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Strategies to Improve Student's Oral Performance and Overcome  
Stage Fright.

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## **Abstract**

In this investigation, several techniques and strategies were applied to help students in the eighth grade of a public school to overcome their "scenic panic" or stage fright. The strategies are based on the information obtained from the same study group, in which they admit to feeling fear and insecurity to speak in English in public, mainly because of shame that their classmates make fun of them.

Through the results obtained, it could be demonstrated that using oral techniques in a gradual process, students could overcome their fear of speaking in English both publicly and privately, reduce their anxiety levels to do so, overcome the scenic panic and improve Your performance in oral communication in English.

Keywords: Stage Fright, fear of mockery, strategies to overcome the "stage Fright", Improvement in oral performance in English.

**CHAPTER I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Introduction.**

When students are learning English, speaking might be the skill that presents the greatest challenge for the apprentice, since here the performance is evident, not only the ability to communicate effectively, but also in the right way. This challenge for the student can be magnified if in addition, the person does not feel comfortable speaking in public, when he or she suffers what people name colloquially, “stage fright”; and the faster the students gets over it, the better it will be for their learning process. This project is designed to create and apply specific strategies to help students overcome their panic to speak English in public.

The language is a “living thing” say the linguists, and as a living thing, the language is the maximum expression of culture of a society. While it is true, in Costa Rica the English language is not the maximum expression of culture; but it is reflection of the quality of the education, both as individuals and as the country level. It is a fact that many international companies around the world, before installing its operations in a country like this one, the quality of English of workforce, is one of the key aspects taken into account.

So that, it must be recognized that speaking English in Costa Rica, has already gone from being a privilege to be a basic educational need. Going straight to the point, the state invests a lot of money annually in education, and one of the mainstays of modern education is the ability to communicate fluently in English.

This research has been conducted taking as study subject eighth grade students from Candelaria High School, which belongs to circuit 05 of Educational Regional of Occidente, Alajuela, Costa Rica.

In the first chapter, the reader can find basic research information, such as: a brief introduction, abstract, justification, the objectives of the research, the research question, and definitions of keywords that set the importance of this investigation. The second chapter contains the framework, which is theoretical information based on similar or related researches on educational field that support this one. The third chapter, on the other hand, contains the design of the research, here is detailed the type of research, the study subjects, the sources of information used, the population to which the study is directed, sample and describes the instruments used in data collection.



## **1.2 Rationale**

Throughout the years, much has been said about the huge amount of resources the Ministry of Public Education invests in the teaching of English and how much the country needs students to graduate from secondary education with a high level of English, in accordance with that investment in their education.

To get closer to that goal, teachers must teach the students to overcome the barrier of limitations, especially their shyness in front of others. Many suffer from stage fright, the fear of speak English in public. The teaching experience has taught teachers that students are often able to master the contents of the program and yet they feel uncomfortable when speaking in English in front of an audience, even in the privacy of the classroom.

The main objective of this research is helping students to significantly reduce their fear of speaking in English in front of an audience, with the use of specific techniques. For this, a set of activities are applied to the target group as diagnosis, in order to determine the fluency, they communicate in English in front of a small audience, in this research their audience is made up of their classmates.

Next, a set of techniques are put into practice to reduce the "stage fright" in the students of the group to increase their ability to express themselves orally in English. Finally, a final evaluation is perform asking students to give their opinion about whether or not those techniques could help them to improve their oral performance and whether or not the fear of speaking English in public was reduced.

## **1.3 Purpose**

Finding and applying tips and strategies to encourage students to speak their second language is the main purpose of this research. Also, this investigation plans to show them how other people had been successful when they overcame their fear, because everyone who is learning a second language goes through this nervousness of being wrong and to ignore people who laugh at them when they make an error while speaking. In addition, make teachers be aware of the importance of encouraging their students to improve their verbal communication and how they are the main influence in helping them develop their communication skills.

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

To improve student's oral performance through the application of oral techniques to reduce their "stage fright".

### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

#### **1.3.2.1**

To apply a diagnostic questionnaire to find out students' opinion about which elements make them feel secure or insecure when speaking in public.

#### **1.3.2.2**

To diagnose through the application of a questionnaire the possible limitations and stage fright in students when communicating orally in English.

#### **1.3.2.3**

To implement strategies in order to decrease the intensity of fear (stress) and improve student's self-control in regards to oral presentations.

#### **1.3.2.2**

To evaluate the impact of strategies applied in terms of oral performance and sense of achievement in students.

### **1.3.3 Research questions**

- a) Why are second language learners afraid of being wrong when they are learning to speak a second language?
- b) Why do students do not know how to express themselves in real life situations when using English as a Foreign Language?
- c) How can students improve their oral performance in the process of learning a second language?

**CHAPTER II**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

## 2.1 Literature review.

Many people think the most important things about life are hard work and become well prepared in the major a person has already chosen, but what they do not wonder is the importance of communication. People can come up with amazing ideas, but in most of the cases they cannot communicate them clearly. As Paul J. Meyer says in his quote “Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success.” When people really have an effective communication, the ideas cannot turn into an error or being misinterpreted, it becomes to be the key to success.

In order to understand everything related to good communication people must first know its definition and, according with Z. Hereford (2019 ) it can define it as following. “Communication is the process by which we exchange information between individuals or groups of people. It is a process where we try as clearly and accurately as we can, to convey our thoughts, intentions and objectives”. it means that it is a resource in order to reach our goals.

According to Stein, M.B., Walker, J.R., & Forde, D.R. (1996) “The fear of public speaking or performance, often called stage fright, exacts a huge toll on self-confidence and self-esteem and causes some people to leave school or a job or pass up a promotion. Many, including seasoned professional performers, suffer in silent terror. And because they feel embarrassed, people try to keep their fear a secret, even from a spouse or other close family members or friends”. Most of the time, students get embarrassed to be in front of the class doing an oral presentation and they have to go through this horrible situation in order to get the points they need to pass their school year and, they think “the teacher is ridiculous, these presentations do not help us in nothing”. But what they do not know is that this kind of oral performance is the key that will help them in their future. Also, it is a way to show them what they have to face in the future. As Stein, M.B., Walker, J.R., & Forde, D.R. (1996) says “Sometimes, public performing can give teachers the opportunity to realize about student’s fears talking in public, so this situation can be treated by the teacher giving them techniques or tips in order to overcome it and avoiding the fear of public speaking end up ruining their future.”

