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**THESIS TO OBTAIN THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN ENGLISH WITH AN
EMPHASIS ON TEACHING**

**Song-Based Strategies to Improve the Pronunciation of Interdental English Sounds in
EFL Eighth Grade Learners at CINDEA de Alajuelita During the Third Period, 2025**

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Dedication

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Abstract

This research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of song-based strategies in improving the pronunciation of the English interdental fricatives in English among eight-grade ESL learners at CINDEA de Alajuelita, Costa Rica. The study followed a mixed-method approach and included a diagnostic pre-test, two intervention activities using songs, an observation checklist, a post-test, and a perception survey. The pre-test revealed that students commonly mispronounced the target sounds, mainly due to the sound substitution, limited articulatory control, and the influence of their mother tongue.

After the interventions using songs, the results obtained through the post-test and the survey demonstrated clear improvement in students' articulation, sound identification and confidence when pronouncing the interdental sounds in English. Additionally, the survey findings also revealed positive perceptions towards the use of songs as a motivating and effective pronunciation tool. Overall, the study concludes that the use of songs as a strategy to improve pronunciation is a significant and useful tool to enhance this ability.

Resumen

Esta investigación tuvo como objetivo evaluar la efectividad de estrategias basadas en canciones para mejorar la pronunciación de las fricativas interdentes del inglés en estudiantes de octavo grado de inglés como segunda lengua (ESL) en CINDEA de Alajuelita, Costa Rica. El estudio empleó una metodología mixta e incluyó una prueba diagnóstica previa, dos actividades de intervención con canciones, una lista de observación, una prueba posterior y una encuesta de percepción. La prueba previa reveló que los estudiantes frecuentemente pronunciaban mal los sonidos objetivo, principalmente debido a la sustitución de sonidos, un control articulatorio limitado y la influencia de su lengua materna.

Tras las intervenciones con canciones, los resultados obtenidos mediante la prueba posterior y la encuesta demostraron una clara mejora en la articulación, la identificación de sonidos y la confianza de los estudiantes al pronunciar los sonidos interdentes en inglés. Además, los resultados de la encuesta también revelaron percepciones positivas sobre el uso de canciones como una herramienta motivadora y efectiva para la pronunciación. En general, el estudio concluye que el uso de canciones como estrategia para mejorar la pronunciación es una herramienta significativa y útil para potenciar esta habilidad.

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

English plays a crucial role in our lives today as it is integral to a globalized and multicultural world. English provides numerous professional and personal opportunities, opening doors across various fields and countries, making it essential for success in many aspects of life. However, speaking English can be challenging for non-native speakers, especially regarding oral skills. Pronunciation, therefore, plays a vital role in being understood and understanding others in English. This can be particularly difficult for those whose first language does not include certain sounds, such as the English dental sounds, which have no direct equivalent in Spanish. The struggle with English pronunciation is a significant hurdle for accurate communication; for example, Kongji (2022) states that pronunciation is the most challenging area of learning English as a second language, and students need to pronounce vocabulary and sentences correctly to avoid a language “breakdown”.

Many strategies are developed in education to help students pronounce sounds correctly and achieve the desired fluency. However, some methods, especially those involving memorizing extensive phonetic rules, do not always lead to the effectiveness and results expected by educators. This research, of significant importance, aims to analyze and study how English songs can improve pronunciation in general and specifically address the pronunciation of dental sounds, which are often confusing and difficult to pronounce. The study will also explore the concept of active listening and cognitive engagement with an external source, such as music, to examine how likely

and effective it is for students to learn sounds at the beginner level within the public education system in Costa Rica.

Finally, this research aims to collect data from recent and innovative studies that support theories related to active listening, music-based strategies for improving pronunciation, and the specific challenges Spanish-speaking learners face when producing difficult sounds like the interdental sounds in English. By exploring these studies, the research seeks to provide a solid foundation for understanding how active listening enhances cognitive engagement, how songs can be an effective pedagogical tool for fostering accurate pronunciation, and why certain phonetic features, such as the interdental sounds /θ/ and /ð/, pose significant difficulties for Spanish speakers. Additionally, the study aims to bridge the gap in the existing literature by connecting the fields of phonetics, pedagogy, and music, offering practical strategies that educators can implement to address these pronunciation challenges effectively.

1.1 Problem statement

Students from all around the world face difficulties in pronunciation when learning English, since pronunciation is the key to understanding and conveying accurate messages. Additionally, ESL learners sometimes do not have good strategies or methods to learn English pronunciation appropriately, so the problem of pronunciation is everywhere. Good verbal communication is always an open door; when speaking English, pronouncing correctly is crucial, so people will better understand what the speaker tries to express or what tries to get from the listener. Thus, the pronunciation of interdental sounds is essential for good speaking and listening skills.

Pronunciation plays a fundamental role in English language acquisition since it is the most accurate form of communication, fluent and clear in a second language. In communication, the

ultimate goal of learning a new language is that the phonological system, which refers to the sound patterns and rules of a language, plays a significant role; pronunciation also determines how intelligible messages are (Uribe, 2019, p. 217). Then, they can be understood by the message received. That means communicating in a second language would be easier by writing or reading than listening and speaking. However, the last two skills are the hardest to master and the most necessary for face-to-face communication, which is globally used.

Furthermore, some sounds are tricky to pronounce because they are not part of the phonological system of specific mother tongues. According to Uribe (2019, p. 221), some fricative and affricate sounds, such as [θ] & [ð], are particularly problematic for EFL Spanish learners because phonemes are not similar to those in English. Therefore, assuming this information, both English and Spanish phonemic systems are significantly different, and that is where the pronunciation and communication problems come from.

In summary, the evidence points to the differences between both languages, English and Spanish, and their phonetic systems, which place a barrier for EFL Spanish learners to learn some sounds effectively and pronounce them accurately. Additionally, fricative sounds and interdental sounds [θ] & [ð] have some phonetic rules non-existent in Spanish, such as lip position, voicing, aspiration, and frication. According to Timonen, M. (2011), he states that EFL learners face two problems in pronouncing fricatives; the first problem is the physical and relational relationship between the learner's native language and the target language, and the other difficulty remains in the interrelationship between spelling and pronunciation of the words in English. Based on this, English fricatives, and specifically interdental sounds [θ] & [ð], have some specific aspects, which are not present in the monophonic and allophonic Spanish systems.

1.2 Justification

Improving English pronunciation can be a frustrating process for non-native speakers, as English includes many features that do not exist in Spanish. One such challenge is the interdental sounds (/θ/ and /ð/), which are absent from the Spanish Phonetic System. As a result, when students begin learning English and working on proper pronunciation, they often struggle to sound natural or fluent. While the goal of this research is not to make students sound like native speakers, it does aim to explore interactive strategies, such as the use of English songs, to foster interest and engagement among learners. Songs offer a wide range of rhythms, melodies, lyrics, and styles that can make the learning process more dynamic and enjoyable for learners and teachers.

Learning sounds that students have never included in their phonetic repertoire or conversational practice (essentially new sounds) can lead to confusion and frustration. This is why teachers must motivate students to continue learning and ensure that the process feels as natural as possible. Additionally, this research aims to support the Costa Rican public education system, which is criticized for lacking solid structures to equip students with the linguistic skills necessary to meet the demands of a labor market where English proficiency is increasingly essential.

This study focuses primarily on improving the pronunciation of interdental sounds, as these are commonly used in everyday English without exception. However, they are often confused with similar sounds, such as the Spanish "d" and "t," which are dental in Spanish but not equivalent to the interdental sounds in English. According to Pizarro & Cordero (2015) in their study "Pronunciation Difficulties for Costa Rican EFL Learners", the majority of English learners in Costa Rica exhibit consistent patterns of difficulty when pronouncing sounds that do not exist in Spanish. Therefore, this research seeks to provide strategies and resources that teachers and students can use to make the learning process more accessible and enjoyable.

Additionally, this project seeks to analyze and identify the root causes of pronunciation challenges faced by Costa Rican students and to evaluate how song-based strategies could serve as a methodological "treatment" to switch their perspectives and improve outcomes and results. By integrating music into language learning, this research aims to offer an innovative approach to overcoming traditional barriers in pronunciation instruction and provide teachers of the Costa Rican public education more tools, then, they can use it to address English beginner students' oral communication skills.

Finally, the goal of this project is to assess whether the integration of music into language learning can offer an innovative approach to overcoming traditional barriers in pronunciation instruction. This would not only benefit students but also provide teachers in Costa Rican public education with more tools and resources to improve the oral communication skills of beginner English students. With this approach, it is hoped that students will not only improve their pronunciation but also gain more confidence in their ability to communicate in English, ultimately contributing to their academic and personal success in an increasingly globalized world.

1.3 Objectives of the Investigation

1.3.1 General Objective

To analyze the effectiveness of using songs in English to improve the pronunciation of interdental sounds of eighth-grade students at CINDEA in Alajuelita during the third period of 2025

Specific Objectives

- To determine the reasons that have been obstacles for eighth-grade EFL students' pronunciation of interdental (fricative) sounds in English

- To evaluate the use of song-based strategies as a strategy for eighth-grade EFL students' pronunciation of interdental sounds in English

1.4 Antecedents

Felix Lee (2018), in his study "Improving Students' Pronunciation of Interdental Fricative Sounds (Voiced and Unvoiced Sounds)," with Indonesian English students, aimed to improve students' pronunciation of interdental fricative sounds. His goal was to analyze students' improvement through listening to and repeating native speakers' pronunciation. The study involved an experiment where children aged 8 to 10 imitated native English audios. In the first phase of the experiment, the students struggled to pronounce fricative dental sounds correctly. After listening to native-produced sounds, the students were able to repeat and mimic the placement of their tongues and teeth, achieving correct pronunciation. The results showed that 9 out of 12 students correctly pronounced the interdental sounds, based on a qualitative approach. This study is relevant to the current research because it shows that listening to native models can significantly improve pronunciation accuracy among EFL students.

Hanulikova and Weber (2010) studied the difficulties that non-native speakers face when pronouncing interdental fricatives. The study is named "Production of English interdental fricatives by Dutch, German, and English speakers". In this study, they explore the most relevant and significant difficulties EFL learners struggle with at school every day. The study consisted of 37 Dutch native speakers, 37 German native speakers, and 31 English native speakers from their respective universities. The objective of the study was to identify and compare the different accents of non-native English speakers and native English speakers. Additionally, the study consisted of having students read aloud a passage that contained many words with fricative interdentals and comparing the accent and pronunciation of the students from different countries.

Moreover, the study showed that depending on where they come from, students tend to mispronounce some words in English, especially those that include the interdental sounds. As a result, 70% of students were not able to pronounce these sounds correctly. Finally, this study has relevance to the present study because it shows that non-native English speakers tend to mispronounce and substitute interdental sounds with other sounds that they already know.

Villalobos (2008) explored the use of songs as a strategy to improve students' pronunciation. The study titled "Using Songs to Improve Students' Pronunciation" aimed to prove that the songs in English could be effective on Costa Rican students' pronunciation. The study consisted of exploring the benefits of music on the brain and how it positively impacts motivation and reception to learning. Additionally, the objective of the study was to use English songs within the class to help students have a better pronunciation of several sounds; in addition, the research included recognizing vowels and consonants. Moreover, the investigation was carried on with regular English students; the number was not specified in the paper, but it consisted of making students hear "difficult" songs and have them listen to them to identify different sounds throughout. The results showed that listening to songs caught students' interest and motivated them to continue to learn. This research is significant to the present paper because it proved the effectiveness of using songs to enhance students' listening skills.

Asmaradhani, Evendi, Mursid & Gani (2019) studied Indonesian students' pronunciation and the mistakes they made to pronounce some words. The study called "Fixing Students' Pronunciation Using Songs" pretended to use songs as an effective methodology to develop correct pronunciation in EFL students. The objective of the study was to introduce listening activities that included the use of songs to give students' pronunciation a significant and positive impact. Additionally, the investigation was carried out with students of secondary schools; the teachers

selected a popular and catchy song to arouse interest. Also, the teacher had students read the printed lyrics of the songs, which they were able to follow as the song played. Moreover, the students showed an improvement in pronunciation as they followed the song, usually sung by a native speaker.

Finally, the results showed that EFL alumni enhanced their oral skills after listening to the song and mimicking the sounds. For instance, this research is relevant to this study because it provides arguments and proofs why songs can be effectively used as a strategy to enhance interdental sounds pronunciation.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

This chapter contains the theoretical foundations that support the research on the use of songs as a strategy to improve the pronunciation of the interdental sounds of EFL learners. Moreover, this chapter includes theories that describe the main concepts of this investigation and relevant methodological approaches based on active listening and their impact on EFL learners and their communicative oral skills. For this investigation, the theoretical framework plays a fundamental role because it provides resources and structures that offer researchers a strong and supported scientific analysis and procedures that enable students and teachers to have a broader perspective of the topic of this study.

Additionally, pronunciation teaching has been a key aspect in the acquisition of a new language because it influences the effectiveness of clear and concise communication in a foreign language. Learning a second language from scratch represents a challenge for many people around the world; English is one of the most important languages nowadays, which represents a sort of challenge for non-native speakers and their necessity of learning English to improve their personal careers, academic goals, and economic opportunities. According to Putra E. (2020) and his article “The Importance of Learning English Nowadays”, English is the most widely known language worldwide, and its emergence as a world language is indisputable. This means that English does not represent a school subject only, but also it is a requirement to communicate with people from everywhere.

Finally, this chapter aims to analyze different pronunciation challenges that EFL learners may face every day.

This chapter explores the relevant literature review that reinforces the aim of this paper: pronunciation enhancement through listening theories and the use of songs as a proposal for teachers to help their students improve their listening and speaking skills in English.

2.1 Importance of English

Learning new sounds may be challenging for those who are not in constant interaction with the language. In English or any other language, it is essential to be in contact with the target language to learn from it, as humans do when they learn their mother tongue. The lack of interaction can represent an issue with the target language because the interaction makes learners train their ears and “mimic” what they are saying. “Mimic” is basically the way humans learn a language, by imitating sounds, words, phrases, and so on. According to Skinner (2014, p. 32) (as cited in National Library of Medicine (2017)), humans learn through their environment and repeat behaviors, this also happens when learning a language. People tend to imitate and repeat everything that surrounds them because it is easier, and gives them a constant sense of belonging necessary to fit and feel more comfortable with their existence.

Interaction with the language that someone is trying to learn is essential to succeed in the pronunciation learning process. The lack of practice, the lack of interaction with the target language, disables students to learn the correct English structure, and then the sound system of the language. Since the interdental sounds are not part of the verbal daily communication among Spanish speakers, these sounds represent a big challenge when someone is learning English for the first time.

Pronunciation is not only the way people “emit sounds”, but also the combination of the rhythm and intonation of a particular language in order to establish clear and fluent communication. According to Pourhossein (2016), pronunciation is the ability that humans have to

produce sounds in any language. These sounds are produced by the speech mechanism.. Humans have learned different languages throughout history as they communicate with others and give messages. In this case, it is crucial to understand what pronunciation is and how it works for humans.

Additionally, pronunciation offers the speakers better results when sharing a message with their listeners. All languages around the world have different pronunciation rules and phonemic systems. Since this paper aims to compare the Spanish and English languages, it is fundamental to analyze how native speakers in both languages use the phonemic and pronunciation systems.

Hussein (2021) says that pronunciation is the most difficult skill to learn because learning a foreign or a second language is complex for both teachers and students. Therefore, learners and teachers need to focus on basic grammatical skills and basic phonological structures to master pronunciation. In conclusion, learning English pronunciation is a requirement for communicating accurately and giving a clear and concise message to the hearers or receivers of the message.

To conclude, English pronunciation, beyond millions of reasons that already exist, marks a key point for the speaker and the listener; it gives both fluency and reduces the possibility of making mistakes when communicating or giving mistaken messages to the listener. Pronunciation allows the speaker to have a relevant and integral communication with native and non-native speakers worldwide. Disha (2018) mentions that because of the variety of English spoken in many non-English speaking countries, there is no purity of pronunciation among the speakers who have learned or are learning English. Therefore, the interaction with non-native English speakers

negatively influences pronunciation, intonation, phonetics, and communication in a foreign language overall. As pronunciation has a lot to do with natural and unforced speech, the interaction either with native or non-native native speakers of English is necessary for language acquisition.

Pronunciation is not just the way people “emit sounds”; pronunciation is clear and fluent communication. According to Pourhossein (2016), pronunciation is the ability that humans have to produce sounds in any language. These sounds are made with the elemental parts of the body that function specifically to produce sounds. Humans have learned different languages throughout history as they communicate with others and give messages. In this case, it is crucial to understand what pronunciation is and how it works for humans.

2.2 Definition of Pronunciation

The English fricative sounds /θ/ /ð/ are produced when the tip of the tongue is placed between the teeth. In their articulation, the air goes out through the mouth with friction. Sound /θ/ is a voiceless sound because in its production the vocal cords do not vibrate because they are fully open and sound /ð/ is a voiced consonant because in its articulation the vocal cords are loosely together and as a result, they vibrate.

Sounds /θ/ and /ð/ have general distribution, that is, they occur in initial, medial, and final position in the syllables. It is very useful to practice minimal pairs of words with these sounds in different positions.

2.3 Mistakes in the Pronunciation of Sounds /θ/ and /ð/ Made by Costa Rican Speakers

As sound /θ/ does not exist in the sound system of the Costa Rican speakers, it is sometimes produced like Spanish /t/. therefore, it is important to emphasize the interdental articulation, that is, placing the tip of the tongue between the upper and the lower teeth.

Sound /ð/ exists in Spanish as an allophonic variant, and it only occurs in intervocalic position, for example, in the word “dedo”.

Sound /d/ is sometimes produced like Spanish /d/. for that reason, it is also important to emphasize its interdental articulation.

