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*Anxiety as a Factor Affecting the Pronunciation of the English Vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ /
on EFL Adult Learners of 7-3 at Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados during the First
Quarter of 2017*

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ABSTRACT

The present research studies how anxiety affects the pronunciation of the English vowel sounds /æ, α, ɔ, Λ/ on EFL adult learners at Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados. The students were tested with different methods, techniques, and tests in order to measure their anxiety levels while speaking in public and how the pronunciation of vowel sounds was affected. The research was divided into five stages: An initial questionnaire to get to know the main problems and difficulties students had about public speaking. Second, a pre-test, which measured their pronunciation levels focusing on the vowel sounds /æ, α, ɔ, Λ/, fluency, communication, and anxiety. Third, two methods were applied, the ABC Method, based on the research, which tries to identify the common irrational fears students had towards public speaking and how to overcome them, and the Skills Training Technique, which gave students the necessary skills to speak in public. Finally, the last stage was a speech made by the students which they had to present in front of the class. These stages were accomplished through the implementation of instruments such as a questionnaire, tests, and a performance evaluation test. Through the analysis of the results, it was concluded that anxiety, among other factors, affects the pronunciation of the English vowels /æ, α, ɔ, Λ/. Therefore, getting rid of it through the techniques mentioned above will help improve students' pronunciation of the English vowels /æ, α, ɔ, Λ/.

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Chapter I

Introductory Framework

1.1 Background of the Study

Throughout the years, Spanish speakers have experienced problems with the pronunciation of English. A strong Spanish accent is common when learning to speak any language, and only through good teaching and a lot of practice one gets to learn the accurate pronunciation of the language. Another problem Spanish speakers face in schools is that the English lessons focus more in grammar and writing than in speaking and listening, therefore, leads to miscomprehension.

When planning English lessons, according to Kelly (2007), teachers avoid including pronunciation issues and prefer to give more emphasis to grammar and vocabulary. In fact, the educational system should focus on the written form of the language, but also on the oral skills. Unfortunately, the system tends to give more importance to the written ones, when both skills should be equally important in order to develop an accurate English level.

The Costa Rican public educational system focuses more on grammar contents than on pronunciation. As teachers, we play one of the most important roles in the class, thus if we do not have a good pronunciation, the students will not acquire it correctly. To learn something appropriately, it has to be taught accurately and precisely. As a matter of fact, one of the major purposes of learning a language is to communicate, to understand, and to be understood. Miscommunication problems cannot be fixed only by assessing grammar or vocabulary. Those subskills are as important as pronunciation; however, pronunciation is crucial when someone is trying to communicate.

When an English word is mispronounced, the whole intended meaning within the thought may change, so misunderstandings appear making communication fail.

Pronunciation cannot be taught just as most of the time grammar structures and rules. It needs to be assimilated by the students throughout an extensive and constant process. Harmer (2005) claims that the way to achieve clear communication is not by getting students to pronounce correctly, but to show them how English is spoken in the real world. Moreover, facing the real world is quite different from what one can learn in an English class. It takes more than just learning the matter, the grammar rules, or the pronunciation patterns. In order to learn a language, pupils must be exposed to it as much as possible.

In addition, Costa Rican schools do not provide the necessary elements or tools for the students to acquire a foreign language successfully; therefore, there must be a change in our public education. Public schools teach English, but they do not provide a real English environment for the students neither to practice nor acquire the language. As it has been seen throughout the years, the speaking skills are only developed correctly by practicing and being exposed to the language, so that students feel in the need to speak and communicate their thoughts and ideas in English. Unfortunately, many teachers give little or no importance to teaching this crucial subskill and they focus only on the grammar competence. In some schools, English teachers speak Spanish most of the time and they even explain the English content entirely in Spanish. This behavior will never lead students to develop their speaking skills; consequently, students will consider that it is not important to speak English in class because the teacher never speaks it; thus, they will never develop speaking skills in class.

One of the biggest pronunciation problems for Spanish speakers is their language interference, not having a clear difference between short and long vowels as English does, to mention one of the most obvious differences between Spanish and English in regards to pronunciation. Therefore, they get confused and tend to articulate and reproduce the English vowel sounds as the Spanish ones. Some other factors students face when they have to speak English, according to Alsagoff (2007), they are the phonetic ability, instructional variables dependable on every teacher and the age factor, and class atmosphere and linguistic variables, which include the sound system of the language.

While some students have problems with the pronunciation of the target language, being aware of the language may help them to develop their speech. Therefore, students who do not have a good phonetic awareness are unable to compare their pronunciation differences with the correct ones. According to Mann (2007), learners who have a high phonemic awareness, have better results when pronouncing, speaking and reading. As a result, students may have problems of inadequate pronunciation and speech development.

When studying and learning a foreign language, it is challenging to separate the native language from the foreign one. EFL learners easily make pronunciation mistakes while speaking in English; this as some English sounds are excluded from the native language of every speaker; such is the case of Spanish, which causes mispronunciations. As Lai, Tsai & Yu stated (2009); the mother tongue will always interfere in the acquisition of a second language because of many factors such as lack of words, substitution of sounds, among others.

Together with mispronunciations and speech problems, anxiety plays an important role in the pronunciation problems. Anxiety is an overwhelming condition. It not only affects one's thoughts, senses, or physical well-being, but also one's speech patterns.

Communication may be interrupted and unsuccessful due to anxiety. It becomes apparent in the voice and it can be noticed when someone is nervous just by listening to that person speaking. It can cause both physical and mental issues, which affect speech and; therefore, pronunciation.

Not only anxiety affects pronunciation, but also the high levels of stress in the students' learning process. High competitive educational systems stress the students and equally affect the correct acquisition of knowledge and in this specific case, pronunciation.

When students are about to take an exam, they feel stressed and anxious. This may affect their performance during the exam; consequently, they have unsuccessful results. Mahmood Alam (2013) observed that among the factors which affect the development of anxiety, self-esteem is listed. According to Alam (2013), students worry about suffering a reduction of their self-image in front of their classmates leading to anxiety when speaking in public. As it can be seen, it is important for students who suffer anxiety to feel confident and secure when speaking or delivering a speech. Confidence can lead students to achieve higher academic goals. In contrast, those students who do not have confidence in themselves tend to become lower achievers in grades and performance.

During an English class, speaking activities are mostly considered as a beacon; nonetheless, teachers prefer not to teach them correctly or disregard the importance they have. Anxiety overcoming techniques are helpful when teaching and learning English, specifically the speaking skill. Everyone gets anxious when speaking in public. Several

thoughts go through the students' minds, making them feel nervous and unable to deliver a speech. Anxiety causes these effects and also can affect the accurate pronunciation of words and sounds in connective speech. When someone does not master a language, it is common to feel anxious when speaking it in public. Students who face this problem tend to speak less or not to speak at all; therefore, their performance gets affected or diminished.

Several anxiety overcoming techniques must be put into practice in order to overcome this pronunciation problem. For instance, icebreaker activities are easy to develop and fun to do. Students may find themselves speaking in public in English without having to worry about if someone is judging their speech or not. Speaking anxiety is one of the most common fears shared in English classes, and presently students may not have the correct tools and techniques to get over the pronunciation anxiety problems.

1.2 Research Question

Pronunciation problems have always existed in Spanish speakers and mostly on EFL classes. As a result of the different phonemic varieties of the two languages, some English sounds are more difficult to pronounce correctly by Spanish native speakers. Vowel sounds are hard to pronounce depending on the part of the mouth in which they are pronounced and depending on how difficult it is for the person to articulate the sound.

Pronunciation can be easily affected when nervousness and anxiety take over the speaker. Anxiety affects the way we speak and react in public. Therefore, the pronunciation of certain vowels seems difficult for most Spanish speakers; these vowels are / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ /. Front, central and back vowels are tricky, and only by practicing one can reach the correct pronunciation. Students need to learn how to manage their anxiety, so that their pronunciation may not be affected by this important factor.

As Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados is a public high school, the English level the students have is not as high as expected. This can be because some English teachers are not aware of the importance of the proper pronunciation students need to have. Consequently, teachers do not take into account the numerous problems their students face towards English.

Therefore, the question for this research is; How does anxiety affect the pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ / on EFL adult learners f 7-3 of the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados during the first quarter of 2017?

1.3 Purpose and Significance of the Study

The aim of this study is to discover how anxiety affects the pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ / on EFL adult learners. Pronunciation has always been a problem for Spanish native speakers. Therefore, it is important for students to learn how to communicate correctly in an English environment without barriers, such as a correct pronunciation. The greater demand for students with English pronunciation issues justifies the need for more effective methods and techniques in order to them develop their pronunciation.

This research focuses more on the effect of anxiety, which affects English pronunciation on Spanish native speakers in regard to some English vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ /. The more anxious and nervous the students are, more pronunciation problems they will have when speaking in public. Therefore, it is important to investigate about this difficulty by analyzing and determining the major causes and effects, and as a result anxiety overcoming techniques in order to eliminate this problem. The findings of this research will give techniques to teachers and students on how to overcome common pronunciation issues and

anxiety. Also, it will help to increase students' English pronunciation by applying the techniques.

This problem is present in the majority of Costa Rican public schools, including the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados, school for this investigation. Moreover, schools apply different methods or in some cases they do not apply any specific method to teach pronunciation, which leads this research to find out the correct techniques to train students better. Consequently, students and teachers at Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados will have effective tools to determine the causes of this pronunciation problem; therefore, the methods and techniques can help them achieve the goals of the English class. The results of this research will guide teachers in selecting the appropriate methods and techniques for stating the learning objectives, in this case the pronunciation objectives. As a result, anxiety overcoming techniques will help students to overcome the pronunciation issues by providing a friendly-environment and applying the techniques in the classroom.

As a matter of fact, people feel more comfortable when they are surrounded by a calm and healthy environment. It happens the same with schools, class groups, and students. One student may or may not speak or participate actively in class if he or she is not feeling comfortable. It is important to have a good and confident environment in an English class because a poor environment will not give the necessary confidence to the students to develop their real potential. Anxiety is part of every classroom, specially when speaking in public. Therefore, teachers should provide a good environment in order motivate the students and make them feel willing to learn and grow.

This research will not only contribute with one single school or age-group, but also it will help to open the road to new researches about pronunciation problems. It will help to

guide teachers to accommodate their teaching regarding the speaking skill and apply the techniques exposed in this investigation.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

- To analyze the effect of anxiety on EFL adult learners' pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ / at Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados of 7-3

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- To determine the major causes of anxiety and its effects on EFL adult learners' pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /
- To apply anxiety overcoming techniques on EFL adult learners' pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /
- To evaluate the effectiveness of anxiety overcoming techniques on EFL adult learners' pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Every study may have its limitations, first because of time and second because one cannot tend to study and research every single aspect of a topic. It needs to be narrowed to a specific content. In addition, the options, opportunities, and results may vary as the research takes form.

The limitations of this current study rely on the fact that the Costa Rican public education (MEP) has not developed an appropriate curriculum for English teaching. There is a great demand on the country for English speaking teachers and Costa Rican education is not currently offering a good English program for the students to grow and learn the language correctly.

The lack of an intermediate-high English level of the students of Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados may affect the application of the methods of this study in order to overcome its specific problem of study. Due to the low level of English, students of this high school may not understand the language at all. Therefore, this is a limitation for communication with the researcher, the teacher, and students.

The lack of material provided by the school may not be the correct one to work and grow with the students in the speaking skill. Also, the support from the school is very important in order to complete and reach the goals and objectives of this study. If there is no support from the school, the application, development of the classes, and techniques are going to be affected a great deal.

Students of this high school are teenagers and adults. Working with teenagers may affect the results of this study because sometimes dealing with people who do not want to cooperate may be difficult. There may be also some adults who may not want to talk or complete the tasks given in class.

Time is also a limitation for this study because the classes are at night. First, students are not at a 100% attentive when studying at night, so it may be hard for get them to focus on the class and the activities presented. Second, night schools have less effective time than day schools. Day schools have 8 hours and night schools have only 3 or 4 hours per day. Therefore, the time needed to develop this study might be more than expected because of the previous limitations that affect the results.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

English pronunciation is one of the main problems EFL students face in their classrooms. Teaching pronunciation has been left aside by teachers and institutions; one of the reasons is because teachers do not have the correct tools, strategies, and techniques available to teach it properly.

This review includes previous studies that have investigated different problems students may have led when learning pronunciation. Also, pronunciation theories, strategies, and techniques are going to be stated in this chapter, as well as some ways in which a teacher can help students who are learning a foreign language to improve pronunciation. Alongside, it will be investigated how anxiety affects pronunciation and the effect it has on the pronunciation of certain vowel sounds for EFL adult learners when speaking in public.

2.1 Antecedents

Anxiety places an important role in the pronunciation English classes, because it affects the development of the language and the speaker, as well. In addition, teachers may experience problems when giving a class if the students are anxious or stressed. For this reason, students may not learn the target language accurately.

A study made in 2009 by Ryan Zgutowicz showed the effects language anxiety have on ESL students on their decisions to speak. In other words, he studied why language anxiety affected the way in which the students speak. He focused on the factors that affected their speaking in public and their decision to speak.

Motivation is part of the learning process including the process of learning a different language. Zgutowicz (2009), stated that someone may be motivated to learn another

language in order to be able to communicate with others. A person is motivated when the need to communicate is to survive in a world with a different language than his or her native one.

When a student feels motivated, he or she learns better and with a different attitude. Together with anxiety, it can be beneficial because it tends to facilitate the performance rather than impede it (Zgutowicz, 2009). When anxiety gets combined with worry, the performance of a student can be affected on the way he or she speaks in front of others. Also, anxiety can affect the speaking task when a person is predisposed to feel anxiety in specific situations.

In his research, Zgutowicz (2009) investigated how language anxiety can affect students' decisions to speak English and the factors, which contribute to language anxiety in an ESL classroom. In order to explore the effects, he used two research instruments. First, the English Language Anxiety Scale (ELAS), which is a survey to measure anxiety levels in a classroom. Second, some students were selected to participate in an interview based on the result of the ELAS instrument.

Once the students had completed the ELAS questionnaire, the teacher interviewed with each one based on the ELAS. Then, an observation was needed to make the analysis of the results. He made some comparisons to measure the students' responses and looked for levels of language anxiety.

The results of his investigation showed language anxiety in ESL classes. It suggested language anxiety as a factor in the learning environment. He concluded that students tend to have higher levels of language anxiety in speaking in ESL classes. It manifested in different ways an increasing level of comfort in speaking, which can vary from student to student.

A common feature was fear of humiliation from their peers; in simple words that their classmates made fun of them when speaking in public because of some mistakes they had made do. Furthermore, he found out that when students believe that they can speak, despite their difficulties when they are in a supportive learning environment, the impact of deciding to speak in public changes in a great manner.

Similar to motivation, attitude is important, as well. According to Gardner (2006), attitudes can refer to the teacher, the language, or group speaking the target language. He stated that different attitudes can influence motivation, which affects what is achieved. He explains motivation from three different points of view according to Second Language Acquisition. The first one is from a social perspective, the second from activity-centered, and the third one from an individual perspective.

In addition, Gardner (2006) states that a person can communicate with other people who speak the target language because of the motivation that person has to learn the language. As a matter of fact, attitude needs to be present before motivation takes place because it helps to keep the desire and effort in the process of acquiring a new language.

Students who are in the process of learning and acquiring a foreign language face different challenges during the process. The most common issues they face are the speaking skill and the subskill of pronunciation. As a matter of fact, speech production is one of the most difficult things to achieve when learning a new language. People may get nervous or anxious; other may feel motivated and willing to learn. Equally important are the different areas of language acquisition that may affect the oral production of the foreign language.

Another study about difficulties in speaking English was conducted by Henna Paaki in 2013. In this research, some issues related to second language learning and speech

production were discussed. Also, the areas of second language acquisition related to oral language proficiency and the main factors affecting English speech production were analyzed. The aim of the study was to find out if adult learners experience problems with pronunciation when speaking English, and to identify the difficulties they have and why.

In order to carry out the data collection, he interviewed the adult learners. The questions of the interview consisted mainly on their background in education, their own speech and use of English, the difficulties experienced in speaking English, and the role of other people in speaking.

Overall, adult learners thought that speaking English was difficult. They still have the idea that if you make a mistake when speaking, you will be punished. The results showed that the main factors that affected their speech were social, instructional, and/or neurological. It also stated that the English language and communication skills should be emphasized more in the classroom than the study of more theory. English education should change from being theoretical to more practical in order to to enhance communicative skills (Paaki, 2013).

Adult learners may have a disadvantage over the younger learners when acquiring a foreign language, since some studies have shown they struggle more because they have psychological barriers, which young learners such as children do not have. Moreover, schools and institutes should teach the process of communication through the development of oral skills.

Chen Dan (2006), in a study made on how to improve students' pronunciation, showed several ways in which teachers can help students with pronunciation problems. He stated that phonetics constitutes the basis of speaking above other aspects of language.

Pronunciation is the foundation of speaking; a good pronunciation makes communication an easier and successful process.

With this in mind, he started his investigation process with the data collection. He took notes about what was happening and collected them in a notebook, then, he paid attention to the students' comments. She started to find different ways in order to encourage her students. First, she made a listening test in which students had to tell the difference between sounds. She made a checklist of the students' pronunciation problems. Then, the checklist was used to choose a pronunciation area to study.

Second, she asked each student to read a word and correct the mistakes. The teacher listened carefully to the students' pronunciation and corrected them when they could not correct themselves. They practiced a lot until students were able to distinguish the different pronunciations correctly. As a result, 80% of the students were able to hear the differences.

Another method used in the investigation was self-testing. It consisted on a mini test to evaluate the ability to recognize and pronounce sounds in words, sentences, and/or conversations. It had to be read and checked by themselves (the students). At the end of the class, the teacher checked their answers and corrected them if necessary.

Finally, the students were able to speak English, recognize the differences between sounds, and understand the language. Dan (2006) used different methods in order to accomplish the pronunciation required and expected. It was shown that through practice and teaching pronunciation and phonetics appropriately students can improve their speaking and listening skills.

It is important to point out, that when teaching is good, learning will be good. For instance, whenever teachers want their students to develop good pronunciation, they should

teach good phonics and oral skills. At the same time, learning a foreign language involves different factors that may affect in many ways the learning process.

In this case, speaking may be affected by phonics and pronunciation problems and the confusion of the two sound systems, the native and the foreign one.

A case study on non-native acquisition of English pronunciation in Spanish speakers made by Klara Sedlackova (2009) explored the factors, which have an influence on it. She also established a comparison between the English and Spanish sound systems. Furthermore, she illustrated some difficulties Spanish learners face in English pronunciation. It was carried out on six Spanish speakers learning English.

The study was divided into three parts. First of all, collecting data about the speakers' language background, which was collected throughout a questionnaire. Second, the students were recorded while reading a text aloud. It was followed by the recording of a spontaneous speech. Finally, in the third part students were asked to read aloud some exercises in which it word stress, sentence stress, linking or blending, and intonation, were evaluated. All students were tested individually in a quiet environment without visual distractions; and it lasted 30 minutes per student.

The results showed between the six students tended to replace the English phoneme /æ/ for the Spanish /a/ or /e/ when reading texts aloud. For the spontaneous speech, students struggled with the pronunciation of the same sounds as in the reading aloud task. The speakers were influenced by the Spanish pronunciation of the corresponding sound in English.

Sedlackova (2009) also concluded that significant features of the English sound system present obstacles for Spanish learners to overcome. In addition, exposure to English

during their stays on a foreign country seem to affect in a good way Spanish speakers' English pronunciation (Sedlackova, 2009).

After reviewing these factors, it can be noted that learning a foreign language is difficult, but not impossible. Also, many factors, such as anxiety, stress, pronunciation issues, cultural factors, age, motivation, and attitude, may take over the learning process. These studies have shown different analysis of the factors that affect most of the process of learning a foreign language and the ways in which they have worked to overcome the barriers.

2.2 Literature Review

Learning a foreign language is not an easy thing to do. It requires big efforts and a lot of motivation for students who are learning a foreign language and are surrounded by the use of their native language. It is a big challenge. As it was mentioned before, many factors may affect the way in which one learns a new language. For instance, anxiety is a big barrier for students when they get to speak in public. Different studies have shown that anxiety affects the learning process and also the pronunciation of the foreign language.

Anxiety has always been present in classrooms, specially in language classes. For a better understanding of anxiety, here are some definitions. According to Folk (n.d), anxiety results from a certain style of behavior. Moreover, Webster's dictionary (2017) defines it as, "A state of apprehension, uncertainty, and fear resulting from anticipation of a realistic or fantasized threatening, event or situation, often impairing physical and psychological functioning." Besides, Folk et.al (n.d) explain it as when someone creates the psychological, physiological, and emotional state of being anxious, worried, or concerned. Anxiety is not an illness someone can develop, it is something a person can get as a result of a specific context

and situation he or she is facing. Anxiety also has its causes; it does not appear without a cause. Thus for Folk, anxiety is caused because of conscious behavior, such as worry.

Current researches say anxiety involves a combination of factors such as genes, diet, and stress. According to Legg (2016), stress, genetics, personality type, and trauma are some factors, which can increase the risk of developing anxiety. It is a state of mind in which the person who is getting anxious feels that something can be harmful in some way.

Speech anxiety is what most of English as Foreign Language (EFL) students feel when they have to deliver a presentation or just to speak English in front of someone. According to the University of Pittsburgh (2017), most people experience at least a low level of speech anxiety every time they deliver. Among the most common symptoms are shaking, dry mouth, sweating, and rapid heartbeat. When someone is getting ready to deliver a speech, he or she may experience some kind of anxiety. Some people get to handle anxiety, but anxiety is always going on.

An EFL student's excess of worry leads to anxiety problems; therefore, the speaking process is more affected when the student is speaking in front of others. Zgutowicz (2009) argues that foreign language anxiety affects language acquisition. He believes that a poor performance in language is due to language anxiety.

Public speaking anxiety interferes with a person's capacity or ability to communicate in a successful way to an audience. Not only because it makes the person nervous, but also because it affects pronunciation. According to Folk (n.d), being anxious can stress the body and coordination actions, and thinking problems may cause difficulty to speak and move the speech organs. This can lead to mispronunciations of certain words or sounds.

An observation made by the researcher showed that most of English as a Foreign Language students tend to have problems when speaking English in front of other people. Many students are afraid of speaking in front of others and their fear grows if they have to speak in a foreign language, in this case English. Anxiety takes place in most of the cases of public speaking.

Pronunciation can be defined, according to Cambridge Dictionary (2017), as how we say words; the way in which a word is pronounced. It is the way in which a person sounds the words while speaking. For non-native English speakers of EFL, it may be difficult to learn how to pronounce perfectly the English sound system, as it is different from the Spanish one. Some students tend to have pronunciation problems because they transfer the phonological rules from Spanish to English, which is not the proper way to learn a language.

Pronunciation is sometimes affected when someone is anxious when speaking in public. Many students have experienced pronunciation problems due to anxiety. When they try to speak and pronounce correctly under pressure, they tend to mispronounce words and sounds. In some cases, students may not speak at all because they “freeze” in front of people. The consequence of experiencing anxiety when speaking in public is not being able to speak at all or to have pronunciation problems; therefore, communication is not successfully accomplished.

For this reason, EFL students who are learning how to speak English and have a good pronunciation may face different problems on their learning. According to Nawaz (2011), recognition of speech sounds and mother tongue interference are some of the problems students face when learning to speak a foreign language. Students tend to mix up the sounds

of both, English and Spanish languages; in effect, the recognition of foreign sounds is more difficult.

Many students make mistakes when producing certain sounds. In this investigation, the vowel sounds that are going to be evaluated are /æ, ʌ, ɑ, ɔ, /. Each vowel sound is different from each other; although they have some common characteristics. For Spanish native speakers, it is difficult to manage all the English sounds at once. It is even more difficult when those Spanish speakers have never been taught correctly pronunciation or phonetics.