It is well known that some students are more nervous than others and as a result, it is difficult for them to carry out their work and, in the worst of the cases their dropped out their studies or job. But, this is because they can suffer from social anxiety disorder. Stein, M.B., Walker, J.R., & Forde, D.R. (1996) defined it like “social anxiety disorder, also called social phobia, is intense anxiety or fear of being judged, negatively evaluated, or rejected in a social or performance situation.” Everybody has been able to see a classmate sweating or with attack of panic and when they have to talk they forget everything and their oral presentation is a mess. This problem really affects the life of a person and it must be treated since school.

Students should know that famous people go through this fear of not being able to reach other people expectation and they are not the only ones. A way to face this horrible situation they should do what Taylor Swift mentions in her quote “In my opinion, the only way to conquer stage fright is to get up on stage and play. Every time you play another show, it gets better and better.”

According to Lybi Ma (2016) “In his book, Free Yourself from Fears, Joseph O'Connor recommends five minutes of preparation for every minute of presentation.” When a person is going to deliver an oral presentation or anything that involves public speaking it is recommended that this person be well prepared and has clearly ideas or concepts that he or she is going to present, why this? Because when a person already knows the topic this person is going to feel comfortable and the fear of being wrong or forget any kind of information is going to be less. In order to deliver a good presentation is necessary to create a plan where speakers convey their thoughts and about all their point of view. Look for the correct information and materials are going to help learners to generate new ideas and organize them in a proper flow. When the presenter already got all the information and really knows the topic, the next step is to be prepare for the performance. Do they know which is the key to success in an oral presentation? Well, practice is the key. When they keep themselves practicing their brain start organizing the ideas and memorizing the steps they might follow. Practice make expertise.

To get over oral performances fears students must wonder, why do they are getting stage fright? And according with Cho, M (2013) “As humans, we're hardwired to worry about our reputation above almost all things.” The problem is that students worry about

what their classmates think about them if they have a mistake in their pronunciation or a grammar error because they do not want to feel embarrassed. When a person worries about what other people think about them it is signal that they do not have confidence or they do not feel complete in their own. That shows lack of self-esteem and self-love. When they are leaning a new language or whatever thing they should focus on what is important for them, they must not feel embarrassed to ask for things they do not know because they are in a process of learning. Think about those people who use to make fun of people who is dealing an oral performance, are they smarter or have more knowledge of the topic? I bet if you ask him or her to go to the front and continue with the presentation they are not able to do it because what they want is to make you feel insecure. They must ignore this kind of people and continue working for what you star in order to achieve your goals.

“Stage fright primarily is a mental, not a physical phenomenon “James C (2014). Most of the people think that shaking hands, mouth trembling and sweating are the factors that causes stage fright and that is why the believe that it is a physical problem. But in reality this problem stars in their brain because everything is about student ´s fears to be wrong, every negative thinking people have their brain active signals that come to produce to their bodies effects like hand shaking and other ones.

There are many people who have been able to face their fears as the young Danish did. In his testimony he concluded the following. I outgrew these fears. I overcame them as I grew older. But public speaking? No way. I was still afraid of it. for him. It was time to do something to change his mind become a public speaker. So, he looked for information on internet and he found millions of ways to overcome it. But he realized that it is not only that is inside you if not it is a skill that everyone can learn. If people want to speak powerfully they can do it in spite of their fears. Then, he tried some of the solutions he had already found, some of them work very well, but others not so much. His secret was practice and practice in front of the mirror and receiving some advice about what he did wrong. Now, he is a public speaker and a coach of an online app. Danish finish his speech saying “You can always become a better speaker. You only stop if you tell yourself you’re good enough.” That phrase highlights the importance of keep working on what we like because you never

end learning, there are always new to learn, nothing is enough if you want to become better and better keep learning and encouraging you to do things in a better way and, focusing on people that make you grow and no on these ones that try to stop your dreams..

It is important to know how other people could overcome stage fright in order to understand that anybody is able to do it. here you can see what happened in his life to think the way that was mentioned before. Everything started at his first day school. His family moved from Pakistan to Tanzania. He was concentrated doing other thing when suddenly his teacher said “Danish can you stand up and introduce yourself?” So, he was so embarrassed, his stomach knot, his heart started racing and everybody was staring at him due that his mind went blank. He did not understand why his teacher put him in that spot. Then, he heard silly laughs and tears ran down his face. Danish says it was the first time he experienced stage fright and it was a fear that he cannot explain. Years went by and he was at college and that fear was still there like if it was part of his soul. He says that when he was little he had other fears like to be afraid of the dark, the monsters under his bed and other things, but he could overcome these fears as he grew older. But, he was not able to overcome public speaking. That phrase highlights the importance of keep working on what we like because you never end learning, there are always new to learn, nothing is enough if you want to become better and better keep learning and encouraging you to do things in a better way and, focusing on people that make you grow and no on these ones that try to stop your dreams.

Anxiety can be one of the most negative factor, which prevents learners from having success when learning a second language. It makes students to be nervous and afraid, so it allows students to have a bad oral performance. The main aspect that is associated with anxiety, is self-confidence. It involves the perception or evaluation the one’s own value and quality. This can affect negatively when learners put limitations or feel deficient in the language.

McLeod, S. A. (2012) “Self-esteem should be viewed as a continuum, and can be high, medium or low. Both high and low levels can be emotionally and socially harmful for the individual. People with high self-esteem tend to focus on growth and improvement,

whereas people with low self-esteem focus on not making mistakes in life.” Learners do not want to make mistakes because they want to be accepted in the society and not being rejected. So, they think that if they make things in the correct or right way people will feel proud of them and can form part of their group. Also, what they try to do is to please people and, for that reason, they do not risk themselves to ask for things they do not know when learning a foreign language, that only for not being ridiculous in front of the people. When a student feels confident and believes in himself or herself they will reach their goal of becoming bilingual.

According to Exploring your mind (2015) there are three types of self-esteem “inflated self-esteem, high self-esteem and low self-esteem.” But it does not mean that you can assign yourself only one type. The inflated self- esteem refers to all those people that believe they are better than the other ones. This kind of people usually do not listen to other people because the only thing they mind it is to be on the top. This type of attitude is very negative because it is hard to establish effective relationships. Related to high self-esteem, the author says that it is a positive self-esteem because in this one the people feel good and comfortable with themselves. People of high self-esteem are not driven to make themselves superior to others; they do not seek to prove their value by measuring themselves against a comparative standard. They enjoy being who they are, not in being better than someone else. “Persons of high self-esteem are not driven to make themselves superior to others; they do not seek to prove their value by measuring themselves against a comparative standard. Their joy is being who they are, not in being better than someone else” (Nathaniel Branden 2017) It makes people to success in whatever thing they want to achieve because they focus on themselves, they do not worry what other people think about themselves. Finally, we have low self-esteem the Need of talking badly about others indicates low self-esteem. It shows their lack of self-love and the possibilities of success. They feel insecure and unhappy that shows why they try to point out the defects of other people.

