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Perfil de investigación previo al informe final de trabajo de titulación y obtención del Título de Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación Mención: Inglés.

"Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and the Communicative Competence"

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A. PRELIMINARY PAGES

DECLARATION PAGE

I declare this undergraduate dissertation entitled **"Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and the Communicative Competence"** is the result of the author's investigation and has reached the conclusions and recommendations described in the present study.

Comments expressed in this report are the author's responsibility.

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AUTHOR

TO:

Manuel, Lucila, Carlos, and Elsa.
You are the ones who deserve the credit
of what I've got so far. I am just a reflect
of your effort. The person I am now is
thank to your love and dedication.

Ismael.

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Abstract

The English language has four skills which are Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading, but this research focuses only on one of them which is the speaking skill. For the learning of this skill as well as the other three, it is necessary to use certain strategies. In this case, the research will focus on pronunciation strategies. This research aims to analyze the Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and their relationship with the communicative competence in students of the ninth semester of Idiomas major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. The methodology was qualitative and quantitative approached. First, the question two of speaking part from CAE exam was applied to determine the communicative competence of students. A rubric was used to grade the student's participation in the CAE exam. Then, to determine the study groups, the students' speaking academic performance was used. As Szyszka (2015) did on her research titled "Good English pronunciation users and their pronunciation learning strategies". The class was divided into Good Pronunciation Users (GPU) and Average Pronunciation Learners (APL). Once the students were classified in the study groups, an observation sheet was applied during several classes. Then, the information obtained from the observation sheets was analyzed. It was possible to determine that the most PLS used by GPU are the cognition (direct strategies) and metacognitive and affective (indirect strategies). It is reflected in their communicative competence scores so that it is concluded that there is an influence of the PLS in the Communicative Competence.

.

Key words: pronunciation strategies, relation, communicative competence, analysis.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Theoretical Framework

There has been lots of research about strategies to learn English for EFL students. It might be to improve the learning of reading, writing or listening. In Ecuador, one of the basic principles of the proposed curricula is focused on the communicative language. Language is a mean to communicate and interact with others rather than something that is just memorized theoretically. (Ministerio de Eduación , 2016). Based on the above, a student who aims to communicate whether in the academic environment or the professional field should be able to communicate his/her ideas and thoughts. Good pronunciation is not the only aspect that a student should domain but also must be competent in speaking and communicating through the use of language.

It is necessary to establish what Pronunciation-Learning Strategies are and what Communicative Competence is. Therefore, Pawlak & Szyszka (2018), mention that Pronunciation-Learning Strategies are specific actions used by learners to enhance their production of sounds of a particular language. In this case, language learners aim to learn English. They will follow a series of steps for successful strategic learning of English. When a learner chooses a strategy, he is aware that it is a tool for active and conscious learning. These strategies chosen by the learner will be different as the process of learning of English goes on. In other words, the strategies are not going to work the same way as the process of learning which is in constant change. Not all strategies are applicable in the same way. Perhaps strategies that were suitable for his learning purpose, in the beginning, are not enough after some time of use.

Throughout the time, pronunciation learning strategies have been classified in many forms. It depends on the author's point of view about the language and its use. Shi (2017) starts with Rubin (1975) who said that learning strategies can be taught and learned once they are identified and proved to be effective for learners. So, Rubin proposed three main strategies classification. Cognitive and metacognitive are part of

the first group of strategies. The second main strategies are communicative and the third group is social strategies. He also, identified six direct strategies. (1) Clarification, (2) inductive reasoning, (3) deductive reasoning, (4) practice, (5) memorization, and (6) monitoring. On the other hand, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) proposed other strategies' classification. They proposed the metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective strategies. While Rubin classified into six direct strategies the model of O'Malley and Chamot included such strategies into their three main strategies' classification.

Although there are many similarities in the strategies' classification, there is not a consensus on it. Shi (2017) mentions one of the most used classifications of PLS made by Oxford (1990). It states that Pronunciation-Learning Strategies are divided between direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are actions involved in the mental processing of the language. It is divided into (1) memory, which is the storage or retrieves of information. E.g. learners can store new words/vocabulary using flashcards in which they can add information of the word such as meaning, synonyms, antonyms, phonemes, and everything related to the word that learners consider is important to learn or remember. As well, learners can use the new/difficult words in a different context or group words e.g. regular and irregular verbs. (2) Cognition enables learners to understand and produce the language. E.g. Analyze grammar rules, infer and reason the use of prefixes, suffixes, articles, conjunctions, punctuation, and so on. Or to analyze information, why certain verbs in the past tense are added suffixes d/ed or why the verb changes. (3) Compensation is the overcome of limitations despite of the knowledge limitations of the language. E.g. learners can use gestures when they do not how to say something. Commonly this might happen when the learner lacks enough knowledge of grammar or vocabulary. For these, learners can use gestures like in body language. Another example of compensation is guessing meaning from context.