It is important to point out that Spanish “t” and “d” are classified as dental sounds because the tip of the tongue touches the back part of the upper teeth.

Both, “t” and “d” are Spanish plosives, that is when producing them, the air goes out through the mouth explosively. According to the presence or absence of voice, “t” is a voiceless sound and “d” is a voiced one.

To teach and correct sounds /θ/ and /ð/, it is useful to show the articulation of the sounds, emphasize the absence of voice in the case of /θ/ and the presence of voice in sound /ð/, and ask the students to repeat words with the two sound in different positions. As sounds /θ/ and /ð/ are difficult to produce in final position, find words such as “bath” and “bathe” lengthening the final sounds as much as possible to achieve their correct pronunciation.

This can be done by placing the sounds in the final position and lengthen the to achieve their correct pronunciation. As in the case of the words “bath” and “bathe”.

2.4 Active Listening Theory

Active listening in English involves a variety of aspects that help students of English as a second language achieve their goals with the language. Many studies and scientists agree that active listening is a tool used by teachers to familiarize students with the target language. Since the production of certain sounds in English clarifies the message non-native English speakers try to convey, the speech production is one hundred percent clear message. Consequently, active listening is a strategy that teachers and students can use to improve students’ pronunciation. As it is stated by Clayton, Asokan, Watanabe, Hancock, and Polley (2021) “During active listening, sound features that are distracting irrelevant or totally predictable are often suppressed and do not

raise to perceptual awareness.” (p. 2), active listening, in the teaching field, must be engaging and must complement the class goal, pronunciation imitation.

In addition, active listening through attention is the first cognitive skill humans develop. In accordance with R. Rogers and E. Farson (n.d.), active listening is what the speaker tries to say and what the other understands, and by listening, people create relationships, emotions, and personality. In English teaching, listening actively is a key behavior, because it provides students with clear messages and what they are listening to have clarity and firmness. Why is active listening so relevant for accurate English pronunciation? The answer is simple; it is relevant because what humans hear is what they learn if this theory comes to truth. Moreover, active listening results in a pile of strategies and activities teachers can foster to engage students and themselves.



Figure 1

Recovered by McCain & Marsh (2015). University of Nebraska.com

The previous image shows the active listening cycle: hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating, and responding, and it goes over again. As a result, humans

naturally develop hearing and listening skills, and they fulfil a cycle. In English and pronunciation teaching, understanding and interpreting the message is key; when what the speaker tries to communicate is not clear, there are interpretation mistakes, which affect communication itself. EFL learners benefit from active listening because they can listen and hear connected speech and pronunciation from native speakers. Consequently, students may improve their speaking and pronunciation skills significantly. According to Mantilla, Narvaez, Carrillo (2020), and their study “Listening comprehension to improve pronunciation in students of Mechanics Career-ESPOCH”, “there is no doubt about the importance of listening comprehension in the process of teaching English; several authors remark on this as an essential and extremely determining factor for a correct oral expression, and more specifically for a proper pronunciation.” (p. 886). Consequently, pronunciation and listening are closely related, and they both work together. Thus, how does active listening improve pronunciation? As mentioned before, active listening develops attention and fast responses. When someone listens carefully, they are ready to repeat and respond naturally.

Overall, active listening provides EFL learners the opportunity to “train” their ear and assimilate what they hear (in this case, English pronunciation) without having learning issues, as learners usually do when they have traditional listening exercises. The University of Adelaide (2014) states that good and understandable communication is possible through active listening. Saying that, English students have to form part of the intelligibility when communicating and when understanding. Added to this, teaching to listen but not teaching to hear helps both teachers and students develop their communicability through these mechanisms, such as active listening.

To conclude this theory. Active listening represents the beginning and the ending of the understanding of the human cognitive cycle because listening is catching and interesting for the human brain. In accordance with Real, Contreras, and Almache (2022, p. 40), English as a second

language learners may be more captivated by listening than by any other method. For instance, actively listening helps students enhance their cognitive skills in verbal communication and perception. Active listening is not just for small children; active listening is effective for everyone, and when learning a second language, as people learn their first language, listening actively makes the brain work with more energy and development.

2.5 Innovative and Creative Teaching Strategies

Many teachers at public and private schools apply and have applied many strategies to improve the pronunciation of beginner English learners. However, not many have been effective for teachers and students. Active listening is one of the most efficient strategies because it allows students to develop skills related to listening and speaking. Song-based strategies have improved students' pronunciation and active learning because most enjoy music. Melo (2022) says that songs are one of the most beautiful ways of expression, and people use them to create many things they imagine and feel. From this point, students connect themselves to music and learn through it, and pronunciation is not the exception. Considering those, these strategies based on songs may help students develop more mental activation, which will be beneficial for EFL learners through the path of learning a second language. According to Melo (2022), when teachers use new and different ways to teach, students get more interested and learn more effectively. For instance, learning through dynamic and interactive strategies creates a better environment in class and helps strengthen the relationship between the teachers and their students.

2.5.1 Song-based Strategies in Teaching

Song-based strategies foster prosody (rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation) in the target language, according to Mobbs and Cuyul (2018, p. 23) and their article "Listen to the Music: Using Songs in Listening and Speaking Classes". This theory affirms that students learn better

through music because music is the “universal language”. Music is a way of art that everybody loves; it transmits whatever the singer wants to transmit, and everyone can sing in any language. Music can motivate learners, and it may catch their attention more than in a regular class. With different rhythms, lyrics, and melodies, music is an excellent way to engage learners. However, how to choose the correct songs? Mobbs and Cuyul (2018) emphasize the following steps to choose the correct music:

- 1 Clarity of speech. The students can understand what the letters and sounds are.
- 2 Considering age. Repetitive songs for young ones and captivating for the oldest.
- 3 Speed. Music should go at a good speed. Sentences are clear and fluent.
- 4 Vocabulary. The vocabulary is enough to correlate with the lesson.
- 5 Grammar. The lesson should fit the grammar content and with the proper grammar rules.
- 6 Idioms. The idiomatic language has to be clear and relevant to the class.
- 7 Popularity. Songs have to be engaging and trending.
- 8 Cultural sensitivity. Songs have to have a good message for the students.
- 9 Offensive lyrics. The lyrics should fit with the objectives of the lesson and be respectful.

With the information above, it is clear that using song-based strategies to improve listening and speaking skills is not just about playing a song; the chosen music and songs have to be relevant to the class and help students learn the objectives of the class. Additionally, students have to enjoy the music they are listening to and not get distracted from the real purposes of the lesson. A good song also needs to include good vocabulary and good pronunciation; there are some songs that have inaudible lyrics and are very difficult to understand. Moreover, students should be comfortable with the lyrics and the rhythm; some songs are ear-hurting, and they can cause the contrary effect, which will negatively influence the students and the class itself. Then, how can

teachers choose good songs to improve oral skills? Firstly, to master these skills, students need to develop oral skills in speech. Mobbs and Cuyul (2018) agree that the speech is what students think, feel, and express; it is an interaction. Consequently, students need interaction in real life to develop their oral communication skills within and outside the classroom. This means that the teacher has to foster interaction, and music can be a good starter.

Additionally, song-based strategies are used mainly to improve oral communication skills or to enhance the environment of the class. Some teachers in other subjects, such as math, history, science, and so on, may use music to improve the environment of the class and make it more captivating and entertaining for the students and for them too. According to Hallam (2010), music is closely related to personal attainments and creativity. This means that music increases creativity and motivation to learn. In this case, using songs as a strategy within the classroom can relax and calm students' thoughts and improve their cognition through creativity and motivation.

To sum up, song-based strategies may be considered as the best strategy to be used within the classroom, whether for using to learn English or vocabulary or for creating a captivating and motivational educational environment for both students and teachers. Additionally, songs help to develop cognitive skills, as mentioned by Hallam (2010, p. 78), which students develop through their listening sense from which they obtain stimulus and positive reinforcement.

2.5.2 Song-based Strategies to Improve the Pronunciation of the Interdental Sounds in English

The interdental sounds in English /θ, ð/ are an essential part of connected speech. Yordhana, Prawinanto, and Bram state, “in English, interdental consonants are produced by placing the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower front teeth.” (2019, p. 3) The interdental sounds of the English Phonetics System are used in voiceless sounds (without vibration), such as

“think” and “theory”, and in voiced sounds with vibration, such as “this” and “leather”. The pronunciation of these sounds is key to understandable speech in daily conversations, so it is important to establish these sounds in ESL learners and get them used to them. In American English, the pronunciation of certain sounds changes a little bit depending on the region, community, or the speed the speaker is talking; however, interdental sounds remain the same pronunciation in all cases. According to Abad (2020, p.14), humans and their bodies are made to survive, and in connected speech, the body works to communicate what is happening and express whatever the body needs. In the following image, there is a representation of how the body produces these sounds.

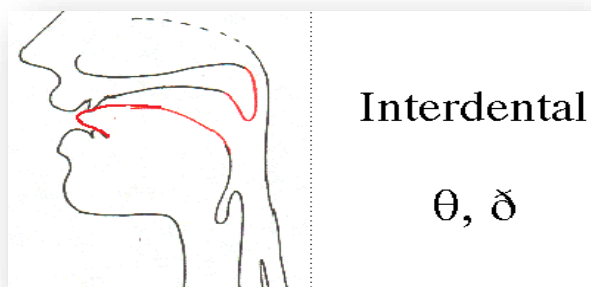


Figure 2

Recovered by Martinez E. Source: ResearchGate. (2008)

As the previous picture shows, the air travels through the mouth, touching the tongue, and it finally escapes with the sound produced between the front teeth. Sometimes, for Spanish ESL learning may be difficult to pronounce them due to all the processes the body goes through before producing these sounds, and these students are not used to them. Then, using new and modern techniques may work more effectively with these ESL learners rather than the regular and orthodox techniques that modern teachers do not use nowadays. Song-based strategies to teach

pronunciation are a good technique that teachers can use regularly. Borge, Méndez. et. al. (2022) state that “talking about language and music, it is ‘possible to find a connection between songs when communicating messages, concepts, contexts, ideas, feelings and emotions.’” (p. 18). Mentioned this, teachers can use songs not only to improve pronunciation but also to connect students with real life and make them participate more in class. Music can also be a strategy to give students confidence, which is the first step to developing fluent speaking skills. Thus, a student who feels comfortable is at peace with themselves.

Moreover, music provides a beneficial effect on the brain that enhances cognitive skills. According to Borge et. al. (2022, p. 19), listening repeatedly to a song and learning from it, students will gradually correct their mistakes and other classmates; consequently, they will achieve native-like pronunciation. As a result, students will pronounce interdental sounds better because they will imitate native singers and their pronunciation. Why is native-like pronunciation so important? Native-like pronunciation is the ability to communicate verbally, sounding as a native speaker does, but not the same. Native-like speaking skills should be a “real world” experience, in which students listen to vocabulary they generally use, and correct pronunciation mistakes they may have by activating listening to mimic. According to Abimanyu (2023, p. 5), listening to music as a strategy allows students to repeat as native-like while they pick up new vocabulary with the correct pronunciation. Thus, listening to music not only helps students with pronunciation but also helps them to learn new words and phrases from native speakers.

Furthermore, English music is very popular; it is everywhere, and most of them are from famous native singers who indirectly teach non-native speakers pronunciation rules. Nevertheless, using songs to improve the pronunciation of interdental sounds in EFL learners should be a technique that includes a structure and organization. For this reason, these songs must contain the

content that teachers are looking for to achieve, in this case, the interdental sounds. These sounds are particularly common, so they may be present in many English songs from all genres, melodies, and lyrics. Agreeing with Brewer (1995), “the use of music in the classroom requires instructors to carefully select the songs to use. The students’ level is highly important to take into account; short and slow songs should be used with beginners so that it is easier for them to understand.” (p. 2) Therefore, students, especially beginners, need songs in accordance with their abilities and understanding to make the process easier and effective.

As stated before, music and songs are beneficial for both English and teachers. Listening to music makes the class more entertaining and dynamic, it awakens more emotions and creates an unbreakable connection between the students and the teachers because they share likes, emotions, of points of view through music. In agreement with HM Education (2022), music is a cornerstone of the broad and balanced education because it touches hearts, minds, and moves us together. For instance, music is a powerful tool that will make students feel more comfortable with what they speak and feel, because they will be listening to what they like and what they are accustomed to in their day-to-day life.

Additionally, some theories have studied music as a tool to develop human social and emotional skills. In accordance with Annet (2024), in her study “The Influence of Music in Social and Emotional Development”, she describes that music can develop emotional awareness through the occurrence of different emotional states during active listening. In this context, listening to music, for example, fosters humans’ natural abilities to socialize and interact naturally with the environment. Moreover, humans develop emotions through experiences and living situations. In the context of music, music brings people experiences or at least, they tend to connect music to life’s events, for instance, music forms part of everybody’s life in many stages of life. Annet

(2022, p. 2) states that music reinforces the sense of community, and in a classroom, there should be a strong sense of community. For instance, music puts people together and helps them to develop integrated skills that form the human cycle.

In conclusion, since the goal of this research is to enhance students' pronunciation of interdental sounds, it is important to talk about all the implications music holds. Music with meaningful lyrics, rhythm, and vocabulary that are relevant to students can help them master the pronunciation of the interdental sounds and all target sounds. Through music, students can mimic native speakers with confidence, ensuring that they are pronouncing each word and sound correctly. For these reasons, teachers have to be careful when choosing songs and lyrics to enhance students' pronunciation and avoid having the opposite effect and having a setback for students.

2.5.3 Popular English Songs to Choose as a Strategy Within the Classroom

It is not a secret that English music has become more popular over the years, especially among the Spanish community. It seems that people from Latin America love this music and these singers. Oliveira (2020, p. 3) mentions that music is transferable and accessible to any region of the world with a click nowadays. Therefore, for this, almost the entire world population has access to any genre, singer, and rhythm. However, why is American (English) music so popular? Maybe because this is the goal of the industry. Oliveira (2020) also says that artists need to meet the expectations of the members of the music community because this is how they become famous and rich. Consequently, English songs and music are popular because that is the goal: engaging people and making them “click the bottom”. Choosing a good song to apply as a strategy within the class could be challenging because students are usually different, with different likes and preferences. Added to this, songs have to fit with the content that the teachers look forward to, in this case,

interdental sounds mastery. Fortunately, many American songs contain these sounds at least once, because they represent a big percentage of words and common vocabulary in English.

Additionally, it is important to remember that students need to feel comfortable with the songs and the activities, and they need to learn from them. For this reason, it is relevant to explore the best English songs to achieve the class goals. According to Hendrawaty (2020), “certain genres like pop or pop, it is the commercial record music that is often oriented towards young people and usually consists of relatively short and simple love songs. There is a feature of pop songs that can be inferred from the name itself. The popularity of pop songs ensures that they have very potential to motivate students to learn a language.” (p.58). As most of the studies suggest, English pop music is the most popular one and it may be a good genre and strategy to use to teach English interdental sounds pronunciation. Stated by Diana, 2021, as cited in Borge, et. al., (2022, p. 26), the most popular English songs between 2013 and 2015 were pop songs especially, those with generic and catchy rhythms, that that attract the attention of teens and adults; for example, “Roar” of Katy Perry or “See You Again” of Whiz Khalifa.

As mentioned above, all of the most popular songs of the past decade are pop songs combined with other rhythms, but pop after all. By these songs or other more modern songs, students may be engaged in the class and learn more about pronunciation than usual listening exercises that could be boring and stressful for students.

To conclude, popular English songs are everywhere; people, and especially teenagers, enjoy listening to popular songs, since they are trendy and interesting. As a result, teachers can take advantage of the music's popularity and start implementing this popular music and songs in their lesson plans. Furthermore, with music sounding everywhere, students may have more possibilities of enhancing their vocabulary variety and pronouncing words correctly. This is

because, through listening, students “shadow” a native-like accent and pronunciation. To sum up, the music and songs that teachers choose for their students are essential and form part of the song-based learning-teaching process.

2.5.4 Song-based Activities to Improve Interdental Sounds Pronunciation in EFL

Learners

Creating activities perhaps become a challenge for the teachers, especially in public education, because everything carries a very specific structure. However, teachers can innovate their lessons following the institutional structure. How to prepare activities using songs? In accordance with Guler and Bozkurt (2021), teaching through songs requires certain procedures: preparation of the stage, core stage, and follow-up stage. In the first stage, the students are informed about the goal of the task; in the second stage, students are engaged with the songs, and in the third stage, students develop the expected skills.

Some activities may include other skills like writing (spelling) and speaking; this is because listening and speaking come together. Additionally, dynamic activities will always be successful for both the teacher and the students, because an active and moving class may probably work better. Nevertheless, the focus of this point is to acknowledge what activities will match the class and to goals. Moreover, these kinds of activities may help the teachers “fix” students’ pronunciation. According to Asmaradhani et. al. (2018, p. 77), the process of fixing pronunciation using activities with songs can become very stimulating for both English and teachers because songs can provide an appropriate environment. For instance, song-based activities also create a fun and moving atmosphere that commits students to learn the contents of the pronunciation class.

Finally, song-based activities provide other benefits too. Asmaradhani et. al. (2018, p. 78), songs create a peaceful environment where students are positive, relaxed, and help students grasp

more knowledge and vocabulary. In addition, it is important to choose good activities that students are willing to learn as much as possible. Nevertheless, teachers have to be careful with the activities they choose; the activities have to include the content the teacher needs for his or her class. For example, if the teachers need students to learn interdental sounds, the activities have to focus on interdental sounds and relevant vocabulary that enhances students' pronunciation in these sounds. In accordance with Rais et. al. (2020, p. 134 & 136), some examples of activities are the following:

- 1 Students listen to the song and sing aloud to repeat and emphasize the interdental sounds.
- 2 Students pronounce the vocabulary with the sounds independently, shadowing the singer.
- 3 The teacher gives students a worksheet that contains vocabulary that may be confused by Spanish learners with dental sounds such as /t, d/, and they have to choose the correct one with the correct dental sound.