It is important to mention that stage fright is not a kind of phobia and Lisa Fritscher(2018) mention this in her investigation “Stage fright is not commonly thought of as a phobia, despite its ability to nearly cripple performers of all types.” It not serious enough to consider it as a phobia.



Everithing is in your mind and what you think you bring it to you life.

**CHAPTER III**  
**DESIGN AND METHOD**

### **3.1 Research method.**

“The main purpose of a research is to inform action, to prove a theory, and contribute to developing knowledge in a field or study.” (owl cation, 2018). This method calls people attention due to investigators can construct knowledge and facilitate the process of learning. Furthermore, the researcher looks for the main issues in order to keep people aware of it and find the necessary solutions. Also, this method provides the investigator the way to prove lies and support truths and, the most important is that action research allows the investigator to share valuable information for people's well-being.

### **3.2 Type of approach**

This research is qualitative, since the type of data collected consists of the assessment or personal opinion of the participants. Given that the collection instruments to be used will be two questionnaires of closed questions which are aimed to know the opinion of the students regarding the effectiveness of the techniques used to help them reduce the stage fright. As a support method, the observation of the researchers will be used.

### **3.3 The context.**

Candelaria High School is located in Alto Murillo de Naranjo. It was founded in 2004. An urban class community, composed mostly by people of lower middle class. And its principal has worked harder in order to make the structure bigger and give the students the best infrastructure possible and with this implement a better education.

#### **3.3.1 Describe the chosen setting.**

Students from eighth grade participate in the different techniques in order to overcome their stage fright. This is an active group available to learn and improve how to manage their fears. They belong to Candelaria High School and they are so proud where they study because teachers find ways to help them grow.

### **3.3.2 Participants.**

The participants in this research are adolescents, boys and girls whose average age is 13 years old, eighth grade students from Candelaria de Naranjo High School.

## **3.4 Data Collection Procedures and Tools of Initial Research**

### **3.4.1 Procedures of initial research**

For this investigation, questionnaires were used. The first, a diagnostic questionnaire applied to the study group, aimed to collect the opinions, impressions and / or fears of the students regarding speaking in English in front of other people.

### **3.4.2 Instrument**

- a) The diagnostic test is made by eleven closed questions, which investigate the fears of the participants about speaking in English in front of an audience.
- b) During the application of oral presentation techniques, the observation of researchers as a complement to the research will be used in the sense of noting the reactions, non-verbal language of the students to each of the strategies applied.
- c) Finally, to close the process, an assessment questionnaire will be applied, whose objective is to determine if the applied techniques fostered student's oral performance and if they contributed to reduce the stage fright. The closing questionnaire consists of 8 closed questions and multiple selection designed to know the opinion of students regarding the techniques used.

### **3.5 Action Plan**

The action plan has three stages. The objective is leading the students by the hand through a gradual process in which they begin by listening to their own voice speaking English, so that they feel comfortable. In the introductory phase, the student will record their voice, reading texts to get used to speaking English out loud.

In the intermediate phase, the student begins to interact with an audience which is made by their own classmates, so that they listen but do not see it, in this way, the student becomes familiar with the sensation of standing in front of a public and speaking English without being assessed.

In the last phase of the process, students already know the sensation of speaking in front of the class, here they confront their audience fully by answering questions and participating in a small interview that consists of 5 questions.

#### **3.5.1 Introductory Phase: Speaking in English in private**

##### **3.5.1.1 Becoming familiar with my own voice speaking English.**

Students in the classroom choose a topic of their choice. Then, at home, students read aloud the text in English they have chosen and using the application of their smartphones, they make a recording of the reading, which should take two minutes. During the reading, they should make correct use of the punctuation marks so that they can appreciate their own voices. Finally, students in class share with their classmates the recorded audio and comment on their impressions, and how they felt about.

##### **3.5.1.2 Interviewing my famous character.**

In the classroom, students imagine being a famous character who is interviewed. Teacher offers a list of questions from which they must choose three. At home, each student answers the questions in a 1 minute recording for each one. Often, the students share their audios and their personal opinion about speaking in English.

**3.5.2 Intermediate Phase: Speaking short dialogues, the audience listens but does not see.**

- a) In pairs, the students prepare a 5-minute role play they will present to the class. In this activity, they will use resources such as puppets, costumes, masks, false walls, etc., so that the audience listens but does not see the student.
- b) Each student will present a short speech to the class about a topic of their choice, time of duration 3 minutes. The audience will be able to hear him/her, but will not be able to see, since the student will be placed behind the class instead of in front.

**3.5.3 Final Phase: Speaking short dialogues in front of the class**

- a) A series of questions written on a piece of paper are placed in a box. Each student in turn takes a question out of the box, one by one passes in front of the class, reads the question aloud and gives a short answer in English. The exercise will be repeated so that each student answers 3 questions.
- b) The teacher distributes 4 different color ballots to their students, one color per turn, the students individually, pass to the front of the class for a brief interview of 5 questions that their classmates will ask.

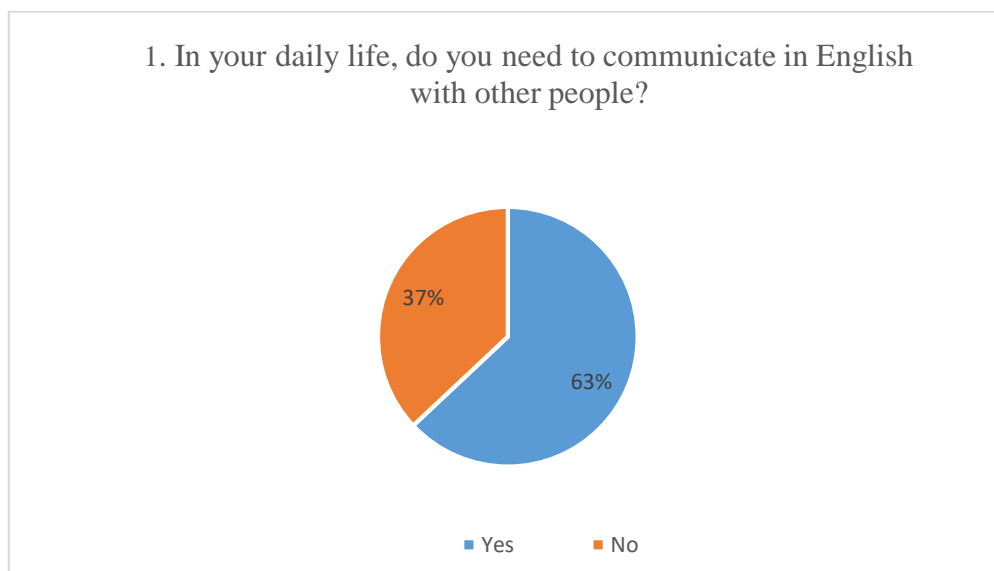
# **Chapter IV**

## **Findings**

## 4.1 Data analysis

### 4.1.1 Diagnostic questionnaire

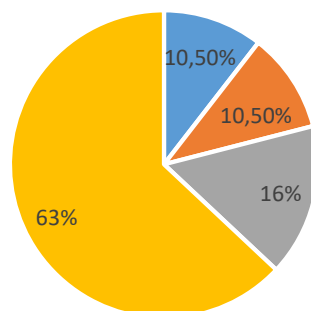
As a result of the application of the diagnostic questionnaire, it could be seen that, in general terms, the students who participated in the study consider it necessary to apply oral techniques that help them to express themselves orally in the English language, while at the same time helps to reduce your stage fright.



