

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO



DIRECCIÓN DE POSGRADO

MAESTRÍA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

**TEMA: LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION IN THE SPEAKING
SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Trabajo de Investigación, previo a la obtención del Grado Académico de
Magister en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

Autora: Licenciada Wilma Guadalupe Villacís Villacís Magíster.

Directora: Doctora Elsa Mayorie Chimbo Cáceres Magíster.

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A la Unidad de Titulación de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato

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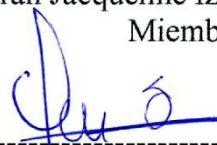
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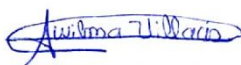
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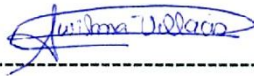
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A Dios por ser quién guíe mis pasos por el camino de la verdad y sabiduría. A mis padres por ser los motores de mi vida, a mis hermanas, hermanos y esposo por su amor incondicional, por estar siempre conmigo apoyándome y motivándome para lograr exitosamente cada uno de mis objetivos.

Wilma Guadalupe Villacís Villacís

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TEMA:

**“LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION IN THE SPEAKING SKILL
DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
LEARNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION”**

AUTORA: Licenciada Wilma Guadalupe Villacís Villacís, Magíster

DIRECTORA: Doctora Elsa Mayorie Chimbo Cáceres, Magíster

FECHA: 07 de marzo de 2018

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

La comunicación fluida en inglés como lengua extranjera es lo que muchos estudiantes aspiran en un mundo globalizado. Sin embargo, el desarrollo de la destreza oral (speaking) ha sido, por años, considerada difícil de desarrollar en los estudiantes. Es por esto que este estudio de investigación se realizó con el fin de determinar el efecto de la instrucción centrada en el estudiante en el desarrollo de la destreza hablada. Esta investigación se llevó a cabo con 54 estudiantes de nivel B1 + de la modalidad regular en el Centro de Idiomas de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Dichos estudiantes participaron en un estudio experimental que consistió en dar a los estudiantes una prueba previa y una prueba posterior; de los cuales, 26 estudiantes participaron en el grupo experimental y 28 en el grupo control. Solo los estudiantes del grupo experimental participaron de la implementación de un enfoque de aprendizaje que se aleja de la forma tradicional de aprender un idioma. Los resultados obtenidos en esta investigación indicaron que con una metodología que se enfoca en los estudiantes, ellos participaron más activamente en el proceso de aprendizaje, tomaron más responsabilidad por su aprendizaje y sus roles en cada lección cambiaron significativamente. Además, la interacción y la comunicación fueron dos criterios evidentes cuando los estudiantes se comunicaban con sus compañeros de clase. Este estudio resultó en la creación de un folleto de diez estrategias interactivas y comunicativas diseñadas para hacer que los estudiantes sean los principales protagonistas en cada lección, también están orientadas a la profundización al adquirir nuevos conocimientos, desarrollar habilidades y tener la predisposición para tener éxito en la vida educativa.

DESCRIPTORES: aprendizaje, comunicación, destreza hablada, enfoque, estrategias, folleto, fluidez, Inglés, instrucción centrada en el estudiante, interacción

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RESEARCH TOPIC:

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AUTHOR: Licenciada Wilma Guadalupe Villacís Villacís, Magíster

DIRECTED BY: Doctora Elsa Mayorie Chimbo Cáceres, Magíster

DATE: March 7th , 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fluent communication in English as a foreign language is what many students aspire in a globalized world. However, having students speaking English fluently has been considered difficult to achieve. This research study was done in order to determine the effect of learner-centered instruction on the speaking skill development. It was carried out with 54 B1+ level students of the regular modality in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato. These students participated in an experimental study which consisted of giving learners a pre-test and a post-test. 26 students participated in the experimental group and 28 in the control group. Only the students in the experimental group underwent the implementation of a learning approach that moves away from the traditional language learning. The results obtained in this investigation indicated that with an approach that focuses on the learners, students are more actively engaged in the learning process, they take more responsibility for their learning and their roles in every lesson changed significantly. Furthermore, interaction and communication were two evident criteria when students communicated with their classmates. This study resulted in the creation of a booklet of ten interactive and communicative strategies which were designed to make learners the main protagonists in every lesson, to go in depth in the development of their knowledge, skills and dispositions to have success in their educational life.

KEYWORDS: learning, communication, speaking skill, approach, strategies, booklet, fluency, English, learner-centered instruction, interaction

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to study the impact a learning approach has on the development of the speaking skill in English language learners who are studying their fourth level of English. The implementation of learner-centered instruction has helped to evaluate the results students can get in a classroom where the focus of instruction is on the learners rather than the teachers.

During this study, students have been involved in a research intervention process which makes learners explore a different way to learn to communicate in a foreign language. The transition from a teacher-centered instruction to a learner-centered approach gives learners the chance to take more responsibility for their learning.

This research study is organized in the following chapters:

Chapter I. Problem statement, contains the research topic that is going to be developed. It also contextualizes the problematic situation at an international, national and institutional level. A critical analysis is included as well as the general and specific objectives. Finally, it encompasses the reasons why the research is done.

Chapter II. Theoretical framework, includes the research background, the philosophical foundation, legal grounds, fundamental categories, hypothesis and the identification of variables. All of these components are described from a scientific and bibliographical angle.

Chapter III. Methodology, describes how the research is carried out. It contains several elements such as: the research approach, the basic research modality, level or type of research, population and sample, operationalization of variables, data collection plan and data processing and analysis plan. All of these

provide a step by step explanation of the process the researcher follows to do the study.

Chapter IV. Analysis and interpretation of the results, includes a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results obtained in the pre-test and post-test taken by the two groups who participated in the study. Moreover, this chapter contains the hypothesis verification which permits the evaluation of the feasibility of the investigation.

Chapter V. Conclusions and recommendations, encompasses the final thoughts based on data and some ideas that are suggested in order to solve the problem with appropriateness and practicability.

Chapter VI. The proposal, explains the creation of a booklet of interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency. This proposal has been elaborated based on the results obtained in the study. Consequently, it contains all the components such as: the informative data, the background of the proposal, the justification, objectives, feasibility analysis, the theoretical foundation, the operational plan and the evaluation plan. All this information aims to contribute to the practical implementation of the booklet in the classroom.

Finally, there is a list of bibliographical sources and the annexes used during the research.

CHAPTER I

PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 Theme of the problem

Learner-centered Instruction in the speaking skill development of English as a foreign language learners in higher education.

1.2 Problem Statement

1.2.1 Contextualization of the problem

Education, nowadays, takes a relevant role in human beings' formation. It is a highlight for socio-economic, cultural and political development. This is why the Ecuadorian government has been implementing some educational reforms in the system. One of the reforms started with the law of Reglamento de Regimen Académico (approved in 2013 by Council of Higher Education – CES, and modified in 2014), which states the objectives and articles in order to regulate the functioning of high education institutions.

Ecuador aims at forming professionals who are capable of solving problems in different areas. Thus, education is the means to reach the objectives established in Reglamento de Regimen Académico. For example, Article 2, g. states that education should be centered on learners in order to promote the development of curricular-pedagogical contexts characterized by interaction, creativity, innovation and problem-solving. This particular objective requires teachers and professors to reflect on the methodology they are using to help learners become active participants in the learning process.

Similarly, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education has worked on a new English curriculum for pre-preparatory, elementary, secondary and higher levels because there has been a disconnection among what children and teenagers learned in these levels. Therefore, the Curriculum for General Basic Education was implemented in September 2016 in all educational institutions in the Highland Region. The main aim of this curriculum is to determine how the contents are organized and the number of hours teachers teach English in a week. Interestingly, in this new curriculum English is considered as an important element. Therefore, students are being instructed in English as a foreign language in all institutions since September 2016.

The implementation of English in the curriculum is, undoubtedly, a great advancement in education because learning a foreign language at an early age lets students have a lot of benefits not only in their academic formation but also in their personal development. However, the age and the curriculum are not the only factors in learning a language. The methodology used by teachers as well as their language domain can contribute to the attainment of better results.

Despite all the efforts made by the Ecuadorian government, the English curriculum and the training programs, English has not been improved. Students do not obtain the language sufficiency. A low academic level in English students is evident when learners start their university studies. They do not pass exams at an intermediate or advanced level. Consequently, students have to take four more English courses at the university.

In zone 3, the situation is similar. There are high percentages of students who finish high school with a basic level of English. For example, for the scholar year 2015-2016 there were 410,873 registered students only in zone 3. From this number of students, the majority of them did not develop the communicative competence or have the B1 level described in the Common European Framework. So, the reality in zone 3 and the country needs to be analyzed because students

and teachers are devoting more than 10 years in a learning process that is not being fruitful.

In Universidad Técnica de Ambato, there is a languages center that offers English courses to students from the different faculties. These students are required to approve four levels of English before they take an institutional sufficiency test. Even though the test is institutional, the results that students obtain are not satisfactory, usually their scores are the minimum required to get the certificate. This means that students do not achieve the real B1+ level that they are asked for. As a result, they struggle when they want to apply to Master programs in foreign countries. They are not accepted because they do not have the language competency.

In this regard, it is necessary to study why this phenomenon, particularly when learning English. It is seen by many as a huge problem because there is no progress in the development of the language, specifically the speaking skill. For several years, a great effort has been devoted to the study of the speaking skill. Young adults usually find themselves in trouble when they have to communicate their ideas, thoughts and emotions in English. This situation takes place when learners are exposed to activities that are not engaging, meaningful and authentic. Learners do not have opportunities to interact with their peers, the lesson is teacher-centered; usually the person who makes the decisions about the techniques is the teacher. These decisions are not made taking into account the learners' behaviors and needs.

Having said this, educators have huge responsibilities to make the classroom a place where learners have to face challenging situations. These situations must awaken learners' interest, curiosity and motivation to learn things in real contexts. When students find learning interesting, there will be no limits in academic achievement.

On the other hand, the approaches used in the classroom should really offer students an opportunity to explore new things, develop innovative capacities as well as problem solving skills. The latter really represents a problem in students' formation. Currently, most learners struggle when they have to do projects or tasks that require them to analyze, evaluate, create and solve problems. Learners are accustomed to repeating and memorizing information. They are not able to generate new things. This occurs as a result of traditional instruction and the assessment the teachers are using. The focus on the teacher predominates at the moment of preparing materials, choosing activities or tasks, and planning the lesson. This is one of the reasons why learners lose interest in the lesson.

Consequently, Nunan (1988) notes that learner-centeredness has an important role in language pedagogy. Although learner-centeredness might be similar to traditional curricula in terms of its elements, it differs from it in the sense that learners will take part in the curriculum process closely. Both teachers and learners will work collaboratively to develop the curriculum. This way, learners are going to be more involved and engaged in the learning process.

1.2.2 Critical analysis

1.2.2.1 Problem scheme

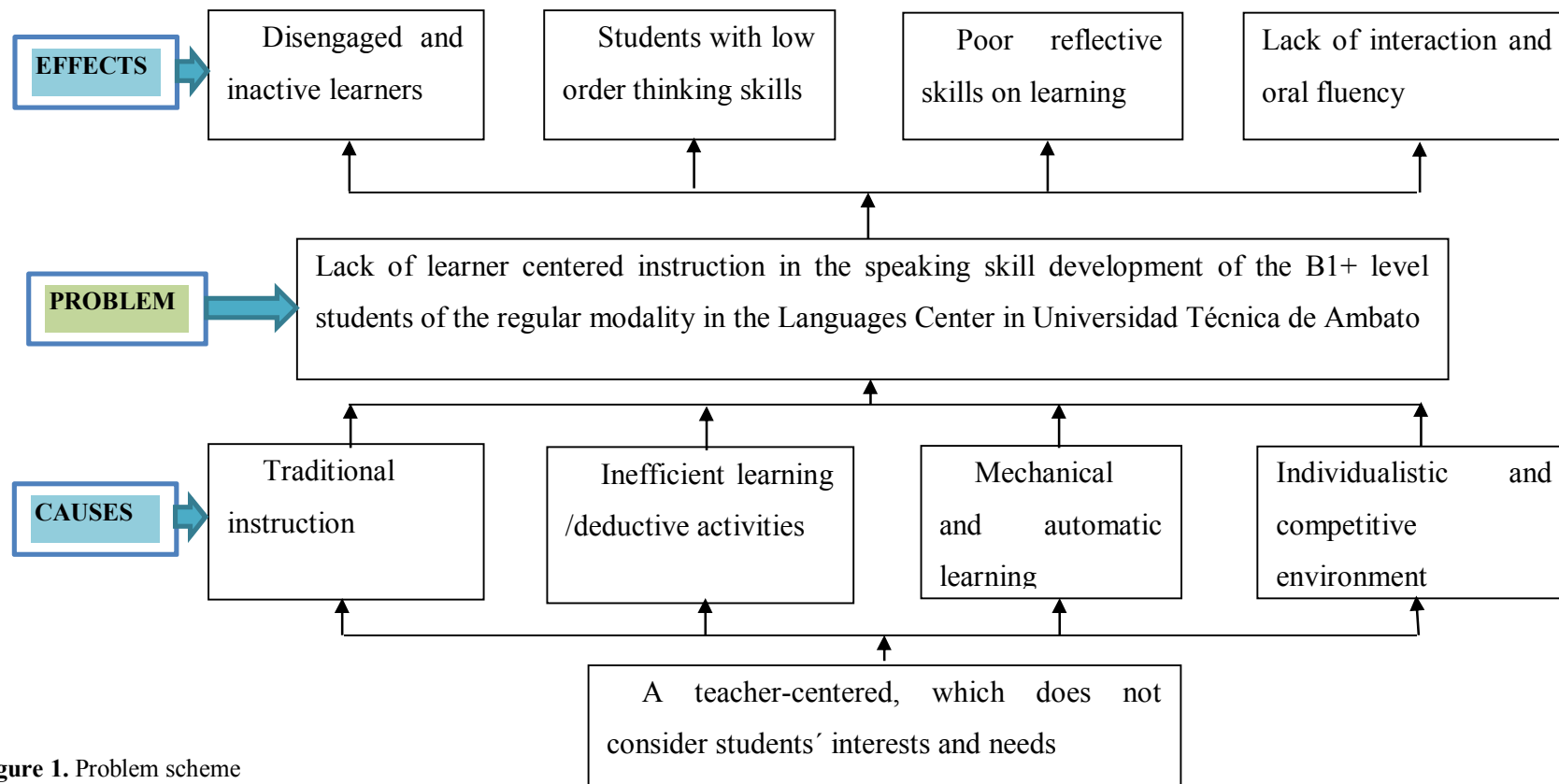


Figure 1. Problem scheme
Created by: Villacis, W. (2017)

The core problem of this research is the lack of learner-centered instruction in the speaking skill development of the B1+ level students of the regular modality in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato. This situation has an effect on students' predisposition and interest to participate actively in the activities planned by the teacher. This occurs because most of the activities and tasks have a teacher-centered approach, which means learners do what the teacher decided to do, when and how he decided. What the learner needs or thinks beneficial to his learning is not taken into consideration. In fact, learners' characteristics and needs are overlooked when the syllabus is planned.

This traditional approach implies the use of inefficient and deductive activities which only require learners to focus on the completion of tasks, so that a syllabus can be finished in the stipulated amount of time. Learners are not involved in activities and tasks that make them analyze, synthesize, evaluate, create or give a solution to a problem. Instead, they are most of the time instructed to be prepared for a midterm or final exam. Additionally, learners do not generate new knowledge. They just replicate what they have been modeled or shown. Reasoning, critical thinking and higher order thinking skills are not developed with a traditional instruction.

Likewise, the improper instruction makes learning mechanical and automatic. Students respond to questions without thinking, reasoning or evaluating variables. This, of course, causes students to not know what they are learning. There is no a period of time when they devote to reflect on what and how they are doing something. On the other hand, if learners participated in the decision-making, they would be more involved, engaged and responsible for what they do in every lesson. Learners will appreciate what the teacher does more since they feel part of the pedagogical process.

Another thing that the lack of learner-centered instruction causes is the absence of interaction and oral production. When learners do not work in pairs or in teams,

they become individualistic and see competition as an opportunity to shine in the classroom. This will not happen if instruction is focused on the learners. Collaboration and interaction are two principles of learner-centered instruction. These two are possible when students are required to participate in activities that they propose such as discussions, debates, role plays, among others. Consequently, they have plenty of opportunities to develop the speaking skill.

1.2.3 Prognosis

If there is no a solution to the problem of lack of learner-centered instruction in the speaking skill development of the B1+ level students of the regular modality in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato, learners will not be independent users of English. They will continue behaving as passive receivers of the language. They will be disengaged and will not show interest in the activities planned by the teacher. Additionally, their experience learning English as a foreign language will not be meaningful or long-lasting. In fact, they will see English as a tedious subject that they take because it is a university requirement.

On the other hand, if the aforementioned problem is solved, learners will become active participants in the learning process. Students will have more responsibility because they partake in the selection of activities; their interests, characteristics and needs are taken into consideration; and the syllabus is flexible and changeable according to their learning priorities. Moreover, they will become learners with a great capacity to reflect on their learning as well as develop higher order thinking skills. Finally, they will develop the speaking skill since they will work in pairs and teams. Undoubtedly, interaction and collaboration will permanently be present in the classroom because they are two important principles of learner-centered instruction.

1.2.4 Setting of the problem

What is the effect of learner-centered instruction on the speaking skill development of the B1+ level students of the regular modality in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato?

1.2.5 Research questions

- What language elements are needed to develop oral fluency?
- How do interaction strategies correlate with the development of oral fluency?
- What strategies can teachers use to promote learner-centered instruction in oral interaction?

1.2.6 Research delimitation

Field: Education
Area: Learner-centered instruction
Aspect: Learning and teaching

1.2.6.1 Temporal delimitation

Semester September 2017 – February 2018

1.2.6.2 Specific location of research

This research will be carried out in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

1.3 Justification

This research is **important** because it contributes to the improvement of the learning process in the area of foreign language instruction. For students, being able to speak in English is their goal. Therefore, it is essential to examine why they struggle with the speaking skill. Furthermore, being aware of what learners experience in the classroom helps researchers understand the problem and come up with ideas. These ideas can permit learners overcome their language barriers, feel comfortable, be engaged and consequently become fluent users of English in a spoken as well as written way.

Considering that speaking a foreign language (English) gives students a vast amount of opportunities in a globalized world, this study is of **interest** since it explores how learner-centered instruction contributes to the development of the speaking skill. As Nunan (2004) notes learner-centeredness is strongly connected to communicative language teaching and it has an important role in language pedagogy. Therefore, good teaching practices can help learners be more involved, more responsible for their learning and more reflective about what they are doing in the classroom.

This study is also **significant** for education in Ecuador in that it throws light regarding the implementation of learner-centered instruction. Findings of this research might be useful because they will make teachers, teacher educators and curriculum designers aware of the importance of using an approach that involves learners actively in the process. Moreover, learner-centered instruction is linked to the development of the speaking skill because in this approach the instructor coaches learners in the skills they need to develop and require learners to create thinking through collaboration and lots of interaction.

It is also necessary to highlight that this study is **feasible** in that teachers and students can collaborate with the data needed by completing a questionnaire. In

fact, this research will not interfere in any schedules, so it is possible to be carried out. Additionally, the implementation of learner-centered instruction will help both learners and teachers have a learning process where they will participate actively and enjoy what they do. Teachers and learners' motivation, cooperation and self-involvement will be evident in both their academic and personal lives.

The direct **beneficiaries** of this research will be students and teachers. Students will improve their speaking skill in a learner-centered environment and teachers will feel satisfaction due to their learners' progress. Within the indirect beneficiaries are the authorities and institution because students will have a different attitude towards education and will register high scores in their academic records.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General

To determine the effect of learner-centered instruction on the speaking skill development of the B1+ level students of the regular modality in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

1.4.2 Specific

- To identify the language elements needed to develop oral fluency.
- To associate the use of interaction strategies to the development of oral fluency.
- To evaluate the development of the speaking skill through the application of learner-centered strategies.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Research background

Having checked the databases of several universities and academic journals, there are some research studies that have been done on the topic nationally and internationally.

In the University of Jazan, a research on the topic: The Impact of Learner's Autonomy on Teaching Oral Skills (Speaking Skills) in an EFL Classroom was done to determine the impact of learner's autonomy on attaining oral skills. The author wanted to strengthen the idea that a learner-centered classroom was ideal for teaching oral skills and promote the communicative approach of teaching (Qamar, 2016). The results of the study helped the author to conclude that the seeds of proficient speaking have better outcomes in a learner-centered classroom. Learners assume more control and responsibility for their own learning.