With these kinds of activities, students can train their listening skills and shadowing to pronounce like a native. Moreover, these activities make the brain remember everything it learns, because music usually “activates” cognitivism and memory retention. Misa (2024) states that the rhythm of a melody can transfer verbal information, that is, spoken information. Thus, song-based activities not only improve the class's atmosphere but also enhance students' speaking skills. For all these reasons, song-based activities should be a warm-up to start a good pronunciation and memorization lesson.

To conclude, this chapter aims to research important theories and relevant information for the investigation; this chapter is one of the most important parts of the investigation because it explains all the theories expected for this chapter. Firstly, it explores important information about the importance of learning English and its impact on the modern world. Secondly, it points out

the importance of good communication, emphasizing pronunciation and its impact on transferring messages accurately. For instance, the chapter aims to analyze and determine the use of strategies based on songs to help EFL learners master their oral skills, and mainly their pronunciation fluency and accuracy when trying to pronounce difficult sounds such as dental sounds.

Additionally, this theoretical framework mentions the importance of English and its impact on the modern world, since English is the foundation of communication among people all around the world. In accordance with Putri (2021), English is the international language, and it is spoken by more than 400 million people worldwide. This means that the importance of learning English goes beyond frontiers and it has a huge impact on people's lives in cultural, economic, and social aspects. Besides, in countries that are not 100% developed, such as Costa Rica and all of Central America, English represents the development of the educational, touristic, economic, and cultural enrichment. Thus, English is the way people open the doors to many opportunities and enable themselves to have a wide variety of options in their working life.

Moreover, the chapter focuses more on the pronunciation of interdental sounds and their importance in speaking skills, and how the mispronunciation affects the way people understand and interpret what non-native speakers try to say. The mispronunciation of interdental English sounds is very common among EFL learners, because these sounds do not exist in Spanish in the way they are pronounced in English. In accordance with Pourhosein and Ahmadi (2011, p. 78), there are three main factors affecting the pronunciation of English in non-native speakers. First, the absence of some sounds in the target language that are replaced by other sounds. Second, the combination of sounds into words is phonetics. Last, the rhythm, stress, articulation, and intonation that are characteristic of the target language can be very different in English.

Consequently, learners struggle with many factors that affect their pronunciation, influenced by their mother tongue and other aspects such as emotional, social, or cultural contexts, which have to be fixed by the professional in teaching. The pronunciation of interdental sounds represents a challenge due to the effects of the aspects mentioned before in second language acquisition. In addition, the interdental sounds are strong, used sounds in English that have to be managed properly by non-native speakers to reach their goals in communicability and intelligibility.

Besides, the strategies and the impact of using songs to improve the pronunciation within the classroom, and all the benefits of listening to music may have when teaching a second language. Nowadays, the world is changing in all aspects, and English is not the exception; languages are taught everywhere, and especially those that have a big demand globally, such as English. For instance, people from everywhere, and specifically those who dedicate their lives to teaching languages, need to implement good and innovative strategies to teach languages effectively and help students achieve success, or at least achieve good and clear communication. Song-based strategies have been present in the educational field for decades. As stated by Hatimah et. al. (n.d), song-based lessons improve vocabulary, lexicon, and reliability of the students' pronunciation and give them a foundation to build a new language. As a consequence, song-based strategies are beneficial for broadening students' knowledge and mastery of any content or topic that they are learning. In addition, song-based strategies allow learners to master their pronunciation, as mentioned throughout this chapter. This is because songs activate many parts of the brain that regulate memory, awareness, attention, and motivation, too. For instance, songs are also used for improving feelings and awakening people's interest in learning.

Finally, the chapter explores the activities that teachers can use to achieve the pronunciation goals and all the expected results. Nevertheless, it is important to say that this part of the investigation attempts to be focused on specific sounds that Spanish EFL learners usually mispronounce due to the influence of their mother tongue. For instance, it is also important to talk about the challenges these learners face during the English pronunciation learning process. Some challenges that some learners may struggle with are the difficulties of learning another language itself. From a young age, a human starts to develop language by making “weird sounds”, like bubbling. Adam S. (n.d) of Harvard University says that humans learn languages without knowing the grammar rules. This means that by hearing sounds and relating sounds to images, flavors, smells, textures, and experiences, humans acquire language. In this context, the listening skills are innate skills for humans’ natural development. For instance, some difficulties that language learners may have related to the environment and to the lack of exposure to the language. In Costa Rica, for example, public education in the English teaching field is not focused on training the ear and exposure to the language; the majority of Costa Rican people do not have this contact with the language, and it is when they fail pronunciation. In addition, as emphasized in this chapter, some sounds may be more difficult to pronounce than others that might be similar to some sounds in Spanish. To conclude, EFL learners acquire languages through constant interaction with the language, and songs are definitely a good strategy to start this interaction.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

A methodological framework is usually the foundation of the practical part of a dissertation paper. In accordance with Oxford University (n.d., p. 7), a methodological framework encompasses the methods and the process the researcher will use to analyze the data recovered during the investigation process. Said this, a methodology is how the data will be collected and analyzed to stamp the expected results. Additionally, this chapter enables the researcher to organize and sort the steps to follow during the investigation and testing process. The methodology that may be used provides reliable research that the lecturers can trust. A methodology is always important in the practical part because it allows the participants of the study to have the appropriate tools and techniques to achieve the target results.

Moreover, the methodology always has to match the topic or topic the researcher is studying, because the steps to follow depend on the type of investigation the investigator is doing. Usually, research papers always contain the information the reader expects from them. For instance, a paper with the most accurate methodology is always the most appropriate research. Finally, it covers methods, techniques, design, sources, and data collection instruments. The aspects mentioned above strive to convince the reader that the content of the research is real and

authentic. In addition, the concepts touched on in this part are broadly explained within the chapter.

3.1 Type of Investigation

The type of investigation means what the investigation focuses on, statistics or reasons for those statistics. The type of investigation used for this research is the mixed type, the ones that combines quantitative and qualitative in one single paper with one single aim. Firstly, the quantitative approach is the one that investigates numbers and patterns of a specific group of people or population. Rana and Oldroyd (2021) say, “quantitative methods are the collection and analysis of numerical data to answer scientific research questions. The quantitative method is used to summarize, average, find patterns, make predictions, and test causal associations.” Basically, the approach strives to find numbers with an opinion, perception, or problem in common, not the reasons behind.

Secondly, the qualitative approach, on the contrary, seeks to analyze deeply the reasons for the statistics of a specific behavior or problem. Udoka (2023) from Kampala International University defines the qualitative approach as:

“Qualitative research is the study of the nature of phenomena, which includes their quality, different manifestations, the context in which they appear, or the perspectives from which they can be perceived, but excludes their range, frequency, and place in an objectively determined chain of cause and effect. A more practical guideline can be added to this formal definition: qualitative research typically includes data in the form of words instead of numbers.” (p. 6).

Accordingly, a qualitative approach focuses more on the background of the problem or the situation given in the study field. Finally, the mixed approach is the combination of both approaches; essentially, that is, researchers' numbers, but the background of those numbers, too. A mixed approach or method fully studies the phenomena.

3.2 Investigation Design

The investigation design has the purpose of giving the research support. Several designs can be used when doing an investigation, but in the case of this paper, the design combines exploratory and descriptive designs as a descriptive-exploratory design. To understand it better, it is important to clarify what each design holds. In the first place, the descriptive design is defined by Manjunatha N. (2019) as the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. Consequently, a descriptive design provides the research with the basis of the phenomenon or the problem.

Secondly, an exploratory design defined by Saka (2023), is the way the researcher collects data to analyze it in several ways, but not to "fix" the problematic, only to investigate the foundations of the phenomena. Thus, in this research, the exploratory design is useful to get to the bottom and seek to find the answers. The descriptive-exploratory design that is used in this research aims to analyze the population facing the phenomena and give it a background by exploring the possible causes and solutions. For instance, the design of this research describes the population and the problems that they have when pronouncing interdental sounds; in addition, it explores the strategies based on songs that teachers can use to improve or fix the phenomena.

3.3 Sampler

The sampling of an investigation is seriously important because it gives the study a sense. Sampling makes the decision whether the theories can be put into practice or not. In the case of

this research, the sample is made up of 33 participants, **13 students in eighth grade, and 1 ESL teacher from high school**. This sampling born in the CINDEA de Alajuelita, located in Alajuelita Centro, San Jose, Costa Rica, is a night shift secondary school for teenagers older than 17 years old and adults of all ages: since this type of education is for those who abandoned their secondary or high school studies at some point of their life, these participants have an educational setback, especially in English speaking and pronunciation skills. All the participants volunteered for that investigation and were informed about the aims of the investigation. The participants, including students and teachers, regularly struggle with the typical methodologies established by the M.E.P. Consequently, sometimes, the development of oral skills is not the most adequate.

The sampling is chosen by the non-probabilistic convenience method. In accordance with Kyu-Seong (2022), the non-probabilistic convenience method occurs when the sampler is previously selected by the researcher, not a random sampling as some investigation papers aim to. This means that the sampling selected here is intentionally selected due to some behaviors detected before starting the study.

3.4 Analysis of Categories

The analysis of the categories discriminates each point that will be analyzed in this paper. The analysis of categories focuses on the processes and stages developed throughout the study. According to Gale et. al. (2013), the analysis of categories or the analytical framework refers to a set of codes organized into categories that can be used to manage and organize the data. Thus, the analysis of categories represents a sort of organization that helps the researchers develop the strategies and methodologies step by step. To understand how categories connect, it is important to know the main concepts and key words (codes) that will be explored during the investigation.

3.4.1 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the ability to produce sounds as the speaker talks, maintaining intelligibility. According to Pourhossein (2016, p. 2), in any language, humans can produce sounds as they are ruled in any language. For instance, learning a language, whether English or any other language, has rules and structures made to follow carefully in order not to affect intelligibility, to be understood or comprehended, and to transmit a clear and understandable message.

3.4.2 Songs in English

Songs in English are very popular worldwide; everybody has heard a song in English. There is a huge variety of musical genres in English; for example, pop, rock and roll, reggae, among others, which are listened to by many people every day. Thus, English songs have become a strong influence on the language for young and old in many parts of the world. In accordance with Diana (2021, as cited in Borge et. al, 2022, p.26), the most popular songs in English connect with billions of people around the world. This means that these kinds of songs are not only for making money or influencing the masses; songs in English are the most listened to. Furthermore, songs in English, as they are known to a great percentage of people, can be used as a strategy to know and learn the language.

3.4.3 Interdental sounds

The interdental sounds in English /θ, ð/ are described as dental fricative sounds, which means that they are produced with the tongue and the teeth pushing the air outside. Lee (n.d) mentions that dental fricative sounds are produced with the tip of the tongue when it touches the upper teeth, and the air is not locked at any point of the production of the sound. The interdental sounds are present in every conversation in English. According to Wells (1982), the interdental fricatives /θ, ð/ represent a very small portion of the English lexicon, less than two percent of all

words, but they occur with high frequency in everyday speech, about 40%, mainly because they appear in many common function words as “this, that, the, and they”. For instance, interdental sounds will continue to appear in every common and fluent conversation in English. Therefore, the interdental sounds in English differ from Spanish dental sounds, because they do not appear in common Spanish conversations; in fact, interdental sounds in English do not have an equivalent in Spanish.

3.4.4 Improvement

Improvement refers to everything that requires effort and good results. Oxford Learner’s Dictionary (2023) defines “improvement” as the process of making something better through gradual change and effort, especially in learning and performance. Thus, improvement has criteria and steps to follow to achieve what is expected. Improvement, as stated by Harris & Chrispeels (2006), implies a continuous process of development in students’ skills and competencies. In this research, improvement refers to the progress in students’ pronunciation of interdental sounds as a result of song-based strategies. Moreover, improvement in this context is relevant because, as mentioned before, it looks forward to progress and achieves successful results.

3.5 Collecting Data Techniques and Instruments

This section describes the data collection techniques and instruments used in this study to gather information about students’ perception and improvement in the pronunciation of interdental sounds through the use of songs. Moreover, data collection is a fundamental step for the aim of this research, because it implies the relevant information that is required to analyze the problem of the research and the possible answers. According to Creswell (2014), data collection involves a systematic process of obtaining relevant information that helps the researcher answer the research questions and evaluate the objectives of the study. Thus, this process involves first evaluating the

problem through observation and finally analyzing the results through the survey. Therefore, in this study, observation and survey techniques were applied to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

3.5.1 Observation

The observation process is used as a qualitative data collection technique to analyze students' performance, attitude, and interaction regarding the interdental fricative sounds during activities such as reading aloud and repeating words. Its main purpose is to identify the pronunciation difficulties that students present, especially in the production of the sounds /θ/ and /ð/. This instrument allows the researcher to obtain direct evidence of students' participation, pronunciation accuracy, and possible causes of mispronunciation of interdental fricative sounds.

Moreover, observation is key to determining and analyzing students' behavior and interaction with the pronunciation problem under study. According to Burns (2010), classroom observation provides a valuable source of information for teachers to understand learning processes and to evaluate pedagogical interventions. In this research, observation helped the researcher identify the causes of the pronunciation difficulties and evaluate strategies that could be useful to address them. Finally, the observation will be conducted during the initial sessions of the English lessons in which students practiced and interacted with the interdental sounds.

3.5.2 Survey

The survey is a tool used to complement the strategies and results of the research. The survey gives the participants the opportunity to evaluate and give an opinion on the methods used during the application of the activities and strategies. According to Dornyei (2007, p. 102),

questionnaires are an effective way to obtain quantitative data about learners' beliefs, attitudes, and self-perceived progress in language learning contexts. For instance, the survey will consider and obtain the general perception of the students about the interdental sounds and the use of songs to improve their pronunciation.

The survey is made of 10 questions with a Likert Scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is totally disagree and 5 is totally agree. The survey contains 3 sections: the students' general perceptions on the interdental sounds, the students' general perceptions on the pronunciation of the interdental sounds, and the students' general perceptions on the use of songs as a strategy within the class.

3.5.3 Pre-test of the interdental sounds

The pre-test will help the researcher determine the main problems that students have when pronouncing the interdental sounds. Its objective is to evaluate students' performance and knowledge of the interdental sounds. Moreover, the pre-test will complement the observation as part of the identification of the problem and its level.

The participants (students) read the lyrics of the song "Die with a Smile" by Bruno Mars ft. Lady Gaga, while they are recorded with a high-quality tape. Then, the records are analyzed by the expert teachers of the sampler in the pronunciation of the interdental sounds, and they provide their first testing result.

3.5.4 Activities in Between

The activities in between are designed as part of the intervention stage to improve students' pronunciation of the interdental fricative sounds through the use of English songs. These activities aim to increase students' awareness, motivation, and accuracy in producing the target sounds in authentic communicative contexts.

The intervention lasts 2 sessions, each including a combination of listening, repetition, and pronunciation. The songs are chosen according to their lexical content, rhythm, and frequency of the target sounds.

During the first session, students listen, read, and analyze the song “Thinking Out Loud” by Ed Sheeran, identifying and highlighting words that contain the target sounds. Then, some students chosen by the researcher read aloud the lyrics and read louder when reading the interdental sounds, focusing on tongue position and airflow. Finally, students receive feedback on tongue placement, voicing, and airflow to differentiate between /θ/ and /ð/.

During the second session, students work with the song “Thank You” by Dido through a fill-in-the-blanks activity, specifically designed to enhance listening discrimination. The researcher provides printed lyrics with the target words removed, leaving blank spaces where the interdental sounds appeared. Students listen to the song twice. In the first listening, they focus on identifying missing words by sound. In the second, they fill in the blanks and practice pronouncing each word, emphasizing correct articulation of /θ/ and /ð/. Finally, the class reviews the answers together, and students repeat the phrases rhythmically with the music to internalize the sounds through melody and rhythm.

These activities promote confidence and help students transfer pronunciation practice into spontaneous speaking. As Harmer (2007) highlights, songs are powerful teaching tools because they integrate listening, speaking, and pronunciation in a natural and motivating way, fostering meaningful language learning experiences. Through these activities, students will be able to link pronunciation with melody and context, which facilitates long-term retention and improvement in the articulation of the interdental fricatives.

3.5.5 Post-test of the interdental sounds.

The post-test will determine the final results of the techniques applied to the sampler (students). Its objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of using songs as a strategy to improve the pronunciation of interdental sounds. This is the most important stage because it defines whether the strategies and songs work or they do not.

The participants read aloud the lyrics of the song “Rolling in the Deep” by Adele while they are recorded with a high-quality tape. Then, the expert teachers from the sampler and the researcher analyze and determine if students are having an improvement in the pronunciation of the interdental sounds after the application of the song-based strategies.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is the next step of this investigation. Data collection procedures mean the way the researcher finds the data and organizes it to analyze the results. Dovetail (2023, para. 5) mentions that data collection procedures gather information from different research methods and consolidate it into a repository. This means that the data collection procedures allow the researcher to have all data collected in hand to use it whenever it is necessary for its subsequent analysis. The steps to follow during this research are presented in this section. The investigation needs time, organization, and stages in order to apply the interventions on time in accordance with each procedure.