When surveying the 19 students of the study group, it is found that 63% of them indicated that they need to communicate in English in their daily lives. For its part, the remaining 37% responded that they don't require the English language in their daily lives. Which shows the importance that English has taken now.



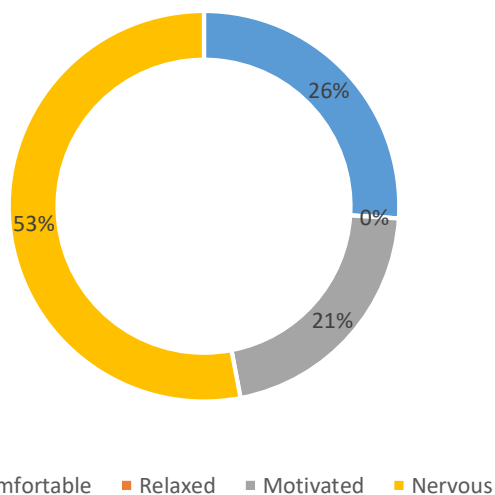
## 2. Which people (and places) do you feel comfort speaking English?



- Anyone and anywhere. I don't feel comfort.
- Everyone and everywhere, I do enjoy speaking English.
- With closer friends and their families.
- In classroom, only when I have to do it.

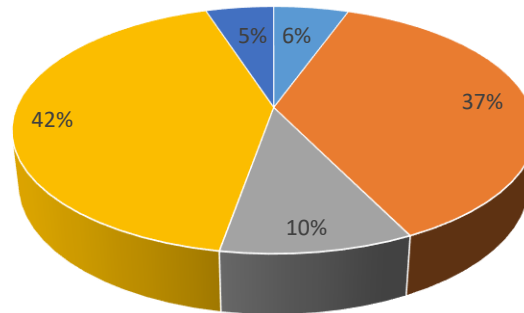
On the other hand, when inquiring about the places and people whom the surveyed students need to communicate in English with, it was found as follows: 63% of them indicate that the place they feel the most comfortable to speak in English, it is in their classroom and with their classmates. Which let see, that despite having answered in the previous question, that they do need to communicate in English in their daily lives, they feel more comfortable if they do it in the classroom. On the other hand, the 16% of the respondents feel more comfortable speaking in English with their closest friends and families. Next, the 10.5% answered the same question, they feel comfortable speaking in English anywhere and speaking to anyone. The remaining 10.5% said they do not feel comfort when speaking English in front of other people, anywhere and with anyone.

3. When you have to speak in English and there are people around, how do you feel?



When the students were asked, how they feel when they speak in English in public they responded in the following way: 53% said they felt nervous, 26% felt uncomfortable and the remaining 21% felt motivated when communicating orally in English with other people.

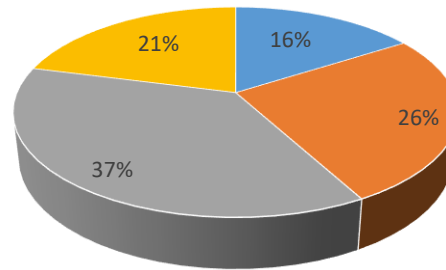
4. If you have to speak with an English Native Speaker, how would you feel?



- Safe and Confident.
- Scared and insecure
- Motivated to prove my English.
- Nervous, but I would.
- It would paralyze me completely.

When asked how they would feel if they had to speak in English with a Native of the English language, the students surveyed responded as follows: 42% indicated that they would be nervous, but still would. 37% would be scared and insecure. 10% would be motivated to test their level of English, as for the rest, 5% show that they would feel very safe and confident when speaking in English with a native, and the final 6%, indicates that they would be paralyzed completely if they had to.

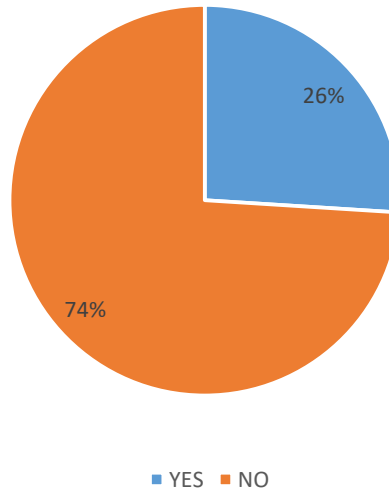
5. In the Classroom, when the teacher asks questions in English:



- I know the answer, but I don't respond for fear that my classmates laugh at me.
- I answer even if I am wrong.
- I do not worry about the reaction of others.
- I can do it better, but I would like to receive help.

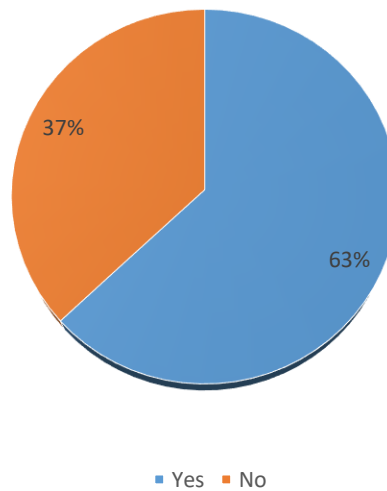
Regarding question # 5, the 37% of the respondents answered that when the teacher asks questions in English in the classroom, they respond without worrying about the reaction of his classmates. 26% responded that they dare to answer the question even if the answer could be wrong. 21% of them responded that they answered the questions, but agreed that with help, their answers could be better. Finally, the remaining 16% responded that although they know the correct answer, they don't answer due to the fear of their classmates make fun of them.

