



Faculty of Education

School of English Language Teaching

Thesis submitted to obtain the licentiate degree in English Teaching I and II

Cycle

**The effectiveness of using Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista located in Sarapiquí, Heredia during the first quarter of 2025.**

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En mi calidad de tutora, he verificado que se han hecho las correcciones indicadas durante el proceso de tutoría y he evaluado los aspectos relativos a la elaboración del problema, objetivos, justificación, antecedentes, marco teórico, marco metodológico, tabulación, análisis de datos, conclusiones y recomendaciones.

De los resultados obtenidos por el postulante se obtienen la siguiente calificación:

	<i>Descripción</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>% Obt</i>
a	Originalidad del tema	10%	10%
b	Cumplimiento de entrega de avances	20%	20%
c	Coherencia entre los objetivos, instrumentos aplicados y los resultados de la investigación	30%	30%
d	Relevancia de las conclusiones y recomendaciones	20%	20%
e	Calidad detalle del marco teórico	20%	20%
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**Estimado señor**

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He revisado y he hecho las observaciones relativas al contenido analizado, particularmente lo relativo a la coherencia entre el marco teórico y análisis de datos, la consistencia de los datos recopilados y la coherencia entre éstos y las conclusiones; asimismo, la aplicabilidad y originalidad de las recomendaciones, en términos de aporte de la investigación. He verificado que se han hecho las modificaciones correspondientes a las observaciones indicadas.

Por consiguiente, este trabajo cuenta con mi aval para ser presentado en la defensa pública.

Atte.



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## **Dedicatory**

This work is the fruit of countless and arduous sacrifices. Through the effort of the researcher, this study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved family, who have been the source of inspiration and gave me strength when I thought of giving up, who continually provide their moral, spiritual, emotional, and financial support.

I also want to dedicate this achievement to my teachers, and specially my tutor MSc. Yanory Arguedas Carballo, who shared their words of advice and encouragement to finish this study. To their help in the midst of problems while doing this work.

And lastly, I dedicate this study to the almighty God, thank you for the guidance, strength, power of mind, protection, and skills and for giving me the healthy life and letting me pursue this dream.

Keyna Obregón Ramírez

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Keyna Obregón Ramírez

## Resumen

Este estudio se realizó con niños de una escuela pública. Con el uso de la tecnología y los principios del enfoque CALL (Aprendizaje de Idiomas Asistido por Computadora por sus siglas en inglés), estos estudiantes pudieron adquirir conocimientos sobre la fluidez en la lectura en inglés. El grupo completo, formado por 14 estudiantes, fue el beneficiario de este proyecto.

Este programa se llevó a cabo desde el primer cuatrimestre de 2025 hasta el segundo cuatrimestre de 2025, por lo que estaba previsto completarse en el mismo año. El estudio tuvo lugar en la Escuela La Conquista, Sarapiquí, Heredia, con la ayuda de estudiantes de 5° grado.

La investigación fue de tipo descriptiva y correlacional con un enfoque mixto (cualitativo y cuantitativo). Se prepararon una prueba previa, una lista de observación, una prueba posterior y una entrevista para los estudiantes que participaron en el proyecto. Esto se hizo con el fin de recopilar información sobre sus necesidades y más, con el propósito de apoyar la investigación y tener una forma más clara de llevarla a cabo.

Los estudiantes que participaron en el programa obtuvieron más conocimiento para la fluidez en el idioma, desarrollaron más habilidades, ganaron más confianza con el idioma inglés y se sintieron complacidos con el programa. En general, la retroalimentación recibida fue positiva. La experiencia que adquirieron fue muy útil para su confianza al leer en inglés.

*Palabras clave:* Fluidez en la lectura, aprendizaje de idiomas asistido por computadora, tecnología en la educación, enseñanza del inglés, cuentos cortos, estrategias de lectura, plataforma digital Epic, método mixto, habilidades de lectura.

## Abstract

This study was done with children from a public school. With the use of technology and the principles of CALL Approach these students were able to acquire knowledge on fluency when reading in English. The whole group formed by 14 students were the beneficiaries of this project.

This program was carried out from the first quarter of 2025 until the second quarter of 2025, so it was meant to be completed in the same year. This study took place at Escuela La Conquista, Sarapiquí, Heredia, with the help of 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

This research was descriptive and correlational with mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative). It included a pre-test, an observation checklist, a post-test, and a student interview for students who participated in the project in order to gather information about their needs and more, with the purpose of giving support to the investigation and having a clearer way for it.

Students who participated in the program gained more knowledge for fluency in the target language, got and developed more skills, got more confidence with English language, and felt pleased with the program. In general, the feedback received was positive. The experience they acquired was very helpful for their confidence when reading in English.

*Key words:* Reading fluency, CALL Approach, technology in education, English language teaching, short stories, reading strategies, Epic digital platform, mixed-method, reading skills.

## **CHAPTER I RESEARCH PROBLEM**

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a very significant skill that can help students learn more about a language like, in this case, English. The use of short stories for acquiring more fluency on reading is an attractive selection to motivate students to learn the language since they need help from teachers to increase the several abilities and skills to progress in the learning process. Maulidia, (2023) said: “A short story makes learning English more interesting and appealing to students. It piques learners’ interest in the target culture and language” (p.97).

Literature has been a powerful resource when teaching different languages due to the vocabulary, sentence rules and structures, values, customs, and history that enriches the person who reads. And short stories are part of the enrichment that literature can bring to children when learning English. There are many kinds of short stories that teachers can use in the classroom according to the preferences of the students and the topics that have to be studied. Mohamed, (2024) said: “the reading of short stories in the class is more appealing as it brings an element of fun and excitement into the classroom.” (p.4).

The use of readings can be well accompanied with technology where they can have more motivation to read by interacting in a device. Many teachers can have access to a very useful tool called Epic that is free and appealing for children. It has colors, pictures, shapes and sounds while they learn the language English. So, books are not a big deal because having this resource is a modern way to teach reading short stories in the classroom.

The relevance of reading short stories on children is due to the lack of reading skills that students from Escuela La Conquista present. They have not had English classes with frequency for around two years, so their knowledge about the language decreased significantly. Furthermore, they have not had any motivation from previous teachers to

acquire more knowledge of the language and reading skills. Those reasons are the importance of helping students to know the language more.

This research paper will focus on the importance of fluency in reading. According to Felton, (2024): “Reading fluency is important because it develops comprehension and motivates readers. It has been referred to as a bridge between reading phases such as early reading and later reading.” (p. 3). Reading is like a key that can open many doors that carries to the acquisition of more knowledge, and the fluency develops the acquired knowledge motivating the students to learn more.

Teachers should realize that using short stories in the classroom has a lot of advantages that can carry the class to a more successful process of learning. (Megawati, et.al, 2023) stated some advantages of using short stories:

1) Stories can help EFL students improve their communication, critical thinking, and aesthetic sense. They also help EFL students improve their interpretive skills and raise their language awareness. As a result, for the reasons stated, they should be used in EFL classrooms. 2) Stories can be used to provide educationally valuable, motivating, and authentic teaching and learning materials. As a result, instead of the informative materials used in reading comprehension skill classes, EFL teachers should use them. 3) Stories can help EFL students develop personal creativity, higher- level thinking skills, and emotional intelligence. 4) Stories can also help EFL students grow personally and are an excellent teaching tool. (p. 47).

To conclude, the relevance of short stories to help students have fluency when reading can be highlighted by saying that they bring an overall knowledge and experience that will enrich the acquisition of the language English. And the future of the students can

improve due to the knowledge they acquire at a very young age, so it is very important that the teacher joins students in every step during this process.

### **1.1.1. Background of the Problem**

The main purpose of *The Impact of Short Stories on English Language Learning* by Amine Karam Eddine and Nadir Mohammed is to investigate the use of short stories to teach English in the classroom, and how the role of them enhances acquisition of the language on students. The use of short stories can be interesting and beneficial if it is used in the correct way to take advantage of tool. Both teacher and students think that learning with literature can contribute to develop attitudes and values that will help them outside in the real world, Karam & Mohammed, (2018) said: “Literary texts, in general, and short stories specifically, have been an essential source of teaching and learning materials for EFL classes. Short stories are rich in language and have many benefits for EFL learners.” (p. 21).

The authors discussed the importance of the acquisition of English since it has become a global language that is necessary in many areas in different jobs. There are many countries in which English has to be taught since very early grades at school due to the relevance that this language has. Literature is fundamental to learn English since they use American and British literary texts like novels, novellas, short stories, and poems to read as homework and then discuss in the class.

They chose short stories as a toll for teaching and learning English because they think it is better to have imagination and live in a fictional world as an escape from daily routine and full of new elements. For them, literature can give the knowledge they need to promote the use of the language more frequently. It contributes to the building of strong

bases of linguistic knowledge like grammar, vocabulary, and concepts, so short stories have an extensive reach in the lives of many people.

Also, it is relevant to know about the definition of short stories. They are short and fictional situations that contains fictional characters and describes events that may not be related with real life, and people can read them in several hours, so they do not take a lot of time.

Reading literary texts can help students increase their imagination, critical thinking abilities, and educational awareness. Short stories are not boring so they can help students develop their imagination and creativity, and at the same time learning grammar becomes interesting for students. In conclusion, reading short stories help develop the four skills, and brings motivation to students for the acquisition on knowledge.

Short stories as a Source of Cultural Insight When Teaching English by Ann Elisabeth Pettersen Stevens in the investigation takes relevance on short stories because they help children learn about history, culture, values, and practical skills of the society. Literature from other cultures enrich the knowledge of the language and the customs they have, and they inspire and motivate people to know more about a different culture.

Additionally, Pettersen, (2014) said: “Today, English is a broad subject that aims not only to teach students how to speak, read, listen and write in English, but also to develop cultural understanding, social skills and to encourage the students’ personal development”. (p. 11). It means that English is important for people, and it will help students to have a better life in the future.

Short stories have been viewed as inferior next to other genres and not enough to provide knowledge to students. Edgar Allan Poe is mentioned in the research as one of the first ones writing short stories saying it is not necessary to write very long stories to fulfill

the intention of the story. It means that short stories are full of engagement that contributes readers with plenty of knowledge, in this case, of English.

For the investigation the focus is on short stories because they have to be accessible to the kind of readers. So, it is significant to take into account the population for the investigation to catch their attention and motivation. Short stories have a lot of knowledge to develop in the classroom, and they are a good help for the acquisition of a language because they provide students with exposure to authentic language, so they are viewed as good tools for language acquisition.

This kind of literary texts include fiction and socio-cultural aspects that enrich with the kind of vocabulary that students can acquire, taking into account that they are not going to learn just isolated vocabulary but also relevant aspects about life to create critical thinking that will help children for their future.

Moreover, it is important to know that the situations described can change with time because everything in this world changes depending on the situations in which people are living, and so the same with the stories that can change the perspective because of time. Teachers are pillar for students because they need guidance and explanations of the different situations and perspectives of the short stories, so teachers should join students during the process of acquiring reading and understanding skills.

Finally, the author wants to show that short stories can provide students with a wide source of insight that will reinforce the knowledge students can acquire.

Experiencing Reading EFL short stories in the English classroom by Wilson Andrés Pineda Antolinez, in this study starts from worrying about the lack of reading literature in the program from the institution because it does not allow students to incorporate reading as an essential source of knowledge of English. In Colombia occurs the same problem as in

Costa Rica, where the Ministry of Education does not integrate the literature as part of the curriculum at schools. So, the author wants to promote the use of short stories as an encouraging source of knowledge.

Reading literature is authentic material that provides more interaction in the classroom, expands language awareness, is motivating because educated the whole person that reads. Literature is a model since it contains real examples of grammatical structures and vocabulary samples, also it incorporates cultural information that will increase the motivation to read and acquire more knowledge.

There are mentioned three main approaches as base for the investigation that are: language-based approach, literature as content and literature for personal enrichment. Those approaches are focused on using literature as a base for reading in the classroom, where students can learn grammar, vocabulary and express personal opinions using English.

It was found that the incorporation of reading short stories in the classroom increased communicative competences and learning the target language. Also, it gave them the ability to respect the opinion from classmates having an environment in which students can discuss freely about their ideas. Respect is an essential part when listening to others because it can give them confidence or fear when speaking. In this part, student have to be taught that everybody can have different opinions, and they have to be respected.

Pineda, (2017) mentioned the five most students' literature preferences in the EFL class: comedies, adventures, thriller, love, and mystery. (p. 56). This can change according to ages and cultural background.

In conclusion, the use of short stories as a tool to acquire more knowledge of English provides students a comfortable environment for learning the language.

### 1.1.2. Problematization

In Costa Rica many students from public schools are showing lack of reading skills in English language, and it was observed on Escuela La Conquista in Sarapiquí where the researcher worked as an English Teacher. This is a big problem for the acquisition of vocabulary and knowledge of the language because everybody knows that English has become a global language that is used worldwide and nowadays it is a necessity to obtain a job, as Neely (2012) cited “Ready or not, English is now the global language of business.” (p. 1). The use of a proficient English communication has presented barriers for students from Escuela La Conquista, where students do not manage a basic level of the language to have a fluent conversation.

This is where reading comes and shows that since very early years of school it is a good choice to overcome this problematization of lack of vocabulary, grammar and including the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). For these students at Escuela La Conquista, it has been difficult to have English classes with regularity because the teachers come and go, so they have been facing difficulties with the language, but now the researcher came to stay for a long time.

A study made in Costa Rican schools showed that the majority of students do not have the custom of reading and it leads them to understand less than they expected.

According to Quesada (2023):

Tests from the OECD Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA, showed that 74% of Costa Rican students that year had reading skills at levels one or two, the lowest of six. That means that after reading a text of moderate length, the most they

could achieve was to identify the main idea, show partial understanding of the text, and follow specific directions to find information in the text. (p. 4).

This means that students should have higher reading comprehension skills according to their ages, but it is not happening in the present.

Reading is an excellent means to enhance the acquisition of the language because using attractive material for students offers them the interest of reading in order to learn more about the language. When they have an interest of reading for pleasure, they start little by little getting more knowledge of the language.

Reading enriches the knowledge people can acquire, and it gives added value for life like values, customs, and history. It is why children should have the opportunity to read in classes in order to develop their reading skills for their present and future. It can help students internalize and analyze English language, sentence structures and rules, and vocabulary more naturally, and it will help them have more understanding and a better foundation in the future.

It is important that the four skills are connected between them, and if students reinforce a skill, it is going to help them develop the other ones more effectively because it motivates them to continue learning more about the language, and (Manaj, 2015) said:

When a teacher makes use of activities that have been specially designed to incorporate several language skills simultaneously (such as reading, writing, listening, and writing), they provide their students with situations that allow for well-rounded development and progress in all areas of language learning. (p. 29).

Another problem related with reading is that many schools do not have books and libraries. According to Quesada, (2023): “The cruel reality was that there were no books and there were no libraries. It was like a bucket of cold water,” says Alda Cañas. “How do

you learn to read if you don't have a book?" (p. 1). Students and teachers do not have access to the materials to use them when teaching. Nowadays, with the access of internet teachers can search books and print them, but these technological tools are not present in many schools. So, the teachers have to use their own resources to provide student with literature.

Students should have a space dedicated to reading in which they can immerse themselves and fulfill the gap that they have in the present, and they can learn how to present their thoughts in a concise and coherent way due to the feedback they absorb from reading.

To conclude, reading can be their safe place in which imagination and learning bring them the tools for a high level of learning English and communication abilities. Learning English can be entertaining with the use of accurate materials that can cover the necessities of this new global world.

### **1.1.3. Justification**

The research and review of different investigations related to the problematization observed in Escuela La Conquista about the lack of reading in the classroom demonstrated that this is a big problem that many students present when learning a target language like English. In Costa Rica MEP study programs do not include the implementation of reading more than what is given for some topics. In Escuela La Conquista was observed that students do not have any skill for reading simple sentences and they have not been introduced to any kind of reading due to the problem that they did not have constant English classes for around two years.

The proposal is to improve reading bases in simple sentences implementing the use of reading in the classroom using the tool Epic for acquiring more knowledge of English language in order to enhance the reading skills on students of 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the learning process.

The purpose is to provide students with a space focused on attractive reading that can help them get more interest on the language and guide them to acquire more knowledge of the grammatical structures and vocabulary using a helpful technological tool.

This can be done by having the guide of the Ministry of Public Education curriculum to follow the line of topics that are the most important for the acquisition of the whole knowledge. It can be used several activities in which students can start having critical thinking and expressing their own opinions. The reading skill can help the development of speaking and writing at the same time they are learning how to create complete sentences and share ideas with the classmates.

