Universidad Laica VICENTE ROCAFUERTE de Guayaquil

FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN

CARRERA DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN MENCIÓN INGLÉS

PROYECTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN

PREVIO A LA OBTENCIÓN DEL TÍTULO DE LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA MENCIÓN EN ENSEÑANZA Y ADMINISTRACIÓN DE SISTEMAS EDUCATIVOS EN T.E.F.L

TEMA

"THE USE OF DIDACTIC STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE NINTH GRADERS´PRONUNCIATION OF DENTAL FRICATIVE CONSONANTS AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA FISCAL RAFAEL MORAN VALVERDE DURING THE YEAR 2017 -2018"

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Guayaquil, Ecuador

2018

REPOSITARIO NACIONAL EN CIENCIA Y TECNOLOGÍA

FICHA DE REGISTRO DE TESIS

TITULO Y SUBTITULO:
The Use of Didactic Strategies to Enhance Ninth Graders´Pronunciation of Dental Fricative Consonants at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde during the Year 2017 -2018

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INSTITUCIÓN:	**FACULTAD:**
Universidad Laica VICENTE ROCAFUERTE de Guayaquil	Educación

CARRERA:
Ciencias de la Educación Mención Inglés

FECHA DE PUBLICACIÓN:	**N. DE PAGS:**
2018	132

ÁREAS TEMÁTICAS: Humanidades

PALABRAS CLAVE:
Pronunciation, skills, speech, oral expression, second language, production.

RESUMEN:
A significant number of students at high school do not reach adequate communicative skills in English as a second language due to the lack of application of appropriate activities that improvement the pronunciation. Therefore, an important factor is to promote and increase the learners' interest in developing a good pronunciation, as well as, on creating opportunities for them to enhance their oral expression. The essence of this research project is to help students to develop a better pronunciation of specific speech sounds. For this reason, the main objective of this project is to select the most appropriate didactic strategies and determine the best ways they could be applied in order to improve the pronunciation of dental fricative consonants considering the students' learning styles, ages, and interests. This study is based on some learning theories, such as the Psychological Theories and Linguistic Theories. The quantitative and qualitative methods were applied as well as the following research instruments which helped us to understand the ninth grade students' difficulties in pronunciation: two class observations, a questionnaire for students and an interview for the teachers then they were analyzed and the results showed that ninth graders have problems in the production of dental fricative consonants, in consequence the communication was negatively affected. Therefore, we recommend thirteen activities which are based on some

didactic strategies such as the Communicative activities, Reading aloud, Total Physical Response (TPR), and on the Direct Instruction.		
N. DE REGISTRO (en base de datos):	N. DE CLASIFICACIÓN:	
DIRECCIÓN URL (tesis en la web):		
ADJUNTO URL (tesis en la web):		
ADJUNTO PDF:	SI x	NO
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CERTIFICACIÓN DE ACEPTACIÓN DEL TUTOR

En mi calidad de Tutor del Proyecto de Investigación "THE USE OF DIDACTIC
STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE NINTH GRADERS'PRONUNCIATION OF DENTAL
FRICATIVE CONSONANTS AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA FISCAL RAFAEL MORAN
VALVERDE DURING THE YEAR 2017 -2018", nombrado por el Consejo Directivo
de la Facultad de Educación de la Universidad Laica VICENTE ROCAFUERTE de
Guayaquil.

CERTIFICO:

Haber dirigido, revisado y analizado en todas sus partes el Proyecto de
Investigación titulado: *"THE USE OF DIDACTIC STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE*
NINTH GRADERS'PRONUNCIATION OF DENTAL FRICATIVE CONSONANTS
AT UNIDAD EDUCATIVA FISCAL RAFAEL MORAN VALVERDE DURING THE
YEAR 2017 -2018", presentado por la estudiante **PEGGY MARíA DEL**
CONSUELO LUQUE MADRID como requisito previo a la aprobación de la
investigación para optar al Título de **LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA**
MENCIÓN EN ENSEÑANZA Y ADMINISTRACIÓN DE SISTEMAS EDUCATIVOS
EN T.E.F.L. encontrándose apto para su sustentación.

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Submitted: 5/7/2018 10:30:00 PM
Submitted By: mmejiaa@ulvr.edu.ec
Significance: 1 %

Sources included in the report:

Audie-tesis.pdf (D29553397)
https://www.lifepersona.com/what-are-didactic-strategies

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AGRADECIMIENTO

To my Heavenly Father and his Son the Lord Jesus Christ for giving me life and the opportunity to study and complete this period. Thank you for keeping your promise that in hard times you will help me. Isaiah 41:10:

Fear not, for I am with you;

   do not be dismayed, for I am your God;

I will strengthen you, and help you,

   I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

To MSc. Mario Mejía who guided me through his advices.

DEDICATORIA

I dedicate this research project to:

To my Heavenly Father:

His constant help, guidance and strength were evident during the course of the four years of study and became the pillar that sustained me until reaching the desired and dreamed goal.

To my family:

To my father Alberto and my mother Blanca Inés:

Their example of perseverance was the virtue that helped me to successfully complete the university career.

To my sisters Patricia and Sara:

Their advice, unconditional support, and love encouraged me to continue until to reach the objective.

To my brothers-in-law Grimalde and Roberto:

Their support helped me during the process to reach my aim.

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ABSTRACT

A significant number of students at high school do not reach adequate communicative skills in English as a second language due to the lack of application of appropriate activities that improvement the pronunciation. Therefore, an important factor is to promote and increase the learners' interest in developing a good pronunciation, as well as, on creating opportunities for them to enhance their learning. The essence of this research project is to help students to develop a better pronunciation of specific speech sounds. For this reason, the main objective of this project is to select the most appropriate didactic strategies and determine the best ways they could be applied in order to improve the pronunciation of dental fricative consonants considering the students' learning styles, ages, and interests. This study is based on some learning theories, such as the Psychological Theories and Linguistic Theories. The quantitative and qualitative methods were applied as well as the following research instruments which helped us to understand the ninth grade students' difficulties in pronunciation: two class observations, a questionnaire for students and an interview for the teachers then they were analyzed and the results showed that ninth graders have problems in the production of dental fricative consonants, in consequence the communication was negatively affected. Therefore, we recommend thirteen activities which are based on some didactic strategies such as the Communicative activities, Reading aloud, Total Physical Response (TPR), and on the Direct Instruction.

KEY WORDS

Pronunciation, dental fricative consonants, didactic strategies, speech sounds,

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most chosen languages to learn in the world and it is recommendable to start learning it from earliest childhood. However, it has been said that after childhood, it will be a little difficult, but not impossible to learn English with a proper pronunciation. One of the most important parts regarding learning English as a second language is to acquire a good pronunciation. According to Szynalski (n.d). "Pronunciation is definitely the biggest thing that people notice when you are speaking English". (para. 1). Nowadays, society knows that using English language improperly will not only impede you from being understood, but it will also bring negative effects both for communication and fluency.

So, why is a proper pronunciation so important? Pronunciation is just as important for listening as for speaking in English. Adequate pronunciation helps us not only to produce speech sounds correctly, but also to understand what the other person is talking about. These ideas lead us to the following reflection: how can the target language be acquired appropriately if there are so many mispronounced words? We must consider pronunciation as one of the key elements for successful oral communication, for that reason, English teachers need to select and implement the most suitable techniques and procedures in class to enhance students 'pronunciation, as is one of the most important dimensions of oral production.

That is why this study is developed. This research project focuses on the principal problem presented in ninth graders from Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde, which shows not only poor pronunciation resulting in miscommunication, but also drawbacks in the perception and recognition of English speech sounds.

This study is going to present four chapters which are detailed as follows:

Chapter One provides important information about the background and statement of the problem, as well as the general and specific objectives, the researcher also mentions the benefits and the research questions of this study.

Chapter two contributes with significant data about previous research that has been conducted in relation to the topic, very well-known theories have been reviewed getting valuable information in order to form the basis of this study.

Chapter three describes the methods, techniques, and research instruments that this study applied. The results and analysis are also presented giving a clear idea about the research problem.

Lastly, chapter four proposes the project plan for the solution of the problem and it includes its objectives, the impact and benefits, and the general conclusions and recommendations which summarize our project.

1. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1. Background of the Problem

1.1.1. Place of the Study

At the southwest of Guayaquil city, we find the public school Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde. It is located on AV. 38 SO street. It is a well-known educational institution which, over the last 25 years, underwent rapid growth and transformation both physically and educationally. This institution offers among others subjects the English as a second language which is taught from the first to tenth grade of the level of Basic General Education. The English classes covers the students' schedule at the afternoon.

1.1.2. School Staff

The school belongs to the district 09D04 of the Ministry of Education which corresponds to the Febres Cordero city district. It is directed by a Board of Directors formed by the Principal as the Chairman, a vice principal and three additional members. The institution is a co-educational entity which receives and integrates many girls and boys. It has an English department with four English teachers whose coordinator is one of them. It also has a lab, which the students use for listening activities or watching English videos.

The class schedule of the institution is organized in three stages: morning, evening, and night from Monday to Friday. The student population of the institution is approximately 1.369 and the amount of teachers who work in this place is 46.

1.1.3. Population of the Study

The total population of this project is formed by 35 students from the ninth grade "C", among them 15 girls and 20 boys from 12 to 15 years old. This group of the students were friendly and showed lots of cooperation.

1.1.4. English Materials

The English material is provided by the Ministry of Education of Ecuador. The name of the material is "English" and it consists of an English Level A1.2 for ninth grade students´ textbook and workbook. It includes the teacher´s guide book.

1.1.5. Main Problems

The researcher carried out a class observation and based on that information it was evident that ninth graders at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde present the following pedagogical problems:

There is a lack of activities such as games, contents, role plays during the class because it seems that the time is not enough to extend this kind of exercises. There are not writing and reading activities. Occasionally, they go to the lab to watch an English video and that is the only time they hear the foreign language. Students can use the audio program and listen and do the exercises or just download the government page, but there are two reasons why they are not interested in doing these activities. One of them is that they do not have internet at home or their parents do not care about that and do not help them.

We could notice some other factors:

- ➢ Poor communication and fluency
- ➢ Drawbacks in the production of specific speech sounds
- ➢ Problems with sound discrimination
- ➢ Students get poor grades in the subject
- ➢ Sometimes indiscipline shows up in the classroom

The results of this observation have demonstrated that there is a huge problem which is deficient pronunciation of dental fricatives which has negatively affected the production of English oral communication and this conclusion has generated our

interest in this research. For all these reasons, we would like to recommend suitable didactic strategies in order to help students to enhance their English pronunciation.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

How can a selected group of didactic strategies be applied in order to enhance ninth graders' pronunciation of dental fricative consonants at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde during the year 2017 - 2018?

1.3. Systematization of the Problem

In order to carry out this research it is necessary to decompose or disaggregate the formulation of the problem in small sub-problems:

1. Why do ninth grade students at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde have pronunciation problems?

2. What are the characteristics of appropriate didactic strategies in order to improve ninth grade students' pronunciation of dental fricative consonants?

3.- Can the educator use specific didactic strategies to enhance students' pronunciation?

4.- How does the lack of knowledge of dental fricative affect students' pronunciation?

1.4. Broad Objective

To determine how a selected group of didactic strategies can be applied in order to enhance ninth graders´pronunciation of dental fricative consonants at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde

1.5. Specific Objectives

1.- To determine the reasons why ninth grade students at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde have pronunciation problems.

2.- To select appropriate didactic strategies in order to improve ninth grade students' pronunciation of dental fricative consonants.

3.- To define the theoretical aspects related to research variables.

1.6. Significance or Justification of the Study

A previous class observation conducted on ninth grade students at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Moran Valverde evidenced that they had problems in the production and recognition of fricative sounds. It was also mentioned, that mispronounced words represent a huge problem to students because they cannot develop good communication in the EFL classroom.

Teaching pronunciation in class is so important because it represents enormous benefits to students, however this practice has been forgotten by some teachers resulting in some adverse consequences, such as negative effect or impact in oral expression, it contributes to misunderstanding in listening comprehension, and unproductive oral interaction. However, this study will provide a suitable solution for pronunciation problem. Therefore, the essence of this project is to help students to develop a better pronunciation of fricative sounds, and this is the main reason that has inspired the researcher to work out this study.

We need to keep in mind that teachers are responsible for the selection and application of the most appropriate didactic strategies even if they are not included in the school program in order to improve students' pronunciation.

1.6.1. The Benefits of this Project:

For Students: The implementation of adequate pedagogical strategies by the English teacher will help them to enhance their pronunciation, consequently their communication will be better, and their grades in English as a subject will improve with the subsequent satisfaction of school authorities, teachers and parents.

For Teachers: This research will help teachers to have different perspectives in teaching pronunciation, by using different techniques or creating opportunities for the students to construct their knowledge in the area of English as a foreign language.

For parents: They will be proud of their children´s achievement especially when their grades in the subject reflect their efforts they are making to improve their English oral production.

For researchers: This study will contribute with some practical and theoretical basis to continue conducting educational research on how to help students to develop their pronunciation of the foreign language.

1.7. Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The research work will be conducted at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde which belongs to the district 09D04 of the Ministry of Education and it is located in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The research population consists of 35 ninth graders and four English teachers.

The main purpose of this work is to select the most suitable didactic strategies and determine the best ways they could be applied in order to improve the pronunciation of dental fricative consonants, taking into consideration the following aspects: teaching method to be applied, class atmosphere, the learners 'learning styles,

ages, interests and the affective domain. This study does not intend to demonstrate the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable so that´s why there is not a hypothesis to test, instead we have research questions which will be the guides of this work.

1.8. Research Questions

1. Why do ninth grade students at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Morán Valverde have pronunciation problems?

2. What kind of didactic strategies can be used in order to enhance ninth graders 'pronunciation of dental fricative consonants?

3. How will the application of didactic strategies help students' pronunciation?

4. Does good pronunciation increase confidence and improve communicative competence of learners?

1.9. Identification of Variables

Independent variable: Didactic strategies

Dependent variable: Pronunciation of dental fricatives

1.10. Operationalization of the Variables

1.10.1. Operationalization of the Independent Variable: Didactic strategies

Table 1

Independent Variable: Didactic Strategies

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	DIMENSION	INDICATORS	INSTRUMENTS
Learning strategies consist of a procedure or set of steps or skills a student acquires and intentionally uses as a flexible instrument to learn meaningfully and solve problems and academic demands	A procedure or set of steps or skills a student acquires and intentionally uses as a flexible instrument to learn meaningfully and solve problems and academic demands related to the correct use of pronunciation.	Learning strategies (sttudents factors)	Use of L1 Class Participation Attitud towars the subject Motivation Aptitude Proficiency Level Previous Knowledge	Document Analysis Class observation (1) Student survey
Teaching strategies are all those pedagogical aids set by the teacher, that are provided to the students in order to facilitate deeper processing of information	Pedagogical aids set by the teacher, that are provided to the students in order to facilitate deeper learning of pronunciation	Teaching strategies (teachers factors)	Experience Academic preparation Professional development Class management English proficiency level	Class observation (2) Interview guide

1.10.2. Operationalization of the Dependent Variable: Pronunciation of Dental Fricative

Table 2

Dependent Variable: Pronunciation of Dental Fricative

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	DIMENSION	INDICATOR	INSTRUMENTS
Pronunciation is the act or manner of pronouncing a word	*Pronunciation* the way in which the students pronounce, discriminate, and predict speech sounds. .	**Production:** Articulation of speech sounds: (vowels, consonants, diphthongs)	Place of articulation Manner of articulation Voicing or phonation	Two class observations based on teacher's classroom management and students' performance in class
		Perception: Speech sound discrimination	Ability to perceive similarities between speech sounds Ability to perceive differences between speech sounds	
.		**Prediction:** Spelling	Ability to predict the speech sounds according to the spelling of the words	

2. RESEARCH THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. Previous Research in Ecuador

One of the essential characteristics of English language is pronunciation, but this feature has been neglected in some private and public schools in our country. The lack of activities aimed to develop this essential skill in EFL classes has left its mark on the students' performance as it is evident in their poor oral expression that is why we understand the necessity to develop suitable strategies to enhance an adequate pronunciation.

There are very few Ecuadorian research projects that focus on the application of didactic strategies to improve the pronunciation of dental fricatives or any other area of pronunciation at the moment of conducting this study. However, we have found some information that can be considered relevant for the literature review.

A study from Universidad de Cuenca which was developed by (Tinoco, 2017). "Development of Pronunciation Activities regarding American English Vowel Sounds" In relation to this project we noticed that the essential objective in this study was to produce or adjust some activities in order to help the eighth grade students' pronunciation using adjectives and verbs ending in the ed suffix and vowel sounds.

Among other concepts related to phonemes, speech, voiced and voiceless sounds, articulators, and so on, the researcher presented some activities to practice the English vowels, the –ed suffix of the past tense and a few adjectives. The researcher arrived at the conclusion that there is indeed the necessity of developing a good English pronunciation in order to communicate efficiently in the EFL class.

There was an interesting project elaborated at Universidad Central del Ecuador by (Piedra, 2016) "Use of Rosetta Stone Program to Improve the English Pronunciation of Students from eighth grade at Colegio San Gabriel" This study demonstrated that the application of the software: "Rosetta Stone" had a positive effect on the students' pronunciation.

The researcher employed a cuasi-experimental approach and the type of research was qualitative and quantitative. After the application of the pre-test and post-test to the experimental group, the researcher could notice that the students who had followed the pronunciation classes, which were the complement of the Rosetta Stone program, improved their pronunciation.

(Arias, 2011) an English professor from the Pontificía Universidad Católica del Ecuador in Ambato developed a study called "Practical Activities to Motivate Students to Improve English Pronunciation". Among other concepts related to linguistics, language, phonology and pronunciation, the researcher presented some didactic activities which were the most important goal in this research. The objective of the activities was to increase the teachers and students´ interest to enhance their pronunciation. The exercises were developed to fit the learners and teachers' necessities.

A project named "The Analysis of Different Phonics Activities Based on the Reading Horizons Method to Develop the Pronunciation Skill" elaborated by (Maldonado & Matalio, 2016). These authors have pointed that English pronunciation was not considered in the Ecuadorian Curriculum of 2014-2015, thus teachers did not spend time to teach pronunciation, so as a consequence, learners were incapable of pronouncing simple English words.

One of the aims of the study was to provide a booklet with some phonics activities based on the Reading Horizons Method which helped teachers and students improve their pronunciation. They applied a qualitative and quantitative approach

and then they concluded that introducing phonics was very relevant and had a very positive influence on the students' pronunciation, additionally, the results of the work evidenced that it is easier for children to acquire a linguistic system than for adults. If students have a lot of exposure to English language they could produce it without problems.

2.1.2. Research in Foreign Countries

Going through some previous work in this area we found some interesting and meaningful information that confirms the continue necessity of teaching pronunciation in EFL classrooms.

(Metruck, 2017) carried out the study: "Pronunciation of English Dental Fricatives by Slovak University EFL Students." He explained that the main source of pronunciation mistakes was due to phoneme substitution, for this reason comprehension becomes affected. The principal goals were to determine to what extent learners mispronounced [θ] and [ð], which consonants they used as substitutes for the dental fricatives and to suggest a plan in order to reduce the frequency of mispronouncing these English sounds.

He concluded that mispronunciation of dental-fricative consonants is a usual practice in countries where these kinds of phonemes do not exist. Oral exercises were applied and the conclusion was that dental fricative mispronunciation is a big problem in that country. Phonetics practice and pronunciation activities must be part of the teaching process.