6. Do you mind what other people think about you when you are speaking a second language?



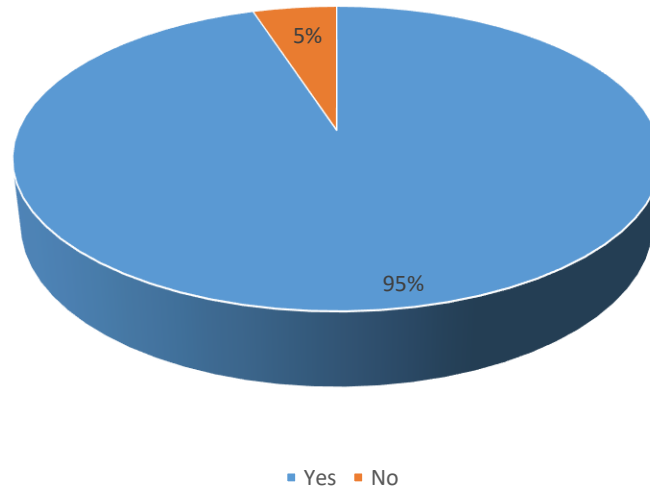
When asking the students, if they give importance to what other people think about them when they speak English in Public, they responded as follows: 74% answered no. While 26% of the respondents answered affirmatively, they do care, they feel affected by what other people may think about them when they hear them speak in English in Public.

7. Are you afraid of committing mistakes while speaking your foreign language?



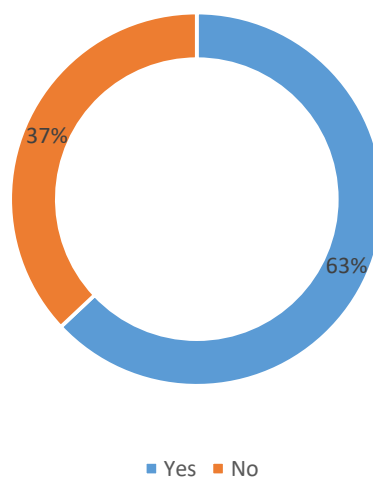
Regarding the question, if you are afraid of making mistakes when speaking in English, the answers were the following: 63% answered affirmatively. On the other hand, the remaining 37% responded they are not afraid of making mistakes while speaking in English.

8. Would you like to try oral techniques to help you overcome the “stage fright”?



When respondents are asked, if they would like to try oral techniques that help them improve their performance in public, 95% of them answered affirmatively. On the other hand, the remaining 5% answered no.

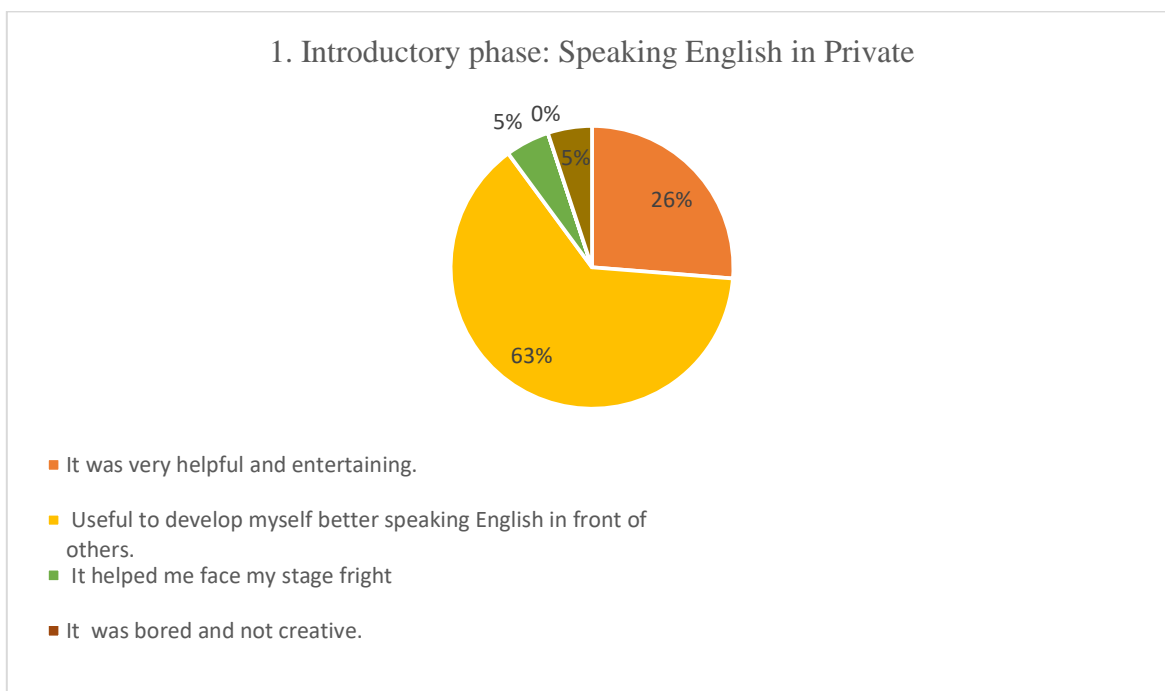
9. Have you ever suffered from stage fight?



Finally, based on a brief definition, the students were consulted if they consider once had suffered from stage fright to which 63% responded that they had suffered from fear of speaking, singing, acting in public or similar. While the remaining 37% said they had not had a "stage fright" manifestation.

#### 4.1.2 Closing Questionnaire

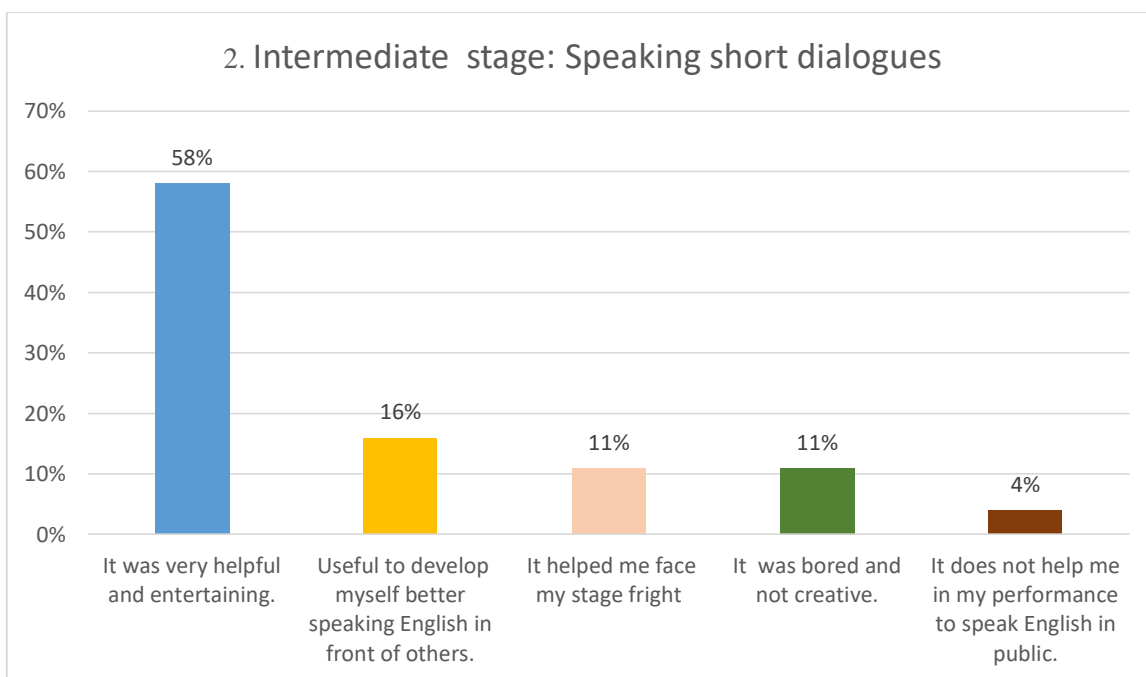
At the end of the oral techniques applied to the participants of the study were surveyed with a second questionnaire, in which the students evaluated according to their own criteria, the effectiveness of the techniques practiced in class. Next, the results are described.