It is imperative to find attractive readings that match with the topic and preferences of the students to make the class more interesting and motivate them to continue reading more and more. And taking advantage of a free tool as Epic to help them improve their bases on reading since the beginning with simple sentences.

There are many students afraid of talking in front of others, but this barrier can be destroyed with the implementation of reading sentences using Epic as an attractive and fascinating technological tool. All this can be accomplished with the help of the teacher, and with time they will not be afraid of making mistakes with the vocabulary and grammar of English language. It will also develop collaborative skills between classmates and critical thinking to feel free and say their thoughts.

To sum up, the purpose is to improve the bases of the students of 5<sup>th</sup> grade on reading simple sentences to develop reading skills using the technological tool Epic. This will help children have more knowledge for their future lives.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista present a lack on fluency when reading during English classes.

### **1.2.1. Research Question**

What is the effectiveness of using Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista during the first quarter of 2025?

### **1.2.2. Hypothesis**

By using Epic with the CALL approach with students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista during the first quarter of 2025, their fluency when reading short stories will improve significantly.

### **1.2.3 Variables**

#### **1.2.3.1 Dependent variable**

The improvement of fluency when reading.

#### **1.2.3.2 Independent variable**

Using Epic.

## **1.3. OBJECTIVES**

### **1.3.1. General Objective**

To determine the effectiveness of using Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista during the first quarter of 2025.

### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

1. To identify the reading fluency level of 5th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista before the implementation of Epic using the CALL approach.
2. To implement reading activities based on short stories through Epic integrating the CALL approach during the first quarter of 2025 with 5th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista.
3. To analyze the changes in students' reading fluency after using Epic with the CALL approach with 5th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista, by comparing pre- and post-intervention results.

## **1.4. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

### **1.4.1. Scope**

This research will be carried out with the population of Escuela La Conquista, Horquetas de Sarapiquí, during the first semester of 2025, with the purpose of improving fluency when reading of students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade applying the CALL Approach and incorporating the use of Epic that will help enhance their development in the reading skill fluency since it has a lot of interactive readings like short stories With this investigation the students will have more help to enhance their knowledge about English language and the focus on reading with fluency using the technology that is more attractive for them. In addition, the school will benefit with this research due to the enhancement of the knowledge of the students and the use of computers with more frequency of computers from the Technology Department.

### **1.4.2. Limitations**

The researcher can face limitations related with the interruption of the nomination in the institution since the present English Teacher does not have property in this job, so it can

interrupt the research. Also, the possible fragmentation of the group of students selected because during a year in the school many students move to another place and have to change to another school with their families. In addition, the possibility that the computers from the institution present any kind of problem that makes their use impossible, and this can be the hardest situation to solve because the budget from the school does not take into account to fix or buy computers. And finally, the limited timeframe can affect the investigation because in Sarapiquí rains a lot and several times during a year the Ministry of Public Education cancels the classes, so the research can have interruptions for weeks or months.

## **CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains all the relevant theoretical information that is going to help the reader understand the concepts used during research and all the areas that are going to be covered in this part. All the theories mentioned and explained are essential for this research in order to collect important data to be studied.

This chapter emphasizes the integration of technology and traditional literary tools within language learning, specifically focusing on enhancing reading fluency. The integration of CALL approach with Epic facilitates language acquisition due to its potential in fostering language development. This integration of technology in education can give people a new perspective of using the technology in the classroom to help students learn in a modern environment.

In addition, the teachers' training to use technology in the classroom is going to be explained in order to comprehend its importance in the process of teaching-learning due to the necessity of giving teachers the tools to start applying the technology during the lessons. This will complement the importance of reading fluency in English. Also, the information about Common European Framework is going to be presented in this chapter to let readers understand the relevant aspects that this takes into account referring to the English language

Finally, it addresses the crucial aspect of reading fluency, defining its components, and outlining strategies for its effective development within the English language learning context. This comprehensive analysis aims to provide a detailed understanding of how these diverse elements can be synergistically combined to create a dynamic and effective language learning environment.

## **2.1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

### **2.1.1. Background of the community**

This present research is carried out in Sarapiquí, in the community La Conquista. “Sarapiquí, founded on November 18, 1970, is located in the north of Costa Rica. It is the tenth canton in the province of Heredia and is divided into 5 districts”. (Guías Costa Rica – Expreso,2013) The corresponding district of this research is Horquetas, and in this district Escuela La Conquista is located.

### **2.1.2. Characterization of the School**

In its beginnings, a group of families had around sixty school-aged children who traveled to La Chaves School. However, due to the distance, they decided to organize and carried out the respective procedures with the MEP (Ministry of Public Education) for the authorization of the opening of an educational center, which opened its doors in 1989. This took place in a "galerón" (a large, basic structure) that was built with wood donated by the Rural Development Institute (INDER), formerly the Agrarian Development Institute (IDA). Currently, the educational center is part of circuit 04 of Río Frío, also forming part of the Sarapiquí Regional Directorate; its budget code is 57304 59 2241. Previously, it operated as a one-teacher school, and due to modifications in enrollment ranges, it was upgraded to a "direction one" school, which is its current modality. It provides Preschool Education, the First and Second Cycles of general basic education, and the subjects of English, Music Education, and Physical Education.

Name of the Educational Center: La Conquista

Budget Code: 2241

Type of Administration: Direction One

Educational Offer: First and Second Cycles and Preschool.

Schedule Module: Daytime.

Modality (according to the definition of modalities of the Department of Development of Educational Services of DPI): Primary Education.

Area of Influence of the Educational Center (where do the students come from?):

From the La Conquista Community.

Educational and Support Services Provided by the Educational Center:

- Support in the Itinerant Support service for Learning Disabilities.
- Support in the Itinerant Support service for Emotional and Behavioral Problems.
- Support in the Itinerant Support service for Intellectual Disability.
- Support in the Itinerant Support service for Multiple Disabilities.

Strategies Applied to Promote Coexistence and the Exercise of Student Rights:

- Encouraging Participation in sports activities (Student Sports Games, Athletic Kids).
- Motivation for Participation in the Electoral Week Process.
- Motivation for participation in the Arts' Festival and Science Fair.
- Participation in recreational and family activities.
- Mathematics Olympics.
- Student transportation.

## **2.2. THEORETICAL-CONCEPTUAL CONTEXT**

### **2.2.1. Using Technology in Education**

#### **2.2.1.1. History of technology in education**

Technology in education has changed over time from very basic functions to very new and modern functionality that pretends to help teachers and students during the teaching-learning process. Class VR (2023) mentioned that “However, it wasn’t until the 1980s that digital technology made its mark on education. This was the decade when computers went from an experimental technology to a mass-market consumer product.” (p. 4). It means that the use of computers started as an experiment that was not available for the public, but it changed to become a useful device for many people around the world.

Class VR (2023) said: “By the end of the 1990s, most primary and secondary (K-12) schools had a computer lab equipped with enough machines for a full class to use”. (p. 5). Schools started to have more complete technological classrooms in which students and teacher could have access to them with more freedom.

Years later “The early 2000s saw interactive whiteboards introduced. We’ve since seen a wide range of technology make its way into education – from portable and handheld devices in the 2010s to increasingly sophisticated software for learners and educators”. (Class VR, 2023 p. 7). It has been more than 20 years that technology started to increase at schools, and its use has facilitated a lot of work for teachers, letting them integrate the subjects with technological tools in the classroom.

A very important recent point in time is that due to pandemic technology started to become a need for every person around education. According to American University

(2020): “The COVID-19 pandemic is quickly demonstrating why online education should be a vital part of teaching and learning”. (p. 2).

### **2.2.1.2. Importance of using technology in education**

The technology in education is actually essential for students and teachers, and the implementation of new tools can improve the process of teaching-learning, American University (2020) said:

“Virtual classrooms, video, augmented reality (AR), robots, and other technology tools can not only make class more lively, they can also create more inclusive learning environments that foster collaboration and inquisitiveness and enable teachers to collect data on student performance.” (para. 4).

Nowadays there are many kinds of devices that can help to have an environment in which students can experience amazing learning as the AR let them be inside a new world while learning. But it does not mean that teachers are not going to be present in the process, so American University (2020) states:

“Still, it’s important to note that technology is a tool used in education and not an end in itself. The promise of educational technology lies in what educators do with it and how it is used to best support their students’ needs.” (para. 5).

It is important to clarify that technology is a help for teachers and students, and teachers should use it as help for students, not as an isolated tool.

### **2.2.1.3. Benefits of using technology in education**

The use of technology in the classroom has multiple benefits for both teachers and students that can facilitate the educational process, and Class VR (2023) says that “It can help educators create exciting, engaging, and memorable lessons. Needless to say, higher engagement makes pupils more motivated and makes lessons more enjoyable for both

students and teachers.” (p. 13). The most important benefit of using technology is that students have more motivation to be emerged in learning because they learn more easily when they enjoy the lessons.

Another benefit is that it prepares students for their future as technology advances like Class VR (2023) mentioned: “Students can learn some extremely important skills by using technology in education. With the rapid rate of technology innovation, simply being to adapt to new technologies is an invaluable skill in itself.” (p. 14). It means that in the future they will have to adapt to new devices to survive in real life.

And an essential benefit for teacher is it help them save time planning for the lessons, and Class VR (2023) says: “It can be as simple as saving documents and lesson plans in Google Drive, taking attendance with nothing but a few clicks, or reporting on results. Technology can help educators focus their time on what matters, the teaching!” (p. 20). Saving time is essential for teachers because it lets them do more materials than before using less time.

#### **2.2.1.4. Challenges of using technology in education**

The challenges when using technology can be related with the use teachers make of them. According to Class VR (2023): “While engagement is seen as a common advantage of edtech, it can also have the opposite effect without the right planning and implementation”. (p. 40). Teachers need to have correct planning for integrating technological tools that helps students be engaged in learning.

A very important point to take into account is what Class VR (2023) says:

“Teachers may also find it difficult to use certain technology or adapt their teaching methods to get the most out of it. In this case, professional development is

necessary, especially for experienced teachers who didn't cover such technology in their initial teacher training.” (para. 41).

Teachers should be aware of and updated with the use of technology since students need instructions and guidance to make things correct and learn what they are studying.

Also, the lack of access that many schools or students present that becomes an obstacle very difficult to overcome in a short-time period. Class VR (2023) mentioned that:

“Not everyone has access to the same resources for digital learning. That applies to schools, who might not have the adequate funding for the technology they need. But it can also extend to students, who don't have devices or reliable internet at home.” (para. 42).

#### **2.2.1.5. The way technology is used in education**

There are many ways in which technology can be used in education, according to Class VR (2023): “There are thousands (potentially even millions!) of technologies that educators can integrate into schools and smart classrooms. All of these tools have the potential to transform learning when correctly aligned to the pedagogy of the teacher.” (p. 21). There are some examples of how technology is used in education:

- Interactive whiteboards
- Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR)
- The metaverse
- Mobile devices, tablets, and laptops
- Learning management systems
- Projectors and TV screens
- Microphones and speakers
- Remote learning

➤ Blended learning

All this can be used in education in order to make lessons more attractive for students, and using the tools accurately is going to enhance the acquisition of learning on students.

#### **2.2.1.6. Ways to enhance the success of technology in the classroom**

There are many ways to enhance the success of technology in the classroom that are going to help students in the acquisition of learning. According to Explorance (2025) “Student engagement and course evaluations are vital in improving the educational experience. With the growing popularity of AI and remote/hybrid learning, higher education institutions must prioritize meeting the evolving needs of digital learners to succeed.”(p. 1). It can be said that prioritizing the use of technology is essential as time passes and technology updates every day.

Explorance (2025) mentions some examples of how to enhance the use of technology in education:

1. Use classroom technology to provide instant information access
2. Get the right insight from student comments with AI
3. Connect classroom learning to the real world
4. Prepare students for success in the modern workforce
5. Use feedback to support different learning styles
6. Teach responsible digital citizenship

#### **2.2.1.7. Making the learning experience fun for students**

Those points need to be taken into account in order to help students accomplish the set objectives from the beginning. “By harnessing the power of additional, cutting-edge

technology in the classroom, instructors and institutions can bolster student success through enriched learning.” (Explorance, 2025, p. 40).

### **2.2.2. CALL Approach**

#### **2.2.2.1. Definition of CALL approach**

CALL approach is very useful for teaching a language because of the use of technology. This approach has a lot of ways to define it, Gallego (2008) said: “In general, CALL can refer to any language learning or teaching that involves the computer in a significant way”. (p. 43). Technology has become a very useful tool to teach in the classroom, so this approach is a fundamental method to do it successfully. With the use of technology, the teaching-learning process becomes more appealing and making correct use of it can help a lot.

De Blas, (2024), stated that:

“Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) is an approach to teaching and learning in which computers and other resources such as the Internet are used to present, reinforce, and evaluate what is to be learned. It usually includes a substantial interaction between students.” (para. 1).

The use of the computer includes the internet, in which students can find a lot of materials, tools and access to different apps that can help them have a closer interaction with the topics. It is essential to keep the interaction between students because it can help them practice more what they are studying and learning. The CALL approach helps teachers who are pretending to make use of technology and internet because it facilitates reinforcement and assessment using tools that can have a wide range of measurement in the knowledge of the students.

According to Gallego, (2008): “The microcomputer has been a central element of this for the past few decades, although notebook computers and even cell phones are beginning to be utilized”. (p. 43). Nowadays, it is very common to use technological devices to implement the CALL approach in the classroom, and most of the students have or know how to use a computer or cellphone. So, this can be utilized in favor of education to make the process more attractive and creative that attracts the attention of the students.

With time technology has become part of the daily lives of many people around the world and has a lot of influence on what they do and consume in the internet, also De Blas (2024) said:

“Society and technology are intrinsically intertwined today, forming an inseparable fabric that shapes our way of living, interacting, and progressing. Technology has not only transformed how we perform daily tasks but has also deeply influenced social, economic, and cultural structures. From instant communication to the globalization of information, technology has forged new modes of connectivity that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries.” (para. 5).

#### **2.2.2.2. History of CALL approach**

Gallego (2008) affirmed that “Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is not a new development in language teaching, as it has been used since the 1960s and 70s. However, it still lacks research methods and a clear theoretical foundation”. (p. 44). Since technology is in progress every day, there is a need to have more bases of the method to develop it.

The CALL approach started since 60’s when computers appeared in the lives of people. “The history of CALL dates back to the 1960s when it was first introduced on University Mainframe Computer. Microcomputers came in the late 1970s and brought

computing within the range of a wider audience”. (Benyo,2020, p. 1390). The use of computers is not as new as many people think because since the 60’s the computers started to be functional for people to finally become what they are in the present.

The CALL approach is divided into three phases: behavioristic, communicative, and integrative. According to Dwivedi and Seema, (2022,p. 2-3), the behavioristic consists of repetitive language drills and practice activities, the communicative uses the language or functions rather than analysis of language forms, and the integrative allows for a combination of sound, graphics, text, and video presented in one computerized program and computer-mediated communication.

The phases during the history of CALL approach have made changes that carry to the modern use of the method complemented by the modern technology to integrate all the skill that have to be taught in the classroom.

### **2.2.2.3. Technologies used in CALL approach**

The software and internet are the base of the technologies that CALL approach uses in order to apply the method in the classroom. The use of software is very demanding, Benyo (2020) said that:

“Major CALL development projects are usually managed by a team of people, a subject specialist usually a language teacher who is responsible for providing the content and pedagogical input, a programmer who is familiar with the chosen programming language or authoring tool, a graphic designer to produce pictures and icons to advise on fonts, colour, and screen layouts.” (p. 1393).

The responsibility when creating software for educational purpose is high because it has to take into account that the process of learning is important, and creativity has to be

present. Moreover, the internet came to change the perspective in which technology was seen. According to Benyo, (2020):

“The coming of the worldwide web (www) marked a significant change in the use of communication technology. The web is a remarkable invention by Tim Bearners – Lee and has transformed the nature of CALL. The language teacher got attracted towards the web. The concept of hypertext was familiar to the language teacher wherein they could point to items of text or images on a page displayed on the computer screen.” (p. 1393).

The use of both tools, software and internet, is increasing the ways that CALL approach can be helpful for teachers and students. They have contributed to education for a more interactive and creative way to teach and learn. The worldwide web has increased the sources in order to find more information about many topics that are very useful to teach a target language.

The modern technology has brought the opportunity to have access to more tools like editing text and pictures when necessary. It helps teacher and students to have more options when searching for a specific topic. The worldwide web has increased the sources of information in which people can find exactly what they are looking for, and it gives the chance to obtain more attractive material to use in the classroom like images and videos that represent what the teacher is expecting to teach. The internet increased to facilitate the lives of many people around the world.