3.6.1 Observation

The procedure starts with the observation; in this step, the researcher observes the behavior and the difficulties that students may have when pronouncing. According to Burns (2010), the observation during class helps the teachers explore and determine the class issues, causes, and possible solutions or strategies to reinforce the class improvement. This step will mark

the starting point of the investigation and the answers to the questions, and it will also allow the researcher to establish the objectives and find achievable aims by implementing strategies and instruments. The observation was applied to 10 eighth-grade students of eighth grade, to identify the difficulties students had when pronouncing interdental sounds. The observation checklist was designed to identify and describe students' pronunciation regarding the interdental fricative sounds. According to Richards & Lockhart (1994), classroom observation instruments, such as checklists, are valuable tools for collecting systematic data on teaching and learning behavior. The checklist included specific criteria focused on accuracy, articulation, and production.

| Criterion | Yes | Partially | No | Comments |
|---|-----|-----------|----|----------|
| Students pronounce /θ/ correctly in isolated words. | | | | |
| Students pronounce /ð/ correctly in isolated words. | | | | |
| Students differentiate /θ/ and /ð/ sounds in sentences. | | | | |
| Students maintain correct tongue position (between teeth). | | | | |
| Students demonstrate confidence while pronouncing sounds. | | | | |
| Students identify words with the interdental sounds in English. | | | | |

3.6.2 Pre-test

Secondly, the procedure continues with the pre-test. The pre-test is a tool that, next to the observation, will determine if the causes of the problem are related to the questions and the objectives of the paper, in order to apply the strategies effectively. In accordance with Hashim, Mohamed, Lim & Che (2022), the pre-test is the foundation of the tools used in a study, survey,

questionnaire, or interview. This means that the pre-test defines the questions that will answer the objectives of the study. For instance, at this stage, the researcher tests the students and the problem presented in this paper. The pre-test was applied to 10 students, next to the observation, to measure the causes and level of the problem.

3.6.3 Activities in between

Moreover, the next stage of the procedure is the activities in between. The activities in between are just after the pre-test and before the post-test. The activities in between modify, improve, and reinforce a skill, in this case, the pronunciation of the interdental sounds. In other words, they are the methodological strategies applied to solve a problem. Brown, H. (2004, p. improvement. 25), activities between the pre-test and post-test provide the opportunity for learners to apply knowledge, practice skills, and demonstrate improvement. Thus, the activities in between are the key to the enhancement of the students. On this stage, two activities were applied using songs as a strategy to improve students' pronunciation. The activities included listening, reading, and repeating.

3.6.4 Survey

Furthermore, the procedure includes the tools used to collect the information and the final results according to the sampler (students). The students answered a survey where they read statements related to the strategies using songs and their effectiveness. The students answered a survey where they chose the frequency of the statements proposed by the researcher. The survey was measured with a Likert Scale, and the frequency of answers. The table/survey determines the answers and the frequency, where "never" represents 0 and "always" represents 5. The objective of the scale is to collect the students' perception of the use of songs as a strategy to improve the pronunciation of the interdental English sounds

| Participants' perception of the use of songs to improve pronunciation of the interdental sounds. | Nunca | Casi nunca | Casi siempre | Siempre |
|---|-------|------------|--------------|---------|
| 1. Las canciones motivaron la atención. | | | | |
| 2. Las canciones promovieron la participación activa. | | | | |
| 3. Las actividades con canciones me ayudaron a entender cuáles son los sonidos interdentes. | | | | |
| 4. Las canciones me hicieron diferenciar entre el sonido /θ/ y /ð/. | | | | |
| 5. Las canciones me hicieron aprender la articulación y posición correcta de la lengua y dientes de los sonidos /θ/ y /ð/. | | | | |
| 6. Las canciones elegidas contenían muchas palabras con los sonidos interdentes. | | | | |
| 7. Entendí la diferencia entre los sonidos interdentes del inglés /θ/ y /ð/ y los sonidos dentales del español /t/ y /d/ gracias a las canciones. | | | | |
| 8. Aprendí a pronunciar los sonidos interdentes en inglés sin reemplazarlos con otros sonidos. | | | | |

Table 2 *Adapted from Scribbr.com (2023)*

3.6.5 Post-test

Finally, the post-test is the closure procedure. As Brown (2004) states, tests are essential tools to measure learners' progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies proposed by the professional. On this stage, students were asked to read the lyrics of a song that included many interdental sounds while they were being recorded. The results of the recordings were analyzed by the researcher and the expert teachers of the sampler. The post-test was identical to the pre-test to ensure compatibility and reliability of the results.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

This chapter presents, analyzes, and discusses the results obtained from the application of the different data collection instruments used in this research. The purpose of this section is to describe the findings derived from the observation, pre-test, activities in between, post-test, and survey, which aimed to determine the effectiveness of using songs to improve the pronunciation of the interdental fricative sounds among EFL students.

The analysis of the results is key to finishing the study, because in this part, the researcher applies the instruments and finds out the answers to the questions and objectives proposed in the study. Bathia (2017) states that data analysis can help the researcher make better decisions with the application of the instruments. Thus, the data analysis sets the final stage of the whole investigation and determines the effectiveness of them.

Additionally, the results are organized according to the stages of the research process: diagnostic, intervention, and evaluation. Quantitative data are presented through tables and figures, while qualitative data are described and interpreted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the students' progress.

Finally, the purpose of this section is to interpret the collected data to determine the effectiveness of using songs to improve pronunciation. The results are presented in both quantitative and qualitative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed through percentages and comparison tables, while qualitative data were described and categorized according to students' performance and perception.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretations of Results

The analysis of the results is based on direct observation of students' performance and behavior in the different stages of the collection procedures. According to Dibekulu (2020), by closely examining data, we can find patterns to perceive information, and that information can be used to enhance knowledge. For instance, the analysis of data helps the researcher find out and verify the theories and findings to ensure the reliability of the instruments. The different stages of the field study are presented in this chapter. This analysis seeks to answer the main research question and validate the achievement of the specific objectives established in Chapter I

The institution where the study was carried out is a night-shift high school; the students range in age from 15 to 60. For instance, they have difficulties with learning English because they left high school several years ago. Additionally, before implementing the instruments, the application for permission and the instruments were presented to the principal of the institution and the teacher of the groups involved in the study. Moreover, the institution did not have a high-quality tape or speakers to carry out the observation, nor the pre-test and the post-test; for instance, all the equipment was provided by the researcher.

4.1.1 Observation Checklist

The following section presents the results of the observation criteria, which provided essential data to identify eighth-grade students in eighth grade difficulties when pronouncing interdental sounds. The observation checklist is a significant tool for gathering essential information, which is fundamental for the researcher to find and analyze students' behavior, attitude, difficulties, and strengths towards the language. The observation checklist provides the researcher with the opportunity to evaluate all elements involved to start applying the techniques. The objectives of the observation checklist were to analyze and identify the causes of students'

mispronunciation of the interdental sounds in English, as well as the techniques the English teachers implement in listening and speaking, and the techniques they use to improve and strengthen these skills. It also identified the relationship students had with the language overall and the interdental sounds. As well as the causes of mispronunciation and the familiarity of songs within the class.

This first stage was developed on October 17th, 2025, with 13 participants from eighth grade, the section 8-2. The observation was carried out next to the pre-test in order to get in touch with the objectives of the study. The session started with a brief explanation of the study and the activities of that day. The teacher of the session was informed about the accomplishments of the observation; thus, she prepared a reading and speaking class during the session.

Firstly, the students read aloud a simple story, the story was titled “The Things I Did These Days”. The story contained the interdental sounds /θ/ and /ð/. During the activity, the teacher asked the students to read louder the words that contained “th”; students read, and they had some trouble identifying the interdental sounds. As the class continued, the teacher read the passage aloud, and they had to repeat each line because the teacher is used to having students repeat and learn new words, especially those that represent a challenge. In the next lesson, students had to listen to a dialogue from the book, which was also printed; this dialogue had some words with the interdental sounds. The teacher asked them to say the theme of the dialogue, and they said it was about “dates”. After, the teacher asked them to listen to the audio carefully again and repeat each single word. The students had several pronunciation mistakes, including words pronounced with the tip of the tongue and the teeth. The teacher asked them to pronounce the words “think” and “this”, which were part of the dialogue they had already read and listened to, and the students did not identify the pronunciation differences of these two words. This indicated

that students did not recognize these sounds and the lack of relationship between these two sounds. The researcher observed students' mouths while pronouncing the two words, and all the participants had an incorrect position of the tongue, mouth, and teeth. For instance, the students of this study showed issues with the position of the tongue and teeth.

Moreover, the students were asked to read one by one, one word assigned by the teacher; they had to stand in front of the rest of the students and say the word. During this activity, some students showed a shy attitude through the activity, because they were aware of their mispronunciation and the difficulties they had with the language. Nevertheless, some other students showed willingness to learn and confidence while pronouncing the word, even though they knew they did not have a perfect pronunciation of the sounds.

Finally, in the last minutes of the session, the students wrapped up with a group reading aloud, following the teacher as they read the dialogue that they were familiar with. The teacher gave them some feedback about pronunciation and rhythm. During this activity, students felt more comfortable with the words and the dialogue, because they had practiced listening and repeating again and again.

The following graphic shows the final results of the findings in the observation checklist. The graph illustrates the indicators and the number of students and their development during the observation session. The graph contains the most important aspects to be analyzed during the observation session.

Graph 1. Observation Checklist

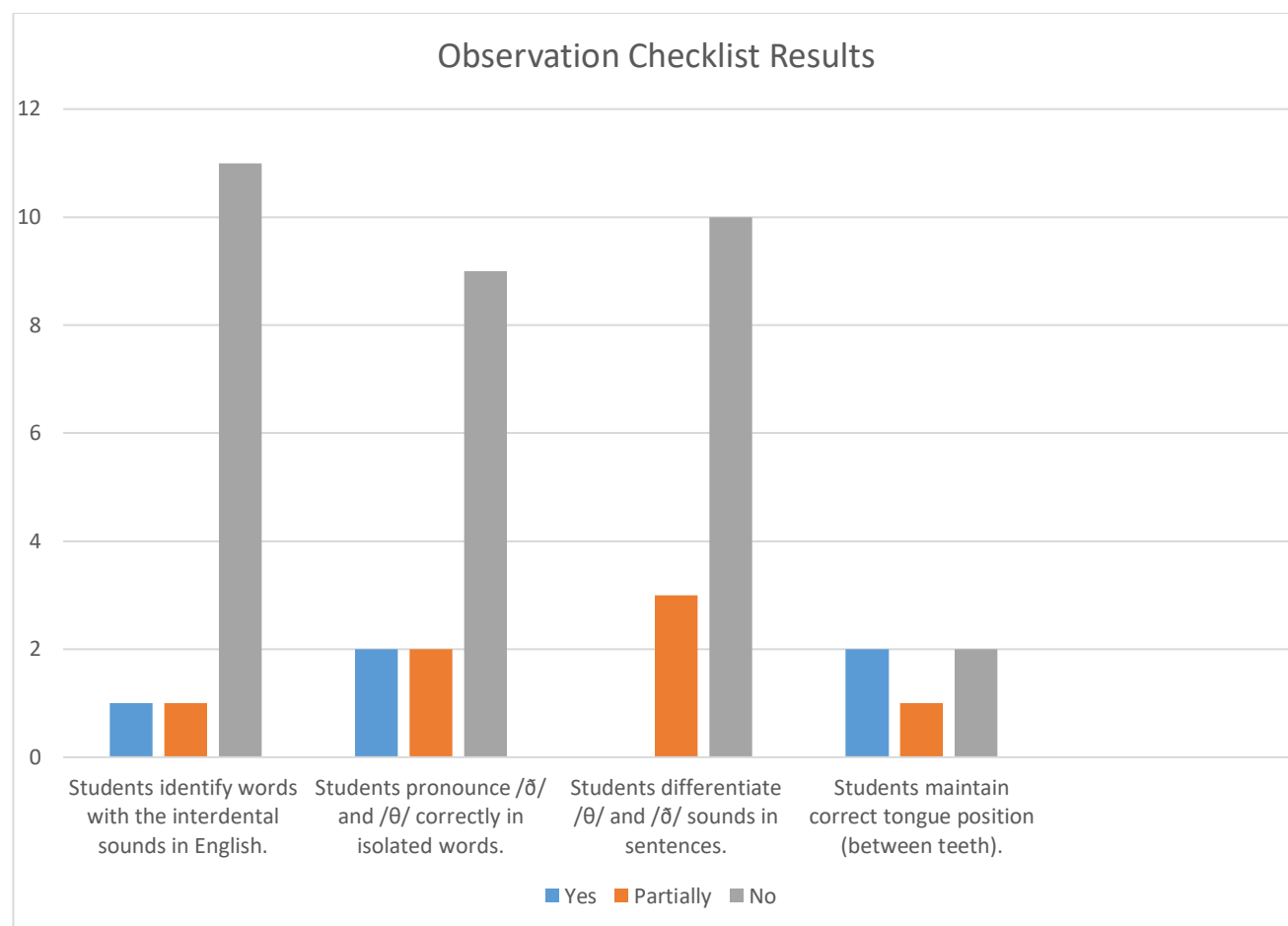


Figure 6. Checklist results on students' pronunciation. Source: Researcher creation. (2025)

The observation checklist was applied to evaluate students' performance in identifying and pronouncing the interdental fricative sounds in English. As shown in Figure 6, minor participants were able to identify the target sounds within isolated words and short sentences. Additionally, a few students maintained accurate tongue positioning and articulation throughout the activities. This suggests that while sound recognition and pronunciation accuracy remained limited, particularly regarding tongue placement between teeth.

Finally, the results obtained in the observation checklist provided valuable input for the comparison pre-test and the post-test results, allowing the researcher to measure the progress achieved after the implementation of the activities. Thus, the data collected ensures the identification of pronunciation issues found with the interventions.

4.1.2 Pre-test

The pre-test is the second stage of the study. The session was carried out on October 20th, 2025. The session included the thirteen participants and the teacher in charge; also, on this day, the students were learning some grammar, specifically, verbal tenses. The participants were willing to participate because they were informed about the session before starting, and they also agreed with the Informed Consent presented previously. During this stage, the researcher aimed to obtain the first results of the study, putting into practice the use of songs to pronounce words with the interdental sounds. At this stage, the students interacted directly with the sounds /θ/ and /ð/.

To start, the researcher provided each student with the lyrics of the song “Die with a Smile” from Bruno Mars ft. Lady Gaga. The participants were asked to focus on the words with the voiced fricative dental sound /ð/, on the highlighted words. The words were “that”, “the”, and “this”. As the students pronounced the words, they were first observed by the researcher and the teacher, in order to obtain data about their place of articulation, the position of the tip of the tongue, and the position of the front teeth. During this phase, the students showed some shyness and difficulties with pronunciation; for instance, the researcher encouraged the students to pronounce without any shame. Later, 5 of the 13 participants volunteered to participate first: they started reading the highlighted words by themselves. After, the other 8 students read the same words as the previous group did. All students were observed during this process. Additionally,

each student was asked to read each word slowly while they were being recorded by a high-quality tape. The first try was not successful because there was a lot of background noise. In the second try, the recordings were clearer and adequate for the study. After the recordings of their voices were finished, the researcher played the song, they listened to it twice, and they compared their pronunciation with the pronunciation of the singers. 10 out of 13 students did not even notice the words and the sounds they had read before. Finally, they had to read aloud the lyrics again as a group.

The analysis of this first activity with the sound /ð/ yielded important information that could demonstrate the average number of students who are not familiar with the sound and have difficulties pronouncing it correctly. During the observation session, students were evaluated according to several pronunciation indicators. The graph below shows the findings and their corresponding analysis based on the indicators and criteria used for the pre-test conducted by the researcher.

Graph 2. Pre-test results on the Pronunciation of Sound /ð/.

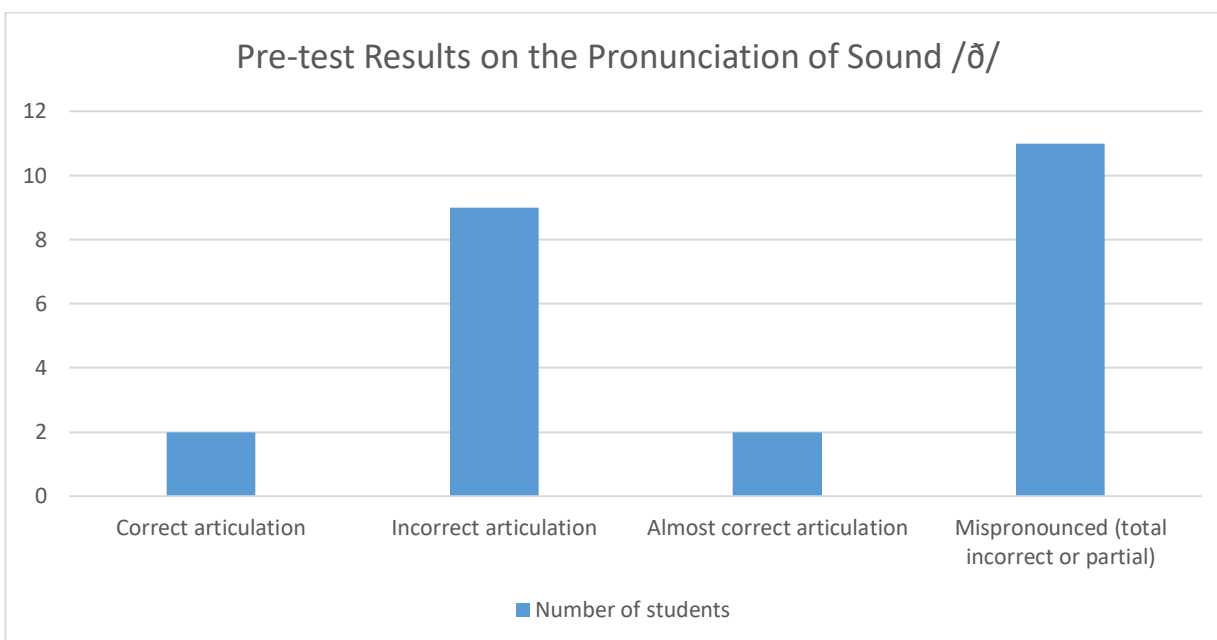


Figure 7. *Pre-test results on students' pronunciation. Source: Researcher creation. (2025)*

The analysis of the pre-test results yielded that most students struggled to produce the interdental fricative sound /ð/. As presented in Figure 6, only two participants (15%) achieved correct articulation, and two (15%) produced the sounds almost correctly. Overall, eleven students (85%) mispronounced the target sound, showing significant articulation difficulties related to the tongue placement and awareness of voicing, confirming that pronunciation problems were mainly due to the production of sounds with the tongue and the teeth. These findings demonstrate that pronunciation errors were primarily associated with a lack of training and feedback.