This research demonstrates that learner's autonomy can be developed in a learner-centered environment and that this influences on the speaking skill. Students become more accountable for their learning since they have the opportunity to partake in the selection of content, activities, materials and the pace of learning.

A study in the United Arab Emirates University was conducted to investigate the impact of student-centered learning approach. This was done under the topic: The Impact of Student-centered Learning Approach through Workshops conduction on the UAE University Female Students' Confidence. It was concluded in this study that collaboration among the instructor and students is the secret for the workshops success and that building students 'confidence that they "can do it" was the main goal of conducting the workshop (Al Murshidi, 2014).

This is an indicator that learner-centered instruction contributed to make learners more autonomous and gained confidence in the learning process.

Based on this research, it can be said that when students are self-confident and believe in themselves, there are no limitations in the classroom. Learners are always predisposed to do all the tasks assigned by the instructors both inside and outside the classroom.

In the UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO, a study was done in an undergraduate program under the thesis title: “THE STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING AS EDUCATIONAL APPROACH FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN OCTAVO SEMESTRE OF THE CARRERA DE IDIOMAS AT THE UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO IN THE ACADEMIC PERIOD MARCH 2016- AUGUST 2016.” (Uvidia & Llamuca, 2016).

This study aims at exploring the Student Centered learning as educational approach for the English language learning. Therefore, it helps the present research because it shows that there is a problem in the way the language is taught in the classroom.

From the conclusions made in the study, it can be said that when students are not accustomed to working on student centered activities, they experience fear, shyness to participate and there is no confidence among teacher and learners. On the other hand, when they work on activities such as debates, role plays, class discussions, group work, it is evident that there is a better retention of information and of course learning takes place in the classroom.

The aforementioned conclusions contribute to this study because it shows that learner-centered instruction helps learners become more responsible for their learning. They develop the communicative competence through the realization of

meaningful activities that engage them in the process and make them be the main protagonists in the lesson.

Likewise, in the Universidad Técnica de Ambato, there is an undergraduate program thesis that is related to this research: “ACTIVIDADES ENFOCADAS EN LOS ESTUDIANTES (STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIVITIES) PARA EL DESARROLLO DE LA DESTREZA ORAL DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS CON LOS ALUMNOS DEL PRIMER AÑO DE BACHILLERATO “A” DE LA UNIDAD EDUCATIVA BOLIVAR” (Rodríguez, 2015).

This study makes a contribution to the present research because it analyzes one of the variables in a specific way. Moreover, the conclusions help to notice that there is a problem in the approach teachers use in the classroom every day. The researcher concluded that the activities currently used by the teacher do not awaken students’ interest. What is more, the activities are not student-centered. This is the reason why the speaking skill is not completely developed and it is not evaluated effectively by the teacher.

This present research is different from Rodríguez (2015) study because it examines the impact student centered instruction has on the development of the speaking skill. It is a wider study since it does not only focus on the activities but also on the way the teacher and learners work collaboratively in the decisions made regarding the planning, methodology, materials, contents and activities. All of these in order to get the satisfactory results in the development of the speaking skill.

2.2 Philosophical foundations

This research is based upon constructivism. This approach sees learning as interdisciplinary, integrating and practical process. This means learners relate prior knowledge to new knowledge in different contexts. Moreover, developing

thinking, imagination, creativity, critical analysis, collaboration and cooperation constitute important elements in this approach.

Constructivism is also predominant since it is guided by the idea of developing consciousness in learners. It also aims at connecting knowledge to the reality, so that students can take constructive action in order to transform education. Additionally, constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning, not a theory about teaching (Brooks & Brooks as cited in Jones M., 2002). With this, it can be said that students are the central focus in the learning process. They are the ones who construct their own understanding and learning in the classroom.

The central principles of this approach are that learners can only make sense of new situations in terms of their existing understanding. Learning involves an active process in which learners construct meaning by linking new ideas with their existing knowledge (Naylor & Keogh, as cited in Jones M., 2002).

Besides, this approach emphasizes on how learners acquire new knowledge. The active role of the students is what makes this approach attractive to educators. What learners bring to the classroom permits them to construct new understandings and have new experiences (Jones M. 2002). Based on this, it can be said that the traditional teaching approach disappears with constructivism because students are not passive learners. In fact, the learning process is centered on students. Davis (as cited in Sanaa, 2006) mentioned that constructivism is reflected in the student-centered approach since learners construct their own understanding.

On the other hand, this research is axiological because it requires participants to show a good practice of values. Students, teachers and authorities are the main audience of the present study. Consequently, values such as respect, cooperation, responsibility, honesty and others should be reflected in every action taken by the participants.

2.3 Legal basis

One of the most important norms that regulates the country is the Constitution of Ecuador (2008), which states in Section Five that Education is an important right. Articles 26, 27, 28 and 29 describe the purpose of education and the implications it has in order to provide Ecuadorians with good education.

It is clear that all human beings have the right to receive quality education at all levels. In the same sense “Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural (LOEI), publicada en el Segundo Suplemento del Registro Oficial No. 417 de 31 de marzo de 2011, in Article 6 determines that among the obligations the Ecuadorian State has are the promotion of scientific research, innovation, artistic creation, cultural and linguistic diversity. It also guarantees plans and programs of initial, basic and baccalaureate education in the curricula in order to foster the competent development in all citizens.

Similarly, objective 4 of Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir aims at fostering the capacities and the potential of all citizens. Intercultural dialogue is considered the main concept of the pedagogical model as well as the usage of the educational area (stated in 4.8). These objectives make education an essential component in the national plan that the government has in Ecuador.

In the same article, item *i* is about the importance of learning a foreign language. It is expressed as follows: Promote learning a foreign language considering international standards of accreditation, from basic to higher education.

In Reglamento de Regimen Académico, article 31 notes that learning a foreign language is a requirement that all students need to have in order to graduate in the majors they are studying at the university. This article emphasizes on the importance of learning a foreign language in higher education.

2.4 Key categories

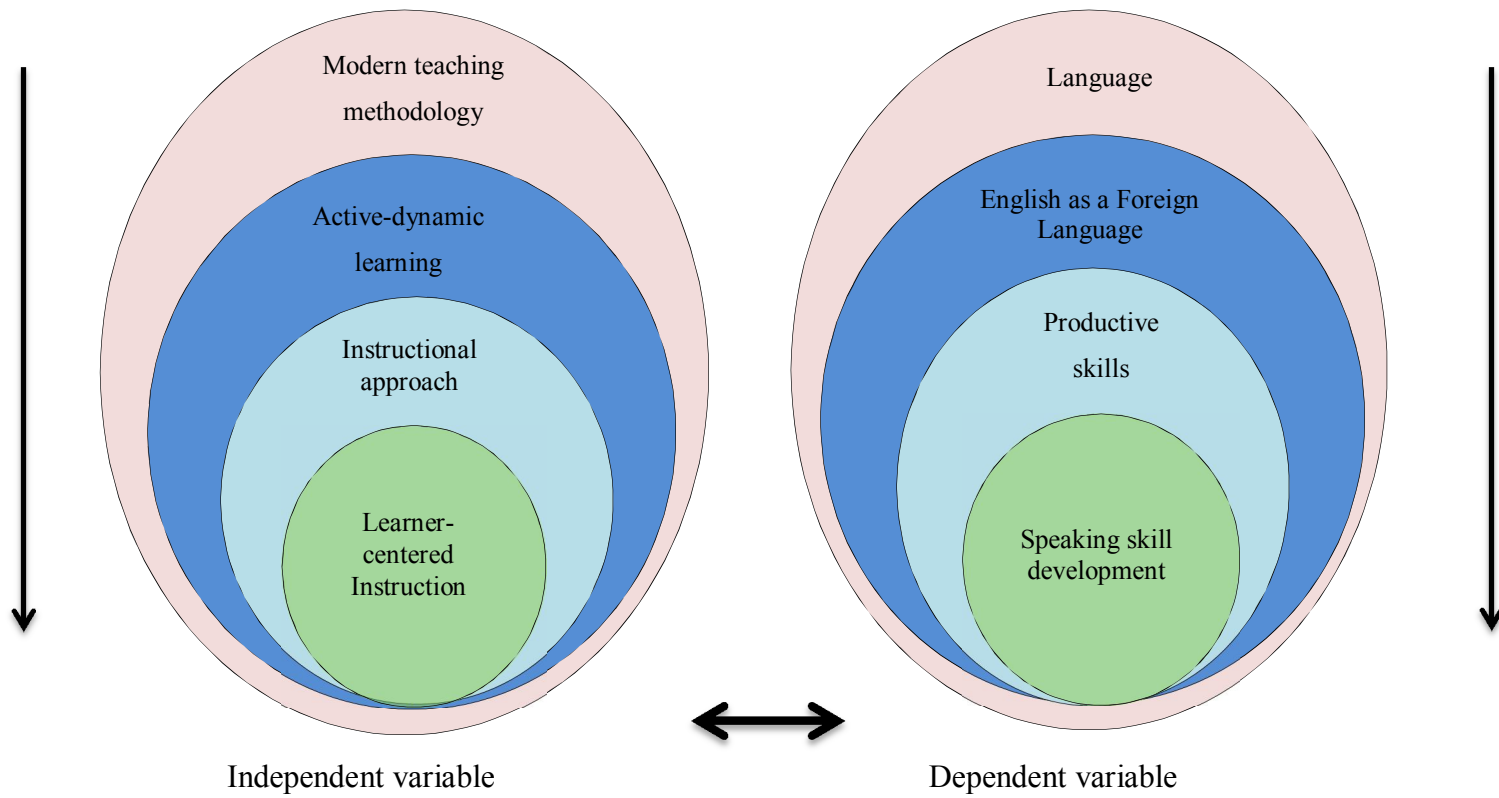


Figure 2. Fundamental Categories
Created by: Villacis, W. (2017)

2.4.1 Independent variables interrelated graphics

Independent variable

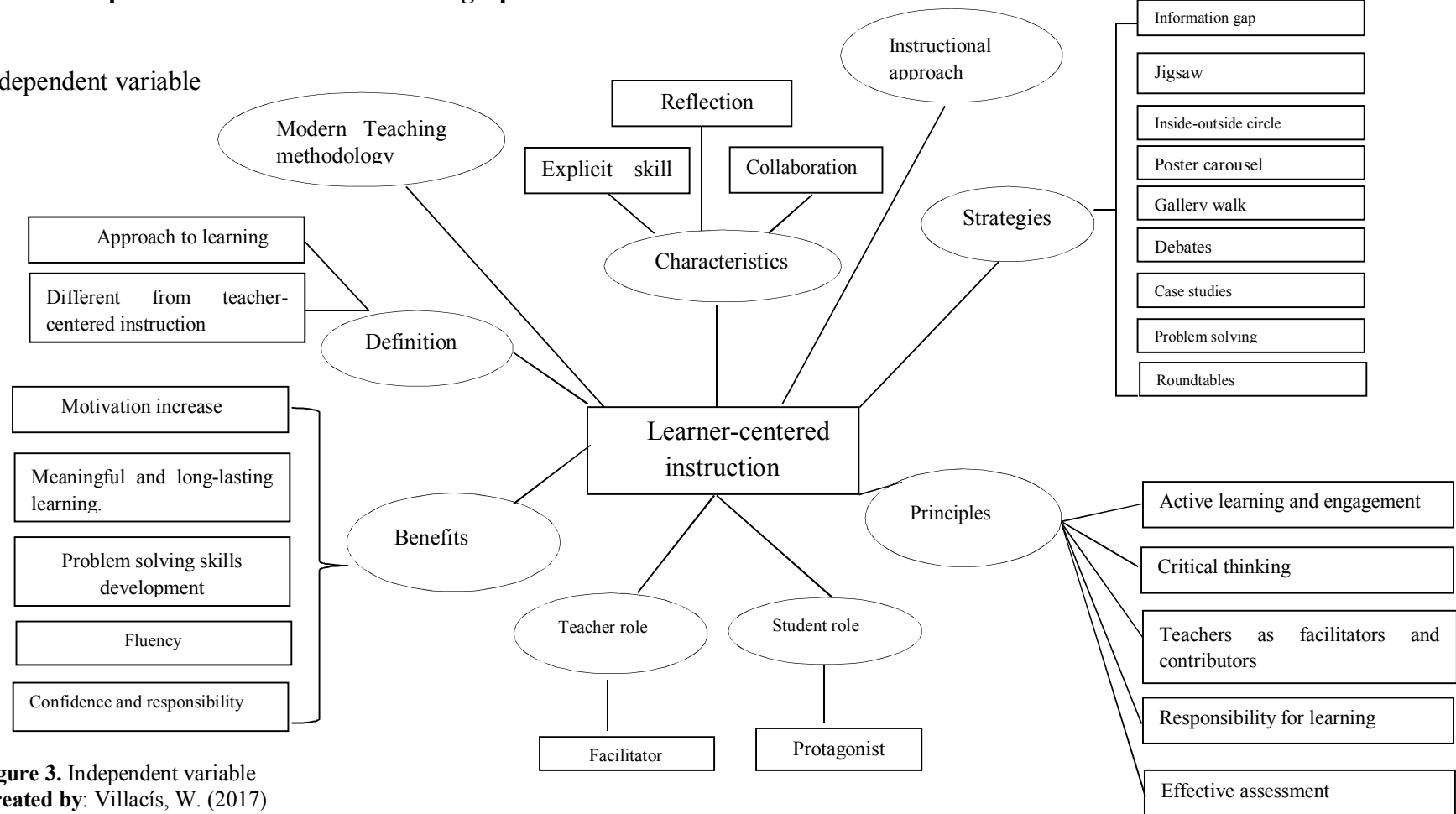


Figure 3. Independent variable
Created by: Villacís, W. (2017)

2.4.2 Dependent variable interrelated graphics

Dependent variable

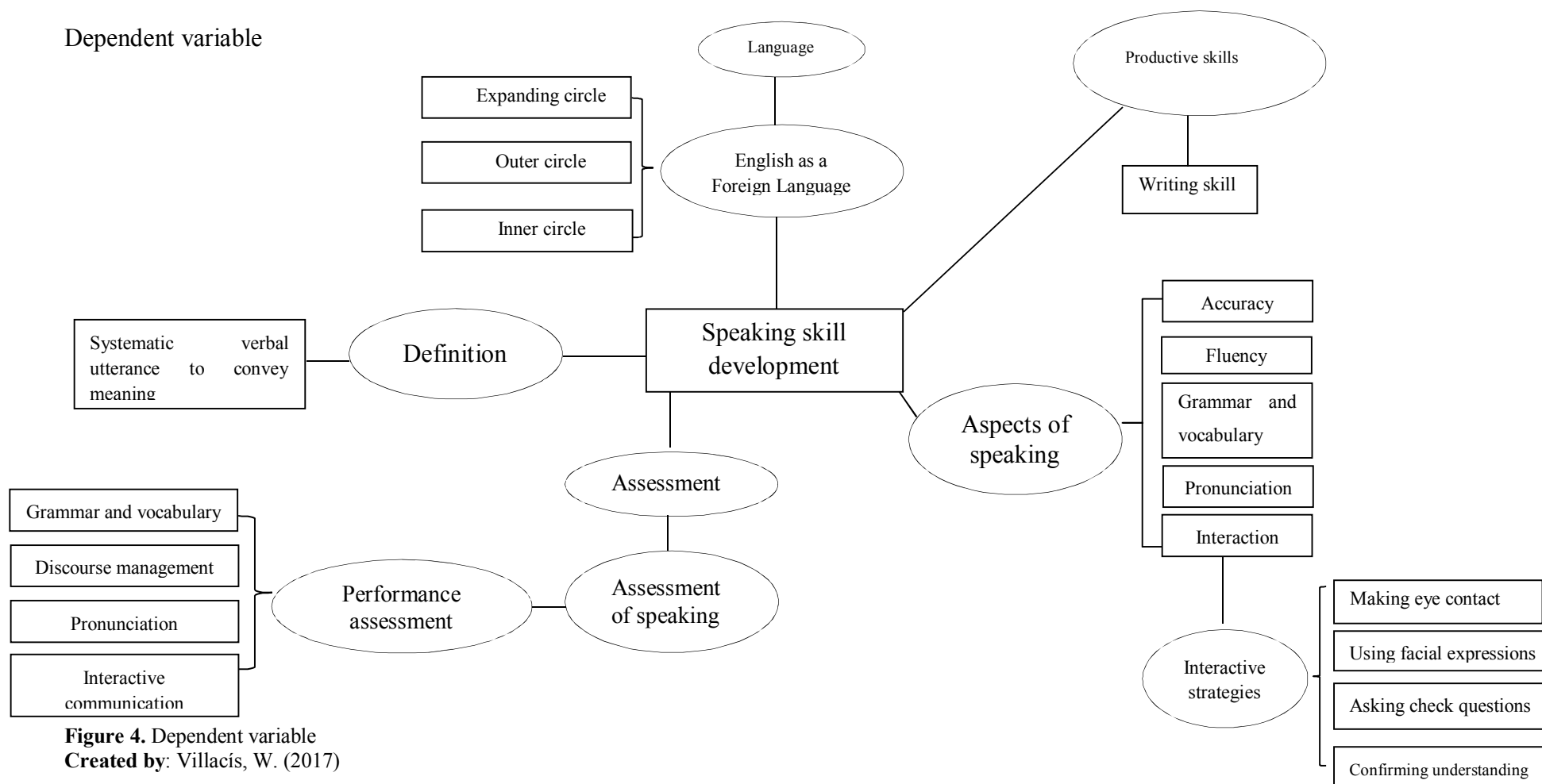


Figure 4. Dependent variable
Created by: Villacis, W. (2017)

2.4.3 Dialectical view of conceptualizing variables

2.4.4 Independent variable framework: Learner-centered instruction

Modern teaching methodology

Language learning and teaching has faced a variety of transformations in the pursuit of better conditions in order that learners get most of what is being done in the classroom. Richards and Rodgers (2014) pointed out that the increased demand for speakers of second and foreign languages, immigration, globalization and internationalization of education have obliged educators to look for new ways of teaching and learning.

For years, language teaching has focused on the study of language structure and vocabulary. However, educators noticed that learners needed an engaging and effective way of approaching language learning. They needed to have more significant lessons, which fulfilled their needs for communication using strategies and methodologies that encourage them to learn (Renau, 2016). This was the onset of a modern teaching methodology; nevertheless, there were some difficulties when modern languages entered the curriculum of European schools in the eighteenth century (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These difficulties arised because they taught modern languages using the basic procedures that people used to teach Latin. Moreover, speaking the foreign language was not the goal. It was restricted to reading aloud sentences.

The methodology used in those centuries was teacher-centered. All the curriculum was designed taking into consideration what teachers preferred. Additionally, in the classroom the teacher was the one who did most of the talking, speaking was not seen as interaction and repetition and rote memorization were privileged.

However, Brown (2007) continued exploring pedagogical means for real-life communication because he found problems in the speaking development. Students were not able to communicate fluently. For this reason, this professional kept on investigating and switching from a teacher-centered to a student-centered methodology.

Language teaching methodology

Rodgers (2001) explained that methodology is what links theory and practice and said there are some things which characterized language teaching methodology. For example, the environments where language is learned and the learning practices that are carried out.

It is necessary to bear in mind the concepts of approach, method and technique. Edward Anthony (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1999) defined approach as a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. He noted that an approach is axiomatic and it describes the nature of the subject in teaching and learning processes.

In the same sense, he described method as an overall plan for systematic presentation of language; and a technique as implementational - which actually takes place in a classroom.

Having these concepts clear is essential to decide on the best approach to teaching a foreign language. When teachers instruct learners, they need to plan what, when and how the information is going to be presented to the students. The approach is the theory under which all the other steps are taken in order to engage learners in the learning process.

Considering that approach is a theory, it can be said that there have been different movements in language teaching: traditional approaches and the

informed approaches. For example, some of the traditional methods include grammar translation, audiolingualism, oral situational, direct approach, total physical response, silent way; and suggestopedia. On the other hand, the informed approaches comprise humanistic approach, communicative language teaching, task-based language learning, cooperative learning, interactive learning, learner-centered instruction and content-based instruction (Brown, 2007). These approaches have based their theory on particular language elements, skills, concepts or people involved in the learning process.

Active-dynamic learning

Having a dynamic approach to teaching is essential to exploit students' potential to get the maximum results. Learners' attitude towards learning suffers a positive transformation. Their motivation, enthusiasm, energy are fostered. Consequently, the quality of their performance is superior compared to the passiveness they have in a teacher-centered lesson. Hughes (2016) pointed out that this dynamic teaching approach is authentic and exciting since it activates intrinsic motivation in learners. Moreover, the author stated that a student-centered methodology aims at promoting continuous development, reflection and improvement.