(López, Ruíz, & Rodríguez, 2014) from Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Nicaragua, wrote the paper: "Methodological Strategies to Improve Pronunciation in the English Learning Process as a Foreign Language". The general objective of this research paper was to validate the most appropriate methodological strategies to

help students to improve their pronunciation at Pedro Orozco High School in Terrabona.

Some qualitative techniques were employed such as: surveys, an interview and an observation guide. The study also presented the importance of teaching pronunciation based on methodological strategies. Besides, the researchers proposed some methodological techniques such as reading aloud, isolation, record and replay, use a mirror, phonetics and others which were applied with success since most of the students at the end of the process had improved their pronunciation.

(Wong, 2005) from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, produced the following study "Phonetic Study in the Pronunciation of English Dental Fricative [θ] and [ð], among Hong Kong ESL Learners". This work tries to analyze the Hong Kong ESL students' pronunciation of English dental fricative sounds (voiced and voiceless).

According to the researcher's observation the Cantonese students usually replace the dental fricative sounds with other consonants sound at the beginning and end of the syllable, in that way the syllables of the English words were modified. The goals were to check the patterns in the production of the dental fricative between the students and know the causes of the problem. The students' age was another aspect which was observed and considered since this factor took place in the phenomenon.

The research project made easy the comprehension of the difficulty in the production of the dental fricative sound among Hong Kong ESL students. The researcher's recommendation focused on the teachers and he asked them to be alert to the students' mistakes and compare the English and Cantonese languages being sensible of the contrasts among them in order to prepare good lessons that help students.

All those projects have shown that mispronunciation is still a current problem in many schools so that is why it is necessary to do research in order to find appropriate techniques to help our students.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

In order to continue with this part of the study, we are going to describe the theoretical aspects that are related to the variables of our research project.

2.2.1. Origin of the Word Didactics

The independent variable has to do with the word didactics, so what does didactics mean? Navarro and Piñeiro (2012) emphasized that the word "didactics" has Greek roots. Etymologically the word didactics is "didaskein" that means teaching and "tékne" which suggests art. So the word didactics means "art of teaching." (p.324).

With regards to this, Medina and Salvador (2009) argued that in a literal way "didactics" presents double roots, that is, "docere" which means "to teach" and "discere" which means "to learn". They also explained that those terms had to do with these agents: docere which refers to the teacher and discere which refers to the learner. Both of them are the protagonists who build essential knowledge and respond to the interactive process or the didactic act. (p.6).

2.2.2. Definitions of Didactics

Navarro and Piñeiro (2012) defined didactics as:

> The discipline that studies techniques, procedures, strategies, and methods to enhance the teaching process for students to approach in a wide, deep, and significant way the knowledge in the process of acquisition of English as a foreign language. (p. 234).

Carvajal (2009) described didactics as:

> The part of Pedagogy that is interested in knowledge, it contributes to the teaching-learning process, through the development of theoretical practical tools, which serve for research, training and fundamental student development. (p. 4).

Van der Stoep and Louw (2011) stated, "A theory of teaching or a reflection on the activity of teaching is called "didactics". Therefore, "didactics" is the scientific study of the activity of teaching, i.e., a theory of it" (p. 21).

Ana IT (n.d.) expressed in her article:

> Didactics can be defined as the branch of pedagogy that is in charge of looking for methods and techniques to improve teaching, so that knowledge reaches effectively the educated, who are usually children.(Definition of General Didactics, par. 3).

2.2.3. Objectives of Didactics

According to the approach of Nérici (n.d.) these are the main objectives of Didactics (as cited in Torres and Girón (2009)

- To carry out the purposes of Education.
- To make the teaching-learning process more effective.
- To orient the teaching according to the age of the student.
- To adapt teaching and learning to the students' possibilities and needs.
- To guide the planning of learning activities in order to get progress, continuity and unity, so that the objectives of education are achieved.
- To guide school tasks in an organized way.
- To making Education fit the reality and possibilities of the student and society.

- To carry out a conscious control of the learning process, so that appropriate corrections can be made. (p. 13).

2.2.4. Contents of Didactics

Contents are the set of scientific knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, and principles that students have to learn. They are the basis on which teaching - learning activities are developed in order to achieve the proposed objectives. In the educational process, it is essential to determine the sequence of the contents and for that purpose, teachers must follow a specific program.

Education is present around the triple contents, such as Conceptual contents, Procedural contents, and Attitudinal contents. Content of knowledge, for example is explicit when students learn new things in the classroom it means that they incorporate or assimilate new ideas or concepts, also they can simulate to do something which has to do with procedural contents and finally they can generate good attitudes and create positive thinking and ways of being which represent the attitudinal contents.

- **Conceptual Contents (knowledge)**

Conceptual contents answer the question about what to teach. They are vital information or facts that must be understood by students and include them in their cognitive structure in a comprehensible way. This knowledge is considered of high importance because they represent the essential basis to build new learnings. Conceptual contents must be learned through meaningful learning in order to keep them in the long term memory so that they can be easily retrieved or updated.

If they are acquired in an inconsistent way without relation to previous knowledge they will accumulate in the short term memory and if they are not used in a repetitive way this information will be lost. They are formed by data and facts, and it is

important to keep working on them, because they are the bases on which the students will perform in the procedural and attitudinal contents.

- **Procedural Contents (To know how to do it).**

The procedural contents answer the question "how to learn" and refers to the tools that students will use in the teaching-learning process. It is the students' ability to accomplish actions in order to finish an assignment. The intervention of the students is important because the content requires that they try to know "how to do" something to enhance their learning.

Carmona (2015) stressed:

> Procedural contents constitute a set of actions that facilitate the achievement of an objective. The student will be the main actor in the execution of the procedures that demand the contents, that is, he will develop his ability to "know how to do". (par. 42).

In other words, procedural contents have to do with students' actions, for example: to evaluate a grammar structure, to compare between two speech sounds, to contrast two grammar rules, to write a composition, those are examples of activities that students are able to do in their acquisition of knowledge.

Attitudinal Contents (know how to be)

Carmona also manifested that:
> The attitudinal contents refer to the formation of a positive action according to the values of the society in which individuals live. (par. 95).

Attitudes constitute the people's emotion, convictions and behavior towards something significant such as rules, groups, people, situations, objects. Through attitudes people can evaluate things or circumstances and express value judgments on them.

It involves being engaged or interested, listening with attention, dialoguing, being enthusiastic, obey the rules, having a good disposition. We can apply this content on group work in class where the principles of trust, compromise, agreement, and dialogue can be taught.

2.2.5. Definitions of Didactic Strategies

Didactics strategies can be seen as a set of procedures or actions planned by the educator in order to help students be an active part in the construction of their learning and achieve the required objectives. A didactic strategy should be a planned and organized procedure to achieve the learning purposes. Its elaboration, development and design are under the responsibility of the teacher. Some definitions of didactic strategies are presented in this study:

Two researchers emphasized that didactic strategies have to do with learn a specific subject using techniques, methods, strategies considering the students' interests and necessities. Didactic strategy is the act of developing an educational relationship between teachers and learners, then they with other classmates by sharing ideas, information and activities. Cooperation is present in didactic strategies because students need to work together in order to build their own knowledge. (Navarro & Piñeiro, 2012, p. 324).

Boghici (2011) stated, "Didactic strategy is a "complex and circular set of methods, techniques, educational means and complementary forms of activity organization, based on which the teacher elaborates a work plan with the pupils, in order to realize an efficient learning" (p. 19).

Pierce (2017) said, "The didactic strategies are taken to the classrooms to promote the autonomy of the student, favoring the construction of his own learning."

2.2.6. Objectives of Didactic Strategies

A 2003 compendium of didactics strategies by Tobón (as cited in Trujillo, 2012) the use of didactic strategies is achieved when the student:

- Develop critical and creative thinking.
- Foster responsibility for their training.
- Be able to find, organize and apply information.
- Experience cooperative learning by performing tasks with mutual support.
- Self-reflection on your own learning by asking yourself what, for what? How? When? Where? And with what?
- Understand the personal, social and environmental reality of your problems and solutions.

2.2.7. Types of Didactic Strategies

Among the didactic strategies that teachers can use to help English learners to improve pronunciation, we found the following:

- **Communicative activities:** These kinds of exercises enhance language learning, and especially they help students to develop a good pronunciation. These activities encourage them to practice the target speech sounds. English teachers can elaborate communicative duties, such as small phrases or mini-dialogues for young learners to practice specific sounds, particularly those which are not found in L1.

- **Reading aloud:** In this type of didactic strategy the teacher gives a small text to the learner in order to read out loudly. The teacher has to verify the students' pronunciation mistakes and then gives feedback which will correct the learners' English pronunciation.

  Reading aloud offers learners a possibility to face up their difficulties in pronunciation. This strategy promotes self-assurance and determination to conquer the deficiencies that occur at the moment to practice spoken English

language. This practice will help students to be fluent readers with a good pronunciation.

- **TPR:** Activities that include movements immediately arise interest among the students. Select specific movements to particular speech sounds such as raise a hand, clap or stay sit or stand in reply to sounds. Activities such as minimal pairs, discrimination sounds, can be practiced with this strategy.

- **Direct Instruction:**

Richa (2014) emphasized that Direct Instruction centers its attention on the teacher's actions. The learning resources must be ready and in order. The teaching strategy focuses on share knowledge with students gradually. The learners' cooperation is necessary. This strategy includes the following methodologies: educational speech, repetition and practice, specific teaching, association and disassociation etc. (par. 8-9).

In this strategy, the teacher has the responsibility and the privilege to elaborate the contents and the ability to teach them to students through different means or resources, as Boleware (2018) stated that, "direct instruction is most effective when accompanied by demonstrations, small discussions and visual aids" (par.3).

This type of teaching is based on an expository strategy. It is characterized by the fact that the teachers broadly exposes the concepts by themselves or using technology. The teacher plays an active role in explaining the content or skills to students, but they are not mere listeners. While they are learning they will put the knowledge into practice in an individual and personal way. The student creates a link between the previous knowledge and the new structure then he will build a new body of theoretical concepts.

2.3. English Teaching Methods

2.3.1. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

There are huge advantages for students to be exposed to the target language and having numerous opportunities to use it. Communicative language teaching is one of the methods that gives this chance to them. It is also known as Communicative Approach and focuses on the importance to help students to develop real language instead of structural and lexical items. Teachers encourage the communication and behave like tutors. Students are communicators and are enthusiastically involved in the oral production.

In CLT, language can be used in many conversation activities where students are engaged in realistic communication such as: role plays, performing, games, interviews, conversations, news reporting, and realistic objects. These activities must provoke them the willingness to communicate something. The contents which is going to communicate should have a goal to convey a message. e. g. to make an appointment, to room a table in a restaurant, or write a complain letter to a company, describe an object or a person. (Harmer, 2001, p. 84).

2.3.2. The Direct Method

The direct method has been employed by teachers for many years, since grammar translation was not very efficient and it did not often produce the desired results. The direct method won many adepts and it became the most accepted because its purpose is to learn how to use a foreign language for communication.

This method is based in the idea that the second language is learned following the same process of acquiring the mother tongue language. It is not allowed to talk in the first language. New material is taught orally using the target language. Vocabulary is presented through demonstration, realia, pictures and mimics, the abstract words are learned by connection of ideas.

Teaching grammar is introduced by using the inductive approach. The errors are corrected by the students themselves. The method pays attention to a correct grammar and pronunciation.

Mahapatra (2014) manifested that the application of Natural Method, also known as Direct Method, is appropriate in this contemporary world because of the following causes:
- It supplies wide possibilities for developing the oral communication and acquire suitable pronunciation.
- Learners will have the ability to think in the second language and enhance their oral expression.
- This method puts in practice the principles of the modern teaching process. (p. 112).

2.3.3. Presentation, Practice and Production

This method is well-known and successfully used among educators who teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It is an approach for teaching grammar structure, vocabulary, functions even pronunciation. PPP, as it is also called, is formed by three stages: Presentation, Practice, and Production.

In the phase of presentation the teacher is in charge:
- He introduces the target language using a situation according to a familiar context for the students.
- At the second stage the students practice what they learn through drill, dialogues, responses, all the activities under teachers' direction.
- At the third level, which is the production, learners are motivated to use the new language in a freeway. (Harmer, 2001, p. 80).

2.3.4 Audio-Lingual

Rhalmi (2009) expressed "The objective of the audio-lingual method is accurate pronunciation and grammar" (p. 6). This method is characterized by the following factors:

- The spoken language is practiced most of the time
- The use of realia, flashcards, pictures, posters and games increase the meaningful learning.
- The use of the English language is a routine, therefore it needs to be practice a lot.

Audiolingualism approach was created from the perspective of Behavioral models of learning. The audio lingual method employs three important elements of the theory of Behavior such as Stimulus- Response- Reinforcement in order to produce good habits in language learning. It is essential to use drills in order to form these habits, so that substitution can be part of the drills. In that way, little by little the students are continually assimilate new knowledge. (Harmer, 2001, p. 79).

2.4. Learning Theories

2.4.1. Psychological Theories

- **Behaviorism**

At the beginning of the twentieth century a new psychological model began to emerge and influenced in the scientific and psychological areas of the time. John B. Watson, American psychologist, was the founder of the school of psychology known as Behaviorism, which had a great development in North America countries for many years.

Behaviorism tries to explain the observable behavior of the individual and considers it the answer to some previous stimuli. This approach affirms that behavior is learned and the stimulus and the reinforcement play a very important role. This model is applied by parents when they reward their children for showing good behavior or doing what is asked of them.

Pritchard (2009) defined behaviorism as "A theory of learning focusing on observable behaviors and discounting any mental activity. Learning is defined simply as the acquisition of new behavior" (p.6).

In other words, the theory only has to do with observable behaviors, the inner part of the human being, such as the mental processes or cognitions, the aspects of the soul like emotions, conscience, feelings are not considered at the theory of behavior because they are impossible for an objective study.

The following tables show the principal representatives of Behaviorism and their main theories:

Table 3

Psychological Theories of Learning: Operant and classical conditioning

Main Representative	Theories	Concept
B. F. Skinner	Operant Conditioning	It is a type of associative learning that focuses on the development of new behaviors according to their consequences.
Ivan Pavlov	Classical Conditioning	There is an association between two stimuli. An organism learns to respond to a stimulus that at the beginning of conditioning was neutral.

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Another example of the well-known Psychological theories are described in the table below:

Table 4

Psychological Theories of Learning: Laws of Learning, Theory of Response of Psychology

Main Representative	Theories	Concept
Edward Thorndike	Laws of Learning	Any behavior that has good consequences will be repeated, and any behavior that has bad consequences will be avoided.
John Watson	Theory of response of Psychology	According to Watson certain emotions such as love, fear and fury with behaviors are stimulated and the stimulus-response association is established.

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

- **Cognitivism**

This theory served as an alternative to behaviorism and it focuses in the acquisition of knowledge and skills by mental or cognitive process, such us perception, memory, knowledge, thinking, attention, (Pritchard, 2009, p.17) all these cognition actions occur inside the" black box" of the brain, as the behaviorists called to the mind.

In agreement with cognitivists students have full participation in the acquisition of their own knowledge. They can employ different strategies in order to receive, process, transfer, and apply new information of the contents. Nowadays, students' skills, opinion, and attitudes are taken into consideration to impact the learning experience. (Rhalmi, 2011, par. 3).

The following examples show the principal representatives of Cognitivism and their main theories:

Table 5

Psychological Theories of Learning: Instructional Theory, Multiple Intelligence

Main Representative	Theories	Concept
Robert Gagne	Instructional Theory	It has to do with internal and external conditions named as "conditions of learning" The first one has to do with the prior knowledge that the learner has before teacher's instructions, and the second one regards with a stimuli that is showed to the student.
Howard Gardner	Multiple Intelligence	This theory classifies 8 intelligences. All these intelligences work together in the human being. Gardner says that each person shows these intelligence, some in a low or high grade, they help people face life, work, circumstances, personal relationships, and problems.

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

More examples of the Psychological Theories of Learning in the following table:

Table 6

Psychological Theories of Learning: Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels Theory of Intellectual Development

Main Representative	Theories	Concept
Benjamin Bloom	Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels	It concerns with the classification of the objectives of education. The system of education according with this theory can be divided in three stages: Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor. The main idea of this theory is that the students achieved the educational goals.
Jean Piaget	Theory of Intellectual Development	The theory of cognitive development proposes that kids progress through four stages of mental development. Piaget's theory center its attention to understand how children get knowledge and to figure out the nature of intelligence.

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

- **Constructivism**

Pritchard (2009) stated a concept of Constructivism in this way:

> Constructivists view learning is the result of mental construction. That is, learning takes place when new information is built into and added onto an individual's current structure of knowledge. (p. 17).

Funderstanding (2011) stated that:

> Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. (par. 1).

In other words, the theory of constructivism argues that students become the protagonist of learning by connecting the new information with their previous knowledge. Every human being has the opportunity to be an active part in the construction of his learning and knowledge, making connection between his reality and experiences with his previous concepts or ideas. Therefore, learners take part in a dynamic, interactive and participatory learning process.

Besides, constructivism considers learning as something special and singular that develops between the learner and the object that is learned. Since students have their own styles of learning and acquiring knowledge in different ways, the teacher plays an important role because he will be the guide and facilitator in the classroom.

The principles of Constructivism:

- Instruction has to be focused on students' experiences and a good environment must cooperate with the development of learning.
- Instruction must have a defined organization in order to students understand the contents.
- Instruction must planned to promote deduction. (Culatta, 2018)

The following table shows the principal representatives of Constructivism and their main theories:

Table 7

Psychological Theories of Learning

Main Representatives	Theories	Description
Jerome Brunner	Discovery Learning	This theory promotes that the learner acquires the knowledge for himself, so that the content to be learned is not presented in its complete form, but must be discovered by the learner. Students learn under the guidance of the teacher with appropriate material to stimulate them to experience, knowing, asking, comparing, observe.
Lev Vygotsky	Theory of Social Development	Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the contribution of the community to individual cognitive development. He believed that people around children such as parents, relatives, classmates and culture play an important role in the formation of human learning. (McLeod, 2014, p. 2).
David Ausubel	Theory of meaningful learning	This point of view is opposite to rote learning and it is based on constructivism theory. Ausubel states that the students' previous knowledge is essential in order to build the new information. Meaningful learning is the process by which new knowledge is related to another from the past, the learner assimilates the information, relates it and organizes it, then the practice of that knowledge is executed. It is a human act that is done consciously. Knowledge must be easily acquired, its retention must be enduring and learning must be active. (Ballester, 2014, p. 2)

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

2.4.2. Linguistic Theories

General Theory of Linguistic Signs.

Language is an innate capacity in human beings in order to communicate and transmit verbal or non-verbal information a system of signs is used. In this system of signs we find the linguistic sign. According to Ferdinand de Saussure linguistic signs are oral signs that form a language. They are formed by two elements: Signifier and Signified.

The signifier which Saussure called "sound image" (for example a heart) is the mental linguistic sign. On the other hand, the signified (a symbol of love and affection) has to do with the concept or meaning. It is the mental image which is associated with the "thing". Therefore, the relationships between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary, that is, there is not any reasonable or logical association between them. (Lanir, 2012).

Theory of Acquisition and Learning of Languages

Stephen Krashen is a well-known American linguistic and professor. For many years he has written a lot of books about second language acquisition. He is the author of the theory of Acquisition and Learning of Languages. His beliefs have been widely accepted and his theories have influenced the concept of transmission of learning in a positive way. Krashen is convinced that a second language can be acquired and assumed that there is not a huge difference between the way people learn the first language and the second one.

"Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill." Stephen Krashen (as cited in Schütz, 2017, para. 1). That is, he believes that each human being has an inherent or natural ability that leads him during the acquisition of language. This ability helps children to assimilate the first language easily by listening people speaking a language (input) that will be significant for them, "comprehensible input' is the crucial and necessary ingredient for the acquisition of language." Stephen Krashen. (as cited in Schütz, 2017, par. 3).

The interaction and relationship with native speakers or with people that are fluent in the target language become essential in order to acquire the second language. "In the real world, conversations with sympathetic native speakers who are willing to help the acquirer understand are very helpful." Stephen Krashen (as cited in Schütz, 2017, para. 5). Schütz (2017) emphasized that second language acquisition theory consists of five main hypotheses. (par. 4).

- Acquisition-Learning hypothesis
- Monitor hypothesis
- Natural Order hypothesis
- Input hypothesis
- Affective Filter hypothesis

Transformational Grammar (TG)

It is also called Transformational-Generative Grammar. Noam Chomsky is recognized as the designer of the term "Generative Grammar". In linguistics, this concept refers to a set of theories for the study of the syntax of languages. It is a theory that proposes to explain the knowledge that the speaker has of their language and it provides a set of rules or principles that predict combinations that are grammatically correct in a language.

Nordquist (2017) states that:

> In linguistics, generative grammar is a set of rules that indicates the structure and interpretation of sentences which native speakers of a language accept as belonging to the language. (par. 1).

The following table shows the principal representatives of Linguistic Theories:

Table 8

Linguistic Theories

Main Representatives	Theories	Description
Ferdinand de Saussure	General Theory of Linguistic Signs.	According to Ferdinand de Saussure the linguistic signs are the oral signs that form a language. They are formed by two elements: Signifier and Signified
Stephen Krashen	Theory of acquisition and learning of languages	The acquisition of a second language is acquired naturally without any effort or follow grammar rules.
Noam Chomsky	Transformative generative grammar	It is a linguistic theory that arises as a hypothesis of the acquisition of language

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

2.5. Definitions of Pronunciation

- According to American Heritage Dictionary (2017), A graphic representation of the way a word is spoken, using phonetic symbols.

- YourDictionary (2017) said, "The act or manner of pronouncing syllables, words, and phrases with regard to the production of sounds and the placing of stress, intonation, etc.

- The Free Dictionary (2017) said, "Pronunciation is the act or manner of pronouncing a word".

- Pronunciation is the act of producing sounds of speech with the purpose of expressing meaning. It involves segmental and suprasegmental sounds.

2.6. Dimensions of Pronunciation

2.6.1. Production

Manner of Articulation

The manner of articulation describes how the airflow is obstructed as it flows from the lungs and out of the mouth and nose. It determines how the different speech organs take part in producing a consonant sound. Professor Naeem (2010) classified the manner of articulation in the following way:

Plosives: There is a total closure in the mouth. The air is blocked behind the closure and there is a pressure. When the air escapes a plosive is produced**.**

> /p/ as in pay
>
> /k/ as in key
>
> /t/ as in table

Affricate: There is an association of sounds. There is a total closure somewhere in the mouth similar to a plosive. Then, the air pressure is released slowly with friction like fricatives.   /tʃ/ as in chair   /dʒ/ as in jaw

Fricative: There is a partial block at some point on the vocal tract. The air goes out through a narrow passage with audible friction.

> /f/ as in face   /v/ as in vase
>
> /θ/ as in thank   /ð/ as in them
>
> /s/ as in Sue   /z/ as in zoo
>
> /ʃ/ as in shoe   /ʒ/ as in rouge
>
> /h/ as in house

Nasals: This consist of a complete closure of the mouth. The flow of air escapes through the nose.   // as in mouse

> /n/ as in name
>
> /ŋ/ as in anger

Lateral: There is a partial block in the moth made by the tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge. The air stream can escape around the sides of the tongue. Example: light' and 'full' The sound is voiced.

Approximant: Tip of the tongue approaches to the alveolar ridge, but not close enough to produce audible friction.   /w/ as in window

/r/ as in radio

/j/ as in yes

Place of Articulation

Place of articulation refers to where in the vocal tract the construction of airflow takes place. Roach (2015) listed the place of articulation in this way:

Bilabial: Both lips come together.

/p/ as in Peggy   /b/ as in boat

Labio dental: Upper teeth and lower lip come together.

/f/ as in floor   /v/ as in very

Dental: Tongue in between upper and lower teeth.

/θ/ as in think   /ð/ as in father

Alveolar: Tip of the tongue at or near the ridge behind the upper front teeth.

/t/ as in top   /d/ as in day

Post alveolar: Tongue and the alveolar ridge.

/ʃ/ as in wish   /tʃ/ as in chair

/ʒ/ as in measure   /dʒ/ as in age

Velar: Velum and back of the tongue.

/k/ as in key   /g/ as in go

Glottal: Glottis or the space between the vocal folds.

/h/ as in hat

Voicing or state of the glottis refers to what the vocal folds are doing. When air passes through open vocal folds, we call these **voiceless** sounds. When air passes through vibrating vocal folds, we call these **voiced** sounds. You can feel the difference between voiced and voiceless sounds by putting your hand on the Adam's apple. For example: You should feel that / z / produce a vibration. So it is a voiced sound. On the other hand, / s / does not produce vibration. So it is a voiceless sound.

According to Roach (2015)), we can produce contrasted kind of voicing; for example when we sing, shout and speak softly, the quality of our voice becomes different, the same happens when we tell stories or read a poem, a novel we change our voice according to the characters, all of those variations are made by the larynx. The vocal folds can also change. They can extended or not so long, can be rigid or flexible. The sub glottal pressure, that is, the pressure of the air below the vocal folds can be modified. (p. 27).

Besides that he said that there are three different types of voicing:

Variations in intensity: We produce voicing with high intensity for shouting, for example, and with low intensity for speaking quietly.

Variations in frequency: If the vocal folds vibrate rapidly, the voicing is at high frequency; if there are fewer vibrations per second, the frequency is lower.

Variations in quality: We can produce different-sounding voice qualities, such as those we might call harsh, breathy, murmured or creaky. (p. 27).

2.6.2. Perception

- One researcher emphasized that "the speech sound discrimination is the ability to perceive similarities and differences between speech sounds" (Estrella, 2017, p. 8).

- As state in Definitions.net (n.d.), speech perception is the process by which the sounds of language are heard, interpreted and understood. Research in speech perception seeks to understand how human listeners recognize speech sounds and use this information to understand spoken language.

In terms of perception it is very common to use minimal pairs which are defined as words that differ by only one sound. We show a table with vowels that differ in a single sound.

Table 9

Minimal Pairs

Vowels	Sound 1	Sound 2
/ɪ/ and /i:/	slip	sleep
/e/ and /ɪ/	rest	wrist
/e/ and /eɪ/	test	taste

Source: Second Edition. Pronunciation Pair by Ann Baker and Sharon Goldstein

2.6.3. Prediction

One researcher stated that "prediction is the ability to predict the speech sounds according to the spelling of the words" (Estrella, 2017, p. 8). For example:

Table 10

Prediction (Consonant Spelling)

Sound	Spelling	Example	Expressions
/ay/	It is usually spelled with the letter **i** or **y**	h**i**, f**i**nd, m**y**, wh**y**	H**i**, **I** bu**y** a new t**ie** **I** had a n**i**ce t**i**me.
/u/	The sound **/u/** is usually spelled with the letters **oo** or **u**.	t**oo**, s**oo**n, tr**u**th, st**u**dent	See you s**oo**n Exc**u**se me.

Source: Second Edition. Pronunciation Pair by Ann Baker and Sharon Goldstein

2. 7. Speech Sounds

Definition of Vowels

In the words of Roach (2015) vowels are "sounds in which there is no obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips". (p. 10)

Vowels can be classified en this way:

- Long and short vowels
- Close and open vowels
- Front and back vowels
- Spread, rounded, neutral

As well Underhill (2005) stated,

> In the production of vowel sounds, the vocal tract is open so that there is no obstruction to the air flow escaping over the tongue. The characteristic sound of a vowel depends on the shape and size of the resonant space in the mouth. (p. 5).

Definition of Consonants

Consonants sounds are produced in the vocal tract. According to Rahman (2012) there are twenty four English consonant phoneme. They involve some constriction of airflow, whereas vowel do not. When linguists described consonant sounds, they use three criteria: voicing, place of articulation and manner of articulation.

According to Roach (2015), "consonants are sounds in which there is obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips. This obstruction is formed by the articulators". (p. 10).

In keeping with Underhill (2005),

> Consonant sounds are made by restricting or blocking the air flow in some physical way, and this restriction, or the release of the restriction, is what gives the consonant its characteristic sound. By contrast, vowels require the vocal tract to be open so that the air stream escapes unobstructed. (p.29).

2.8. Fricative Sounds

2.8.1. Concept and Characteristics

Roach (2015), stated that:

> Fricatives are consonants with the characteristic that air escapes through a narrow passage and makes a hissing sound. They are continuant consonants, which means that you can continue making them without interruption as long as you have enough air in your lungs. (p.39).

2.8.2. Production of Fricatives in General

Fricatives are sounds produced when the tongue approaches but does not make contact with a place of articulation causing a bottleneck of the airflow. This give the sound a friction like quality such as / v / z / θ / ʃ /

2.8.3. The Fricatives of English

Table 11

The Fricative of English

	Labio Dental	Dental	Alveoral	Post Alveoral	Glottal
Fortis Voiceless	f	/θ/	s	/ʃ/	h
Lenis Voiced	v	/ð/	z	/ʒ/	

Source: **Fourth Edition.** English Phonetics and Phonology: A practical Course by Peter Roach

2.8.4. Place of Articulation of Fricatives

Roach (2015) described the place of articulation of fricatives:

> With the exception of glottal, each place of articulation has a pair of phonemes, one fortis and one lenis. The fortis fricatives are said to be articulated with greater force than the lenis, and their friction noise is louder. The lenis fricatives have very little or no voicing in initial and final positions, it may be voiced when they occur between voiced sounds. (p.40).
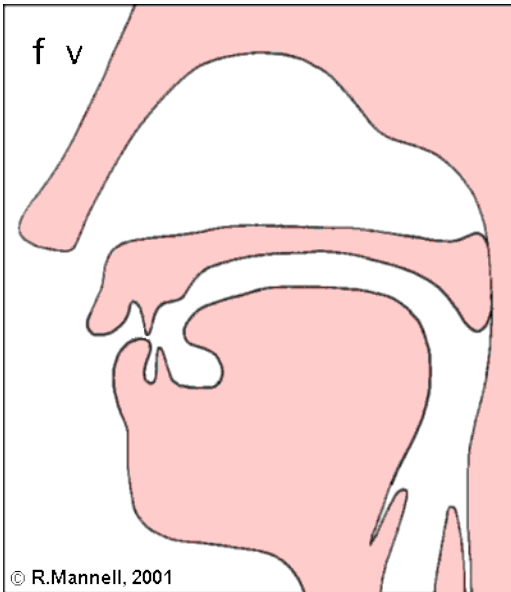
/f/ free (Fortis – Voiceless)

/v/ vine (Lenis – Voiced)

"In the production of labiodental fricatives touch your top teeth with your bottom lip. Blow out air between your tip and teeth. Do not use your voice. Use your voice to say /v/" (Baker & Goldstein, 2008, p.139 -143).

Figure 1
Articulation of Labiodental Fricatives
Source: Articulation of Fricatives. Reprinted from Phonetics and Phonology, by R. Mannell, 2009, Retrieved from - http://clas.mq.edu.au/speech/phonetics/phonetics/consonants/fricatives.html Copyright [2009] by Copyright Macquarie University. Elaborated by Peggy Luque Madrid
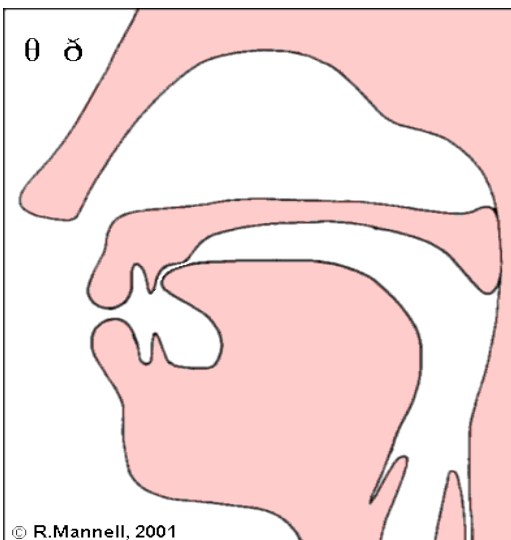
/θ/ throw (Fortis - Voiceless)

/ð/ then   (Lenis – Voiced)

Put the tip of your tongue behind your front teeth. Blow out air between your tongue and top teeth. Do not use your voice. Use your voice to say /ð/.

Figure 2
Articulation of Dental Fricatives
Source: Articulation of Fricatives. Reprinted from Phonetics and Phonology, by R. Mannell, 2009, Retrieved from - http://clas.mq.edu.au/speech/phonetics/phonetics/consonants/fricatives.html Copyright [2009] by Copyright Macquarie University. Elaborated by Peggy Luque Madrid
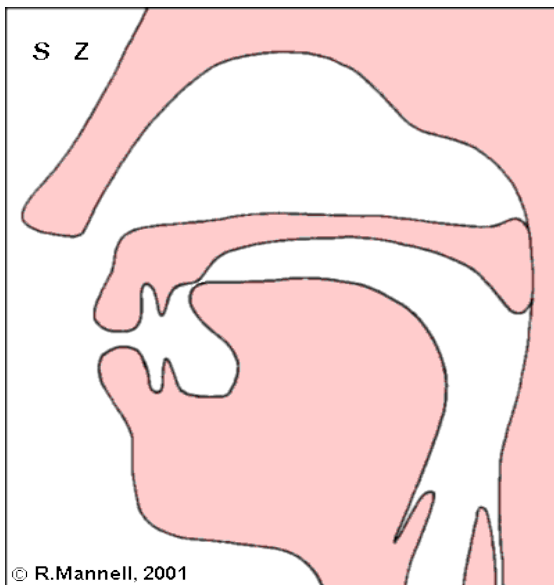
/s/ sister (Fortis Voiceless)

/z/ music (Lenis – Voiced)

"Touch your top teeth with the sides of your tongue. Put your tongue forward, behind your top teeth. Force air out over the top of your tongue. Do not use your voice". Use your voice to say /z/" (Baker & Goldstein, 2008, p.109 - 113).

Figure 3
Articulation of Alveolar Fricatives
Source: Articulation of Fricatives. Reprinted from Phonetics and Phonology, by R. Mannell, 2009, Retrieved from - http://clas.mq.edu.au/speech/phonetics/phonetics/consonants/fricatives.html Copyright [2009] by Copyright Macquarie University. Elaborated by Peggy Luque Madrid
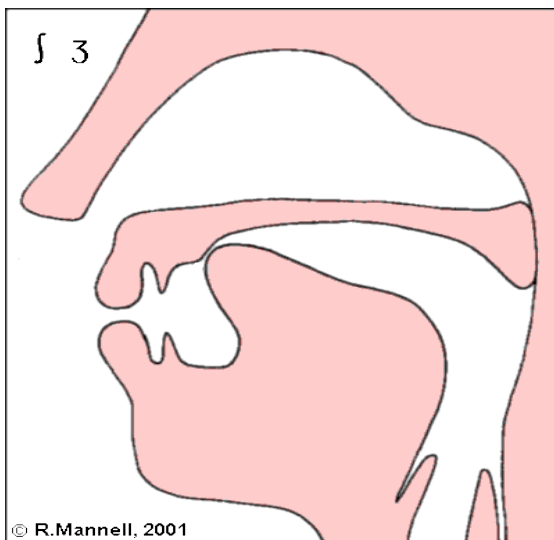
/ʃ/ as in shot (Fortis Voiceless)

/ʒ/ as in vision (Lenis – Voiced)

"Put the tip of your tongue up and back a little to make /ʃ/. Push your lips forward a little into a circle. The same position for /ʒ/ but use your voice to pronounce it." (Baker & Goldstein, 2008, p.117 - 121).

Figure 4
Articulation of Post Alveolar Fricatives
Source: Articulation of Fricatives. Reprinted from Phonetics and Phonology, by R. Mannell, 2009, Retrieved from - http://clas.mq.edu.au/speech/phonetics/phonetics/consonants/fricatives.html Copyright [2009] by Copyright Macquarie University. Elaborated by Peggy Luque Madrid
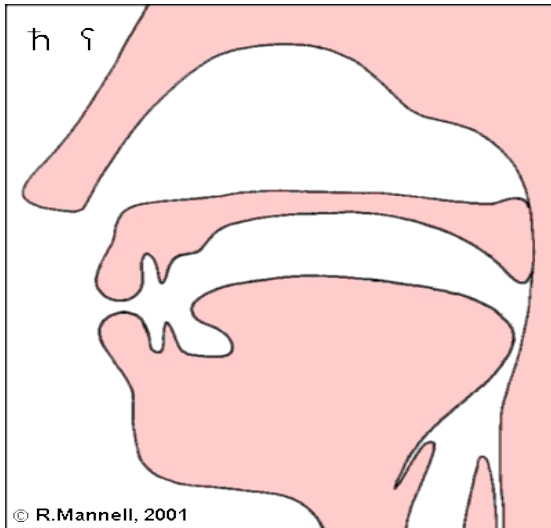
/no /h/   air, old, eat

/h/   hair, hold, heat

"Open your mouth. Quickly push out a lot of air, do not use your voice. Do not touch the roof of your mouth with your tongue". (Baker & Goldstein, 2008, p.152).

Figure 5
Articulation of Glottal Fricatives
Source: Articulation of Fricatives. Reprinted from Phonetics and Phonology, by R. Mannell, 2009, Retrieved from - http://clas.mq.edu.au/speech/phonetics/phonetics/consonants/fricatives.html Copyright [2009] by Copyright Macquarie University. Elaborated by Peggy Luque Madrid

2.8.5. Perception of Fricatives

As it was mentioned before that the perception of fricatives has to do with the capacity to distinguish similarities and differences between phonemes or speech sounds. We present the following examples that confirm that relationship:

Example No. 1

Tabla 12

Similarities and Differences between Labiodental Fricatives

	/ f /	**/ v /**	**Examples**	
Similarities	consonant	consonant	fan	van
	labiodental	labiodental	fine	vine
	fricative	fricative	few	view
	upper teeth	upper teeth	leaf	leave
	lower lip	lower lip		
Differences	fortis	lenis		
	voiceless	voiced		

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Example No. 2

Table 13

Similarities and Differences between Dental Fricatives

	/ θ /	/ ð /	Examples	
Similarities	consonant	consonant	breath	breathe
	dental	dental	teeth	teethe
	fricative	fricative	bath	bathe
	tip of the tongue	tip of the tongue	coth	clothe
	upper teeth	upper teeth		
Differences	fortis	lenis		
	voiceless	voiced		

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

This is another example about fricatives that help us to notice the relation between the phonemes:

Table 14

Similarities and Differences between Alveolar Fricatives

	/ s/	/ z /	Examples	
Similarities	consonant	consonant	lacy	lazy
	alveolar	alveolar	price	prize
	fricative	fricative	bus	buzz
	tip of the tongue	tip of the tongue	sip	zip
	alveolar reach	alveolar ridge		
Differences	fortis	lenis		
	voiceless	voiced		

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

2.8.6. Prediction of Fricatives

As we mentioned before prediction of fricatives is the faculty to anticipate the phonemes or speech sounds in agreement with the spelling of the words. We present the following examples:

Spelling Rules for Labiodental Fricatives

F   "For fine fresh flowers, phone Phillip"

- It is pronounced the same way as Spanish **" f "** (foco, future, foto).