Indirect strategies are actions that are not directly related to language processing but they are as important as the direct strategies. They are also classified in (1) metacognitive, is regulated and self-directed learning. E.g. planning, setting goals, evaluating the own learning, self-evaluation of errors in the learning process. This strategy has to do with the self-management of the learning. (2) Social strategy has to

do with the learning of the language throughout the interaction. E.g. It is how learners interact with native speakers or their peers. Questioning for clarification, improvement of cultural understanding e.g. greetings, social manners, expressions, and everything related to the culture of the target language. (3) Affective strategy is related to the learners 'emotions about the language. E.g. self-motivation to continue practicing, to talk in public, to talk to native speakers, self-encouragement and attitude.

Eka Permatasari (2019) states that factors like learning goals, topic of material, type of task, teaching techniques, and learning style will influence on strategies application while learning pronunciation. The above factors demonstrated to influence on student's enjoyment and motivation to learn. As it is stated by Eka, pronunciation strategies effectiveness will vary according to aspects that not only depends on students or the professor. These factors can be found in the learning environment of students.

 Hannawa & Spitzberg (2015) state that communicative competence is the capability to participate in a communicative environment. It is an active exchange of information and the capability of a person to adapt himself to the input produced by one or more people that are part of a social context. Also, the author Mart (2018), cited Savignon (1972) and Canela & Swain (1980) definitions of communicative competence. Savignon viewed communicative competence as an ability to function in a communicative setting. On the other hand, Canela & Swain defined communicative competence as the knowledge of the langue and its use in communicative circumstances. The author Hymes (1972) refers to communicative competence as the knowledge people have about the language and their capability to use it. Therefore, Communicative Competence is the ability of people to communicate in different situations by making practical use of knowledge of the language and using it to communicate. Despite the different opinions about the communicative competence model, Hymes mentions four components of communicative competence and they are: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discursive competence and Strategic competence.

The authors Bulut & Wu (2016) state that Linguistic competence is referred to the knowledge a native speaker has about its mother tongue. It allows him to notice if the expressions used by EFL learners are grammatically accurate. This knowledge of the language is unconscious, and somehow it is innate. Although native speakers did not study anything about grammar, phonology, or whatever subject related to the use of language. They will be capable to identify when someone that its mother tongue is not English makes a mistake. If a non-native speaker says something that is not grammatically accurate, it will be easily identified by a native speaker because for him it does not make sense at all. In some way, all people around the world are linguistically competent, the only thing that makes them different from one another, is their mother tongue.

As the world is in constant change, people who can communicate in politics and economy fields have a clear advantage, so mastering a second language has become a vital skill for them. So, for that people, sociolinguistic competence is the pragmatical and sociolinguistic awareness of the language as well as its linguistic and social appropriate use (Dikilitas, 2015). In other words, the speaker can use a language that is not his own despite cultural limitations. Therefore, aspects such as the style, register, and the context in which the speaker is, will influence his manner to use the language to communicate. This means knowing how and where to use the language.

The staff institution (Cuerpo de Maestros, 2016) defines the discursive competence as the students' ability to understand and produce oral and written texts. It also refers to the word organization, sentences, and phrases to create texts. These texts integrate cohesion devices (e.g. synonyms, pronouns, transitional words) which are used for a better connection between individual sentences. On the other hand, coherence is the logical connection between words, sentences, and paragraphs. All these aspects of discursive competence will help the student to use his knowledge of the language to produce texts linguistically and socially appropriate.

Finally, the author (Sabri Thabit, 2018) says that strategic competence are/is verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies that will help the speaker to adjust to possible mistakes in communication. Therefore, it has to do with the ability of the speaker to

repair possible communication failures before, during, and after it occurs. So, in circumstances where the speaker does not know how to say a certain word, he can use other words that express the same idea in order not to interrupt the communication process. This communicative disruption might be due to the deficient sociolinguistic or linguistic competence.