Likewise, Caine (2011) indicated that a more dynamic and less prescriptive approach to learning and teaching includes the following aspects:

- Hierarchy between students and teachers is flattened as everyone respectfully exchanges ideas and information, with teachers becoming the facilitators of excellence.
- Students become more creative and ready to explore and experiment with their own ideas, with teachers preserving some boundaries as they integrate high standards into student-generated products.

- Learning becomes more complex, with a focus on questions that require uniquely organized research and demonstration of higher level thinking skills rather than the mere gathering of facts and information for written or verbal summaries or reports.

With these aspects, both teachers and students take a more dynamic role. A collaborative culture is initiated in an environment like this. Students are provoked to crystallize, clarify and concretize their thoughts by discerning meaning and making sense of the things around them, Vygotsky (as cited in Fogarty, 2016).

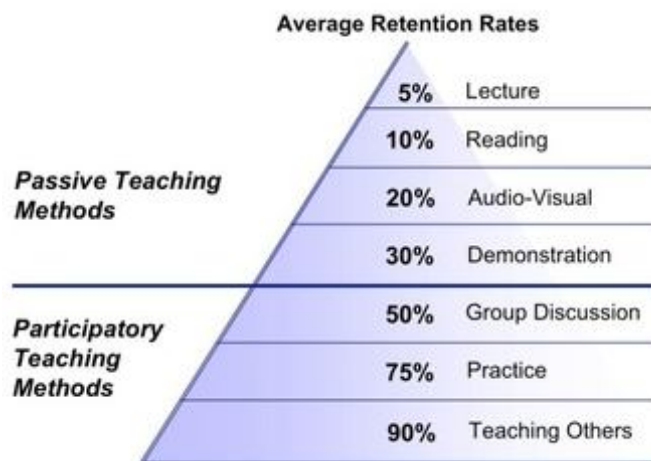


Figure 3. Learning pyramid
Source: Adapted from National Training Laboratories, Bethel, Maine

The average of retention increases when students have entire participation in the activities planned by the facilitator. In fact, Lalley and Miller (2007) confirmed the assertions of Dale (1946) and Dewey (1916) that for successful learning experiences, it is necessary that learners undergo various instructional methods. In the same sense, Anderson (n.d.) stated that during the 1960s, Edgar Dale theorized that learners retain more information by what they do rather than what they heard, read or observed.

Instructional approach

Teaching and learning a foreign language is a deep and dynamic process that requires facilitators to explore different instructional approaches to ensure learning in the classroom. In this respect, it is essential to be aware of what an instructional approach entails. Firstly, instruction has been defined by different authors. For instance, Akdeniz (2016) stated that “instruction is the whole process applied for learning to occur and for the development of the target behavior that learners are expected to have” (p. 57). Likewise, Şimşek (as cited in Akdeniz, 2016. p. 57) pointed out that “instruction requires not only systematic guidance for learning but also a purposeful organization of experiences to help students achieve the desired change in their performances.”

The two concepts emphasize the relevance of the learning process and the role the teacher has in learner-centered lessons. Teachers are facilitators who have the responsibility for identifying strategies and tasks that make of learning a real-life experience. Moreover, Akdeniz (2016) listed some features that instruction as a fundamental concept must have. Some of them are: Instruction changes the learners’ attitudes, motivation, and interests; strengthens psychomotor, cognitive and social skills; facilitates individual development and learning to learn skills; develops learners’ and instructors’ self-evaluation skills, recommends using information technologies, and it gives feedbacks to curriculum.

Language teaching is a huge area in which there is a variety of theories that provide teachers with the scientific information to base the teaching practice on. Therefore, Merrill (2006) indicated five principles of instructional approaches. They are listed below:

- Learning is promoted when learners are engaged in solving real-world problems.

- Learning is promoted when existing knowledge is activated as a foundation for new knowledge.
- Learning is promoted when new knowledge is demonstrated to the learner.
- Learning is promoted when new knowledge is applied by the learner.
- Learning is promoted when new knowledge is integrated into the learner's world. (p. 43)

These principles should be a guide for educators because they describe how learning is promoted. A problem, activation, modeling, application and integration are the key words that ensure better teaching practices and better students' attitudes toward learning. In fact, instructional approaches consider students as the center of teaching and learning.

Learner-centered instruction

Learner-centered instruction has been defined mainly as an approach to learning. Here are some of the definitions from different authors.

Carreiro (2003) states that learner-centered is a model that focuses equally on the learner as well as the process of learning. Therefore, the role of the learner changes in a great amount. For instance, the learner decides what and how to study better. Pintrich and Schrauben (as cited in Carreiro, 2003) said that learner-centered has the theoretical roots in a social cognitive model of student motivation. This means students have more responsibility in the classroom. The classroom environment depends so much on the attitude of both students and teachers.

Similarly, Rogers (as cited in TEAL Center staff, 2010) stated that learner centered instruction is an approach to learning in which learners choose not only *what* to study but also *how* and *why* that topic might be of interest.

Learners find the learning process more meaningful when topics are relevant to their lives, needs, and interests, and when they are actively engaged in creating, understanding, and connecting to knowledge, McCombs and Whistler (as cited in TEAL Center staff, 2010).

In other words, the learning environment has learner responsibility and activity at its heart, in contrast to the emphasis on instructor control and the coverage of academic content found in much conventional, didactic teaching, Cannon (as cited in TEAL Center staff, 2010)

The Greenwood dictionary of education points out that:

Student-centered instruction [SCI] is an instructional approach in which students influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning. This learning model places the student (learner) in the center of the learning process. The instructor provides students with opportunities to learn independently and from one another and coaches them in the skills they need to do so effectively. The SCI approach includes such techniques as substituting active learning experiences for lectures, assigning open-ended problems and problems requiring critical or creative thinking that cannot be solved by following text examples, involving students in simulations and role plays, and using self-paced and/or cooperative (team-based) learning. Properly implemented SCI can lead to increased motivation to learn, greater retention of knowledge, deeper understanding, and more positive attitudes towards the subject being (Collins & O'Brien, 2011,p. 446).

Undoubtedly, learner-centered instruction or student centered instruction is an approach which focuses on cooperative learning. Consequently, learning takes place in an engaging and meaningful environment characterized by interaction, creativity and deep critical thinking.

According to Wlodkowski (2011), learners have prior knowledge, so for learning to take place, a practical way to learn is by connecting the behavioral entry of learners to construct new knowledge or skills. In terms of biology, learning requires teachers to discover what adult learners understand and are able to do. This way, such information is considered to be a necessary guide for teachers to design the instructional process.

Additionally, the author stated that how students feel and react during learning to one another depends on their individual cultural background. Indeed, emotions have an impact on task involvement. Therefore, the way how learners respond to a task is of great importance. The author concluded that cultural response in teaching is remarkable if instructors want to teach learners effectively.

Shumin (n.d) stated that interaction contributes to improve speaking abilities in young adults. Thus, teachers need to provide learners with authentic and meaningful tasks. This way, learners take advantage of tasks to exchange ideas, experiences and prior knowledge.

On the other hand, Brown (2007) pointed out that there are some characteristics that differentiate young adult from children. For instance, authenticity and meaningfulness are relevant to this group of learners. Consequently, the author recommends focusing more on the learners by giving them the chance to make decisions about the tasks they want to do during the lesson, in other words, emphasizing learner-centeredness.

The history of learner-centered instruction

Learner-centered instruction has its roots in the constructivist theory, in which learners learn more by doing and experiencing rather than by observing (Dr. Bada & Olusegun, 2015). In this approach, students are the creators and designers of their own learning and knowledge rather than passive learners who receive

knowledge from expert teachers (Brown, 2008). Moreover, this approach was first developed at the beginning of the 20th century and was influenced by the American philosopher and educator John Dewey and sociologist Lev Vygotsky (Kenneth, 2003).

Bearing in mind that learner-centered instruction is based on social-constructivism, it is vital to put emphasis on its perspective which couples individual learners-their heredity, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs- with a focus on learning (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004). Likewise, Gunderman, Williamson, Frank, Heitkamp and Kipfer (2003) explained that in learner-centered instruction, students are viewed as active participants in the learning process. They also indicated that the main objective of education is to make of students critical entities. Additionally, these authors claimed that teachers should take into account what learners bring to the classroom. This way, less emphasis is placed on knowledge.

Nunan (1988) noted that learner-centeredness has a relevant role in language pedagogy. Although learner-centeredness might be similar to traditional curricula in terms of its elements, it varies from it in the sense that learners will take part in the curriculum process closely. Both teachers and learners will work collaboratively to develop the curriculum. In fact, learners' styles and strategies are considered when planning.

Likewise, Breen (as cited in Nunan, 2004) emphasized the benefits of interrelating learner-centeredness with the activities they do to develop the speaking skill. He mentioned that there is often a disparity between what teachers want to achieve as a result of an activity and what the students really want from them. Hence, if students participate in developing the curriculum, the learning outcomes will reflect the learners' opinions and preferences in terms of activity completion, the situation in which the activity is done as well as the difficulties.

Identically, applying learner-centered instruction in the classroom has some effects on the relationships among curriculum, instruction, learner grouping, and evaluation. For example, the relationships between the instructor and learners are more collaborative; the curriculum is more thematic, experiential, and inclusive of multiple perspectives; the instruction allows for a broad range of learning preferences, builds from learners' strengths, interests, and experiences, and is participatory; grouping is not tracked by perceptions of ability but rather promotes cooperation, a shared responsibility, and a sense of belonging; and evaluation considers multiple intelligences, uses authentic assessments, and fosters self-reflection (Staff, TEAL Center, 2010).

This point is also sustained by the work of Lea, Stephenson and Troy (2003) since these authors emphasized the main tenets of learner-centered instruction. This approach is characterized by active learning, deep learning, learners taking responsibility, learner autonomy, interdependence between teachers and learners and mutual respect as well as reflexive learning.

Certainly, the use of good tasks and activities as a way of learning gives learners the opportunity to plan and take responsibility for their learning (Nunan, 2004). Equally important is what the author expressed about the relevance of learner-centered instruction and its strong connection to communicative language teaching.

Characteristics

Learner-centered instruction has some characteristics that make it interesting to explore. Weimer (2012) listed the characteristics of this approach:

1. Learner-centered instruction engages students in the hard, messy work of learning.

Students learn by doing. They do activities that require them to investigate, discuss, debate, create new things.

1. Includes explicit skill instruction

All learners are told what to do in a clear way. Instructions guide learners through the process.

2. Encourages students to reflect on what they are learning and how they are learning it.

Reflecting on what they do and learn is fundamental because they become aware of the cognitive processes they go through in the realization of every task.

3. Motivates students by giving them some control over learning processes.

Students are encouraged to have active participation in the process. They are involved in the decision making.

4. Encourages collaboration

The learning environment is characterized by lots of cooperation, interaction and group work. All learners develop a sense of collaboration.

With this approach, the classroom is a place where students create and have new experience. The main protagonists of the lesson are the students and all the activities go around them. In fact, teachers' lesson plans must contain contents and objectives putting the student need as priority.

Benefits

There are plenty of reasons why teachers should make effective use of learner-centered instruction in the classroom. The most remarkable benefits involve motivation increase, meaningful and long-lasting learning, fluency, and problem solving skills development. Another important contribution of this approach is the confidence and responsibility that learners show in the process. This happens

when students notice they play an essential role in the decisions made in the learning process (Qatar University).

Solaiman (2016) further explained that students are the center of the educational system. Therefore, Kramer et al. (as cited in Solaiman, 2016) found that students show accountability for their learning and become more independent. They develop creativity, better understanding, solving problem and study skills when they work and learn with others. They are engaged in the learning process so their motivation increases greatly. All these positive aspects can be experienced in the classroom with an approach that focuses on the learners, their needs and interests.

Moreover, learner centered instruction also influences positively on the teachers. Kilic (as cited in Solaiman, 2016) remarked that teachers show a change in their teaching behavior. Their planning, teaching process, classroom management, communication and evaluation skills improve so as to create a suitable learner-centered environment for students to enjoy learning.

Principles of learner-centered instruction

According to Weimer (2002), learner-centered instruction has five principles that make this approach an effective learning alternative:

- Student centered learning shifts the balance of classroom power from teacher to student thus fostering active learning and engagement among peers.
- Student centered learning enables critical thinking and is a means to develop knowledge rather than a collection of facts by building upon and challenging prior learning.
- Student centered learning situates the teacher as facilitator and contributor rather than authoritarian and director of knowledge.

- Student centered learning returns the responsibility for learning to the students, so students are able to discover their strengths and weaknesses and take part in directing their own knowledge gain.
- Student centered learning employs effective assessment to promote learning and inform future practice.

Teacher and student roles

When a learner-centered instruction is emphasized in the classroom, there is no doubt that the roles of the teacher and students differ from the ones they have in the traditional way of teaching.

TEAL Center staff (2010) note the learner roles as follows: learners are active participants in their own learning, they make decisions about what and how they will learn, construct new knowledge and skills by building on current knowledge and skills, encourage themselves to use self-assessment measures, monitor their own learning to develop their learning strategies, work collaboratively and produce authentic work. Basically, the student has an important role in the learning process. They are the protagonists in every lesson.

Similarly, Weimer (2013) noted that learners have an essential role in the classroom. They do the tasks and work on problem solving activities, review, discuss and create. Therefore, they work through higher order thinking skills of application, evaluation, and creation. Their participation is active during the whole session because they interact with their classmates in pairs and in groups.

On the side of the teachers, their roles include recognizing and accommodating different learning modalities, providing structure for work, encouraging and facilitating learners' decisions, guiding them at arriving at conclusions or solutions (TEAL Center staff, 2010).

Teachers work as facilitators, guides, coaches, conductors during the learning process. Usually they plan and conduct the classroom effective and suitable activities that prompt engagement and cognitive effort on the part of learners, provoke enquiry on learners, provide appropriate materials for students to use outside of class, make learners reflect on their learning, and close the learning loop by providing reinforcement for the effort experienced by the students (Wiederman, 2015).

Strategies in learner-centered instruction

There are some strategies that teachers can use to create an environment where learners are the center of instruction. For instance, Wiederman (2015) suggested some: information gap, jigsaw, inside-outside circle, poster carousel, gallery walk, debates, cases and problems, roundtables, among others. They are described by different authors as follows:

Information gap

Thornbury (2009) explained that in information gap activities, “the information required to complete the task is distributed amongst the interactants. There is a knowledge gap, between them, and this can only be bridged by using the language. So, to achieve the task outcome, the students have to communicate” (p. 80)

Jigsaw

In this strategy, each student in a small group is responsible for his or her own portion, which is then shared with the others in the group. Each student is responsible for one piece in the larger puzzle, and each takes turns teaching the others his or her piece so that each student serves as both teacher and learner (Wiederman, 2015).

Inside-outside circle

Students form two different circles: half of the group stands in a circle facing outward while the other half forms a circle around them facing inward. Students ask and answer questions until the teacher signals the outer circle to move in one direction. The students now have a different partner with whom to exchange. Finally, they have to be ready to report information about their peers (Bennett & Rolheiser, 2001).

Poster carousel

Thornbury (2009) indicated that in this strategy half the students move while the other half remains in the same spot. Students talk about a topic. Then they prepare a poster on a selected theme. Once the poster is ready, half the students stand by the poster and the others circulate, moving from poster to poster asking questions. Then the roles reversed and those how have been asking questions, stand by their posters and become the interviewees.

Gallery walk

For this strategy, Thornbury (2009) noted that students are divided in two groups. All of them have posters or postcards of paintings. The first group has to explain to the students who are walking around asking questions. Then they change roles and explain to the other group. At the end of the activity, learners can vote on what they thought was the most convincing explanation.

Debate

Tumposky (as cited in Darby, 2007) pointed out that “debate nurtures students’ critical thinking skills and awareness of thought, and allows students to move beyond rote learning of facts, theories and technique and provides opportunity for applying knowledge through role playing while demonstrating ideas, values and attitudes”

Cases and problems

For this strategy, Wiederman (2015) explained that provided scenarios become powerful methods of teaching when students are required to work on them independently or in groups rather than simply being presented with the cases/problems and their solutions as illustrations or examples. Learners have to analyze the case or problem and in groups come up with possible solutions.

Roundtables

Wiederman (2015) indicated that in this strategy a case, scenario, or other problem is presented. Teacher asks students in small groups to each take a piece of paper and write down an answer. As soon as they are done they are to pass the sheet to the group member to the left with no discussion. When the activity has slowed, students can be directed to briefly discuss within the group the strongest answer to then share with the class, or students can be directed toward a general classroom discussion.

The aforementioned strategies are useful because they put into practice the principles of an approach that focuses on the learners. Furthermore, they promote interaction and communication which are two elements to ensure meaningful learning.

Likewise, there are many factors that make learner-centered instruction a good learning approach to be implemented in the classroom. The following chart depicts a comparison between teacher-centered and learner-centered:

Table 1. Comparison of teacher-centered and learner-centered paradigms.

COMPARISON OF TEACHER-CENTERED AND LEARNER-CENTERED PARADIGMS	
Teacher-centered Paradigm	Learner-centered Paradigm
Knowledge is transmitted from professor to students.	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking and problem solving.
Students passively receive information	Students are actively involved.
Emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used.	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address enduring and emerging issues and problems in real-life contexts.
Professor's role is to be primary information giver and primary evaluator.	Professor's role is to coach and facilitate. Professor and students evaluate learning together.
Teaching and assessing are separate.	Teaching and assessing are intertwined.
Culture is competitive and individualistic.	Culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive.
Focus is on a single discipline.	Approach is compatible with interdisciplinary investigation.
Desired learning is assessed indirectly through the use of objectively scored tests.	Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performance tasks, portfolio

Source: Adapted from (Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses by Huba and Freed 2000)

2.4.5 Dependent variable framework: Speaking skill

Language

According to Holmes (2013) languages help human beings because they provide a variety of ways of saying the same thing. For example, addressing and greeting others, describing things, paying compliments, among others. Based on this, it can be said that a language is a system of communication which enables people to express their ideas, opinions, feelings. It is a feature that distinguishes human beings from other living species. Moreover, language is part of verbal communication because it has semantic, syntactic and pragmatic principles.

Similarly, Kumin (2003) mentioned that language is used when people want to communicate ideas, thoughts and information in order to be understood by others in the community. In fact, the author defined language as follows: “Language is an arbitrary code that uses symbols to represent real objects and events; has rules that specify how to use the code; is used intentionally or purposefully; is a learned code, and is learned through social interaction” (p. 52).

Based on these ideas, it can be said that verbal communication is possible when people use a code to express what they think and feel. Moreover, social interaction is necessary to put into practice this arbitrary group of symbols.

On the other hand, it is necessary to analyze the importance of learning a language. Della Chiesa, Scott and Hinton (2012) stated that “language learning is not only a means to improve communication, but more importantly a key avenue to promoting global understanding. To understand the importance of language and culture, people need to be familiar with several languages and cultures.” On this point, intercultural communication takes a relevant role in education. When students learn English, they do not only learn a system, they learn a tool that serves them to survive in a globalized world.

English as a foreign language

In a globalized world, it is necessary to have a global language which enables human beings to communicate and interact among them. Therefore, English has spread worldwide and has been one of the many different developments on the globe. It is furthermore associated with boundless mobilities and, as such, is the language of globalization (Gnutzmann & Intemann, 2008).

The English language is instructed in different contexts. Some people pick the language up naturally or as their mother tongue, others learn it as a second language, and a huge number of people learn it as a foreign language. But what is the difference in the ways people learn the language? Kachru (as cited in Schmitz, 2014) viewed the world of English in three different circles: the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle. According to this author, the inner circle refers to the traditional bases of English; the outer circle has to do with a large speech community with great diversity and various characteristics and the expanding circle consists of English as an international language or known as a foreign language. The figure below depicts the model suggested by Kachru.

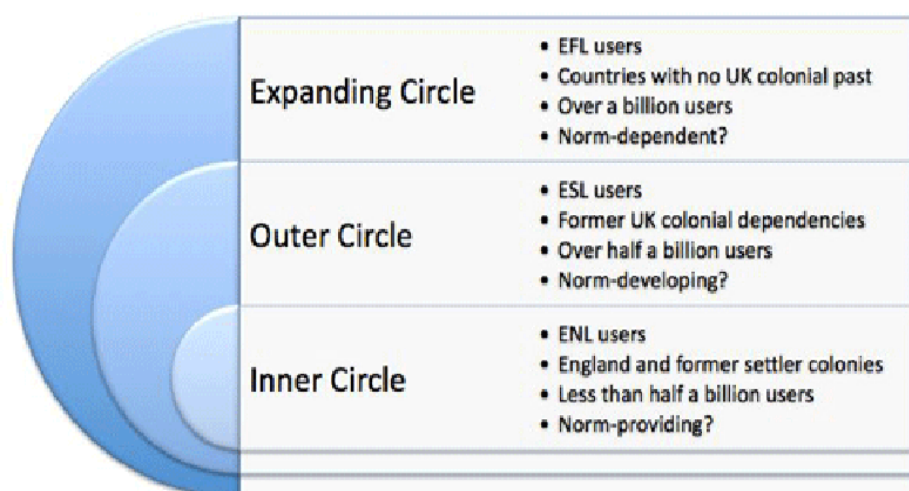


Figure 4. Three circles model of world Englishes
Source: Adapted from Kachru's model of world English

Foreign language definition

It is a traditional term for the use or study of the English language by nonnative speakers in countries where English is generally not a local medium of communication. Additionally, it corresponds to the expanding circle described above.