- It is found at the beginning, middle, and end position in a word.

Spelling: **f**   **f**ood – **f**rame – **f**un - **f**ace

               ff   o**ff**er – su**ff**er – o**ff**ice

               ph   **ph**oto **ph**one   **ph**onology

               gh   (is silent) lau**gh** cou**gh**   tou**gh**

Common Expressions:
Is it **f**ar **f**rom here?   It's **f**ive a**f**ter **f**our   **F**ill out this **f**orm   Don't **f**orget

V   "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"

- Consonant **" V "** does not exist in most dialects in Spanish because people pronouns **" b "** instead of **" v ".**
- It is found at the beginning, middle, and end position in a word.

Spelling: **V**   **v**ein   **v**ocabulary   **v**est

               Unusual spelling **"of "** / ʌv /
               Words ending with the sound **/ v /** always add the letter " e " in the
               spelling. English words do not end in letter " v ".

Common Expressions:
It's **v**ery expensi**v**e   I don't belie**v**e it

Spelling Rules for Dental Fricatives

/θ/   **"Three thick things"**

- It does not exist in most Spanish dialects.

- It is present in Spanish, in words like (**z**apato, **z**orro).

- It is found at the beginning, middle and end position in a word.

Spelling: At the beginning of content words **" th "** is pronounced **/θ/**

Verbs	Nouns	Adjectives	Adverbs
think	**th**ing	**th**in	**th**inly
throw	**th**ree	**th**ick	

At the end of a word, **" th "** is almost always pronounced **/θ/**

tee**th**, sou**th**, pa**th**, mou**th**, mon**th**

Exception: smoo**th** / s m u **ð** /

" th " is silent in these words: as**th**ma, clo**th**es, mo**th**s

/ð/   **"This is smoother than the other"**

- It is similar to Spanish " d " when it is between two vowels.

          n**ada**   est**ado**s   hel**ado**   mantec**ado**

- It is found at the beginning, middle, and end position in a word.

Spelling: At the beginning of function words (phonemes, articles, conjunctions).

" th " is almost always pronounced **/ð/** **th**e, **th**is, **th**ese, **th**ose, **th**an

- If **" th "** is followed by **" e "** it is **/ð/**
  Compare the nouns and verbs:

Nouns	Verbs
brea**th** **/θ/**	brea**the** **/ð/**
tee**th**	tee**the**
ba**th**	ba**the**
co**th**	clothe

- It is usually pronounced **/ð/** before **" er ".** (e.g.):
  mo**ther**   fa**ther**   la**ther**   ei**ther**   wea**ther**

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Spelling Rules for Post Alveolar Fricatives

/ʃ/   "She sells seashells by the seashore."

- It is not present in Spanish.
- It is found at the beginning, middle, and end position in a word.

Spelling: **sh**: **sh**oe   **ti** (between two vowels)

bru**sh**   informa**ti**on

radi**sh**   posi**ti**on

shadow   condi**ti**on

shopping   ini**ti**al

ci (between two vowels)   **ssi** (between two vowels)

spe**ci**al   discu**ssi**on

deli**ci**ous   profe**ssi**on

musi**ci**an   Ru**ssi**a

/ʒ/   "An unusual collision was announced by television"

- It exists in the Spanish of Argentina, Uruguay and Central Colombia.
- In these countries Spanish **" y "** and **" ll "** are pronounced **/ʒ/** in words like: yo, llano, yucca, yema, lluvia
- It is found in the middle and end of words

Spelling: **s** (between two vowels)   **ion**: deci**sion**

mea**s**ure   divi**sion**

plea**s**ure   provi**sion**

u**s**ually   televi**sion**

ge –gi   **ual**

rou**ge**   casual

bei**ge**   usual

ure   **ia**

pleasure   As**ia**

leisure   Malays**ia**

Spelling Rules for Glottal Fricatives

/h/ **"Hello, Harry Healy!"**

- It is similar to the sound of Spanish letters **g** before **e, I, j** in several dialects of American Spanish: **g**ente, **g**iro, **j**ota, **j**ugo
- It is found at the beginning, middle, and end position in a word.

Spelling: **h**: **h**eart, **h**umble, **h**orror, **h**omeless

wh: " **h** " is silent when it follow **g,k,r**, at the beginning of words: k**h**aki, r**h**ubarbs, r**h**yme, r**h**ythm

2.9. Legal Framework

The Ministry of Education of Ecuador has guaranteed the education as a right for all its citizens declaring it in article 26 of the agreement 0052-14. Children, families and all the society have the right to be educated. The education acquired assure equality, social integration which are the favorable conditions for good living. It was established by the Ministerial Agreement No. 041-14, March 11, 2014, for the Basic General Education level the implementation of the subject of the Foreign Language-English in the curriculum.

Also the law points out in the Article 1, that teaching English in the coastal and highlands regions of Ecuadorian territory, is compulsory and will start from the second grade of Basic General Education to the third year of high school in all institutions public and private.

According to Article 3 under the same agreement the subject of English will be taught by the academic staff with a minimum grade of B2 according to the scale of the Common European Framework for Languages.

2.10. Conceptual Framework

TH Sounds: They refers to the theta ($/θ/$) or eth ($/ð/$) sounds. In English th has two different pronunciation: voiced dental fricative $/ð/$ (e.g. there, then). The other th is voiceless dental fricative $/θ/$. (e.g. think, thank).

Voiced consonants are consonants sounds which are produced when the air passes through the vocal cords making them vibrates.

Voiceless or unvoiced consonants are consonants sounds which are produced when the air passes through the open vocal cords but there is not vibration.

Articulators: Articulators are the different parts of the mouth that are used when spoken, such as lips, tongue, soft palate, teeth and jaw.

Speech sound: The sounds that we produce when we speak using the different articulation of the vocal tract.

Didactic Strategies: Didactic is a learning activity. The role of the didactic strategies in the practice of teaching English is fundamental since it depends the success of learning in the class.

Fricative: Are continuous sounds characterized by a friction which is notorious when they are produced.

Methodology: It consists of theories and researchers and also it is connected with what and how to teach.

Method: Through the method the theory is put into practice. It helps to choose the skills to be taught, also the content, and the order in which the content will be presented. It is the plan to organize the presentation of the lesson plan.

Activities: They are specific actions that facilitate the execution of the technique. They are flexible and allow to adjust the technique to the characteristics of the group.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Types of Research Description

According to the type of previous knowledge that serves as a starting point, this study is **scientific** because the researcher applies a theoretical framework which is derived from science. Considering the nature of the object of study, this research is **factual** since it is based on observable facts in real life.

In accordance with the levels of research, this project is:

➤ **Exploratory:** It serves to familiarize the researcher with the phenomena, events or situations that are unknown.

➤ **Explanatory:** The project will be submitted under an explanatory research trying to clarify why and how the two variables of this study can be related.

➤ **Descriptive:** It tries to determine the causes for which students have difficulty in producing the dental fricative sounds.

➤ **Not Experimental:** The phenomenon or situation under analysis is not modified, since the relationship between the variables already occurred previously.

Conforming to the statement of the problem, this study is **theoretical, basic or pure.** It is oriented to provide to the problem which has been stated, with the theoretical and conceptual framework.

In agreement with the study method of the variables, this research is:

➤ **Quantitative:** This type of method is adopted when it is necessary to collect measurable data of the variables, then they can be changed into useful statistics. It also seeks to measure the accuracy or otherwise of some phenomenon such as attitudes, facts, opinions, behavior, and other types of variables.

The **quantitative** method uses questionnaires as a measuring instrument which are formed by multiple choice questions, statistical procedures are used, you can also use graphs, tables or any other instruments to measure quantities.

In consonance with the number of variables:

➢ **Bivariate:** The research has two variables:

Independent variable: Didactic strategies

Dependent variable: Pronunciation of dental fricative consonants

In line with the environment the research is conducted:

➢ **Bibliographic:** Because the information will be gathered from different kinds of sources. We can use also oral research that include information by directly talking to people.

➢ **Field:** The problem has been observed at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Mixta Comdte. Rafael Morán Valverde in order to identify the learners' difficulties of pronunciation that they deal with during the learning process.

3.2. Methods, Techniques and Research Instruments

3.2.1. Methods and Techniques

This study employs a **quantitative** research which is one of the methodological aspects in the process of data collection. The numerical data were got through an interview guide and a questionnaire, then they were analyzed and the results were transformed into statistics. Those instruments were used to determine the causes by which the problem of the investigation is present.

This is also a **qualitative** research since the information which was provided in both observation guides helped us to interpret certain aspects and results in order to get conclusions of the phenomenon. The **techniques** that were used in this study are the following: Survey, interview, and class observation.

3.2.2. Research Instruments

In this research project the following research instruments were used: two observation guides, a questionnaire for students, an interview guide for teachers. These research instruments were processed in order to determine the factors for students' mispronunciation in the target language.

Class Observation Guide:

Two **class observations** were carried out for this project. The first one was directed to the ninth graders, focusing on the learning process. It was intended to analyze the students' participation in class activities, their motivation, interests, behavior, the atmosphere in the class, monitor the appropriate use of materials and the students' attitude during the learning process. This class observation guide contained ten items.

The second observation focused on the English teacher and the teaching process. Its main purpose was to test her performance, the use of the English language in the classroom, the use of materials, the implementation of techniques and all the other aspects related to classroom management. This class observation guide contained ten items too.

A **questionnaire** was another instrument which was applied to 35 students from ninth grade at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde, It consisted of twelve questions and it was used in order to know the students' level of satisfaction and their opinion about aspects related to the process of teaching English, such as the correction of pronunciation, the existence of didactic resources to teach pronunciation, the use of the target language in class, and the use of the laboratory.

An **interview guide** which included eight questions was given to four English teachers. The aim of this interview was to check their academic preparation, level of proficiency in English, and their experience in the teaching process.

3.3. Research Population and Sample:

The school is located at the southwest area of Guayaquil city in Febres Cordero district. The **population** of the study included 4 teachers and 35 students from ninth grade at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde. The students' ages varied from 12- 15 years old. The research population was relatively small so this would be our **sample.**

3.4. Sources, Resources and Timeline
Table 15

Sources and Resources

Description	Number	Price	Total
Internet	10 meses	$26,00	$260,00
Anillados	4	$10,0	$40,0
Printing Papers	70	$0,10	$7,00
Empastados	2	$15,00	$30,00
CD's	3	$1,50	$4,50
Pendrive	2	$13,00	$13,00

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Table 16

Timeline

Activity	MONTHS									
	Jul	Agt.	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Marz	Abril
Chapter 1 Background, statement of the problem, objectives, justification, research questions, variables	x x x x									
Chapter 2 Literature Review Theoretical, Legal, and Conceptual Framework		x x x x	x x x x							
Chapter 3 Research Methods/Tech . Populations and sample Resources Processing, Presentation and Analysis of Results Conclusions				x x x x	x x x x	x x				
Chapter 4 Title Justification Objectives Proposed Project Plan Validation Impact and benefits Conclusions Recommendations Bibligraphic References Anexes						x x x x	x x x x	x x x	x x x	x x

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

3.5. Processing, Presentation and Analysis of Results

3.5.1. Results and Analysis of the Class Observation which Focused on theTeacher`s Performance in class (Aspects related to classroom management)

- An English teacher was observed in 9th Grade "C" from the English Area at "Unidad Educativa Fiscal Cmdte. Rafael Morán Valverde". In total, there were 10 aspects under observation. The results revealed the following facts:

-The use of instructional material was not evident during the development of the lesson. The teacher did not provide directions to perform activities that could have helped the students to retain and practice the topic, as a result, they did not have any written or oral tasks to develop.

-Just one or two students answered the teacher's questions during the short explanation of the topic the rest of them did not pay attention at all. Team work was not promoted.

-The teacher did not use precise activities to promote a good pronunciation. During the presentation of the new topic neither the teacher nor the students spoke in English. At a specific moment the teacher asked a question in Spanish and one student used the same language to answer it.

-It was difficult to make a complete evaluation of the students' pronunciation in class because of the continuous use of the mother tongue. It was evident that during the English class there was lack of motivation to produce a good pronunciation since from the beginning of the lesson both teacher and learners were speaking Spanish.

3.5.2. Results and Analysis of the Class Observation
which Focused on the Students

Thirty-five students were observed in 9th Grade "C" from the English Area at "Unidad Educativa Fiscal Cmdte. Rafael Morán Valverde". In total, there were 10 aspects under observation.

-At the moment of the class observation the students showed good behavior. They also had a good attitude when the teacher asked them to be silent and pay attention in order to begin the activities.

Very few students were engaged with the English class since the lesson was introduced without a warm up and was led directly to the specific topic using L1 most of the time. There was not any kind of support material.

-. After the explanation of the structure the students were not asked to practice the new structure either in written way or orally. Therefore, the students did not have tasks to complete or perform.

By observing the students, it was easy to notice that most of them were not interested in the lesson and adopted a passive role. The teacher could not capture their attention, as a result, most of them were talking to each other and others were indifferent.

-The teacher and the learners did not strive to use the English language. Since nobody made the effort to use it, the learners were not motivated to express themselves in the target language, therefore oral participation was not observed.

3.5.3 Results and Analysis of the Teachers' interview

This interview was applied to 4 teachers at Unidad Educativa Fiscal Rafael Moràn Valverde. The purpose of this was to gather important data regarding their teaching experience, background, expertise and qualifications.

Table 17

Question 1 *In what place did you learn English?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
High School	1	25%
University	2	50%
English Academy	1	25%
English Speaking Country	0	0%
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 6
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Considering the chart above, 50% of educators learned L2 at university. It means that this will be very favorable for students since the teachers acquired not only the communicative competence but also the necessary skills to teach English in the correct way. On the other hand, the other 50% of the teachers learned English at high schools and academies which means that they did not develop their professional competences.

Table 18

Question 2 *What level of education did you get?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
High School Diploma	2	50%
Bachelor in Education	2	50%
Master in Education	0	0%
PH.D	0	0%
Total	**4**	**100%**

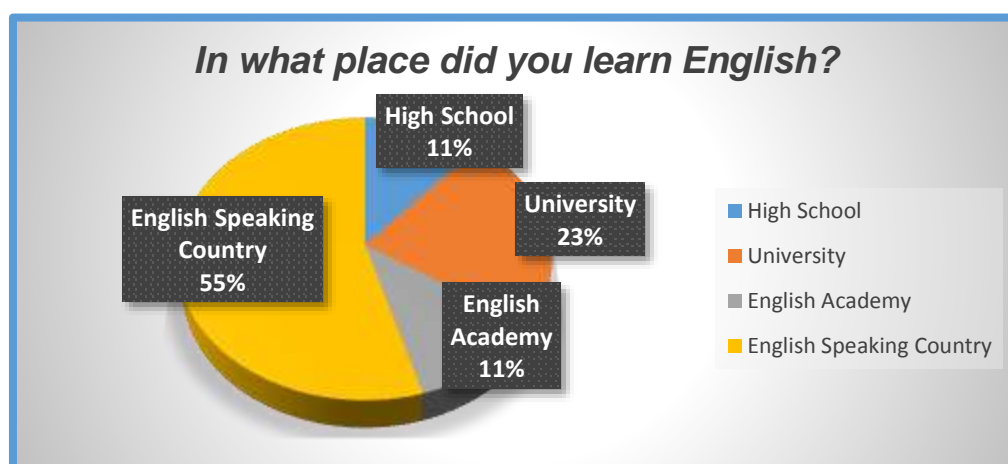Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 7
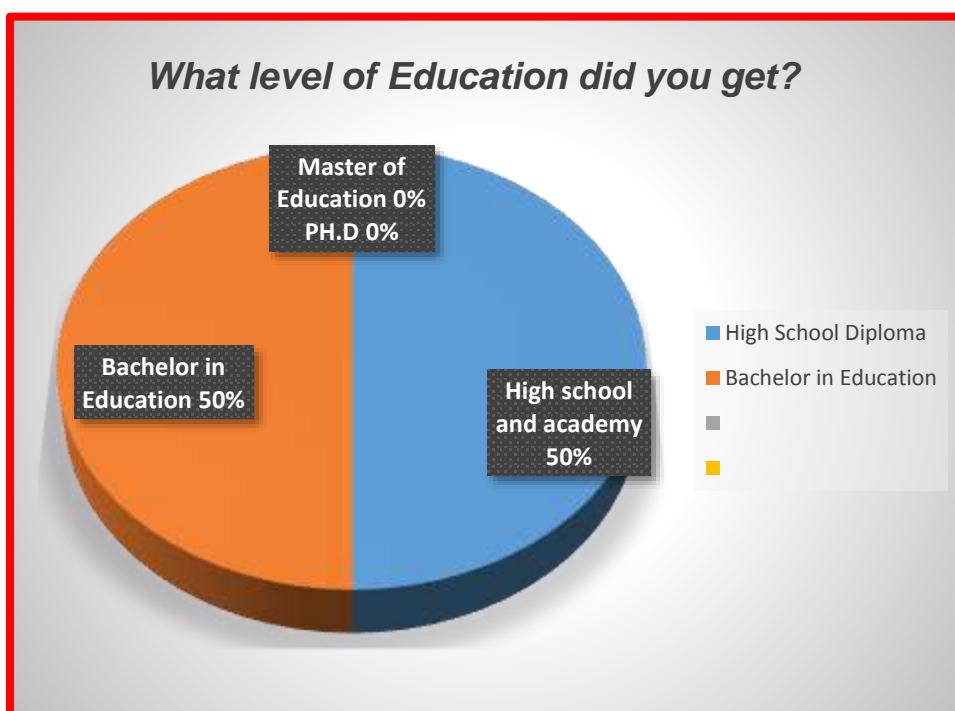Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

In accordance with the graphic above, 50% of the teachers have finished their studies in Education. It means that the teachers are familiar with the foreign language and therefore they identify the students' needs in a suitable way. The other 50% of the teachers got their English level at high school and academies.

Table 19

Question 3 *How long have you been working as an English teacher?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
1 – 5	2	50%
6 - 10	0	0%
11 – 15	0	0%
16 – 20	2	50%
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 8
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Conforming to the circular graph, 50% of the teachers have been teaching English from 16 to 20 years, the researcher can deduce that they can manage the pedagogical strategies in order to enrich the students' learning process. On the other hand, the 50% shows a lack of experience which can affect the development of the English lessons negatively.

Table 20

Question 4 *How often do you speak English in class?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
Always	1	25%
Sometimes	3	75%
Almost never	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 9
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

According to the chart, 75% of the teachers speak English in class from time to time. The students will be harmed with this action, because the continuous use of L1 in the classroom interferes with the correct production of L2. Additionally it is evident that students will not get the benefits of a good practice such as more fluency, good pronunciation, sound discrimination skills and others.