#### **2.2.2.4. Role of the teacher**

The role of the teacher is important in the process of teaching using the CALL approach. Nagaveni and Karunakaran (2018) said: “Teacher has a very significant role in introducing CALL into the learning environment. It is a multifarious role: “resource

provider', 'manager', 'coach', 'researcher' or 'facilitator'." (p.162). The teacher is a facilitator that is uncharged of being a helper, it does not have a traditional role. But it is essential that the teacher guides the students using the CALL approach.

The teacher is always going to be important with any method or approach because it is the one who is in charge of providing students the information to be studied. This role is very important because the teacher should be able to know when he has to mediate and help students so they can be more independent during the process of learning but always require the teacher present in the classroom.

According to Nagaveni and Karunakaran (2018): "The teacher is not the source of language learning in a CALL course. The teacher monitors the learning process s/he compliments the CALL application." (p. 162). The teacher should only monitor the learning process and be able to guide them whenever they need it but always have the role of a manager who let them work by themselves to develop their abilities independently.

Even though the teacher is the facilitator, it is required that to be present during the use of CALL approach to motivate and guide students, and to research what is needed during the class since students have to start learning to work independently step by step. Also, the acquisition of the knowledge can increase with the guidance the teacher brings during the process.

#### **2.2.2.5. Role of the students**

The role of the students also changes from a conventional class, (Nagaveni and Karunakaran, (2018) affirm:

"They can no longer be passive participants. Their responsibility in learning becomes central to the learning process "learners must negotiate meaning and assimilate new information through interaction and collaboration with someone

other than the teacher” students should become the users of the language in the class to initiate learning.” (p. 162).

The role of the students is very active, so they have to participate a lot and interact with others. The responsibility of learning is to focus on them because their collaboration guides them to learn more independently. During the learning process, the student can acquire and develop their abilities to collaborate with others and be responsible of the pace in which they are learning to acquire more knowledge of a certain topic.

The classes become more active with the participation of the students, so their experiences are created by themselves and in the way they prefer. There are many programs that students can use using technology that will help them improve their knowledge of the topic and of the computer or device they are using.

Therefore, students cannot be passive and wait for the teacher to do everything since the teacher is the facilitator, and the student is the maker of the knowledge. The students who are less participants can have the opportunity to be more active and collaborate with others in the process of using technology. Due to easier access to technology in the present, most of the students can be motivated to learn using a computer or any technological device, their engagement is more visible.

#### **2.2.2.6. Advantages of CALL approach**

The CALL approach has advantages that help teachers and students for a better teaching-learning process. Gallego, (2007, p. 45), stated some advantages for CALL approach like: real communication, new role for teaching materials, improving confidence, overcoming writing, authentic and adaptation of materials, motivation, and global understanding for all students.

The authenticity of materials is a very useful technique to engage students with the use of technology and attractive material as a tool. With the use of technology most of the students have more motivation to focus on learning by themselves and the acquisition of knowledge can be enhanced with the CALL approach.

The access to a lot of information has facilitated the gathering of materials when teaching. There are many sources to compare the information and select what is needed and fulfill the expectations.

Moreover, the process of learning is more related with experimenting individually and then to collaborating with others, so the experiences start giving shape to construct a more confident student that participates actively and is motivated to continue learning. According to Dwivedi and Seema (2022, p.4), Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) offers several benefits, including providing feedback on assignments, customizing learning for large classes, and promoting teamwork on projects. Additionally, it provides a variety of resources and learning styles, allows for exploratory learning with a large amount of language data, and helps students develop practical computer skills.

Those advantages can integrate and develop all the abilities that student acquire when learning and using the CALL approach because of the variety of ability to work individually or in groups to have more interaction between them. The information they can find in the target language and its culture is wide, consequently, they can learn a lot about another culture without living there.

### **2.2.2.7. Problems and criticism of CALL approach**

Gallego, (2007), mentioned some disadvantages of the CALL approach: “Financial barriers. Availability of computer hardware and software. Technical and theoretical knowledge. Acceptance of technologies.” (p.45).

First of all, the financial barrier is the hardest to overcome since every family has different economic situations in which it is difficult for them to have access to different technological devices or programs that need to be bought to use them. This barrier brings a lot of inequality for students that do not have access to technology. It also includes the schools in which the access to internet or computers does not exist.

Moreover, the unavailability of hardware and software are related to the difficulty of having access to technological devices because the need of a computer brings the need of any kind of software that requires the use of the device. There is a lot of software that have to be bought or is not available in the country where they need it.

There is a lot of technical knowledge that has to be acquired to use any kind of technology and it only happens with practice. It means that it takes time to learn about a new program that is going to be used. Likewise, the acceptance of technology is sometimes very difficult because it depends on the development of the place in which it is going to be used, and there are many people that dislike the use of technology to teach others in the classroom.

There is also a relevant point to take into account that is mentioned by Dwivedi and Seema, (2022): “Moreover, the Internet offers access to all types of issues and topics, some of which are unsuitable for children, and this lack of limits in itself may result in various problems” (p.5). Adults have to be very careful about the unlimited access that children

have in internet, and the teachers have to be responsible of the search students make because there is a lot of information that students do not have to access.

### **2.2.3. Teachers' training to use technology in the classroom**

#### **2.2.3.1. Importance of teachers' training**

One of the most complicated problems of using the technology in the classroom is that many teachers do not have the knowledge for using technological tools, and it affects the demonstration or guidance for students. "Teachers can be understood as 'digital immigrants' in that they only learn about ICT tools, but do not necessarily immerse or live with a positive attitude about new technologies". (Hatos et al., 2022, p. 167).

The use of technology in education has been increasing as well as its updates and many teachers are not prepared to start this process in the classroom, that is why is essential that teacher receive training for using technology, and Hatos et al., (2022, p. 167) said that "It is almost self-evident that the effectiveness of online education is dependent to a significant extent on teachers' digital competencies".

It is important that teacher learn how to model students the use of the technology, "Using computer-based technology such as data-logging and simulations is important for modeling subjects such as science and mathematics. Modeling is an important part of science and computers are good for modeling things such as nuclear testing and molecules calculations". (Kumar et al., 2008, p. 604).

#### **2.2.3.2. Benefits of teachers' training**

The benefits teachers obtain from training are a lot that are going to help students succeed in the learning process. According to GCU (2025) there are some benefits for students that consequently will be benefits for teachers as well:

- Increased student engagement
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Differentiation
- Productivity
- Creativity
- Automation
- Future focus

Moreover, in terms of professional development, there are relevant benefits that Nancholas (2023, p. 11-15) mentioned: “Improved teaching practices, Enhanced student learning, Increased opportunities for professional development, Efficient use of time, and Better communication”.

All the benefits are going to help teachers and students since it is a chain of learning that starts from the educator in order to guide and model students the correct way of using the tools at the same time they are learning about a specific topic.

#### **2.2.3.3. Teachers’ attitude towards training**

The attitude that teacher take towards training is the key for achieving the goal of learning from the technology, Hatos et al., (2022, p. 168) highlighted that “educators’ attitudes toward computer technologies are also related to their perceived computer competence”.

There are many teachers that avoid integrating the use of technology in the classroom as Kumar et al., (2008, p. 606) said: “many teachers actively resist using computers even though there are ample researches that clearly show achievement and opportunities to learn would increase with the application of information technology”. This

becomes an obstacle for the integration of technology since they are not having an accurate attitude.

Also, Hatos et al., (2022, p. 169) said that “teachers who are not confident in using ICT in their teaching will encounter difficulties in preparing their students”.

#### **2.2.3.4. Tools for teachers’ training**

Technology offers a lot of options of tools to use for training teachers in the use of technology in the classroom. There are some mentioned by Nancholas, (2023, p. 5-8): Digital learning tools, Digital resources, Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), and Social media and professional learning communities”. Those tools are accurate for teachers to develop their new skills and knowledge with someone who guides them or by themselves.

There are some options in which teacher can develop their skill using digital tools like Nancholas, (2023, p. 5) said: “can host webinars and courses that allow teachers to expand their knowledge, collaborate with other educators, and gain insights into new, innovative teaching practices”. Virtual interaction with others who are learning can inspire and motivate them to continue with the process.

#### **2.2.3.5. Continuous learning and updating**

Teachers should keep in continuously learning and updating their knowledge about new tools or skills for implementing the technology in the classroom since it is going to give students a wider view of the topics they are studying.

The continuous learning of teachers is a pillar aspect for the success of students, so (Pentecost & Fernando, 2024) stated that:

“As emerging technologies redefine teaching and learning processes, teacher professional development must adapt and respond to new educational needs by

engaging and empowering teachers. These capacities include effectively utilizing digital tools, including AI, integrating pedagogical approaches, supporting blended learning techniques, and strengthening classroom management. Building teachers' confidence can support quality learning experiences that cater to the diverse profiles and needs of students.” (para. 17).

#### **2.2.4. Common European Framework**

##### **2.2.4.1. Definition of Common European Framework**

The Common European Framework is defined by (EF - Education First, n.d.) as: “The CEFR, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, is one of many frameworks that describe your language proficiency.” This framework describes what people is able to do with a certain language in which they want to get a level for getting a job or other reason.

It measures any European language including English. Actually, it is very famous due to the certification that many people need for their level in English. “While the CEFR is a European scale and specifically designed to apply to any European language, it is now becoming a worldwide standard framework for language abilities, especially European languages, including English.” (EF - Education First, n.d., p. 4).

##### **2.2.4.2. History of Common European Framework**

The History of Common European Framework started many years ago, (EF - Education First, n.d.) said:

“The CEFR was put together by the Council of Europe in the 1990’s as part of a wider effort to promote collaboration between language teachers across all European countries. The Council of Europe also wanted to improve clarity for

employers and educational institutions who needed to evaluate candidates' language proficiency. The framework is intended to be used in both teaching and assessment.” (para. 6).

The implementation of the CEFR had been applied mainly in Europe due to the necessity to evaluate the proficiency of people in a language for a specific purpose that was needed. And an essential point was to collaborate between European countries, so it was necessary to measure the level of people involved in any kind of interaction.

#### **2.2.4.3. Importance of Common European Framework**

As was mentioned before, the certification that indicates the level of a specific level is relevant because it is very useful for many purposes.

“In Europe, the CEFR is increasingly the standard way of describing your proficiency level in a foreign language, particularly in an academic setting. If you have studied more than one language, as most Europeans have, the CEFR is a conveniently standardized way to present two or more languages on your CV. In school or university, the CEFR is the standard framework across Europe and can be used without reservation. (EF - Education First, n.d., para. 8)”.

For academic purposes, it is a strong tool that can lead people for a successful career. So, people who speaks more than one language should be aware of the importance of getting a certification that indicates their level on the language. It is also going to help people in their jobs since it adds a plus to the curriculum.

#### **2.2.4.4. Common reference levels**

In the CEFR there are six levels that are used to evaluate and assign a level to the proficiency a person has with a language. (EF - Education First, n.d., p. 5) said that “The CEFR sets out six levels of foreign language mastery, and EF SET is aligned as such: A1:

Beginner, A2: Elementary, B1: Intermediate, B2: Upper Intermediate, C1: Advanced, C2: Proficient". The levels to certificate people in English language are assigned by points obtained in a test, this test includes the four skills according to what they need like speaking, reading, listening, and reading comprehension that can be used for different purposes.

## **CHAPTER III METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter gives an explanation of study's design, data collection, and analysis of strategies that are going to be used for the investigation. The methodological framework contains details about the research type, specifying its applied purpose, transversal temporal dimension, and mixed-method nature, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data. The research framework, the mega, macro, and micro levels are defined, along with the correlational and descriptive character of the study.

Also, in this section are explained the subjects and sources of information, including the units of analysis, and the selection of a non-probabilistic sample from the 5th-grade students of Escuela La Conquista. It also describes the instruments used for data collection, like the pre-test, the observation checklist, and the post-test, designed to analyze the impact of Epic on reading fluency. Finally, the research hypothesis and the operationalization of variables are presented, providing clear guidance for the investigation's execution and analysis.

### **3.1. TYPE OF RESEARCH**

#### **3.1.1. Purpose (Applied)**

This present research uses the type applied and its explanation is given by Appinio Research (2024, p. 3): “Applied research is a systematic and organized inquiry aimed at solving specific real-world problems or improving existing practices, products, or services”. Also, according to Charlesworth Author Services, (2024, p. 3): “Applied research addresses specific problems with the goal of finding practical solutions”.

This paper is focused on a real problem that needs to be solved in order to improve a lack of knowledge on a specific topic, that in this case is about the lack of fluency when

reading in English. The goal of this research is to produce tangible improvements in students' reading abilities by making the use of a technological tool that is going to make them feel engaged during the teaching-learning process.

### **3.1.2. Temporal dimension (Transversal)**

The timeline for this investigation is very short because it is used transversal research in which the investigator does not have to stay for a long period of time collecting data, but it is enough to collect the information needed. This is also called a cross-sectional study. To define more specifically the transversal research, Thomas, (2023, p. 1) said that "A cross-sectional study is a type of research design in which you collect data from many different individuals at a single point in time". This transversal research is done only once in a specific point of time in which it is not necessary to collect data several times in different points of time doing it repetitively.

This is a short-term research because it has a specific time to be developed which is specifically applied during a quarter in 2025, where the investigation will provide the audience with valuable information in order to enrich the teaching-learning process of the students involved in the investigation. The use of transversal is appropriate since it is not required to compare different periods inside the study, and just one single point of time is necessary to complete the investigation.

### **3.1.3. Framework (Mega, Macro and Micro)**

The framework mega refers to big number of people that are involved in the research; for example, in this investigation the mega population refers to all the schools in the province Heredia. The macro involves a small number inside the province that goes more specific to the place where the investigation is going to be applied, and in this case all

the schools in Sarapiquí. The micro framework according to Glover (2019): “The approach is very flexible and can be adapted to fit many different situations and, in particular, different timescales and research scope.” (p. 3). It refers to the specific population that is part of the investigation, 5th graders from Escuela La Conquista are the micro in this research.

#### **3.1.4. Nature: Mixed (Qualitative and Quantitative)**

This nature of this present investigation is based on the qualitative and quantitative methods, so this means that it uses the mixed approach since it considers both methods in the investigation. First of all, it is essential to define both natures. According to National University, (2023, p. 10): “Qualitative research aims to gain insights into phenomena, groups, or experiences that cannot be objectively measured or quantified using mathematics”. This means that the qualitative research is not measurable with numbers, so it has to interpret non-numerical collected data.

On the other hand, the definition of quantitative research is imperative. So, National University (2023, p. 12) affirms that “quantitative research provides precise causal explanations that can be measured and communicated mathematically”. The quantitative research can be interpreted using numbers according to the data that was collected for the investigation.

For this investigation the mixed method is going to be applied since both the quantitative and qualitative are going to be used. The definition of mixed approach according to Delve and Limpaecher (2022, p. 1) is that: “Mixed methods research is a research method that combines and integrates qualitative and quantitative research methods

in a single research study. It involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to understand a phenomenon better and answer the research questions.”

### **3.1.5. Character (Correlational and Descriptive)**

The character of this investigation is going to present two of them, the correlational and the descriptive, and it is essential to define them. Bhat (n.d., p. 27) defined the descriptive as: “In a descriptive composition, a researcher is solely interested in describing the situation or case under their research study. It is a theory-based design method created by gathering, analyzing, and presenting collected data”.

Also, the definition of the correlational according to Bhat (n.d., p. 30): “Correlational research is a non-experimental research technique. It helps researchers establish a relationship between two closely connected variables”. This character is going to be used since this investigation has an independent and dependent variable, and they both have to be used during investigation.

Both characters are going to help interpret the results of the investigation related to the effectiveness of using Epic in order to improve the reading skill fluency, so the researcher cannot manipulate the data collected to obtain the results of the study.

## **3.2. SUBJECTS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### **3.2.1. Units of analysis**

This investigation is carried out with fifth grade students from Escuela La Conquista during the present year 2025. Due to the necessity to improve the fluency skills of students in Costa Rica is that this research explores the impact of the use of technology in improving fluency when reading in English. It is essential, and it is a skill considered as difficult for many people, so for this reason this research looks forward to getting a solution or

recommendations to enhance this process of reading with accurate fluency in English at schools for the country's benefit.

For the universe of the analysis, the definition according to Shukla (2020, p. 1) is that “Referring to the definition of universe, we can say that it is a group or set of all such units that possess the variable characteristic under study”. In this research the universe is all the students from Escuela La Conquista.