Productive skills

Harmer (as cited in Bashrin, 2013) stated that *productive skills* is a term used to refer to speaking and writing. These two skills are called productive because it is where learners have to produce the language themselves. In other words, speaking and writing are two skills that require people to manipulate language, so that they can express their thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions in both written and spoken ways.

In this respect, Hossain (2015) also specified that productive skills are fundamental when learning a language since speaking and writing give learners the chance to practice real-life activities in the classroom. Particularly, he stated that productive skills can be used as an indicator of how much students have learned. In fact, good speaking skills give evidence of real progress among students and help them improve their confidence. All of the above make developing the speaking skill a dynamic process that requires a lot of practice, motivation and collaborative work.

Moreover, Golkova and Hubackova (2014) pointed out that productive skills are called active skills because they are the means to transmit information in a foreign language. However, they indicated that productive skills such as speaking and writing cannot exist without the support of receptive ones. Learning a foreign language is, indeed, a deep process that requires learners to be exposed to the

language so as to get the most input they can. Consequently, they can produce messages in a spoken and written way to communicate what they need.

Speaking skill

Hasan (2012) noted that speaking is considered the most important language skill since it is one of the means to convey information to others and through which people do most of their actions.

“Speaking is the productive aural/oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning.” Ur (as cited in Bashrin, 2013). One way to communicate what people think and feel is speaking. When people do this, there are some internal processes that take place in the brain. For example, ideas are organized in semantic frames, making them meaningful, accurate and coherent. Additionally, when the message is organized, the speaker articulates the phonemes to make the language receiver get the message across. All this process is possible when some aspects of speaking are taken into account.

Similarly, Thornbury (2009) stated that speaking is interactive and requires the ability to co-operate in the management of speaking turns. He also pointed out that speaking typically occurs in real time, with little time for detailed planning and that speaking represents a real challenge to most learners. For this reason, he suggested that this skill should be developed and practised independently of the grammar content because grammar is a factor that differs in spoken and written language.

Writing skill

Hossain (2015) stated that “writing is the productive skill in written mode. It involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way” (p. 24). Concerning this skill, Sadiku

(2015) emphasized that “writing is a gem to pick and explained that a person with good writing skills is always victorious at expressing oneself. The writing skill is the ‘hard copy’ of your intellectual level or the level of your expression” (p. 24).

With these ideas in mind, it can be said that writing is an essential skill that contributes to human beings in many ways. For instance, people can express their feelings, emotions and thoughts freely. In fact, nowadays people communicate more in a written way due to technology.

For these reasons, writing must be taught and developed both inside and outside the class. When students write, they have more time to think and more opportunity to process language (Harmer, 2007). Therefore, teachers should choose suitable activities that aim to maximize the development of the writing skill.

Different aspects of speaking

Accuracy

One aspect that enables people to communicate properly is accuracy. It has been defined as follows. “Accuracy involves the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. In controlled and guided activities the focus is usually on accuracy and the teacher makes it clear from feedback that accuracy is important”. Gower et al. (as cited in Bashrin, 2013, p. 5) Another concept indicates that “Accuracy in speaking is the use of correct forms of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. When we speak, we use different aspects of speaking depending on the type of speaking we are involved in”. (Carel, 2012, p. 163) As mentioned above, speaking is a skill that must be developed taking into account the correct language use.

Fluency

There are various definitions of fluency. However, two important ones are included. Carel (2012) defined fluency as “speaking at a normal speed, without hesitation, repetition or self-correction, and with smooth use of connected speech” (p. 163). Similarly, Fillmore (as cited in Yang, 2014) stated that speaking fluency is “a) the ability to talk at length with few pauses; b) be able to produce sentences coherently, reasoned and semantically; c) have appropriate expressions in a wide range of contexts and d) language use should be creative and imaginative” (p. 197). In this respect, it can be said that someone speaks fluently when they express their ideas and thoughts clearly and with a good command of language items.

Grammar and vocabulary

These two aspects make speaking a foreign language difficult because the demands of producing speech in real-time with minimal planning opportunities places considerable limitations on the kind of complexity speakers can achieve (Thornbury, 2009). For example, learners want to communicate something, but they do not know enough words and phrases to express their ideas or the organization of the vocabulary items is not accurate so the message is not conveyed clearly. Therefore, it is essential that learners have a good command of grammatical structures and lexis to communicate naturally.

Pronunciation

“Pronunciation refers to the production of individual sounds, the appropriate linking of words and the use of stress and intonation to convey the intended meaning” (Thornbury, 2009, p. 129) However, Brown (2007) remarked that the features of pronunciation such as stress, rhythm, and intonation are given high priority because they take major roles in communication and interaction. When

speaking, learners need to pronounce words comprehensibly and clearly so that the listeners can understand the message and communication can continue.

Interaction

Spratt, Pulverness and Williams (2005) stated that “interaction is two way communication that involves using language and body language to keep our listener involved in what we are saying and to check that they understand our meaning” (p. 34). This means that students need to work with others in order to put into practice their speaking skill. In this regard, Brown (2007) further pointed out that “the greatest difficulty that students encounter when speaking is not the multiplicity of sounds, words, phrases and discourse forms that characterize any language, but rather the interactive nature of most communication”(p. 324).

Bearing in mind that speaking is a skill that is developed when there is interaction; students need to manage some interactive strategies that can help them to have conversations and dialogues with others in a natural way. Some of these strategies stated by Carel (2012) are: making eye contact (looking at the others’ eyes while they are speaking is important because it is a way to show interest); using facial expressions (movement of your face conveys a lot of information); asking check questions (Do you understand? is a question that can help you know if the other person gets meaning) and confirming understanding (the use of interjections, “mm, right” to show that you got the message across).

Assessment

Brown (2007) stated that “assessment is an integral aspect of the pedagogical process of designing lessons, implementing them, and evaluating their success. Without an assessment component in every lesson, every unit, and every course, we couldn’t determine the attainment of objectives and goals” (p. 443). Based on this, it can be said that assessing what learners do during the learning process is of

paramount importance because teachers and students can gather information of the weaknesses and strengths they have when they communicate in English. This information can help learners to find strategies and techniques to solve the problems they have when they speak.

Assessment of speaking

Ginther (2012) noted that speaking is considered by language testers as the most difficult language skill to assess and he explained that assessing this skill requires the observation of a live oral performance. In the same sense, Fulcher and Davidson (2007) pointed out that assessing the speaking skill demands significant resources to implement. This occurs because the activities and assessments are performance-based and completely integrated. Additionally, these authors indicated that speaking occurs in a social learning environment that encourages interaction, communication and collaboration. These elements differentiate assessing the speaking skill from assessing reading.

Performance assessment

Judging speaking is different from judging grammar knowledge or writing (Thornbury, 2009). For this reason, questionnaires and traditional assessments are not appropriate if the learning approach is student-centered. Developing the speaking skill with a student-centered focus is characterized by using strategies that engage learners to practice speaking at all times. Consequently, proper assessments need to be designed to evaluate this skill. For example, performance assessment is what fits what students do in this type of classroom environment. Performance assessment requires learners to show specific skills and competencies mastery by performing or producing something orally (Wisconsin Education Association Council, 1996).

To develop performance task or performance assessments is not easy as someone could think. In fact, facilitators must analyze what has been done in the classroom in order to determine which performance tasks will be used to assess speaking fairly and effectively. There are three steps that the Wisconsin Education Association Council (1996) suggested: (1) a list of skills and knowledge you wish to have students learn as a result of completing a task; (2) design a motivating, challenging and achievable performance tasks which require the students to demonstrate these skills and knowledge and (3) develop explicit performance criteria which measure the extent to which learners have mastered the skills and knowledge. If facilitators follow the three steps, assessments are well-structured and aligned to the learner-centered and authentic learning approach.

As mentioned in step three, assessment criteria should be determined depending on the aspects that are going to be measured. For example, Thornbury (2009) described four categories that are used in the CELS Test of Speaking such as: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication. They are described below:

Grammar and vocabulary evaluate accurate and appropriate use of syntactic forms and vocabulary in order to meet the task requirement.

Discourse management measures the ability to express ideas and opinions in coherent, connected speech. Additionally, the construction of sentences and production of utterances are measured because learners need to show that they are able to convey information and to express and justify opinions with an appropriate range of linguistic resources.

Pronunciation tests the ability to produce sounds individually and in words, use stress and intonation to communicate and meet the task requirements.

Interactive communication assesses the ability to interact with the other participants by using functional language and strategies to keep or repair interaction. (p. 127)

The selection of good performance assessment and effective assessment criteria will make an evaluation process reliable and practical. What is more, they will make learners feel satisfied with their learning experience in a student-centered environment.

Finally, the relationship between learner-centered instruction and the speaking skill is relevant. Al-Tamimi (2014) indicated in the study that the shift from the teacher-centered learning model to a learner-centered model has changed foreign language pedagogy. In fact, this author concluded in the study that cooperative learning, a student-centered approach, improved the speaking skill and attitude among learners because it requires each learner to develop a sense of personal responsibility to learn and it promotes interaction while doing a task. Similarly, Shalaby (2012) emphasized that with learner-centered instruction, students receive input since they are exposed to a foreign language learning environment that encourages their aural skills. Moreover, this approach promotes learning by doing in order to get more involved in learning and task based learning to achieve more communicative competence.

2.5 Hypothesis

H0: Learner-centered instruction does not have an effect on development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

H1: Learner-centered instruction has an effect on the development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

2.6 Signaling hypothesis variables

Independent variable: learner-centered instruction.

Dependent variable: speaking skill development.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research approach

To work on this research project, the researcher focused on the positivist and social constructivist paradigms. The positivist paradigm provides an objective reality and the latter emphasizes on the nature of the reality constructed socially. These two paradigms are directly associated with the quantitative and qualitative approaches that the researcher utilized in this study.

Both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches are complementary and help the researcher to collect information in different ways in order to generate a good understanding and interpretation. While the quantitative approach helps to collect data and convert it into numerical form, the qualitative approach is useful to get in depth descriptions of procedures, human behavior and experience.

Therefore, both research approaches are worthwhile because the gathered information is analyzed profoundly and the numbers are the base to do statistical calculations. This analysis and results helped the researcher to determine to what extent the variables were related, proved the hypothesis, drew conclusions about the research problem and made recommendations.

3.2 Basic method of research

3.2.1. Field research

It is field research because the investigation was carried out in the place where the research problem occurred. The investigator could have a systematic analysis and a closer view of the reality. Thus, she could collect information according to the research objectives.

Being aware of what was happening with the research problem was remarkable since the investigator could make notes of every behavior in the research object.

3.2.2. Bibliographic and documentary research

It is of paramount importance to support the research with concepts, theories, approaches and opinions from several authors who have studied the variables in this investigation. This information is the starting point to the analysis of the problem. Knowing what scientists have done and concluded in their studies worldwide helped the researcher have a broader perspective to suggest solutions to the problem.

The process of bibliographic and documentary research includes all of conceptualizing, using and evaluating publications, newspapers, diaries, papers, scientific journals, films and books, so that the investigator could study in depth the two variables purpose of this research.

3.2.3. Observational research

This research is observational since it allows the investigator to do an objective analysis of the things that happen during the study. Additionally, useful information was collected just by observing the behavior and attitude of the participants. This way, the researcher had the opportunity to observe the whole situation and come up with ideas that can help in the process. On the other hand, a questionnaire was used to corroborate the results obtained in the observation.

3.3 Level or type of research

3.3.1. Quasi-experimental research

This research is quasi-experimental because it aimed to explain some kind of causation. In the experiment, the researcher tried to determine the effects of one variable on the other. In this regard, Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2016) stated that experimental designs are used when the researcher wants to see the possible effect of a cause. Therefore, this study consisted of working with two sampling groups. One sample group that served as a control group and another that was tested under the experimental conditions. This type of research made gathering information a more reliable process. It also allowed the researcher to compare the behavior of the phenomenon in two different contexts so as to identify its causes and effects.

3.3.2. Quantitative - correlational research

This research is correlational because it examined the behavior of the two variables and how they are related. In this respect, Waters (2017) pointed out that “a correlational study is a quantitative method of research in which you have two quantitative variables from the same group and you are trying to determine if there is a relationship between them” (p. 6). This means, the researcher was able to evaluate if the independent variable correlated to dependent one.

3.4 Population and sample

3.4.1. Population

The whole population in the B1+ intermediate level at the Languages Center of the Universidad Técnica de Ambato was 942 students in the regular modality and the open courses in the semester September 2017 – February 2018.

Table 2. Population B1+ intermediate level students

POPULATION		NUMBER
B1+ level students of the regular modality		798
B1+ level students of the open courses		144
Total		942

Source: Secretary at the Languages Center, Universidad Técnica de Ambato
Created by: Villacís, W. (2017)

3.4.2. Sample

From the whole population in the B1+ intermediate level, two groups were chosen to carry out this study. They are described as follows:

Table 3. Sample

POPULATION		NUMBER
Students	Control group	28
	Experimental group	26
Total		54

Source: Secretary at the Languages Center, Universidad Técnica de Ambato
Created by: Villacís, W. (2017)

3.5 Operationalization of variables

3.5.1 Operationalization of the independent variable

Table 4. Operationalization of the independent variable

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION					
DEFINITION	DIMENSION	INDICATORS	ITEMS	TECHNIQUES	INSTRUMENTS
It is an approach that consists of making learning meaningful to students through the realization of activities and tasks that are designed to involve learners in the decision making about the curriculum, in order to meet their needs and interests.	Approach	Method	Does the teacher make you find and use resources (do research on the net, create situations, use photos) to do speaking tasks and solve problems to improve your oral fluency?	Survey	Structured questionnaire
	Meaningful learning	Interaction and interest	How often do you participate actively in tasks and activities that require lots of interaction and communication in class?	Test	
	Tasks and activities	Practical, problem solving, participatory	Does the application of interaction strategies (information gap, carousel, gallery walks) in the class help you improve your speaking fluency?	- Interview - Discussion - Extended turn	Rubric Pictures Situations
	Learners' involvement in decision making	Students' ideas Learning objectives Learning outcomes		- General conversation	
	Learners' needs and interests	Goals, learning styles, intelligences			

Created by: Villacís, W. (2017)

3.5.2 Operationalization of the dependent variable

Table 5. Operationalization of the dependent variable

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT					
DEFINITION	DIMENSION	INDICATORS	ITEMS	TECHNIQUES	INSTRUMENTS
<p>“Speaking is the productive aural/oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning.” (Nunan 2003, p.48)/ Ur (as cited in Bashrin, 2013).</p>	Productive aural/oral skill	Accuracy Grammar and vocabulary Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you consider that, at this level, you are able to express your ideas using appropriate words and expressions? - When having a conversation, do you speak easily, quickly, with no mistakes and no pauses? - How do you feel about your ability to communicate fluently in English? 	Survey Test	Structured questionnaire
	Systematic verbal utterance	Coherence Message Pronunciation Speed Discourse management Communication Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent are your speed and flow of language production appropriate to keep a conversation going? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview - Discussion - Extended turn -General conversation 	Rubric Pictures Situations
	Meaning conveyance				

Created by: Villacís, W. 2017

3.6 Data collection plan

This research was conducted at the Languages Center of Universidad Técnica de Ambato. The people who participated in this study were 54 students who were studying their fourth level (B1+) of English in the Regular Modality.

In this study, a pre-test was given to both the control group and experimental group at the beginning of the research. The test that had been chosen to assess students' ability to communicate in English orally was PET (Preliminary exam) from Cambridge since it is a validated test used worldwide (See Annex 1). Moreover, PET is a test which has validated by the Cambridge English Language Assessment team. During the validation process, item characteristics, task performance, learner performance, adequacy of standards set were collected and analyzed so as to determine the quality of the test.

The test has four parts in which students were asked to partake in an interview, a discussion, extended turn and a general conversation, as described below:

Table 6. Parts in the PET test

PARTS	FORM	DURATION	DESCRIPTION
Part 1	Interview	2-3 minutes	There is a conversation with the interlocutor and between students. Students ask and answer questions about themselves.
Part 2	Discussion	2-3 minutes	The interlocutor gives photos and a situation to the students. Students have to talk about it and come up with ideas about what the man in the situation should keep and should throw away. Both students interact and tell each other their ideas.

PARTS	FORM	DURATION	DESCRIPTION
Part 3	Extended turn	2 minutes	The interlocutor gives each of the students a photograph of people at lunchtime. Each student has to tell the interlocutor what they can see in the photograph.
Part 4	General conversation	3 minutes	The interlocutor gives the two students a photo showing people at lunchtime. They are asked to talk together about what they usually do at lunchtime, during the week and at the weekend. They could talk about the importance of having lunch and the differences between their lunch on weekdays and on weekend.

Source: Cambridge English Language Assessment (UCLES 2011)

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

To administer the 10-12-minute test, two teachers were in the same classroom. The first was the interlocutor and the second was the assessor. Both the interlocutor and the assessor sat in front of the two students (see Annex 5). The interlocutor as well as the assessor assessed students with a rubric (see Annex 2). This rubric contemplated five criteria such as: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication. The reason why two teachers assessed students' speaking skill was to have reliable results. This way, any bias was avoided.

On the other hand, the test was given to students in pairs so that they had the opportunity to interact and do all the activities the test contained. At the beginning, two students entered and took a seat (If there was an odd number, the last students worked in a group of three). Then the interlocutor gave students the

rubrics so that they filled in with their information. Next, the rubrics were given to the assessor and interlocutor told students what to do and asked questions. During the test the interlocutor and the assessor listened and evaluated students by using the rubric. Moreover, students were recorded in order to revisit students' performance when it was needed. After the exam, both the interlocutor and assessor analyzed students' performance and gave a score. As soon as the investigator had the results of the test, students completed a questionnaire. This survey was conducted to confirm the existence of the problem (See Annex 3). The survey was done once, only before the intervention process.

Furthermore, the PET test was administered as soon as the intervention process finished. Both teachers gave the test to the students and used the rubric to evaluate them.

Once the information was collected, the researcher proceeded to tabulate the data and elaborate graphics and tables to illustrate it. The investigator then analyzed and interpreted the results, which were used to verify the hypothesis by using a statistical test called T-Test (Student's T-Test). This test is used to compare the two means so that differences could be identified in the study. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were made based on the analysis and interpretation of the gathered information.

Table 7. Parts in the PET test

BASIC QUESTIONS	EXPLANATION
1. Why?	To determine the effect of learner-centered instruction on the speaking skill development of the B1+ level students of the regular modality in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato

BASIC QUESTIONS	EXPLANATION
2. Who will be researched?	B1+ level students of regular modality
3. What will be researched?	Learner-centered instruction and the speaking skill development
4. Who will do the research?	Researcher: Wilma Villacís
5. Who will be researched exactly?	B1+ level students at the Languages Center
6. When?	September 2017 – February 2018
7. Where?	Languages Center at Universidad Técnica de Ambato
8. How many times?	One time
9. Which technique will be used?	Survey / experimental intervention
10. Which research instrument will be used?	Structured questionnaire and a test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

3.7 Data processing and analysis plan

The following steps were taken in this research to process and analyze the information:

- A research process was followed.
- A critical revision of collected information.
- Tabulation and graphic elaboration for each variable.
- Statistical study of data for result presentation.
- Analysis of results.
- Interpretation of results.
- Hypothesis verification.
- Determining of conclusions and recommendations

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Analysis of results and data interpretation

4.1.1 Pre-test and post-test results

Two groups were involved in the research. The first group was the experimental with 26 students and the second group with 28 students was the control group. These two groups were taking the fourth level of English (B1+) in the Regular Modality in the Languages Center. Both groups A3 and D3 were given the same Preliminary English Test (PET) to evaluate their speaking skill, specifically, their oral fluency and their interactive communication.

A comparative analysis was done with the results gotten in the pre-test and the post-test from both the experimental and control groups. Moreover, a rubric with five assessment criteria was used to measure students' ability to communicate fluently and interactively. The assessment criteria were grammar and vocabulary, fluency and discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication. The results are presented in the charts below.