Table 21

Question 5 *How do you evaluate your level of proficiency in English?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
A1 – A2	3	75%
B1 – B2	1	25%
C1	0	0%
C2	0	0%
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
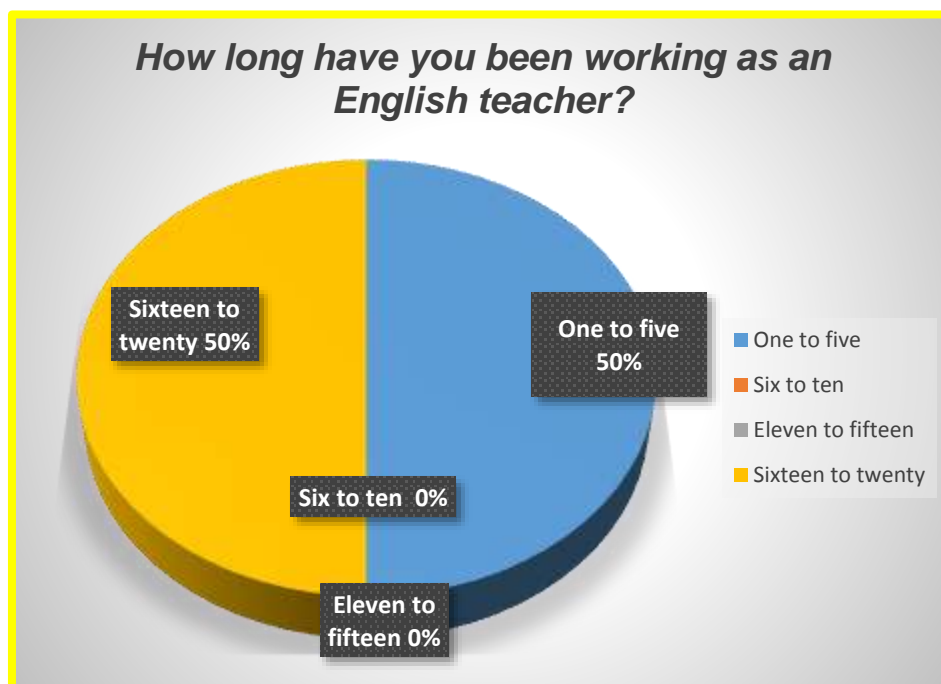Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 10
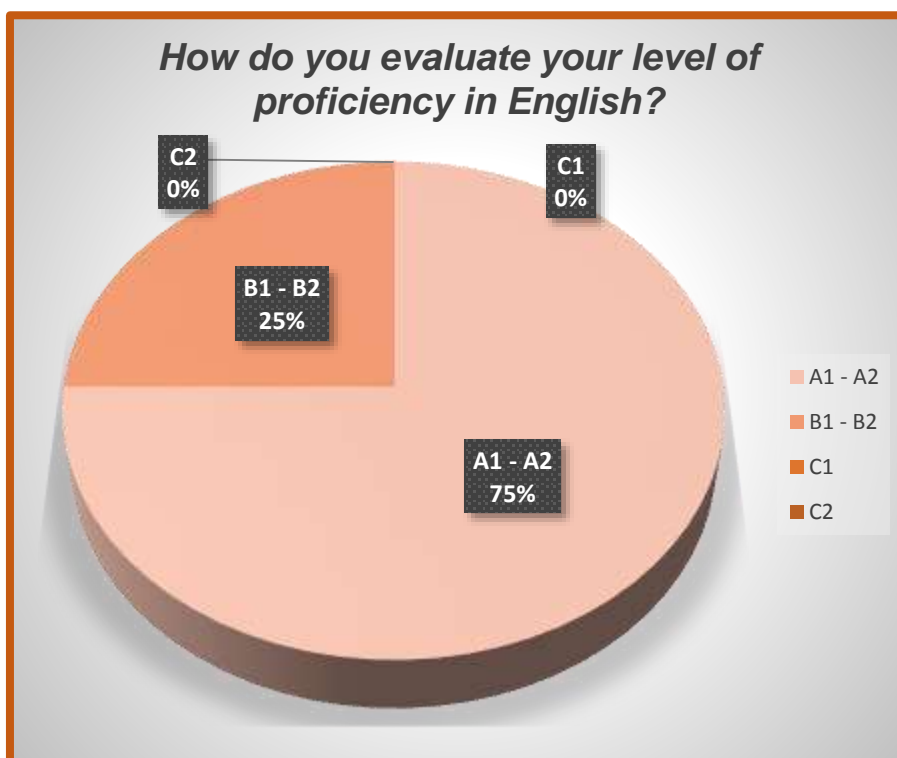Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

In agreement with the graph, it is confirmed that most of the teachers have A1 - A2 level of proficiency of English which demonstrates that learners are not always exposed to good English. It is better when teachers have at least a B2 level because that efficiency will help to enhance the students' pronunciation and communication.

Table 22

Question 6 *How would you evaluate your teaching process?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
Good	4	100%
Very good	0	0%
Not bad	0	0%
Needs Improvement	0	0%
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 11
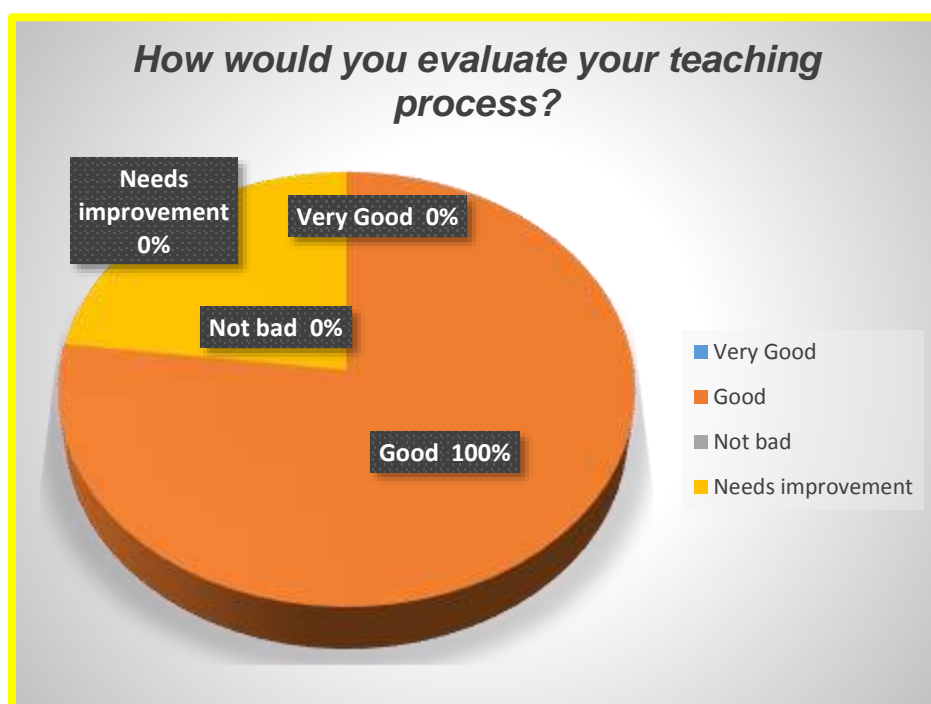Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

In accordance with this chart, even though 100% of the teachers evaluate their teaching as good, none of them consider that they need to improve in the area of teaching English as a foreign language. Considering that most of them are in levels A1-A2 it is necessary to reflect on the importance for the teachers to be better each day.

Table 23

Question 7 *Have you attended to any seminar /workshop recently?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
Yes	4	0%
No	0	100%
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Have you attended to any seminar/workshop recently?

Yes; 0%

No; 100%

Yes
No

Figure 12
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

It seems that 100% of the teachers do not have interest to know the new trends in education or acquire any up-date preparation. It might be caused by various reasons as the lack of motivation, the topics are not interesting enough, the lack of time, but it is necessary to be exposed to the new view points and techniques in order to contribute to the students' learning.

Table 24

Question 8 *Do you use technology to teach English in class?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PORCENTAGE
Always	0	0%
Almost always	0	0%
Sometimes	4	100%
Never	0	0
Total	**4**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
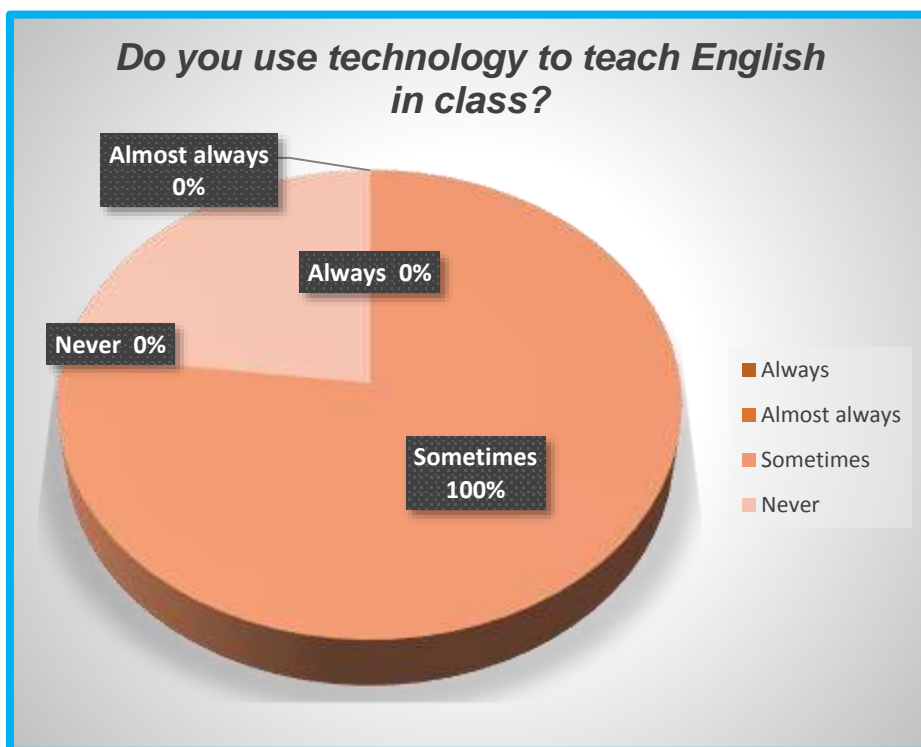Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 13
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

The graph above shows that 100% of the teachers sometimes employ technology. Nowadays the use of technology in class is considered an essential part in the teaching process.

3.5.4. Results and Analysis of the Students Survey

Thirty-five students in 9th Grade "C" from the English Area at "Unidad Educativa Fiscal Cmdte. Rafael Morán Valverde" answered a questionnaire which included twelve questions. Its purpose was to know the students' opinion about the English teaching process.

Table 25

Question 1 *Do you enjoy the English class?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	8	23%
Sometimes	18	51%
No	9	26%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 14
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

According to the chart, 51% of the students sometimes enjoy the English class. This low interest might be caused by the absence of the warm up at the beginning of the lesson or the lack of activities which were evident in the previous class observation. Likewise, 26% of the students state that they do not like the English class, this represent a big weakness because it implies that the teacher shows lack of motivation to develop interesting and lively lessons.

Table 26

Question 2 *Are your English lessons interesting and dynamic?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	7	20%
Sometimes	16	46%
No	12	34%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 15
Source: Unidad Educativa. Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

46% of learners consider the English classes are sometimes interesting and dynamic. This condition represents a serious problem because it seems that the students' interest and needs are not taken into account and it shows the necessity to apply better strategies. On the other hand, 34% of the learners think that the classes are boring and it was difficult for them to be engaged in the topic due to the lack of specific exercises that help to internalize the theme. It would be really useful to employ some interesting exercises in order to catch the students' attention. 20% of the students agree that the English classes are a little interesting.

Table 27

Question 3 *Are you motivated to speak English in class?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	10	28%
Sometimes	9	26%
No	16	46%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
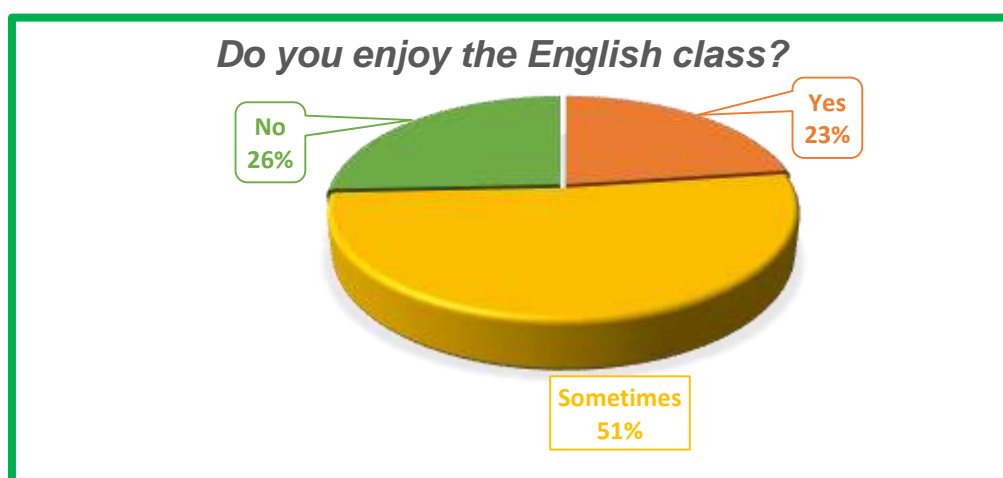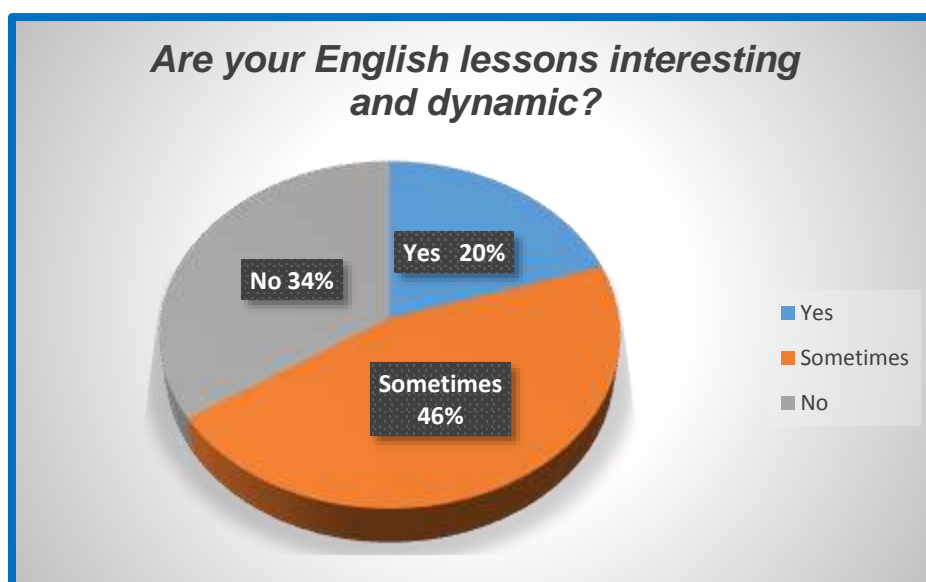Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 16
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

This graphic indicates that 46% of learners believe that they are not motivated to speak English in class. This demonstrates the presence of a critical problem that demands to be analyzed. The lack of practice of the oral expression will impede them to enhance their pronunciation and fluency. On the other hand, 28% of learners think that they are motivated in this area. However, they do not speak English in class. The 26% of students believe that sometimes they feel motivated to speak the target language. This also represents an important problem, especially in an English class where all the students need to speak the target language; however it can be solved with some adequate communicative strategies and activities.

Table 28

Question 4 *Are you satisfied with your English class?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	10	29%
Sometimes	17	48%
No	8	23%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Figure 17

The graphic shows that 48% of the students on occasions feel satisfied with the English class. This probably suggests that there is not frequent development of appropriate activities in the classroom. A lesson with very few examples, the lack of exercises and no motivation can cause a lot of bored and discontent people. Another 23% are completely dissatisfied with the English class. This could indicate that it does not exist an adequate elaboration of the lesson plan and appropriate activities are missing. 29% shows that they are satisfied.

Table 29

Question 5 *Does the teacher speak English most of the time?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	27	77%
Sometimes	6	17%
No	2	6%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 18
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

According to the graphic 77% of the students agree that the teacher speaks English most of the time. This means that the students must be familiar with the language. However, at the moment of the class observation neither the teacher nor the students use the L2 during the lesson. 17% state that she sometimes uses the foreign language in class. Nevertheless, the use of English from time to time will not help students to improve their pronunciation which must be reinforced each English class. The other 6% affirm that the teacher does not speak English in class and it shows a very serious difficult to the students because the exposition the learners to the L2 is insufficient and it impedes to be familiar with the specific English sounds such as the dental fricatives.

Table 30

Question 6 *Does your teacher teach pronunciation?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	24	68%
Sometimes	10	29%
No	1	1%
Total	**35**	**100%**

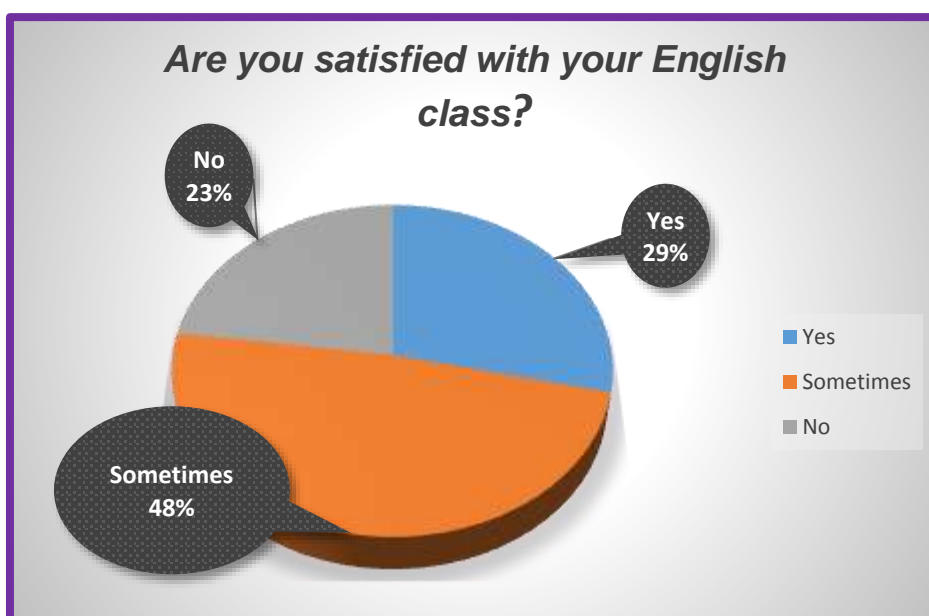Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
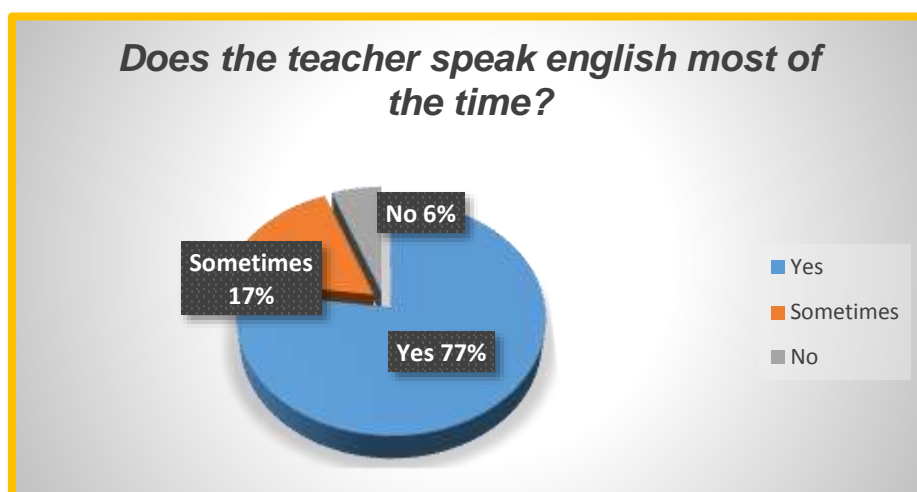Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid
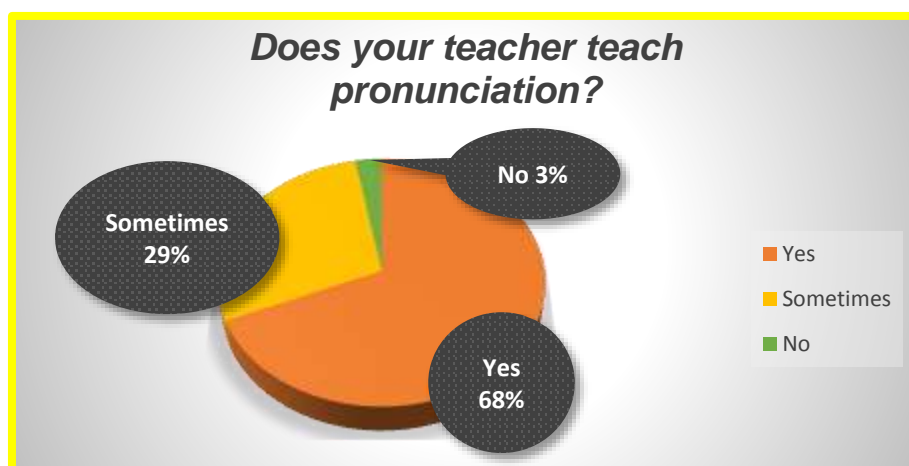
Figure 19
Source: Unidad Educativa Cmdte. Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

In this graph, 68% of the students state that pronunciation is taught in class. However, during the class observation the researcher did not notice the use of strategies to correct the students' mistake since nobody in the class spoke in L2. Moreover, 29% of the students think that occasionally the teacher pays attention to this area. It involves a serious problem because pronunciation must be emphasized every day during the class. The last group which is formed by the 3% believe that pronunciation is not taught during the learning process, it represent a great difficulty for the students because they lose good opportunities to enhance their pronunciation.