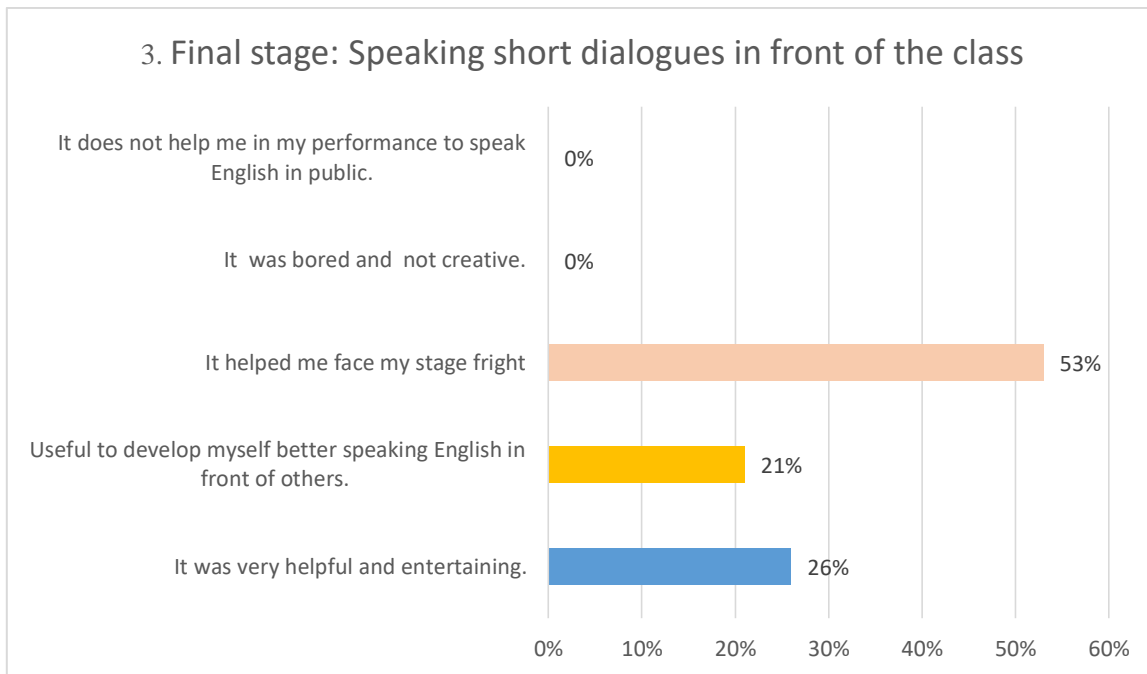
After applying the oral techniques described in chapter III to the class, the study participants were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of these techniques, according to each stage. Figure # 10, compiles the opinions of the students about the techniques applied in the "introductory stage", the answers are detailed: 63% of the students said that the activities They were useful to develop their oral performance by themselves when they speak in English in front of other people. On the other hand, 26% considered that they were useful



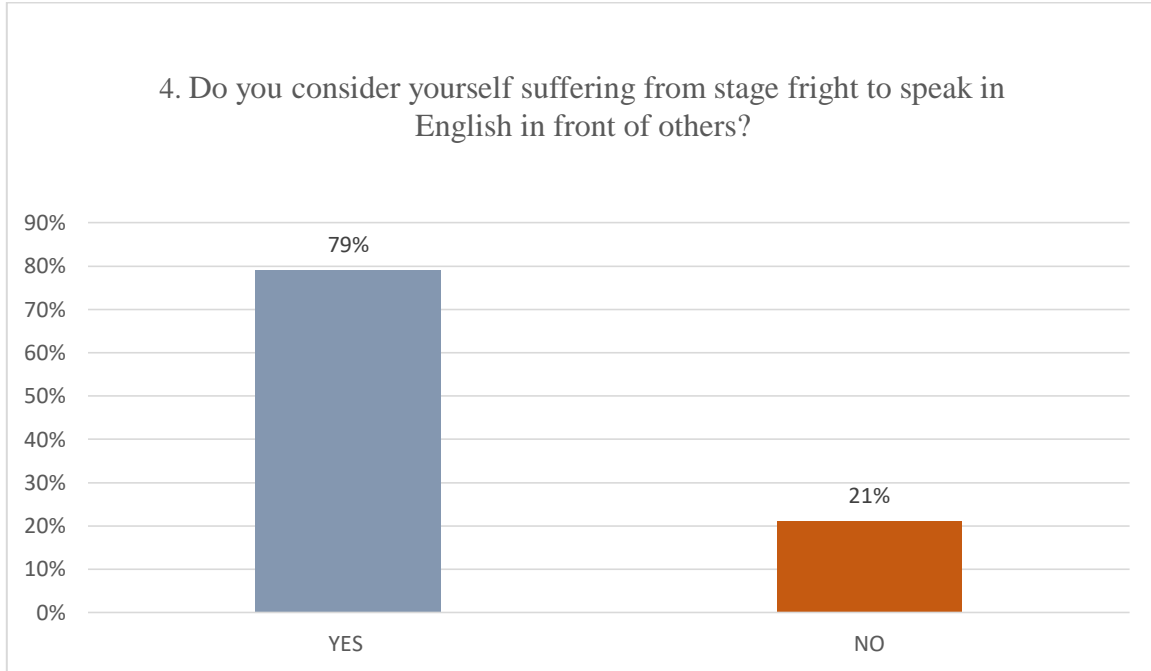
and at the same time entertaining. 5% thought that they helped him to face his "scenic panic", and the remaining 5% thought that they were boring and useless.