For a better understanding of the vowels, here is an articulatory description which helps to classify each of them for a better understanding. Front vowel sound /æ/, called diagraph, is produced in the front part of the mouth when the front part of the tongue is raised towards the hard palate. The tongue is in a low position. Also, the muscles of the lips, mouth, and tongue are tense. The jaw is in a half-open position and it is a long sound. The lips are fully spread and somewhat open (Pérez, 2017) (personal communication).

The central vowel sound /ʌ/, called caret, is produced in the central part of the mouth when the central part of the tongue is raised towards the mid palate. The tongue is in a mid position. The muscles of the lips, mouth, and tongue are tense and the jaw is between half-closed and half-open. It is a short sound and the lips are in a neutral position (Pérez, 2017) (personal communication).

Vowel sound /ɑ/, called alpha, is produced in the back part of the mouth when the back part of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate. The tongue is in a low position. The muscles of the lips, mouth, and tongue are tense and the jaw is open. It is a long sound and the lips are open rounded (Pérez, 2017) (personal communication).

Finally, vowel sound /ɔ/, called open o, is produced in the back part of the mouth when the back part of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate. The tongue is in a low position. The muscles of the lips, mouth and tongue are tense and the jaw is half-open. It is a long sound and the lips are rounded (Pérez, 2017) (personal communication).

English and Spanish are two very different languages in the matter of phonetics. They both have different vowel sounds that make each language different from each other. According to Bradlow (1993), the main difference between these two languages regarding the vowel systems, is the number of vowel categories. In English there are 12 vowel sounds, while in Spanish there are only five. As mentioned before, each English vowel sound has its own classification, as well as in Spanish. For instance, the English /æ/ is a front vowel sound and the Spanish equivalent sound is between vowel sound /e/ and /a/, getting closer to /a/ more than to /e/. In the case of /ɑ/ is practically the same, but the difference is that it is a back vowel, so it is closer to a sound in Spanish. For English vowel sound /ʌ/, the Spanish equivalent is /a/ because both are central vowel sounds. Finally, for English vowel sound /ɔ/, the Spanish one is /o/. Open o is back, as well as the Spanish /o/.

Different studies have shown many ways in which pronunciation can be achieved. Methods, strategies, and techniques that help improve pronunciation for EFL learners have been developed. Although, for a non-native English speaker it is almost impossible to have a perfect pronunciation in English. Due to the differences between the two languages and its accents, it is difficult to achieve it.

In addition, there are some studies that show how anxiety affects the pronunciation and some techniques to overcome it. These methods and techniques have been proven and applied in different contexts and in different ways as it will be mentioned below.

2.2.1 Overcoming Speech Anxiety Techniques

When teachers assess speaking in their classes, anxiety is part of the speech problems. Students seem to get really nervous when they have to deliver a speech or simply speak English in front of others. There are some overcoming anxiety techniques students can follow in order to overcome their fears when speaking in public (Ayres, 1993). Relaxing is the first step. Students should breathe deeply and slowly. Then, they should warm up their body before speaking, so they reduce their tension and stress to help them concentrate. For instance, they can try walking or stretching.

Also, to practice beforehand is very important. It helps students to feel confident about their speech. Also, take off the pressure the speaking has on the student. Students need to keep in mind that everyone makes mistakes when delivering a speech. When a person thinks about doing it perfectly, most of the times he/she fails because he/she concentrates on how perfect it should be done and not on really doing it as good possible.

Anxiety affects pronunciation along with other variables. In order to avoid mispronunciations, students can practice beforehand all the words they know they cannot pronounce correctly. At the moment of speaking, they should try to stay calm and speak at a normal rate, not too fast, not too slow. In that case, the communication process will succeed and the student will overcome anxiety and pronunciation problems.

2.2.2.1 The ABC Technique by Joe Ayres

There are more techniques someone with speech anxiety can put into practice in order to conquer the problem. According to Ayres (1993), speech anxiety appears because people tend to think it is something difficult to do. They have some fears about public speaking, and that produces anxiety when speaking in public. In his book, he explains that some

cognitivists believe that if students change the types of thoughts they have about public speaking, then maybe speech anxiety will be reduced (Ayres, 1993). In addition, he states that if someone does not have the adequate speaking skills, speech anxiety will arise.

Therefore, if speaking skills are improved, speech anxiety will be reduced in a great way.

Some people may have irrational thoughts about speaking in public (Ayres, 1993). For instance, an irrational thought can be when the speaker thinks that nobody will like his/her speech, or that no one will understand the point of view, also he/she may think that because of his/her mispronunciation the audience will think he/she is not professional or a poor one. In view of that, there is a technique that helps people identify irrational beliefs about public speaking.

Ayres (1993) developed a technique to help people identify all their irrational thoughts when they have to deliver a speech. The technique is called ABC Method. The purpose of this technique is to identify the thoughts and confront them in order to be eliminated. He believed that when a person identifies what the thoughts she or he has on public speaking and understands the whole process, it is easier to confront and overcome those fears. The A stands for the antecedent condition, that means what makes the person to deliver the speech. The B stands for the belief system; it is what a person beliefs and thinks about giving a speech. For instance, when someone thinks that nobody will like the speech, or that he/she is not good at speaking in public, the speech will fail.

Finally, the C stands for consequence, that is how a person feels when delivering a speech.

For example, speech anxiety is one consequence of delivering a public speech.

The results of this technique are that people who have realistic beliefs about speaking in public suffer less speech anxiety than the ones who have unrealistic expectations (Ayres,

1993). In addition, if people want to cope with speech anxiety, they will have to avoid thinking and having negative beliefs about delivering a speech.

Consequently, they need to set reasonable expectations about their speech and put extra effort. Ayres believes that the beliefs and thoughts one has on speaking in public are the basics factors in developing speech anxiety. In other words, it is not delivering a speech what makes someone anxious, it is what that person thinks and believes about himself/herself giving a speech.

2.2.2.2 Systematic Desensitization by Mike Allen, John Hunter, and William Donohue

This method of public speaking helps to reduce anxiety by exposing the person to the fear of speaking. First, the speaker has to face the fears of public speaking and try to associate pleasant responses with the speaking situation. Relaxation methods take place on this technique. The speaker has to relax and go through some methods, like controlled breathing techniques in order to conquer the anxiety at a lower level (1989).

After the relaxation techniques, the speaker has to think about public speaking and has to avoid thoughts about fear and anxiety towards public speaking. In order to control the fears, first the speaker is asked to relax about the situation and think about it with less anxiety. When the speaker learns how to relax, he is asked to think about some more frightening aspects of public speaking.

Then, the speaker has to relax again and try harder to overcome the fears by relaxing more and more through the process of overcoming the fear and anxiety to speak in public. Once the speaker can go through all the process successfully without being anxious, it is “cured” (Allen, Hunter & Donhue, 1989).

2.2.2.3 Skills Training Technique by Allen, Hunter and Donhue

Speakers are different from one another, that means that no one learns in the same way and no one is good at everything. Speakers may have some deficiencies that have to be corrected before they deliver a speech (Allen, et al, 1989).

Furthermore, when a person lacks the basic skills in public speaking to be considered competent, he/she is justified in being anxious.

In other words, if a student does not know how to speak in public because he/she has not learned the skills for it, anxiety will take the lead of the student and the communication process will fail. Some of the skills may be outlining, organizing ideas, making research about the topic, and practicing the speeches (Allen, et al, 1989).

Therefore, teachers have to give students the correct and necessary tools to learn how to speak in public. Once the skill or skills are learned properly, the student will be able to perform better. In order to accomplish this, not only the teacher, but also the educational system has to provide the tools by giving the students practice in speeches and receiving constructive criticism, which helps them feel confident during the learning process.

2.2.2 MARIA Method

Many researches have found that good pronunciation instructions are effective when communication takes place. It means that with a good pronunciation, people may understand better and be understood by others. Ana Maria Chizue (2015) conducted a research where the effectiveness and the benefits of explicit pronunciation teaching were investigated.

In her research, she developed the MARIA method (**M**imic **A**nd **R**epeat, **I**nstruct **A**nd...). In that study, 174 Japanese junior school students practiced pronouncing ten English phonemes through the MARIA method. Each student had ten minutes during English regular

classes for about two weeks. The MARIA method is a way of teaching English pronunciation. It includes different fields such as education, phonetics, English phonology, psychology, and pedagogy. It also includes a variety of teaching strategies as phonological awareness, phonics, and phonetic instruction including the use of different teaching materials such as mirrors, instruction cards, corrective feedback, lips, mouth, and tongue. The way in which it is developed is through repeated production exercises and oral practice.

Chizue (2015) applied the MARIA method to the Japanese English class and the results for the reading task showed a significant improvement in the students' pronunciation. On the listening task, students also improved with the method applied. It also showed that the instructions might have helped them. In other words, through the application of the MARIA method and a good teaching, students improved in their pronunciation.

The conclusion of this research was that in order for students to acquire a higher level of pronunciation, combining pronunciation instructions with practice and self-monitoring is helpful.

The MARIA method seemed to work out well when achieving and teaching English pronunciation for EFL learners, in this case Japanese learners. Also, it can be applied for Spanish-native speakers and maybe with the same or alike results.

As it is not a well recognized method, it may still have some errors. Using it as a technique in the class may not be very helpful; despite, teachers can use it and try to develop it in their classes. It was a method used with Japanese students, which may have different results if it is practiced with Spanish students, as both languages are very different from each other.

2.2.3 Phrase Phase Technique by Saara Tikkakoski

Phrase Phase is a technique that helps students to start step by step with the speaking skill. This technique is for those students who are beginners in learning the language. The task is simple for them because they have a sample they can follow in order to accomplish the goal, which is to speak the target language with a good pronunciation.

This technique helps students to improve their pronunciation following the principle of repeating (Tikkakoski, 2015).

First, the students have to choose their sources and materials in order to apply the technique. They can gather sources from TV shows, movies, series, videos, and no forth. The sources they need to find have to be quotes or lines.

After this step, they are ready to move on to the speaking part, which is the dialogue part. In this second part, students have to change some words from the quote for their own words. They cannot change the general meaning of the quote, nor the intonation and stress patterns of the original one. The students have to get in pairs in order to develop the dialogue using their quotes. At first, the conversations are going to be short, but as they practice this technique, they are going to develop more complex conversations.

This technique seems to be very active because students have to work with a partner and they have to communicate in order to accomplish the goal of the technique. Peer correction and feedback can also be part of this technique.

2.2.4 Vlog Stock Technique by Saara Tikkakoski

Nowadays, students are more into technology than years ago. For this reason, teachers have to look for techniques and activities that have something to do with technology. Taking notes on a notebook and having a record on paper seems odd, and young

students may find it boring. Under those circumstances, the technique “Vlog Stock,” encourages the students to use technology as a tool to study and learn.

The goal of this technique is for students to express themselves and say their own points of views through a video blog (Tikkakoski, 2015). In this technique, students are asked to choose a video blog which has a distinctive intonation pattern. The students then have to reproduce that specific intonation pattern in their own video or audio recording. For beginners, the pronunciation training has to be simple and with English common intonation patterns.

Although students are the ones who choose the video, the teacher is the one who selects the content of the material. The teacher has to give students a set of guidelines for choosing the correct material. For instance, the language of the materials has to be native or near-native English, the materials have to be appropriate for their ages, and they cannot include strong language or sexual references. The material has to be suitable for school purposes and environment.

Once the students are familiarized with the intonation pattern, they should start practicing only by listening and repeating the material. When students are ready with this part, they move on to the next step, which is to change the original content to the student’s new content. The students’ content has to be created and produced by themselves, and it can include their own interests and goals. For the final step, students have to record or video tape in order to create a video blog produced by themselves. Once this is ready, students can compare their own video blog to the original material they have chosen at the beginning.

Teachers can take great advantage of this technique because with it, they are making their students think by themselves and create their own products. In addition, students

practice their pronunciation by listening and repeating the original material and then, they are able to listen to their own improvement in the language.

2.2.5 Music as a Tool to Improve Pronunciation on EFL Learners by Nuria Villalobos

Music has been an important part of people's life, but it is not very common to see teachers using it in their classes.

According to Villalobos (2008), the teaching and learning process can be an enriching experience because music can provide a nice atmosphere for the teacher and the students. Also, it is very useful when teachers want to create fun activities for the class.

Songs are an excellent way in order to improve the language skills, in speaking specifically. Villalobos (2008) states that there are different advantages of using songs in the classrooms. Some of them are increasing students' attention, improving memory, energizing the learning activities, providing a relax environment, enhancing imagination, and developing inspiration. Songs are very helpful because they include different aspects like intonation, vocabulary, idioms, and no forth, which are very important when teaching and learning a second or foreign language.

Using music in the class can help students to develop some listening abilities, speaking, and reading and writing. Teachers can take advantage of this and teach different topics such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary just by listening to a song in English. It makes the teaching process easier and the learning funnier. If teachers want to try something different in the class and not make them boring or tedious, they should try to use some music and song techniques. In addition, music can be very helpful for students because it enables them to understand the target language better and acquire new forms of the

language, such as rules. Also, it motivates the students to learn while they are in a fun and relaxed environment.

Music has different effects depending on the learner. A research showed that music could make the brain more receptive to learning (Villalobos, 2008). The Multiple Intelligence theory plays a big role in using music as a teaching technique. Gardner (1983) developed this theory about the different kinds of ways in which a person can learn better. He included seven different intelligences: visual-spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and musical. The developing of the musical intelligence can be enhanced by the usage of songs in the class.

Songs are used by teachers in order to assess grammar, listening comprehension, vocabulary, and sometimes for writing exercises (Villalobos, 2008). When a Spanish native-speaker listens to a song in English, the target language, that speaker can learn to identify the different sounds of the language. In addition, teachers should take into account what kind of music they are going to use in the class. Teachers have to think about the English level the students have and their ages; the kind of songs they like, if the song is too fast or too slow, and very important if the vocabulary is appropriate for the students' English level.

There are different activities teachers can do in their classrooms using songs to assess pronunciation. For example, the teacher plays a song and students have to pay close attention to the pronunciation of certain sounds. They have to choose the correct pronunciation for some words. Another activity is to have students classify the underlined words according to their pronunciation. In this one, the teacher gives them a written song and also plays it for them to listen to it and be able to read it. Fill in the blanks of cloze exercises are very useful when combining them with songs. The teacher gives them an incomplete song and while

they are listening to it, they have to complete the song with the correct missing word.

Selecting the correct transcriptions and writing the words to fill in the blanks is an exercise for advanced students. They have to listen to the song, they find out the correct word, and then select the correct transcription of the word.

For teaching pronunciation focused on phonetics, teachers can use some activities like writing the IPA symbols next to the word students have just listened. Also, teachers can use transcription with the songs. Students will have to listen to the song and then write the transcription on a different paper.

Music and songs can be very helpful for teachers and students to learn pronunciation and to overcome some problems they may be facing. EFL learners can take advantage of it not only in their classes, but also on their daily life when listening to a song, trying to understand it, and copying it, may enhance pronunciation.

On the other hand, there can be different learners that cannot concentrate with music, or that do not like it. This is related to the type of intelligence they have and with the way of learning of each student.

Not all students learn in the same way; although, using music occasionally is not bad and it has been proven it helps the majority of learners with their pronunciation.

2.2.6 Drills to Improve English Pronunciation on EFL Learners

2.2.6.1 Repetition Drill

Drills are helpful to improve or learn pronunciation. The teacher is the one leading the drills and the class repeats what the teacher says. It can be helpful in different ways, not only with pronunciation. For instance, as drills involve the whole class to participate, some

shy students may feel comfortable speaking at the same time as their classmates. In that way, they do not feel they are on the spotlight and they lower their level of anxiety.

Repetition drills help learners to be accurate when speaking and to learn how to use set of sentences and phrases that allow them to start using the language as soon as possible (Brown & Nation, 1997). They are used to learn the sounds of a word or sentence, mainly on EFL classes.

According to Nakamura (1999), students who are using repetition drills have to follow some steps in order to accomplish the desire goal that is to pronounce as an English native speaker. He states that they should comprehend a sentence in colloquial English and then repeat it. Second, they have to repeat it in a rapid way and also understand it. Third, they have to comprehend the sentence model using the necessary skills for listening comprehension. In other words, if a student does not comprehend what is being repeated, then the pronunciation will not improve at best.

An application of this method was done by Nakamura (1999) on EFL learners. The procedure started with a 10 minutes' video that the students had to watch. While they were watching it, they were allowed to see the written script of the video. Then, they had to record model sentences and listen to them very carefully. Each group of students had to produce the sentences in a colloquial style, just as in the video. Some students practiced through repeating the sentences word by word very carefully. Finally, all the students watched the video again and they tried to discriminate the sounds they had repeated in the repetition drill.

Repetition drills are very helpful when teachers want to enhance pronunciation. First, it is important to have students listen to a native recording or video for them to hear the difference between their native language and the target language, in this case English. Then,

when they have listened to it, they are ready to repeat and pronounce properly each sentence and each word. They should repeat after the teacher or after the recording or video, so that they hear the native form and try to imitate it until they get the correct native pronunciation.

2.2.6.2 Backward build-up drill

This drill is also called “back chaining.” The teacher chooses a sentence and starts reading the last part of it, then the other part and so on, until the sentence is complete.

The students have to repeat what the teacher says. For example, the sentence is “The dog is on the table;” the teacher starts saying “the table,” then “on the table,” “is on the table,” “dog is on the table,” “the dog is on the table.”

This technique can be used when the sentences the teacher are using in class are too long for the EFL students to repeat them correctly the first time. It takes them sometime get used to the sentence intonation and pronunciation in order for them to repeat it correctly. In addition, some students may not have trouble repeating the first part of the sentence, but they may forget the last part of it.

The backward build-up drill helps when they have problems repeating the last part of long sentences. Repeating from back to front helps students remember better the whole sentence and it seems to be not so hard for them when this technique is used (Colvin, n.d)

This technique can be used with beginners and intermediate level students.

Teachers have to speak in a natural way and at a normal speed, so students can understand the sentence and repeat it without any problem. Since EFL students are learning a new language, they need to listen to it in the clearest possible way. Then, they will be able to listen to the words and the intonation.

2.2.6.3 Chain Drill

This kind of drill works like a chain in which all the students have to participate by asking questions to their classmates and answering those questions. For example, student 1 asks: Where is the dog? and student 2 answers: The dog is on the table. Then, student 2 has to ask the same question to another student, and so on. This kind of drill helps students to relate with their classmates and learn to ask and answer simple questions.

Also, the chain drill gives the teacher an opportunity to check the students' speech because they have to speak by asking questions and answering (Houston, n.d). Some teachers can start using a question just like "How are you?" and the student answers the question and moves to another classmate to ask the same question or he/she can change the question and ask something completely different from the first one. This for the purpose of getting to know the classmates and for the teacher to see if they can construct language by themselves without repeating only what the teacher says.

Since the chain drill is for students to create a conversation, it may be useful with beginners and intermediate. Moreover, drills are useful when teaching pronunciation because teachers can make students repeat and practice specific words that are difficult for them to pronounce. In that way, teachers can provide feedback in pronunciation.

Generally speaking, drills are techniques that can be used in EFL classrooms and are useful for oral practice to demonstrate the students' ability to use the language in a controlled way.

2.2.7 Tongue Twisters

Tongue twisters are used in order to improve pronunciation and to acquire a native-like pronunciation. They can be difficult at the beginning, but through practice one can develop a good pronunciation. Carmen (2010) states that a tongue twister is a sequence of

words that are difficult to pronounce rapidly and correctly. Tongue twisters are famous because of their common patterns of sounds and words which make them difficult to pronounce. According to Turumi, Jamiludding & Salehuddin (2015), tongue twisters help develop strong language skills. They say that tongue twisters stimulate the brain in order to develop the pronunciation subskill because the brain is the one that controls the oral functions.

Based on their investigation, they found out that tongue twisters improved students' pronunciation. For teachers to apply this method, they showed to have enough time to develop it. It is not something one person can achieve from the first time because it takes time and needs a lot of practice.

In another investigation conducted by Sitoresmi (2016), tongue twisters were used in a pronunciation class in order to improve the students' pronunciation of certain words. He found out that there were both advantages and disadvantages of using tongue twister in the class. One advantage was that students' felt motivated because they were learning by doing something fun in class. Also, the students' awareness of correct pronunciation improved due to the tongue twisters used in classes. In that way, they learned new words and how to pronounce those words correctly.

On the other hand, tongue twisters can be more difficult for some students than for others. They may have specific pronunciation problems which makes the learning process slower. For that reason, the fastest students may feel bored easily because they have to wait for the slower ones to catch up with the tongue twister. In addition, the teacher has to slow down when someone is not getting it right and focuses more on that students rather than on the others.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

This chapter begins with a description of the different methods and techniques that are going to be used in this investigation. In addition, a description of the population, participants, and institution is going to be explained in detail. Moreover, all the data collection instruments are going to be developed and explained in this chapter, as well as the validation of the instruments used.

3.1 Research Method and Scope

In this research, the mixed method approach is the one that is going to be used according to the type of investigation. The mixed method includes a mixture of both kind of research methods, the qualitative and the quantitative. By using both methods, multiple ways to explore a research problem can be used. In order to understand what a mixed method approach is, here is a brief explanation of each.

The qualitative method is designed to reveal a target audience's behavior and perceptions that guide to specific topics or issues (Qualitative Research Consultants Association, 2016). The results of the qualitative research or method are descriptive and not predictive. That is the reason why hypothesis or research questions tend to change during the whole process of the research.

The qualitative method originated from the social sciences such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology (QRCA, 2016). By using this method or approach of investigation, the researcher can apply several kinds of methods for collecting qualitative data; for instance, individual interviews, observations, observation checklists, questionnaires, focus groups, aptitude tests, IQ tests, background and context interviews, personality tests,

and in-depth interviews. Moreover, the advantages of the qualitative approach are that the information is richer and has a deeper insight into the problem being studied. Also, when interviewing a group, the dynamic of this type of interview engages the participants to respond more actively than in a common survey.

The approach is not based on numerical measurements; therefore, it is not a statistic analysis. The data collection involves the points of view of the participants such as emotions, priorities, experiences, and no forth. (Sampieri, Fernández, Baptista, 2010). According to Sampieri, et al (2010), the qualitative data are detailed descriptions of situations, people, interactions, and behaviors. In other words, the qualitative approach interprets the reality being observed.

On the other hand, the quantitative approach uses the data collection to prove hypothesis based on numerical measurements and statistic analysis in order to prove theories (Sampieri *et al*, 2010). As the qualitative approach, the quantitative one has some important characteristics. For instance, the researcher has to think about a problem to be investigated and resolved. Then, the researcher has to make a literature review in order to gather all important information about the study, and make a theoretical framework. Afterwards, the researcher examines the hypothesis and finds out if it was correct or not.

During the data collection, all the measurements take place. It is very important to use numerical measurements, so it can be believable and reliable. Once the numbers are ready, it is time to analyze the data using statistic methods and take out conclusions of the whole investigation (Sampieri *et al*, 2010). The quantitative approach is objective; it means that feelings, emotions, and social approaches do not take place on it. The data collection has to

be real and measurable with numbers and statistics for it to be considered reliable and correct.

The mixed approach has its own characteristics; for instance, the research problems can become research questions or hypotheses based on prior knowledge, experience, or literature. Also, something important to mention is that the data collection can involve any technique or method available for the researcher to use (Creswell, 2003).

Some researchers say that the mixed approach is easier to describe and to report because there is not only one kind of approach and not only one way to do it. According to Creswell (2003), there are four decisions for mixed method designs. The first one, the implementation sequence of data collection. Second, which method takes priority during data collection and analysis. Third, what the integration stage of finding involves. Finally, if a theoretical perspective is going to be used or not.

This research is mixed because it has both approaches in it. As it describes a population and a problem they have, it is qualitative. Through observation of the social behaviors and the participants, hypothesis, research questions, objectives and conclusions, are established. On the other hand, in order to measure those behaviors, the quantitative approach takes place. The results are taken with numbers and percentages. Then, when it comes to analysis, it is made through the quantitative approach because all the data has to be analyzed objectively. In addition, at some point the data analysis applies the qualitative approach because it analyzes the behavior and responses the participants have given.