### 3.2.2. First Hand Sources

**Table 1**

*Firsthand Sources Used in the Research Process.*

<b>Author or authors</b>	<b>University or organization</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Year</b>
Karam, E. A., & Mohammed, N.	Belhadj Bouchaib University Centre Of Ain Temouchent.	Algeria	2018
Mohamed	SERDEC Educational Research and Development Centre - Mogadishu	Somalia	2024
Megawati, Noni, N., & Muhayyang, M	State University of Makassar	Indonesia	2023

*Source: Developed by Keyna Obregón Ramírez (2025)*

### 3.2.3. Second Hand Sources

**Table 2**

*Secondhand Sources Used in the Research Process.*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Book title</b>	<b>Year</b>
Charlesworth Author Services	Applied research essentials: Types, examples, and writing guide.	2024
Delve, Ho, L., & Limpaecher, A	Qualitative Quantitative Mixed Methods.	2022
Joshi, M	Research Methodology for beginners	n.d.
Manaj, S. L	The importance of Four Skills Reading, Speaking, Writing, Listening in a Lesson Hour.	2015
National University	What is qualitative vs. quantitative study?	2023
Pettersen, S. A	Short stories as a Source of Cultural Insight When Teaching English.	2014
Quesada, C. M	Costa Rica isn't reading well — but what does this mean?	2023
Shukla, S	Concept of population and sample.	2020
Appinio blog	What is applied research? Definition, types, examples	2024

*Source: Developed by Keyna Obregón Ramírez (2025)*

### 3.2.4. Third Hand Sources

**Table 3**

*Thirdhand Sources Used in the Research Process.*

<b>Author</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Year</b>
Bhat, A	Research design: What it is, elements & types	2023
Felton, A	What is reading fluency?	2022
Maulidia	The Impact of Short Stories in English Language Learning Classroom.	2023
Neely	Global English Speaks English.	2012
Pineda Antolinez	Experiencing Reading EFL short stories in the English classroom.	2017
Quesada	How can Costa Ricans read more if they don't have books?	2023
Thomas	<i>Cross-sectional study   Definition, uses &amp; examples.</i>	2023

*Source: Developed by Keyna Obregón Ramírez (2025)*

## 3.3. SAMPLE SELECTION

### 3.3.1. Population

The definition of population according to Shukla (2020, p. 1) is the following:

Referring to the definition of population, we can say that it consists of all the units

on which the findings of research can be applied. In other words, population is a set

of all the units which possess variable characteristic under study and for which findings of research can be generalized.

### **3.3.2. Sample**

The sample is defined by Shukla (2020, p. 4) as: “A part of population that represents it completely is known as sample. It means, the units, selected from the population as a sample, must represent all kind of characteristics of different types of units of population.”. The sample of this investigation is the 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Escuela La Conquista due to the necessity of improving the reading skill fluency in English.

### **3.3.3. Non-probabilistic**

The non-probabilistic selection is the one used in this research and is defined as: This method of sample selection does not have any scientific base, so it increases the chances of selecting biased sample. In most cases, such sample does not represent all characteristics of entire population. All units do not have certain or fixed probability to be selected in sample in this method. (Shukla, 2020, p. 6).

The selection of the sample for this research studies the subject of English, and only fifth grades will be included. There are many students that are excluded because of different aspects like: they are in other grades, they are very young and do not know how to read, they are in the last year of the school and are not part of the group of English that are considered for the investigation since the researcher establishes the goals and population that is accurate for the research.

### 3.4. TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS TO COLLECT DATA

According to Jain (2025):

Data collection is the process of collecting and evaluating information or data from multiple sources to find answers to research problems, answer questions, evaluate outcomes, and forecast trends and probabilities. It is an essential phase in all types of research, analysis, and decision-making, including that done in the social sciences, business, and healthcare. (p. 3).

Some instruments were created in order to be applied during this investigation process with the purpose to acquire valuable inferences that contribute on the topic studied. For that reason, there are different instruments used to gather all relevant data.

The pre-test: this diagnostic pre-test pretends to gather information about the level that the students have about the reading skill fluency. It is formed by three short paragraphs with different titles each one, they have to read them, also, they have the corresponding scoring rubric for the assessment with a scale from one to four with aspects like accuracy, pacing or rate, smoothness, and comprehension.

The observation checklist: this checklist pretends to observe the implementation of short stories from Epic. There are categories like: engagement, reading fluency, engagement and fluency correlation that will have the options yes or no and a space to write down important notes or comments.

The journal: this journal was carried out during the implementation of the digital platform Epic to register their development using Epic. It contains a register of the process including the behavior and experiences of the students during the process.

The post-test: this post-test pretends to analyze the advancement and changes that the students obtained in reading fluency after the implementation of Epic in order to compare it with the initial level before implementing the app. This test has a short story and a scoring rubric with a scale from one to four.

The interview: this closed-ended questionnaire pretends to gather information from students about their experience in the process of using the technological tool while learning fluency when reading.

### **3.5. HYPOTHESIS**

By using Epic with the CALL approach with students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista during the first quarter of 2025, their fluency when reading short stories will improve significantly.

### **3.6. OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES**

In the following chart, there is the process in which the researcher specifies the variables, definition, instruments, and operational elements used to achieve specific objectives. This is to validate the given information and the research.

#### **Table 4**

##### *Variables Chart*

Title: The effectiveness of using Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista located in Sarapiquí, Heredia during the first quarter of 2025.

**General objective:** To determine the effectiveness of using Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista during the first quarter of 2025.

<b>Specific Objective</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Instrumental Definition</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>
To identify the reading fluency level of 5th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista before the implementation of the Epic using the CALL approach.	Students' level of fluency in reading before implementing Epic with CALL approach.	Fluency is an ability that is part of the reading skill that can be enhanced using Epic.	Instrument: Pre-test Technique: Diagnostic This diagnostic is aimed to the students to determine what is the level they have in fluency when reading in English before the implementation of Epic and CALL approach. This test contains three short stories that they have to read aloud with its corresponding scoring rubric for fluency assessment.	The variable is valid if: Grades from 100 to 80 = students have an advanced level of fluency in reading. Grades from 80 to 70 = students have an intermediate level of fluency in reading. Grades from 70 to 50 = students have a basic level of fluency in reading.
To implement reading activities	Implementing short stories	Epic is a free app used by many	Instrument: Checklist	The variable is valid if:

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based on short stories through Epic integrating the CALL approach during the first quarter of 2025.	using Epic applying CALL approach.	teachers to enhance the knowledge of English in the public schools.	Technique: Observation The observation aims to observe the implementation of the short stories from Epic to develop their fluency when reading in English.	Yes = 100% of the aspects occur during English lessons. No = 0% of the aspects occur during English lessons.
To analyze the changes in students' reading fluency after using Epic with the CALL approach by comparing pre- and post-intervention results.	Advancement of students' reading with fluency after using Epic with CALL approach.	The advancement on fluency using an app like Epic is an attractive tool for students to acquire the reading skill.	Instrument 1: Post-test Technique: Diagnostic This diagnostic is aimed to the students to determine their improvement on fluency when reading in English after the implementation of Epic and CALL approach. This test	The variable is valid if: Grades from 100 to 80 = students achieved an advanced level of fluency in reading. Grades from 80 to 70 = students achieved an intermediate level of fluency in reading.

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contains the same Grades from 70 to  
 three short stories 50 = students  
 from the pre-test that achieved a basic  
 they have to read level  
 aloud with its of fluency in  
 corresponding reading.  
 scoring rubric for  
 fluency assessment.

Instrument 2: The variable is valid  
 Questionnaire if:  
 Technique: Student The 70% of students  
 Interview mark “Yes” in the  
 This interview is 70% of the items. It  
 aimed to ask means that students  
 students about their had an improvement  
 opinion with the on the fluency when  
 experience using reading in English.  
 Epic and their  
 progress in fluency  
 when reading short  
 stories in the app.

## **CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

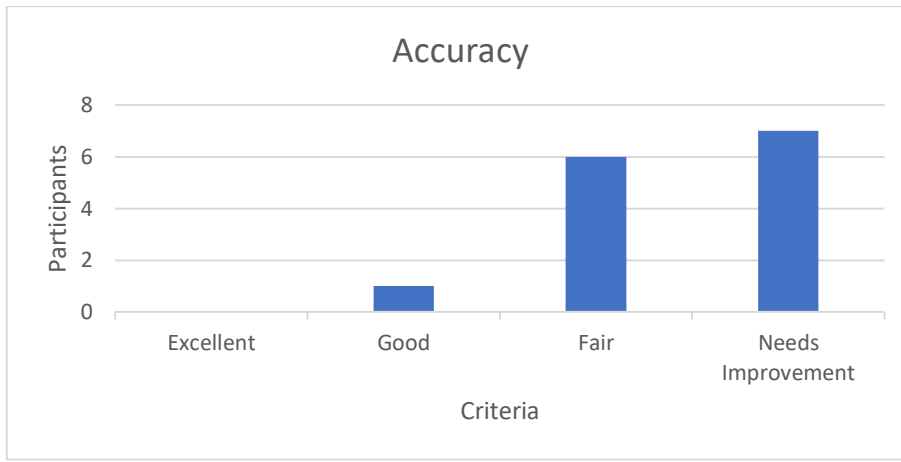
This chapter presents the data collected through the administration of four distinct instruments: a pre-test, an observation checklist, a questionnaire, and a post-test. These instruments were applied to students from 5th grade, from Escuela La Conquista. The participants' responses were thoroughly analyzed to determine impact of implementing the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) approach using Epic for improving fluency when reading in English.

#### **4.1. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION**

In this chapter, the researcher planned the tools employed to gather proper information regarding the study and its participants. These tools are designed to help the detailed interpretation of the collected data, the analysis, and explanation to expose meaningful insights. Moreover, this chapter seeks to interpret the various perceptions and reactions exhibited by students concerning the topic of study about fluency when reading. By achieving this, it offers an in-depth perspective on the students' experiences, facilitating well-founded conclusions and suggestions related to the research topic.

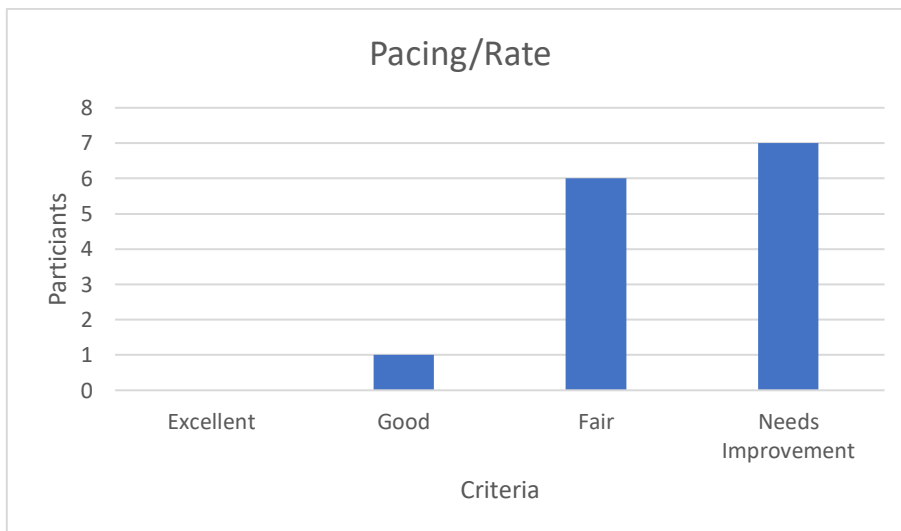
#### **4.2. ANALYSIS OF THE PRE-TEST**

Before implementing the activities using Epic, a pre-test was conducted for 14 students. This pre-test, developed and administered via orally, comprised three different short stories with a scoring rubric designed to know learners' fluency when reading.

**Figure 1***Accuracy*

**Source:** Data taken from the Pre-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June 2025.

Figure 1 shows that 7 out of 14 students need improvement, 6 out 14 are fair and 1 out 14 is good in the aspect of accuracy when reading in English. Showing that the majority of the students do not have accuracy when reading.

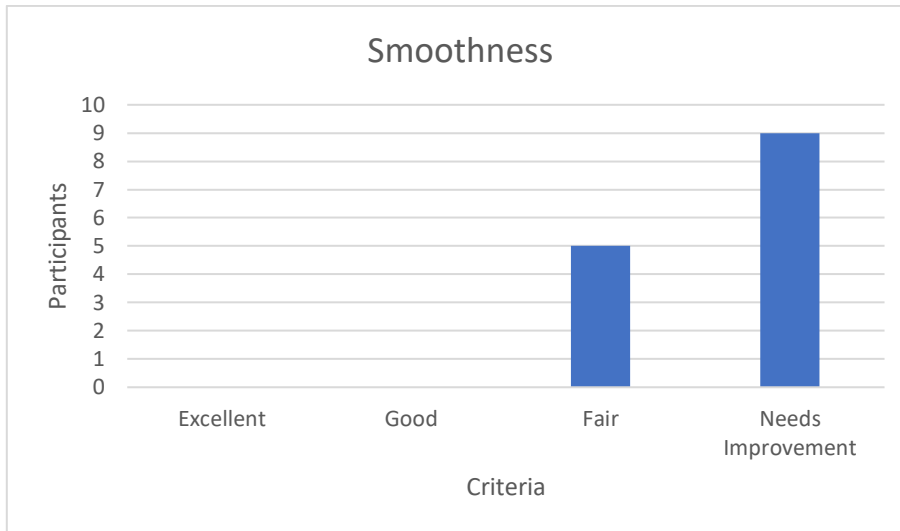
**Figure 2***Pacing/Rate*

**Source:** Data taken from the Pre-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June 2025.

Figure 2 shows that 7 out of 14 students need improvement, 6 out 14 are fair and 1 out 14 is good in the aspect of pacing or rate when reading in English. Showing that the majority of the students do not have pacing/rate when reading.

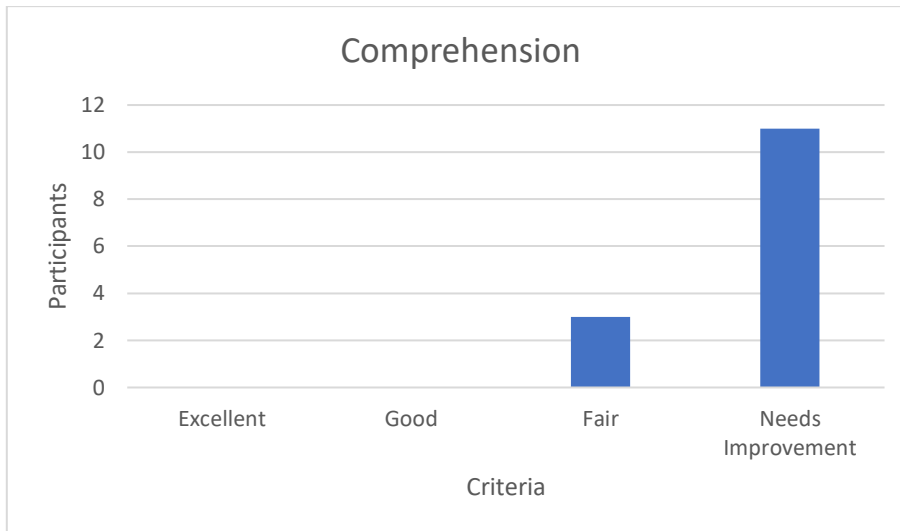
### Figure 3

#### *Smoothness*



**Source:** Data taken from the Pre-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June 2025.

Figure 3 shows that 9 out of 14 students need improvement and 5 out 14 are fair in the aspect of smoothness when reading in English. Showing that the majority of the students do not have smoothness when reading.

**Figure 4***Comprehension*

**Source:** Data taken from the Pre-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June 2025.

Figure 4 shows that 11 out of 14 students need improvement and 3 out of 14 are fair in the aspect of comprehension when reading in English. Showing that the majority of the students do not have comprehension when reading.

#### **4.3. ANALYSIS OF THE OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

During the students' completion of the readings through Epic, an observation checklist was employed to evaluate the participants. This checklist included twenty yes/no criteria, along with a column for additional notes or comments. It was administered exclusively by the project leader. The checklist items are shown in the figure below.