Table 8. Pre-test results of experimental group

CRITERIA	GRAMMAR VOCABULARY	AND	FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION	TOTAL
1.		2	1,5	2	2	2	9,50
2.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
3.		2	2	2	2	2	10,00
4.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
5.		1	1,75	2	2	2	8,75
6.		1	2	2	2	1,75	8,75
7.		2	3	3	2,25	3	13,25
8.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
9.		1	1,75	2	1	1	6,75
10.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
11.		2	2	2	2	3	11,00
12.		1	1,75	2	2	1	7,75
13.		2	2	2	2,25	2	10,25
14.		2	2,75	3	3	3	13,75
15.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
16.		1	2	2	2	2	9,00
17.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
18.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
19.		2	2,5	2	2	3	11,50
20.		2	2,5	3	3	3	13,50
21.		1,5	1	1	1,5	1,5	6,50
22.		2,5	2,25	2	2	3	11,75
23.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
24.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
25.		1	1	1	1	1	5,00
26.		1	1	1	1	1,5	5,50
X		1,4	1,6	1,7	1,6	1,7	8,0

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Table 9. Pre-test results of control group

CRITERIA	GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION	TOTAL
1.						
2.	1	2	2	2	2	9
3.	2	2	2	2	2	10
4.	2	1,75	2	2	2	9,75
5.	2	2,75	2	2	3	11,75
6.	2	2	2	1,75	2	9,75
7.	1	2	1	1	2	7
8.	2,75	2,75	2,75	3	2,75	14
9.	1	1	1	1	1	5
10.	1	1	1	1	1	5
11.	1	1	1	1	1	5
12.	1	1	1	1	1	5
13.	2	3	2	2	3	12
14.	1	1	1	1	1	5
15.	1	1,5	2	1	2	12
16.	1	1	1	1	1	5
17.	1	1	1	1	1	5
18.	1	1,5	1	1	1	5,5
19.	2	2	2	2	1,75	9,75
20.	1	1	1	1	1	5
21.	3	2,75	3	3	3	14,75
22.	1	1	1	1	1	5
23.	1	1	1	1	1	5
24.	1	1	1	1	1	5
25.	1	2	2	1	2	8
26.	2	2	2	2	3	11
27.	1	2	2	1	1	7
28.	2	1,75	2	2	2	9,75
	1	1	1	1	1	5
X	1,4	1,6	1,6	1,5	1,7	7,9

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Table 10. Post-test results of experimental group

CRITERIA	GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION	TOTAL
1.	2,25	2,5	2,5	3	2,5	12,75
2.	1,5	2	2	2	1,75	9,25
3.	2,25	3	3	2,75	3	14
4.	2,25	2	2	2	1,75	10
5.	2	2,75	2,75	2,5	2,75	12,75
6.	2,25	3	2,75	3	3	14
7.	2	2,5	2,5	2	2	11
8.	2,25	2,5	2,75	2	2,25	11,75
9.	2,5	2,75	3	2,75	2,25	13,25
10.	1,5	1,75	1,25	1	1	6,5
11.	2,75	3	2,75	2,75	2,5	13,75
12.	2,25	2,75	2,75	2,75	2,75	13,25
13.	2,75	3	3	2,75	3	14,5
14.	2,25	3	2,75	2,5	2,25	12,75
15.	2,5	2,25	2,25	2,25	2,25	11,5
16.	2,25	2,5	2,75	2,25	2,75	12,5
17.	2,25	3	3	3	3	14,25
18.	2,5	3	3	2,75	3	14,25
19.	2	2,75	2,5	2,5	2,75	12,5
20.	2	2,75	2,75	2,5	2,5	12,5
21.	3	3	3	3	3	15
22.	2,25	2,75	2,75	2,5	2,5	12,75
23.	2,25	2,75	2,5	2,25	2,75	12,5
24.	2,25	2,5	2,25	1,75	2,25	11
25.	2	2,25	2	2,25	2,25	10,75
26.	2,5	2,75	3	2	2,5	12,75
X	2,3	2,6	2,6	2,4	2,5	12,4

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Table 11. Post-test results of control group

CRITERIA	GRAMMAR AN VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION	TOTAL	
1.		2	2	2	2	1,5	9,5
2.	2,5	2,5	2,75	2,75	3	13,5	
3.	2,5	2,75	2,5	2,5	2,75	13	
4.	2	2,75	2,75	2,25	2,25	12	
5.	2	2,25	2	2	1,75	10	
6.	1,75	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	7,75	
7.	2,25	2,75	2,75	2,25	2,25	12,25	
8.	1,75	1,5	1,5	2	1,5	8,25	
9.	1,75	1,5	1,5	1,75	1	7,5	
10.	1	1	1	1	1,25	5,25	
11.	1,25	1,25	1,25	1	1,25	6	
12.	1,25	1,75	1,25	2	1,75	8	
13.	2	2	1,75	2	1,75	9,5	
14.	1,25	1,25	1,25	1,75	1,5	7	
15.	1,5	1,75	1,25	1,5	1,75	7,75	
16.	2,25	2,25	2,25	2,25	2	11	
17.	2	2	2	2	1,75	9,75	
18.	2	2	2	2	1,75	9,75	
19.	1,25	1,25	1,5	1,5	1,5	7	
20.	2	2,25	2	2,25	1,5	10	
21.	2	2	2	2	2,75	10,75	
22.	1,5	1,75	1,25	1,25	1,75	7,5	
23.	1	1	1	1	1	5	
24.	2,25	2,25	2,25	2,25	2,25	11,25	
25.	2,25	2,5	2,5	2,5	2	11,75	
26.	1	1	1	1	1	5	
27.	1,5	2	2	2	2	9,5	
28.	1,75	1,75	1,75	2	2,5	9,75	
X	1,8	1,9	1,8	1,9	1,8	9,1	

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Table 12. Comparison pre-test and post-test: Grammar and vocabulary

GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY	
Groups	Results
Pre-test control	1,4
Pre-test experimental	1,4
Post-test control	1,8
Post-test experimental	2,3

Note. From pre-test and post-test using PET exam

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

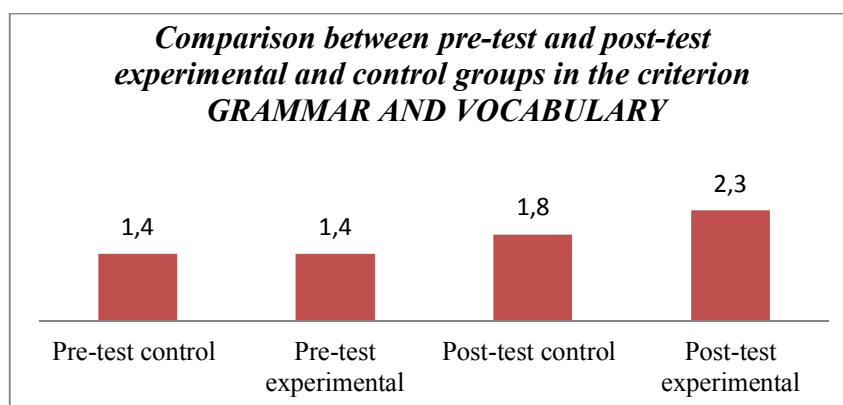


Figure 5. Comparison in the criterion of grammar and vocabulary

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation:

Students in both the control group and experimental group obtained 1.4 out of 3.0 in the pre-test. In explaining these results, it can be said that the grammatical structures and the vocabulary used by students were limited, having a negative effect in their fluency. Additionally, they lack words and phrases unable them to interact with their partners. On the other hand, students presented different results in the post-test. It can be seen that students in the experimental group obtained 2.3 out 3, which means that the methodology used in the intervention stage helped learners improve their command of grammar and vocabulary.

Table 13. Comparison pre-test and post-test: Fluency

FLUENCY	
Groups	Results
Pre-test control	1,6
Pre-test experimental	1,6
Post-test control	1,9
Post-test experimental	2,6

Note. From pre-test and post-test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

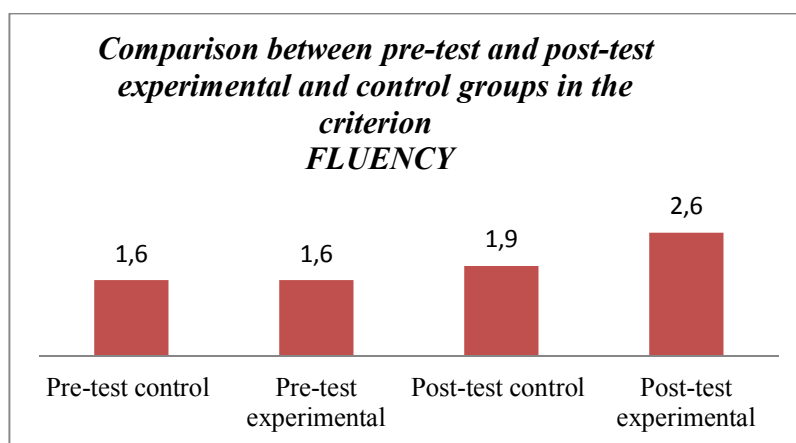


Figure 6. Comparison in the criterion of fluency

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation

The figure indicates that students obtained 1.6 out of three in the criterion of fluency in the pre-test in both groups. However, the results in the post-test were better. Therefore, it is evident that students improved their fluency due to the activities done in the intervention stage. The students in the control group also improved, but minimally (1.9); and students in the experimental group presented a significant progress (2.6) in the way they speak in English. Their speech was smooth and fluid with few to no hesitations. The results establish the fact that using a methodology which focuses on the learners permits them to be active in an environment characterized by a dynamic and meaningful way to process information and develop skills.

Table 14. Comparison pre-test and post-test: Discourse management

DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	
Groups	Results
Pre-test control	1,6
Pre-test experimental	1,7
Post-test control	1,8
Post-test experimental	2,6

Note. From pre-test and post-test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

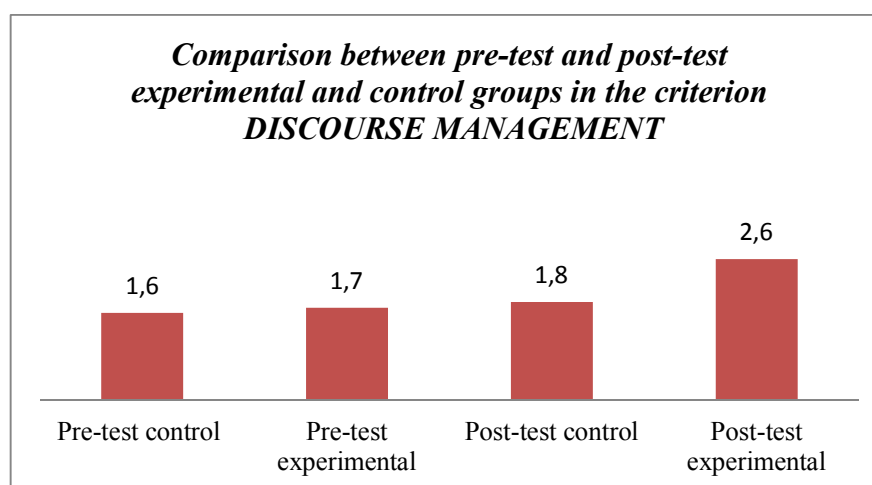


Figure 7. Comparison in the criterion of discourse management

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation:

In the criterion about discourse management in the pre-test, students obtained 1.6 in the control group and 1.7 in the experimental group. These results indicate that their speaking production was characterized by short phrases and frequent hesitations. Some information was repeated and there was digression. On the other hand, delving into the figures, it can be said that learners from the two groups improved in the post-test. There is an obvious progress (2.6) in students who were part of the experimental group. Their contributions were relevant and coherent. Additionally, they produced more elaborated and extended ideas in a collaborative context.

Table 15. Comparison pre-test and post-test : Pronunciation

PRONUNCIATION	
Groups	Results
Pre-test control	1,5
Pre-test experimental	1,6
Post-test control	1,9
Post-test experimental	2,4

Note. From pre-test and post-test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

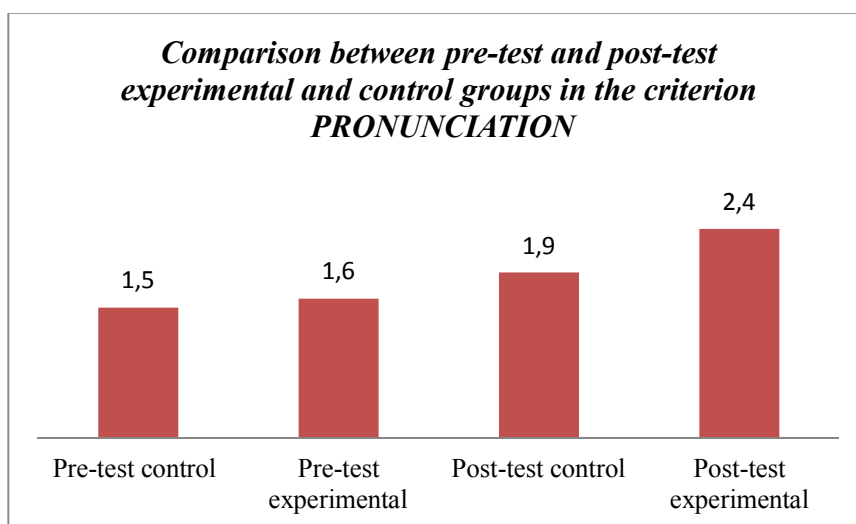


Figure 8. Comparison in the criterion of pronunciation

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation:

Pronunciation was an issue in the pre-test, as it can be observed in the figure. Students in both the control and experimental groups obtained 1.5 and 1.6. These results were almost the same. On the contrary, students improved in the post-test, especially the ones who were active participants in the research intervention process. The results (2.4) suggest that there was an increase of 0.8 in their pronunciation. Students pronounce words intelligently with adequate intonation. Furthermore, they felt comfortable speaking a foreign language. It is relevant to point out that the methodological approach used in the classroom can have a positive impact on the development of the speaking skill.

Table 16. Comparison pre-test and post-test: Interactive communication

INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION	
Groups	Results
Pre-test control	1,7
Pre-test experimental	1,7
Post-test control	1,8
Post-test experimental	2,5

Note. From pre-test and post-test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

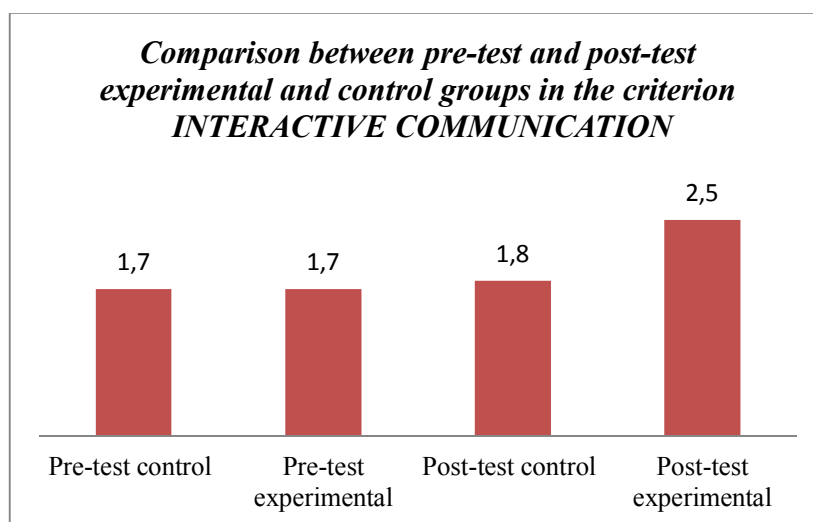


Figure 9. Comparison in the criterion of interactive communication

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation

As reflected in the figure, there was a similarity in the grade obtained by students in both control and experimental groups (1.7) in the pre-test. However, the results in the post-test were better. Students in the experimental group obtained 2.5 out of 3.0. This improvement in the way learners interacted with their peers in a conversation or dialogue was reached due to the methodology used in the experimental intervention. Additionally, the activities students did during the research process helped them to initiate and respond appropriately and naturally. They followed a conversation by using language which provoked interaction.

Table 17. Comparison pre and post-tests experimental and control groups

Groups	Results
Pre-test control	7,9
Pre-test experimental	8,0
Post-test control	9,1
Post-test experimental	12,4

Note. From pre-test and post-test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

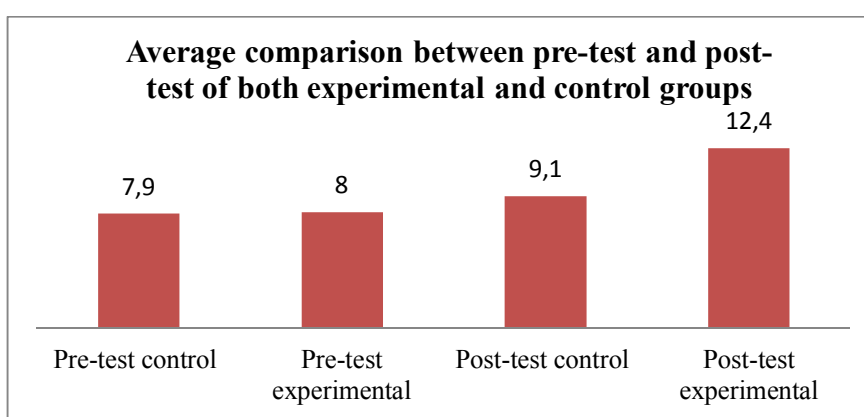


Figure 10. Average comparison between pre-test and post-test

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation

The illustrative figure above shows that students from both the control and experimental groups obtained a similar grade in the pre-test. Students in the control group obtained 7.9 out of 15 and the students in the experimental group obtained 8.0 out of 15. These results permit to state that before the intervention, students' ability to communicate in English was the same. They had problems to express their ideas fluently and there was no significant evidence of interaction among them. However, in the post-test there is a remarkable difference between the students who participated in the experimental stage (experimental group) and the students who continued with the same methodology (control group). As observed, there was indeed an improvement in the experimental group compared to the control group. Delving deeper into the figures, it can be stated that learner-centered instruction is an approach that encourages students to take responsibility

for their learning and be active learners. Moreover, they communicate with more spontaneity and confidence using interactive strategies that made their conversations more fluent, interesting and easy to follow.

Table 18. Comparison between pre-test and post-test experimental group

Groups	Results
Pre-test experimental	8,0
Post-test experimental	12,4

Note. From pre-test and post-test
Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

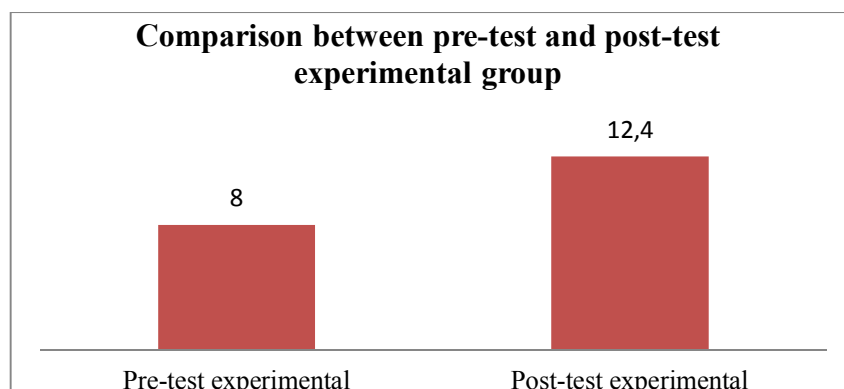


Figure 11. From pre-test and post-test (PET)
Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Analysis and interpretation

Delving deeper into the figure, it can be stated that students who participated in the experimental intervention made a significant improvement in their speaking skill. In the pre-test, they obtained 8.0 out of 15 and in the post-test 12.4 out of 15. Therefore, there was an increase of 4.4. This result shows that the way students communicate in English is by far better due to the instructional approach and interactive strategies used by the facilitator during the process. Students gave evidence of their motivation, confidence and enthusiasm to communicate in a foreign language. Additionally, they felt more responsible for their learning and they produced the language more naturally. A learner-centered instructional approach makes a huge difference in the classroom. Students participated actively, interactively, fluently and their collaboration among them was notorious.

4.2 Hypothesis verification

To determine whether or not Learner-centered instruction influences in the development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato, the PET exam was applied both before and after the intervention, which consisted of ten interactive strategies to improve fluency when speaking in English. The statistical objective is to perform a “comparative” study between the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group.

Speaking skill development was the measurement variable, which used a numerical scale, so that the paired sample Student T-Test is used to verify the hypothesis. It starts from the identification of the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis, as indicated below:

4.2.1 Hypothesis approach

Null Hypothesis H_0 : Learner-centered instruction does not have an effect on development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : Learner-centered instruction has an effect on the development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

4.2.2 Variables

Independent variable: learner-centered instruction

Dependent variable: speaking skill development

4.2.3 Description of the population

To carry out this research project, the researcher worked with an experimental group of 26 students of B1+ level in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato. The PET exam was applied by a teacher from outside the university, in order to avoid measurement bias.