3.2 Selection and Description of Population and Participants

In this research, it is studied how anxiety affects pronunciation on EFL learners. Therefore, the target population is a group of EFL students from a public high school; the

majority of students are adults. From the whole high school, two groups have been chosen to participate in this investigation; 7-3 and 7-4.

3.2.1 Description of the Institution

The institution in which the investigation, data collection, and data analysis took place is the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados. It is a high school that works in the evening from 6:00pm to 9:45pm from Monday to Friday. The institution is regulated by MEP (Ministerio de Educación Pública), institution that is in charge of public and private education in Costa Rica.

The purpose of this high school is to provide education to those who could not finish their studies. It gives an opportunity to adults who are now working at day time and study at night. It is like a regular day time high school with the same program and chronogram of studies. The difference is that the ones who attend school are adults and as it is a night school, the hours per lesson are less; therefore, they have fewer hours of classes per week.

The campus of the school is big and has a lot of classrooms. There is the administration building in which the principal's office and the secretary are. Also, there is a library open for the students to use and take advantage of it. The school has several green spaces around the campus, a gym, and a dining room. In each classroom there are around forty desks for the students, one desk for the teacher and two or three boards, depending on the classroom. The quality of the classrooms is low because they are not in a good condition. For instance, there are different kinds of desks in each class and they all have things written on them. Also, the walls are covered with drawings and words made by the students, and it gives the impression of a dirty place. Most of the students do not take care of the school's implements, materials, and classrooms.

In addition, the enrolment each year is huge. Every year there are many students trying to finish their high school studies. Unfortunately, the school cannot give a chance to every single person wanting to be in the school because there is no enough space for all of them. However, in each class there are around sixty to seventy students and just forty desks. There are some students who have to sit down on the floor because there are no enough places for them to sit. Therefore, it is hard for the teachers to manage groups of seventy people in a not so large classroom.

3.2.2 Description of the Population

The population of this research are the students of the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados. Most of them are adults from 18 to 60 or more years old. The majority of them work during day time and some of them during night time, too. They live in Desamparados and its surroundings.

The population is responsible for their own learning that is why they are taking classes in the evening because they want to and they need to. It is known that due to the area in which the school is located, it is dangerous at certain time during the evening and night. Because of the different problems there have been in those areas during the last years, it is considered one of the most dangerous areas of the Central Valley. It is not safe because there are people who belong to different social groups and not all of them get along with each other. There are students who have drug issues, drinking problems, money problems, and smoking problems. For instance, one student may come into the class yelling to someone else because they do not get along, and they may fight to each other as it has happened many times before in this institution. It is an environment of tension every day.

On the other hand, there are students who really want to be there to learn and achieve their life goals and objectives. They go to classes after work and try their best to learn and get their high school degree. For example, last year in this same institution an old man from about seventy years old, graduated from ninth grade. Now, he is in tenth grade, almost at the end and closer to his dream of getting his high school degree after many years later.

3.2.3 Description of the Participants

The participants of this research were chosen from groups from seventh to eleventh grade. Seventh grade was the one chosen for this research because of the new MEP program of English, which includes pronunciation and phonetics. From the five groups, 7-3 and 7-4 were taken into account.

Through observation of the two groups, 7-3 was chosen to be part of this research. It is a big group of 60 students, but only 30 students attend English classes. The majority of students are young adults around 18 to 25 years old. It is not a well-behaved group, but they are interested in learning and understanding the class. They pay attention to the teacher and take down notes. If they have a question, they ask the teacher as many times they need until they clarify the doubt.

In terms of pronunciation and phonetics, the group has several difficulties to pronounce English correctly. They struggle with some English sounds including vowels and consonants. However, the main vowel sounds they struggle with the most are /æ, α, ɔ, ʌ/. They need constant help with their pronunciation when they are presenting something in front of the class. Although they do not know the pronunciation of the words, they try their best and pronounce as they can. They are willing to learn the language.

3.3 Implemented Strategies

The strategies used on this research are made through the instruments. The instruments are ways in which different kind of data is collected and then analyzed. The participants are going to answer different questions in order to get to know better the factors affecting English pronunciation and their anxiety levels while public speaking. Also, two main strategies or techniques are going to be applied and evaluated in order to overcome the factors already mentioned and collected by the first instrument. The techniques are designed to identify the main factors, situations, and feelings they have towards public speaking. In addition, there are other techniques to help them improve pronunciation and anxiety.

In order to evaluate their progress once they have worked via all the techniques, they will put them into practice with the final instrument. Every instrument has been prepared carefully to measure those variables and to analyze them to get conclusions. Moreover, the expected result of this research is to find out how anxiety affects English pronunciation. The less anxious they are, the better they pronounce.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

3.4.1 Questionnaire

For this research, a questionnaire is prepared for the students of 7-3 of the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados. The objective of this questionnaire is to measure anxiety levels in the classroom. It is a questionnaire in which each participant has to respond to a particular item. As there are many factors that influence language or speaking anxiety, this instrument provides more information about the specific factors influencing the group. Moreover, it determines the major causes of anxiety and how it affects pronunciation.

Each question provides a more descriptive analysis of anxiety. This because the questionnaire and the answers are from the students' perspective.

Once knowing the causes and factors of anxiety in the class, it is easier to learn how they carry with anxiety and how they manage it successfully.

In addition, the questionnaire is, not only made to explore the factors of speech anxiety in the EFL classroom, but also outside the EFL classroom. Also, it measures what the students' decision to speak English in the class are that is if being in a EFL class affects their speaking skills, or if being in any other class in which they speak their native language, produces speech anxiety too. It is important to mention that the questionnaire is originally written in English, but a Spanish version is given to the students, due to the fact that in the case of students who do not speak fluently English the objective is to get precise answers from them when answering the questions.

Once, all the students have answered the questionnaire, the data is going to be collected and afterwards, analyzed. After the analysis, it will be known all the factors or the main ones that affect their English speech and their levels of anxiety in and out the EFL class.

3.4.2 Pre-test

On the pre-test the students have to read a short text. The objective of this second instrument is to determine the problems of pronunciation in the case of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ / on EFL adult learners of 7-3 of the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados. By the way, this is the second specific objective of the research. This instrument is a pre-test, which measures the mispronunciations of certain words and vowel sounds in English.

The instrument is a pronunciation test composed by a short text of three paragraphs and all the vocabulary is already known by the students. It has a rubric to measure the level of pronunciation of each student by giving criteria. If the student has more than 10 errors in pronunciation, it does not meet the expectations.

If the student makes from 5 to 9 errors, needs improvement. To meet the expectations, the student has the right to commit from 2-4 errors in pronunciation, and finally, from 1-0 error it exceeds expectations.

Once this instrument is applied, the analysis will take place. It will give an average of the students' pronunciation problems with the specified vowel sounds in this research. This will help to know the most common pronunciation mistakes every student makes in the classroom. Also, it helps to focus on certain vowel sounds instead on working with all of them at the same time.

3.4.3 Anxiety Overcoming Techniques

3.4.3.1 ABC Method

In order to overcome speech anxiety, different methods and techniques may be applied. In this research, two of them were chosen to be part of it. The first method is called the ABC Method already exposed and explained in this paper. The objective of this method is to identify the irrational beliefs towards public speaking and work on them to overcome the fears. After the students have answered the questionnaire, they are going to identify what makes them anxious when speaking in public. In order to do this, they have to imagine they have to deliver an important speech. They have to think about everything they have to do before, during, and after delivering the speech. Specially, they showed about how this situation makes them feel. What emotions, feelings and concerns they have towards public speaking in English.

The students have to answer some questions and to do so, they have to think about the moment they are told they have to give a speech.

In addition, they have to think about the exact moment of preparation and delivering their speech. There are four different questions they have to answer and then, justify their answers. All the questions are related because each one asks about how they feel toward a situation. The first question is: How would you feel before delivering the speech? With this question, the student has to choose which option best describes his or her feelings when preparing the speech. Also, in each question they have the space to write any other feeling they may have. They have to imagine they are told to give it to a big audience in the foreign language, and how this make them feel. Anxious, nervous, happy, excited, challenged, and no forth. In this question, one can find out the thoughts they have about public speaking, and afterwards, work on them to overcome anything, or if the thoughts are good, keep working on how to make them feel better than they are now.

The second question is: How would you feel when delivering the speech? They have to imagine the exact moment they are speaking in front of the audience and think of the amount of people in the room if there are just women, or just men, or both, also about the type of speech they should deliver if it is formal, informal, about teaching, business, marketing, religious, and no forth. In addition, they have to determine if they feel nervous or anxious because they have to speak in a different language and they do not mispronounce words. Therefore, they have to choose one of the four options that best describes their emotions or feelings. As well as in the previous question, they have a space to write any other answer.

The third question is: What would your thoughts be when delivering the speech? Also, if they are frighten and freeze when they have to speak to an audience. Blackouts of information may occur, so they think about how they would feel if that happened, or if

something else happened. They have to choose one of the following four options: I cannot talk; I forget everything; I get this; and I can do it.

Also, there is a blank space for them to write any other option. With this and the previous question, the researcher can know the most common fears, feelings, and thoughts students have about public speaking. With this information, the researcher can analyze different aspects depending on their answers.

Finally, the fourth question is: How would you feel after delivering a speech? This question measures how they felt when they finished delivering their speech? For instance, they can feel relieved because it is all done, or they can feel sad and disappointed because they could have done it better and they did not. Also, they can feel satisfied because they did their best and were confident during the speech.

In addition, with the last question, the conclusions can be prepared because the students have already given important information about the whole process of delivering a speech. The last question summarizes the previous because it depends on the previous three. Once all the students have answered all the questions, the analysis can take place. With the students' answers the researcher will determine the way in which the anxiety techniques should be applied.

3.4.3.2 Skills Training Technique

The objective of this technique is to develop speaking skills when delivering a speech in order to overcome speech anxiety. In other words, to provide the students with the basic tools for them to be ready and well prepared to create their speech.

This technique is applied as follows. They have to create the speech they were asked for previously. In order to prepare it, the students must put into practice basic skills to prepare and deliver the speech.

The first step is to think about a topic they like and/or would like to talk about. The topic should be one in which they can research and get relevant information about. They have to write the topic down and continue with the next step.

The second step is to make some research about the topic they have chosen. The information they find relevant has to be part of their speech. As it is not a long speech, the information has to be straight to the point and as clear as possible.

The third step is creating an outline. If they do not know how to do it, the teacher provides the guidelines to prepare one. They should include sentences with the information in the correct order they would like to present it. The fourth step is to write down the speech based on the information they have and following the outline they already have.

Finally, the fifth step is to practice the speech. Once they have prepared the outline, and are sure about the speech, they have to practice it several times. For instance, they should practice the pitch of the voice they use, the rate, the volume, and so forth. Practicing with another classmate makes them feel more secure and less anxious, or instead, they can practice it in front of a mirror. This technique helps students to be more prepared before delivering a speech, and if they follow the steps correctly, the speech will flow in a good way and their thoughts will be different from the ones they might have had before delivering it.

3.4.4 Post-test

The third instrument is a post-test where students have to prepare and deliver a speech. The objective of this instrument is to evaluate the effectiveness of the anxiety overcoming techniques applied on EFL adult learner's pronunciation of the English vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/. For this instrument, the students have to write down the speech they have prepared previously and present it in front of the class. They have to apply the anxiety overcoming techniques (ABC Method and Skills Training Technique) before, during, and after the speech in order to measure the effectiveness of the techniques.

The speech has some rubrics to evaluate the objective. The rubrics are divided into 4. If the student does not meet expectations, the score is 1. If the student needs improvement, the score is 2. If the student meets expectations, the score is 3, and if the student exceeds expectations, the score is 4.

The first rubric to be evaluated is fluency, and it is divided into 4. For instance, score 1, hesitates too often when speaking. Score 2, speaks with some hesitation. Score 3, speaks with some hesitation, but communication is achieved. Score 4, speaks smoothly with little hesitation.

The second rubric is pronunciation. If the student has frequent problems with the pronunciation of vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/, the score is 1. If the student makes errors in pronunciation of vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/, and meaning is difficult to convey the score is 2. If the student's pronunciation of vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/ is clear and accurate, and has few problems, the score is 3. Finally, if the student's pronunciation of vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/ is clear and accurate, the score is 4.

The third rubric is communication that is, determine if the student can communicate his or her thoughts to the audience successfully. For example, if the purpose is not clear and communicability needs help, the score is 1. If the student tries to communicate, but is not accurate, the score is 2. If the student communicates effectively and the purpose is clear, the score is 3. Finally, if the student stays on task and communicates effectively, the score is 4.

The fourth and last rubric is to measure anxiety levels. If the student gets a score of 1, he or she does not use strategies to overcome anxiety and the meaning is not clear at all. In addition, if the student uses few strategies to overcome anxiety and meaning is not clear, the score is 2.

On the other hand, if the student uses some strategies to overcome anxiety and generally achieves it, the score is 3. Finally, in order to get a score of 4, the student uses the strategies to overcome anxiety and achieves it.

These rubrics are helpful because they measure the effectiveness of the anxiety overcoming techniques the pronunciation, fluency, and communication. All together, they give a wide view of the results of the research and if the objectives already established have been achieved successfully or not.

3.5 Validation of instruments

The instruments were validated on a reading class at Universidad Internacional de las Américas with EFL adult learners. There were 20 students present in the class, and all participated on the validation of instruments. They were told that they were going to answer some questions and complete some exercises. All the instruments for this research were validated.

The first instrument validated was the questionnaire. All students completed and answered the questions. They were asked if they had understood everything on it including instructions and questions. For the second instrument, the pre-test, they were given a text to read and they were called one by one to read it aloud and be evaluated with the rubric. The third instrument, the ABC Method, was validated too. The students answered all the questions. Everything was clear and understandable. Also, they read instrument four and five and made comments about them. Everything was clear and they could answer the questionnaire without any difficulty.

At the end of the validation of the instruments, they were asked about how they felt during the process. Some of them said they were anxious and nervous about speaking English in public.

They also mentioned that as it was not their native language and someone was evaluating them, they felt uncomfortable and really nervous. On the other hand, some of the students said they were totally relaxed and could do it without anxiety or pressure.

Data Collection Chart

	Instrument 1 Questionnaire	Instrument 2 Pre-test	Instrument 3 Anxiety Overcoming Techniques (ABC Method)	Instrument 4 Anxiety Overcoming Techniques (Skills Training)	Instrument 5 Post-test	Review of the literatur e page number
Specific Objective 1 Subordinat e questions 1	What are the anxiety levels on EFL adult learners when speaking in public?					12
Specific Objective 2 Subordinat e questions 2		Which are the main problems in the pronunciat ion of the English vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/ of EFL adult learners?				18
Specific Objective 3 Subordinat e questions 3			Which are the irrational beliefs towards public speaking, EFL adult learners have?			22
Specific Objective 4 Subordinat e question 4				Which are the speaking skills to develop in order to overcome anxiety?		24
Specific Objective 5					What is the	24

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

In this chapter, all the data collected previously is going to be analyzed through a mixed approach. In order to analyze the data, first the quantitative approach will be used and then, the qualitative to mix them in the analysis. Data analysis is important because it provides an explanation of different theories, methods, strategies, and techniques used in the research. Also, it helps to make conclusions.

According to Sampieri et al (2010), data analysis is a process used to inspect, clean, transform, and remodel data in order to reach to a specific conclusion or conclusions for a given situation. Data analysis has to be done using the methods of the research. In this case, the mixed method includes both approaches, the quantitative and qualitative, which are the ones used and will be analyzed using both hand in hand.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

In this section, the analysis of the data collected is made. The instruments for data collection were applied to all participants and they are going to be analyzed and explained.

4.1.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire had 16 closed questions and all of them are represented on the following figures with their corresponding answers and percentages per question and answer. Moreover, the purpose of this questionnaire was to determine the anxiety levels of the students when they have to speak in public.

The questionnaire is based on the Language Anxiety Scale (ELAS), developed by Zgutowicz (2009). Some questions were modified in order to achieve the specific objectives of this research.

The questionnaire was applied in Spanish and not in English because the population speaks mostly Spanish and the results needed to be very accurate. For research purposes, the students' answers needed to be real, so the questions needed to be very clear for them to be able to answer them correctly.

The questionnaire was applied to the 30 students of the 7-3 class at the Liceo Nocturno de Desamparados. It was applied as soon as everyone was in the class, so no one missed the questionnaire. The instructions were given in Spanish, and the questions were read one by one. Then, they were asked if they had any questions or doubts about what they had to do and how to do it. No one asked, so they started to answer the questionnaire.

On the following pages there are the results of the 16 questions and their answers. All the questions are relevant to the research; therefore, all of them are represented. Each figure below represents each question of the questionnaire. There are sixteen different figures, and each one represents the students' answers to the questions presented. They had five options to choose which one best describes how often they face a specific situation. They five options were never, hardly ever, sometimes, frequently and always. There were different questions based on situations they face in class. Including English classes and regular classes they attend every day at school.

The figures represent the percentage of students who chose the same answer and which one is the preferred one for the students. Each question helps to evaluate the different factor who may be affecting English pronunciation when speaking in public.

4.1.1.1 Question 1: In EFL classes, I forget how to say things in English.

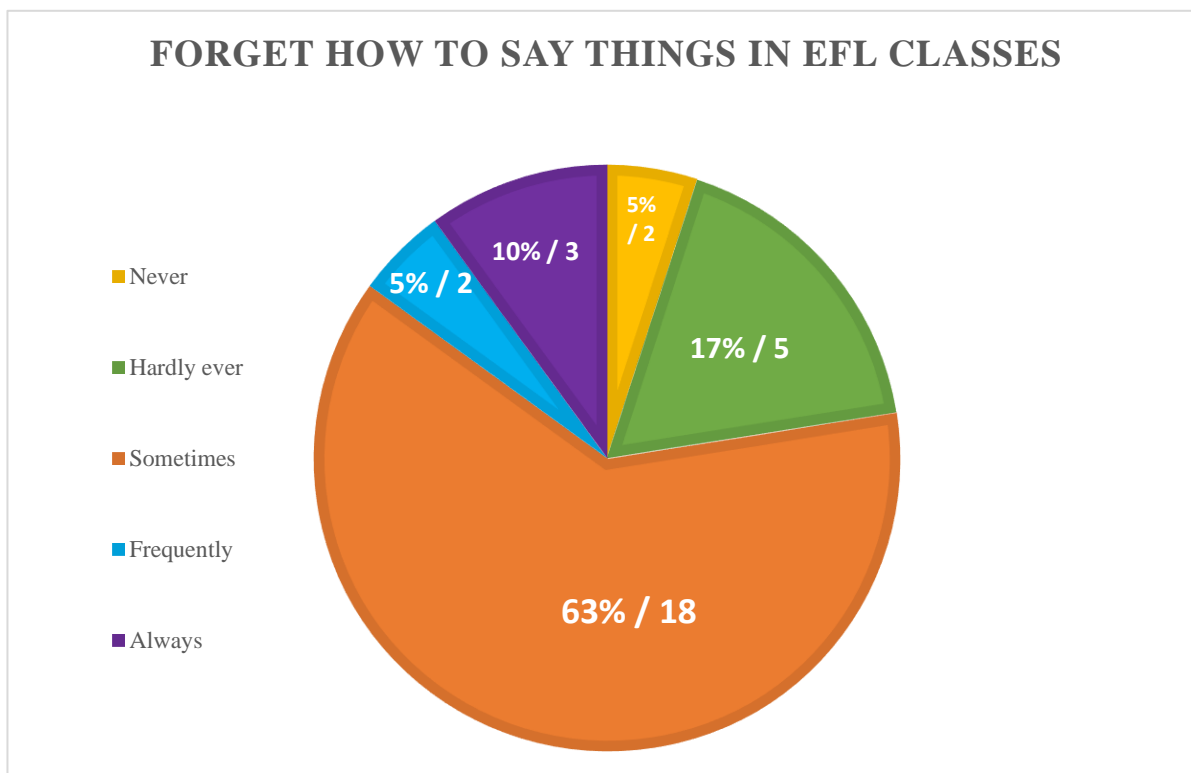


Figure 1. Illustrates how frequent students forget how to say things they already know in EFL classes.

Figure 1 illustrates how frequent the students forget things they already know in English. As it can be seen, the majority of students sometimes forget how to say things they already know in the foreign language. They may think about what they want to say, but at the moment the 63% of them forget how to say it. Also, 5% never forget how to say what they know, and 17% of the students hardly ever forget. There were some students, 5%, that frequently forget how to say things they know and finally, 10% always forget how to say things they know in English.

4.1.1.2 Question 2: In regular classes, I forget how to say things I know.

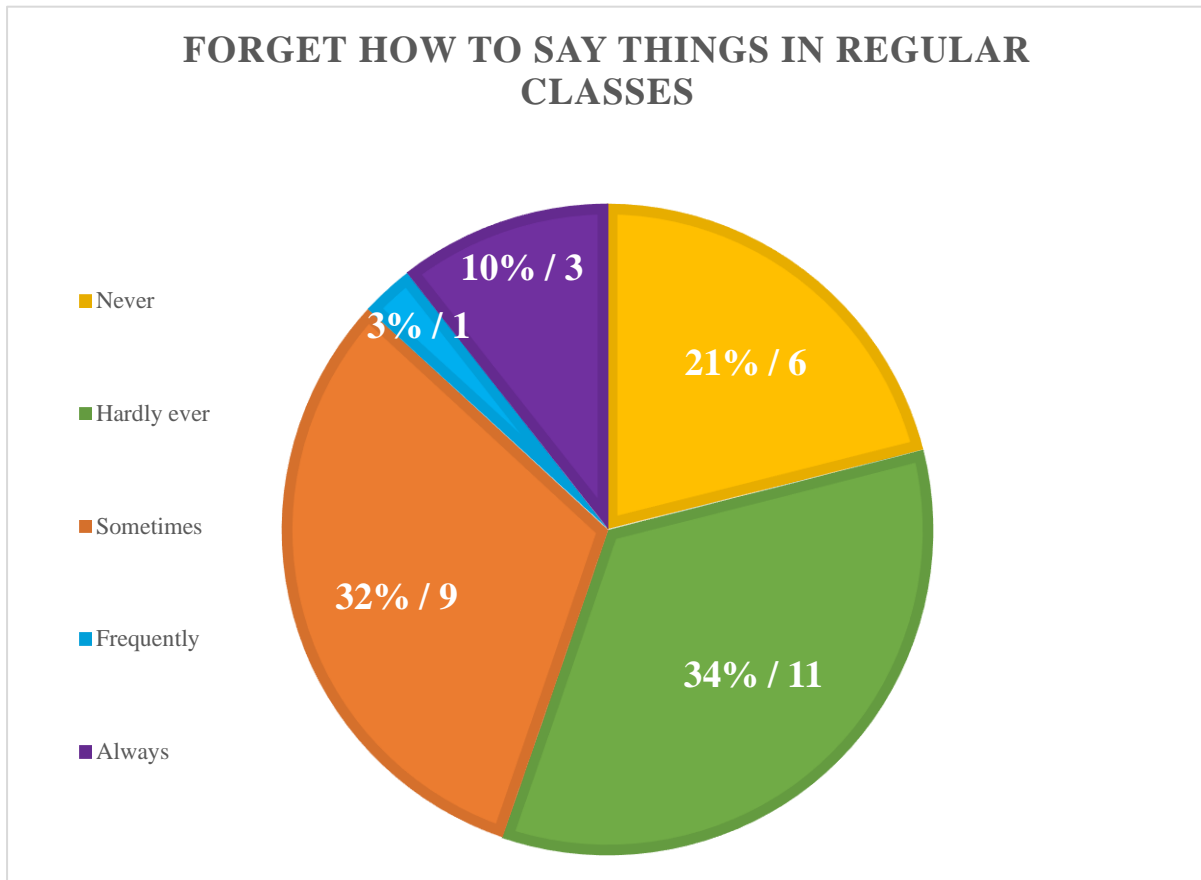


Figure 2. Represents how frequent the students forget how to say things I know in regular classes.