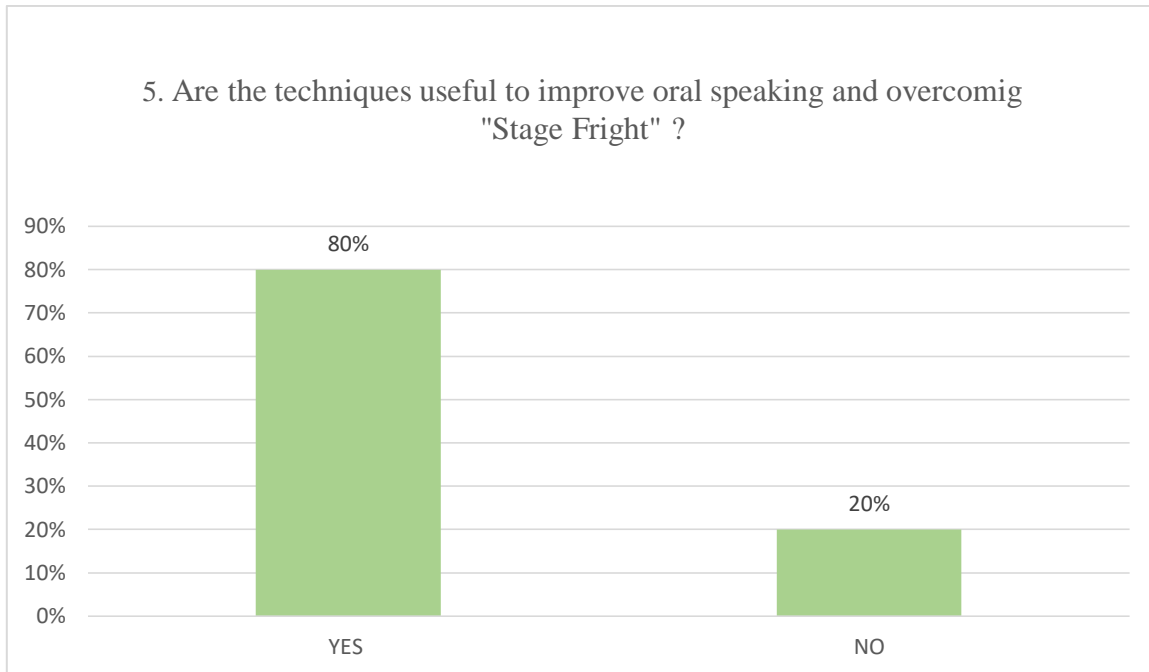
The "intermediate stage" consisted of the students having to start answering short questions in front of their classmates, here the answers are detailed. 58% thought that the activities of this stage were useful to improve their oral and at the same time entertaining performance. Sixteen percent said they are useful to develop their performance by speaking in English. 11% of them indicated that they would help them overcome their "stage fright". Another 11% said that the activities were boring, not creative. Finally, 4% think that they do not help them improve their oral performance.



Like the previous two stages, the "final stage" was evaluated in which the students presented short dialogues with their classmates, asking them to evaluate the techniques corresponding to this stage, responding as follows: 53% of the students responded that it helped them face their stage fright. 21% thought those techniques help them to develop their oral performance by themselves and the remaining 26% thought that are useful and also entertaining. The remaining categories did not score at this stage.



To emphasize, the opinion of the students, they were asked if they consider suffering from "stage fright" to which they responded in the following way: 79% of the students surveyed considered suffering from stage fright when it comes to speaking in English in front of public. For its part, the remaining 21% considered not to suffer from "stage fright".



The question number 5 of the closing questionnaire was addressed only to respondents who had answered affirmatively to question number 4. That is, that people who consider suffering from stage fright, gave their opinion, if the techniques seen in the three stages they help them improve their oral performance in English and lessen the fear of speaking it in public. Here are the answers. Of the 100% who indicated suffering from stage fright, 80% consider that the techniques applied in the class do help them overcome it. On the other hand, 20% indicated that it does not help them to improve their oral performance or to overcome or reduce their stage fright.

#### **4.2 Restatement of questions.**

According with the applied techniques in eight grade in Candelaria high school, it could be argued that most of the students are afraid of being wrong when learning a second language because they think that their classmates, teacher or native speakers who listen to them might laugh at them just because their poor English skills. Furthermore, others say that they are afraid because of their bad pronunciation and it causes that other people understand something that they are not saying. Besides that, most of them feel that their shyness don not let them continue in the process of learning due to that if they say something wrong their classmates are going to think that they are fool and they could reject them.

In other hand, some students cannot express themselves in another language that is not of them. According with the investigation, it can be said that the problem starts since their own language because many of the students do not know how to organize their ideas or thoughts in order to express their way of thinking. Also, they say that it takes them a lot of words to express the ideas in a foreign language, when in their own language they just would use few words and less time. But, what really happen is that students are translating from their native language to English and, of course, it takes time and allows the lack of fluency. That is why they do not know how to face real life situations when using English.

Based on the mentioned issues, researchers create some techniques that will help students to overcome stage fright. The activities are related to the speaking skill, where the idea is that students improve their fluency, pronunciation and at the same time they can express their knowledge to their classmates. Then, Learner say that recognize their own voice speaking another language and listen to their mistakes help them a lot because they gain self-confidence and realize that they need to work harder to improve their speech. So, considering the results in the closing questionnaire it can be inferred that students find the techniques useful in order to become better.

**CHAPTER V**  
**REFLECTIONS**

## **5.1 Reflections**

Through the study, the participants showed being aware of the importance of speaking in English, however, they also pointed out weaknesses and limitations, such as suffering of stage fright when speaking in English in public and this limits their improvement in English oral communication.

It is not intended that students overcome the fright stage in three weeks, but it could be noticed that using learning techniques inside and outside the classroom, as a continuous process of self-motivation and self-improvement, helps students break the barrier of fear and the shame to be heard speaking in English.

When considering that they are eighth graders, the need to overcome the fear of making mistakes becomes an imperative in the process, since communicating in English effectively and fluently is the goal of teaching this language in the classroom.

## **5.2 Plan for further action**

For future reference, if the same study had to be applied, it would be ideal if the oral techniques could be applied during a school year, even if it could be applied in two groups of students for comparison of results at the end of the school year.



**CHAPTER VI**  
**CONCLUSIONS**

## 6.1 Outcomes

In the diagnostic questionnaire, 63% of students indicated that they need to communicate in English in their daily lives, which can be taken as an indicator, that young students are aware of the need to speak fluently in English nowadays.