4.2.4 Mathematical model

Statistical test observed:

$$\mathbf{H_0: } \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$\mathbf{H_1: } \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

Where:

μ_1 = media experimental group in the pre-test.

μ_2 = media experimental group in the post-test.

The calculation formula is the following:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{S_p^2 \left[\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right]}}$$

$$S_p = \sqrt{\frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}}$$

Where:

\bar{x}_1 = average in the first measurement (pre-test).

\bar{x}_2 = average in the first measurement (post-test).

S_p = combined variance of the samples.

n_1 = data number of the first measurement (26 data).

n_2 = data number of the first measurement (26 data).

4.2.5 Specification of the regions of acceptance and rejection

The distribution under the null hypothesis of the variable t is a Student t -test with $(n_1 + n_2 - 2)$ degrees of freedom.

4.2.6 Decision making

If the 'p' value or level of bilateral significance is smaller than or equal to a (0,05), the null hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) will be accepted. It is the same as if the Student t value is on the null hypothesis rejected area in the Student t -test distribution the alternative hypothesis (H_1) will be accepted.

It is necessary to determine the value of Student t of the table (see Annex 4), which depends of the degrees of freedom and the level of significance.

4.2.7 Selection of the level of significance

To verify the hypothesis, the following level of significance was used: $\alpha = 0.05$

4.2.8 Degrees of freedom

The formula to determine the degrees of freedom is the following:

$$v = n - 1$$

Where:

n = average of first and second measurement (26 data).

v = degrees of freedom

$$v = 26 - 1 = 25$$

4.2.9 Data collection and calculation of statistics

Table 19. PET pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group.

NO.	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
1	9,50	12,75
2	5,00	9,25
3	10,00	14,00
4	5,00	10,00
5	8,75	12,75
6	8,75	14,00
7	13,25	11,00
8	5,00	11,75
9	6,75	13,25
10	5,00	6,50
11	11,00	13,75
12	7,75	13,25
13	10,25	14,50
14	13,75	12,75
15	5,00	11,50
16	9,00	12,50
17	5,00	12,50
18	5,00	14,25
19	11,50	14,25
20	13,50	12,50
21	6,50	15,00
22	11,75	12,75
23	5,00	12,50
24	5,00	11,00
25	5,00	10,75
26	5,50	12,75
Mean	8,0	12,4

Source: PET exam applied to B1+ level students in the Languages Center
Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

4.2.10 Student T-test results

Through the use of statistical software the following results were obtained:

Table 20. Paired sample statistics

		MEAN	N	STANDARD DEVIATION	STANDARD ERROR OF THE MEAN
Par	Pre-test Total	8,0	26	3,09671	0,60731
1	Post-test Total	12,4	26	1,84831	0,36248

Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

Table 21. Paired simple test

		PAIRED DIFFERENCES							
		Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	95% of difference interval of confidence		t	l	Sig. (bilateral)
					Lower	Upper			
P	Pre-test	-	2,9607	0,5806	-	-	-	2	6,37E
ar 1	Total Post-test	4,3942	2	5	5,59009	3,19837	7,568	5	-8
Total									

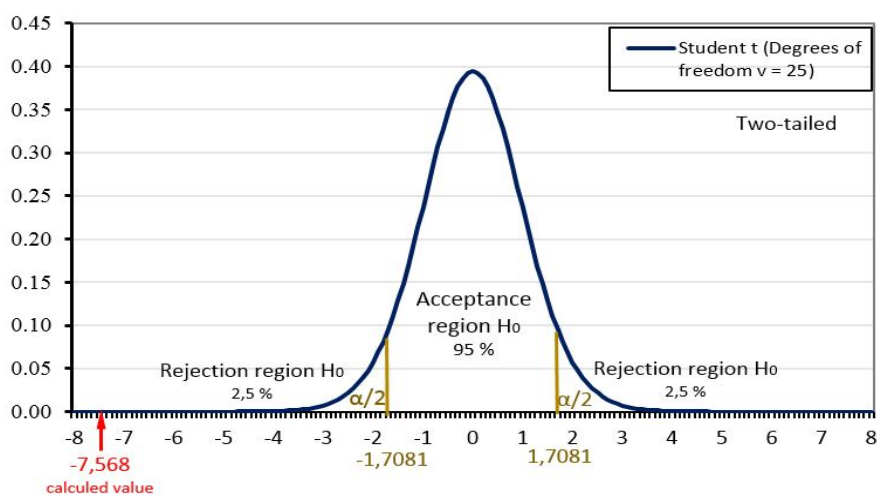
Source: PET exam applied to B1+ level students in the Languages Center.

Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

4.2.11 Final decision

With 25 degrees of freedom and with 0.05 of level of significance, $p = 6,37 E-8 < \alpha = 0,05$, and according to the values considered, the second one is greater than the first one and therefore, it is in the rejection region. Similarly, calculated Student t is -7,568 which is lower than -1,70814 from the Student t-test distribution table (see Annex 4). In other words, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative one is accepted, which means that: **“Learner-centered instruction has an effect on the development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato”**. The Student T distribution for the experimental group is presented as follows:

Student t-Distribution



Graph 1. Student t distribution Density Curve.

Source: PET exam applied to B1+ level students in the Languages Center.

Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

4.3 Control group analysis

In order to determinate whether the results are the same without intervention, the PET exam was also applied to the control group, 28 students of B1+ level in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato in the same conditions as the experimental group.

4.3.1 Selection of the level of significance

To verify the hypothesis, the following level of significance was used: $\alpha = 0.05$

4.3.2 Degrees of freedom

The formula to determine the degrees of freedom is the following:

$$v = n - 1$$

Where:

n = data number of the first and second measurement (28 data).

v = degrees of freedom

$$v = 28 - 1 = 27$$

4.3.3 Data collection and calculation of statistics

Table 22. PET pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group

NO.	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
1	9,00	9,50
2	10,00	13,50
3	9,75	13,00
4	11,75	12,00
5	9,75	10,00
6	7,00	7,75
7	14,00	12,25
8	5,00	8,25
9	5,00	6,00
10	5,00	7,50
11	5,00	5,25
12	12,00	8,00

NO.	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
13	5,00	9,50
14	12,00	,00
15	5,00	7,75
16	5,00	11,00
17	5,50	9,75
18	9,75	9,75
19	5,00	7,00
20	14,75	10,00
21	5,00	10,75
22	5,00	7,50
23	5,00	5,00
24	8,00	11,25
25	11,00	11,75
26	7,00	5,00
27	9,75	9,50
28	5,00	9,75
Mean	leve9,1	9,1

Source: PET exam applied to B1+ level students in the Centro de Idiomas.
Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

4.3.4 Student T-test results

Through the use of statistical software the following results were obtained:

Table 23. Paired sample statistics

		MEAN	N	STANDARD DEVIATION	STANDARD ERROR OF THE MEAN
Par	Pre-test Total	7,8929	28	3,16113	0,59740
1	Post-test Total	9,1161	28	2,37120	0,44812

Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

Table 24. Paired simple test

		PAIRED DIFFERENCES							
		Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean	95% of difference interval of confidence		t	l	Sig. (bilateral)
					Lower	Upper			
Par 1	Pre-test Total	-	2,9141	0,5507	-	-	-2,221	27	0,035
	Post-test Total	1,2232	6	2	2,35321	0,09322			

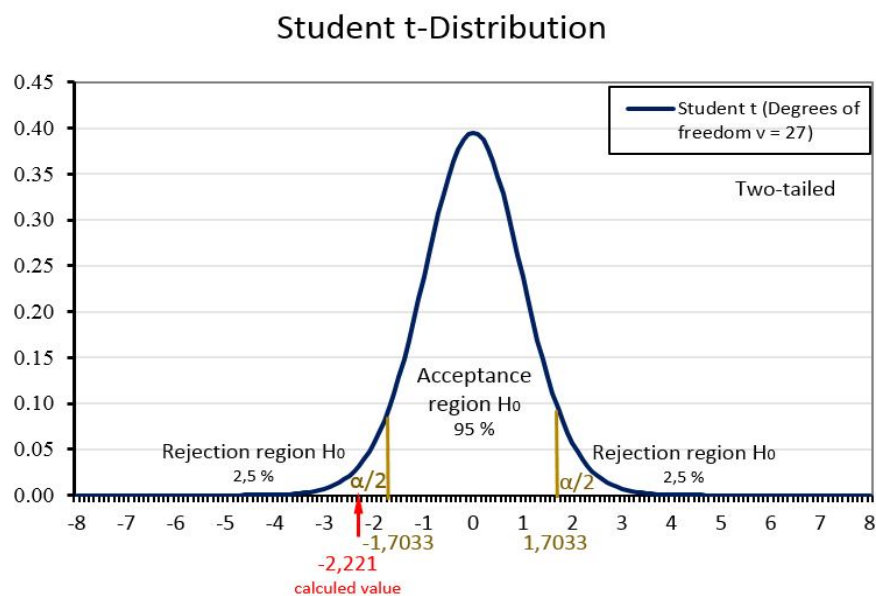
Source: PET exam applied to B1+ level students in the Languages Center.
Created by: Villacís, W. (2018)

4.3.5 Final decision

With 25 degrees of freedom and with 0.05 of level of significance, $p = 0,035 < \alpha = 0,05$ and according to the values considered, the second one is greater than the first one and therefore, it is in the rejection region. Similarly, calculated Student t is $-2,221$, which is lower than $-1,70329$ from the Student t-test distribution table (see Annex 4).

In other words, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative one is accepted to the Control Group, which states that: **“Learner-centered instruction has an effect on the development of the speaking skill of B1+ level students in the Languages Center in Universidad Técnica de Ambato”**.

The Student t distribution for this group is presented as follows:



Graph 2. Student t distribution density curve.

Source: PET exam applied to B1+ level students in the Languages Center.

Created by: Wilma Villacis

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Having identified specific problems in the pre-test, an experimental intervention was carried out for four weeks. Then the results obtained in the post-test helped the researcher draw the following conclusions:

5.1 Conclusions

- It is evident that language elements such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency and interaction improved to a great extent because the learner-centered instruction approach made learners put the theory into practice. Students were involved in interactive activities that required them to speak in the target language constantly. The students were the main protagonists of the lesson. Thus, they had an active role in the classroom. Learners participated in hands-on communicative tasks that avoided a structural focus.

- Fluency and interactive communication resulted in a remarkable improvement. This happened because students participated in a series of sessions characterized by speaking activities based on lots of interaction, problem solving, creativity and meaningful situations. These situations required learners to use the language to discuss real-life issues.

- It has been demonstrated that learner-centered instruction and its strategies have a positive impact on the speaking skill development because this approach prioritizes students' needs. It creates an interactive environment where participants have more responsibility, evident motivation and their learning is meaningful and long-lasting.

- A learner-centered approach was the best decision because learners benefitted from an effective methodology, which encompasses strategies to hook learners' attention, concentration as well as their active participation. Moreover, this approach is based on the constructivism learning theory by Lev Vygotsky, which is featured by knowledge construction, cooperative learning, self-regulated learning and real-world situations. All of these features give learners more responsibility for their role in the classroom.
- There is relationship between the dynamic approach of learner-centered instruction and the development of oral fluency. The statistical paired sample Student T-Test showed that there is a significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group, which means that the application of this approach contributes greatly to the development of the speaking skill. Areas such as fluency, pronunciation, discourse management, vocabulary and grammar registered great improvement.

5.2 Recommendations

- The application of learner-centered strategies is recommended in order to help students communicate in English fluently and enhance interaction when working in pairs or in groups. This way, learners put the vocabulary and grammar they know into practice. What is more, they do it in meaningful and real-life situations.
- Learners should be encouraged to participate more in the implementation of interactive and communicative strategies that require them to do research and inquire more. By doing this, their oral fluency will improve and the methodological focus will switch greatly because the teacher is not the center of instruction or the one who makes all the decisions about the contents. In fact, students decide on the language and information they will use to do a great job. Students will also develop their independence, their ability to analyze, synthesize as well as their communication skills.
- Educators should plan their lessons based on learners' needs and interests. The focus should be on the students rather than the teacher. This way, learning will take place in a more engaging, meaningful and interactive way. Furthermore, students will realize that their role does not only consist of sitting and listening to the teacher but to create and use their intellect to come up with solutions to the tasks or problems planned in the syllabus.
- It is important to rethink about the role of learners and teachers in the classroom so that better results can be obtained at the end of an academic period. Learners should be better engaged and involved in the learning process so as to have more responsibility and a long-lasting learning experience.

- By using a learner-centered approach, students should work collaboratively with their classmates. The responsibility should be shared and students and teacher should set goals that are reached by the total involvement of learners in the lesson. This way, the classroom will be featured by lots of movement, interactive communication in the target language, creativity and hands-on activities.
- Finally, both teachers and students should be predisposed and open-minded to approach language lessons differently. For this reason, training on learner-centered instruction and useful interactive strategies should be done by the educators to have a deep insight of the methodology that will make a big and effective change in their classroom roles.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROPOSAL

TOPIC: Creation of a booklet of interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency.

6.1 Informative data

Name of the institution:	Languages Center of Universidad Técnica de Ambato
Location:	Chasquis Avenue and Rio Payamino Street, Ambato
Beneficiaries:	Students and teachers of the B1+ level of the English language at the Languages Center.
Estimated time for the execution:	One month
Beginning:	May 1, 2018
End:	May 31, 2018
People in charge:	Researcher: Wilma Guadalupe Villacís Villacís
Cost:	300 Dollars

6.2 Background of the proposal

The previous research has revealed the importance of using a dynamic and active teaching approach in the classroom because this approach focuses on learners, their interests, needs and characteristics. Therefore, learner-centered instruction is the most recommendable methodology to develop speaking through a lot of interaction and collaboration. In fact, the experimental intervention

process resulted in a remarkable improvement in students' oral fluency and interactive communication.

This happened because students participated in a series of sessions characterized by speaking activities based on lots of interaction, problem solving, creativity and meaningful real-life situations.

Furthermore, an approach centered on the learners is an effective methodology because it emphasizes the application of strategies in order to hook learners' attention, concentration as well as their active participation. Another positive aspect of this approach is the fact that it has its foundations on the constructivism learning theory by Lev Vigotsky, featured by knowledge construction, cooperative learning, self-regulated learning and real-world situations.

There are overriding reasons why learner-centered instruction should be included in teachers' planning and consequently, implemented in their everyday lessons. Therefore, teachers should use interactive and communicative strategies which aim to improve oral fluency.

On the other hand, having searched related investigations in the digital data repository of the Technical University of Ambato, it can be said that some studies have been done on didactic strategies to develop skills in different subjects.

One investigation which is linked to this research is titled as follows: "Estrategias didácticas comunicativas en el desarrollo de la destreza de hablar el idioma inglés en los estudiantes de los octavos paralelos A y B de la Unidad Educativa Jorge Álvarez de Cantón Píllaro Provincia de Tungurahua," (Amores, 2015). The author concluded that the strategies used by teachers in the classroom are not updated and they do not aim at developing communication among students. Thus, she recommended the application of a guidebook of didactic communicative activities to develop speaking.

It is essential to point out that the present proposal is different from the aforementioned study in the fact that most of the activities included in the guidebook emphasized a traditional teacher-centered approach.

Having analyzed this research, great effort has been made in the creation of this proposal. Consequently, the proposed booklet was created taking into consideration learners' needs and their great motivation to learn a foreign language in a more dynamic, meaningful, active and participatory way.

6.3 Justification

Learning English in a country where the language is not acquired as a mother tongue or first language (L1) is a process that requires students to be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically. Motivation is the inner force that can help learners to be patient and passionate about the language experience. Additionally, a good approach is necessary if teachers want learners to enjoy learning English and to take responsibility for learning.

Classrooms are, currently, environments where teachers do most of the talking and learners are passive entities. This is one of the reasons why students have a negative feeling towards learning the language. The traditional teaching methodology prevents students from active participation. In fact, in most cases students do not even need to work in pairs or in groups. They partake in solo work activities. This way, students are used to classroom settings where they are required to do very little.

However, a classroom characterized by little interaction, passiveness and inappropriate communication is not a safe place to have meaningful learning. Hence, it is necessary to change the approach to teaching. In this approach, the roles of both teachers and students are different. Teachers are facilitators and students take the main role in the classroom. For example, learners do most of the

talking, they participate in the decisions made in the syllabus, they work in pairs and in groups, they are involved in tasks that aim to develop their creativity, problem-solving abilities as well as their ability to collaborate to reach a shared objective.

Then, a booklet of interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency can help to move from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered approach. This way, the speaking skill is improved through a lot of interaction, collaboration and team-building strategies. In fact, learning is a memorable experience because the students are the ones who have the leading roles in every lesson.

With the implementation of the booklet of interactive and communicative strategies, an evident improvement in the speaking skill and oral fluency in particular will be experienced by teachers and students. In fact, students become independent users of the language and their speech is more fluent and spontaneous.

The beneficiaries with the application of the booklet will surely be students, their parents, teachers and university authorities. Students will feel more confident with their ability to speak in English, their parents will be proud of their children, teachers will feel satisfied because they could witness students' learning, and finally authorities will have evidence of the learning outcomes at the end of the academic period.

6.4 Objectives

6.4.1 General

- Improve oral fluency through the implementation of a booklet of interactive and communicative strategies.

6.4.2 Specific objectives

- Identify strategies that can boost interaction and communication among students by encouraging them to take responsibility for their learning.
- Design interactive communication strategies to develop oral fluency with a focus on the learners and report the results gotten in the research
- Use the booklet of interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency in the classroom.

6.5 Feasibility analysis

The proposal is feasible to be implemented in the institution. Some aspects are taken into consideration to analyze the viability.

Sociocultural

The proposal has been created taking into account several fundamental factors that help to promote interaction, collaboration, cooperation, respect, responsibility and active participation. All of these factors are aimed to provide learners with an environment where they can experience the language differently. In fact, all participants can feel safe because the strategies that will be implemented in the classroom will encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning. Their overall involvement will make them feel enthusiastic and satisfied with their ability to communicate in a foreign language and talk about various topics. Additionally, it is also cultural because learning English implies exploring habits, behaviors and customs that identify English native speakers.

Technological

Today, technology is necessary in most of the activities we do daily. It, in particular, makes communication possible. In fact, it has changed the way people

communicate with their relatives, friends and people in general. Education has also been benefitted by technology because doing research is faster and more relevant. Information is, now, accessible to all people. Hence, technology enables the implementation of the proposal in the classroom. Students are able to investigate in order to expand their knowledge and explore ways to support their ideas. This way, the quality of their discussions, debates, projects boost, making learning more meaningful and long-lasting.

Organizational

Good organization is needed to make learners improve their oral fluency. All the strategies require students to have excellent organizational abilities in order to carry out the task within the time set. Moreover, different interaction patterns are emphasized in the realization of the activities and tasks. Consequently, learners have to be able to assign roles and work collaboratively in pairs and in teams to succeed in each task.

Furthermore, the organization of the Languages Center of the Technical University of Ambato is well-structured. Authorities, teachers and all personnel work collaboratively, giving all people a good working atmosphere. These characteristics help the implementation of the proposal in a suitable environment for students to feel comfortable and enthusiastic about speaking in a foreign language.

Economic-financial

The proposal can be easily implemented in the institution because it does not require teachers, students and parents to spend a lot of money on it. In fact, what students need is the predisposition to work hard and partake in all the activities and strategies suggested by the facilitator. Economy is not an impediment to put into practice the present proposal.

Overall, the implementation of the booklet of interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency is feasible because it is easy to use and self-explanatory and it does not represent students an extra financial effort.

6.6 Theoretical foundation

This proposal was created taking into account an approach that focused on the learners rather than the teacher. Considering this fact, more independent learning will take place. Students will be the focus of instruction and their roles will be more active, with more responsibility and involvement. With this proposal, students are expected to be preparing, organizing, creating, discussing and debating their positions with the unique idea to reach the objectives and the principal goal, which is develop their speaking skill, particularly their oral fluency and interactive communication.

6.6.1 Learner-centered instruction

The core principle underpinning this proposal is learner-centered instruction because there is a great difference in the roles students play in a traditional approach and a modern approach. For example, a traditional approach to teaching is characterized by having the professor lecturing and the students listening, watching and working individually without cooperation. However, a modern approach shifts the focus of the activity from the teacher to the students. Students participate in activities that require them to answer questions, formulate questions, solve problems, discuss, explain, debate or brainstorm during the lesson. Additionally, students do not work individually. Instead, they work in teams to do projects. This way, positive interdependence and individual accountability are promoted on the learners.