1.2. Investigative Background

A study done by the researcher Szyszka (2015) with the title "Good English pronunciation users and their pronunciation learning strategies" which endeavored to reach a tentative profile of a Good Pronunciation User (GPU). For that a survey was used to ascertain which variables affect their pronunciation learning. Szyszka applied a questionnaire and examined the frequency of PLS using the Strategy Inventory for Learning Pronunciation (SILP). The items represented memory, cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategies. It was applied to 61 participants the same who were divided into two groups. The first group was established by Good Pronunciation Users (GPU). They were 28 teachers from higher education and specialized in phonetics and phonology. The other group was established by 33 specializing teaching students in EFL. It was called Average Pronunciation Learners (APL). GPU mentioned some strategies such as mimicking native speakers, listening authentic songs and movies, imitating and repeating, checking or studying pronunciation in dictionaries, transcribing, following a notice-and-improve approach, learning songs by heart and finally feeling good about correct pronunciation. The above strategies contribute to the pronunciation learning success.

The author Sabri Thabit (2018) mentions some strategies or activities based on his own experience and research that might help students to enhance their communicative competence. He proposes to use social PLS such as oral conversations in pairs or groups, promote interaction between the whole class (teacher-students), literature no matter the genre it is going to provide authentic language input. It is also mentioned that role-plays help students to build up self-confidence, develop communicative competence and learn more things related to the English culture. Additionally, this scholar suggests using technology, watching English tv, reading newspapers and,

using social media tools. These strategies mentioned by Sabri Thabit are beneficial for learners because increase the exposure to the target language making them interact rather than learning language theoretically. It is important to note that the learning strategy that the student use must coincide with the learning objective. It means if the student´s objective is to pronounce better. Students must seek strategies that serve this purpose and apply them in his English lessons. If the strategies are not working according to the learning objectives, he/she must change it until he/she finds a strategy that works for him/her.

As the researcher Sardegna (2011) states the pronunciation enhancement is a process that depends on the amount of time students dedicate to practice. It is progressive which means that students will be better at pronunciation depending on how constant they are at practicing their pronunciation. No one is going to get results without practicing. A study done by Jantawong, Yuso, & Nilwichien (2018) titled "Language Learning Strategies Employed by High and Low Language Proficiency University Students in a Thai Context" provides a comment that supports this assertion. It is mentioned that a student commented: "I think I am not good enough in English. That is why I review the lesson every day. Paying attention in class is very important but you will gain more understanding if you review it again after the class."

Some studies reveal the benefits of the application of PLS. After carrying out an investigation in which controlled, and free activities were used. A research conducted by Chodkiewicz & Trepczynska (2014) aimed to find out whether there exists a positive relationship between the student´s use of PLS and their results in the production of English monothongs and diphthongs in free speech. The result was that there is a positive influence of the pronunciation learning strategies over the utterance of monothongs and diphthongs. They also find out that students, in average, use direct and indirect strategies in a same percentage. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that the indirect PLS are used a 10% more than the direct ones; and the most widely indirect PLS used are the metacognitive strategies. This research shows clearly the benefits of the use of PLS in the pronunciation of monothongs and diphthongs.

Further research done by the researcher Mirza (2015) in her research "ESL and EFL Learners Improve Differently in Pronunciation: The Case of Lebanon" which aimed to investigate whether there is a difference among French and English students in terms of English pronunciation after intervention of pronunciation learning strategies (PLS). The research demonstrates the benefits of the application of pronunciation learning strategies. To carry out the study, she applied the cognitive, and social PLS, which belongs to the direct, and indirect strategies respectively to a group of undergraduate EFL and ESL students. In a pre-test, this scholar reveals, among other mistakes, that learners mispronounce, with a high frequency, the interdental sounds /θ/ /ð/, they also have problems with the pronunciation of the –ed suffix of the past tense of regular verbs, and the pronunciation of /ə/. After twelve weeks of exposure to the PLS, a post-test was done, and the results were significantly better. In the pre-test, students got a mean score of 11.63, but once the application of the cognitive, and social strategies, the mean score was 18.9. It shows clearly, how beneficial the PLS are.

Other research conducted by Dwi Wulandari (2016) aimed to describe a phenomenon or process of how the students learn, improve and solve difficulty of English pronunciation, and understand the subjects' point of view of their strategies used. This scholar studied the PLS that help Indonesian students to utter accurately the sounds /v/, /tʃ/, and /ʃ/. She used the interview as the research instrument. It was determined that EFL learners use cognitive, compensation, affective, and metacognitive strategies. For example, learners record their voices, to assess their pronunciation. They also use their experience, or previous knowledge to guess the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Self-motivation is also another strategy**,** mentioned by students**,** that helps them to improve their pronunciation. The results gotten in this research proved that EFL learners that use the PLS above mentioned are able to overcome the difficulties to utter the sounds /v/, /tʃ/, and /ʃ/, and to improve their pronunciation in terms of sounds, stress, and intonation.