This figure represents how often the students forget how to say things they already know in their native language and in their regular classes, not English per se. As shown on figure 2, in regular classes, such as Spanish, Social Studies, Math, and Science, 21% of the students never forget how to say things they already know. The majority of them hardly ever forget how. In other words, the 34% of the students hardly ever forget how to say things during regular classes as it is their native language and not their foreign one. The 32% of the students answered sometimes. Finally, just 3% answered frequently, and 10% always forget how to say things they already know.

4.1.1.3 Question 3: In EFL classes, I tremble when I know I have to speak English.

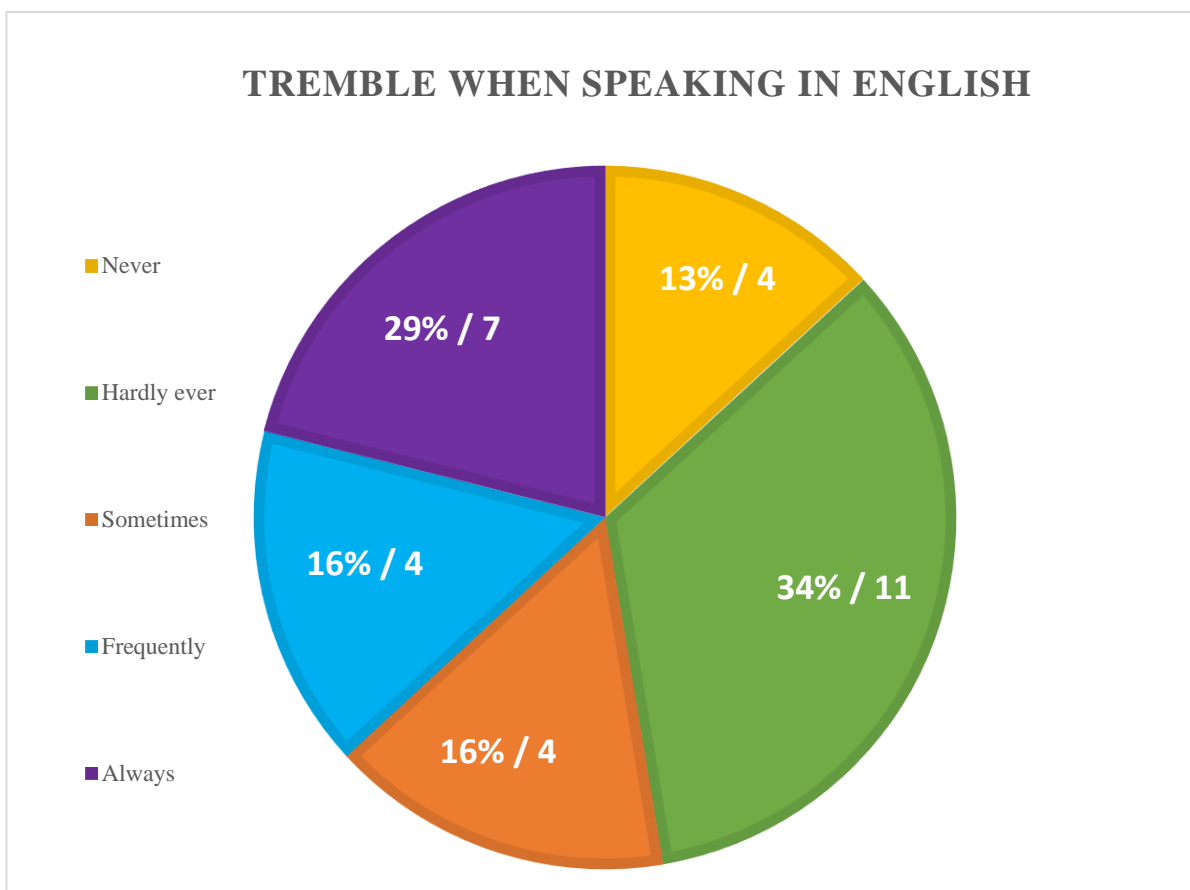


Figure 3. Represents how frequent students tremble when they know they have to speak in English.

On figure 3, the students were asked how frequently they tremble when they know they have to speak in English in public. As shown, 13% answered that they never tremble. The majority answered that they hardly ever tremble when they have to speak in public during English classes. They may seem nervous sometimes, but the majority which represents the 34% of the students, hardly ever tremble. Also, 16% sometimes and frequently tremble. Finally, 21% always tremble when speaking English in public.

4.1.1.4 Question 4: In regular classes, I tremble when I know I have to speak.

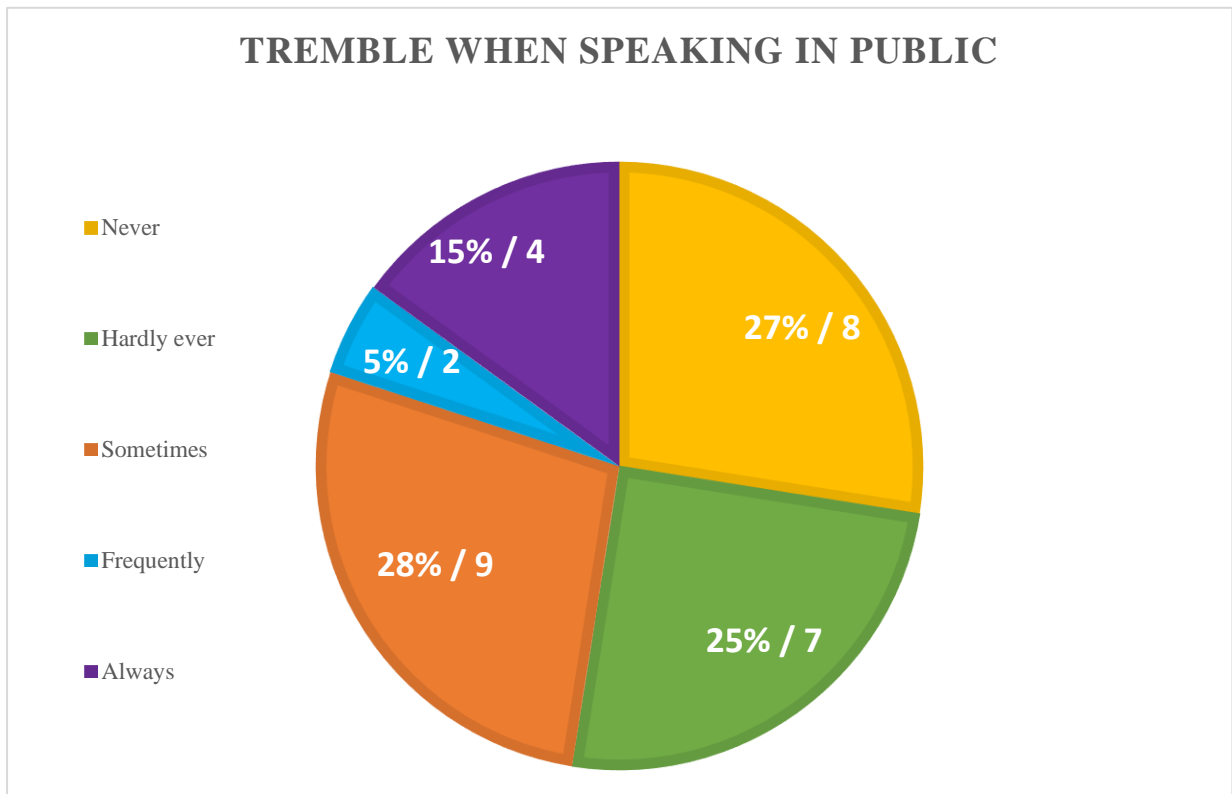


Figure 4. Represents how frequent the students tremble when they know they have to speak in regular classes.

As the previous question, this one measures the frequency the students tremble when they speak in public in their native language, which is Spanish. The purpose of the previous and this question is to figure out if speaking in English makes them feel nervous or not. In other words, which scenario is more frightening for them, English or Spanish. Figure 4 represents the same question as the previous one, but this one is about regular classes; in other words, Spanish speaking classes. The 27% never tremble when speaking in public in their native language. Also, 25% hardly ever tremble, and the majority, which is 28% sometimes tremble when they have to speak in public. The last two percentages are 5%, which represents frequently, and the 15% always tremble when speaking in public.

4.1.1.5 Question 5: In EFL classes, I am in a panic when I have to speak English without being prepared beforehand.

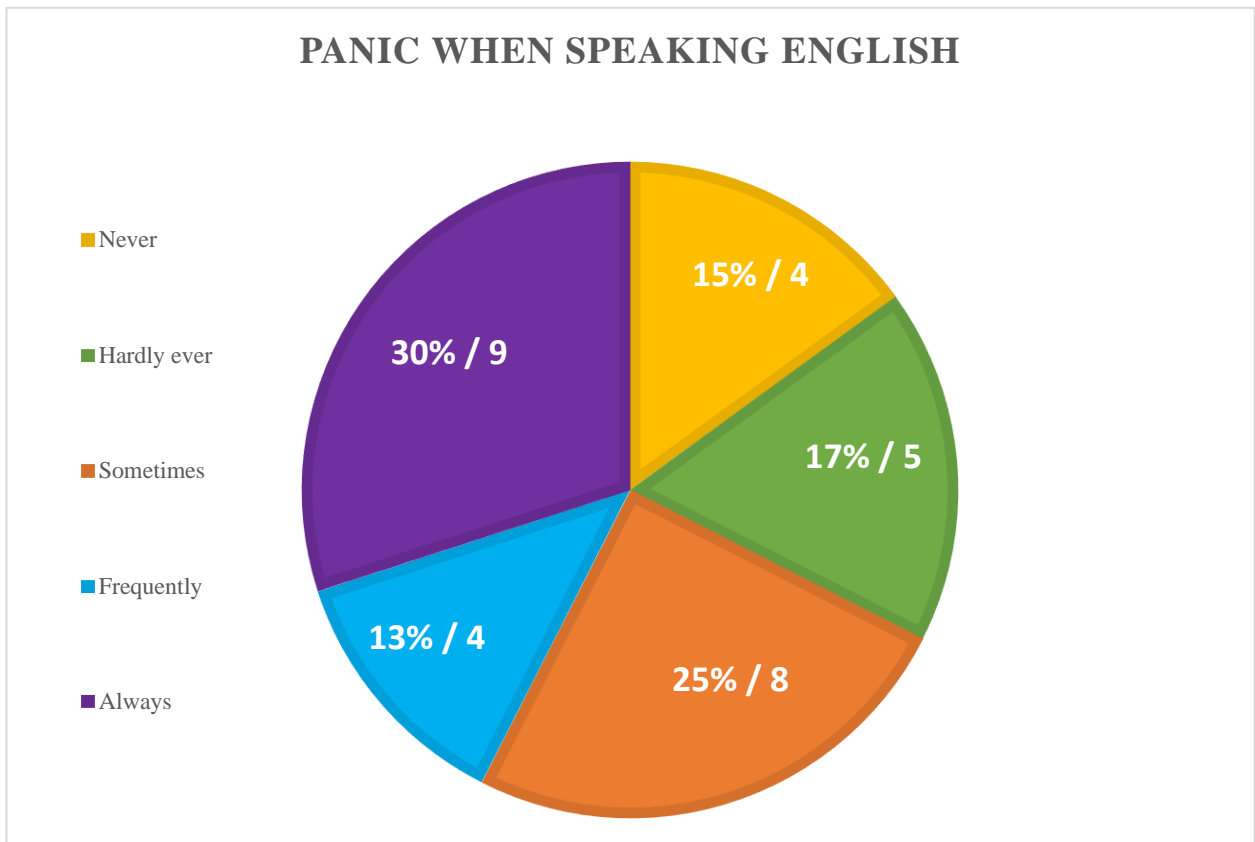


Figure 5. Represents how frequent the students start to panic when they have to speak English without previous preparation.

This question measures the frequency in which the students tend to panic or to feel panic when they are speaking in public in English, their foreign language. It makes a comparison between EFL classes and regular Spanish classes. Figure 5 represents the percentages of the students who panic when they speak English in public. The 15% never panic when speaking in public. 17% answered that they hardly ever panic, and 25% sometimes panic when speaking in public. Just 13% frequently tend to panic. Finally, the majority, which is 30%, always panic when they have to speak English in public without previous preparation.

4.1.1.6 Question 6: In regular classes, I am in a panic when I have to speak without being prepared beforehand.

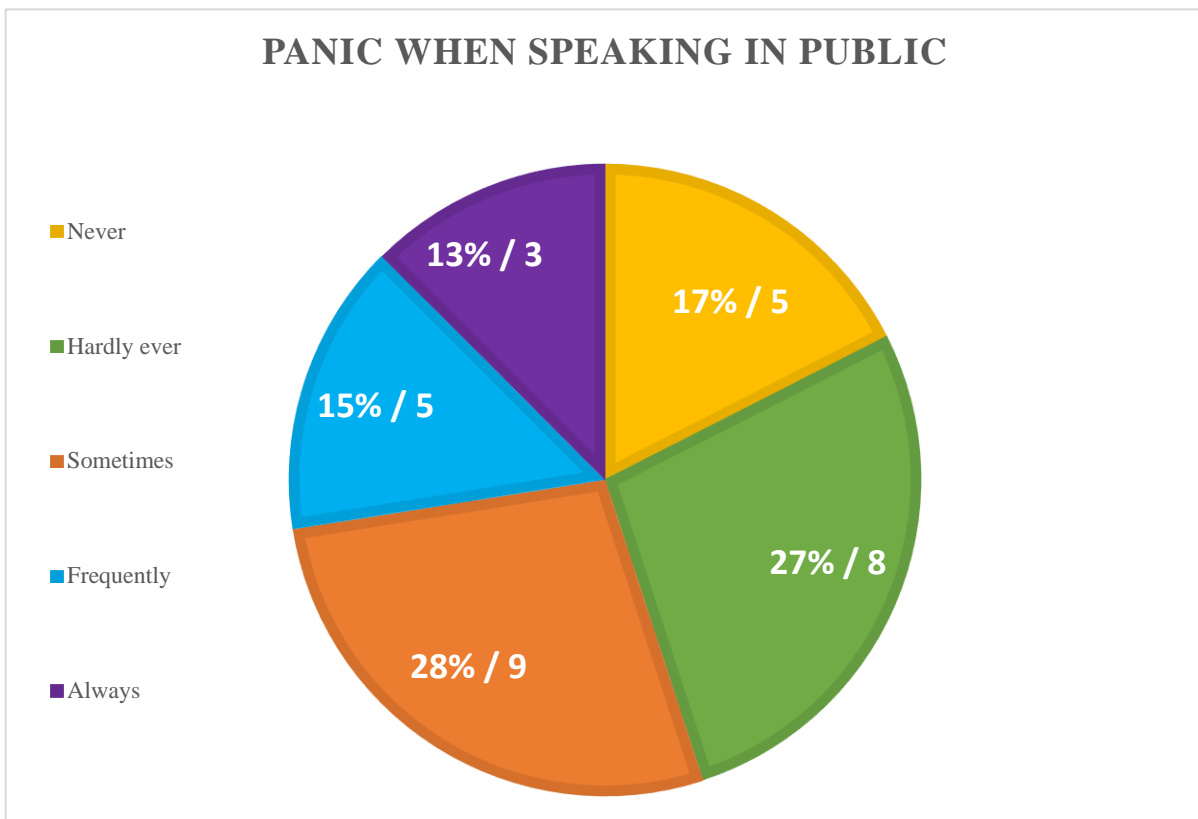


Figure 6. Represents how frequent the students start to panic when they have to speak without preparation in regular classes.

The previous question answered how often the students panic when they speak in public in English. In contrast, question number six answered to the same question, but this time how often they panic in regular classes when they have to speak in public. It gives a comparison between how they feel while they are speaking in English and then in Spanish. Just 17% of the students answered that they never panic when they have to speak in public without preparation in their native language. 27% hardly ever panic, and 28%, the majority, sometimes panic. 15% frequently tend to panic, and the 13% always panic when speaking in public without previous preparation.

4.1.1.7 Question 7: In EFL classes, when I speak English I feel like a different person.

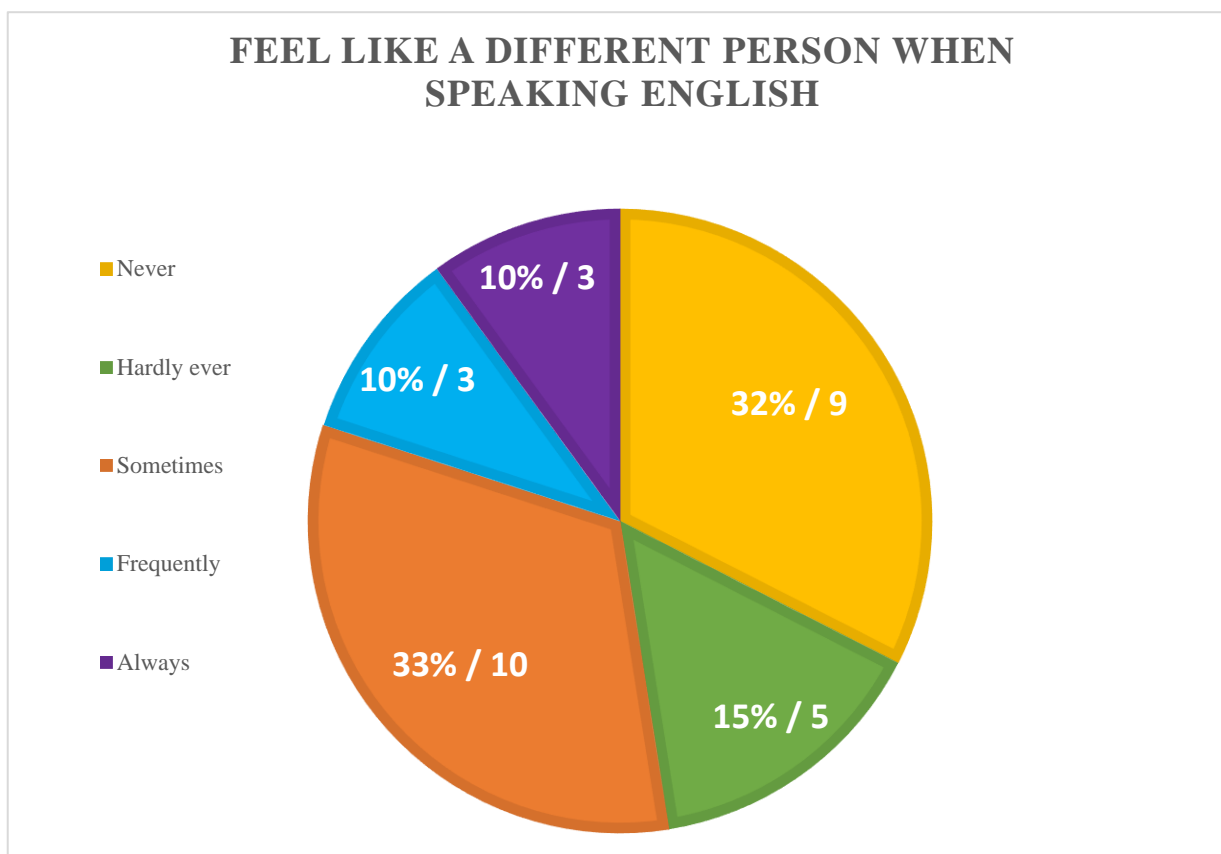


Figure 7. Represents how frequent the students feel like a different person when speaking English.

Figure 7 represents the percentages of how frequently the students feel like a different person when speaking English. This question is important because it gives a relevant result about the students' feelings and emotions. Not only what they know or do not know, but also what they feel about it. The 32% never feel different. 15% hardly ever feel they are different. The majority, which is 33%, sometimes feel like a different person when speaking in English. 10% answered they frequently feel different, and the other 10% always feels like a different person when speaking English in public.

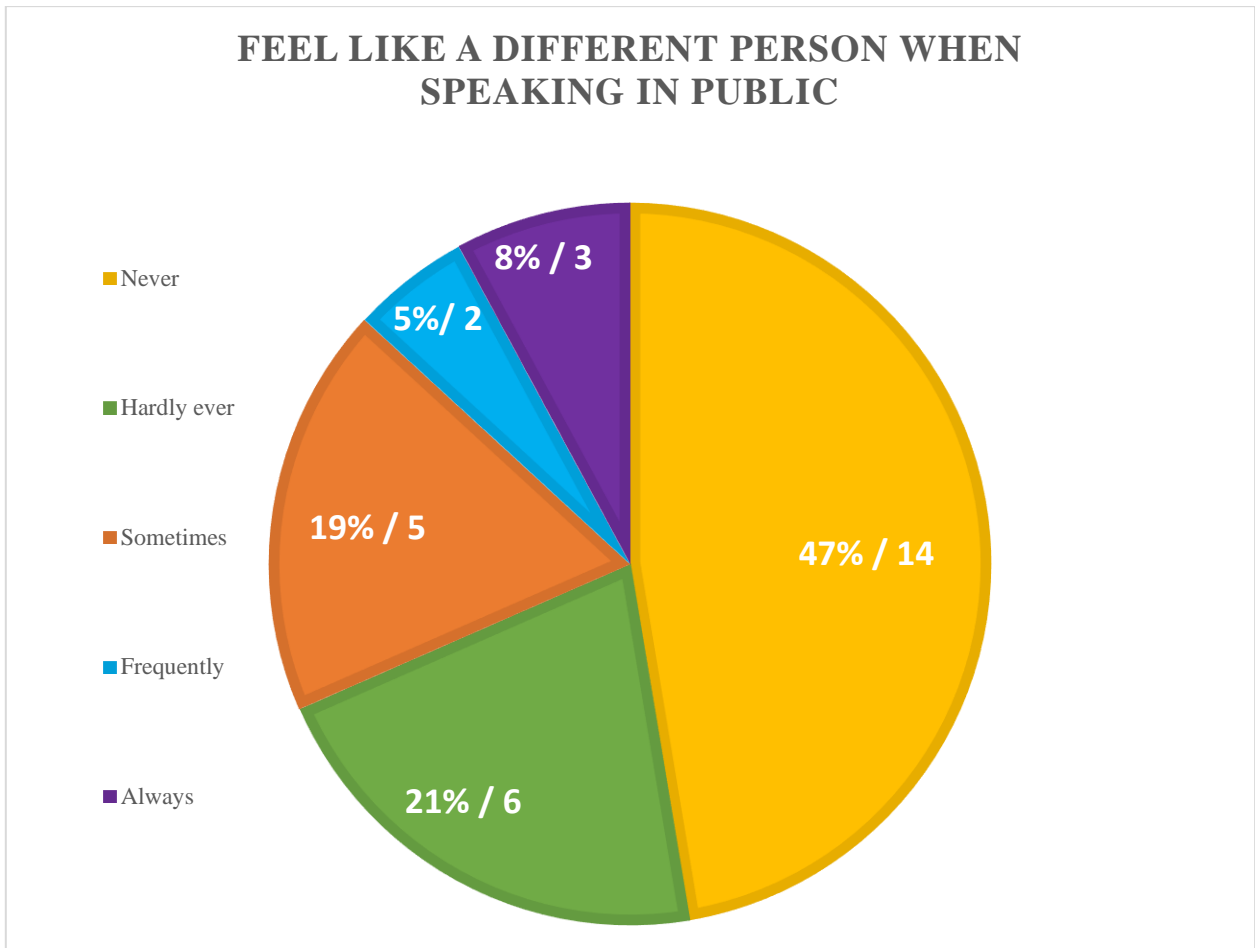
4.1.1.8 Question 8: In regular classes, when I speak, I feel like a different person.

Figure 8. Represents how frequent the students feel like a different person when speaking in public.