At the second stage, the students had to read another paper with the same lyrics of the song “Die with a Smile”, but by this time, they had different highlighted words that contained the voiceless sound /θ/. The words were: “with”, “earth”, and “through”; during this activity, the participants had to read aloud the lyrics first by themselves. The participants read aloud, and most of them were less shy about reading without the teacher’s or the researcher’s support. After the teacher read the lyrics and she intonated the highlighted words higher, in order to teach the students their correct pronunciation, voicing, tongue placement, and articulation. The students reread the lyrics as a repetition activity. Then, each student was called one by one to read the highlighted words. The first three students pronounced the words low and calmly while they were being recorded by the researcher; the rest of the students read the words louder, while they were being recorded too. All recordings collected during this process were clear and of high quality for the study. When students finished the recordings, the teacher played the song “Die with a Smile” again, and they were asked to focus on the highlighted words only, as they followed the song with the lyrics in hand. When the song finished, the teacher asked to share the results, many of

them, eight specifically, expressed that they could not go with the flow and the speed of the singers. The other 5 participants expressed that they were able to hear some of the sounds they were asked to focus on. Finally, the activity finished by giving students some feedback about the tongue position and the correct articulation when pronouncing these sounds in English. The students asked some questions about strategies or activities to learn the correct pronunciation of the sounds, and the teacher and the researcher told them that the following stage included songs to learn pronunciation, and they showed enthusiasm. The following graph illustrates the results obtained through the pre-test stage.

Graph 3. Pre-test Results on the Pronunciation of Sound /θ/

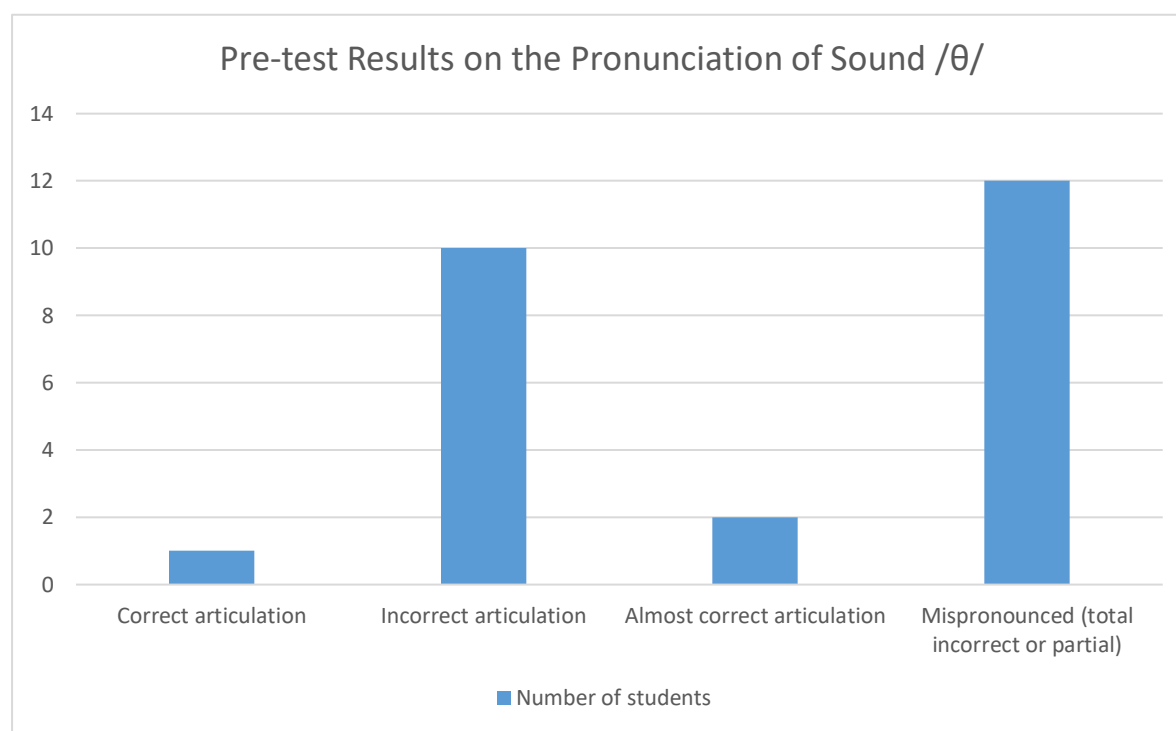


Figure 8. *Pre-test results on students' pronunciation. Source: Researcher creation. (2025)*

The analysis of the pre-test for the interdental fricative /θ/ revealed that most students faced articulation difficulties. As shown in Figure 6, only two participants achieved correct articulation, while the majority mispronounced the sound due to incorrect tongue placement or

lack of awareness of voicing. In total, 11 students (85%) failed to produce the sound accurately, indicating the need for focused pronunciation practice.

Thus, it is clear that most participants had low results in the first stages of the study. The results indicate that the majority had difficulties with sound identification, tongue placement, and articulation, and the correct pronunciation of the sounds. For instance, this stage showed the lack of relationship and the pronunciation issues students have with the fricative interdental sounds in English. Additionally, students demonstrated uninterest in their regular English lessons and the way they are used to learning orthodox and traditional way. They expressed that English was monotonous and boring. This means that most participants do not really enjoy the regular English activities, due to the MEP system and the old-fashioned way some teachers have when teaching English. Moreover, the students from this study do not practice listening and speaking a lot; they regularly study grammar, reading, and writing, reason why they felt shy and distrustful of speaking in front of other people. Nevertheless, some students mentioned that they felt less stressed with the help of the songs and the researcher's feedback, and the teacher's guidance through the pre-test process.

Finally, the pre-test was useful for the researcher because it revealed that the participants deal with difficulties related to the language and, more specifically, to the pronunciation of the interdental sounds in English, and the lack of motivation they feel about learning English. The data obtained is essential because it allows the researcher to continue with the next stages and put into practice the song-based strategies to address the issues students showed through the pre-test. These results provided a solid foundation for the intervention process, confirming the need to reinforce articulation through engaging and meaningful pronunciation exercises. Also, the

effectiveness of the activities chosen by the researcher which were validated and approved by the group's teacher.

4.1.3 Activities in Between

The activities in between are the starting point for the application of the strategies proposed in this study. In this section, the activities that were used to achieve the objectives of this study were applied to the sampler, and the results are explained and analyzed throughout this stage.

These activities represented a crucial bridge between the pre-test and the post-test as they allowed students to practice the pronunciation of the interdental sounds in a contextualized and motivating way. The activities in between were fundamental because they helped the researcher understand the effectiveness of songs and how to apply song-based strategies within the classrooms of Costa Rica and promote the language and its fluency and accuracy in speaking and listening skills.

The activities in between were the most dynamic part of the intervention. At this stage, the researcher implemented a series of activities that connected the diagnostic phase (pre-test and observation checklist) with the final evaluation (post-test). These activities served as the heart of the intervention because they were designed to strengthen students' pronunciation through direct practice with real and motivating materials-specifically, English songs.

The song-based techniques and methodological activities were applied and carried out during 2 sessions, which were totally practical and about the performance of the participants. The teacher in charge was also invited to participate in the activities and provide students with guidance and confidence with the new activities.

The first session introduced the method and helped the students familiarize themselves with the songs in the class. This is a part of preparation and introduction before starting with new techniques or activities they have never done before. Moreover, this session included the implementation of new materials and resources for the participants and the teacher in charge.

The second session complemented the first session of the stage, because in this part, the researcher confided more in the songs within the class, and the students were a little bit more familiar with the activities and the methods used throughout the study. The activities were applied separately on different days in order to obtain reliable results and give a margin of time before drawing real conclusions. Additionally, the development of the activities was divided in the study, but they work together as the main instrument to prove the effectiveness of using songs as a strategy to improve students' pronunciation.

The stage of the activities is divided into three parts that define the natural flow of song-based strategies and their effective application to non-native English speakers. According to Guler and Bozkurt (2021), song-based activities should follow three main stages: preparation, core, and follow-up. Thus, the activities in between required divided sections and tools to succeed with the strategies and the goals proposed in Chapter I

4.1.3.1 Activity 1: Identification and Pronunciation of Interdental Sounds Through the Active Listening of Songs.

This part was divided into three important sections: pre-listening and introduction to the songs, word identification through music, and the recognition of the interdental sounds in English by listening and repeating the lyrics of a song.

4.1.3.1.1 Pre-listening and Preparation

The first activity, titled Listening and Identifying Interdental Sounds through Songs, was designed to expose students to authentic pronunciation models through music. In this stage, students listened to selected songs and identified words containing the target sounds /θ/ and /ð/, and they explored their pronunciation through reading and repetition from native speakers. The aim was to develop auditory awareness and learning through listening and repeating before moving into direct production practice.

This first activity was carried out on October 21st, 2025, with the same thirteen participants from Eight grade of the pre-test. This activity lasted about 3 lessons, around 100 minutes, and it included the participation of their English teacher.

Firstly, the researcher started with a question: “How often do you listen to songs in English? 10 out of 13 students answered that they regularly listen to songs in English, even though some of them do not even know the real meaning of the songs or the message. After, the researcher asked someone to volunteer and say the name of one song in English to use as an example; one of the participants said he wanted to share his favorite song in English with the rest. This song is called “Rude” from MAGIC, a popular song in English that it’s been part of the Billboard lists and rated as one of the most listened to songs around the world. The researcher played that song, and the class environment started to change; it felt more motivated, and the majority started to sing, which was revealing about the motivation and encouragement songs can transmit within a regular class. As the song finished, the researcher asked them about some words in English they were able to identify, and some mentioned the word “rude”, some others mentioned the word “Saturday”, and some others mentioned words as “morning” and “bed”. The

researcher asked them to remember the sounds practiced during the pre-test, and one student mentioned the word “the” as one of the words mentioned in the song.

This section of the activity was part of the preparation stage, which is key for the investigation and the strategies used during the interventions, because this preparation represents the introductions of songs and the sounds and words in English to achieve the objectives described in Chapter I.

As mentioned above, the students had already listened to the song “Rude” From MAGIC. This song was used as a preparation for the students to get in touch with the strategies, such as active listening related to songs and their adequate manner and application. This introductory activity lasted around 20 minutes, and it provided important information to the researcher about word identification through songs, since 95% of students were able to identify at least one word in English just by listening carefully to a song. Additionally, this initial pre-listening stage aimed to activate students’ previous knowledge and emotional engagement through authentic music exposure. Encouraging students to share their favorite songs created a relaxed atmosphere that promoted participation and confidence. The use of “Rude” by MAGIC was intentionally selected because of its familiar rhythm and accessible lyrics, which allowed students to connect their existing musical preferences with the learning objective. Also, this stage helped set a positive environment for the pronunciation practice that followed, ensuring students were mentally and affectively prepared to focus on target sounds.

4.1.3.1.2 Core of Song-Based Strategies for Interdental Sounds Identification and Pronunciation (While-listening and Post-listening stages)

In this part of the intervention, the researcher had the fundamental materials to carry on the activity. The researcher had a high-quality speaker and printed lyrics of the song used for this activity, as well as highlighters, colored pencils, and folders.

During this task, the researcher provided each student with a printed version of the song “Thinking Out Loud” from Ed Sheeran, which was chosen strategically by the researcher because it contains enough words with the interdental sounds in English / θ/ and /ð/. Next, the researcher asked the teacher to give each student a highlighter and other materials to perform the activity successfully. After each student was provided with the necessary materials, the researcher asked the participants to follow the song with the lyrics they already had in hand, after, the teacher played the song “Thinking Out Loud” for the first time, and they seemed focused on, when the song finished, the researcher asked them to read and say aloud any word that they were able to hear and identified in the lyrics they had, 4 participants mentioned the word “honey” and 3 other participants said the word “memories, as well as 4 other students mentioned the word “thinking” and others mentioned “stars” and “smile”. The researcher asked students to focused on the word “thinking” as they heard to the song again. When the song finished for the second time, the researcher asked them to say how many times they heard the word “thinking”, and they answered, “5 times”, which was correct, because the song included this word 5 times. After, the participants were requested to sing aloud the lyrics of the song as the song played again. When the song finished for the third time, the teacher asked the students to highlight the words they thought that were pronounced with the teeth and the tongue, specifically, the fricative interdental sounds. This part took them a while because they were focused on their tongue position and sound production. The researcher told each student to read aloud their selections. The most important results were the following: 13 out of 13 students highlighted at least one word with

sounds like “t”, “d”, and “l”, for example, “darling”, “touch”, “like”, “take”, “head”, “still”, and “stars”. These results confirm the theory of sound replacement of non-native speakers and the mispronunciation of sounds that are not part of the native language, specifically the target sounds of this study, the fricative interdental sounds /θ/ and /ð/. These issues were addressed during the feedback session for the two activities.

In the second part of the activity, the researcher wrote the following words on the whiteboard: “they”, “the”, and “that”, pronounced naturally with the sound /ð/. The song played a fourth time as they were asked to focus on the words written by the researcher previously. As the song finished, with the support of their English teacher, who pronounced these words correctly, and the researcher, they both provided some feedback on the place of articulation and tongue and teeth placement of this sound. Later, they both had each student pronounce the words mentioned before as they heard in the song; the results were encouraging for the pronunciation of sound /ð/; the majority had an understandable and almost correct tongue placement and articulation. The following graph illustrates better the results obtained through the activity with the first target sound /ð/ and the effectiveness of the chosen song for its correct pronunciation.

Graph 4. Results of the Pronunciation of Sound /ð/ After the Song

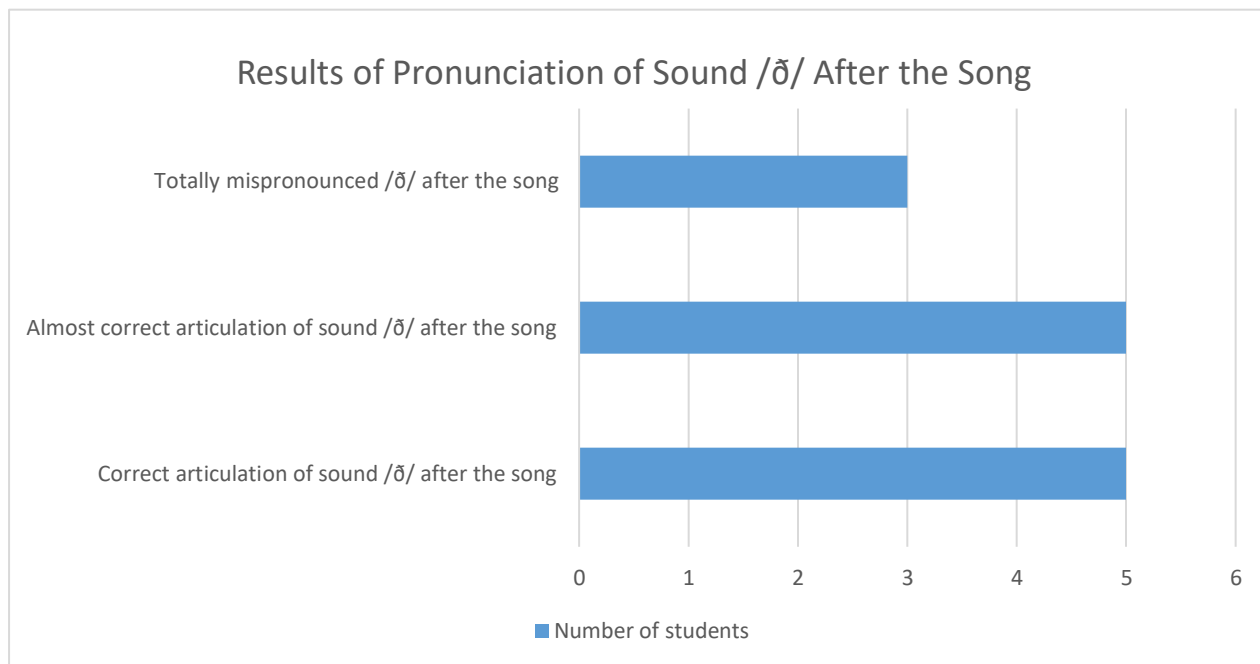


Figure 9. Students' pronunciation performance for the sound /ð/ during the first activity. Source: Researcher creation, 2025.

The results presented in Figure 9 demonstrate significant improvement in students' pronunciation of the voiced interdental sound /ð/. Out of thirteen participants, five managed to pronounce the sound correctly, while five produced it almost accurately with minor articulation issues. Only two students continued to experience difficulties, mainly related to tongue placement and air release. These findings indicate that the use of the song "Thinking Out Loud" by Ed Sheeran was effective compared to the pre-test regarding awareness and accuracy of the target sound. The rhythmic and repetitive nature of the song facilitated better articulation, allowing students to internalize the movement of the tongue between the teeth. Consequently, this first song and activity proved successful, notably enhancing pronunciation through an engaging and authentic learning experience.