Table 31

Question 7 *Does your teacher motivate you to improve your pronunciation?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	20	57%
Sometimes	14	40%
No	1	3%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Cmdte. Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 20
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

According to the survey, the results state that 57% of students are motivated by the teacher to enhance their pronunciation. 40% of them state that from time to time they are encouraged to pay attention in pronunciation. The last group (3%) believe that they are not motivated in this discipline.

Table 32

Question 8 *Do you have pronunciation exercises?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	18	51%
Sometimes	9	26%
No	8	23%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Cmdte. Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 21
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

In accordance with the graph above, 51% of the students express that they have pronunciation activities in class. However, according to the class observation after the explanation of the lesson the teacher does not present any oral or writing activities. The 26% believed that occasionally the pronunciation exercises are present during the class and the 23% agree that there are not pronunciation activities. Pronunciation should be an important part of the teaching process because it helps us avoid communication problems.

Table 33

Question 9 *Do you think pronunciation is an important part in your English oral communication?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	28	80%
Sometimes	50	14%
No	2	6%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
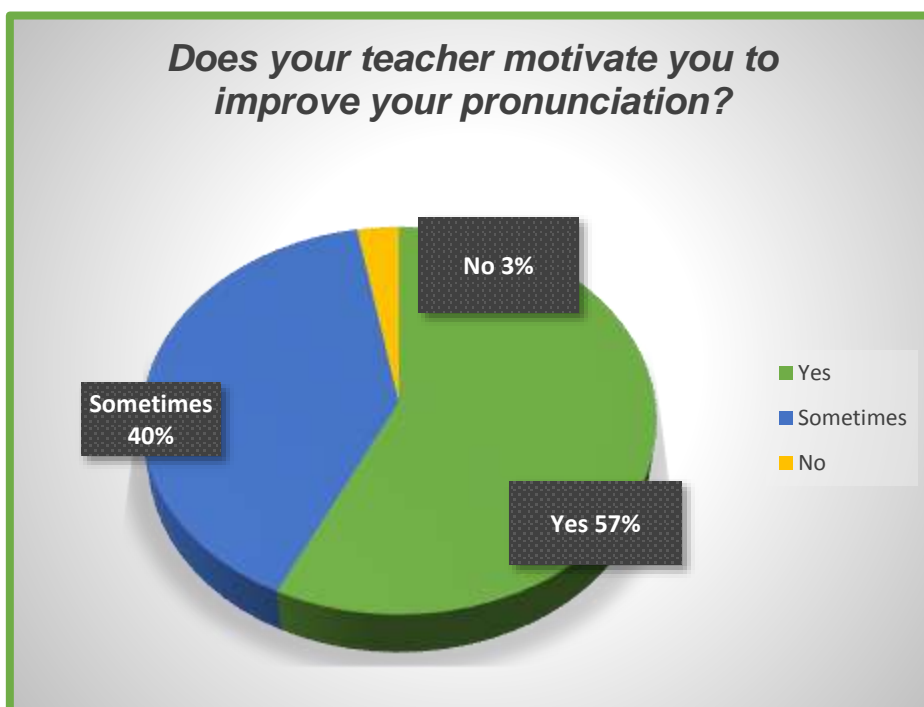Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 22
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

According with this graph, it can be seen that the 80% of the pupils agree that pronunciation is an important aspect in the English oral production. The 14% of the population believe that occasionally pronunciation is useful and the last 6% think that this aspect does not have an important role in speech.

Table 34

Question 10 *Does the teacher use any types of didactic resources to teach pronunciation?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	12	34%
Sometimes	13	37%
No	10	29%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Figure 23
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

The 37% agree that pedagogical supplies are employed from time to time. It indicates that pronunciation is underestimated and it is considered less important than the grammatical area or lexicon. The 29% show that there are not pedagogical resources in order to teach pronunciation. It means that the students lose important training in order to develop their quality of pronunciation. 34% of the students state that the teacher uses didactic resources to teach pronunciation.

Table 35

Question 11 *Do you go to the lab to listen English?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	9	26%
Sometimes	18	51%
No	8	23%
Total	**35**	**100%**

Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
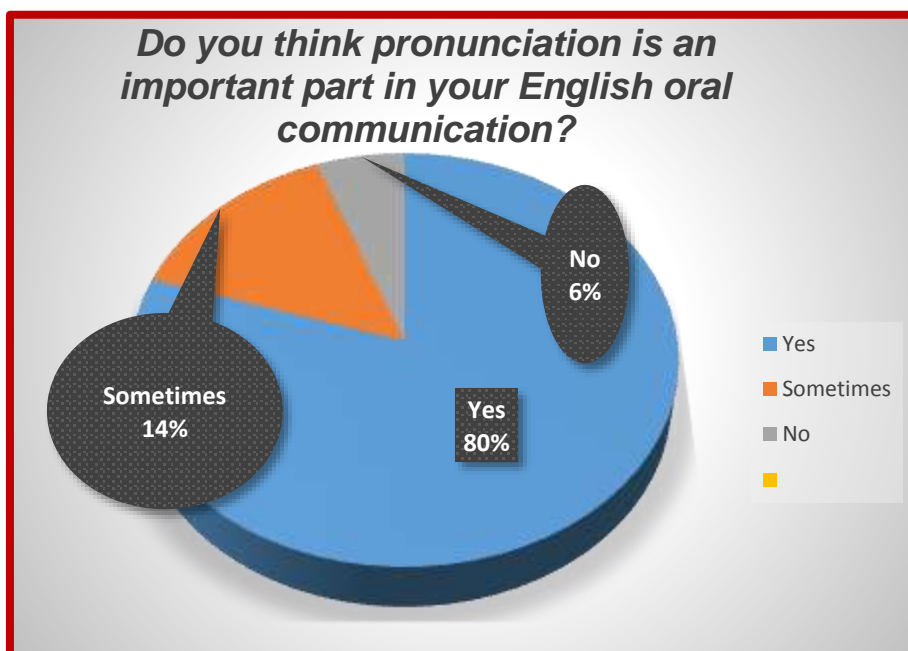Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid
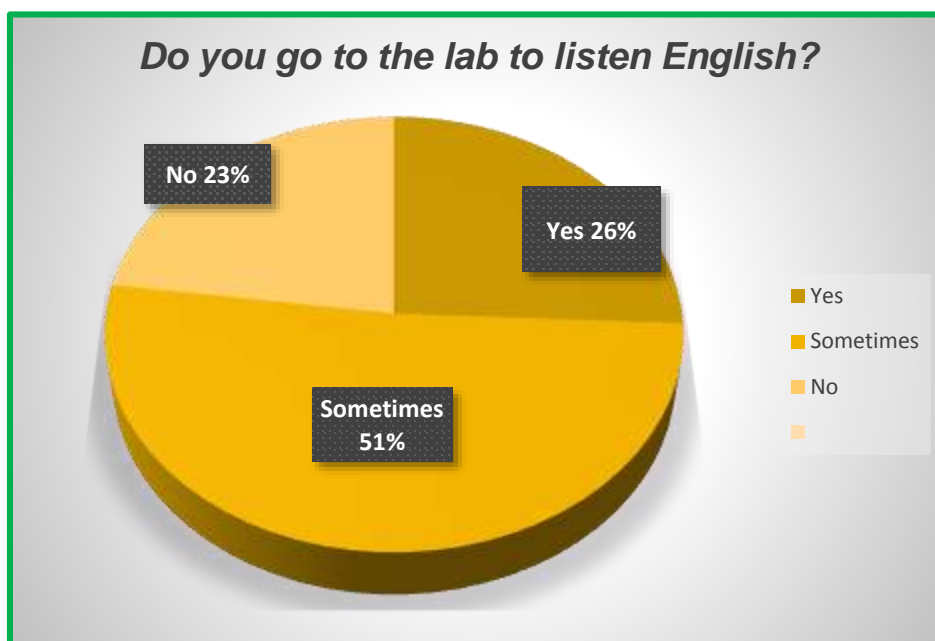
Figure 24
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

This circular graph shows that 23% of the students do not go to the lab to practice listening. Similarly, the 51% shows that the students sometimes visit the lab. It involves a huge problem for the students. Listening is an important active process because it represents a good way to learn different speech sounds and to improve pronunciation and speaking. The last 26% agree that they usually go to the lab.

Table 36

Question 12 *Are there posters, flashcards or other resources to learn English in your class?*

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	16	46%
Sometimes	7	20%
No	12	34%
Total	**35**	**100%**

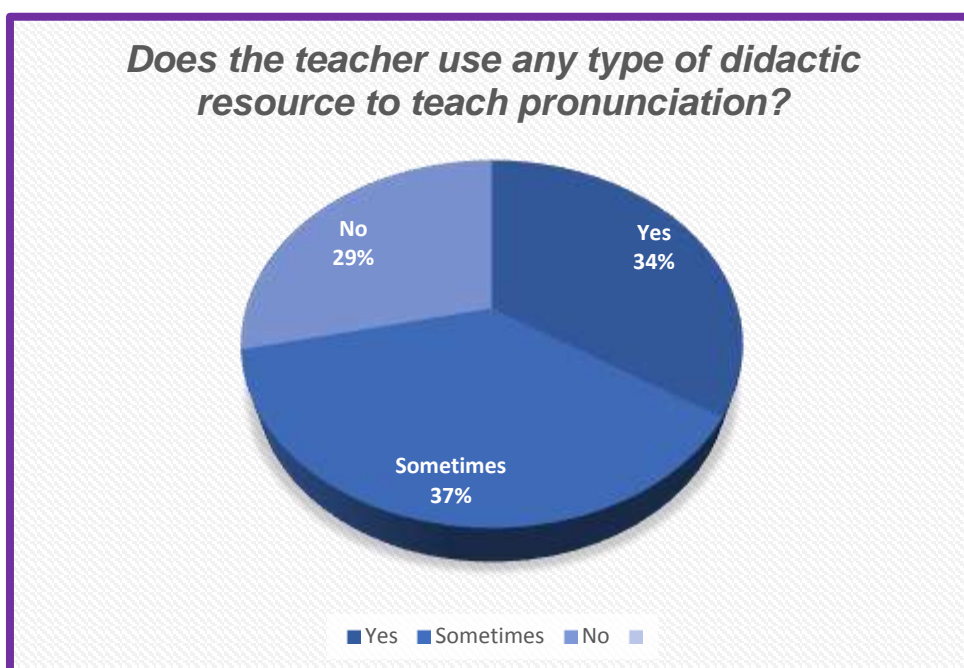Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid
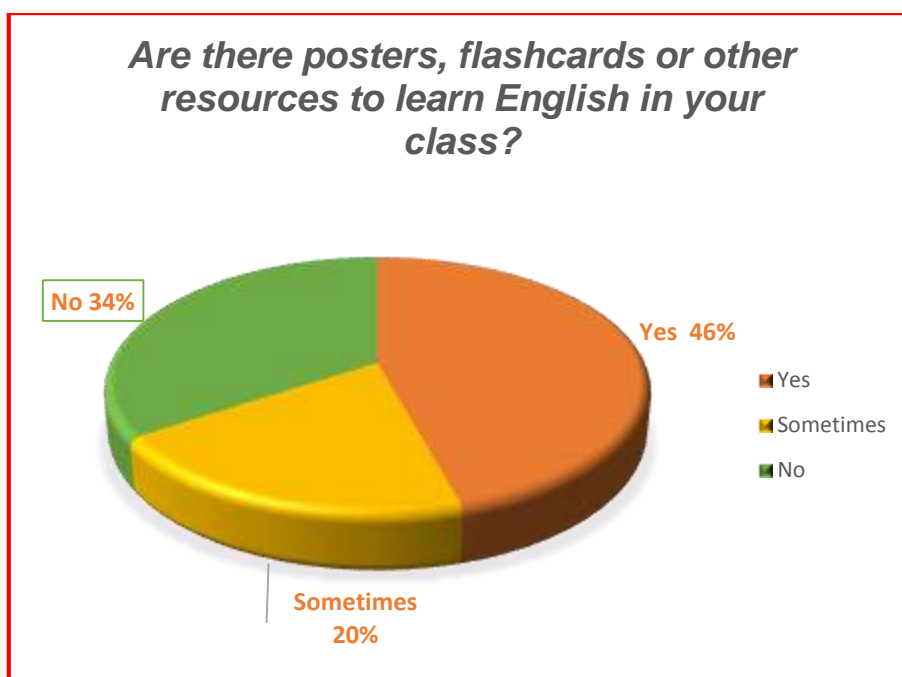
Figure 25
Source: Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde
Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

34% of the learners agree that there are not any kind of resources in class in order to learn English. However, the other 46% affirm that the classroom has different types of them. However, at the moment of the class observation didactic resources such as pictures or posters were not found. The 20% of the students state that the resources sometimes appear.

3.6. Preliminary conclusions

After having evaluated the information and results collected in this research project, we have the following preliminary conclusions:

Regarding to the class observation focused on the teacher:

The role of an educator as a facilitator, guide or mediator between the students and the knowledge is essential in the classroom. However, that role was not developed during the English class observation, so based on that proof, we can conclude that one of the factors which took part in the development of the problem was the teacher's performance.

It was clear that the students' attention and interest were not stimulated, there was not evidence of enough English language practice, therefore students' poor pronunciation of dental fricatives and other kinds of specific speech sounds were evident.

The class observation centered on the students:

Nowadays, the role of students in the educational process has changed. Students should be interested in having a better active role in the construction of their knowledge. They must be researchers, critical, and creative. They must create their own learning by being a collaborator with the teacher.

However, it can be concluded that this role has not been demonstrated in class therefore we can say that the passive attitude of the students represents another aspect that could be involved in the problem since they did not participate during the development of the English class and did not make the effort to use the foreign language.

The teachers' interview:

According to the interview, 50% of the teachers have a Bachelor Degree in Education which implies that the practice of English in the classroom is suitable and students are permanently exposed to the foreign language. However, the teachers who were interviewed admitted the insufficient use of the English language during the class because most of them have A1 and A2 levels which corresponds to elementary English and despite the above-mentioned factors, they evaluated their teaching process as "good".

Therefore, we can conclude that this situation represents another factor that contributes to the problem because the lack of the use of the target language produces inadequate pronunciation, problems with sound discrimination, difficulty in the communication among students. We believe that it is important for teachers to motivate themselves to participate in seminars, workshops, and other events related to continuous professional development because they are the key actors for achieving the quality of education.

The students' questionnaire:

Based on the analysis of the students' questionnaire we can conclude that the following aspects are associated with the pronunciation problem of dental fricatives and other speech sounds: boring English lessons, lack of motivation to use the English language, absence of appropriate activities, lack of correction of pronunciation, and the lack of listening practice. We consider that both teacher and students' participation is essential in the process of learning a second language. It is also necessary to implement appropriate didactic strategies in order to develop the students´ potential.

4. PROPOSED PROJECT PLAN

4.1. Title

 "Instructional Guide to Foster Ninth Graders´ Pronunciation of Dental Fricative Consonants".

4.2. Justification

Pronunciation is one of the most significant skill that non-native English speakers have to deal with when they are learning English, therefore this instructional guide is practical and necessary since it will help teachers to put into practice some suitable activities to improve students´ pronunciation of dental fricative sounds.

The need for this guide also appears in the research process, due to the fact that the students and the teacher showed poor English pronunciation during the teaching process in the classroom. So this proposed project plan will give them the opportunity to work together in order to reach the same objective. From the methodological point of view the instructional guide offers some activities which are based on different types of pedagogical strategies such as, communicative activities, reading aloud, TPR and direct instructions. These pedagogical strategies will promote the development of L2 in learners, giving them the advantage to acquire appropriate pronunciation in an interactive way. Besides, this will help them to enhance their oral proficiency which let them to communicate to each other.

Teachers can use this guide in order to increase students' motivation to get good pronunciation; they must be able to adjust and use the appropriate strategies according to the students' interests and needs. Even though, we focused on dental fricatives activities, all these strategies from the proposed project plan can be applied with the other types of fricative or speech sounds.

4.3. Broad Objective

To provide an instructional guide which includes an account of the most suitable didactic strategies that are used to enhance students' pronunciation of dental fricative consonants.

4.4. Specific Objective

To select the most suitable didactic strategies used to enhance students' pronunciation of dental fricative consonants taking into account the learners' ages, interests, and learning styles.