**Table 5***Specific Observations - Check List*

Specific Observation 1. Student understands and follows the instructions and prompts within Epic Reading activities.
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Sessions	Yes	No
1	14	0
2	10	4
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 2. Student initiates interaction with Epic without prompting.		
1	0	14
2	7	7
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 3. Student maintains focus on the Reading activity within the app.		
1	14	0
2	10	4
3	8	6
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 4. Student expresses enjoyment or interest in the app's content (verbal cues, positive facial expressions).		
1	14	0
2	13	1
3	8	6

4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 5. Student actively participates in interactive elements of the app (clicking on words, listening to audio).		
1	14	0
2	10	4
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 6. Student seeks assistance or clarification when needed, showing active problem-solving.		
1	0	14
2	14	0
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 7. Student demonstrates persistence when encountering challenging words or sentences.		
1	0	14
2	0	14
3	8	6
4	6	8
5	8	6
Specific Observation 8. Student uses the app independently for the allotted time.		
1	14	0

2	10	4
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 9. Student engages with the story beyond simply reading (asking questions, making connections).		
1	0	14
2	10	4
3	8	6
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 10. Student reads words accurately within the app.		
1	0	14
2	10	4
3	8	6
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 11. Student reads at an appropriate pace, avoiding excessive hesitations or rushing.		
1	0	14
2	0	14
3	0	14
4	6	8
5	11	3

Specific Observation 12. Student uses appropriate intonation and expression when reading aloud.		
1	0	14
2	0	14
3	8	6
4	9	5
5	8	6
Specific Observation 13. Student reads smoothly, with minimal pauses or repetitions.		
1	0	14
2	0	14
3	0	14
4	6	8
5	8	6
Specific Observation 14. Student demonstrates comprehension of the story content (retelling, answering questions).		
1	0	14
2	11	3
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 15. Student self corrects reading errors.		
1	0	14
2	10	4
3	14	0

4	9	5
5	11	3
Specific Observation 16. Student reads the story with increasing speed and accuracy.		
1	0	14
2	0	14
3	0	14
4	6	8
5	11	3
Specific Observation 17. Student reads without pointing at each word.		
1	0	14
2	0	14
3	8	6
4	9	5
5	14	0
Specific Observation 18. Student demonstrates increased fluency when actively engaged with the app.		
1	0	14
2	10	4
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 19. Student shows decreased fluency when disengaged or distracted.		
1	14	0
2	14	0

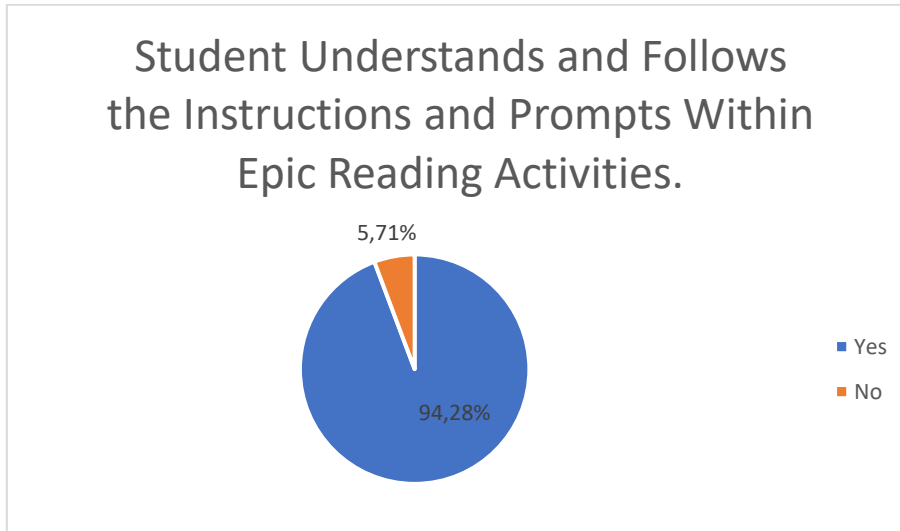
3	14	0
4	14	0
5	14	0
Specific Observation 20. Student rereads words or sentences within the activities to aid understanding.		
1	0	14
2	5	9
3	8	6
4	9	5
5	11	3

**Source:** Data taken from the Pre-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

The results obtained from the observation checklist used to assess participants' performance during the implementation of Epic are shown in Figures 5 through 24. Results are compared considering into account the total of "Yes" and "No" aspects obtained from the 14 students' observations made during the 5 sessions using Epic.

**Figure 5**

*Student Understands and Follows the Instructions and Prompts Within Epic Reading Activities*

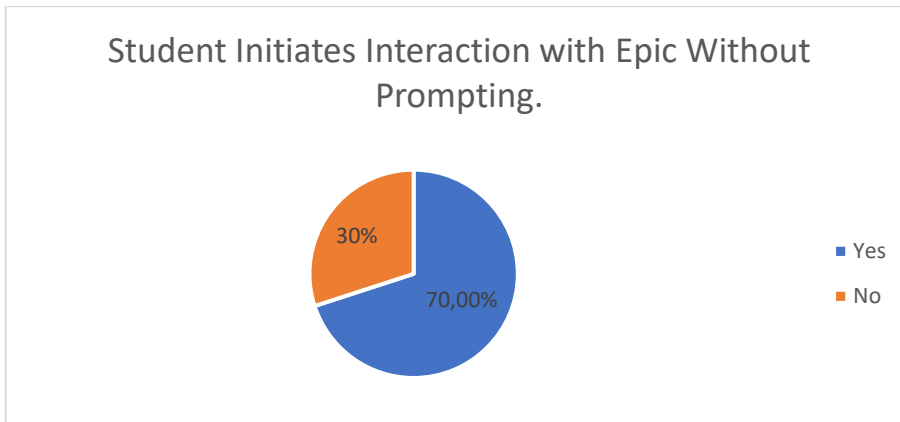


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 5 indicates that during the 5 sessions 94,2% of the students understood and followed the instructions and prompts within Epic Reading activities. There were 5,7% that did not achieve it at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students could manage the instructions on the usage of Epic.

**Figure 6**

*Student Initiates Interaction with Epic Without Prompting.*

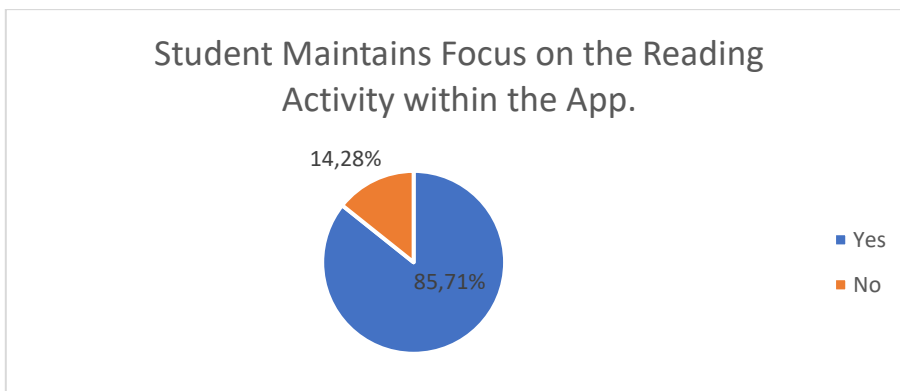


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 6 indicates that during the 5 sessions the 70% of the students-initiated interaction with Epic without prompting. 30% were not motivated to start using the program during the first sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were able to initiate the interaction on the usage of Epic.

**Figure 7**

*Student Maintains Focus on the Reading Activity within the App.*

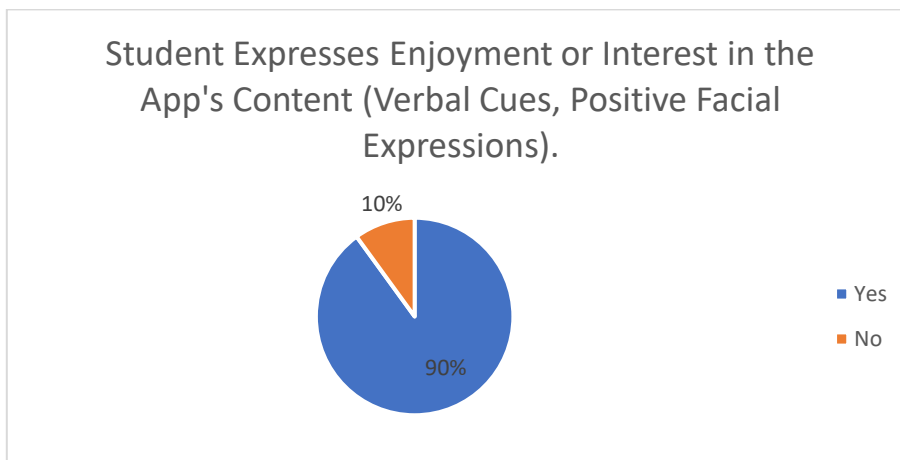


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 7 indicates that during the 5 sessions, 85,7% of the students maintained focus on the reading activity within the app. There were 14,2% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students could maintain focus on the activities of Epic.

### Figure 8

*Student Expresses Enjoyment or Interest in the App's Content (Verbal Cues, Positive Facial Expressions).*

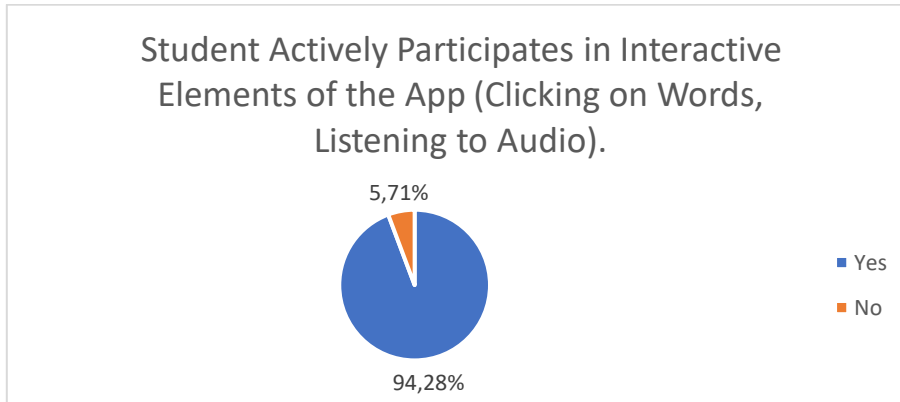


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 8 indicates that during the 5 sessions 90% of students expressed enjoyment or interest in the app's content (verbal cues, positive facial expressions). There were 10% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students expressed interest on the different content in Epic.

### Figure 9

*Student Actively Participates in Interactive Elements of the App (Clicking on Words, Listening to Audio).*

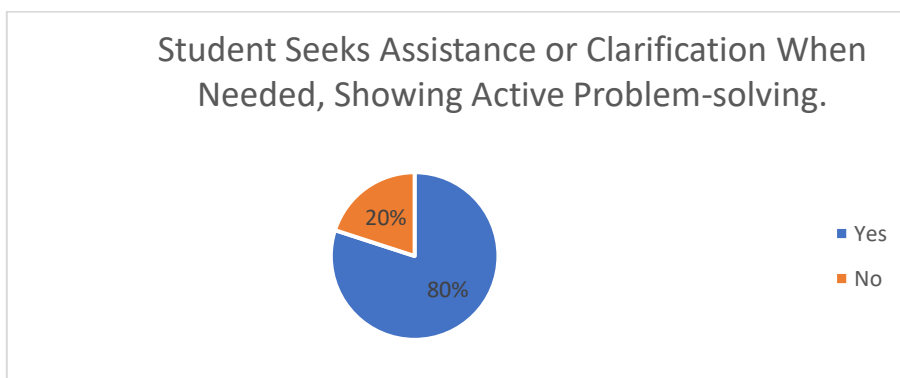


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 9 indicates that during the 5 sessions 94,2% of the students actively participated in interactive elements of the app (clicking on words, listening to audio). There were 5,7% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students were actively interacting on the usage of the elements of Epic.

### Figure 10

*Student Seeks Assistance or Clarification When Needed, Showing Active Problem-Solving.*

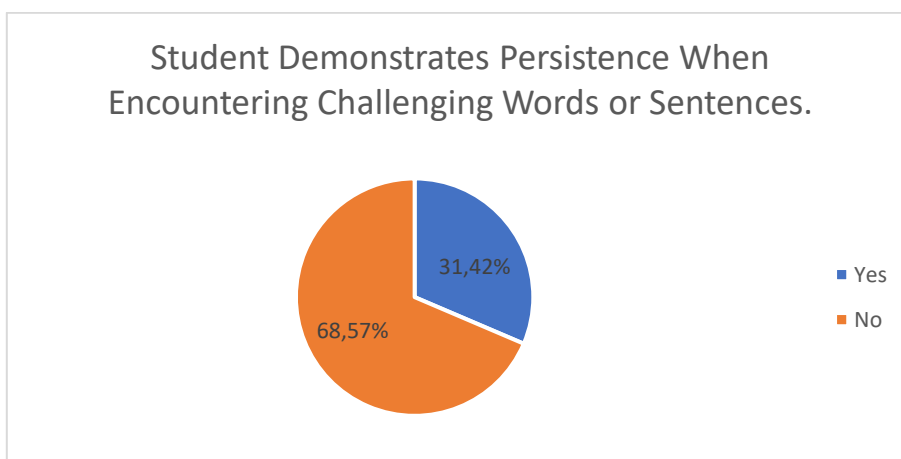


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 10 indicates that during the 5 sessions 80% of the students sought assistance or clarification when needed, showing active problem-solving. There were 20% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students asked for help when they needed in the usage of Epic.

### Figure 11

*Student Demonstrates Persistence When Encountering Challenging Words or Sentences.*

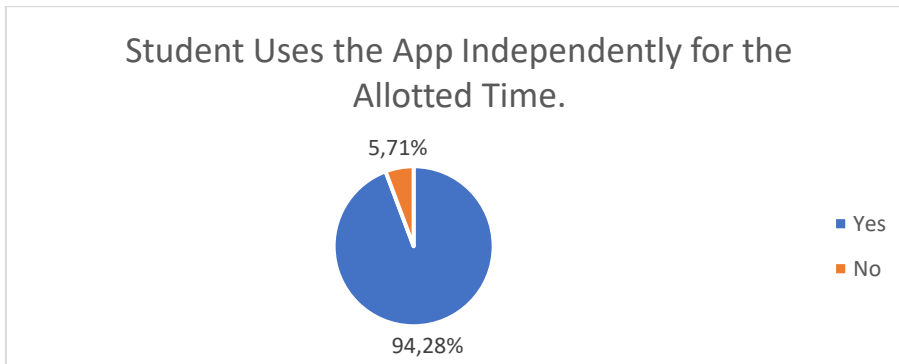


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 11 indicates that during the 5 sessions 68,5% of the students did not demonstrate persistence when encountering challenging words or sentences. There were 31,4% of students that achieved this aspect in the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were persistence with the challenges they faced on the usage of Epic.

**Figure 12**

*Student Uses the App Independently for the Allotted Time.*

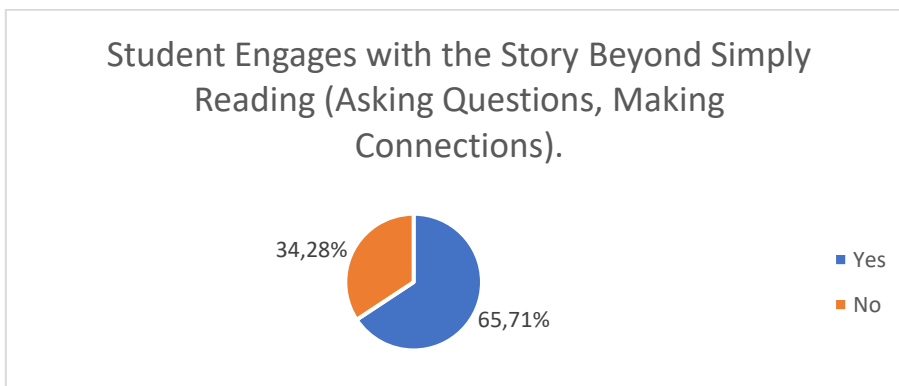


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 12 indicates that during the 5 sessions 94,2% of students used the app independently for the allotted time. There were 5,7% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students were able to be independent from the researcher on the usage of Epic.