In the third part of the activity, the researcher wrote other words on the whiteboard: “mouth”, “thinking”, “with”, and “thousand”, pronounced naturally with the voiceless sound /θ/. This part was pretty similar to the second part because the researcher’s objective was to use the same strategies of songs with both sounds. The song “Thinking Out Loud” by Ed Sheeran played for the fifth time after a brief break; they had to regulate their brains and their bodies. They were asked to focus only on the written words by the researcher with the sound /θ/. The researcher and the helper teacher did it differently this time. Before they pronounced each word after the song, they gave students some feedback on how to pronounce these words correctly, especially the “th” sounds. Next, as they previously did with the sound /ð/, they had to pronounce and repeat the words they had already heard in the song with the sound /θ/ in isolated words, having encouraging results. The following graph illustrates the information obtained related to sound /θ/.

Graph 5. Results of Pronunciation of Sound /θ/

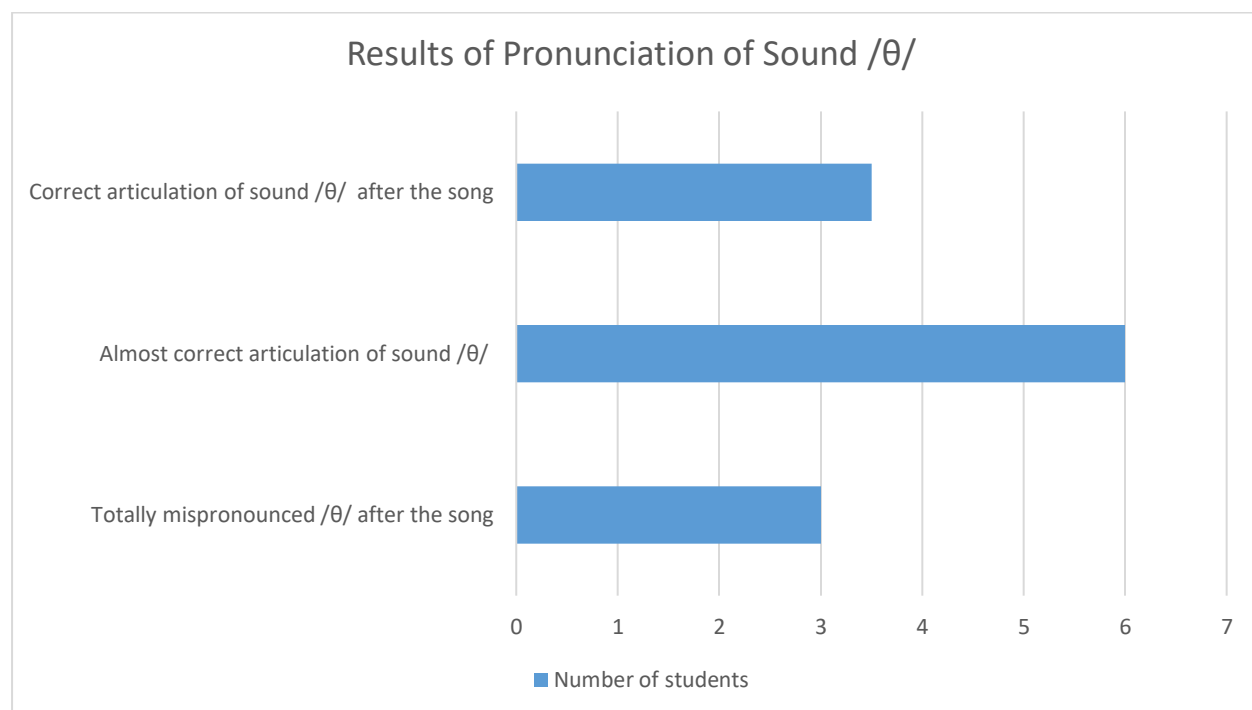


Figure 10. Students' pronunciation performance for the sound /θ/ during the first activity.

Source: Researcher creation, 2025.

As shown in the graph above, the pronunciation of the sound /θ/ improved noticeably after the implementation of the first activity. A large number of participants demonstrated a clear advancement in articulating the sound accurately, while others approached a near-correct pronunciation with appropriate and acceptable tongue placement. Only a few students continued to show minor mispronunciations, indicating that further reinforcement was still necessary. Overall, the results confirmed that the use of songs such as “Thinking Out Loud” fostered a more engaging and relaxed environment where students felt confident to practice and repeat the target sounds.

These findings highlight the effectiveness of integrating song-based strategies into pronunciation lessons. The rhythm, repetition, and familiar context provided by the song allowed students to internalize the sound patterns naturally and enjoyably. Moreover, the interaction between the researcher, the English teacher, and the participants created a cooperative atmosphere that encouraged peer correction and active listening. This dynamic contributed significantly to improving both recognition and articulation of the interdental sound /θ/.

Therefore, the first activity represented a crucial step in the intervention process, as it established the foundation for the subsequent exercises focused on consolidating the pronunciation of interdental fricatives. The progress observed after this activity served as evidence that the selected methodology was not only effective but also highly motivating for eighth-grade learners, paving the way for better results in the following sessions.

4.1.3.2 Activity 2: Follow-up Stage-Reflection and Consolidation of Interdental Sounds

The main goal of this stage was to reinforce and consolidate the knowledge acquired during the core stage by providing feedback, reflection, and further pronunciation practice of the interdental fricative sounds /θ/ and /ð/. This phase aimed to ensure that students were able to analyze and produce the correct articulation patterns and apply them in new communicative and practical contexts. Additionally, during this stage, participants were provided with concrete feedback about sound replacement and sound production of the aimed sounds through this study and its objectives. Additionally, this follow-up is intended to provide additional practice after the main activity, allowing participants to identify, differentiate, and correctly produce the target sounds with accuracy and fluency.

This activity was carried out on October 27th with the same thirteen participants as the whole study, and the session lasted around 4 lessons, 130 minutes. This day, another English teacher wanted to join and help with the different exercises proposed for this session before the pre-test and finals results. Moreover, some materials were indispensable for this activity, such as highlighters, the printed lyrics of the song chosen for this activity, the worksheets created by the researcher, pens, pencils, and a projector.

4.1.3.2.1 Interdental Sound /ð/ Reflection and Consolidation

During the second activity, students worked with the song “Thank You” by Dido through a fill-in-the-blanks and repetition activity specifically designed to enhance listening and sound discrimination.

Firstly, the researcher, the teacher and the assistant teacher explained the participants the interdental sounds again; in this session specifically, the researcher intervened directly teaching students how and where to put the tongue and the teeth to have a correct place or articulation and

thus, pronunciation, as the students imitated the researcher, the front teacher assisted the researcher by pronouncing other words with the interdental sounds after the researcher's intervention. The session officially started with a question the researcher asked: Do you know the song 'Thank You' by Dido? Some students answered "yes" and some others answered "no"; this question aimed to make the students feel comfortable with the song and to provide them with an acknowledgement of the tools before starting. Next, the researcher played the song for the first time. They seemed to enjoy the song, which made the environment more attractive and peaceful. Most participants showed enthusiasm while listening to the song, and even those who were initially shy started participating as the rhythm and familiar melody helped them feel more relaxed. The use of the song as an introduction encouraged students to engage not only with the target sounds but also with the meaning of the lyrics, creating a balance between emotional connection and linguistic focus. Later, the students were asked to mention any word that they remembered from the song they had just listened to, and they had to write those words on the whiteboard. The participants' words such as "thank", "window", "house", "because", and "life". Then, the assistant teacher provided each student with the entire lyrics of the song. As they heard the song, they had to follow up with the singer through reading. The students were also asked to highlight words that they considered were pronounced with the interdental fricative sounds studied during the pre-test and the first session and activity. The students highlighted words such as "thank", "there", "they", "the", and "that", since they already identified "th" pronounced with the teeth and the tongue in the previous activities.

Secondly, the researcher gave each student a worksheet with the lyrics of the song and the target words removed, leaving blank spaces where the interdental sound /ð/ appeared. Students listened to the song one more time. During this listening, they were requested to first identify the

missing words they were able to hear in the song. The students mentioned some words such as “that”, “they” and “the”, since they were already familiarized with the sound /ð/, they identified most of the missing words with the sound /ð/. Later, the researcher projected a short video, in which they could see how to pronounce the sound correctly. After, the students listened to the song again, but this time, they had to write down the missing words with the sound /ð/ and discriminate between other sounds. Additionally, each student was asked to pronounce the words that they had written. The progress after the song is presented in the graph below.

Graph 6. Students’ Performance with Sound /ð/ After the Song

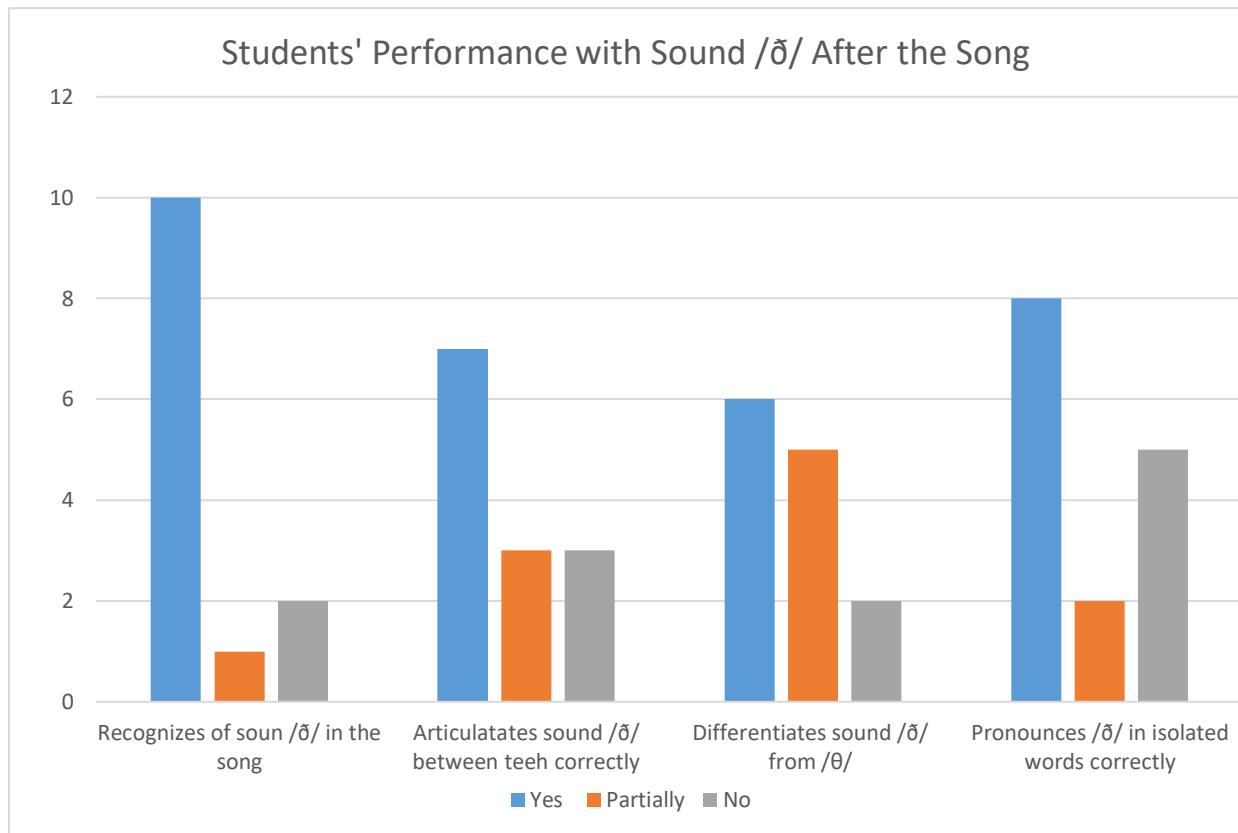


Figure 11. Students’ pronunciation performance for the sound /ð/ during the second activity.

Source: Researcher creation, 2025.

As shown in Figure 11, the majority of participants demonstrated a clear improvement in their ability to recognize, articulate, and differentiate the voiced interdental sound /ð/ after the intervention. The use of the song “Thank You” by Dido and the implementation of interactive activities such as fill-in-the-blanks and guided pronunciation practice allowed learners to engage actively with the target sound. Out of the thirteen participants, ten successfully identified /ð/ in the lyrics, revealing that the integration of music facilitated a deeper level of auditory recognition. This outcome supports the idea that songs can enhance phonological awareness by providing rhythmic and contextualized input (Murphey, 1992; Harmer, 20207).

Furthermore, eight students were able to pronounce isolated words containing /ð/ correctly, while others achieved an almost accurate articulation. This represents substantial improvement compared to the pre-test and a part of the first activity, where most participants mispronounced or replaced the sound /ð/ with /t/ or /d/, such progress indicates that the use of songs as a strategy within the class and visual cues (additionally with the projection of the video during the session) helped learners better understand both the placement and voicing aspects of the sounds. These findings are consistent with Asmaradhani et. al. (2018, p. 78), who state that the effectiveness of using songs to improve pronunciation needs progress consistently.

Despite the evident progress, a portion of students still displayed partial understanding in differentiating /ð/ from /θ/ /t/ or /d/. This outcome can be attributed to the interference from the learners’ native phonetic system, which lacks both interdental fricatives and the tendency to replace sounds with other related sounds (Finch & Ortiz, 1982). Consequently, while students were able to identify the sound and reproduce it in isolated contexts, sustaining accuracy within connected speech challenge. These limitations highlight the importance of continuous practice and corrective feedback with the song-based strategies proposed throughout this study. Overall,

the results of sound /ð/ after the song-based strategies to improve pronunciation are highly beneficial for Spanish-speaking learners who struggle with interdental sounds.

4.1.3.2 Interdental Sound /θ/ Reflection and Consolidation

In this last part of the intervention, students worked with the same song and the same materials they had already worked with sound /ð/ on the same day and within the same 4 lessons, because even though sounds were organized and analyzed separately, they complemented each other.

This last part of the activities started by playing the song “Thank You” by Dido a fourth time, this time students had to identify words with the interdental sound /θ/ just by listening, most of the students were able to identify the word “thank”, which was pronounced by the singer many times in the song. Next, the students were given the lyrics of the song with some missing words; they had to first guess the words as they listened to the song again. The front teacher and the assistant teacher provided the participants with the whole printed lyrics after they guessed the words with the sound /θ/. The students listened to the song again as they followed up the lyrics by reading. After, the students were asked to highlight the words they thought contained the sound /θ/, surprisingly, few students still replaced the sound /θ/ with other sounds such as /d/ and /t/; however, most students identified at least one word containing the sound /θ/. Moreover, participants were asked to leave the whole lyrics of the song on one side, and to focus on the worksheet with the missing words. Their task was to listen to the song again and fill in the blanks with the words they were able to hear and remember. The majority asked the researcher to play the song again, and as the researcher played the song again, the students wrote words such as “thanks” and “with”, which effectively contain the sound /θ/. After this, as the researcher checked the spelling and the word organization, the teacher and the assistant teacher projected another

video, which showed students could see how to articulate the sound /θ/ correctly. Later, the researcher gave some feedback to the students related to spelling and word order. Lastly, the researcher played the song for the last time and asked students to focus on the words they had just written and their pronunciation. When they finished, each student had to read aloud and repeat each word guided by the pronunciation of the song. The front teacher and the assistant teacher gave some feedback on the pronunciation of sound /θ/ as they asked them to pronounce the words again. The following graph explores the results obtained during this activity and their corresponding interpretations.

Graph 7. Students' Performance with Sound /θ/ After the Song

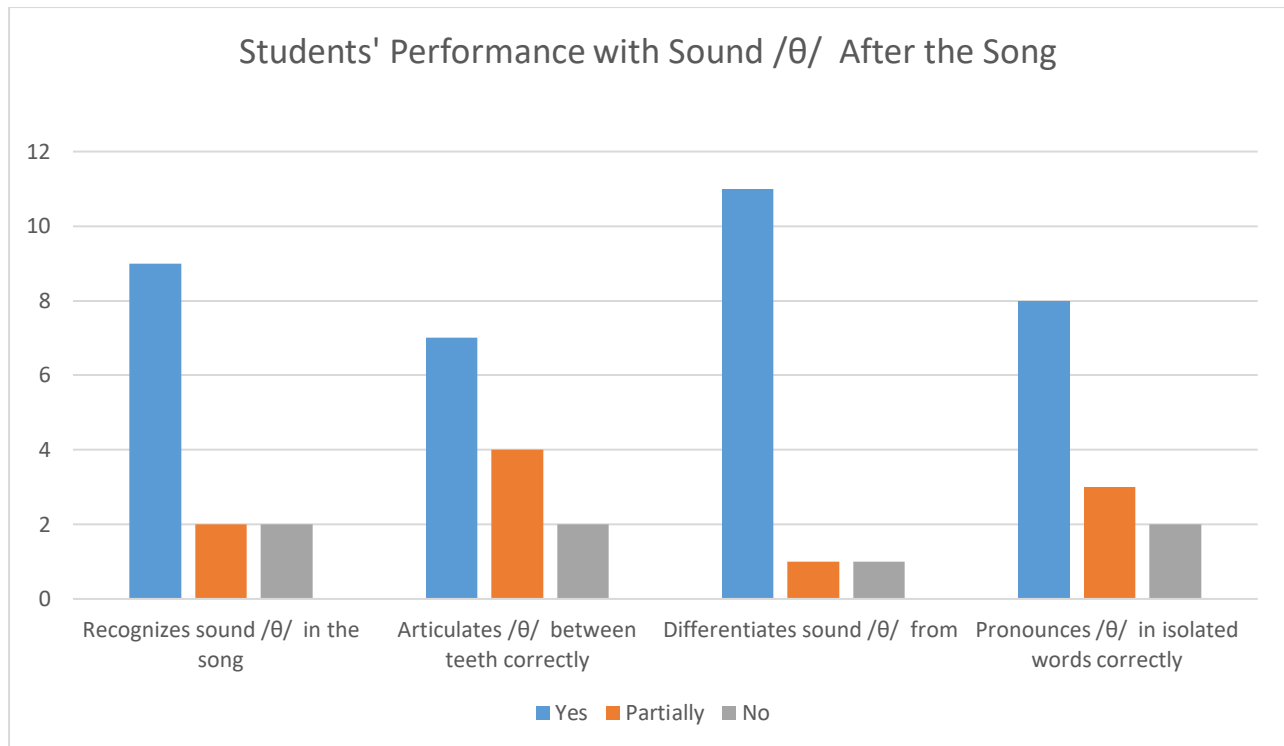


Figure 12. Students' pronunciation performance for the sound /θ/ during the second activity.