The same question was asked to the students, but they were asked about their feelings in a different context, regular classes. In contrast, just a 15% of the students differed on their feelings towards speaking in public in English or Spanish. The majority, 47% never feel like a different person when they speak in public. 21% answered that hardly ever. The 19% sometimes feels like a different person. Just 5% frequently feel like, and 8% always feel like a different person when speaking in public.

4.1.1.9 Question 9: In EFL classes, even when I am prepared to speak English, I get nervous.

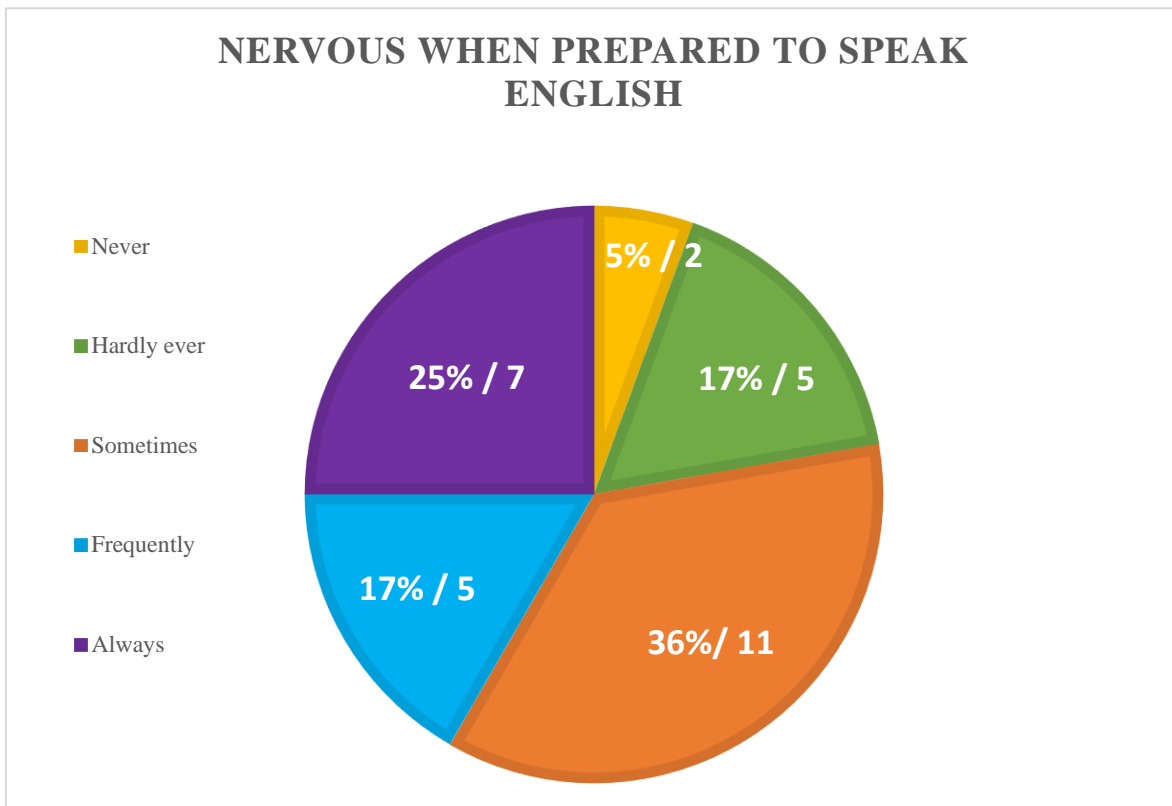


Figure 9. Represents how frequent the students get nervous when they are prepared to speak English.

On figure 9, it is represented the frequency in which the students feel nervous even when they are prepared to speak English. This is an important question because it gives a clear view if the students feel nervous when speaking, which leads to anxiety, making nervousness another factor that affects public speaking, especially in English. The 5% of the students never get nervous. The 17% of the students hardly ever are nervous about it. The majority, which is 36% sometimes are nervous when they have to speak in English and they are prepared to do it. Also, 17% frequently get nervous when speaking with preparation. Finally, 25% always get nervous when they are prepared to speak English.

4.1.1.10 Question 10: In regular classes, even when I am prepared to speak, I get nervous.

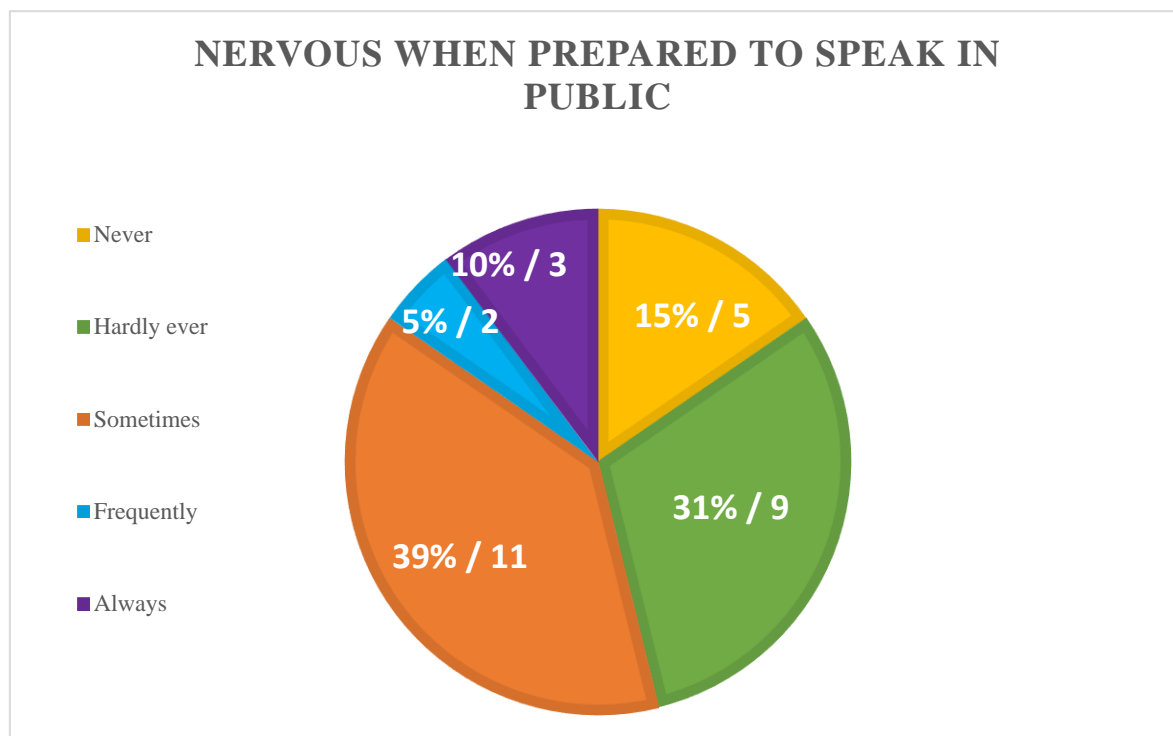


Figure 10. Represents how frequent the students get nervous when they are prepared to speak in public.

Figure 10 represents the same previous question, but this time on how frequently they get nervous when they have to speak in public and they are prepared. In other words, it compares the frequency in which the students feel more nervous about speaking in public by making a comparison between speaking English and Spanish. The 15% of the students never get nervous. The 31% hardly ever feel nervous, while the majority, which is 39% sometimes get nervous when they are prepared to speak in public in their native language. Just 5% frequently get nervous, and 10% always get nervous when they are prepared to speak in public. This shows that the majority, in both questions answered sometimes, which makes nervousness an influencing factor in both languages.

4.1.1.11 Question 11: In EFL classes, I am afraid when my teachers are ready to correct every mistake I make.

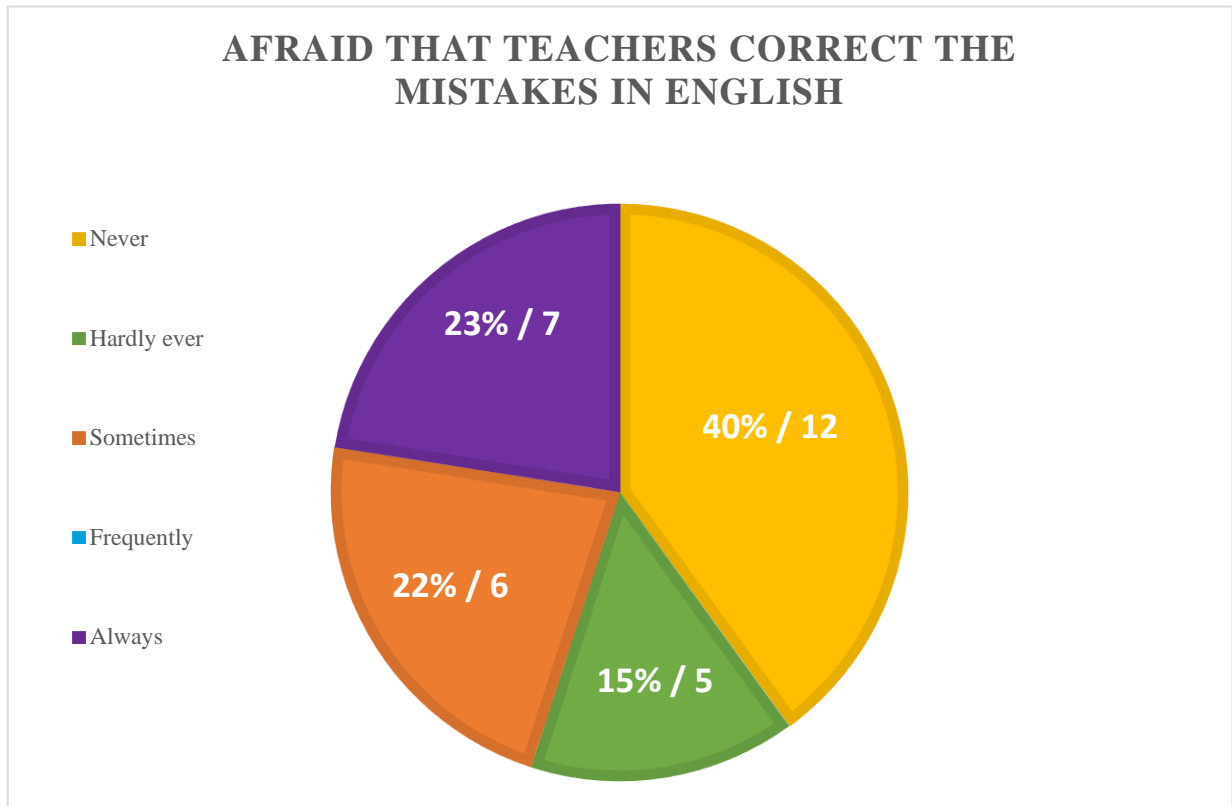


Figure 11. Represents how frequent the students are afraid that they are ready to correct every mistake they make.

Depending on the teacher, there are some students who are afraid of them because they are the ones that notice their mistakes while speaking and they do not want to fail the task because of fear. On figure 11, it is represented the percentages of the students who are or are not afraid that teachers are ready to correct every mistake they make when they are speaking in English. The majority, which represents 40% are never afraid, which makes them feel comfortable when the teacher is listening to them and evaluating them. Just 15% are hardly ever afraid; 23% are sometimes afraid that teachers are ready to correct their mistakes; and finally, 23% are always afraid that teachers correct their mistakes when they are speaking in English.

4.1.1.12 Question 12: In regular classes, I am afraid when my teachers are ready to correct every mistake I make.

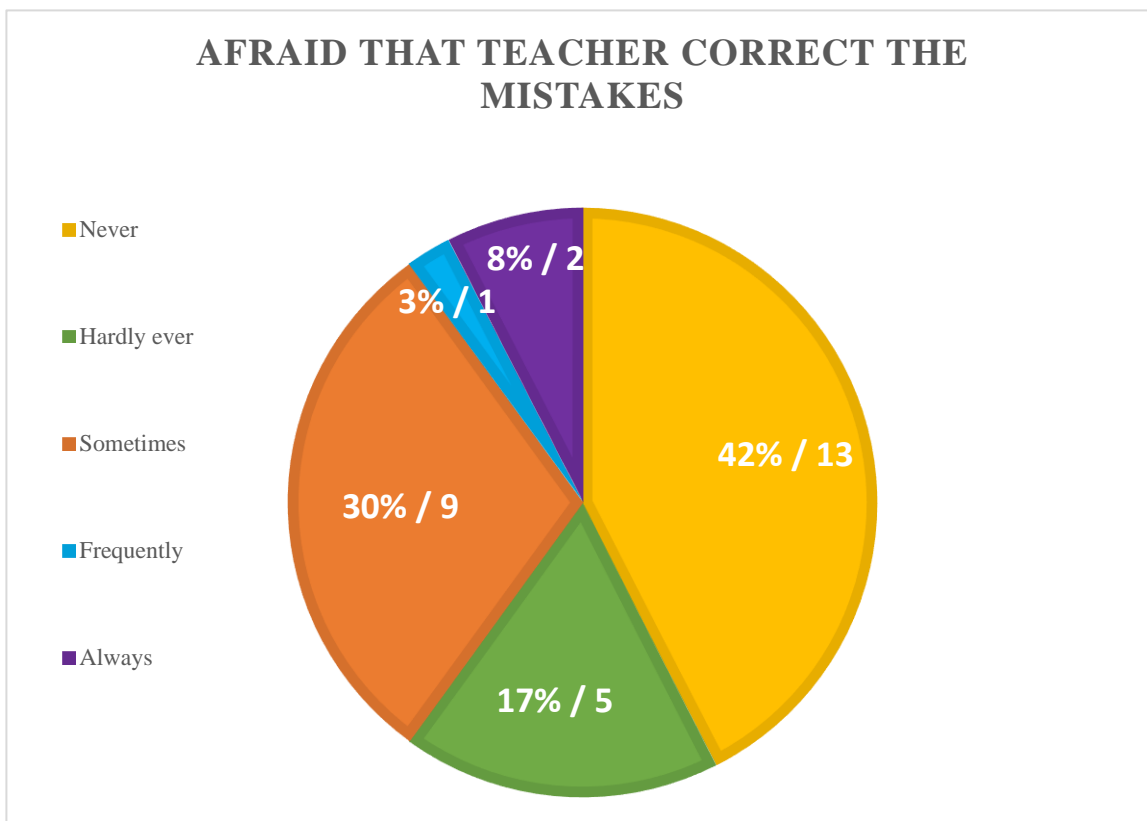


Figure 12. Represents how frequent the students are afraid that the teachers are ready to correct every mistake they make.

In the previous figure, the English part was represented, and now the Spanish one is represented, as well. It shows a comparison between both languages, making English classes more stressful because the students are afraid English teachers are the ones who correct every mistake, while in Spanish classes, they are more relaxed as it is their native language. Figure 12 represents the frequency in which the students are afraid that the teachers are ready to correct all their mistakes in regular classes. The majority, 42% answered that they are never afraid of it; 17% answered they hardly ever are afraid; the 30% is sometimes afraid; just 3% is frequently afraid. Finally, 8% are always afraid that the teachers are ready to correct every mistake they make.

4.1.1.13 Question 13: In EFL classes, I cannot express my true feelings in English and this makes me feel uncomfortable.

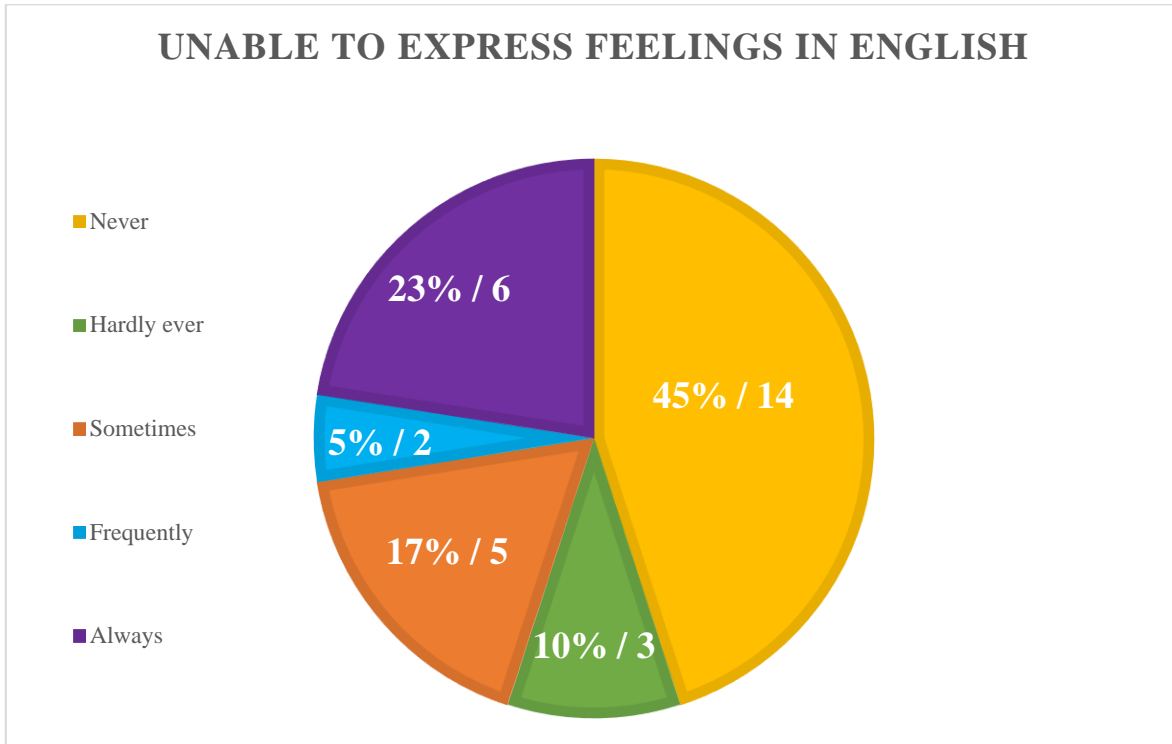


Figure 13. Represents how frequent the students are unable to express their true feelings in English.

While students are speaking in English class, they tend to find it hard to express their true feelings. Nevertheless, in this figure it can be noticed that the majority believes it is not hard at all. Figure 13 represents the frequency in which the students can or cannot express their true feelings in English and if that makes them feel uncomfortable or not. The majority, which represents the 45% answered they never have problems with expressing their feelings in English. 10% answered that hardly ever. 17% answered that they sometimes are unable to express their feelings. Just 5% frequently are unable to express their feelings. Finally, 23% answered that they always are unable to express their true feelings in English and they feel uncomfortable.

4.1.1.14 Question 14: In regular classes, I cannot express my true feelings and this makes me feel uncomfortable.

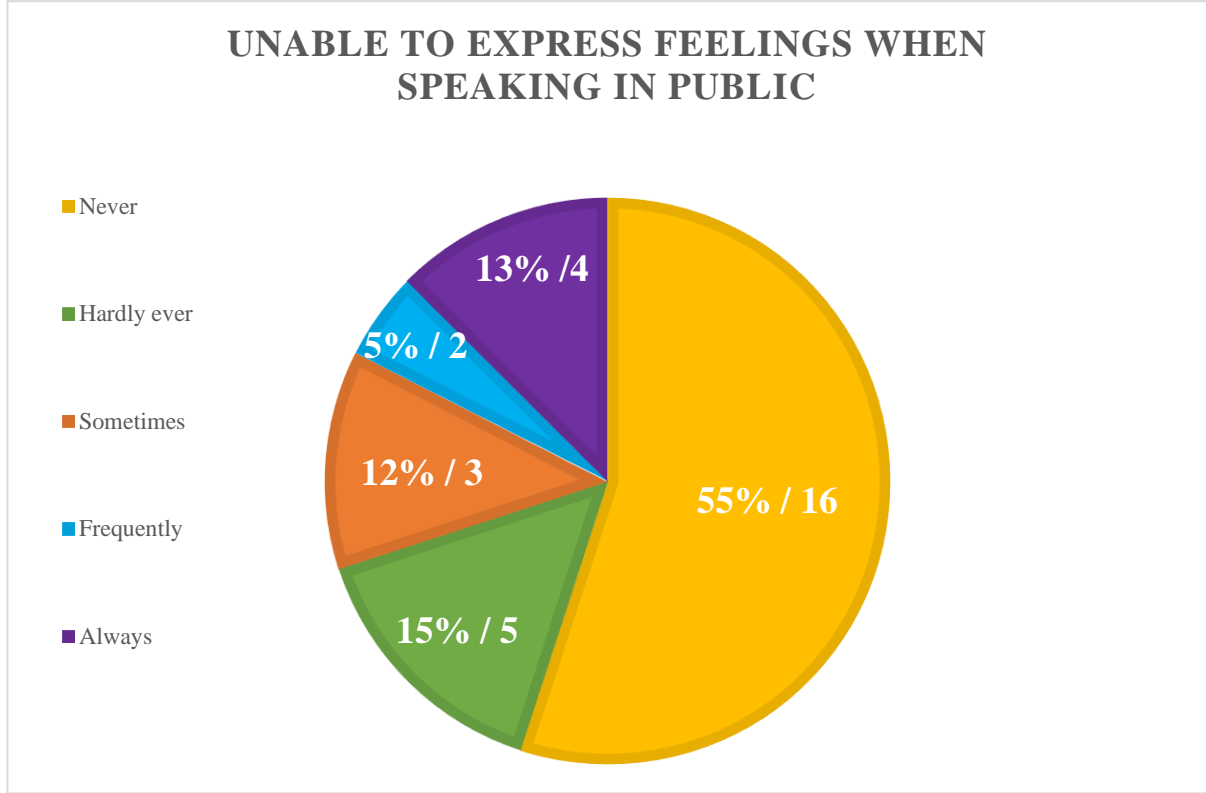


Figure 14. Represents how frequent the students are unable to express their feelings when they speak in public.

This figure is a comparison between the students' feelings towards expressing them in English and Spanish. As it can be noticed, more than half of the group of students believe it is not hard at all to express their feelings in their native language, Spanish. Figure 14 represents how frequent the students cannot express their true feelings in their native language when speaking in public and if that makes them feel uncomfortable. The majority, which represents the 55% answered they never have problems expressing their feelings when speaking in public in their native language. 15% answered that they hardly ever are unable to express themselves. 12% answered that they are sometimes unable to express themselves. Just 5% are frequently unable to express their feelings. Finally, 13% are always unable to express their true feelings when speaking in public.

4.1.1.15 Question 15: In EFL classes, I get nervous and confused when I speak English.

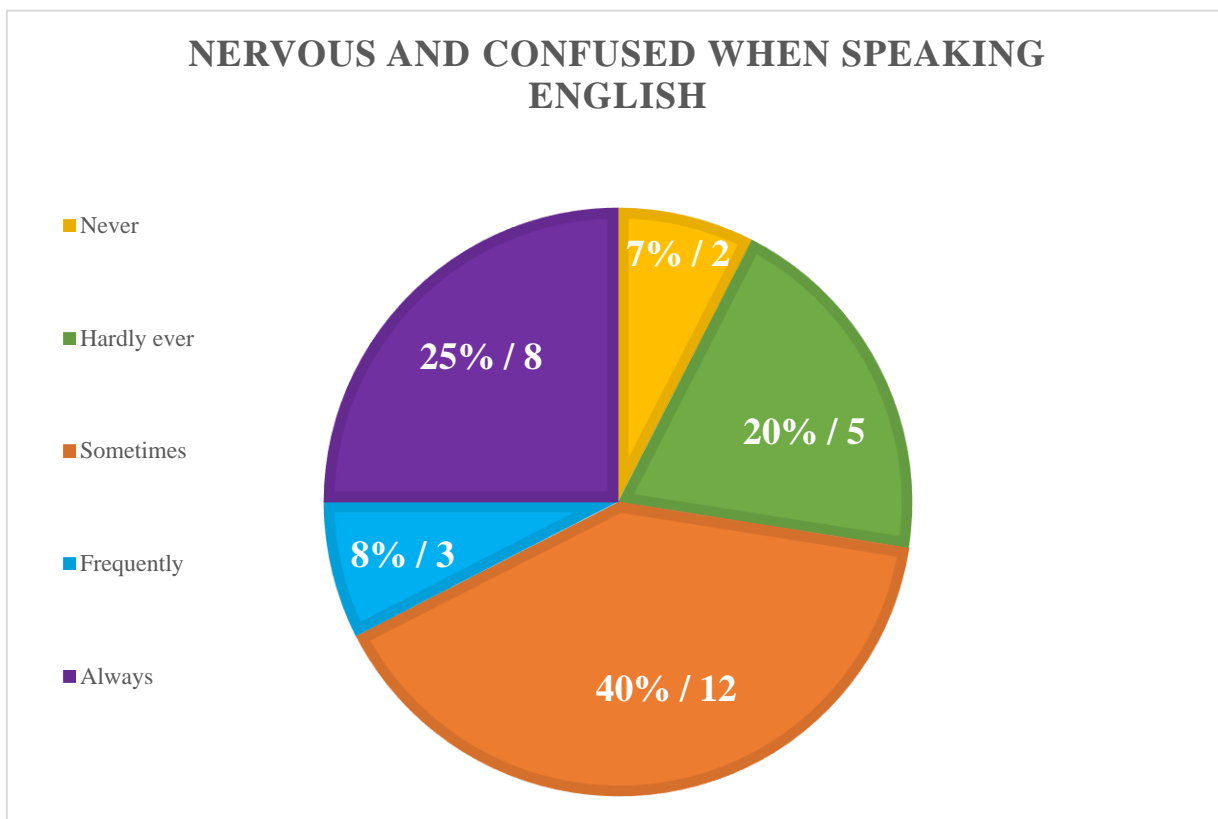


Figure 15. Represents how frequent the students are nervous and confused when speaking English.