**Figure 13**

*Student Engages with the Story Beyond Simply Reading (Asking Questions, Making Connections).*

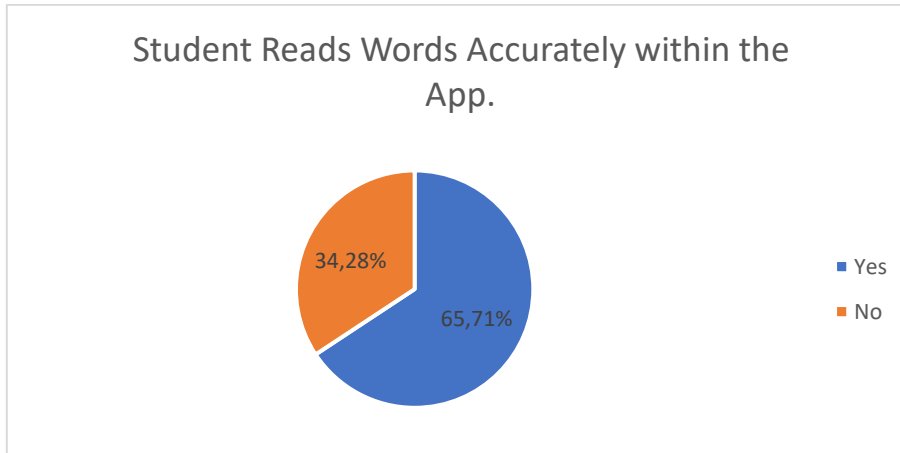


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 13 indicates that during the 5 sessions 65,7% of the students engaged with the story beyond simply reading (asking questions, making connections). There were 34,2% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students were engaged with the short stories from Epic.

#### **Figure 14**

*Student Reads Words Accurately within the App.*

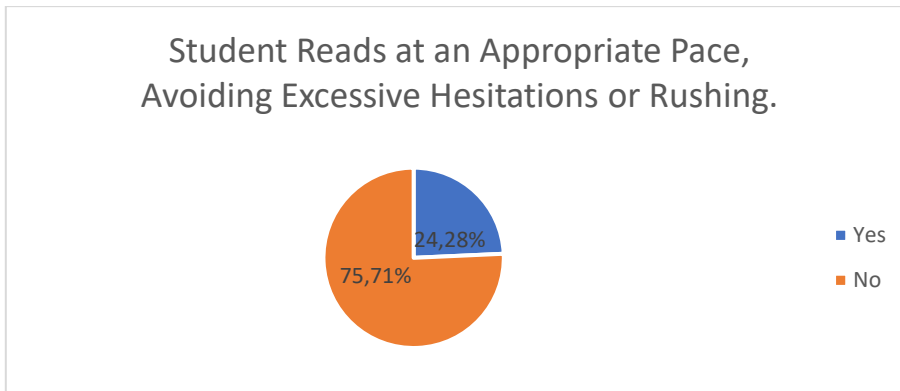


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 14 indicates that during the 5 sessions 65,7% of the students read words accurately within the app. There were 34,2% of students that did not achieve this aspect at the beginning. Showing that the majority of the students were able to read words or phrases from the short stories in Epic.

**Figure 15**

*Student Reads at an Appropriate Pace, Avoiding Excessive Hesitations or Rushing.*

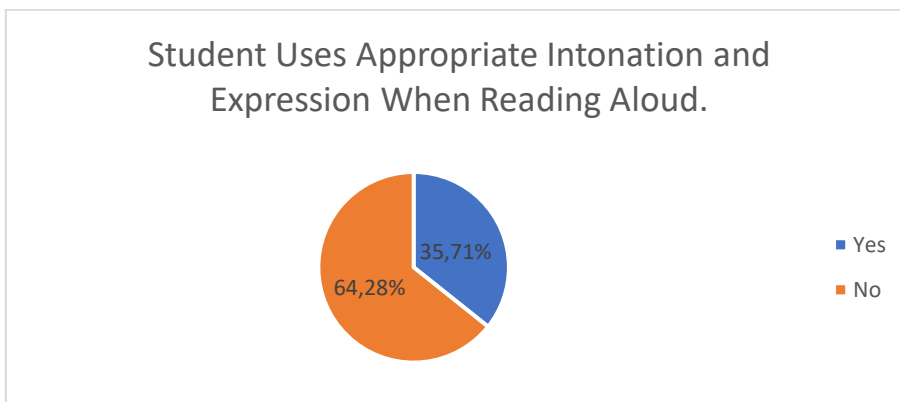


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 15 indicates that during the 5 sessions 75,7% of the students did not read at an appropriate pace, avoiding excessive hesitations or rushing. There were 24,2% of students that achieved this aspect during the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were not able to have appropriate pace when reading the short stories from Epic, they had hesitations.

**Figure 16**

*Student Uses Appropriate Intonation and Expression When Reading Aloud.*

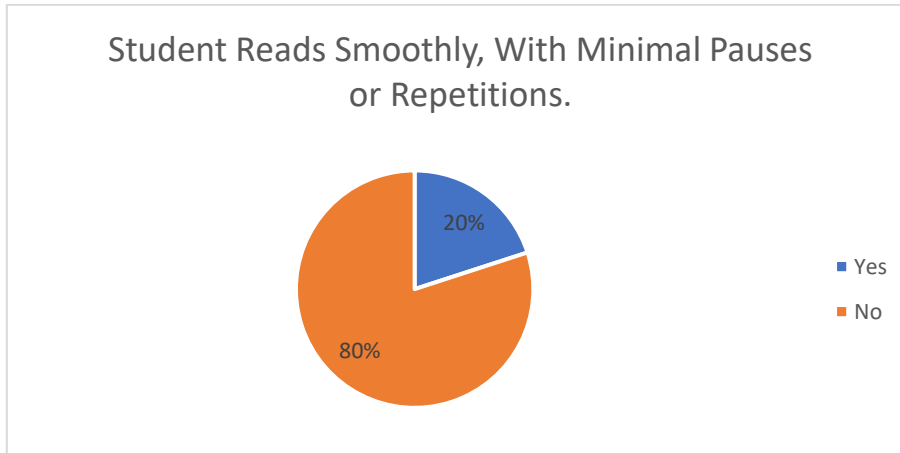


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 16 indicates that during the 5 sessions 64,2% of the students did not use appropriate intonation and expression when reading aloud. There were 35,7% of students that achieved this aspect during the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were not able to have appropriate intonation when reading the short stories from Epic.

### **Figure 17**

*Student Reads Smoothly, With Minimal Pauses or Repetitions.*

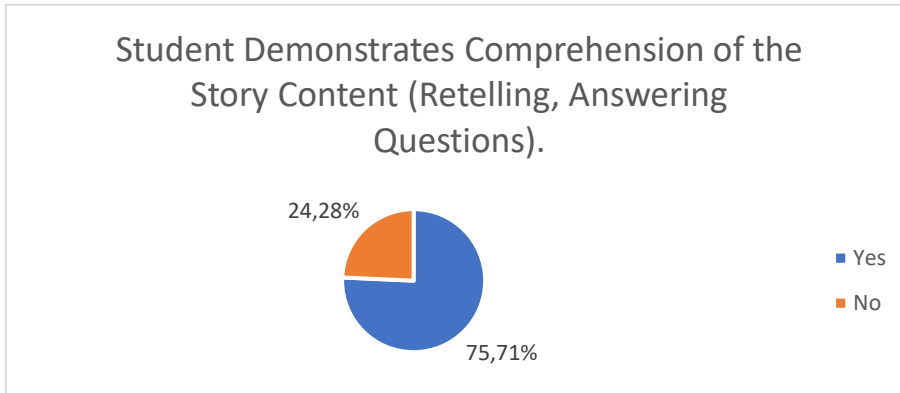


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 17 indicates that during the 5 sessions 80% of the students did not use read smoothly, with minimal pauses or repetitions. There were 20% of students that achieved this aspect during the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were not able to have smoothness when reading the short stories from Epic, they had many pauses.

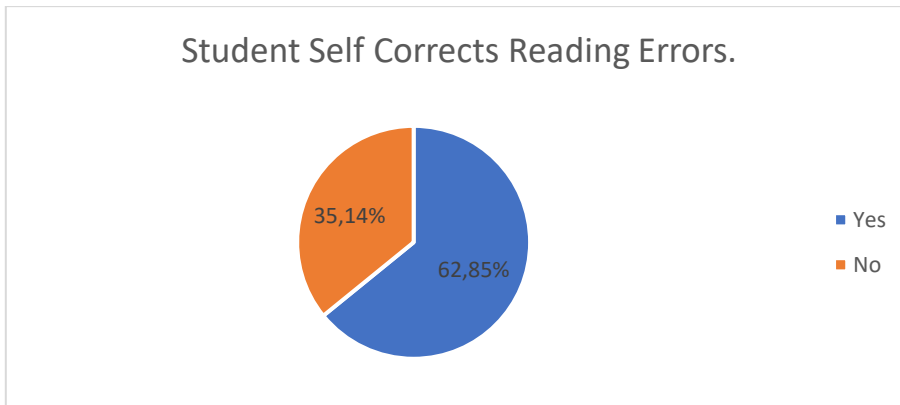
**Figure 18**

*Student Demonstrates Comprehension of the Story Content (Retelling, Answering Questions).*



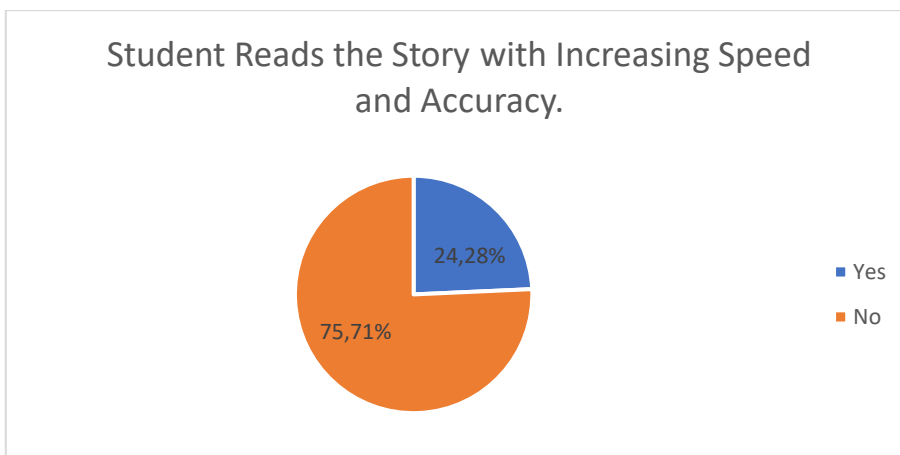
**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 18 indicates that during the 5 sessions 75,7% of the students demonstrated comprehension of the story content (retelling, answering questions). There were 24,2% of students that did not achieve this aspect during the first sessions. Showing that the majority of the students demonstrated comprehension of the short stories they read in Epic, they showed enthusiasm.

**Figure 19***Student Self Corrects Reading Errors.*

**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 19 indicates that during the 5 sessions 62,8% of the students self-corrected reading errors. There were 35,1% of students that did not achieve this aspect during the first sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were able to self-correct their mistakes while reading the short stories in Epic.

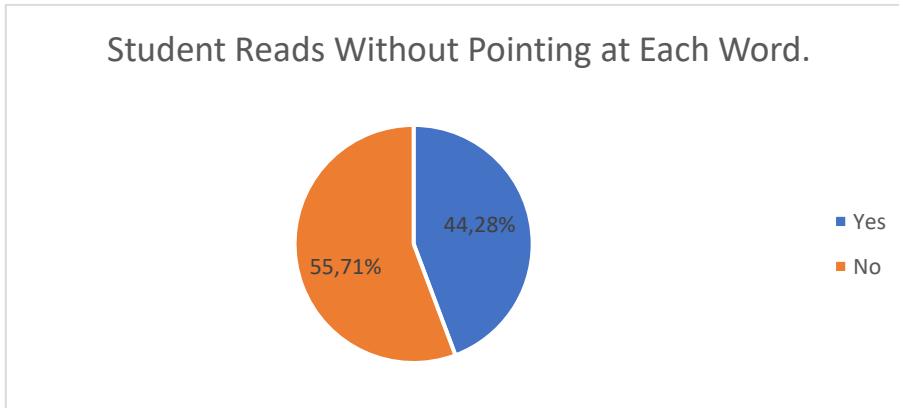
**Figure 20***Student Reads the Story with Increasing Speed and Accuracy.*

**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 20 indicates that during the 5 sessions 75,7% of the students did not read the story with increasing speed and accuracy. There were 24,2% of students that achieved this aspect during the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students did not have control of speed when reading the short stories in Epic.

### Figure 21

*Student Reads Without Pointing at Each Word.*

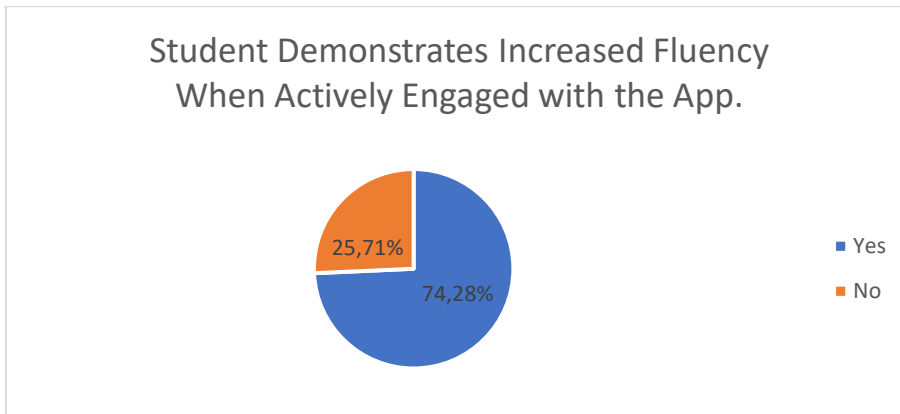


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 21 indicates that during the 5 sessions 55,7% of the students did not read without pointing at each word, and the other 44,2% achieved this aspect during the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were not able to read without pointing words or phrases from the short stories in Epic.

**Figure 22**

*Student Demonstrates Increased Fluency When Actively Engaged with the App.*

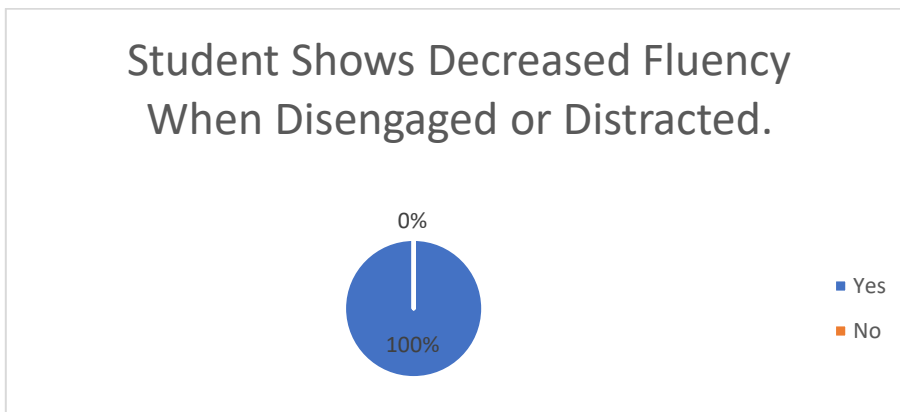


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 22 indicates that during the 5 sessions 74,2% of the students demonstrated increased fluency when actively engaged with the app. There were 25,7% of students that did not achieve this aspect during the first sessions. Showing that the majority of the students demonstrated that with engagement they increased fluency when reading short stories from Epic.

**Figure 23**

*Student Shows Decreased Fluency When Disengaged or Distracted.*

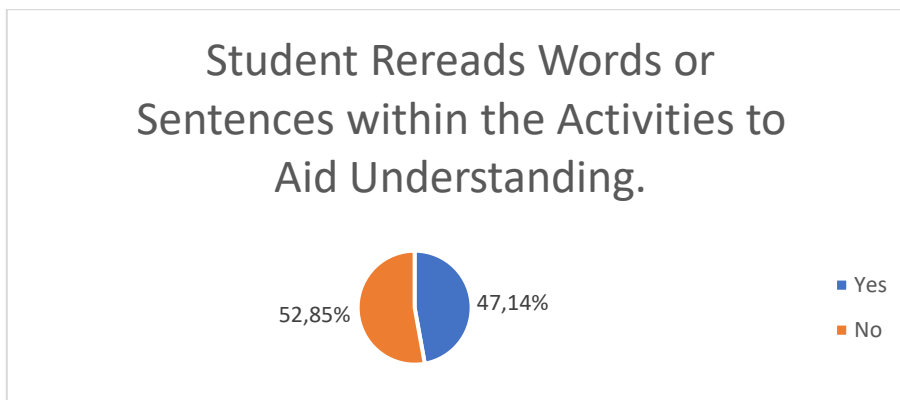


**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

Figure 23 indicates that during the 5 sessions all 100% of students showed decreased fluency when disengaged or distracted. Showing that all students were not able to improve fluency when they faced distractions during the usage of Epic.

#### **Figure 24**

*Student Rereads Words or Sentences within the Activities to Aid Understanding.*



**Source:** Data taken from the Observation Check-list applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during June and July 2025.