Source: Researcher creation, 2025.

As illustrated in Figure 12, the data obtained after the implementation of the second song-based activity revealed a significant improvement in the students' ability to recognize, articulate, and differentiate the voiceless sound /θ/. Ten out of thirteen students successfully recognized this sound while listening to the song, indicating that the integration of music as a teaching tool effectively enhanced their auditory perception and phonetic awareness. This progress aligns with Harmer's (2007) view that songs can create a relaxed yet highly engaging atmosphere that supports pronunciation practice through repetition and rhythm.

Moreover, seven students demonstrated correct articulation of /θ/ by positioning their tongue accurately between the teeth and controlling airflow during pronunciation. The improvement in articulation was mainly attributed to the auditory reinforcement of the songs and the help of the visual aids (the video that modeled the correct articulation). These findings confirm the relevance of using interactive strategies within the classroom to improve pronunciation as mentioned by Hatimah et. al. (n.d).

Additionally, the results show that eleven students were able to differentiate between the voiceless /θ/ and its voiced counterpart /ð/, a task that previously represented one of the most challenging aspects for the participants. This achievement indicates that the sequence of listening, identifying, and reproducing the sounds in context contributed to perceptual learning and cognitive reinforcement. However, a small group of learners still struggled with producing /θ/ accurately in isolation, showing occasional substitution with /t/ and /d/, a typical interference pattern among Spanish-speaking learners whose L1 lacks interdental fricatives (Finch & Ortiz, 1982).

Overall, the outcome of this stage confirms that the song "Thank You" by Dido was a suitable and effective resource to reinforce pronunciation accuracy. The lyrics and melody

provided a natural and meaningful framework for pronunciation practice, motivating students to focus on articulation while maintaining engagement. These findings support the pedagogical value of integrating songs in pronunciation features, as they promote long-term retention, confidence, and autonomy in oral production.

4.1.3.3 Feedback

During these two activities, the researcher and the front teacher were able to identify some mistakes that students had when pronouncing the interdental fricatives. The most common errors were sound replacement and identification, and articulation issues. Because of these factors, the researcher provided the participants with some feedback about both sounds and the fixing of pronunciation through listening and speaking activities, such as the ones used throughout the activities section.

Firstly, the researcher explained to the participants the function of sound production in speaking and its importance; they took notes and practiced pronouncing some of the words they had already learned during the previous activities. After, the researcher pronounced all words practiced containing sounds /ð/ and /θ/, and showed students the correct articulation, tongue placement, and airflow of each. After this, the students pronounced the words again without reading. During this feedback, the students showed an increase in their mastery of the words from the activities, their confidence, and their motivation.

Secondly, the researcher provided students with feedback about word replacement. The researcher explained to the students the difference between sounds /t/ & /d/ and /ð/ & /θ/, and their correct pronunciation in English. The researcher explained the reasons for the sound substitution in Spanish speakers when learning a new language, as the influence of their mother tongue. Next, the researcher pronounced the following words: “head”, “window”, “door”, “this”,

“thanks”, “with”, and “the”, “with” and “the”, as the participants repeated each word, focusing on the researcher’s articulation.

Throughout the feedback process, noticeable improvements were observed in students’ ability to discriminate and articulate the interdental sounds. Their pronunciation became more accurate, and they gradually showed greater control of tongue placement and airflow.

Furthermore, student expresses more confidence when pronouncing aloud, demonstrating that corrective feedback as part of the strategy applied during a study contributed not only to pronunciation but also to self-efficacy and motivation.

4.1.4 Post-test Results and Interpretation

The past test was applied after completing all the interventions in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to improve the pronunciation of the interdental sounds in English. This stage aimed at measuring the progress made by the participants and comparing their final performance with the results obtained in the pre-test.

The pre-test was carried out on October 28th, 2025, with a day of difference between the activities in between and the final part. The materials used for this stage were a high-quality tape and the printed version of the lyrics “Rolling in the Deep” by Adele. The participants performed similar tasks to those completed in the initial assessment.

During the post-test, students were asked to listen to the aforementioned song; they had to listen to it carefully and pay attention to the sounds and pronunciation. The lyrics contained highlighted words with both interdental sounds in English. The students listened to the song one more time, as they sang aloud to the song's rhythm. Once the song finished, the students were invited to read each highlighted word aloud in front of the class. 10 out of 13 students

volunteered enthusiastically, as they already knew the researcher and had more reliability and self-confidence. One by one, the total sampler read the following words aloud while they were being recorded: “there’s”, “the”, “with”, “things”, “they”, “thinking”, “that”, and “think”. These words formed part of the chosen song and contained both interdental fricatives. The researcher played the song one more time to say goodbye to the song lyrics and rhythm.

This last activity aimed to analyze and compare both sounds combined at the same time, and the participants’ performance and improvement in both. Later, the recordings were analyzed by the researcher, and the findings and comparisons are explained and analyzed with the graph below.

Graph 8. Post-test Results of Students’ Pronunciation of Interdental Sounds /ð/ & /θ/

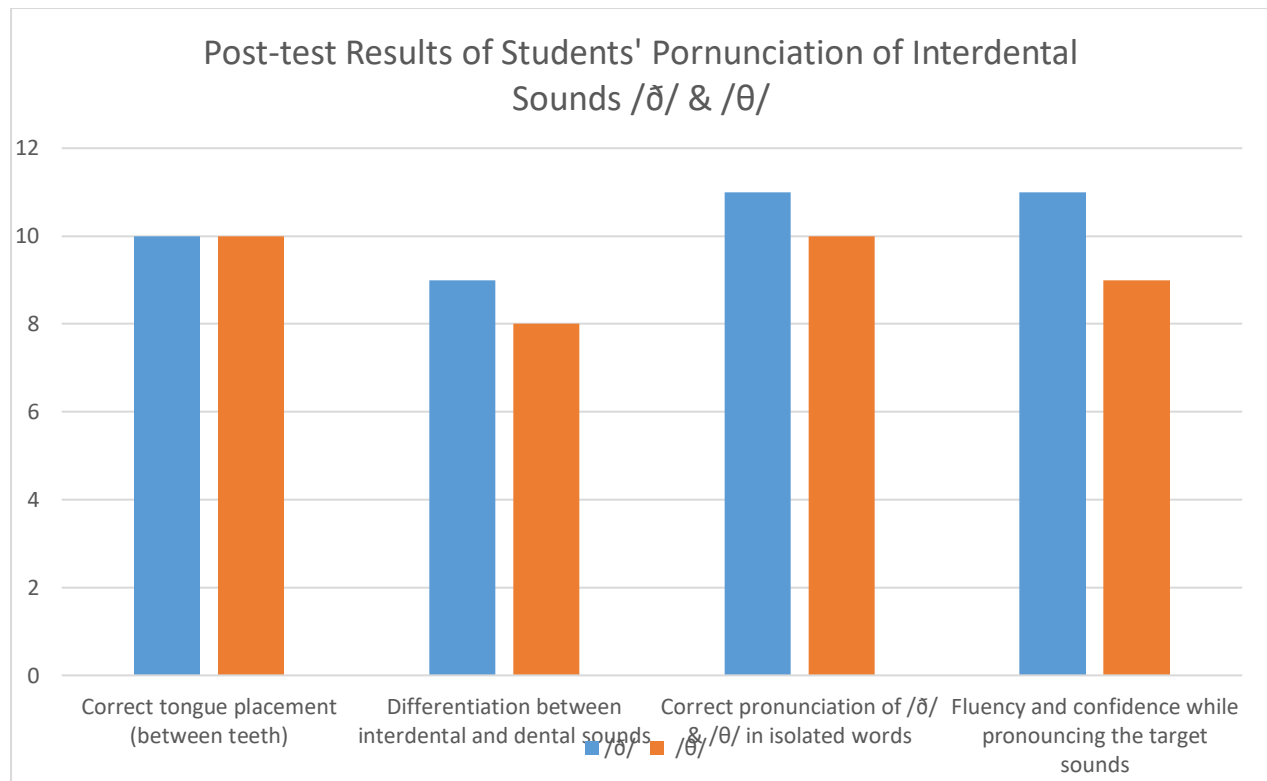


Figure 13. Post-test results on students’ pronunciation of the interdental sounds /ð/ & /θ/.

Source: Researcher creation, 2025.

The post-test results displayed in Figure 13 show a clear improvement in students' pronunciation of the interdental sounds /ð/ and /θ/ after the implementation of the song-based strategies applied during the interventions. The majority of participants achieved accurate tongue placement and proper airflow control, which indicates that they successfully internalized the articulatory instructions provided during the intervention and feedback process. Both sounds evidenced progress, although /ð/ tended to be produced with slightly higher accuracy, suggesting that voiced interdental articulation was easier to reproduce once students gained awareness of tongue position and airflow.

Furthermore, the results obtained demonstrate a positive change in students' ability to differentiate between interdental and dental sounds. Most participants were able to avoid substituting the English interdental sounds /ð/ and /θ/ with the Spanish dental sounds /d/ and /t/, showing that the activities enhanced their phonetic discrimination skills. This improvement was reflected in the "Correct pronunciation in isolated words" and "Fluency and confidence" criteria, where nearly all learners exhibited more accurate articulation and smoother rhythm during oral practice.

Overall, these outcomes confirm that the use of songs as pedagogical tools not only strengthened pronunciation accuracy but also boosted students' motivation and self-confidence while speaking. The rhythm and repetition patterns of the songs appeared to support the automatization of tongue and airflow coordination, leading to more consistent and natural pronunciation. Therefore, the post-test results validate the effectiveness of the song-based approach for improving the articulation of English interdental fricatives among Spanish-speaking learners.

4.1.5 Survey: Participant' Perception on the Use of Songs to Improve the pronunciation of Interdental Sounds

In this last stage of the study there will be presented an analysis of the results obtained through the survey applied to the participants after the interventions with the strategies using songs to improve pronunciation.

After completing the post-test, participants were asked to answer a short perception survey sent via a link in Google Forms. The objective of the survey was to evaluate their attitudes towards the use of songs as a strategy to improve the pronunciation of the interdental sounds. The survey consisted of eight statements rated on a four-point Likert Scale (Never, Almost never, Almost Always, and Always). The purpose of this instrument was to gather qualitative information about participants' motivation, engagement, and perceived effectiveness of the song-based strategies implemented throughout the study. The following graph summarizes the result

Graph 9. Students' Perception of Song-based Strategies to Improve Pronunciatioos

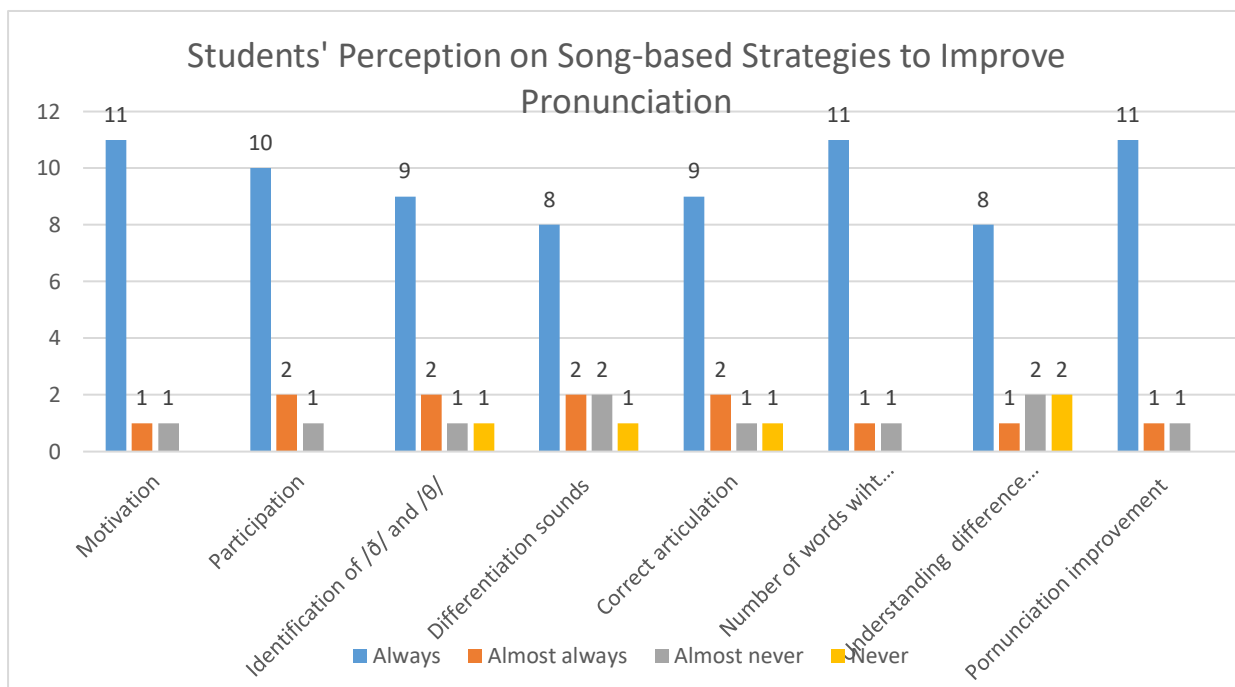


Figure 14. Survey results about students' perception of song-based strategies. Source: Researcher creation, 2025.

The results displayed in Figure 14 demonstrate a highly positive perception from participants regarding the use of songs as a strategy to improve the pronunciation of the interdental sound. The majority of students selected Always in almost all statements, especially those related to motivation, participation, and identification of the target sounds. This indicates that music-based activities generated enthusiasm and engagement during the lessons, which is consistent with Harmer's (2007) idea that songs increase students' affective involvement and motivation in language learning.

In addition, more than half of the participants stated that the song helped them differentiate interdental sounds in English from dental sounds in Spanish and articulate the tongue and airflow correctly. These results suggest that the chosen songs and the applied activities were effective according to the students' perception. Likewise, the categories understanding the difference between sounds and pronunciation improvement received notably high responses, reflecting that students could internalize the sounds naturally through repetition and rhythm.

In addition to the quantitative results, some students expressed and shared positive opinions regarding the use of songs in class. For instance, student 1 mentioned "I enjoyed the lessons and the activities because I felt more encouraged and freer", while student 2 shared "I loved the activities because I love music, now I feel I am ready to speak in English, ha ha!" and finally, participant 3 expressed "the songs helped me to pronounce and understand better about the sounds in English". All these participants expressed their thoughts and ideas during the post-test and the survey.

Overall, the survey results confirm that the implementation of song-based strategies not only strengthened students' pronunciation but also enhanced their confidence, fluency, and overall attitude towards learning English pronunciation. As Harmer (2007) states, integrating songs into language instruction provides learners with a meaningful and emotionally engaging context that promotes pronunciation, rhythm, and fluency development. Thus, the results of this study reaffirm that musical strategies not only enhance the technical aspects of articulation but also strengthen students' motivation and positive attitudes towards learning English.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter recovers the conclusions of the whole study based on the data obtained in Chapter IV and all the information revealed throughout the investigation and application of the instruments. This chapter also includes relevant recommendations that may be useful for the future of this study to be used as a support for coming research related to the main topic and sub-topics explored in this paper. This chapter also includes a meaningful and useful summary of all the fieldwork and the strategies to be used in the future in the teaching field.

A well-written conclusion provides you with important opportunities to demonstrate to the reader that you have an in-depth understanding of the research problem. It is the author's final chance to leave a lasting impression, highlight the significance of the study, and place findings within the broader context of the field. University of Southern California. (2024. p.1).

Thus, the development of the conclusions is essential for the reader to understand the whole study and to apply the strategies used throughout the study further.

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusions

The purpose of this section is to synthesize the most relevant findings and the purposes exposed during the investigation and the application. The conclusions help the reader explore the results and findings in a simpler and more accurate way. Additionally, the conclusions establish a connection between the beginning and the end of the study, in order to provide a sense of the objectives and the results obtained.

5.2 Conclusions of the Complete Study

As mentioned before, the conclusions are developed to propose future pedagogical uses based on the information collected from other authors and papers, and the results obtained during and after the interventions in accordance with the problem and the strategies to fix it. The conclusions contain the most important points explored in the previous chapters.

5.2.1 To Explore the Mispronunciation Mistakes ESL Face Day by Day

Based on the analysis of pronunciation errors in ESL learners, it is concluded that ESL learners struggle with some communication issues every day, especially in the communicative field. The learners face different challenges that make them mispronounce words in the language that they are learning. These challenges appear when they do not have enough knowledge and preparation within the classrooms in Costa Rica. These issues include old-fashioned strategies and orthodox educational systems that do not give space for English teachers to create more interactive activities and implement new and more modern techniques. Additionally, some teachers lack preparation in communicative skills and speaking and listening teaching methods. Finally, the main cause of these problems is the lack of interaction with the language that students have and the influence of their mother tongue when pronouncing.

For instance, it is extremely important to explore each skill separately and identify the mistakes students are making in order to fix those mistakes and provide students with the best teaching-learning process. According to Amelia (2021), learning English accurately provides people with more opportunities for growth and development. This means that fixing students' mistakes when learning another language allows them to use their skills in the future. Therefore, teachers need to implement pronunciation-focused activities that integrate music and oral feedback to improve the correct articulation of the target sounds explored in this study.

