simple sentences.

Instructions: Ss would see a curated selection of TikTok videos related to the topic of sports on past tense regular and irregular verbs.

Lesson 1 (40 min)

Criteria	Weight	Level 1 5 pts	Level 2 3 pts	Level 3 1 pts	Recommendations
Students are engaging to the videos	5	Ss are very engaged to the videos	A few ss aren't paying attention	A few ss are paying attention	
Students are participating in the activities from the videos (repeat, guess, talk)	5	Ss are repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	A few ss aren't repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	A few ss are repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	
Students ask questions, participate in class more.	5	Majority of the class is participating	A few students aren't participating	A few students are participating	
Total points	15				

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Lesson 2 (40 min)

Criteria	Weight	Level 1 5 pts	Level 2 3 pts	Level 3 1 pts	Recommendations
Students are engaging to the videos	5	Ss are very engaged to the videos	A few ss aren't paying attention	A few ss are paying attention	
Students are participating in the activities from the videos (repeat, guess, talk)	5	Ss are repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	A few ss aren't repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	A few ss are repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	
Students ask questions, participate in class more.	5	Majority of the class is participating	A few students aren't participating	A few students are participating	
Total points	15	15			15 total

Lesson 3 (40 min)

Criteria	Weight	Level 1 5 pts	Level 2 3 pts	Level 3 1 pts	Recommendations
Students are engaging to the videos	5	Ss are very engaged to the videos	A few ss aren't paying attention	A few ss are paying attention	
Students are participating in the activities from the videos (repeat, guess, talk)	5	Ss are repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	A few ss aren't repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	A few ss are repeating, talking, guessing (instructions from the videos)	
Students ask questions, participate in class more.	5	Majority of the class is participating	A few students aren't participating	A few students are participating	
Total points	15				

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela

English Department

III Trimester, 2022, 8th grade (Post-test)

Total points: 15 points

Duration: 20 min.

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera

/	
Obt. Pts / Obt. %	Grade



Date: _____ Section: _____

Objective: At the end of the lesson, ss will be able use the regular/irregular past tense form of the verbs (Verb + -ed, ex. Work = worked. Verb = new form ex. Run = ran) and share their responses verbally to another ss in class.

Instructions: Ss should remember an important event and then complete the chart.

Student's name	Year it happened	Event	Who was with me ?	What important happened?	Why unforgettable

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Criteria	Weight	Level 1 5 pts	Level 2 3 pts	Level 3 1 pts	Recommendations
SS completed the chart (Grammar)	5	Completed Chart with 0-2 errors	Completed Chart with 3-4 errors	Completed Chart with 5-6 errors	
Pronunciation	5	Pronunciation mistakes 0 - 5	Pronunciation mistakes 6 - 10	Pronunciation mistakes 10 - 15	
Fluency	5	Few minor difficulties to maintain conversation	Some effort was required to maintain conversation	Much effort was required to maintain conversation	
Total points	15				

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela

English Department

III Trimester, 2022, 8th grade (Post-test)

Total points: 15 points

Duration: 10 min.

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera

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~~Obt. Pts / Obt. %~~ Grade



Date: _____ Section: _____

Objective: At the end of the lesson, ss would be able to identify and correctly pronounce the past tens form of the sport related verbs of unit 2

Instructions: T. will ask the students to go over the list from the beginning of the class to say aloud past tense form of the verbs. Also using a TikTok video, the ss will say the past tense of some verbs @mikechamaleon

Infinitive	Past Tense	Negative
to be	was were	was not were not
to have	had	did not have
to do	did	did not do
to say	said	did not say
to get	got	did not get
to make	made	did not make
to go	went	did not go
to take	took	did not take
to see	saw	did not see
to come	came	did not come

Infinitive	Past Tense	Negative
to ask	asked	did not ask
to work	worked	did not work
to call	called	did not call
to use	used	did not use

I SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Criteria	Weight	Level 1 5 pts	Level 2 3 pts	Level 3 1 pts	Recommendations
Correct pronunciation of the past tense verbs	5	Pronunciation mistakes 0 - 5	Pronunciation mistakes 6 - 10	Pronunciation mistakes 11 - 15	
General pronunciation accuracy	5	Pronunciation mistakes 0 - 5	Pronunciation mistakes 6 - 10	Pronunciation mistakes 11 - 15	
Fluency	5	Few minor difficulties to maintain the reading flow	Some effort was required to maintain the reading flow	Much effort was required to maintain the reading flow	
Total points	15				

Encuesta de finalización

Liceo de San Rafael de Alajuela

English Department

III Trimester, 2022, 8th grade (Final Survey)

Duration: 10 min.

Teacher: Paola Segovia Rivera



Como parte del trabajo de investigación, el uso de TikTok para mejorar el habla del idioma inglés de los estudiantes de octavo año, se lleva a cabo esta encuesta final con el propósito de cuantificar la reacción de los estudiantes al método propuesto. Esta información es confidencial y se utilizara para una investigación de la UIA.

1. Siento que mejore mi habla en inglés con este método de enseñanza
 - Si
 - No
 - Sin cambios

2. Es más probable que practique hablar en Ingles con videos de TikTok que con videos de YouTube
 - Si
 - No

3. Me gustó recibir la materia de simple past tense regular/irregular verbs en con videos de TikTok
 - Si
 - No

4. Preferiría ver solo a mi profesor(a) en los videos o a otros creadores de contenido?
 - Solo a mi profesora
 - Me gustaría ver a mi profesora y a otros creadores
 - Solo me gustaría ver contenido de otros creadores

5. Después de estas clases de inglés con videos de TikTok, utilizaría la app para mejorar su habla del idioma inglés?
 - Si
 - No

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