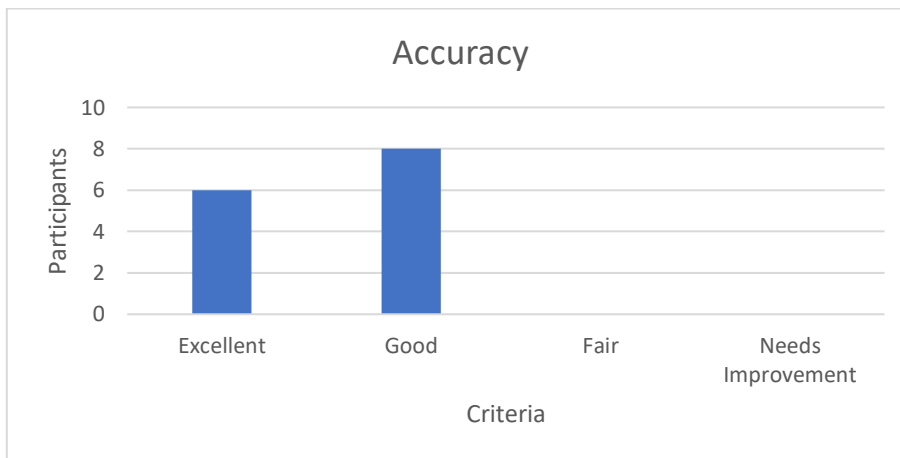
Figure 24 indicates that during the 5 sessions 52,8% of students did not reread words or sentences within the activities to aid understanding, and the other 47,1% of students achieved this aspect during the last sessions. Showing that the majority of the students were not able to reread words or phrases from the short stories in Epic, they focused on following the reading without rereading.

#### 4.4. ANALYSIS OF THE POST-TEST

After implementing the activities using Epic, a post-test was conducted for the 14 students. This post-test, developed and administered via orally, comprised a short story that includes a scoring rubric designed to know their improvement after using Epic.

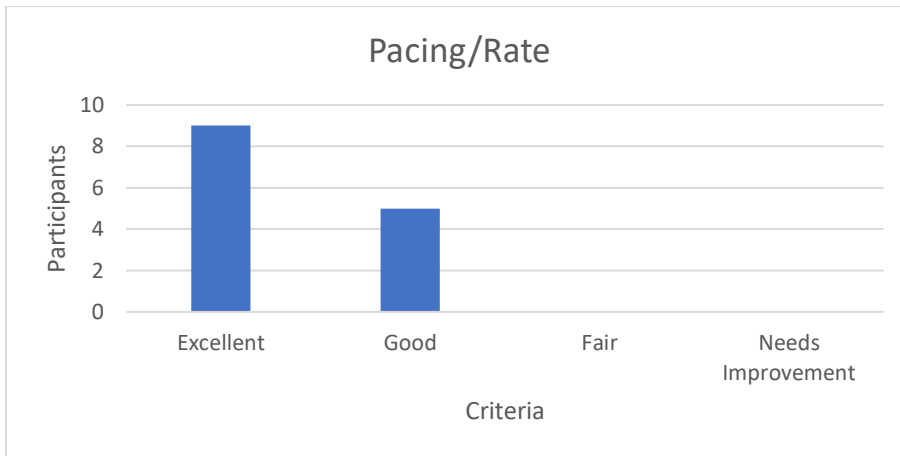
**Figure 25**

*Accuracy*



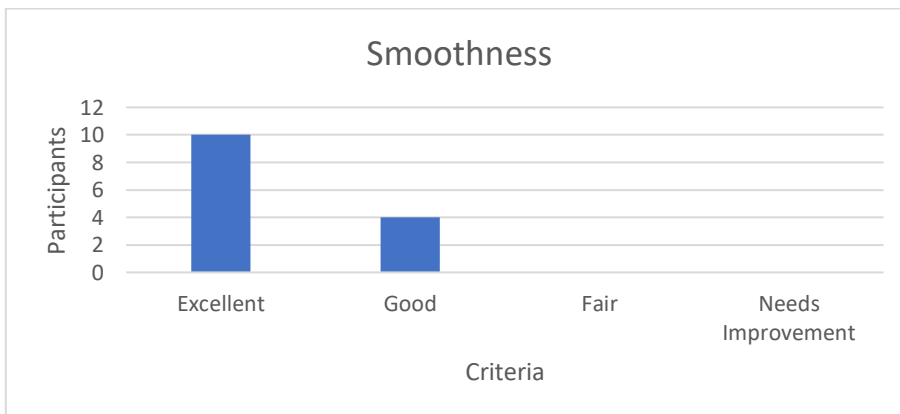
**Source:** Data taken from the Post-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 25 shows that 8 out of 14 students have good and 6 out 14 have excellent in the aspect of accuracy when reading in English. This shows a lot of advances in comparison with the pre-test. Showing that the majority of the students were able to improve from fair to good and excellent on accuracy when reading.

**Figure 26***Pacing/Rate*

**Source:** Data taken from the Post-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 26 shows that 5 out of 14 students have good and 9 out of 14 have excellent in the aspect of pace or rate when reading in English. This shows a lot of advances in comparison with the pre-test. Showing that the majority of the students were able to improve from fair to good and excellent on pacing/rate when reading.

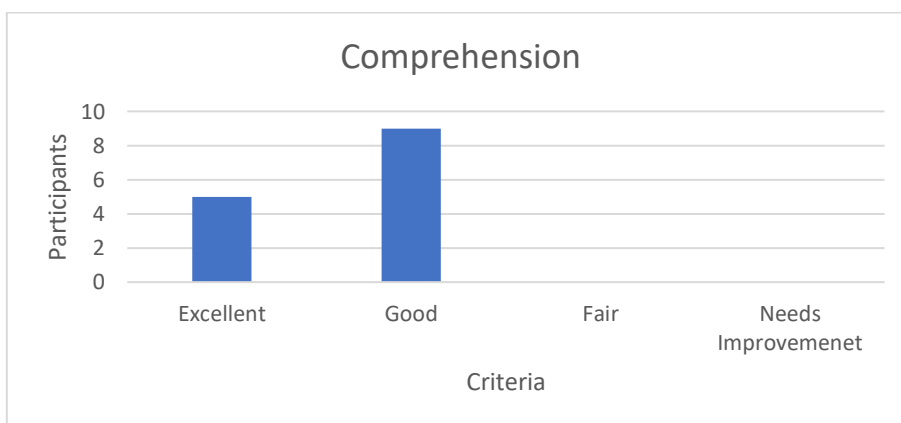
**Figure 27***Smoothness*

**Source:** Data taken from the Post-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 27 shows that 4 out of 14 students have good and 10 out 14 have excellent in the aspect of smoothness when reading in English. This shows a lot of advances in comparison with the pre-test. Showing that the majority of the students were able to improve from fair to good and excellent on smoothness when reading.

### Figure 28

#### *Comprehension*



**Source:** Data taken from the Post-test applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 28 shows that 9 out of 14 students have good and 5 out 14 have excellent in the aspect of comprehension when reading in English. This shows a lot of advances in comparison with the pre-test. Showing that the majority of the students were able to improve from fair to good and excellent on comprehension when reading.

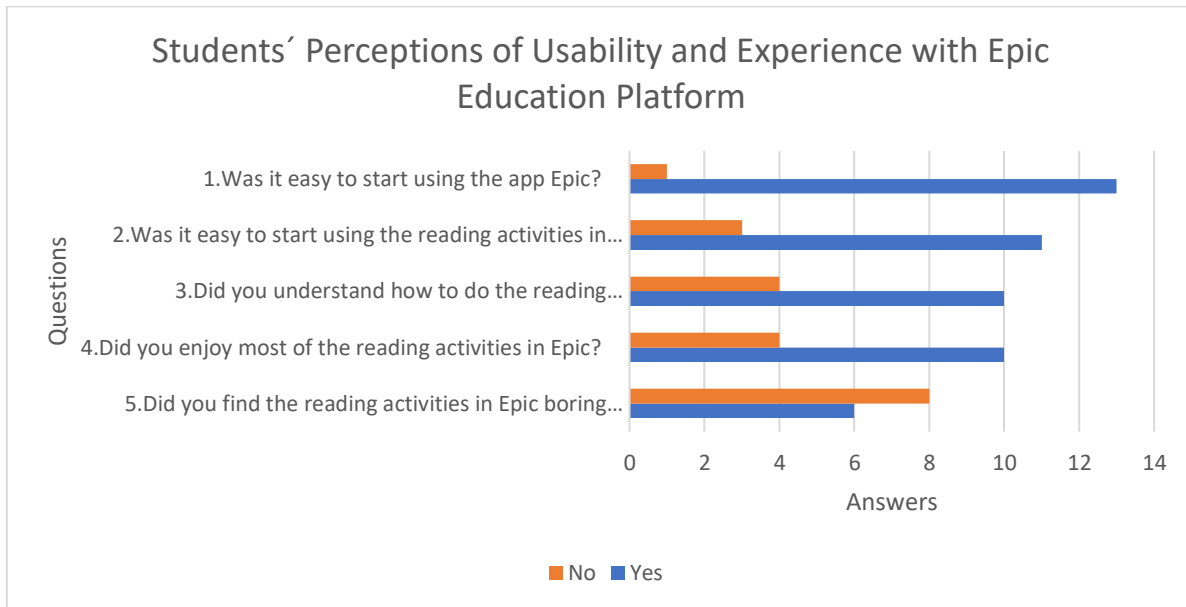
#### **4.5. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT INTERVIEW**

After implementing the activities using Epic, a questionnaire was conducted for the 14 students. This questionnaire, developed and administered in paper, comprised yes/no questions designed to gather learners' opinions regarding Epic and its use while learning fluency when reading, featuring 14 items.

## Figure 29

*Students' Perceptions of Usability and Experience with Epic Education Platform.*

*Questions from 1 to 5*



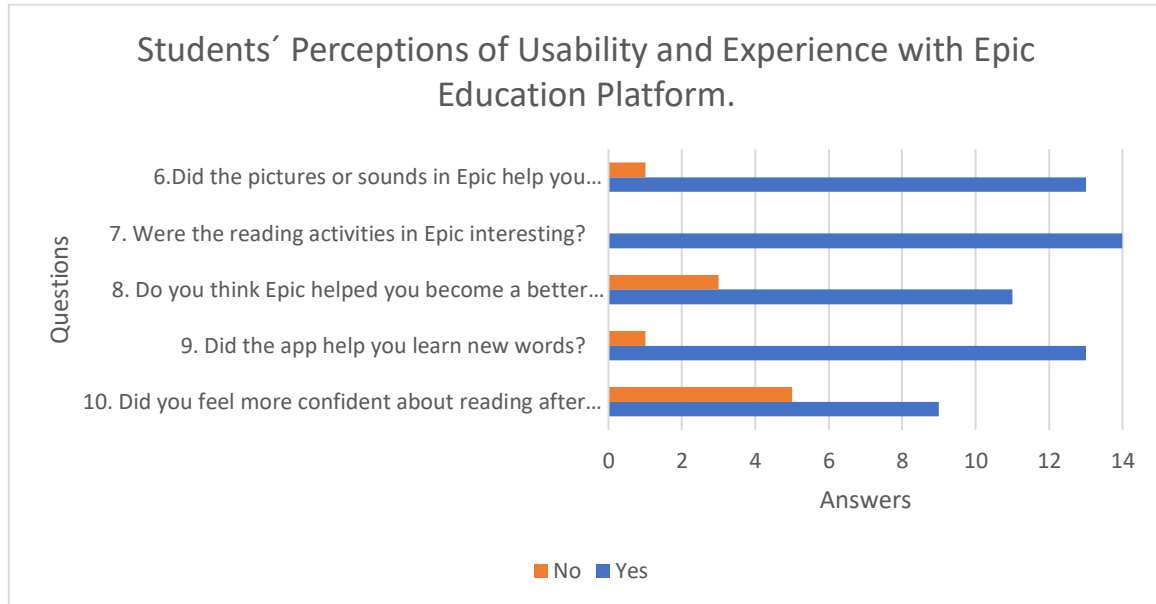
**Source:** Data taken from the Student Interview applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 29 shows in Question #1 that only 1 out of 14 students did not find it easy to start using the app, while for the other 13 students it was easy. In Question #2, for 11 students out of 14 it was easy to use the reading activities in Epic, but for 3 students it was not easy. In Question #3, 10 out of 14 students understood how to do the reading activities quickly, but 4 of them did not. In Question #4, 10 students out of 14 did enjoy most of the reading activities, while 4 of them did not. In Question #5, 8 students out of 14 did not find the reading activities boring, but 6 of them did. Showing that for the majority of the students it was easy to start using the app and reading, they were able to understand how to do the activities and enjoyed them, and for most of them the activities were not boring.

**Figure 30**

*Students' Perceptions of Usability and Experience with Epic Education Platform.*

*Questions from 6 to 10*



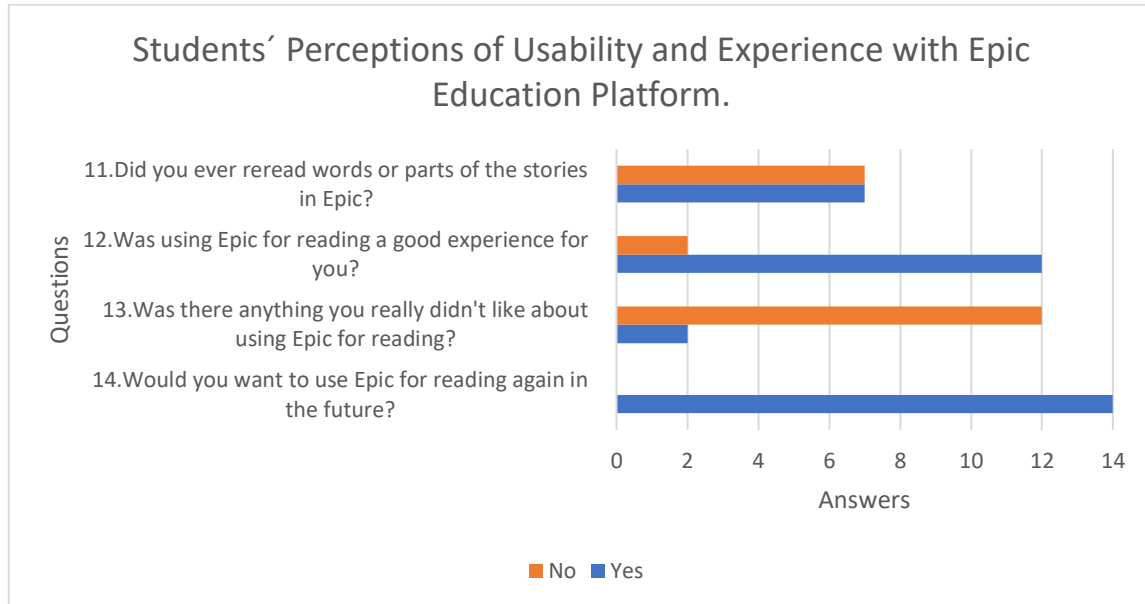
**Source:** Data taken from the Student Interview applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 30 shows in Question #6 that 13 out of 14 students affirmed that the pictures or sounds in Epic helped them understand the reading better, while for 1 student it did not. In Question #7, for the 14 students the reading activities in Epic were interesting. In Question #8, 11 out of 14 students affirmed that Epic helped them become a better reader, but 3 of them did not. In Question #9, 13 students out of 14 affirmed that the app helped them learn new words, while 1 of them did not. In Question #10, 9 students out of 14 felt more confident about reading after using Epic, but 5 of them did not. Showing that for the majority of the students the sounds and pictures helped them understand the reading, the readings were interesting for them, they consider that Epic helped them become better readers and learn new words, so they feel more confident when reading.

**Figure 31**

*Students' Perceptions of Usability and Experience with Epic Education Platform.*

*Questions from 11 to 14*



**Source:** Data taken from the Student Interview applied to 14 students at Escuela La Conquista during July 2025.

Figure 31 shows in Question #11 that 7 out of 14 students reread words or parts of the stories in Epic, while the other 7 students did not. In Question #12, 12 students out of 14 affirmed that using Epic was a good experience for them, but 2 of them did not. In Question #13, 12 out of 14 students affirmed that there was not anything they did not like about using Epic for reading, but 2 of them did it. In Question #14, the 14 students affirmed they would want to use Epic for reading again in the future. Showing that for the half of the students it was necessary to reread some words or phrases from the stories. For the majority of the students Epic was a good experience for them and there was nothing they did not like about Epic. And all students affirmed they would like to use Epic again in the future.