4.5. Content Framework of the Proposed Project Plan

4.5.1. Introduction

4.5.2. How to Produce the Dental Fricative Consonants

4.5.3. Discrimination between the /s/ and /θ/ Sounds

4.5.4. Sound Discrimination between [θ] and [ð]

4.5.5. Position of the /θ/ Sound

4.5.6. Practice the Dental Fricative Sounds /θ/ and /ð/ in Phrases

4.5.7. Sound Discrimination between /d/ and /ð/

4.5.8. Label the Correct Word

4.5.9. Position of the /ð/ Sound

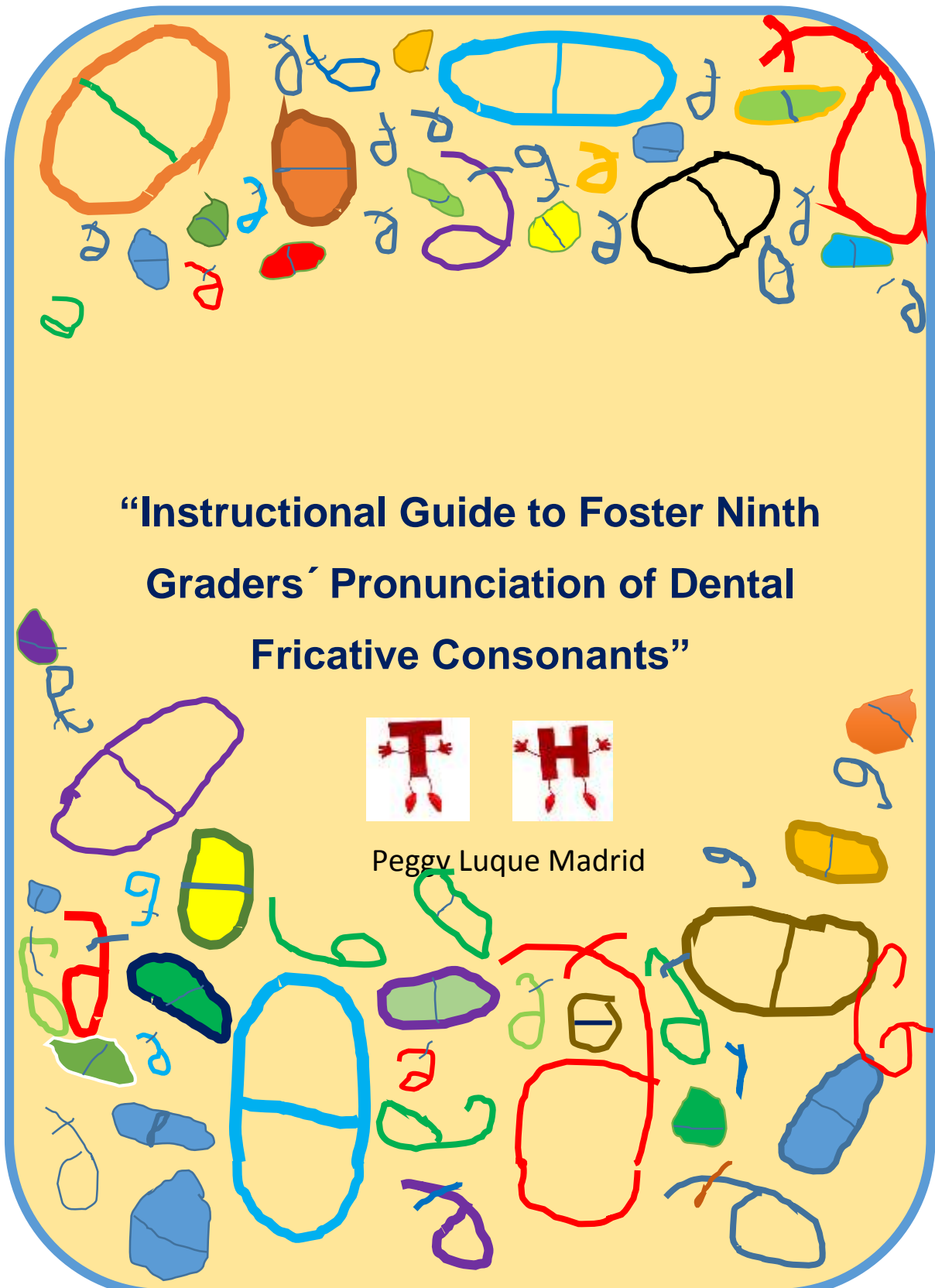**4.5.10.** Classify the Words According to the Sound

4.5.11. Game: TH BINGO

4.5.12. Choose the Correct Letter

4.5.13. Tongue Twister

4.5.14. The Lord of the Words

4.6. The Proposed Project Plan

"Instructional Guide to Foster Ninth Graders´ Pronunciation of Dental Fricative Consonants"

Peggy Luque Madrid

4.6.1.   Introduction

This project plan represents a tool of high importance for teachers and students because it has the purpose to help them to improve their pronunciation throughout activities by using their abilities to identify the dental fricative consonants.

It is formed by thirteen activities based on didactic strategies which are manageable and comprehensible appropriated to create learning environment and students' interest in the classroom. In addition, the activities will promote the participation of all students and work in association with the partners in order to interchange knowledge and develop confidence at the moment of using the English language.

This guide will provide to the teacher many applicable activities that can encourage students into feeling in comfort and confident when learning different ways to enhance pronunciation of dental fricatives sounds using games and other interesting activities.

Besides, the kind of exercises that the didactic guide offers can be interchangeable with other types of consonants sounds. The guide will not only help the students but also to the teachers to enhance their pronunciation by putting those activities into practice.

4.6.2. Proposed Project Plan

4.6.2.1. Strategy One: How to Produce the Dental Fricative Consonants

Skills: Production of Dental Fricative Sounds

Objective: To reinforce the pronunciation of the dental fricative sounds.

Resources: Figures, flashcards, sheets, board and markers

Description: In order to teach the production of the dental fricative sounds the instructor should follow these steps: First of all, the teacher needs to use a figure showing the different parts of the articulators of the vocal tract. For example:
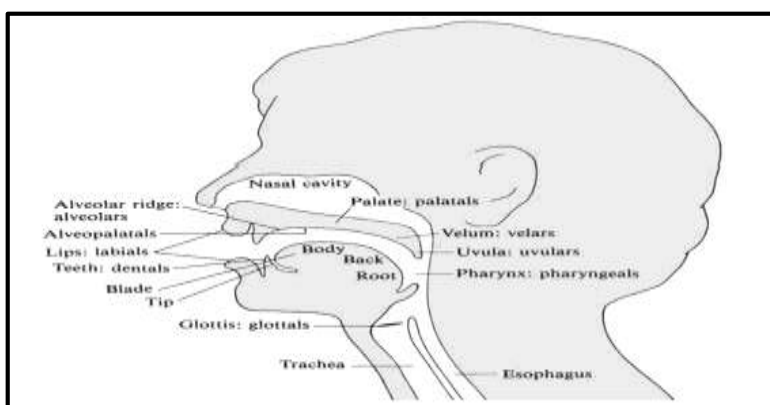

Figure 26
Places of Articulation
Source: ResearchGates. Retrieve from https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Possible-places-of-articulation-are-listed-followed-by-the-term-used-to-describe-sounds_fig3_41886373

Then, the teacher will explain that the dental fricative consonants share the same articulators in the production of the sound, that is, the tongue and the teeth.

Next, it is important that the teacher clarifies that the sound is "dental" according to the Place of articulation and is "fricative" in agreement to the Manner of articulator. The instructor can employ a graphic like this:

	Place of Articulation							
Manner of Articulation		Bilabial	Labio-Dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
	Plosive	P b			t d			k g	
	Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
	Affricate					tʃ dʒ			
	Nasal	m			n			ŋ	
	Lateral				l				
	Approximant	w				r	j		

Figure 27
Place and Manner of Articulation
Source: Bitlanders. Retrieve from: http://www.bitlanders.com/blogs/consonants/199384

Also, the teacher should make clear that the dental fricative has two different pronunciation: Voiced [ð] and voiceless [θ]. See the figure.

	Bilabial		Labio-dental		Dental		Alveolar		Palato-alveolar (Post-alveolar)		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
Unvoiced (-V) Voiced (+V)	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V
Stops (Plosives)	p	b					t	d					k	g	ʔ¹	
Fricatives			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ					h	
Affricates									tʃ	dʒ						
Nasals		m						n						ŋ		
Lateral (approximant)								l								
Approximant		w²						r				j		w²		

Figure 28
The Fricatives of English
Source: The Mimic Method. Retrieve from: https://www.mimicmethod.com/ft101/consonant-wrap-up/

After that, the teacher is ready to show how this sound is developed. In the production of dental fricative sounds students need to put the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower lips. Them they need to blow out air between those articulators. The sound is created when the air escapes through a small passage between those articulators making a hissing sound.

The dental fricative is voiceless when the air passes through the articulators and the vocal cords do not vibrate. Students do not use the voice. For example: think, thank, three.
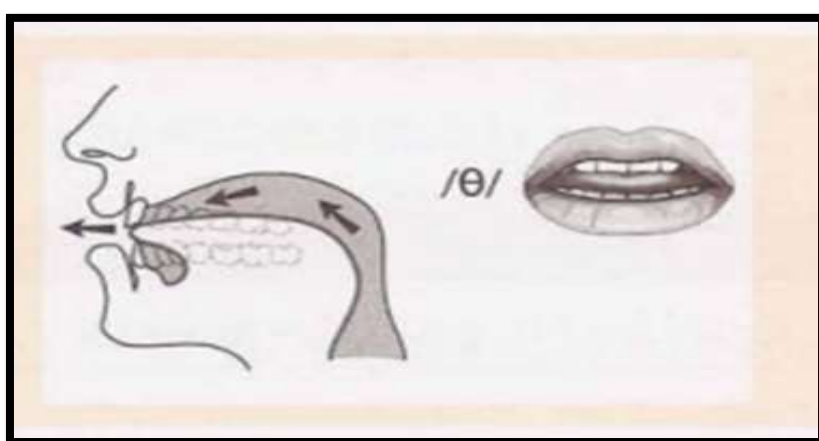

Figure 29
The voiceless dental non-sibilant fricative
Source: Pronunciation Pairs. Second Edition by Baker & Goldstein, 2008, p.156. Retrieve from:
http://1.droppdf.com/files/5LAov/pronunciation-pairs.pdf

The second one happens when the vocal cords vibrate during the production of the sound. Students need to use the voice. For example: there, then, this.
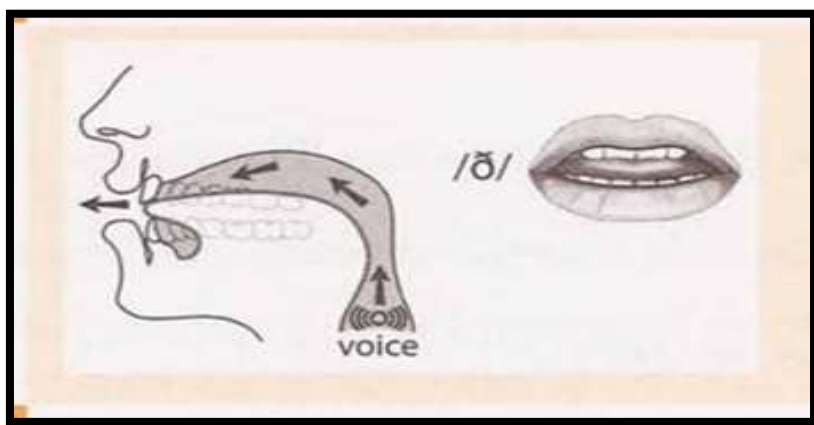
Figure 30
Voiced dental fricative
Source: Pronunciation Pairs. Second Edition by Baker & Goldstein, 2008, p.156. Retrieve from:
http://1.droppdf.com/files/5LAov/pronunciation-pairs.pdf

Additionally, the teacher has to guide and supervise the correct production of the sound. Therefore, he will tell some words aloud with voiceless or voiced dental fricative sound in different position. The students need to follow the recommendations in order to master the sounds then they repeat the words. For example:

Voiceless TH at the beginning of a word

Thanks	/θæŋks/
Thumb	/θʌm/
Thick	/θɪk/
Three	/θri/
Thursday	/ˈθɜːrzdi/
Think	/θɪŋk/
Thigh	/θaɪ/
Three	/θriː/
Thought	/θɔːt/

Voiceless TH in the middle of a word:

Anything	/eniːˌθɪŋ/
Healthy	/ˈhelθi/
Toothpick	/ˈtuːθpɪk/
Birthday	/bɜːrθˌdeɪ/
Something	/ˈsʌmθɪŋ/
Athlete	/ˈæθliːt/

Voiced TH at the beginning of a word:

They	/ðeɪ/
Them	/ðem/
Their	/ðeə/
This	/ðɪs/
The	/ðə/
These	/ðiːz/
Themselves	/ðəmˈselvz/

Voiced TH in the middle of a word:

Weather	/ˈweðər/
Brother	/ˈbrʌðər/
Clothing	/ˈkloʊðɪŋ/
Either	/ˈiːðər/
Another	/əˈnʌðər/
Together	/tʊˈgeðər/
Rather	/ˈræðʌr/

4.6.2.2. Strategy Two: Discrimination between the /s/ and /θ/ Sounds

Skills: Listening discrimination

Objective: To identify the different sounds between two fricative /s/ and /θ/.

Resources: Flashcards, markers and board, sheets.

Description: First, the teacher will describe the exercise. He can say: This type of activity presents two columns with two different fricative consonant sounds the /s/ and /θ/. Then he will pronounce a word from each column.

The students have to listen carefully while the teacher tells the words. Then the learners will tell to the teacher which column each word is from by rising up either one hand or by giving the number of the column.

Column 1 / s /		Column 2 / θ /	
pass	/pæs/	path	/pæθ/
sing	/sɪŋ/	thing	/θɪŋ/
worse	/wɜːrs/	worth	/wɜːrθ/
sank	/sæŋk/	thank	/θæŋk/
kiss	/kɪs/	kith	/kɪθ/
sort	/sɔːrt/	thought	/θɔːt/
mouse	/maʊs/	mouth	/ˈmaʊθ/
sick	/sɪk/	thick	/θɪk/
purse	/pɜːrs/	Perth	/perθ/
sum	/sʌm/	thumb	/θʌm/
moss	/mɔːs/	moth	/mɔːθ/
sink	/sɪŋk/	think	/θɪŋk/
truce	/truːs/	truth	/truːθ/
face	/feɪs/	faith	/feɪθ/
force	/fɔːs/	fourth	/fɔːθ/

4.6.2.3. Strategy Three: Sound Discrimination between [θ] and [ð]

Skills: Listening and Speaking

Objective: To identify and practice the fricative voiceless [θ] or voiced [ð]

Resources: Sheets, markers and board

Description: This activity offers to the students the opportunity to know how the dental fricative is pronounced in the following words using voiceless [θ] or voiced [ð] sounds. Then they can practice the pronunciation.

In the first place, the teacher will give the instructions to the students. For instance: There is a table with three columns, the first one has some words, the second is named "voiced" and the third "voiceless". After that, he will tell the words aloud and the students will choose an option by putting a blue check mark in the correct box. After the students finish the exercise, they need to check the answers with the teacher. Then they will work with their partner. One student should point to a word then the other learner will tell it and vice versa. For example:

	voiced	voiceless
this	✓	
nothing		✓
brother		
everything		
that		
then		
together		
other		
birthday		
Kathy		
thousand		
month		
another		
leather		
seventh		
north.		
weather		

4.6.2.4. Strategy Four: Position of the /θ/ Sound

Skills: Speaking and Listening

Objective: To identify the position of the fricative sound /θ/ in a word.

Resources: Flashcards, markers and board, sheets.

Description: The teacher will explain the following: This activity shows four columns one of them is formed by some words which should be pronounced with the fricative sound /θ/. The other three columns are divided between "beginning", "middle", and "end". Next, the teacher needs to tell the words aloud. The students have to listen carefully. Then the students will to indicate where they hear the /θ/ sound in each word by circling beginning, middle, or end. Finally, the students will repeat the words after the teacher tells them.

think	Beginning	Middle	End
north	Beginning	Middle	End
thick	Beginning	Middle	End
nothing	Beginning	Middle	End
birthday	Beginning	Middle	End
truth	Beginning	Middle	End
toothpaste	Beginning	Middle	⁰End
author	Beginning	Middle	End
thin	Beginning	Middle	End
math	Beginning	Middle	End
tenth	Beginning	Middle	End
thumb	Beginning	Middle	End
thigh	Beginning	Middle	End
thimble	Beginning	Middle	End

4.6.2.5. Strategy Five: Practice the Dental Fricative Sounds /θ/ and /ð/ in Phrases.

Skills: Listening and Speaking

Objective: To practice the dental fricative sounds.

Resources: Flashcards, markers and board, sheets.

Description: The words in bold in the following phrases and sentences should be pronounced with the sounds theta /θ/ or eth /ð/. The teacher will tell the phrases and sentences aloud one at a time. The students will repeat them after the teacher and then they will tell to the teacher which sound they belong.

1.- Thank you   /θæŋk juː/

2.- I think so.   /aɪ θɪŋk soʊ/

3.- The weather is cold.   /ðə ˈweðər ɪz koʊld/

4.- Something else   /ˈsʌmθɪŋ els/

5.- Open your mouth   /ˈoʊpən jʊr ˈmaʊθ/

6.- He likes these old pictures.   /hiː laɪks ðiːz oʊld ˈpɪkʧərz/

7.- Her birthday was last Thursday.   /hɜːr bɜːrθˌdeɪ wʌz læst ˈθɜːrzdiː/

8.- That is her great grandmother.   /ðæt ɪz hɜːr greɪt græn ˌmʌðər/

9.- These shoes are expensive.   /ðiːz ʃuːz ɑːr ɪkˈspensɪv/

10.- Penny for your thoughts.   /ˈpeniː fər jʊr θɔːts/

11.- That is right. Those are my sisters. /ðæt ɪz raɪt/ /ðoʊz ɑːr maɪ ˈsɪstərz/

12.- Better than the others.   /ˈbetər ðæn ðiː ˈʌðərz/

13.- My birthday is in the third month.   /maɪ bɜːrθ ˌdeɪ ɪz ɪn ðə θɜːrd mʌnθ/

14.- This thing is worth thousands.   /ðɪs θɪŋ ɪz wɜːrθ ˈθaʊzəndz/

15.- The path runs north and south.   /ðə pæθ rʌnz nɔːrθ ænd saʊθ/

16.- She is a healthy and wealthy person. /ʃiː ɪz ə ˈhelθiː ænd ˈwelθiː ˈpɜːrsən/

17.- I did it then and there.   /aɪ dɪd ɪt ðen ænd ðer/

18.- He enjoyed the thrilling theater.   /hiː enˈʤɔɪd ðə ˈθrɪlɪŋ ˈθiːətər/

19.- I think these theories are sound.   I think these theories are sound/

4.6.2.6. Strategy Six: Sound Discrimination between /d/ and /ð/

Skills: Listening

Objective: To identify the sounds /d/ and /ð/

Resources: Sheets.

Description: The following activity shows two columns formed by some words which should be pronounced with /d/ and /ð/ sounds. The teacher pronounces a word from each column. The students listen with care and then they will tell to the teacher which column each word is from by giving the number of the column.

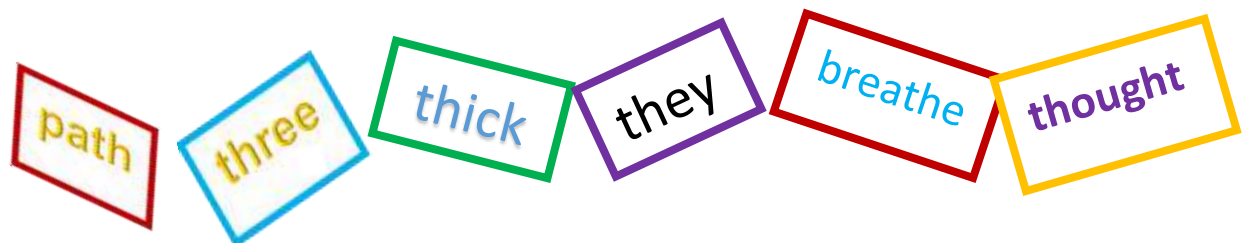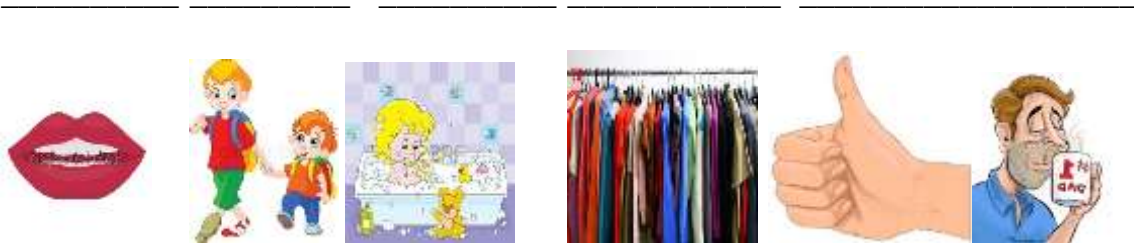| Column 1 / d /		Column 2 / ð /	
day	/deɪ/	they	/ðeɪ/
breed	/briːd/	breathe	/briːð/
ladder	/ˈlædʌr/	lather	/ˈlæðʌr/
dare	/der/	there	/ðer/
doze	/doʊz/	those	/ðoʊz/
laid	/leɪd/	lathe	/leɪð/
die	/daɪ/	thy	/ðaɪ/
load	/loʊd/	loathe	/loʊð/
den	/den/	then	/ðen/
udder	/ˈʌdər/	other	/ˈʌðər/
fodder	/ˈfɑːdər/	father	/ˈfɑːðər/
dough	/doʊ/	though	/ðoʊ/
header	/ˈhedər/	heather	/ˈheðər/
wordy	/ˈwɜːrdiː/	worthy	/ˈwɜːrθiː/
lied	/ˈlaɪd/	lithe	/laɪð/
dale	/deɪl/	they'll	/ðeɪl/
dense	/dens/	thence	/ðens/

4.6.2.7. Strategy Seven: Label the Correct Word

Skills: Listening and Speaking

Objective: To identify and practice the dental fricative sounds /θ/ or /ð/.