Definition

Teaching and learning are correlative or corresponding processes, as much so as selling and buying. One might as well say he has sold when no one has bought, as to say that he has taught when no one has learned (Dewey, 1910, p. 29).

The way Dewey (as cited in Felder & Brent, 2016) defined learner-centered instruction (LCI) clearly shows the difference between a teacher-centered lesson and learner centered one. In the latter, students are not passive recipients and repeaters of information. They take more responsibility for their own learning and the teacher is not the knower or the source of wisdom. The teacher plays the role as a coach or guide, whose main obligation is to facilitate the process to make learners get the knowledge, abilities and skills for themselves.

Learner-centered methods

Some of the methods that learner-centered approach includes are active learning, cooperative learning and inductive teaching and learning. They are described in the table below:

Table 25. Learner-centered methods

METHODS	DESCRIPTION
Active learning	Students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions on their own, discuss, explain, debate or brainstorm during the lesson.
Cooperative learning	Students work in pairs or teams on problems and projects in order to reach the same objective.
Inductive teaching and learning	Students are presented with challenges (questions or problems) and learn the course material in the context of addressing and solving the challenges.

Source: Teaching and learning STEM a practical guide.

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

Task-based learning

Task-based learning is an approach that consists of tasks in which learners use English in real and meaningful contexts. In this regard, Nunan (as cited in Gutiérrez, 2005) stated that this approach is based on the realization of communicative tasks that engage learners in interactions both inside and outside the classroom. The author also pointed out that this approach permits learners to have various interaction patterns such as: pair work, group work or whole class. This way, learners have more opportunities to practice the language and learn from others. Moreover, this approach aims at constructing learner-centered classrooms and language learning contexts, which give students the opportunity to communicate, interact and enhance learners' speaking skill in a natural, practical and functional use of language for meaningful purpose (Lin as cited in Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011, p. 47)

Along with task-based learning, the environment plays an important role in the implementation of interactive and communicative activities. How learners feel and their anxiety level during the process determines the fruitfulness in language learning (Willis as cited in Gutiérrez , 2005, p. 84).

Characteristics of task-based learning

Researchers have different opinions about this approach. Swan (as cited in Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011) listed the following characteristics:

- Instructed language learning should mainly contain natural or naturalistic language use, and the activities are related to meaning rather than language.
- Instruction should support learner-centeredness rather than teacher-centeredness.

- Because totally naturalistic learning does not normally give rise to target-like accuracy, engagement is essential to promote the internalization of formal linguistic elements while keeping the perceived benefits of a natural approach.
- This can be realized best by offering opportunities for focus on the form, which will attract students' attention to linguistic components as they emerge incidentally in lessons whose main focus is on meaning or communication.
- Communicative tasks are especially suitable devices for such an approach.
- More formal pre- or post-task language study may be beneficial. This may make contribution to internalization by leading or maximizing familiarity with formal characteristics during communication (p. 48-49).

Benefits of task-based learning

Task-based learning provides many benefits to aid foreign language learning. Ellis (as cited in Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011) listed these benefits as follows:

- TBL provides the opportunity for 'natural' learning within the classroom context.
- It stresses meaning over form; however, it can also emphasize learning form.
- It offers learners a fertile input of target language.
- It is intrinsically motivating.
- It is consistent with a learner-focused educational philosophy but also gives permission for teacher input and guidance.
- It contributes to the improvement of communicative fluency while not disregarding accuracy (p. 49)

6.6.2 Speaking skill towards communication and interaction

Teachers usually complain about the speaking skill because they consider that speaking is the hardest skill to be developed. Thornbury (2009) agrees that speaking is a real challenge to most language learners. He explains that speaking is interactive and requires the ability to co-operate in the management of speaking turns. Additionally, he points out that speaking typically takes place in real time and with little time for planning. This basically makes speaking difficult. Students do not have a lot of time to plan what to say. Therefore, what students need is opportunities to practice the language independently and in meaningful contexts.

Similarly, Harmer (2007) indicated three main reasons for getting students to partake in speaking activities:

- They provide rehearsal opportunities- chances to practise real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom.
- Speaking tasks in which students try to use all the language they know provide feedback for both teacher and students.
- The more students have opportunities to activate the elements of language they have stored in their brains, the more automatic their use of these elements become.

Making students practice their speaking skill or creating opportunities to activate the elements of language can be done by planning communicative tasks. The communicative tasks fulfil two important language learning needs: they prepare learners for real-life language use, and they encourage the automatization of language knowledge (Thornbury, 2009).

Some characteristics of the communicative strategies according to Thornbury (2009) are the following:

- The motivation of the activity is to achieve some outcome, using language,
- The activity takes place in real time,
- Achieving the outcome requires the participation to interact,
- The outcome is not 100% predictable because of the spontaneous and jointly constructed nature of the interaction,
- There is no restriction on the language used.

Types of strategies used to improve speaking- oral fluency

Some strategies that can be used to improve oral fluency through interaction, collaboration and active participation are: information gap, jigsaw, the inside-outside circle, the poster carousel, gallery walk, debates, case studies, problem solving among others.

Information gap

It is a strategy which consists of giving students a limited amount of information and asking them to work collaboratively with other classmates to solve the problem, understand a phenomenon or complete the task.

Reasons to use information gap strategy:

This strategy has several reasons why facilitators should use it. It promotes a student-centered classroom, increases intrinsic motivation, inspires critical thinking skills, promotes collaboration and increases student talking time.

Jigsaw

It is a cooperative learning strategy that enables each student to take responsibility for his/her role. They first are members of a “home” group and are given the material. According to the material, they form an “expert group.” Once

they have mastered the material in the “expert group,” they return to the “home group” and teach the material to the group members.

Reasons to use jigsaw:

This strategy helps to build comprehension; it encourages cooperative learning among learners and it helps improve communication and problem solving skills through interaction.

Inside-outside circle

This is a strategy used to encourage speaking about different topics. Students are first asked to write questions to inquire about the topic. A list of questions is written on the board or flipcharts. Then they stand up in two circles. Students are given some thinking hats with numbers. They have to form groups according to the numbers. The odd students get together in an inside circle and the even numbers form an outside circle. They take turns asking and answering questions and taking notes from the conversations they have with their partners. They then get into groups according to the color of thinking hats and prepare their presentation using the ideas from their notes.

Reasons to use inside-outside circle:

It encourages communication and interaction. It also allows students to get information from their peers in order to prepare their presentation.

Poster carousel

This is a cooperative strategy which consists of giving students a task. To do the task, students can work in pairs or in groups. They have to do research and prepare their posters. Once they are prepared with the information and materials, they put their posters on the walls and prepare their stands. Half the students take

the roles of presenters and half the students go around listening and asking questions. Then they switch roles. The task finishes when everybody has presented. Finally, facilitator asks questions to make learners reflect on the process.

Reasons to use poster carousel:

This strategy helps students to speak spontaneously, it increases student talking time, collaboration and it makes learners be more independent and responsible in order to achieve the objective.

Gallery walk

This strategy is quite similar to poster carousel. However, in this strategy students bring their materials on a given topic ready and post it on the wall. The materials should be self-explanatory. Students have to walk around the room reading the posters and taking notes. Once they have finished, they work in groups and are asked questions. They have to discuss in their groups and then report what the conclusions.

Reasons to use gallery walk:

It encourages collaboration, promotes language use and gives learners more responsibility. Additionally, students participate actively and their role is not passive.

Debates

This strategy consists of asking students to agree or disagree with a statement. They get together according to their position. Once they are in the group where everybody agrees, they have to prepare ideas to support the idea they agree with.

Similarly, the other group does the same. Then the classroom is organized. The two teams sit down face to face, the facilitator starts the debate and students take turns presenting their ideas and defending their position.

Reasons to use debates:

Debates promote interaction. Speaking is more spontaneous. They have a reason to speak. Additionally, they have to respect opposing views and be creative to present their ideas with good contributions.

Case studies

This strategy allows students to develop a case study of a real or fictional situation. They can work in pairs or in groups. Once students analyze the case and come up with reactions or suggestions to solve the situation, they share their ideas with other pairs or groups of students. Materials are elaborated to support their ideas.

Reasons to use case studies:

They help students to be analytical and critical thinkers because they need to study a situation, gather information and share their reactions or suggestions.

Problem solving

It is a strategy where a problem is given to students. They work in groups and find information to solve the problems. Solutions are presented to the whole class. All the students in the group have a particular role (secretary, leader, time keeper, spokesperson). This way, every member of the group takes individual responsibility for the group.

Reasons to use problem solving:

It is a good strategy because it makes students investigate, discuss, explore alternative of solution. All of these actions are carried out in a collaborative and meaningful context to practice speaking and become more fluent.

Proposal development

A booklet with 10 interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency was created taking into consideration meaningful real-life situations. The strategies also emphasize some communicative functions and every strategy has the useful phrases that students can use in order to carry out the task. All of these have been based on the learner-centered approach.

BOOKLET:

INTERACTIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP ORAL FLUENCY

“A learner centered approach”



By: Wilma Villacís

INTRODUCTION

Learning English is an exciting journey which offers learners an opportunity to explore new worlds as well as to develop abilities and skills through the realization of tasks that are engaging, interesting and based on realistic situations.

This booklet was created to provide teachers with ten interactive and communicative strategies which were designed taking into consideration the principles of learner-centered instruction, cooperative learning and task based learning. For the latter the lesson procedure is divided in a pre-task, task and post-task. Moreover, this booklet aims at making students the main protagonists in every strategy. Learners are also involved in the decisions made in the learning process.

Each strategy can be used to work on various topics and functions. In this booklet, the strategies are developed on suggested topics. They also specified the interaction pattern which lets teachers to organize students in different ways to work effectively during the lesson.


Furthermore, each strategy focuses on developing one function. There is also an explanation of every stage and some useful expressions that make the interaction and communication easier among the students. A rubric is also included. This assessment tool will help teachers evaluate students' performance with reliability and fairness.

Finally, the author wants teachers to enjoy implementing the strategies in their classrooms and having a satisfying experience with hands-on activities.

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STRATEGY 1: GALLERY WALK

	TOPIC: Technology and communication
	AIM: Students will be able to present about the advantages and disadvantages of using technology to communicate.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Teams of three
	FUNCTION: Discussing and presenting advantages and disadvantages

Procedure:

Pre-task:

Students are given the topic: “Technology and communication” and are asked to brainstorm ideas about the upsides and downsides of technology and communication in a chart.

Task:

Students work in teams of three, are assigned roles and compare their ideas. They have to prepare a poster with the most remarkable advantages and disadvantages. During the discussion, they have to use the suggested expressions to keep the conversation going. Once the poster is ready, they have to prepare their stand for the presentation.


Post task:

Students take turns presenting their work to the audience. People in the audience go around the different stands taking notes and asking questions. Presenters have the responsibility for answering all the questions that arise during the presentation. The facilitator listens to the students and takes notes. Finally, the teacher goes over the language problems and invites learners to reflect on what they did during the lesson.

Useful language:

<p>Analyzing advantages and disadvantages</p> <p>One advantage of..... is.....</p> <p>Another upside of is.....</p> <p>In my opinion, one of the main disadvantages of..... is.....</p> <p>From my point of view, a downside of is.....</p> <p>Presenting information</p> <p>Today we are talking about.....</p> <p>Our presentation is about.....</p> <p>The topic of our today's presentation is.....</p> <p>We are going to present our opinion about the advantages and disadvantages of.....</p>	<p>Students' roles:</p> <p>Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Leader✓ Secretary✓ Time keeper <p>Post task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Presenters
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STRATEGY 2: JIGSAW

	TOPIC: Environmental issues
	AIM: Students will be able to share information with their group by giving them the most relevant facts.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Solo work Students to Students
	FUNCTION: Presenting information, asking for clarification

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are given a piece of paper with information about environmental issues. They have to read and underline the main ideas. Then they have to form a home group according to the issue. They read their information together and compare their main ideas. With this information, they do a mind map. After that, they are given a number and students are asked to form another group (expert).

Task:

When students are in the expert group, every member starts sharing their information and answering any questions that people can have during the task. Members are free to take notes and ask questions. Once all members finish their intervention, they return to their home group.

Post-task:

When students are in the home group, they compare the information and do a graphic organizer as a group. Finally, the facilitator asks some questions to check understanding.

Useful language:

Presenting information:

I am going to inform you about.....

I am going to describe.....

I am glad to share some information about.....

I am going to explain.....

Asking clarification questions:

Could you go over that again?

I am not sure what you're getting at.

If I understand you correctly, you are saying/asking.....

STRATEGY 3: DEBATE

	TOPIC: Vegetarianism or eating meat
	AIM: Students will be able to defend their position of a given topic by using expressions correctly.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Students to students
	FUNCTION: Defending arguments

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students first read an article about vegetarianism or eating meat individually. Then they are asked some questions about their preference. They get into two big groups according to their preference (try to have the same number of students in each group).

Task:

Once students are in their group, they have to discuss their ideas in order to make a list of 10 important supporting ideas. The chairs are organized for students to have the debate. One student is charge of introducing the topic and opening the debate. The rest of the students have to participate actively in listening to the opposite group and presenting their ideas. The facilitator explains that all students have to make their contributions in an organized way. If one student intervenes several times, he/she will let the others intervene. While students debate, the facilitator listens carefully and takes notes.

Post task:

The facilitator makes a conclusion about the debate and asks students to concentrate on some language problems that arise during the task. Once problems are solved, they say if they enjoy working on the task or not. Finally, they are asked to create a mind map with the most impressive reasons given in the debate.

Useful language:

Introducing the subject:

Today, we are going to talk about.....

The subject/topic/focus of our discussion is.....

Presenting arguments:

The way I see things.....

In my view, vegetarianism is


In addition to this, eating meat is

Debating:

I see your point, however, I think.....

I respect your opinion, nevertheless, I think.

STRATEGY 4: CASE STUDY

	TOPIC: Afraid of gaining weight
	AIM: Students will be able to find the best solution to deal with a problem in a formal discussion.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Students to students
	FUNCTION: Analyzing problems, explaining and justifying

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are given thinking hats. They get into groups according to the facilitator's distribution and the number in the thinking hat. Once they are in groups, they are assigned roles (two psychologists and two nutritionists) and are given the case study. They have to read the situation and brainstorm ideas.

Case study

A patient, who is sixteen years old, is feeling desperate. She is an athletic woman so she does exercise every day. She goes running for one hour every morning, and she goes to the gym in the afternoon. Additionally, she has a strict diet. However, she is not happy with her physical appearance. She thinks she is fat and she is gaining weight much more. Her temper is uncontrollable at times. What would you do or what could you help this teenager.

Task:

The four students work together taking their professional roles. They have to analyze the situation and explore alternatives to help the teenager have a regular life. To do this, they have to support their ideas with scientific information. They

keep the conversation going until they have a determined written plan to solve the problem.

Post task:

The written plan is posted on the walls. Students go around the classroom and they choose the best alternative to solve the problem. Finally, the facilitator surveys and identifies the best plan. A general rationale is given to the whole class by the professionals.

Useful language:

Analyzing problems:

In my opinion, the major problem is....

I think that..... is causing the

Our main concern should be....


Explaining and justifying:

The main reason for insisting on.....

It is important to remember that....

The main point that we should

STRATEGY 5: POSTER CAROUSEL

	TOPIC: My ideal major
	AIM: Students will be able to justify why they have chosen their majors.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Solo work Student to students
	FUNCTION: Explaining and justifying

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are asked to think of their majors at the university. They have to brainstorm reasons why they have chosen the major. They also look for pictures that can be used to prepare a poster.

Task:

Students first work individually in order to prepare their posters. Once their posters are finished, they start presenting the reasons why they chose their majors. Students go around the classroom listening to their classmates and asking questions.

Post task:

Having heard most of the presentations, students are asked to analyze the similarities and differences of the reasons they have to choose a major. They have to complete a Venn diagram with this information.

Useful language:

Introducing the subject:

Today, we are going to talk about.....

The subject/topic/focus of our discussion is.....

Explaining and justifying:


One of the main reasons why I choseis that.....

Biochemistry/Medicine/ Food engineering... is my overriding motivation in the professional field because.....

Three reasons why I made this decision are.....first,.....second,.....third,....

Another important fact why I selected this is.....

STRATEGY 6: INFORMATION GAP

	TOPIC: The best candidate for the job
	AIM: Students will be able to discuss the personal qualities and qualifications of three candidates for the job.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Students to students
	FUNCTION: Stating opinion, agreeing and disagreeing

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are asked: what would you take into consideration to select workers if you were the human resources managers in a company? Ideas are written on the board. Then students are given a card with the situation and information about one candidate. Every student has to present the candidate as the best option for the job.

Task:

Students pretend they have a meeting among managers. Each manager has the information of a candidate. They have to discuss who would be the best candidate to work in the company. Finally, they make a decision and one member of each group shares the result with the whole class.

Post task:

After the results are presented, students ask questions to inquire about the decision. Finally, they reflect on the experience.

Useful language:

Introducing the subject:

Today, we are going to talk about.....

The subject/topic/focus of our discussion is.....

Stating opinion:

The way I see things.....

In my opinion, this candidate.....

I'd rather Because.....

Agreeing:

I agree.....

That is a good option....

I think we'd analyze.....


I totally agree with you.....

Disagreeing:

I see your point, however, I think.....

I respect your opinion, nevertheless, I think.

STRATEGY 7: TALK

	TOPIC: Various topics selected by the students
	AIM: Students will be able to give a talk on a selected topic by structuring it suitably.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Solo work Student to students
	FUNCTION: Giving a talk

Pre task:

Students are shown some videos about things that are happening around the world. Some information is provided about the different topics. Each student has to choose a topic and do research to organize their ideas. They have to structure their talk and prepare materials for a 2-minute presentation.

Task:

Students are given thinking hats so as to organize the order of the talks. Half of the class presents their talk first and then the other half does the same. While students listen to their classmates' talks, they have to write questions on post-it notes. The post-it notes are stuck on a question corner poster.

Post task:

Students arrange the classroom in a horseshoe. Two students are chosen to be the leader and the other is the assistant. Students take the post-it notes and some

students volunteer to answer the questions. The facilitator gives feedback as needed.

Useful language:

Introducing the subject:

Today, we are going to talk about.....

The subject/topic/focus of our discussion is.....

The topic of my talk/presentation/speech is....

Stating the purpose:

We are here today to decide/learn about/discuss....

In my presentation today I'll be discussing...

What I'd like to do today is to present....

Outlining main points/sequencing/length:

I've divided my presentation into four parts/sections. They are.....


My presentation will consist of...

Firstly/First of all.....

Thirdly/and then we come to.....

Finally/lastly I'd like to...

STRATEGY 8: PROJECT PROPOSAL

	TOPIC: Making a city a better place to live.
	AIM: Students will be able to present a proposal so as to make their city a better place to live.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Students to students
	FUNCTION: Expressing opinion, suggesting

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are told that the major of the city is looking for the best proposals to make of the city a better place to live. They are given the basics of the contest and are asked to make a list of things that can improve life in the city.

Task:

Students get together in groups of four or five. They have to discuss alternatives by presenting supporting ideas and examples. They also have to prepare a proposal to be presented to the major. A poster should be elaborated with all the ideas they have as a group. Additionally, a spokesperson is chosen for the presentation. Once the material is ready, students take turns presenting their proposals. One student from every group is chosen to be part of the jury.

Post task:

The members of the jury present the results and explain the criteria they consider in order to select a certain proposal as the winner.

Useful language:

Expressing opinion:

I think...

Personally, I believe the city needs....

It seems that.....

The way I see it,.....

Suggesting:

There should be a..... in the city.

What about implementing a.....?

A swimming pool/ more police stations should be built in order to.....

There are some things that can be done to make of the city a better place.

First,..... /second.....


Presenting results:

Having analyzed the following criteria....., we conclude.....

After doing an exhaustive analysis of the proposals, our final decision is.....

We want to inform that the proposal is the winner because.....

STRATEGY 9: INSIDE AND OUTSIDE CIRCLE

	TOPIC: Towards success
	AIM: Students will be able to discuss and report their goals and ambitions to a successful life.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Solo work Student to student
	FUNCTION: Expressing future goals, reporting

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are shown a photo. They are asked to write a list of ideas. Then the whole class shares their ideas. The facilitator presents the topic and students ask questions. A list of questions is written on the board. Finally, every student is given a thinking hat.

Task:

Students use the numbers on each thinking hat to form two circles. The students who have odd numbers (1,3,5..) form the inside circle and the even numbers (2,4,6..) form the outside circle. Students have to stand up face to face. They take turns asking and answering questions and taking notes from the discussion.

Post task:

Once the interaction finishes, students organize their notes and prepare a report of their classmates' ideas to reach success. Some learners present the report to the class.

Useful language:

Expressing future goals

I want...

I'd like to.....

I'm thinking of.....

As soon as I finish college, I.....