This figure does not make any comparisons between another similar question. It is important because it shows the main factors affecting English public speaking and moreover English pronunciation. Figure 15 represents the percentages of the students who get nervous and confused when they are speaking English in public. Just 7% answered they are never nervous and confused when speaking English in public. The 20% answered they hardly ever are. The majority, which is 40% answered they sometimes are nervous and confused when speaking English in public. 8% are frequently nervous and confused. Finally, 25% of the students are always nervous and confused when speaking English in public.

4.1.1.16 Question 16: In EFL classes, there are so many rules in English that I feel I cannot apply all of them.

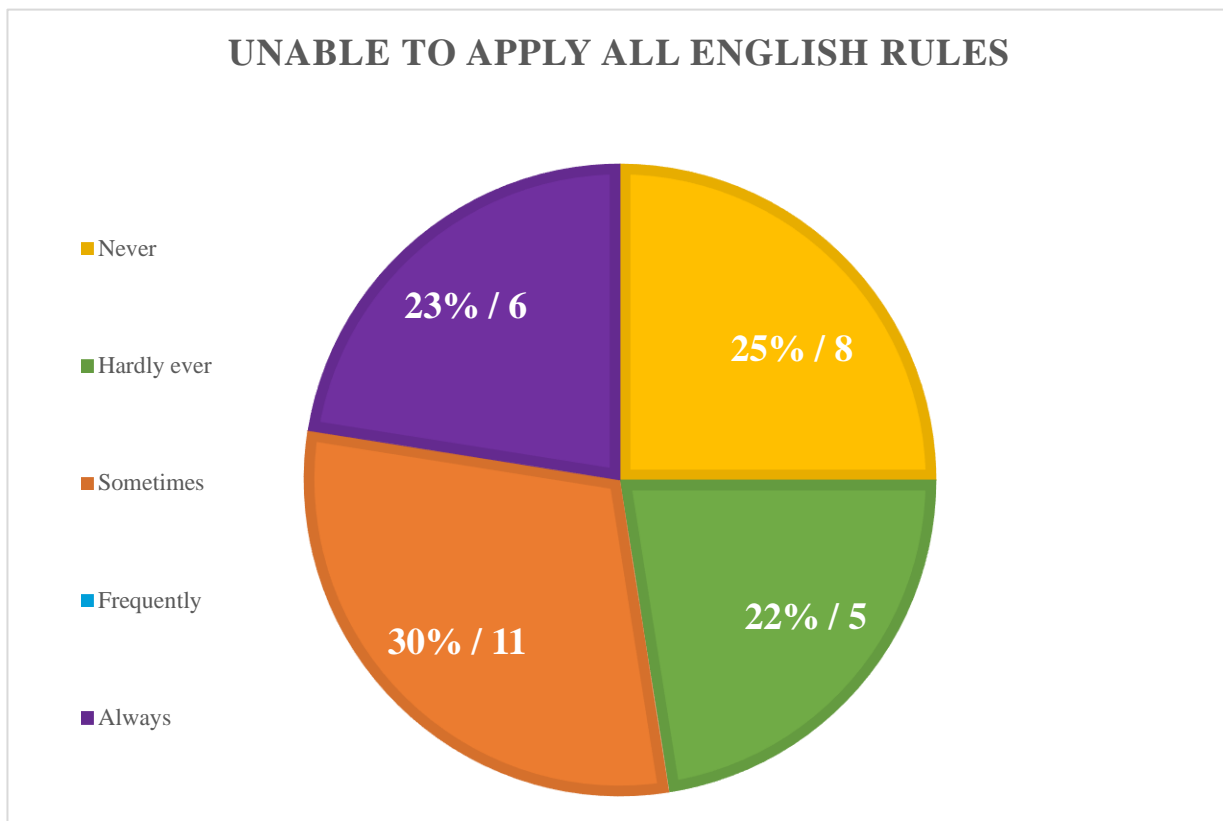


Figure 16. Shows how frequent the students are unable to apply all English rules.

The last question does not have a comparison either. The question was meant to know if English rules make them feel stressed, nervous, and confused because they feel they cannot learn them all and it is impossible to apply every single one while speaking in English. It does not only represent grammar rules, but also pronunciation rules and how to pronounce correctly a word in English. Figure 16 represents the last question of the questionnaire applied. It measures the frequency in which the students feel unable to learn all English rules. The 25% of the students answered they are never unable to learn them all. 22% hardly ever feel unable to do it. The majority, which represents 30% sometimes are unable to learn all English rules. Finally, 23% answered they are always unable to learn all the English rules.

4.1.2 Pre-test

For the pre-test, which is the Pronunciation Oral Test, 30 students were evaluated. They had to read aloud in front of the class. There was no formal preparation beforehand. In addition, each student was evaluated with a rubric, which measured their fluency, pronunciation, communication, and anxiety. They were given a score from 1 to 4 per rubric, depending on their performance during the reading. On each figure, the students are represented at the left side of the graph and the rubric at the bottom.

4.1.2.1 Pronunciation Oral Test – Fluency Rubric

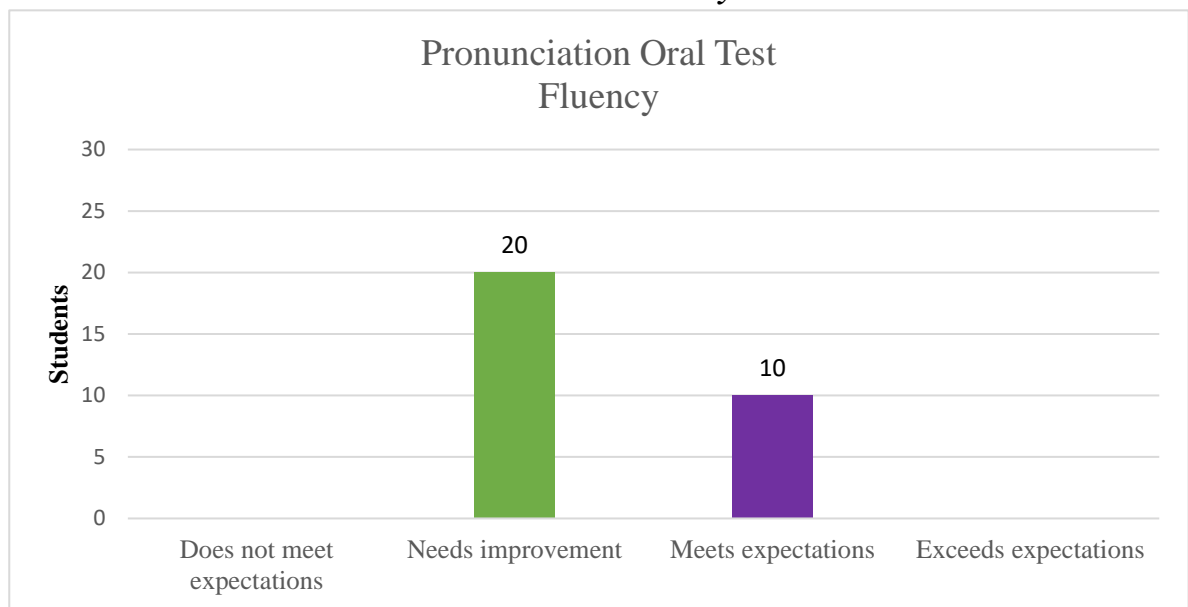


Figure 17. Results of pronunciation oral test in fluency.

Figure 17 represents the rubric on fluency of the pronunciation oral test the students were evaluated on. The rubric was taken into account to measure the students' fluency levels. For fluency, 20 students out of 30 scored 2, which means that the majority hesitated too often when speaking/reading. The other 10 students scored 3, which means they spoke with some hesitation, but communication was achieved; therefore, they met the expectations for the fluency rubric.

4.1.2.2 Pronunciation Oral Test – Pronunciation Rubric

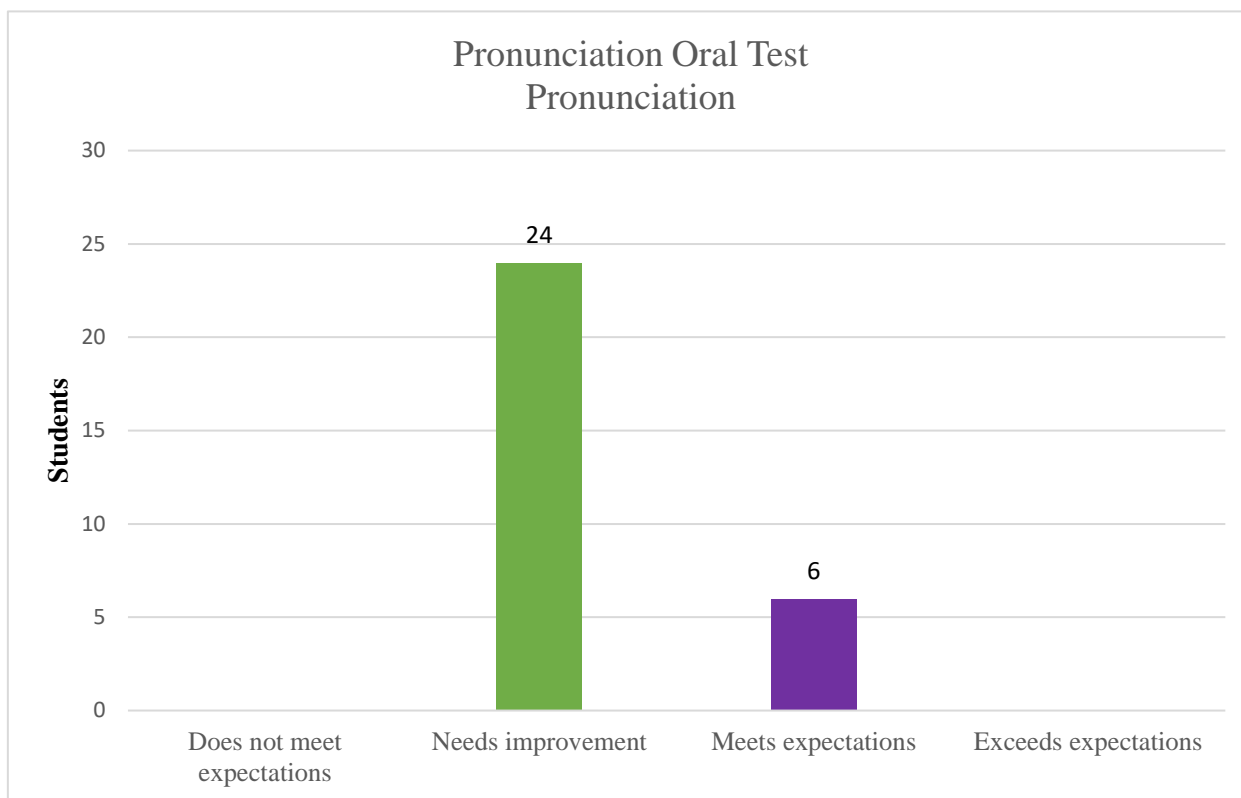


Figure 18. Results of pronunciation oral test in pronunciation.

Figure 18 represents the results of the pronunciation oral test in regards to pronunciation, taking into account the rubric and the scores the students got. In the pronunciation rubric, it was measured the problems they had with the main vowels studied in this research, which are /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/. 24 students out of 30 scored 2, which means they had errors in pronunciation of the vowels already mentioned, and it made difficult to convey meaning. The words they had more problems with were: Thanksgiving, November, Canadians, October, God, harvest, holiday, customary, turkey, sauce, pumpkin, example, workers. The other 6 students scored 3, which means their pronunciation was clear and accurate with few problems with the pronunciation of the vowels /æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ/.

4.1.2.3 Pronunciation Oral Test – Communication Rubric

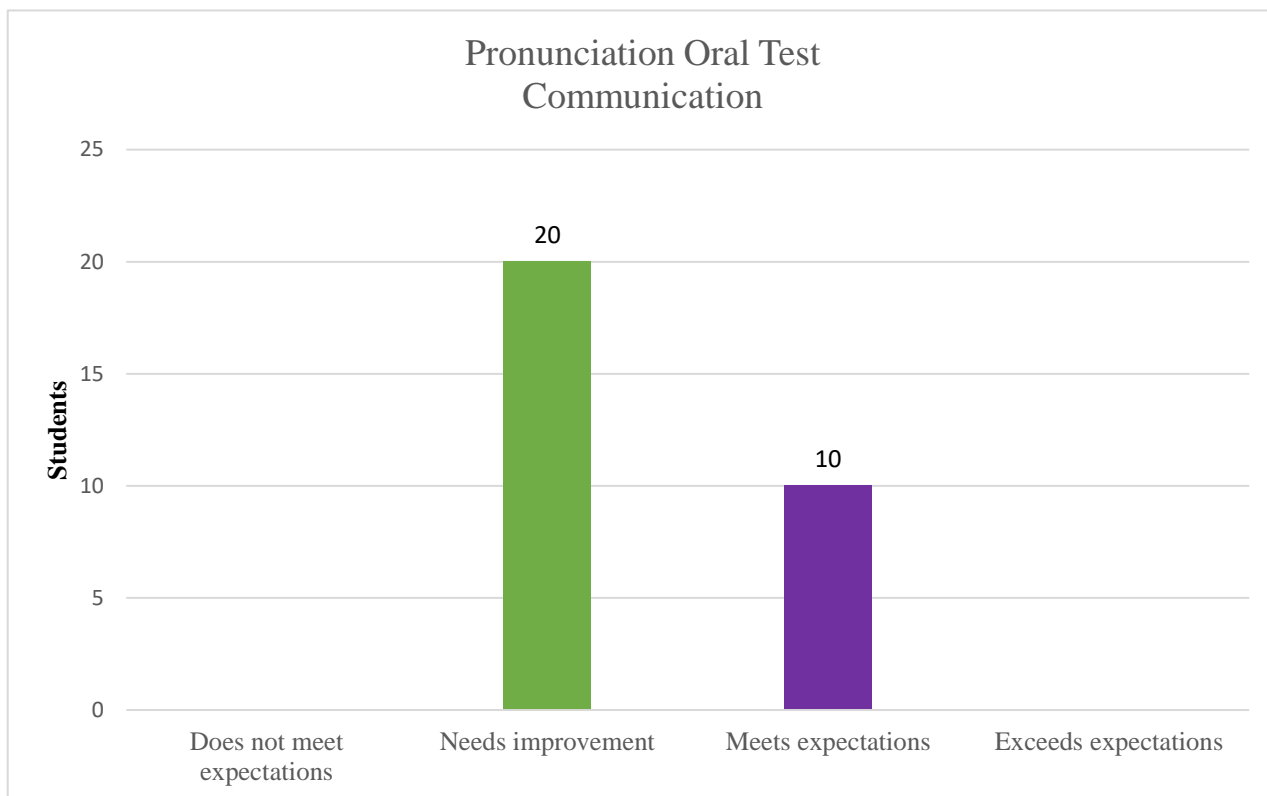


Figure 19. Results of pronunciation oral test in communication.

Figure 19 represents the results of the pronunciation oral test in communication. Each student was evaluated according to this rubric and they got a score. In the communication rubric, 25 out of 30 scored 3, which means they communicated effectively, and the purpose was clear. In other words, they met the expectations of communication. Regardless their pronunciation problems, communication was achieved. The other 5 students scored 2, which means they tried to communicate, but no very accurate.

4.1.2.4 Pronunciation Oral Test – Anxiety Rubric

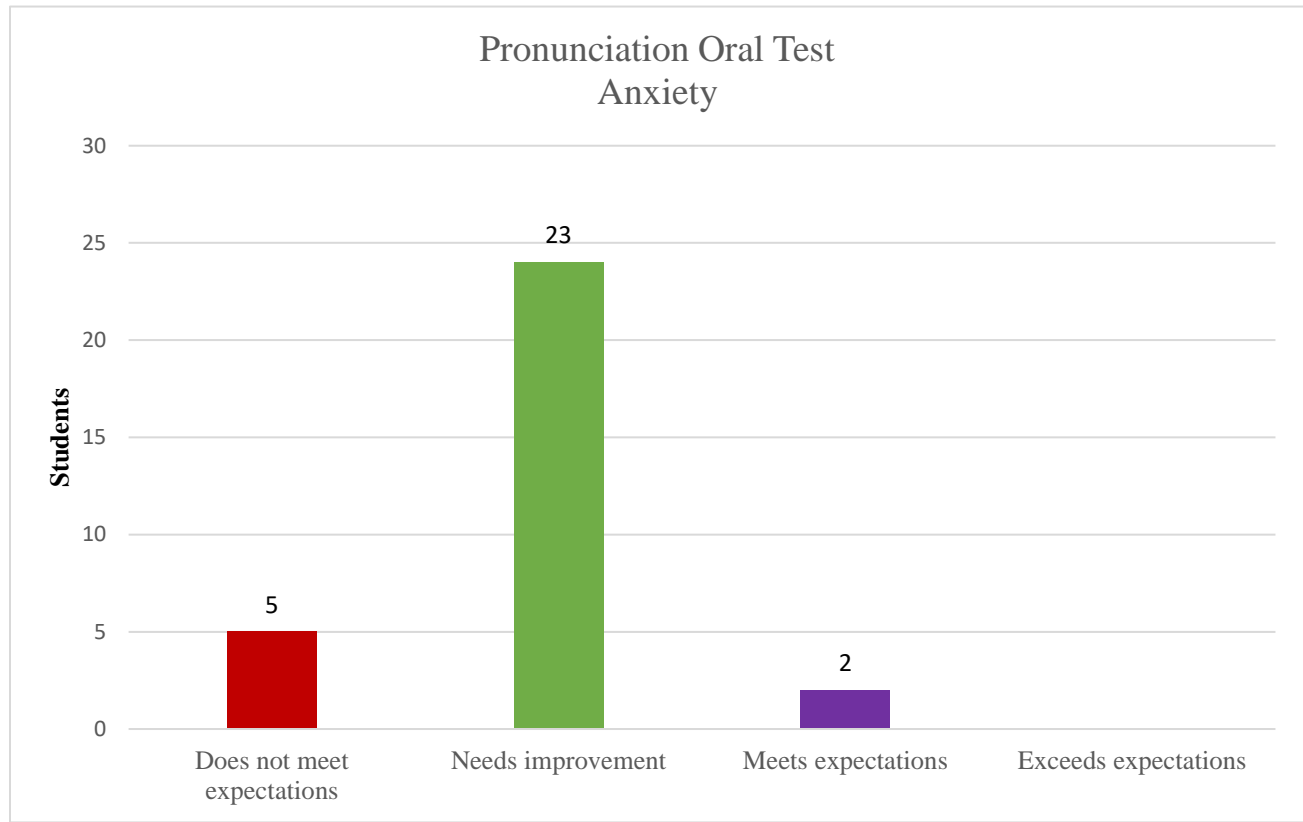


Figure 20. Results of pronunciation oral test on anxiety.

Finally, the anxiety rubric was evaluated during the whole time they were reading. 23 out of 30 were anxious when reading. They scored 2, which means they needed improvement because they only used a few strategies to overcome anxiety and the meaning of the reading was not clear. From the 7 students left, 2 students scored 3, which means they used some strategies to overcome anxiety and generally achieved it. The other 3 students scored 1 because they did not use strategies to overcome anxiety and meaning was not clear at all.

4.1.3 ABC Method

The ABC Method consisted on identifying the irrational beliefs the students had towards speaking in public. Once they already knew what they thought about public speaking, they worked on them in order to overcome those fears and irrational thoughts. The instrument was made carefully to measure the different irrational fears and thoughts they had. In order to do it, first they had to imagine they were really going to deliver a speech. They were told they were going to speak in English in front of a big audience. Also, they were told that the audience's native language was English.

The instrument was applied to the 30 students and all of them participated actively and answered every single question made. The results were taken from this instrument in order to identify, which thoughts and feelings were the most common ones among the students. Afterwards, they had to answer to four questions. Each question had four answers and one extra option if the answers given were not appropriately for them. The results of those questions are explained below.

The aspects taken into account during the analysis of this instrument were the answers the students chose. For instance, the questions were made in order to know the students' feelings, thoughts, and emotions. Each answer gives them an option of one feeling, emotion, or thought they may have before, during, and after the speech. Knowing beforehand that some of the factors influencing are nervousness and confusion, this instrument gives a clearer view of those specific thoughts and feelings the students face when speaking English in public.

4.1.3.1 Feelings before delivering the speech

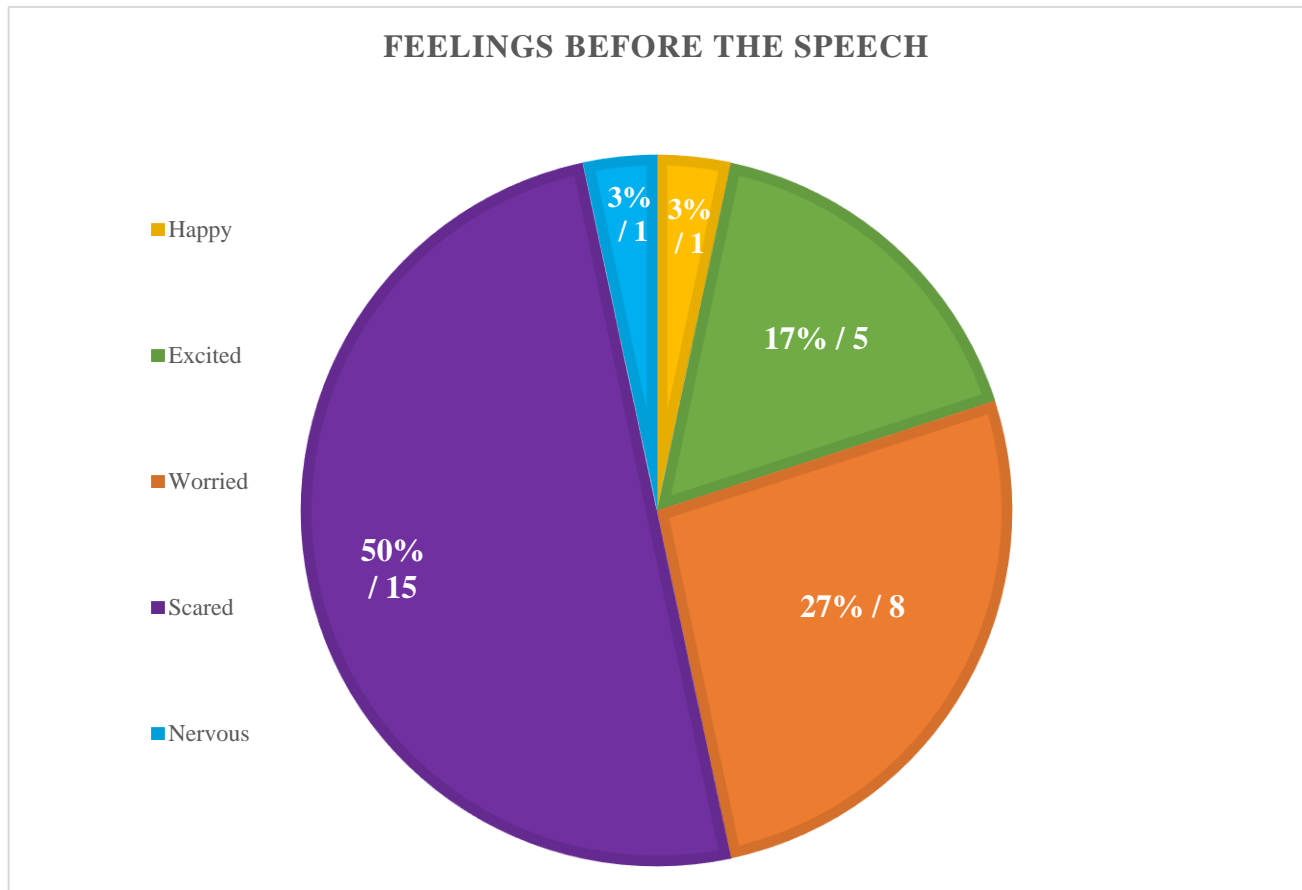


Figure 21. How would you feel before delivering the speech?