Resources: A sheet of paper for each students.

Description: There are six words that should be chosen and label according to the pictures. The teacher will prepare the material and provide the sheets to each student and give the instructions. The students must choose the correct word and label the pictures. Then they have to repeat after the teacher tells them.

thumb   clothing   mouth   bathe   brother   father

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

path   three   thick   they   breathe   thought

4.6.2.8. Strategy Eight: Position of the /ð/ Sound

Skills: Listening

Objective: To identify the position of the fricative sound /ð/ in a word.

Resources: Flashcards, markers and board, sheets.

Description: This activity presents three columns. One of them has 10 words. The other ones have three options "beginning", "middle", and "end". The learners have to choose the correct one. The teacher pronounces a word from the first column. The students need to indicate where they hear the /ð/ sound by underling beginning, middle, or end.

that	<u>Beginning</u>	Middle	End
another	Beginning	Middle	End
beathe	Beginning	Middle	End
the	Beginning	Middle	End
oher	Beginning	Middle	End
clothe	Beginning	Middle	End
these	Beginning	Middle	End
either	Beginning	Middle	End
bathe	Beginning	Middle	End
booth	Beginning	Middle	End
breathed	Beginning	Middle	End
then	Beginning	Middle	End
mother	Beginning	Middle	End
they	Beginning	Middle	End
although	Beginning	Middle	End
those	Beginning	Middle	End
then	Beginning	Middle	End
wether	Beginning	Middle	End

4.6.2.9. Strategy Night: Classify the Words According to the Sound

Skills: Listening and speaking

Objective: To identify and practice the dental fricative sounds /θ/ or /ð/.

Resources: Markers and board, sheets.

Description: The teacher needs to explain the activity: There are two columns with voiced and voiceless dental fricative sound. The teacher will write some words which contain both sounds. The students listen to the teacher and write the word on the correct column. After that, the students have to check the words and repeat them aloud. All the words will be written in the appropriate column.

/θ/	/ð/.
something	their

Word Bank

through	then	they	thank
both	clothe	breathe	nothing
other	faith	think	then
thrill	tenth	fourth	these
faith	birthday	those	their
brother	father	mother	math

4.6.2.10. Strategy Ten: Game TH BINGO

Skills: Listening and Speaking

Objective: To identify the voiced and voiceless th in initial, middle and final position.

Resources: Flashcards, sheets.

Description: The teacher will explain the activity. He is going to say some words one at a time. The word will be repeated two times. Then the learners will choose the correct word by crossing out the picture. The student who win the game will tell each word aloud.

throw	month	thirteen	earth
math	thunder	thick	tooth
thank	thin	mouth	Thursday
three	path	think	thirty

4.6.2.11. Strategy Eleven: Choose the Correct Letter.

Skills: Listening

Objective: To identify the voice and voiceless sounds of dental fricatives

Resources: Markers and board, sheets, flashcards.

Description: The students will hear two words. If the words have the same sound, for example (think- think), they will write " S" (same). If the sound is different (mouth – mouse), will write "D" (different).

1. (thank / thank)   ___S____

2. (thin / sin)   ___D____

3. (there/ there)   _____

4. (tree /three)   _____

5. (taught / thought)   _____

6. (true / through)   _____

7. (three / three)   _____

8. (bath / bath)   _____

9. (bat / bath)   _____

10. (tanks / thanks)   _____

11. (this / thing)   _____

12. (sink / think)   _____

13. (truce / ruth)   _____

14. (face / face)   _____

15. (day / they)   _____

16. (dense / thence   _____

17. (then / then)   _____

18. (term / therm)   _____

19. (got / Goth)   _____

4.6.2.12. Strategy Twelve: Tongue Twister

Skills: Listening and speaking

Description: The teacher will write the tongue twister on the board. Then she will repeat it twice. The students will hear carefully and repeat it alone.

Objective: To practice the voice and voiles sounds th

Resources: Flashcards, markers and board, sheets.

Figure 31
Tongue Twister
Source: http://www.santabanta.com/sms-leaf/tongue-twisters/47283/

I **thought,** I **thought** of **thinking** of **thanking** you.

/aɪ θɔːt aɪ θɔːt əv ˈθɪŋkɪŋ əv ˈθæŋkɪŋ juː/

Not **these things** here but **those things there**.

/nɑːt ðiːz θɪŋz hiːr bʌt ðoʊz θɪŋz ðer/

He **threw three** balls.

/hiː θruː θriː bɔːlz/

Tom **threw three thumb tacks**.

/tɑːm θruː θriː θʌm tæks/

He **threw three** free **throws**.

/hiː θruː θriː friː θroʊz/

The **author's theme** is **thought** provoking.

/ðiː ˈɔːθərz θiːm ɪz θɔːt prəˈvoʊkɪŋ/

4.6.2.13. Strategy Thirteen: The Lord of the Words

Figure 32
Think
Source: https://bridges1.mathlearningcenter.org/resources/blog/201501/meet-mr-think/
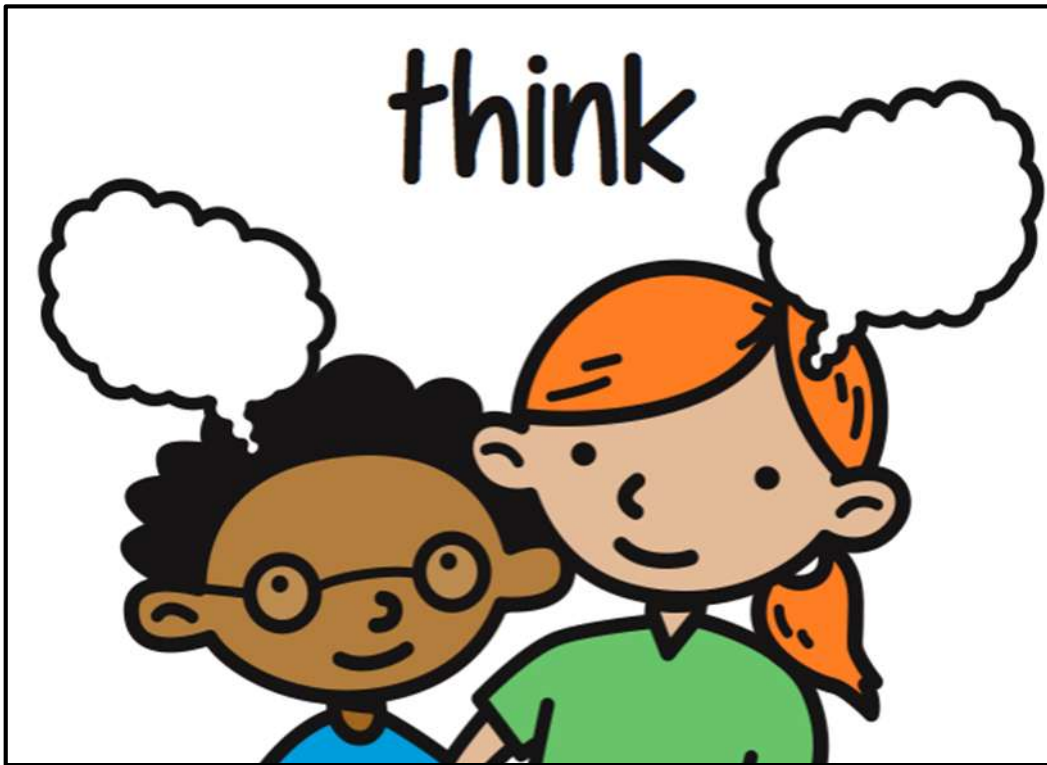
Skills: Listening, writing, and speaking

Objective: This is an engaging activity for children or teenagers. The purpose is to practice the dental fricatives sound.

Resource: A board and two markers of different color, sheets

Description: The teacher needs to choose a particular sound (in this case /th/ and the learners have to write many words as they can. They can use their books or notebooks to make easy this duty. The lord of the words will be the student who writes a lot of words without error.

Examples: there, cloth, tenth, thunder, thank, both, thank, thong, mother

heather, those, writhe, oath, theme, there, birthday, Martha, Ruth, Thomas.

4.7. Validation of the Proposed Project Plan

Universidad Laica Vicente Rocafuerte de Guayaquil

Validation of the Proposed Project Plan

"Instructional Guide to Foster Ninth Graders' Pronunciation of Dental
Fricative Consonants"

Rating Scale

Alternative	Very Significant	Significant	Somehow significant	Not that significant	Not significant
Scientific aspect	✓				
Social impact	✓				
Feasibility	✓				
Relevance	✓				
Originality	✓				
Language	✓				
Comprehension	✓				
Creativity	✓				

Comments:

An innovative version of the activities to engage students in this important field

Name	Janeth Moró Zapater	
Occupation	Teacher	*Janeth P. Zapater*
Phone Number	0990536501	Signature

Universidad Laica Vicente Rocafuerte de Guayaquil

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Rating Scale

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Feasibility	✓				
Relevance		✓			
Originality		✓			
Language	✓				
Comprehension		✓			
Creativity		✓			

Comments:

Good project.

Name	Msr Rosy Mendoza Galeno	
Occupation	Docente de Inglés	
Phone Number	0981802773	Signature

Universidad Laica Vicente Rocafuerte de Guayaquil

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Feasibility	✓				
Relevance	✓				
Originality	✓				
Language	✓				
Comprehension	✓				
Creativity	✓				

Comments:

This is interesting because sometimes students don't like
pronunciation classes. I am sure this booklet will help
a lot.

Name	Mélida Camparede .	
Occupation	Teacher	*(signature)*
Phone Number	0986103613	Signature

4.8 Impact/ Benefits of the Proposed Project Plan

4.8.1. Impact

This instructional guide, which is formed by different pedagogical activities, will have a great impact in the English classroom because it will help teachers to develop the students´attention, interest, and participation in class and it will motivate to students to improve their pronunciation of the dental fricative consonants as well as other kind of speech sounds.

It will also has an important influence over the teachers because it will help them to be creative and more didactic at the moment of design similar activities in order to reach an effective learning and create an active and appropriate class atmosphere.

4.8.2. Benefits

The application and the practice of this proposal guide has a lot of benefits since it will give the students the opportunity to have an active role in the construction of their own knowledge, it will let them to enhance the ability to recognize and produce the dental fricative sounds and in consequence the pronunciation will be better and the communication among students will improve.

The teachers are the second most important benefactors of this guide since they are the ones who will give the instructions and apply the different strategies as tools to help students. This guide will benefit the teachers because the activities can be increased or adapted to other consonants sounds which will improve teachers' performance in teaching pronunciation.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

It is generally accepted among native speakers that poor pronunciation makes bad English. It is produced by some students and teachers without an adequate training in this domain and others are persuaded that it is a waste of time trying to teach and learn this essential area of communication. This project has as reference the well-known Psychological and Linguistics theories and it is based on the Constructivism point of view which affects the way in which the target language is taught.

Therefore, this work is an evidence that the principal goal of teaching and learning English pronunciation is to help students to develop a good pronunciation and in consequent to have a better communication. The purpose of this study is to select the most suitable didactic strategies and determine the best ways they could be applied.

After having examined the results and information collected from the observation guides, a questionnaire and an interview which were applied by this research paper, it can be concluded that the following elements such as the absence of English language practice, insufficient teachers' academic preparation, the lack of listening practice, the lack of learners' participation, interests and motivation contributed to the students' poor pronunciation of the dental fricative consonants. Therefore, the teaching and practice of those phonemes should be one of the main objectives in EFL classes.

An active and dynamic class is necessary to learn a new language and it demands planning, organization and the design and implementation of a series of pedagogic strategies, in consequence, the activities suggested in this work will help learners to achieve a good pronunciation and communicative competence in the English language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Keep in mind that pronunciation is considered one of the most important tools for students who are learning English as a second language, it is necessary that teachers take in count some recommendations:

-Teachers should speak a lot of English during the class.

The English teachers are maybe the only people that students have the opportunity to listen the foreign language. Therefore, the use of English in class is essential because it provides a better English – speaking context which will motivate to students to make an effort to employ the target language.

-Motivate students to pay attention and practice the English pronunciation.

The objective of pronunciation practice in ESL classroom is to articulate the sounds in a correct way in order to the communication be understandable and fluently.

-Create activities that encourage students' participation.

One of the advantage of students' participation is that the teacher has the chance to know if students be aware what is happening in the English classroom. It also helps students to contribute with their opinions, to internalize knowledge and lose their shyness.

-Friendly environment generates students´ self-confidence and interaction.

A good classroom atmosphere let teachers and students to increase a positive attitude and disposition to teach and learn better. Teachers can create an effective environment being an example of positivism, patience, and showing self-control.

-Give students positive feedback.

When students' performance is well done or not it is necessary to let them to know because it will help them to improve, however it is important that the teachers reflect on the vocabulary or language that is going to use at the moment to expose their criteria.

-Incorporate visual, auditory and audiovisual materials to enrich their pronunciation.

The use of technology transformed the teaching-learning process because it became more effective, simple, and productive. Audio-visual equipment give a great help to the educators at the moment to teach pronunciation because the information can be presented in an interactive way, for example the students can see and listen native speakers in a dialogue and learn the correct sounds of speech an then to practice it.

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ANNEXES

Annexe No. 1 Consistency Matrix

The Use of Didactic Strategies to Enhance Ninth Graders´Pronunciation of Dental Fricative Consonants at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán valverde during the year 2017 -2018.

PROBLEM	OBJECTIVE	RESEARCH QUESTION	VARIABLES	INSTRUMENTS	METHODS
MAIN PROBLEM How can a selected group of didactic strategies be used in order to enhance ninth graders´pronunciation of dental fricative consonants at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde during the year 2017 - 2018? PROBLEM 1 Why do ninth grade students at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde have pronunciation problems? PROBLEM 2 What are the characteristics of appropriate didactic strategies in order to improve ninth grade students 'pronunciation of dental fricative consonants?	**BROAD OBJECTIVE** To determine how a selected group of didactic strategies can be used in order to enhance ninth graders´pronunciation of dental fricative consonants at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde. **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES** 1. To determine the reasons why ninth grade students at Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde have pronunciation problems. 2.- To characterize appropriate didactic strategies in order to improve ninth grade students'pronunciation of dental fricative consonants.	What kind of didactic strategies can be used in order to enhance ninth graders´pronunciation of dental fricatives consonants? *Does good pronunciation increase confidence and improve communicative competence of learners? .	**INDEPENDENT VARIABLE** Didactic strategies **DEPENDENT VARIABLE:** Pronunciation of dental fricative consonants	**FOR THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE** Document analysis. Class observation form Questionnaire **FOR THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE:** Class observation form	**Type of research** Applied, practical or empirical research Knowledge of practical interest and social benefit. **No experimental** The phenomenon or situation under analysis is not modified, since the relationship between the variables already occurred previously **Exploratory** It serves to familiarize the researcher with the phenomena, events or situations that are unknown. **Descriptive** Raises questions, about the causes of a problem. **Qualitative-Quantitative** **Research population:**

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Annexe No. 2

Class Observation Form (Teacher)

Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde

Teacher's name: **Date**:
Evaluator's name: **Grade:**

The class observation is part of a research project and has the purpose to know about the English teaching process. The data obtained will be used for issues focused exclusively on the project.

	Elements Observed	Observed	Somewhat Observed	Not Obs	Not Applicable
1	Employs materials accordingly				
2	Provides clear and appropriate directions				
3	Allows and encourages student participation				
4	Provides variety of activities				
5	Promotes team work				
6	Speaks English most of the time				
7	Encourages students to speak in English				
8	Focuses on pronouncing words, syllables and sounds correctly				
9	Motivates the students to produce a good pronunciation				
10	Uses specific activities to enhance students' pronunciation				

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Annexe No. 3

Class Observation Form (Students)

Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde

Grade: **Date**:

Evaluator's name:

The class observation is part of a research project and has the purpose to know about the English learning process. The data obtained will be used for issues focused exclusively on the project.

	Elements Observed	Observed	Somewhat Observed	Not Obser	Not Applicable
1	The students show a disciplined and responsible attitude				
2	The learners were asked to perform some tasks				
3	The pupils enjoy the English lesson				
4	The students speak English in class				
5	The students are engaged with the English lesson				
6	The learners strive to pay attention to the teacher during class				
7	The students' participation is evident during the class				
8	The activities allow them to participate orally				
9	The learners are motivated to produce a good pronunciation				
10	The pupils use extra material to learn pronunciation				

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Annexe No. 4

Students' Survey
Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde

Grade: **Date**:

Evaluator's name:

This questionnaire is part of a research project and has the purpose to know your opinion about the English teaching process. The data obtained will be used for issues focused exclusively on the project. We appreciate your collaboration

	Elements Observed	Yes	Sometimes	No
1	Do you enjoy the English class?			
2	Are your English classes interesting and dynamic?			
3	Are you motivated to speak English in class?			
4	Are you satisfied with your English class?			
5	Does the teacher speak English most of the time?			
6	Does your teacher teach pronunciation?			
7	Does your teacher motivate you to improve your pronunciation?			
8	Do you have pronunciation exercises?			
9	Do you think pronunciation is an important part in your English oral communication?			
10	Does the teacher use any type of didactic resource to teach pronunciation?			
11	Do you go to the lab to listen English?			
12	Are there posters, flashcards or other resources to learn English in your class?			

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid

Annexe No. 5

Teacher's Interview
Unidad Educativa Rafael Morán Valverde

This interview is part of a research project entitled "The use of Didactic Strategies to enhance Ninth Graders Pronunciation of Dental Fricative Consonants at Unidad Educativa Rafael Moran Valverde during the year 2017-2018" and has the purpose to gather data concerning your teaching experience. The information will stay anonymous and only will be employed for project objective. Thank you for your cooperation.

	Questions	**Option 1**	**Option 2r**	**Option 3**	**Option 4**
1	In what place did you learn English?	High School	University	Academy	English Speaking Country
2	What level of education did you get?	High School Diploma	Bachelor in Education	Master in Education	PH. D
3	How long have you been working as an English teacher?	1-5	6-10	11-15	16 -20
4	How often do you speak English in class?	Always	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
5	How do you evaluate your level of proficiency in English?	A1-A2	B1-B2	C1	C2
6	How would you evaluate your teaching process?	Very good	Good	Not bad	Needs Improvement
7	Have you attended to any seminar /workshop recently?	Yes	No		
8	Do you used technology to teach English in class?	Always	Almoss always	Sometimes	Never

Elaborated by: Peggy Luque Madrid