5.2.2 To analyze the Effectiveness of Songs in the Pronunciation of Interdental Sounds

According to the analysis of the effectiveness of using songs, it could be said that song-based strategies were helpful and highly relevant to the problem addressed in this research. The results indicate that the use of songs was not only effective for improving pronunciation but also for increasing students' motivation and oral performance. The instruments applied suggest that the use of songs had a positive impact on learners' behavior, confidence, and overall improvement in the articulation of the interdental sounds.

The pre-test and the post-test indicate that students enhanced significantly after the interventions using songs. This means that the effectiveness of the use of songs to improve pronunciation of the interdental sounds is clear and verified through the aforementioned tools and results obtained through them. As stated by Borge et al. (2022), the use of songs as a strategy to fix learners' pronunciation helps students to develop better language acquisition through listening. Therefore, it is significant for teachers to carry on English lessons, including song-based activities as a pronunciation teaching method.

5.2.3 To Examine Students' Perception of the Use of Songs as a Strategy to Improve the Pronunciation of Interdental Sounds.

Based on the data collected from the survey conducted with the students and the indicators analyzed therein, it is concluded that the overall perception of the students on the use of songs to learn articulation of sounds is notably positive and well-accepted by the participants. According to survey questions that were evaluated with a Likert Scale, where Always presented the highest value and Never the lowest, the majority answered Always. This indicates that the majority of participants supported and trusted the strategies implemented, showing a high level of motivation and satisfaction toward the use of songs as a pronunciation improvement tool.

Furthermore, students reported that working with songs helped them recognize and distinguish the interdental sounds more effectively, while also making the lessons more enjoyable and memorable. The rhythm and repetition present in the selected songs contributed to a better retention of the correct articulation patterns, as well as to the reduction of anxiety during oral participation. These findings demonstrate that integrating music into English lessons not only enhances linguistic accuracy but also creates a more positive emotional environment that encourages participation and confidence. Thus, the survey results support the theory proposed by Brewer (1995), who stated that the use of music can be used as an effective pedagogical strategy.

5.2.4 To identify the Improvement Observed After the implementation of the Song-Based Strategies.

After the implementation of the song-based strategies, a significant improvement was observed in students' pronunciation accuracy and awareness of the interdental sounds. The post-test results revealed that most learners were able to articulate both sounds correctly in isolated words. Moreover, students showed greater fluency and confidence while speaking, indicating that the combination of music, repetition, and explicit instruction had a strong pedagogical effect.

It was also noticed that students' motivation increased noticeably compared to the pre-test sessions. The incorporation of songs such as "Thinking Out Loud" by Ed Sheeran and "Thank You" by Dido encouraged participation and reduced anxiety levels, allowing learners to feel more comfortable practicing pronunciation aloud. Additionally, peer support and teacher feedback reinforced the accuracy of articulation and the ability to differentiate between interdental and dental sounds.

In conclusion, the observed progress suggests that song-based techniques represent an effective and engaging method to address common pronunciation issues in EFL contexts. The

students not only improved their pronunciation but also developed better listening discrimination and a more positive attitude toward English language learning.

5.3 General conclusion

The general conclusion of the study states that the implementation of song-based strategies proved to be an effective pedagogical tool for improving the pronunciation of the interdental sounds /ð/ and /θ/ among EFL students. The use of music in the English classroom not only facilitated and improved students' pronunciation and discrimination of these sounds, but also these sounds enhanced their motivation, participation, and confidence when speaking in English. This means that the use of songs for learning listening and speaking in English promotes the use of the language with self-confidence and accuracy.

The integrations of songs during the intervention demonstrated that learners could connect rhythm, melody, lyrics, and the singer's pronunciation naturally and interactively. This connection allowed them to achieve correct tongue placement, airflow, as well as to reduce the stress and anxiety caused by participating aloud and public speaking. The results obtained in the post-test confirmed a considerable enhancement in correct articulation and pronunciation accuracy in communicative contexts, compared to the pre-test, showing that the majority of participants achieved a correct or almost correct pronunciation of both sounds, which is encouraging and motivational for future applications of the strategies within the classroom.

Moreover, students' perceptions collected through the survey highlighted that songs are a powerful and relevant tool and resource to be used in English lessons further. Most participants expressed acceptance and recognition of the strategies and the activities with music implemented during the interventions. Additionally, the music completely changed the environment and the hue of the class, making students participate and learn enjoyably.

In conclusion, this study demonstrated that music can serve as a bridge between linguistic knowledge and effective learning. By incorporating songs strategically, teachers can not only strengthen pronunciation but also foster positive attitudes and long-term retention of target sounds. Therefore, the researcher recommends the continuous use of song-based strategies and activities in EFL contexts, especially in listening and speaking, as a way to make learning more effective, attractive, and motivating.

5.4 Limitations

Despite the positive results obtained through the interventions, the research faced some limitations explained in this section. These limitations should be considered by future researchers to analyze and interpret the results. The most relevant limitations were the small number of participants, the time permitted for the interventions, and the educational context it was applied. First, the small number of participants restricted the generalization of findings because the study was focused on one group of people specifically. Secondly, the research faced a limited time for the interventions, which restricted more activities using songs. Finally, the study was conducted within a specific educational context in Costa Rica, limiting its applicability to other settings and other contexts.

For instance, even though the findings were mostly positive, the limitations exposed above could be taken into account for the readers and the next researchers when applying a related study.

5.5 Restatement of the Thesis Statement

The main purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of using songs to improve the pronunciation of the interdental sounds in eight grade ESL learners at CINDEA de Alajuelita. The results demonstrated that song-based strategies fostered not only pronunciation but also students' motivation and confidence during oral practice. Through the implementation of

listening practice and repetition the students were able to improve the pronunciation of the target sounds and the ability of communicating more fluently in communicative contexts. The majority of the participants achieved a good pronunciation in isolated words by enhancing their place of articulation and their tongue placement, the students were able to discriminate between the voiced fricative and the voiceless fricative, demonstrating that songs helped to identify each sound word and their differences.

Therefore, this study successfully fulfilled its general objective by proving that song-based activities can be applied effectively in EFL contexts to address common pronunciation issues. The results highlight the pedagogical value of integrating music into the language classroom and show that songs can serve as an engaging and meaningful tool to improve pronunciation skills among ESL learners.

5.6 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions obtained from this research, several recommendations are provided to support future practices and studies related to the teaching of English pronunciation through song-based activities. The recommendations are relevant to the study because they contain helpful information for the future application of the strategies implemented in the future, related to this investigation. According to Nair (2024), recommendations are suggestions or advice provided to researchers to guide their study on a specific topic. This means that recommendations represent guidance for future researchers and readers who will use the study in other related fields.

5.6.1 Integrating Songs More Often into the English Lessons

For English teachers, it is important to have effectiveness in the techniques used in the teaching-learning process. Thus, teachers should select activities that will be effective and used as a tool to ensure the expected learning. Including songs more often in regular English lessons, not

only for entertaining but as a structured phonetic practice for improving pronunciation, will have a positive effect and will help the teacher achieve the goals of the pronunciation class.

5.6.2 Combining Musical Activities with Explicit Instructions

Pronunciation of interdental fricatives improves when songs are paired with clear explanations of tongue placement and airflow. This means that combining musical activities with explicit instructions about pronunciation helps teachers improve the students' performance in the speaking lessons. Giving the activities a purpose and a goal helps teachers develop a well-structured class with specific steps that will enhance listening and speaking skills.

5.6.3 Encourage Repetition and Choral Practice Using Song Lyrics

The use of song lyrics to learn English pronunciation is a resource teachers can use to improve their students' oral skills. Having students listen to a song and repeating and imitating native pronunciation, in isolated words or short phrases, even singing aloud, will be effective on students' motivation and performance in communicative contexts. These activities will be useful for students and teachers to carry out interactive and significant English and pronunciation lessons.

5.6.4 Provide Professional Development Workshops on Pronunciation Teaching and Innovative Methods

Many EFL teachers still focus mainly on grammar or vocabulary instead of other skills such as listening and speaking, due to the lack of professional items orthodox methods have. Providing professional development and innovative methods will help students internalize the language and its accurate pronunciation. Additionally, institutions should implement training for teachers focused on communicative skills and oral performance.

5.6.5 Equip Classes with Audio and Visual Resources

The teaching equipment should be appropriate and adequate for the reach subject. The English lessons, especially, should have adequate equipment for implementing listening and speaking interactive strategies. The equipment should include audiovisual aids such as TV, speakers, and other equipment, such as technological devices that may be accessible and useful for both students and teachers, including computers or tablets, providing students with the best environment and necessary tools for effective learning. Thus, it is highly recommended for educational institutions to include advanced teaching equipment for teachers and students to ensure a successful teaching-learning process.

5.6.6 Encourage Self-Practice with Music at Home

It is important to practice independently when learning English. Listening to music frequently will help EFL learners develop more listening skills and will promote the repetition and production of sounds by imitating native speakers. Practicing not only at school but also at home will make the brain get new words and sounds by actively listening to a song. Learners should use songs and also pronunciation apps to reinforce articulation outside the classroom and ensure that learning is progressive and constant everywhere.

5.6.7 Promote Awareness of English Sound Differences

Understanding how sounds are produced helps students avoid interference from their native language. EFL learners make mistakes due to their mother tongue and the substitution of sounds with other sounds. This happens because some sounds in English are not present in Spanish, or some sounds in Spanish and English sound similar, sustaining their differences. For instance, it is highly relevant to promote one or two classes of English pronunciation and stop teaching only grammar and reading. Listening and speaking reinforcement will help students

have more opportunities outside the classroom and provide them with the tools to communicate fluently and accurately.

5.6.8 Replicate this Study with a Larger Sampler Size

Future studies could include students from different institutions and different educational levels to confirm general applicability. The sampler of this study had a high effectiveness according to the results; nevertheless, including other students from other levels and other institutions may reinforce the instruments applied during the interventions and the results. As mentioned above; in order to avoid future limitations in other studies related to the topics explored, it may be useful to widen the sample in the next research.

5.6.9 Compare Musical vs. Non-Musical Strategies

A contrastive study could reveal which method has stronger effects on pronunciation and motivation. In future research, comparing other strategies not related to music could reveal the effectiveness of other strategies and which is the best for teaching the pronunciation of interdental sounds in English. Using several methods and strategies provides teachers and students the opportunity to have better results, because every student has different ways of learning and implementing different activities, and providing each student, could decipher the best strategy for a specific group or population.

The recommendations presented in this section seek to guide future pedagogical research and future studies evaluating the topics explored during the paper, promoting dynamism, interactivity, and fun activities for communicative contexts, especially the pronunciation of interdental sounds. The use of song-based strategies will be highly effective as an educational strategy for teachers and students. It will also increase motivation and encourage EFL learners and improve their pronunciation in isolated words or in connected speech.

Thus, the implementation of these activities will promote a good environment within the class and will ensure the enhancement of pronunciation, word acquisition, and accuracy in oral communicative contexts. Using songs consciously will have a positive effect and will put away orthodox ways of teaching that could be replaced with modern and effective pedagogical techniques.

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Annexes

Appendix A. Pre-test Pronunciation Task. Song Lyrics

Ooh
 I, I just woke up from a dream
 Where you and I had to say goodbye
 And I don't know what it all means
 But since I survived, I realized
 Wherever you go, **that's** where I'll follow
 Nobody's promised tomorrow
 So I'ma love you every night like it's the last night
 Like it's **the** last night
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 If the party was over and our time on **Earth** was through
 I'd wanna hold you just for a while and die **with** a smile
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 Ooh
 Ooh, lost, lost in the words that we scream
 I don't even wanna do this anymore
 'Cause you already know what you mean to me
 And our love's the only war **worth** fighting for
 Wherever you go, that's where I'll follow
 Nobody's promised tomorrow
 So I'ma love you every night like it's the last night
 Like it's the last night
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 If the party was over and our time on Earth was **through**
 I'd wanna hold you just for a while and die with a smile
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 Right next to you
 Next to you
 Right next to you
 Oh-oh, oh
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 If the party was over and our time on Earth was through
 I'd wanna hold you just for a while and die with a smile
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 If the world was ending, I'd wanna be next to you
 Ooh
 I'd wanna be next to you

Appendix B. Observation Reading Task

These days have been very busy but also meaningful. I have spent most of my time studying and working. Every morning, I wake up early to prepare my lessons and check my students' assignments. Teaching can be tiring sometimes, but I really enjoy seeing my students learn and improve.

In the afternoons, I usually review my thesis. I've been editing the conclusions and adding some recommendations before submitting it. It feels great to be almost done after so many months of effort.

Besides work and study, I've tried to take care of myself. I went to a few medical appointments, and I'm paying more attention to my health now. I've also been trying to spend some quiet time at home with my family and my dog.

Even though the last few days have been full of responsibilities, I feel proud of everything I've done. Step by step, I'm getting closer to reaching my goals.

Appendix C. Observation Listening and Reading Task

Sarah: Nita, hi, it's Sarah.

Nita: Hi, Sarah. How are you? Great to hear from you!

Sarah: Well, I'm great actually ... I'm really excited.

Nita: Excited? Why?

Sarah: Well, I placed a personal ad in Time Out last week ... you know, an ad for meeting someone to go out with.

Nita: A personal? You did?

Sarah: Yeah ... and I got five replies ...

Nita: Five replies ... really? But were they any good?

Sarah: Well, this one guy, Jack ... he sent a photo, and he's really good-looking!

Nita: Really?

Sarah: Yes, and he called, and we had a long phone conversation. He asked me out, and I'm going to meet him next weekend.

Nita: Next weekend! Wow! What are you going to do?

Sarah: I don't know. He said it's a surprise. Anyway, I'm sure we'll fall in love, and then maybe we'll get married – I hope so!

Nita: Whoa, Sarah! Slow down a bit! You haven't even met him yet! I mean, he's good-looking, but what if you don't like him?

Sarah: I'm sure I'll like him. He sounded really nice on the phone. And anyway

Audio Link <https://english-practice.net/practice-listening-english-exercises-for-a2-getting-together/>

Appendix D. Activity in Between 2, Song Lyrics.

When your legs don't work like they used to before
And I can't sweep you off of your feet
Will your mouth still remember the taste of my love
Will your eyes still smile from your cheeks
And darling I will be loving you 'til we're 70
And baby my heart could still fall as hard at 23
And I'm thinking 'bout how people fall in love in mysterious ways
Maybe just the touch of a hand
Oh me I fall in love with you every single day
And I just wanna tell you I am
So honey now
Take me into your loving arms
Kiss me under the light of a thousand stars
Place your head on my beating heart
I'm thinking out loud
Maybe we found love right where we are
When my hair's all but gone and my memory fades
And the crowds don't remember my name
When my hands don't play the strings the same way, mm
I know you will still love me the same
'Cause honey your soul can never grow old, it's evergreen
Baby your smile's forever in my mind and memory
I'm thinking 'bout how people fall in love in mysterious ways
Maybe it's all part of a plan
I'll just keep on making the same mistakes
Hoping that you'll understand
But baby now
Take me into your loving arms
Kiss me under the light of a thousand stars
Place your head on my beating heart
I'm thinking out loud
That maybe we found love right where we are, oh
So baby now
Take me into your loving arms
Kiss me under the light of a thousand stars
Oh darling, place your head on my beating heart
I'm thinking out loud
That maybe we found love right where we are
Oh baby, we found love right where we are (maybe)
And we found love right where we are

Appendix E. Song Lyrics Worksheet

My tea's gone cold, I'm wondering why
 I got out of bed at all
 _____ morning rain clouds up my window
 And I can't see at all
 And even if I could it'd all be grey
 But your picture on my wall
 It reminds me _____ it's not so bad
 It's not so bad
 I drunk too much last night, got bills to pay
 My head just feels in pain
 I missed _____ bus and there'll be hell today
 I'm late for work again
 And even if I'm there, -----'ll all imply
 _____ I might not last _____ day
 And _____ you call me and it's not so bad
 It's not so bad
 And I
 Want to thank you
 For giving me _____ best day
 Of my life
 Oh
 Just to be with you
 Is having _____ best day
 Of my life
 Push the door, I'm home at last
 And I'm soaking through and through
 _____ you handed me a towel
 And all I see is you
 And even if my house falls down now, I wouldn't have a clue
 Because you're near me
 And I
 Want to thank you
 For giving me _____ best day
 Of my life
 Oh
 Just to be with you
 Is having _____ best day
 Of my life_
 And I
 Want to thank you
 For giving me _____ best day
 Of my life
 Just to be with you
 Is having _____ best day
 Of my life. Oh.

Appendix F. Song Lyrics. Worksheet

My tea's gone cold, I'm wondering why
 I got out of bed at all
 The morning rain clouds up my window
 And I can't see at all
 And even if I could it'd all be grey
 But your picture on my wall
 It reminds me that it's not so bad
 It's not so bad
 I drunk too much last night, got bills to pay
 My head just feels in pain
 I missed the bus and there'll be hell today
 I'm late for work again
 And even if I'm there, they'll all imply
 That I might not last the day
 And then you call me and it's not so bad
 It's not so bad
 And I
 Want to _____ you
 For giving me the best day
 Of my life
 Oh
 Just to be _____ you
 Is having the best day
 Of my life
 Push the door, I'm home at last
 And I'm soaking _____ and _____
 Then you handed me a towel
 And all I see is you
 And even if my house falls down now, I wouldn't have a clue
 Because you're near me
 And I
 Want to _____ you
 For giving me the best day
 Of my life
 Oh
 Just to be _____ you
 Is having the best day
 Of my life
 And I
 Want to _____ you
 For giving me the best day
 Of my life
 Oh
 Just to be _____ you
 Is having the best day of my life.

Appendix G. Consent Form

, _____, voluntarily agree to participate in this research project titled "The Use of Songs to Improve the Pronunciation of the Interdental Sounds /θ/ and /ð/ in EFL Students." I understand that my participation is confidential and that I may withdraw at any time.

Participant's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____