Figure 21 represents the percentages of the students' feelings before delivering a speech. As it can be seen, just 3% of the students answered they would feel happy. Also, 17% of them answered they would feel excited. 27% would feel worried about the speech. The majority, which represents 50% would feel scared after delivering a speech. Finally, just 3% would feel nervous. All of these percentages indicate that half of the students feel scared while speaking in public. In other words, another influencing factor which affects anxiety is being scared.

4.1.3.2 Feelings when delivering the speech

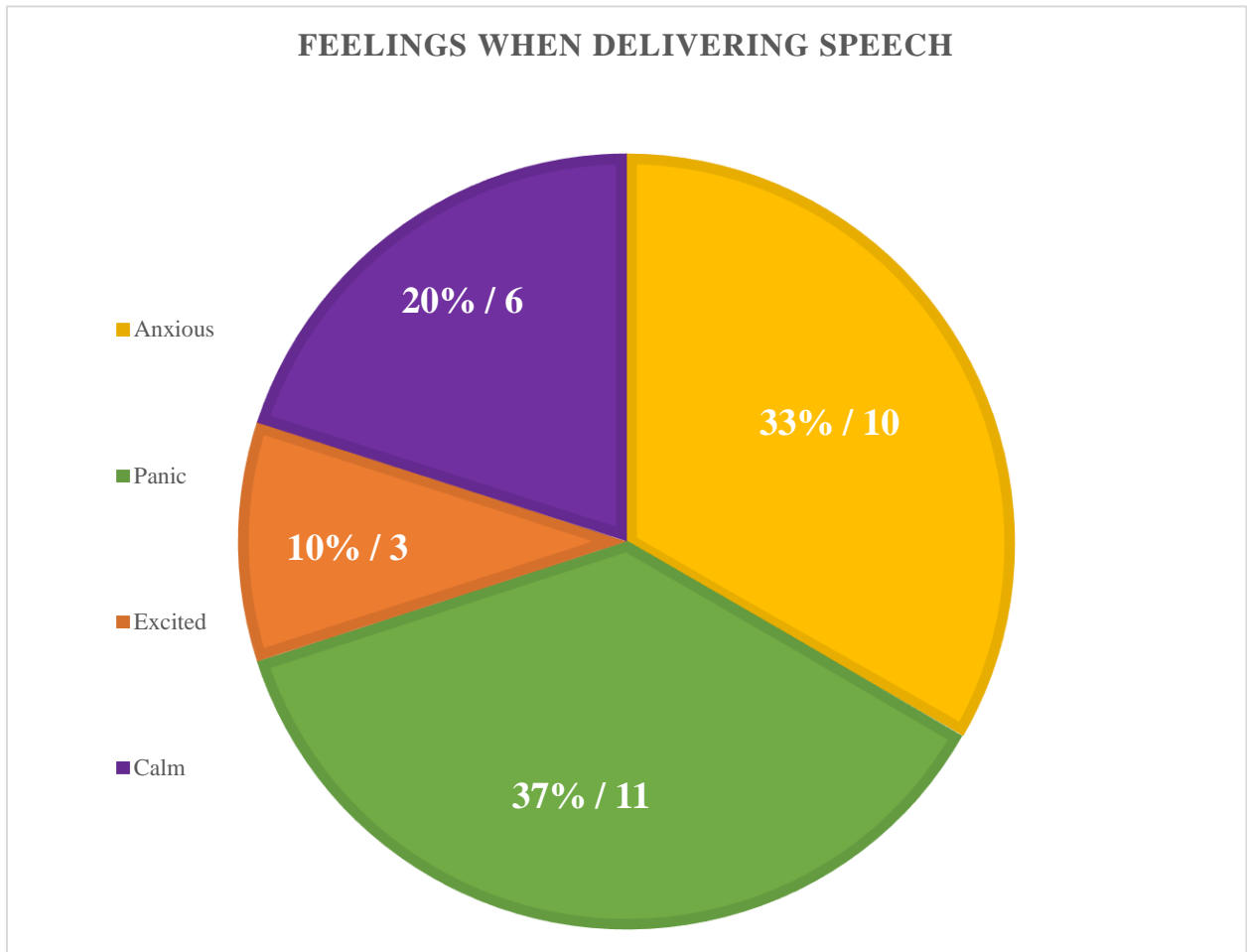


Figure 22. How would you feel when delivering the speech?

On figure 22, there are represented the percentages of the students' feelings when delivering the speech. In other words, the feelings they would have at the exact moment of their speech. The 33% of the student answered they would feel anxious. The majority, which represents the 37%, would be in panic when delivering the speech. Also, 10% of them would feel excited. Finally, 20% of the students would be calm at the moment of delivering the speech. This figure indicates that the majority panic, making it another feeling which affects and influences public speaking anxiety.

4.1.3.3 Thoughts when delivering the speech

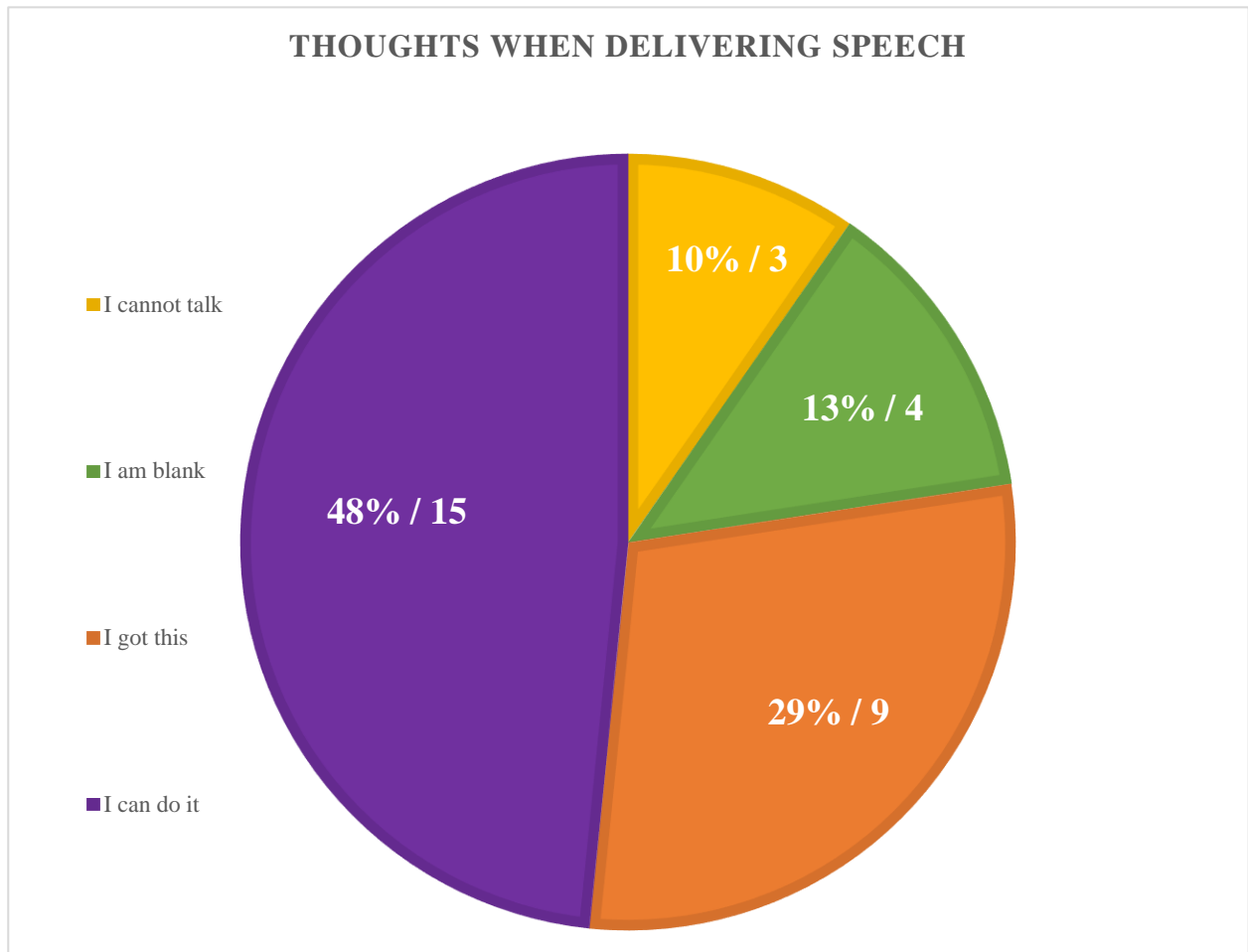


Figure 23. What would your thoughts be when delivering a speech?

Figure 23 represents the percentages of the students' thoughts when delivering the speech. The 10% of the students answered that they would think they cannot talk. The 13% of them answered, "I am blank;" 29% of the students, answered "I got this;" and finally, the majority, which represents 48% of the students answered, "I can do it." Meaning that almost half of the students have a positive thought towards public speaking, although they feel nervous and anxious. Having that the minority of the students have negative thoughts which makes them feel more insecure.

4.1.3.4 Feelings after delivering the speech

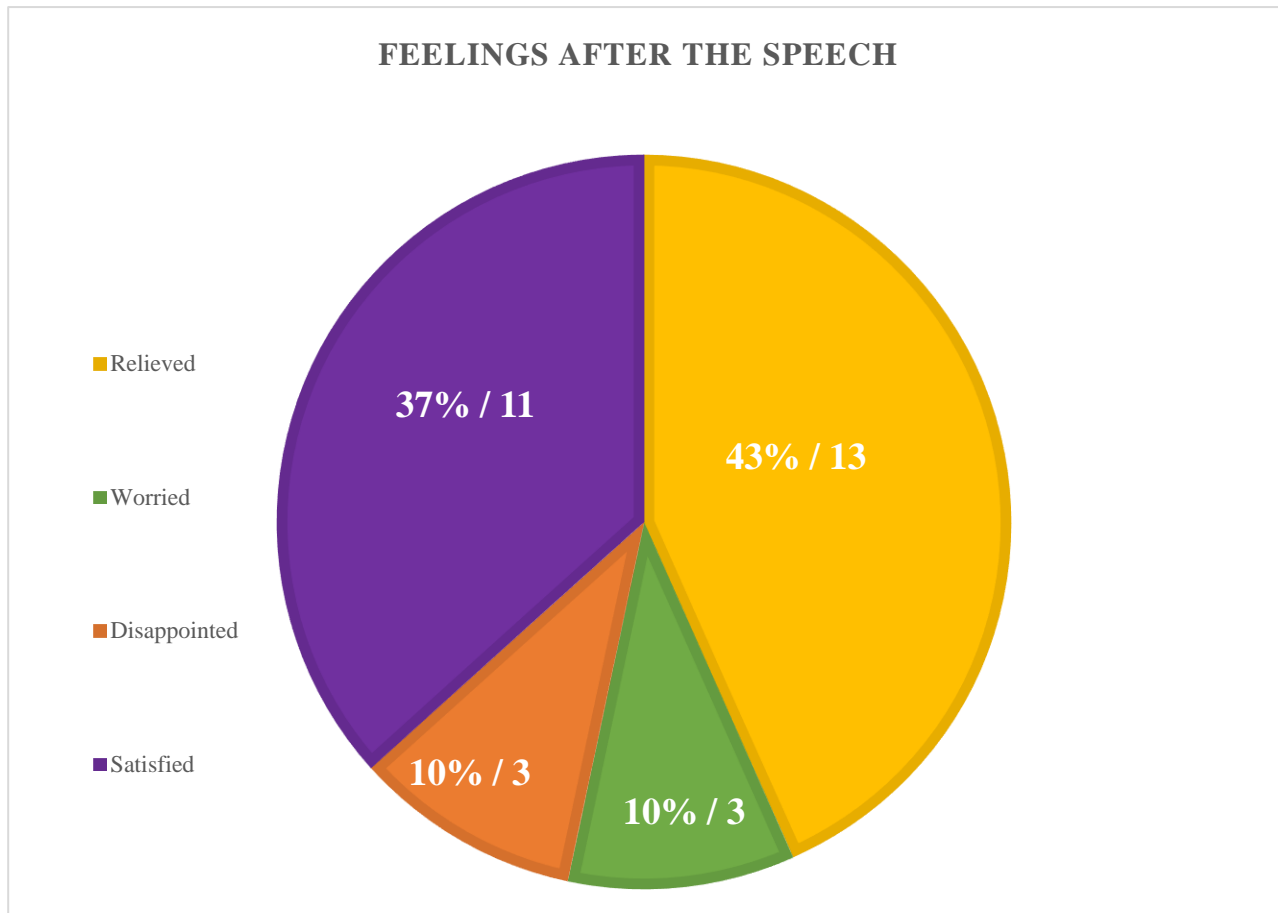


Figure 24. How would you feel after delivering the speech?

Figure 24 represents the last question of the ABC Method instrument. The students were asked about their feelings after delivering the speech. The majority of them, which represents 43%, answered they would feel relieved they are done with the speech. 10% answered they would feel worried, and the other 10% answered disappointed. Finally, 37% of the students answered they would feel satisfied after delivering the speech. In other words, almost half of the students would feel relieved when they finish their speech. That means that they prefer to get over the speech as soon as possible because they have feelings and thoughts that interfere with their speeches.

4.1.4 Skills Training Technique

The skills training technique is an overcoming technique instrument. Its main objective is to develop speaking skills when delivering a speech in order to overcome anxiety. As many students are not well developed in speaking skills, the instrument gives them some important skills to overcome their anxiety.

The instrument was applied to the 30 students in class. All of them participated during the instrument application. They were told that they were going to create a real speech. In order to prepare the speech, they had to follow the steps given on the instrument. For the first step, the majority of the students chose to write about their families as that was the topic they were covering in the class at the moment. They included information about their own families, some were made up, including a family tree description with names and titles. Everyone made an outline, in which they included the main points they wanted to write about in their speech. They included their family members' names, their jobs, age, relationship, and some other characteristics they wanted to write about.

The objective of the instrument was to provide basic skills to the students for them to be able to write a speech and then to deliver it successfully. When the teacher first told them they had to write a speech, they were all confused and scared because it was something new and they did not know how to do it. Then, she started to explain step by step what they had to do. First, she said they had to think about a topic, she proposed "The Family" as it was the current topic they were studying in class. She told them they had to think about what they wanted to tell the class about their family.

In order to make the speech clear, they had to create an outline, which is a basic skill to create a speech. It makes the speech organized and easy to follow. The students did not even know what an outline was; therefore, the teacher had to explain how to create a

simple outline. Once the teacher did it, the students felt less anxious about writing and delivering a speech because with their outlines they were going to have a guide. Once they had their outline ready with all the information they wanted to include, the teacher told them they had to write down the speech using the outline's information. Finally, the last step was to practice the speech. In order to be ready to deliver a speech, they have to practice it beforehand. This helped them to be less nervous and anxious and more confident and ready to do it without fear.

To sum up, the first step and skills allowed the students to think about a topic that they would like to talk about. The topic had to be interesting for them and for the audience. The second step was to make some research about the topic they chose. To find important information, and to summarize the main points they wanted to talk about. The third step was for them to create an outline including the main points of their speech. They had to organize their ideas on an outline to make the speech clear and easy to follow. The fourth step was to write the speech based on the information they researched and the outline they did. Finally, they had to practice the speech before they presented it in front of the class.

The students were given the necessary basic skills to create their speeches. They were able to make their speeches following the steps, which made it easier to create the speech. They understood all the steps and they followed them one by one to finally be ready to write their speeches on the next instrument.

4.1.5 Post-test Speech

This instrument was applied after all the techniques and methods were used by the students. It consisted on developing a speech using all the overcoming anxiety techniques of the previous instrument. Also, they had to make an outline in order to write the speech.

The students wrote their speeches and then they delivered it in front of the class. There was a rubric, the same as in the pre-test, in order to make a comparison between the first results and the final ones using this post-test and its rubric.

4.1.5.1 Post-test Speech- Fluency Rubric Results

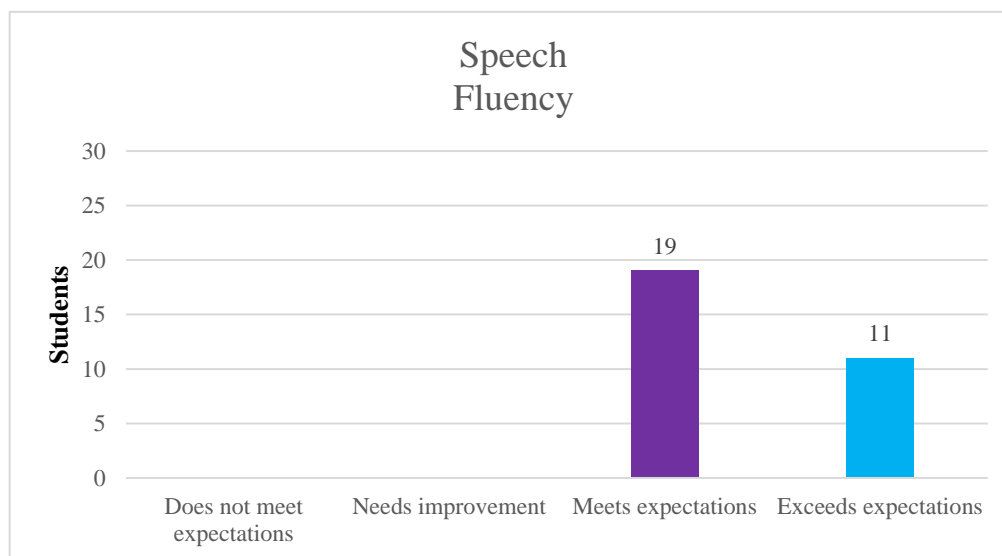


Figure 25. Represents the fluency levels of the students during the speech.

Figure 25 represents the level of fluency the students had on the post-test speech. In this figure it can be observed that the majority of the students met the expectations of fluency. From the 30 students, 19 scored 3 in fluency. Based on the rubric, these students spoke with some hesitation, but communication was achieved. The other 11 students scored 4, which means they exceeded the expectations. In other words, they spoke smoothly with little hesitation. In contrast, the students improved their fluency, so that 19 students met the expectations and 11 exceeded the expectations. This means that all the students improved their fluency even a little, but they did improve.

4.1.5.2 Post-test Speech – Pronunciation Rubric Results

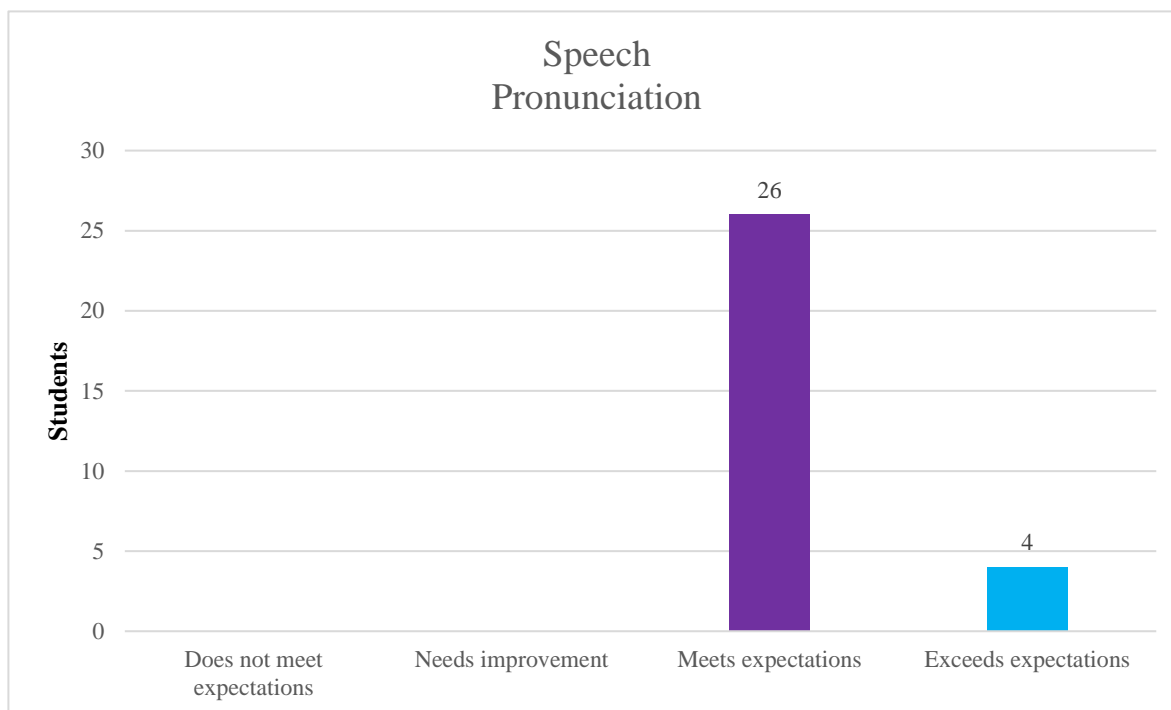


Figure 26. Represents the levels of pronunciation the students had during the speech.

In figure 26, it is represented the levels of pronunciation the students had during their speech in front of the class. They were evaluated based on the rubric, which measured their pronunciation levels. The majority scored 3, which means they met the expectations for the pronunciation rubric. In other words, 26 students from 30 had clear and accurate pronunciation of the vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ / with few problems. The other 4 students scored 4 because they exceeded the expectations in pronunciation. They had clear and accurate pronunciation of the vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ /. In other words, 26 students improved their pronunciation in contrast with the pre-test, in which just six students met the expectations. Also, in the post-test 4 students exceeded the expectations regarding pronunciation. This means that the students improved their pronunciation in class and the results showed the methods have worked.