#### 4.6. ANALYSIS OF THE JOURNAL

**Table 6**

*Analysis of the Journal*

Session	Date	Time	Observations
Session #1	June 17th, 2025	2 lessons	On this first day they were excited because they were going to do something different like using the computer and exploring the program to start the readings. The program has amazing animation and audio, some computers did not want to work, and the internet was very slow.
Session #2	June 20th, 2025	2 lessons	They started and completed a Reading. They were excited to watch the animation and listen to the audio of the readings. They wanted to use the computer and interact with the program. Some of them repeated the Reading they chose.
Session #3	June 24th, 2025	2 lessons	I noticed they love reading Cat Ninja because the animation and audio is appealing for them. They repeated the most amazing phrases and sounds from the stories. They were waiting for the moment to use the program to read and listen to the stories. Some of them wanted to use Epic all the time and understand the stories.

Session #4	June 30th, 2025	1 lesson	<p>All the classes they asked me to use the program.</p> <p>They were very excited waiting for the moment to use Epic. They played several readings. They wanted to listen to and watch the stories. They felt free interacting with the program when choosing and clicking on the stories. They were anxious to read. They understood the main idea of the stories.</p> <p>They were paying attention to the stories; they laughed and enjoyed the time interacting with Epic.</p>
Session #5	July 1st, 2025	2 lessons	<p>At this point they Felt more confident on using the program and chose the stories they wanted to read.</p> <p>They were amazed by the pictures, animation, and voices from the stories. They reread some phrases aloud and understood them. Some of them were excited to read the story about Leonel Messi and then explained to me the main idea of the story.</p> <p>They want to continue using Epic for all the classes because it gives them motivation to improve their fluency to read their favorite stories.</p>

## **CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the key findings from the investigation based on the four specific objectives proposed in Chapter I and the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in Chapter IV. These conclusions offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of implementing Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) approach using Epic as a pedagogical tool to improve the fluency when reading in English for school students. The researcher also included recommendations for future investigations related to this field.

This study aimed to determine the impact of implementing the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) approach using the digital platform Epic in improving the fluency when reading for students from 5th grade in Escuela La Conquista, Sarapiquí.

This investigation was carried out using a pre-test, an observation checklist, a student interview, and a post-test. As a general overview, the results were positive, demonstrating that students improved their fluency when reading after conducting the activities of short stories in Epic platform and following the CALL approach.

The first objective of this project aimed to identify the reading fluency level of 5th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista before the implementation of Epic using the CALL approach, which was developed in the process of the pre-test. This pre-test was applied during the first week of the investigation and it showed that the students had a very basic and low level on fluency when reading getting the criteria of fair and needs improvement. The results showed that they needed help and guidance to get knowledge on fluency.

Students were not accustomed or able to read short stories, short paragraphs, or complete sentences due to their lack of English classes, so their fluency was very poor. The

pre-test was a useful tool to identify their position in the topic, and it ended up being according to what the project had been talking about.

The second objective was to implement reading activities based on short stories through Epic integrating the CALL approach during the first quarter of 2025. This objective was developed with an observation checklist which was used during the second and third week. The first day this process started was observing their first impression when the researcher presented the digital platform and gave instructions of how to start using it and clicking following steps and the readings.

The following days were intensive on using the program by themselves and choosing the stories they wanted to read. They got independent day by day until they got to know the code and user they had to use. During these days the researcher observed their actions with the checklist that was applied during all this step.

The results from this tool showed that the use of technology helped students improve their level of fluency when reading. The majority of the students made progress in every session using the program. In every lesson they wanted to listen to the readings.

Short stories from the program were a good opportunity for students to have more motivation to improve their fluency in the target language. The animation and audios from the short stories were appealing for students and they gave them the option of choosing the word they wanted to listen to again.

Since this project started, the expectations were very high because the digital platform was an amazing tool to start implementing the short stories in their knowledge for fluency.

Then analyzing the results from all the strategies used during the implementation of the project, it can be said that the results were very close to expectations.

From the pre-test it could be affirmed that their level and knowledge to the target language in fluency was very low and basic since they had never had an implementation like Epic for improving their reading skills.

During the observation checklist and usage of the program Epic, students were motivated and enthusiastic to use the computer and play the readings. This stage lasted around 2 weeks, in which the time was dedicated to the usage of Epic. The results from this stage showed that in every session they improved a lot of aspects observed in the checklist, getting a satisfying result during the last session in which they did everything by themselves, and they started getting more knowledge on fluency when playing the short stories.

When the post-test was applied they knew it was the end of the project, so they asked for more sessions in the future. With the results of this post-test, it was noticeable that they had improved enough according to the expectations because comparing the pre-test with the post-test the scores in the rubric showed their progress to a better fluency.

Then the student interview was applied for every participant, so it showed their experience using Epic. It can be said that they were satisfied and glad for having this unique experience at school.

To conclude, participants had a noticeable improvement and progress, now they show more confidence and fluency when reading in English. Both researcher and participants really enjoyed the process of this project due to the enrichment that everybody got from the implementation of a digital program for learning. And the reconstruction of the confidence with a foreign language they had lost. This demonstrated that the use of technology is a success for the acquisition of knowledge in students, and teachers can take advantage of it using it properly.

## 5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Explorance (2025): “More tech is a gateway to more informed, data-driven decision-making for both students and teachers.” (p. 41). So, it is essential to recommend teachers the use of technology in the classroom to help students improve skills in English language. Getting information is essential for students and technology is a good way to help them acquire more knowledge for their present and future.

This research focused on reading with accurate fluency in English, so it is vital that teachers accept to receive the help from technology, and using CALL Approach to complement the technological tools and use them correctly to help students in the process of learning.

Building on the previously discussed conclusions, the researcher will now provide recommendations tailored for EFL students. These recommendations aim to address identified limitations and offer guidance for future research in related areas. Based on the impact of implementing the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) approach using Epic in improving fluency when reading at Escuela La Conquista, Sarapiquí, during the second quarter of 2025, the following are tailored recommendations:

- The impact of the CALL approach using Epic on reading comprehension in 4th grade students.
- Using digital storytelling platforms to enhance vocabulary acquisition in primary EFL learners.
- Comparing the effectiveness of Epic versus other digital reading platforms (e.g., Raz-Kids, StoryWeaver) in developing fluency in English as a Foreign Language.

- A comparative study of traditional reading instruction and CALL-based instruction in rural Costa Rican schools.
- Using game-based learning within CALL environments to enhance reading engagement in primary students.
- Exploring the use of AI-powered reading platforms to personalize fluency development in young EFL learners.

## **CHAPTER VI PROPOSAL**

### **6.1. NAME OF THE PROPOSAL**

The title of the current proposal is: Integrating Digital Platforms to Education. This project addresses the investigation of: “The effectiveness of using the Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista located in Sarapiquí, Heredia during the last quarter of 2025.”

### **6.2. DESCRIPTION**

This proposal describes a mini-project involving 16 students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista. All students involved from this public school have a very basic level in the English language. Its main purpose is to implement the use of Epic a digital program in which they can improve their fluency in the target language.

The length of this project is 4 weeks distributed into 3 days per week. In the first week, students will undergo a pre-test to assess their initial fluency when reading in English. In the first day of the second week, students will start exploring the digital platform Epic. Since the second day of the second week and during the third week, students will use Epic to listen to and read the short stories to reinforce their fluency. This project will conclude in the fourth week with the post-test to see their improvement and progress made during the program. Lastly, the student interview will be carried out in the fourth week.

### **6.3. PLACE TO BE DEVELOPED**

This proposal is developed at a public school, Escuela La Conquista in Sarapiquí, Heredia. The population for this project is 16 students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade with a very basic level of the language. The purpose is to give them the opportunity to participate in this extra-curricular project that will let them acquire more knowledge and fluency in English.

## **6.4. ORGANIZATION**

The researcher has to ask for permission at Escuela La Conquista to make it possible to do this project with the respective permissions from the principal from the institution and designate teacher of the group.

## **6.5. INVOLVED POPULATION**

The population involved of this proposal corresponds to 16 students enrolled at this public institution Escuela La Conquista.

## **6.6. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

### **6.6.1. Proposal general objective**

To determine the effectiveness of using Epic with the CALL approach in improving fluency when reading short stories on students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Escuela La Conquista during the last quarter of 2025.

### **6.6.2. Proposal specific objectives**

1. To identify the reading fluency level of 6th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista before the implementation of Epic using the CALL approach.
2. To implement reading activities based on short stories through Epic integrating the CALL approach during the last quarter of 2025.
3. To analyze the changes in students' reading fluency after using Epic with the CALL approach by comparing pre- and post-intervention results.

## **6.7. CHRONOGRAM OF ACTIVITIES**

As previously stated, the table below presents the activity schedule applied during the project

**Table 7***Chronogram of Activities*

PROPOSAL CHRONOGRAM			
May – July 2025			
WEEK	DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME
Week 1		Pre-test	4 lessons (40 minutes each lesson)
Week 2		Observation Checklist Use of Epic	6 lessons (40 minutes each lesson)
Week 3		Observation Checklist Use of Epic	3 lessons (40 minutes each lesson)
Week 4		Post-test Student Interview	3 lessons (40 minutes each lesson)

**6.8. NECESSARY BUDGET FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION**

This project does not require a budget or any financial resources, as the main features are available in the free version. The primary requirements are a willingness to participate, adherence to the guidelines from the previous project, and access to a computer and the internet. Additionally, this project must be conducted to determine the impact of the digital platform Epic.

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**ANNEXES**

**Annex I****Instrument#1: Pre-test**

**Objective:** To identify the reading fluency level of 5th-grade students at Escuela La Conquista before the implementation of Epic using the CALL approach.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Story 1: The Lost Kitten**

"Lily was sad. Her kitten, Mittens, was gone. She looked under the couch. She looked behind the curtains. No Mittens. 'Where could he be?' she asked her mom. Mom smiled. 'Let's check the garden,' she said. They went outside. Under the big oak tree, they saw a little ball of fur. 'Mittens!' Lily shouted. The kitten purred and jumped into her arms. Lily was so happy to have her friend back."

**Story 2: The Big Race**

"The school's big race was today. Alex was nervous. He looked at the other runners. 'They are so fast,' he thought. The race started. Alex ran as fast as he could. He felt his legs burning. He saw the finish line. He pushed harder. He crossed the line! He was third! He was happy. He did his best."

**Story 3: The Magic Treehouse**

"Tom and Sara found a small treehouse in the woods. It was old and creaky. Inside, there was a book. When they opened it, the treehouse started to spin! It spun faster and faster. Then, it stopped. They were in a jungle! Monkeys swung from the trees. 'Wow!' Sara said. 'This is amazing!' Tom nodded. 'Let's explore,' he said."

**Fluency Scoring Rubric:**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Excellent (4 points)</b>	<b>Good (3 points)</b>	<b>Fair (2 points)</b>	<b>Needs Improvement (1 point)</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	Reads words accurately with very few errors.	Reads words accurately with some minor errors.	Makes several errors, but meaning is still understandable.	Makes many errors, significantly affecting comprehension.
<b>Pacing/Rate</b>	Reads at an appropriate pace, neither too fast nor too slow.	Reads at a mostly appropriate pace, with occasional hesitations.	Reads too quickly or too slowly, affecting comprehension.	Reads very slowly and haltingly, with frequent pauses.
<b>Smoothness</b>	Reads smoothly and effortlessly, with few pauses or repetitions.	Reads relatively smoothly, with occasional pauses or repetitions.	Reads with frequent pauses, repetitions, and hesitations, disrupting the flow.	Reads very disjointedly, with numerous pauses, repetitions, and hesitations.

<b>Comprehension</b>	Student can accurately retell or summarize the main points of the story.	Student can retell most of the main points of the story.	Student has trouble retelling the main points of the story.	Student cannot retell the main points of the story.
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## Annex II

### Instrument#2: Observation Checklist

**Objective:** To implement reading activities based on short stories through Epic integrating the CALL approach during the first quarter of 2025.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student Observed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Category	Specific Observation	Observed (Yes/No)	Notes/Comments
<b>Engagement</b>	1. Student understands and follows the instructions and prompts within Epic reading activities.		
	2. Student initiates interaction with Epic without prompting.		
	3. Student maintains focus on the reading activity within the app.		
	4. Student expresses enjoyment or interest in the app's content (verbal cues, positive facial expressions).		
	5. Student actively participates in interactive elements of the		

	app (clicking on words, listening to audio).		
	6. Student seeks assistance or clarification when needed, showing active problem-solving.		
	7. Student demonstrates persistence when encountering challenging words or sentences.		
	8. Student uses the app independently for the allotted time.		
<b>Reading Fluency</b>	9. Student engages with the story beyond simply reading (asking questions, making connections).		
	10. Student reads words accurately within the app.		
	11. Student reads at an appropriate pace, avoiding excessive hesitations or rushing.		

	12. Student uses appropriate intonation and expression when reading aloud.		
	13. Student reads smoothly, with minimal pauses or repetitions.		
	14. Student demonstrates comprehension of the story content (retelling, answering questions).		
	15. Student self corrects reading errors.		
	16. Student reads the story with increasing speed and accuracy.		
	17. Student reads without pointing at each word.		
<b>Engagement &amp; Fluency Correlation</b>	18. Student demonstrates increased fluency when actively engaged with the app.		
	19. Student shows decreased fluency when disengaged or distracted.		

	20. Student rereads words or sentences within the activities to aid understanding.		
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**Annex III****Instrument#3: Post-test**

**Objective:** To analyze the changes in students' reading fluency after using Epic with the CALL approach by comparing pre- and post-intervention results.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Story: The Day the River Rose**

The small village nestled beside the Pacuare River was usually peaceful. The gentle sound of the flowing water was like a lullaby. But one day, after many days of heavy rain in the mountains, the river began to change. It grew darker and faster. Soon, the water started to rise, inch by inch, creeping closer to the houses near the bank.

Old Man Mateo, who had lived by the river his whole life, warned everyone to move their belongings to higher ground. Some people were worried, but others thought he was overreacting. However, as the day went on, the river continued to swell. It overflowed its banks and flooded the lower parts of the village.

People worked together, helping their neighbors carry furniture and animals to safety. They were grateful for Old Man Mateo's warning. By the next morning, the rain had stopped, and the river slowly began to recede. The villagers were tired but relieved. They had learned a valuable lesson about respecting the power of nature and the wisdom of those who understood it.

**Fluency Scoring Rubric:**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Excellent (4 points)</b>	<b>Good (3 points)</b>	<b>Fair (2 points)</b>	<b>Needs Improvement (1 point)</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	Reads words accurately with very few errors.	Reads words accurately with some minor errors.	Makes several errors, but meaning is still understandable.	Makes many errors, significantly affecting comprehension.
<b>Pacing/Rate</b>	Reads at an appropriate pace, neither too fast nor too slow.	Reads at a mostly appropriate pace, with occasional hesitations.	Reads too quickly or too slowly, affecting comprehension.	Reads very slowly and haltingly, with frequent pauses.
<b>Smoothness</b>	Reads smoothly and effortlessly, with few pauses or repetitions.	Reads relatively smoothly, with occasional pauses or repetitions.	Reads with frequent pauses, repetitions, and hesitations, disrupting the flow.	Reads very disjointedly, with numerous pauses, repetitions, and hesitations.

<b>Comprehension</b>	Student can accurately retell or summarize the main points of the story.	Student can retell most of the main points of the story.	Student has trouble retelling the main points of the story.	Student cannot retell the main points of the story.
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**Annex IV****Instrument#4: Student Interview**

**Objective:** To analyze the changes in students' reading fluency after using Epic with the CALL approach by comparing pre- and post-intervention results.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Read each question and circle the answer (Yes or No).

1. Was it easy to start using the app Epic? (Yes / No)
2. Was it easy to start using the reading activities in Epic? (Yes / No)
3. Did you understand how to do the reading activities in Epic quickly? (Yes / No)
4. Did you enjoy most of the reading activities in Epic? (Yes / No)
5. Did you find the reading activities in Epic boring sometimes? (Yes / No)
6. Did the pictures or sounds in Epic help you understand the reading better? (Yes / No)
7. Were the reading activities in Epic interesting? (Yes / No)
8. Do you think Epic helped you become a better reader? (Yes / No)
9. Did the app help you learn new words? (Yes / No)
10. Did you feel more confident about your reading after using Epic? (Yes / No)
11. Did you ever reread words or parts of the stories in Epic? (Yes / No)
12. Was using Epic for reading a good experience for you? (Yes / No)
13. Was there anything you really didn't like about using Epic for reading? (Yes / No)
14. Would you want to use Epic for reading again in the future? (Yes / No)

**Thank you for your answers!**