However, in a contradictory way, the same percentage (63%) recognizes that they do not feel comfortable speaking in English in front of others and they do it just because they "must" do it in the classroom. In other words, despite needing to speak in English, only 10.5% dare to do so. This seems to be confirmed by question # 3, where only 21% of respondents feel motivated to speak in English, and it is reaffirmed, when the results show that 37% would feel insecure and uncomfortable if they had to speak in to an English native speaker. Even 6% of them indicated that they would be paralyzed before facing the fact of having to talk with the native speaker. This could explain why the oral techniques of the first phase, which consisted in practicing alone, were received with pleasure.

One positive aspect is that 37% of the students indicated that they do not worry about the opinion of others while practicing English in the classroom. Perhaps for this reason they were collaborative to implement the assigned techniques.

## 6.2 Implications

After studying the results of the study, outstands the way the students are negatively affected by the fear of speaking in English in public.

The fact of being paralyzed by the fear and the nerves before the possibility of talking with a native speaker, implies that the real opportunities that they have to put into practice their English, will probably let them pass by due to the insecurity, the nerves and the stage fright.

However, the language is for dialogue, to share, the goal of learning English is not to talk alone at home, or only with their classmates, but to incorporate it into their lives with the same naturalness which they communicate daily in Spanish.

### 6.3 Strengths

The students actively participated in the whole process, and were genuinely interested in the techniques used. The same way, there was an active support by the teacher in charge of the group.

For students, was motivating realized that there are a variety of techniques, digital, virtual material, etc., accessible to them to practice, reinforce and improve their oral performance in English, without feeling exposed and then progressively get used to speaking in English both, privately and in public and eventually getting over the stage fright.

For teacher, to obtain first hand factual information about how the students can be fostered by a self- practice process that takes them out of their comfort zone and helps them to break the stage fright barrier in the early stages of learning English.

### 6.4 Limitations

The main limitation was the lack of time, since the process of the teacher in charge of the group should not be interrupted, in each of the stages two techniques were used. The fact that at the end of the process, 79% of students indicate suffering from stage fright, comes out the question about how much they are limiting their performance when speaking in English in public.

It is important to point out that not being the teacher of the study group stablish limits to the time to collect information, to use different data collection instruments such as the individual interview or the observation to the group during complete periods, for example a school year.

Another element to consider is that people learn in different ways, the study in question applies the same techniques to all students; but it is possible that they do not have the same impact on all students, ideally developing techniques adapted to the needs Individuals and that was not possible during the study because the professor in charge is not the one who does the research.

**CHAPTER VII**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 7.1 Recommendations.

- Perform another study of the same nature, preferably, that covers complete school periods so that it is possible to adapt the techniques to the student's learning style and modify them according to the progress obtained.
- Since the participants pointed out "shame and fear to be mocked," as one of the main barriers to dare speaking English in front of their peers, it is recommended that teachers encourage a fun, relaxed and respectful environment among their students in classroom.
- Help students to understand that stage fright is a fear that can be overcome with the use of speaking techniques, but above all, make them notice the importance that English plays in their future, and how much they need to defeat their stage fright.
- Guide students to find the speaking techniques appropriate to their needs and facilities and encourage them to leave their comfort zone so that they dare to interact with English native speakers.
- To use recreational activities that reduce the level of stress and anxiety before the class begins.

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# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I. DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONNAIRE

The present questionnaire is aimed to collect your personal evaluations regarding your performance when speaking English with other people. It is an integral part of the Seminar I Course, taught by the Universidad Latina de Costa Rica.

Respectfully, we request your valuable collaboration, ensuring the data provided will be treated with absolute confidentiality, used for strictly academic purposes and will not be used by any other institution.

1. In your daily life, do you need to communicate in English with other people?  
Yes ( ) No ( )
2. Which people (and places) do you feel comfort speaking English?  
( ) Anyone and anywhere. I don't feel comfort.  
( ) Everyone and everywhere, I do enjoy speaking English.  
( ) At home, with my family.  
( ) With closer friends and their families.  
( ) In classroom, only when I have to do it.
3. When you have to speak in English and there are people around, how do you feel?  
( ) Uncomfortable  
( ) Relaxed  
( ) Motivated  
( ) Nervous
4. If you have to speak with an English Native Speaker, how would you feel?  
( ) Safe and Confident.  
( ) Scared and insecure  
( ) Motivated to prove my English.  
( ) Nervous, but I would.  
( ) It would paralyze me completely.



5. In the Classroom, when the teacher asks questions in English:

- I know the answer, but I don't respond for fear that my classmates laugh at me.
- I answer even if I am wrong.
- I do not worry about the reaction of others.
- I can do it better, but I would like to receive help.

Would you like to try oral techniques that help you improve your performance when you speak in English?

6. Your school runs auditions for a role play. would you like to participate in?

- No way! everyone will be looking at me!
- I would think about it. but then my friend's would talk me into it
- of course! I would be the best one.

7. Are you afraid of committing mistakes while speaking your foreign language?

Yes ( )      No ( )

8. Would you like to try oral techniques to help you overcome the "stage fright"?

Yes ( )      No ( )

9. The term stage fright refers to "an anxiety and nervous reaction that occurs when a person must perform a type of activity in front of the public, whether it is talking, singing, acting, etc."

Have you ever suffered from stage fright?

Yes ( )      No ( )

## **Annex II. Closing questionnaire.**

Dear Student, based on the oral techniques practiced in the classroom, please choose the option that better shows your opinion.

### **Activity # 1. I record and listen my own voice.**

- It was very helpful and entertaining.
- I find it useful to develop myself better speaking English in front of others.
- It helped me face my stage fright
- She was bored and uncreative.
- It does not help me in my performance to speak English in public.
- other \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Activity # 2. Answer questions chosen at random.**

- It was very helpful and entertaining.
- I find it useful to develop myself better speaking English in front of others.
- It helped me face my stage fright
- She was bored and uncreative.
- It does not help me in my performance to speak English in public.
- other \_\_\_\_\_.

Activity # 3. Create a short dialogue about the topic seen in class.

- It was very helpful and entertaining.
- I find it useful to develop myself better speaking English in front of others.
- It helped me face my stage fright
- She was bored and uncreative.
- It does not help me in my performance to speak English in public.
- other \_\_\_\_\_.

4- Do you consider yourself suffering from stage fright to speak in English in front of others?

Yes ( ) No ( )

5. If you answered yes to the previous question, do you consider that the techniques used in class could help you to overcome your stage fright and improve your performance to speak English?

Yes ( ) No ( )