4.1.5.3 Post – test Speech – Communication Rubric Results

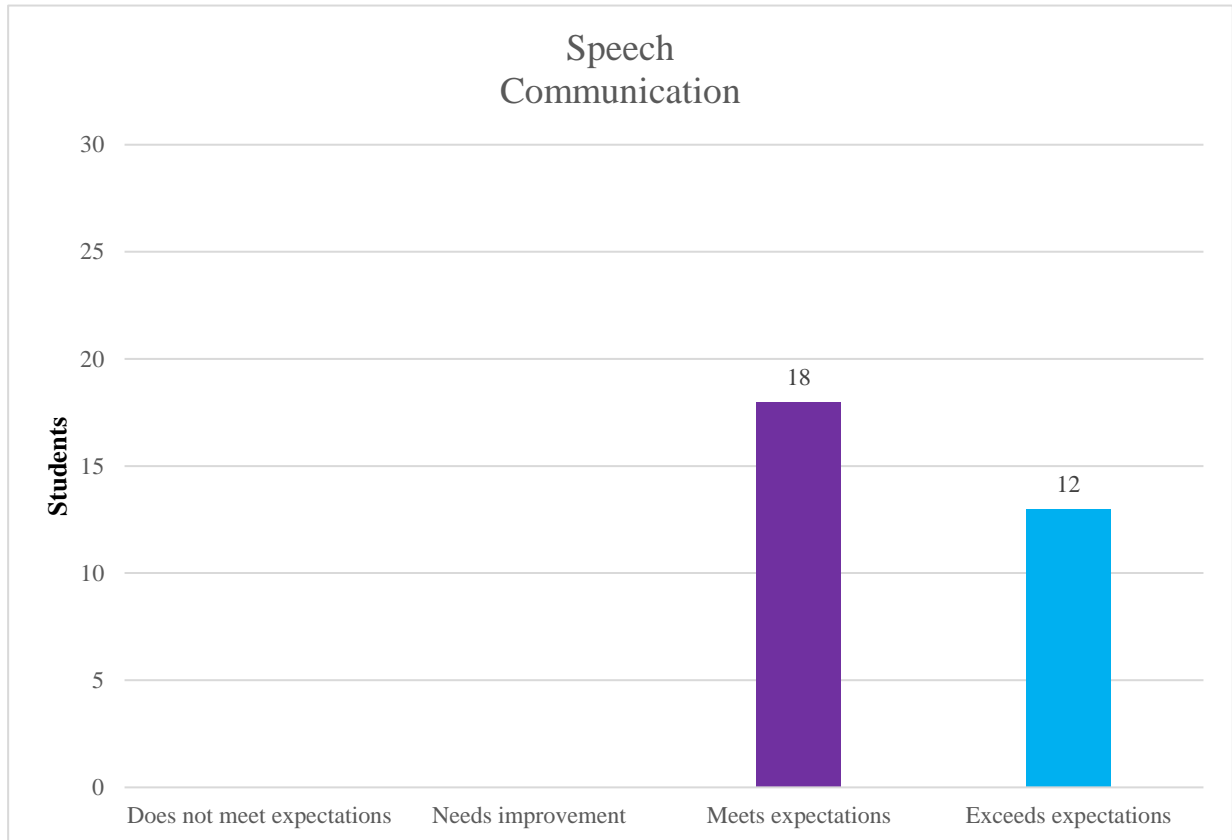


Figure 27. Represents the communication levels of the students during the speech.

In figure 27, it is represented the communication levels the students had during their speech. The rubric measured how effectively they communicate their ideas to the audience and how clear it was to understand the whole speech without problems. The majority, which are 18 students, scored 3. That means they met the expectations in communication. They communicated effectively and the purpose of their speech was clear. The other 12 students scored 4 and exceeded the expectations on communication. Based on the rubric, they stayed on task and communicated effectively. This means that the students improved on their communication, as it was easier to understand what they were saying, and their pronunciation was better, communication was achieved by all the students.

4.1.5.4 Post – test Speech – Anxiety Rubric Results

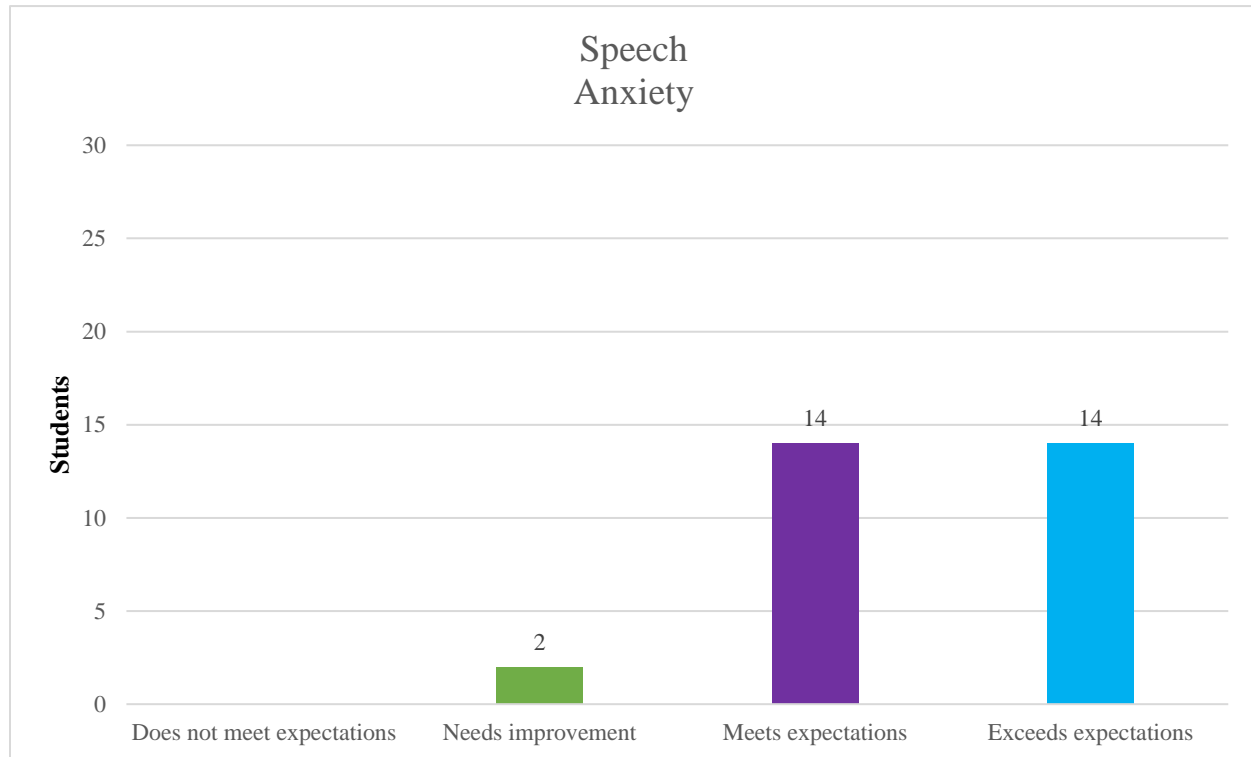


Figure 28. Represents the anxiety levels the students had during their speech.

Figure 28 represents the anxiety the students had while they were delivering their speech in front of their classmates and teacher. They were evaluated according to the rubric on anxiety, which measured how anxious they were and if they applied the overcoming anxiety strategies they learned in class. Two students scored 2 on their anxiety rubric, which means they needed improvement. They used few strategies to overcome anxiety and meaning was not very clear. 14 students scored 3, which means they met the expectations for the anxiety rubric. In other words, they used some strategies to overcome anxiety and generally they achieved it. The other 14 students scored 4, which means they exceeded the expectations. They used the strategies to overcome anxiety and they achieved it without problem. In other words, the students improved their anxiety and they could be able to conquer the fears of speaking by applying the overcoming anxiety methods and techniques.

In conclusion, the results showed an important improvement on all the rubrics. Fluency increased, pronunciation improved, also, communication increased, and finally anxiety levels decreased to the point that anxiety did not affect in a negative way their speeches and mostly their pronunciation. The less anxious the students were, the less mistakes in pronunciation, communication, and fluency.

This shows that the overcoming anxiety techniques worked and helped the students to overcome their anxiety, and they did a good job on their final test, which was their speech. In contrast, the first time they spoke in public, they were very nervous and confused. Their communication was not accurate and their pronunciation was not good. After all the process they did, finally they improved in the rubrics evaluated and could overcome most of their fears towards public speaking, which at the same time, the process helped them to improve pronunciation of the vowel sounds / æ, ʌ, ɔ, ʌ /, which they struggled a lot with at the beginning.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this final chapter, the conclusions of this research are stated and explained. The achievement of the conclusions was possible throughout the interpretation of the results provided by the instruments applied. In addition, each specific objective and the research question were answered and analyzed to figure out if the specific objectives had been accomplished throughout the research. Besides, some recommendations for the present and future researches about this topic are stated, this in order to guide other researchers who would like to research more on this interesting topic.

5.1 Conclusions

5.1.1 To determine the major causes of anxiety and its effects on EFL adult learners' pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ʌ, ɔ, ʌ /

The first specific objective of this research consisted on identifying the major causes of anxiety when speaking English in public through the first instrument, a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to determine what causes speaking anxiety on EFL adult learners. The major causes found in this research were panic, fear, nervousness, confusion, and not being prepared to speak English.

First, one question in the questionnaire was about how frequent students are in a panic when they speak English, and the majority of their answers were “always.” This makes panic, one of the main difficulties of English public speaking, which also affects students' pronunciation.

The second cause the researcher found is that the students feel scared when they have to speak in public, especially during the English classes due to the fact that as English is not their native language, they have to think more and make more effort to finally get to speak in English.

In addition, through the third instrument, which was the application of the ABC Method, students had to answer some questions and choose the best answer. One question was about their feelings before delivering a speech and they had to choose between four options: happy, excited, worried, and scared. The majority of the students chose the last option, scared. This means that being scared is one of the main causes of anxiety when speaking English.

Through the questionnaire, it was found that the students felt nervous and confused when they spoke English. Question 15 was about how frequently they felt nervous and confused when speaking English in public. Most of the students chose the option “always.” This means that anxiousness and confusion are causes of anxiety when public speaking in English takes place.

Finally, through the questionnaire’s results, it was shown that not being well prepared beforehand to speak English, made the students feel anxious and nervous. Again, it can be seen that nervousness is one of the major causes of anxiety while speaking in public, and how it affects English pronunciation.

Moreover, the effects of anxiety on the students’ pronunciation were analyzed through a pre-test, which consisted on a pronunciation oral test. Every student was tested and graded with a rubric. The students had to read a text aloud in front of the class and the teacher took notes and graded them with the rubric. They were scored from 1 to 4 in fluency, communication, pronunciation, and anxiety.

For the first rubric, fluency, the majority of the students scored 2. This means that they needed improvement in fluency because they were nervous and they tended to make unnecessary pauses. That make hard to understand what they were reading.

For the second rubric, pronunciation, the majority of the students scored 2. They did not know how to pronounce some of the words in the text. Because of the students' anxiety and nervousness, they failed most of the time with the correct pronunciation of the vowel sounds / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ /. For the third rubric, communication, the majority of the students scored 2, which means that neither their fluency, nor their pronunciation were good; therefore, their communication failed. That meant that anxiety also took place on this rubric because their communication was affected due to the factors already mentioned and their nervousness made them feel anxious.

Finally, they were tested on anxiety. The rubric was intended to measure their levels of anxiety. In other words, how anxious they felt and if they used or applied some techniques to overcome the feeling. Most of the students scored 2 because they were so anxious that they forgot how to pronounce the vowel sounds, how to speak in public, and how to communicate; although they were just reading a text.

In conclusion, anxiety has different causes such as nervousness, and fear to speak in public in a foreign language. In addition, the effects these factors had over pronunciation were important because without fluency it is difficult to understand because communicatively is interrupted. All this immediately affects the students' pronunciation and feeling anxious just makes things worse. In other words, the pronunciation of vowels / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ/ was affected because of anxiety and all its consequences.

5.1.2 To apply anxiety overcoming techniques on EFL adult learners'

pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ʌ, ɔ, ʌ /

As seen before, anxiety affects pronunciation when speaking in public. Therefore, during this research the students were given different techniques and skills with the objective of overcoming their anxiety. Based on Ayres' investigation (1993), speech anxiety occurs because people tend to think it is something difficult to overcome. He also points out that they have some fears about public speaking, which produces anxiety. In other words, people believe that speaking in public in a different language is difficult and scary. Ayres (1993) also said that if people change their thoughts towards public speaking, their speech anxiety will be reduced.

The technique applied was the ABC Method, that consists on getting to know the students' fears and thoughts. Each student has to know his or her own thoughts, beliefs, and fears towards public speaking. Therefore, for this research the students were asked four questions in order for them to know what they truly felt and thought about speaking in public. The questions were about their feelings before, during, and after delivering the speech. They had to choose an option for each question. Finally, when they were done with the questions, they had to analyze their answers and got to know their fears and thoughts towards public speaking.

The results showed that the most common fears and/or thoughts they had towards public speaking were fear before delivering the speech, panic when delivering the speech, and relieved after delivering the speech. During the speech probably they motivated themselves through thoughts such as "I can do this". Although they felt frighten and panic, the majority of them had positive thoughts, and they motivated themselves to keep going and finally succeed on their speech.

Some of the other students gave different answers such as: worried before delivering the speech, anxious when delivering the speech, or satisfied after the speech. In addition, the thought some of them had, was “I got this!” Again, this shows that a positive attitude and intrinsic motivation helped them to overcome different fears they might have. In addition, they had similar fears towards public speaking.

In conclusion, feeling scared, panic, anxious, and/or worried made them failed on their performance and pronunciation while speaking in public in the foreign language. Meanwhile, having positive thoughts about the situation helped them to overcome those fears and be able to succeed on their public speaking.

The second overcoming anxiety technique used in this research was the Skills Training Technique developed by Allen, Hunter, and Donhue (1989). Based on their investigation, speakers who lack the basic skills to develop a speech correctly, tended to feel anxious about it because they did not know how to do it. In other words, speakers who did not have the right tools proper information for developing a speech felt anxious and nervous; therefore, they could fail.

In order to help them using the correct aspects for the speech, they were asked first to think about a topic they were interested on or they were familiar with. Most of the students chose to talk about their families, as it was their current topic in the English classes. The second step was to research about the topic. In this case, they had to ask their family members’ names, addresses, places of birth, ages, and no forth. Once the students had gotten all the information, they had to create an outline. It was like a short and complete guide about what they were going to say in the correct order.

Finally, the last two steps were to write the speech outline and practice it in front of a mirror, a friend or a family member.

In conclusion, all the students were given tools, skills, and techniques to create, develop, and prepare their speeches correctly. This implied a process that went through finding a topic, making some research about it, creating an outline, writing the speech, and practicing it beforehand. This made the students feel more comfortable while delivering their speeches because they were prepared for them.

5.1.3 To evaluate the effectiveness of anxiety overcoming techniques on EFL adult learners' pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /

Once all the instruments were applied and all the techniques and methods given to them, they had to deliver the speech in public. In order to measure their improvement and the effectiveness of the anxiety overcoming techniques, which are The ABC Method and Skills Training Technique, they had to deliver their speeches. They were evaluated through the same rubric as for the pre-test, but now in a post-test. This, with the purpose of checking their improvement on fluency, pronunciation, communication, and anxiety management levels when delivering a speech in public.

For the first rubric aspect: fluency, students got a score of 3 and 4, that means that their fluency improved because in their pre-test they scored 2, that meant that with all the preparation they had had with the overcoming anxiety techniques, they could manage the expected results. In addition, their accuracy in pronunciation improved a lot. The students were taught how to overcome their fears by thinking about them and trying to cope with them. They had a positive motivation, which helped them to improve their pronunciation. Students got a score of 3 and 4. That means that they had pronounced accurately the vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /.

Concerning communication, they had improved because they scored 3 and 4. That means that the fluency level and pronunciation were good, their communicatively had improved in clearness and accuracy. Thus, they were able to communicate their thoughts and feelings to the audience without any problem.

Finally, the anxiety rubric's results showed that the students diminished their anxiety levels because they were well prepared for the speech, and they could control their anxiety by applying the overcoming techniques they were taught.

In conclusion, the overcoming anxiety techniques were effective because the students were able to speak in English without any anxiety and that helped them to improve their pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /. In other words, knowing how to overcome anxiety through the techniques helped them to improve pronunciation.

5.2 Restatement of the Research Question

The main objective of this research was to analyze the effect of anxiety on EFL adult learner's pronunciation of the vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /. This objective was achieved through the implementation of different instruments (questionnaire, tests, and techniques) in order to get relevant information about the effects, causes, and specially how anxiety affected pronunciation. Through the analysis of the instruments' results, it can be stated that anxiety affects the pronunciation of the English vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ /. The first reason is because anxiety has different causes which affect pronunciation such as nervousness, feeling scared, or worried. Those thoughts made the students felt anxious and, as a consequence their pronunciation was affected.

As it was said on previous chapters, EFL learners may have a hard time learning the correct pronunciation of words because they are used to their native sound system, and they have to learn a new one.

This affects the fact that they get anxious and nervous when speaking a foreign language, as they do not know how to pronounce correctly every single word. As a result, the most common mistakes students made were on the English vowel sounds / æ, α, ɔ, ʌ /. This was due to the interferences between the English and Spanish vowels because it needs a lot of practice to train the speech mechanism to produce the second system of a foreign language.

5.3 Recommendations

In addition, future researchers can analyze other English vowel or consonant sounds. It would be interesting to know if anxiety affects students' pronunciation in the same way or in a different one.

Moreover, the results of this research showed that there are other factors that may affect pronunciation. Future researchers should work to find out if there are other important factors, such as, motivation and anxiety that affect public speaking.

Also, researchers can analyze not only what happened with pronunciation, but also the effect that anxiety effects in the grammar structures when speaking English. EFL learners tend to struggle because they cannot apply the English grammar rules when speaking in public. A research on anxiety affecting grammar structures would be interesting. In addition, to find alternatives and solutions through techniques, methods, or activities and help the students overcome their difficulties.

During the application of the second instrument of this research, the students had to take a pre-test that consisted on reading a text aloud. Future researches can also analyze the effect of anxiety when reading in English, as it is not the same thing to speak English that to read it. There may be some other factors that affect how students read. Besides, the researcher can find innovating ways to overcome those difficulties and improve the students' reading rate and understanding by the application of reading techniques such as skimming and scanning, and developing vocabulary as much as possible.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A. Questionnaire



Universidad Internacional de las Américas
 Escuela de Inglés
 María Paula Fallas Dávila
 I Cuatrimestre 2017
 Questionnaire

English Language Anxiety Scale

Objective: To identify the anxiety levels when speaking in public on EFL (English as a Foreign Language) adult learners.

Este cuestionario es para fines educativos. Todas las respuestas son confidenciales. No forma parte de su nota final.

Instrucciones: Lea cuidadosamente los siguientes enunciados y haga un círculo en la respuesta que considere apropiada. En la escala del 1 al 5 donde 1 es NUNCA y 5 es SIEMPRE.

1	2	3	4	5
nunca	casi nunca	a veces	frecuentemente	siempre

1. En clases de inglés olvido cómo decir cosas que ya sé.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. En clases regulares olvido cómo decir cosas que ya sé.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. En clases de inglés tiemblo cuando sé que tengo que hablar en inglés.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. En clases regulares tiemblo cuando sé que tengo que hablar en público.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. En clases de inglés entro en pánico cuando tengo que hablar en inglés sin prepararme.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. En clases regulares entro en pánico cuando tengo que hablar en público sin prepararme.

1 2 3 4 5

7. En clases de inglés cuando hablo en inglés me siento como una persona diferente.

1 2 3 4 5

8. En clases regulares cuando hablo me siento como una persona diferente.

1 2 3 4 5

9. En clases de inglés aún cuando me preparo para hablar me pongo nervioso.

1 2 3 4 5

10. En clases regulares aún cuando me preparo para hablar me pongo nervioso.

1 2 3 4 5

11. En clases de inglés me da miedo que mi profesor corrija cada error que cometa.

1 2 3 4 5

12. En clases regulares me da miedo que mi profesor corrija cada error que cometa.

1 2 3 4 5

13. En clases de inglés no puedo expresar mis sentimientos y me siento incómodo.

1 2 3 4 5

14. En clases regulares no puedo expresar mis sentimientos y me siento incómodo.

1 2 3 4 5

15. En clases de inglés me pongo nervioso y me confundo cuando hablo en inglés.

1 2 3 4 5

16. En clases de inglés siento que hay demasiadas reglas y no me las puedo aprender todas.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B. Pre-test

Universidad Internacional de las Américas
Escuela de Inglés
María Paula Fallas Dávila
I Cuatrimestre 2017
Pre-test

Pronunciation Oral Test

Objective: To determine the problems of English pronunciation vowels / æ, ɑ, ɔ, ʌ / on EFL adult learners

This instrument is for educational purposes only. Answers are confidential. It is not part of your percentage on your final grade.

Instructions: Read the following text. Keep in mind all the elements of pronunciation: sounds, intonation, and rhythm.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is celebrated in the USA and Canada. In The USA, it is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November every year. The Canadians celebrate it on the second Monday in October. It is associated with giving thanks to God. In the beginning people expressed gratitude for the harvest they reaped. It used to be a religious holiday but now it has become a secular celebration.

The most important part of the celebration is the dinner which includes the customary turkey served with cranberry sauce and pumpkin. A lot of business goes on during this holiday. For example, restaurants take advantage of the holiday to sell turkey dinners. Families and friends usually get together for a large meal or dinner during Thanksgiving and have a lot of fun. That is why, the Thanksgiving holiday weekend is considered one of the busiest travel periods of the year. Students are given a four-day or five-day weekend vacation. Thanksgiving is also a paid holiday for most workers.

Appendix C. Overcoming Anxiety Techniques. ABC Method

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Escuela de Inglés

Nombre: María Paula Fallas Dávila

I Cuatrimestre 2017

Anxiety Overcoming Techniques

ABC Method

Objective: To identify the irrational beliefs towards public speaking and work on them to overcome the fears

This instrument is for educational purposes only. Answers are confidential. It is not part of your percentage on your final grade.

Instructions: Imagine you are going to deliver a speech in front of an audience. The speech has to be delivered in English, which is your foreign language, and the audience's native language. Choose which option best describes your feelings or write other option.

1. How would you feel before delivering the speech?

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| a) Happy | c) Worried |
| b) Excited | d) Scared |

Other: _____.

2. How would you feel when delivering the speech?

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| a) Anxious | c) Excited |
| b) Panic | d) Calm |

Other: _____.

3. What would your thoughts be when delivering the speech?

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| a) I cannot talk | c) I got this |
| b) I forget everything | d) I can do it |

Other: _____.

4. How would you feel after delivering a speech?

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a) Relieved | c) Disappointed |
| b) Worried | d) Satisfied |

Other: _____.

Appendix D. Anxiety Overcoming Techniques. Skills Training Techniques



Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Escuela de Inglés

Nombre: María Paula Fallas Dávila

I Cuatrimestre 2017

Anxiety Overcoming Techniques

Skills Training Technique

Objective: To develop speaking skills when delivering a speech in order to overcome speech anxiety

This instrument is for educational purposes only. Answers are confidential. It is not part of your percentage on your final grade.

Instructions: You are going to prepare the speech you were asked for previously. In order to prepare it you must put into practice basic skills to create and deliver the speech.

1. Think about the topic.
2. Make some research about the topic.
3. Write an outline with the main points.

4. Practice the speech based on the information and the outline.

Appendix F. Pre-test and Post-test Rubric

Rubric	Does Not Meet Expectations 1	Needs Improvement 2	Meets Expectations 3	Exceeds Expectations 4
Fluency	Hesitates too often when speaking	Speaks with some hesitation	Speaks with some hesitation, but communication is achieved	Speaks smoothly with little hesitation
Pronunciation	Has frequent problems with the pronunciation of vowels /æ, α, ɔ, ʌ/	Makes errors in the pronunciation of vowels /æ, α, ɔ, ʌ/ make difficult to convey meaning	Clear and accurate pronunciation of vowels /æ, α, ɔ, ʌ/ with few problems	Pronounces clear and accurate vowels /æ, α, ɔ, ʌ/
Communication	Purpose is not clear; needs helping communicatively.	Tries to communicate, but not very accurate	Communicates effectively; the purpose is clear	Stays on task and communicates effectively
Anxiety	Does not use strategies to overcome anxiety and meaning is not clear at all	Uses few strategies to overcome anxiety and meaning is not clear	Uses some strategies to overcome anxiety and generally achieves it	Uses the strategies to overcome anxiety and achieves it