If I succeed in....., I will (not).....

If I ever manage to....., I'll.....

If I had the chance to....., I'd.....The subject/topic/focus of our discussion is.....

Reporting:


According to our previous conversation, my classmates want.....

Let me share some of my classmates' goals.....

.....told me that.....she/he hopes to.....

Most of my classmates are thinking of.....

STRATEGY 10: INTERVIEW

	TOPIC Learning about an expert's life
	AIM: Students will be able to interview an expert in a TV show.
	INTERACTION PATTERN: Student to student
	FUNCTION: Asking questions-interviewing, stating opinion

Procedure:

Pre task:

Students are asked to think of a person (in science) they admire and the questions they would like to ask him/her. They write a list of questions about personal and professional achievements. Then they compare the questions with their classmates. Finally, they are asked to write a 10-question questionnaire to interview the admired expert.

Task:

Students work in pairs. Now one student is the interviewer and the other is the interviewee. They take turns asking and answering the questions in a TV show. Then they switch roles and videotape their interviews.

Post task:

Students are asked to join another pair and take turns watching the interviews. They have to analyze and state their opinions on their classmates' performance.

Useful language:

Opening an interview:

Today, we are glad to have Dr..... with us.

Welcome to our show.

An important professional is visiting us today. He/She is....

Asking questions and interviewing:

We would like to know how you feel helping the society with your inventions (discoveries, etc).....

We have four main questions. First,.....

Now talking about your personal/professional life, what has been the most remarkable achievement?

What has inspired you to do what you do?

Stating opinion:

It seems to me that ...

I am of the opinion that .../ I take the view that ..

I must admit that ...

I cannot deny that ...

I think/believe/suppose ...

I am sure/certain/convinced that ...

References

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Annexes

Rubric to evaluate students when facilitators try any of the strategies described in this booklet.

**TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF AMBATO
POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM
LANGUAGES CENTER**

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ TOTAL: _____

CRITERIA	GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY	FLUENCY		PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION
		FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT		
3	-Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. -Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics.	-Smooth and fluid speech, few to no hesitations; no attempts to search for words; volume is excellent.	-Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. -Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. -Uses a range of cohesive devices.	-Is intelligible. -Intonation is generally appropriate -Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. -Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.	-Initiates and responds appropriately. -Maintains and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
2	-Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. -Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.	-Speech is relatively smooth; some hesitation and unevenness caused by rephrasing and searching for words; volume wavers.	-Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. -Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. -Uses basic cohesive devices.	-Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	-Initiates and responds appropriately. -Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
1	-Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. -Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics.	-Speech is slow, hesitant and strained except for short memorized phrases; difficult to perceive continuity in speech inaudible.	-Produces responses which are characterized by short phrases and frequent hesitation. -Repeats information or digresses from the topic.	-Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	-Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. -Requires prompting and support.

Adapted from Cambridge English Language Assessment (UCLES 2011) and speaking rubrics.

6.7 Methodology. Operational model

Table 26. Operational model

PHASES	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE	DATE
1. PLANNING	Present the proposal to the authorities of the Language Center in order to get a permit to socialize the booklet with professors.	A meeting with the director of the Languages Center to get the authorization to socialize the booklet with professors.	A letter to the director of the Languages Center.	Researcher	May 1 st , 2018
2. SOCIALIZATION	Present the results gotten in the research. Explain to the English professors the methodology and components of the booklet. Encourage professors to use the booklet in their classrooms.	Getting ready with the materials and classroom to have the meeting. Presentation of the results gotten in the research. Explanation of the methodology and components of the booklet. Conversation to motivate professors to use the booklet.	Power point presentation Computer Projector Booklet	Researcher	May 4 th , 2018
3. APPLICATION	Use the booklet when doing speaking practice in the classroom.	Booklet implementation by a group of professors.	Booklet	Researcher English professors	May 7 th , 2018 – May 21 st , 2018
4. EVALUATION	Evaluate the results gotten after the implementation of the booklet.	A meeting with the group of professors to analyze the results gotten after using the booklet in the classroom.	Checklist	Researcher	May 25 th , 2018

Created by: Villacis, W. (2018)

6.8 Administration of the proposal

The proposal will be administered by the researcher who is going to organize all the activities necessary to implement the booklet in the institution. Additionally, the researcher will closely keep track of all the process described in the Operational Model.

6.9 Evaluation of the proposal

Receiving information about the effectiveness of the proposal is relevant to the researcher because it can help the investigator to confirm the usefulness of the booklet or make changes to improve it. The following questions were used to determine the evaluation methodology.

Table 27. Basic questions

BASIC QUESTIONS	EXPLANATION
1. What is evaluated?	A booklet of interactive and communicative strategies to improve oral fluency is evaluated.
2. Why is it evaluated?	It is evaluated because the researcher wants to confirm the efficiency the strategies have on the development of the speaking skill and in particular oral fluency.
3. Which criteria are considered?	The researcher considers the following criteria: appropriateness of the strategies, design, content, methodological approach and effectiveness on the development of oral fluency.
4. Who evaluates?	The group of teachers who use the booklet in the classroom and the researcher.
5. When is it evaluated?	It is evaluated in May. (May 7 th , 2018 – May 21 st , 2018)
6. Which are the sources of information?	The group of teachers, students and authorities of the Languages Center.

Created by: Villacis (2018)

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. PET test



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF AMBATO
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PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST (PET) - SPEAKING TEST

(Adapted from Cambridge English Language Assessment (UCLES 2011))

TEST 1

Part 1 (2-3 minutes)

Tasks: Identifying oneself; giving information about oneself; talking about interests.

Phase 1

Examiner

A/B Good morning/afternoon/evening.
Can I have your mark sheets, please?

A/B I'm..... and this is.....
He/ She is just going to listen to us.

A Now, what's your name?
Thank you.

B And what's your name?
Thank you.

Student B, what's your surname?
How do you spell it?
Thank you
And, Student A, what's your surname?
How do you spell it?
Thank you

Back-up prompts:
How do you write your
family / second name?

(Ask the following questions. Use
students' names throughout. Ask student A
first)
Where do you live / come from?
Do you work or are you a student in...?
What do you do / study?
Thank you
(Repeat for student B)

Do you live in.....?

Have you got a job?
What job do you do?
What do you study?
What subjects do you study?

Part 3 (3 minutes)

PEOPLE AT LUNCHTIME

Tasks Describing people and places; saying where people and thing are and what different people are doing.
Examiner: Say to both students

Now, I'd like each of you to talk on your own about something. I am going to give each of you a photograph of people at lunchtime.

Student A, here is your photograph. (Ask student B, but I'd like you to talk about it. Student B, you just listen. I'll give you your photograph in a moment.

Student A, please tell us what you can see in the photograph.



Source: BBC News – In pictures: Lunchtime in France

https://www.google.com.ec/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwidiv_k9tfYAhVC8IMKHSUnCdAQjRwIBw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.co.uk%2Fnews%2Fworld-radio-and-tv-17548318&psig=AOvVaw2ScyHfnMGoqypuKlrkyo6J&ust=1516035579208746



Source: People sitting on crates outside WOKIT restaurant at lunchtime
<https://www.google.com.ec/url?sa=i&rc=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi5mJ6L-NfYAhWK8YMKHfuJCyoQjRwIBw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.alamy.com%2Fstock-photo-people-sitting-on-crates-outside-wokit-restaurant-at-lunchtime-in-86814919.html&psig=AOvVaw2ScyHfnMGoqypuKlrkyo6J&ust=1516035579208746>



Source: Photography by Andrea Broroczky –WordPress.com Lunchtime in a different way.
<https://www.google.com.ec/url?sa=i&rc=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjcyfik99fYAhVE44MKHTkTBXgQjRwIBw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fandreaboroczkyphotography.wordpress.com%2F2014%2F04%2F23%2Flunchtime-in-a-different-way%2F&psig=AOvVaw2ScyHfnMGoqypuKlrkyo6J&ust=1516035579208746>

Student A: approximately one minute

If there is a need to intervene, prompts rather than direct questions should be used.

Ask student B to close his/her book.

Examiner:

Now, student B, here is your photograph. It also shows people at lunchtime. (Ask student B to look at the photo) Please show it to student A and tell us what you can see in the photograph.

Part 4 (3 minutes)

Tasks: talking about one's likes and dislikes; expressing opinions

Examiner: Say to both students

Your photograph showed people at lunchtime. Now, I'd like you to talk together about what you usually do at lunchtime, during the week and at the weekend.

Allow the students enough time to complete the task without intervention.

Prompt only if necessary.

Back-up prompts

1. Talk about what you do at lunchtime.
2. Talk about lunchtime at the weekend.
3. Talk about what you don't like doing at lunchtime.

Thank you. That's the end of the test.

Annex 2. Rubric

PRE-TEST

**TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF AMBATO
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LANGUAGES CENTER**

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ AGE: _____ GENDER: ____ TOTAL: _____

CRI TERIA	GRAMMAR VOCABULARY	AND		PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION
		FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smooth and fluid speech, few to no hesitations; no attempts to search for words; volume is excellent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. - Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. - Uses a range of cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is intelligible. - Intonation is generally appropriate - Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. - Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiates and responds appropriately. - Maintains and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speech is relatively smooth; some hesitation and unevenness caused by rephrasing and searching for words; volume wavers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. - Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. - Uses basic cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiates and responds appropriately. - Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speech is slow, hesitant and strained except for short memorized phrases; difficult to perceive continuity in speech inaudible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces responses which are characterized by short phrases and frequent hesitation. - Repeats information or digresses from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. - Requires prompting and support.

Adapted from Cambridge English Language Assessment (UCLES 2011) and speaking rubrics

POST-TEST

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF AMBATO
POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM
LANGUAGES CENTER

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

AGE: _____

GENDER: _____

TOTAL: _____

CRITERIA	GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT		PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION
		FLUENCY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smooth and fluid speech, few to no hesitations; no attempts to search for words; volume is excellent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. - Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. - Uses a range of cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is intelligible. - Intonation is generally appropriate - Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. - Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiates and responds appropriately. - Maintains and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speech is relatively smooth; some hesitation and unevenness caused by rephrasing and searching for words; volume wavers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. - Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. - Uses basic cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiates and responds appropriately. - Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. - Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speech is slow, hesitant and strained except for short memorized phrases; difficult to perceive continuity in speech inaudible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produces responses which are characterized by short phrases and frequent hesitation. - Repeats information or digresses from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. - Requires prompting and support.

Adapted from Cambridge English Language Assessment (UCLES 2011) and speaking rubrics

Annex 3. Survey



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
DIRECCIÓN DE POSGRADO

SURVEY TO STUDENTS

Research topic:

LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION IN THE SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Objective:

Determine the effect of learner-centered instruction on the speaking skill development in the Centro de Idiomas in Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Instructions:

Please read the questions carefully. Mark your answer with an X.

SURVEY QUESTIONS		ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
1.	Does the teacher make you find and use resources (do research on the net, create situations, use photos) to do speaking tasks and solve problems to improve your oral fluency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	How often do you participate actively in tasks and activities that require lots of interaction and communication in class?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Does the application of interaction strategies (information gap, carousel, gallery walks) in the class help you improve your speaking fluency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Do you consider that, at this level, you are able to express your ideas using appropriate words and expressions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	When having a conversation, do you speak easily, quickly, with no mistakes and no pauses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		VERY SATISFIED	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	NOT SATISFIED
6.	How do you feel about your ability to communicate fluently in English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		VERY APPROPRIATE	SOMEWHAT APPROPRIATE	NOT APPROPRIATE
7.	To what extent are your speed and flow of language production appropriate to keep a conversation going?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!

Annex 4. Student t-Distribution
 Apéndice III

Valores percentiles (t_p)
 correspondientes a
 la distribución t de Student
 con ν grados de libertad
 (área sombreada = p)



ν	$t_{.995}$	$t_{.99}$	$t_{.975}$	$t_{.95}$	$t_{.90}$	$t_{.80}$	$t_{.75}$	$t_{.70}$	$t_{.60}$	$t_{.55}$
1	63.66	31.82	12.71	6.31	3.08	1.376	1.000	.727	.325	.158
2	9.92	6.96	4.30	2.92	1.89	1.061	.816	.617	.289	.142
3	5.84	4.54	3.18	2.35	1.64	.978	.765	.584	.277	.137
4	4.60	3.75	2.78	2.13	1.53	.941	.741	.569	.271	.134
5	4.03	3.36	2.57	2.02	1.48	.920	.727	.559	.267	.132
6	3.71	3.14	2.45	1.94	1.44	.906	.718	.553	.265	.131
7	3.50	3.00	2.36	1.90	1.42	.896	.711	.549	.263	.130
8	3.36	2.90	2.31	1.86	1.40	.889	.706	.546	.262	.130
9	3.25	2.82	2.26	1.83	1.38	.883	.703	.543	.261	.129
10	3.17	2.76	2.23	1.81	1.37	.879	.700	.542	.260	.129
11	3.11	2.72	2.20	1.80	1.36	.876	.697	.540	.260	.129
12	3.06	2.68	2.18	1.78	1.36	.873	.695	.539	.259	.128
13	3.01	2.65	2.16	1.77	1.35	.870	.694	.538	.259	.128
14	2.98	2.62	2.14	1.76	1.34	.868	.692	.537	.258	.128
15	2.95	2.60	2.13	1.75	1.34	.866	.691	.536	.258	.128
16	2.92	2.58	2.12	1.75	1.34	.865	.690	.535	.258	.128
17	2.90	2.57	2.11	1.74	1.33	.863	.689	.534	.257	.128
18	2.88	2.55	2.10	1.73	1.33	.862	.688	.534	.257	.127
19	2.86	2.54	2.09	1.73	1.33	.861	.688	.533	.257	.127
20	2.84	2.53	2.09	1.72	1.32	.860	.687	.533	.257	.127
21	2.83	2.52	2.08	1.72	1.32	.859	.686	.532	.257	.127
22	2.82	2.51	2.07	1.72	1.32	.858	.686	.532	.256	.127
23	2.81	2.50	2.07	1.71	1.32	.858	.685	.532	.256	.127
24	2.80	2.49	2.06	1.71	1.32	.857	.685	.531	.256	.127
25	2.79	2.48	2.06	1.71	1.32	.856	.684	.531	.256	.127
26	2.78	2.48	2.06	1.71	1.32	.856	.684	.531	.256	.127
27	2.77	2.47	2.05	1.70	1.31	.855	.684	.531	.256	.127
28	2.76	2.47	2.05	1.70	1.31	.855	.683	.530	.256	.127
29	2.76	2.46	2.04	1.70	1.31	.854	.683	.530	.256	.127
30	2.75	2.46	2.04	1.70	1.31	.854	.683	.530	.256	.127
40	2.70	2.42	2.02	1.68	1.30	.851	.681	.529	.255	.126
60	2.66	2.39	2.00	1.67	1.30	.848	.679	.527	.254	.126
120	2.62	2.36	1.98	1.66	1.29	.845	.677	.526	.254	.126
∞	2.58	2.33	1.96	1.645	1.28	.842	.674	.524	.253	.126

Fuente: R. A. Fisher y F. Yates, *Statistical Tables for Biological, Agricultural and Medical Research* (Tablas de estadísticas para la investigación biológica, agrícola y médica) (5a. edición), Tabla III, Oliver and Boyd Ltd., Edinburgh, con autorización de los autores y editores.

Source: (Spiegel & Stephens, 2009, p. 563)

Annex 5. Assessing students with the collaboration of an invited English teacher.



**APROBACIÓN DE USO DE INFORMACIÓN
(ACTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO)**

TITULO DE INVESTIGACIÓN:

LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION IN THE SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

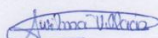
Yo, Wilma Villacís, estudiante en la Maestría en Enseñanza de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (TEFL) en la Universidad Técnica de Ambato en la ciudad de Ambato, invito a usted por ser estudiante de la institución a participar en un estudio que examina la producción oral, específicamente la fluidez con la cual usted se comunica en el idioma Inglés.

A través de este estudio, esperamos examinar la relación entre el aprendizaje basado en el estudiante y la producción oral (fluidez) en el idioma. Si usted decide participar en este estudio, usted participará en un examen inicial (pre-test), encuesta, intervención durante en sus clases de inglés y el examen final (post-test). Se le dará la oportunidad de discutir y verificar las conclusiones finales hechas por el investigador.

El pre-test y la encuesta se llevarán a cabo en el mes de noviembre, la intervención en los meses de noviembre y diciembre y el post-test en el mes de diciembre del 2017. Su participación en la encuesta puede durar entre 1-3 minutos. No habrá compensación monetaria por su participación.

Este estudio es parte del trabajo de tesis. La información que sea obtenida y recogida durante este estudio se utilizará en el desarrollo y presentación de tesis y a la vez se informa que su identidad será protegida al máximo.

Su firma indica que usted ha decidido participar, que ha leído la información suministrada y que está de acuerdo con lo mencionado anteriormente. Sin embargo, al firmar no significa que usted renuncia a sus derechos legales.



Firma del Investigador

LIST OF STUDENTS

STUDENTS' NAMES	SIGNATURE
Almeida Garcia Tito Israel	
Chacha Toapanta Blenda Elizabeth	
Chango Casanova Daniela Estefania	
Chifla Ruiz Gabriela Estefania	
Freire Zurita Juan Antonio	
Gavilanes Punina Karen	
Guerra Benitez Tommy Alejandro	
Guerrero Rojas Alexandra Lizbeth	
Jácome Balarezo Gabriela Estefanía	
Loor Mosquera Carlos Iván	
López Chamorro Nathaly de los Angeles	
López Inga Erika Gabriela	
Mayorga Naranjo Carolina Estefania	
Palacios Erazo Mishell Dayanara	
Pérez Gavilanes Christian Saul	
Pérez Moreta Roberth Ivan	
Pesantes Díaz Alexander Dario	
Quisnia Aldas Erika Vanessa	
Rivera Guerrero Christian Giovanni	
Robalino Castelo Honatra Jose	
Salinas Cordovilla Washington Bladimir	
Salinas Pérez Ximena Estefanía	
Tacco García Ronny Steve	
Tobar Viera Evelyn Vanessa	
Untuña Toalombo Verónica de la Angeles	
Villalba Barona Thalia Johanna	
Vite Constante Jhonatan Paul	

LIST OF STUDENTS

STUDENTS' NAMES	SIGNATURE
Acosta Pérez Cristina Paola	
Aillón Maroto Iveth Aracelly	
Barreros Peralvo Dayana Araceli	
Chicaiza Panata Paola Nataly	
Freire Clavijos Ronaldo Manuel	
Gómez Reyes Dario Javier	
Guachamin Zambrano Scarlet Nathaly	
Guanín Chiluiza Enma Lorena	
Jerez Chango Felix Roberto	
Jimenez Calvache Andrea Lorena	
Lasluisa Pachacama Katherine Lizbeth	
López Benalcazar Sandy Eleana	
Lozada Carrillo Angel Dario	
Manobanda Manobanda Alex Daniel	
Mañay Chicaiza Johana Carolina	
Moreno Castellano Jonathan Xavier	
Muñoz Marines Bianca Carolina	
Pantoja Muso Jose Luis	
Peñafiel Luna Tannia Aracelly	
Pérez Campos Elizabeth Marisol	
Pérez Peralvo Joselyn Andrea	
Pilla Anancolla Rosa Angelica	
Rodríguez Peña Vanessa Karina	
Rueda Puente Hugo Guillermo	
Sanchez Nuñez Pablo Alexis	
Sánchez Zuñiga Kleber Simon	
Torres Aldaz Dayana Estefania	
Yungan Azote Jessica Alexandra	



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
CENTRO DE IDIOMAS

28 NOV 2017

Oficio Nro. UTA-CI-2017-0117-O

Ambato, 07 de diciembre de 2017

Doctores
Elsa Hernández Chérrez
DIRECTORA DEL CENTRO DE IDIOMAS
UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
Presente

Asunto: Autorización

De mi c
Licenciada Mg.
Wilma Guadalupe Villacís Villacís
Docente Centro de Idiomas
UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
En su Despacho

De mi consideración:

En atención a su solicitud recibida el 28 de noviembre de 2017; se autoriza la aplicación del trabajo investigación de tesis con el tema: "**LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION IN THE SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**"; con los estudiantes del nivel B1+ Intermedio, a usted asignados en el Ciclo Académico Septiembre 2017 - Febrero 2018.

Con sentimientos de distinguida consideración.

Atentamente,



[Firma manuscrita]
Dra. Elsa de los Angeles Hernández Chérrez
DIRECTORA CENTRO DE IDIOMAS

DR. GALO NARANJO LÓPEZ, PH.D
RECTOR

Dirección: Av. Los Chasquis y Río Payamino
Teléfono: (+593) 3700090 ext. 81801-81802
Ambato - Ecuador

www.uta.edu.ec

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