Besides the academic benefits, Szyszka (2017) has proved that the use of Pronunciation Learning Strategies has advantages at an emotional level. Her study aimed to initiate identification, description, classification, and evaluation of PLS, drew

attention to PLS as devised by advanced learners of English. This scholar demonstrated that compensation tactics reduced the levels of anxiety. The strategies used by students are: using synonyms, using printed, or electronic dictionaries to check the phonetic symbols, asking someone how to pronounce an unknown word, and imitating the movement of the mouth of the teacher. The reduction in language anxiety becomes important because it helps students to improve their perfomance during the speaking activities, and thus to achieve an approriate level of communicative competence. Without doubts, it is clear that Pronunciation Learning Strategies have proved advantages for EFL learners. Hence, teachers should encourage the development and use of them to help students during the process of language acquisition.

Pronunciation-Learning Strategies have been beneficial for learners. The direct strategies such as cognition and compensation as well as indirect strategies such as metacognitive and social strategies applied in the researches demonstrated that influence in the enhancement of students' pronunciation. Besides the strategies application, an important factor for student's enhancement was the period of application. It is also important to highlight that strategies were applied according to different purposes. In some cases, it was to enhance the mispronunciation of phonemes. In other cases, strategies were applied to enhance the intonation and stress. As can be noted from the review of the literature, the use of PLS has enough theoretical support to be consider as a good way to improve the communicative competence of EFL learners. In addition, the benefits of the use of PLS are well documented in some investigations. This shows that Pronunciation Learning Strategies have an impact on the development of the communicative competence. Consequently, this study will be focused on the effects that PLS have on EFL learners in Ecuador.

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1 General objective

- To analyze Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and its relationship in the Communicative Competence of students from Idiomas major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- To stablish the Pronunciation-Learning Strategies used by GPU.
- To determine the communicative competence of students throughout the application of question two of speaking part from CAE exam.
- To identify the influence of the Pronunciation-Learning Strategies in the development of the communicative competence.

1.4 Process to achieve the objectives

- To analyze Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and its relationship in the Communicative Competence of students from Idiomas major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

For the achievement of the general objective, it was necessary to fulfill some steps. First, an investigative background about the two variables was raised. Second, the methodology and research instrument were established by the researcher. Third, a CAE speaking test was applied to get the communicative competence of students. Fourth, the speaking academic performance of students was used to determine the observation groups. Fifth, an observation sheet was applied. Finally, the results of the observation sheets were analyzed and interpreted so the researcher could conclude whether there was or not a relationship between the Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and the Communicative Competence.

- To stablish the Pronunciation-Learning Strategies used by GPU.

It was necessary the application of an observation sheet. The gotten results from the observation sheet were analyzed and interpreted. The results contributed the researcher to establish what Pronunciation-Learning Strategies are used by the Good Pronunciation Users (GPU). The above-mentioned findings are detailed on chapter III.

- To determine the communicative competence of students throughout the application of question two of speaking part from CAE exam.

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With the aim to determine the communicative competence of students. It was applied question two of the speaking part from CAE exam to the students of ninth level. With the results of the exam, the researcher could determine the communicative competence of students.

- To identify the influence of the Pronunciation-Learning Strategies in the development of the communicative competence.

With the results of CAE speaking part two and the speaking academic performance of students it was possible to make a comparison. SPSS statistics software was used to determine the relation between the data obtained from the test and the academic performance. The result of the comparison helped the researcher to determine whether there is a relation or not between the PLS and the Communicative competence.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Resources

Human resources

Professors

Authorities

Students

Researcher

Institutional resources

Universidad Técnica de Ambato

Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación

Library

Research supplies

Laptop,

Photocopies,

Classroom.

Tv LCD.

Boards and projectors.

2.2 Methodology

The current research revolves around the qualitative and quantitative approaches. It is qualitative because it allows the researcher to observe the subjects of study directly in their natural learning environment, and to understand the reasons that make certain pronunciation learning strategies be more beneficial than others to help student improve their communicative competence. It is quantitative because numeric and statistical data will be taken from the students of the ninth level "A" of "Idiomas" major, throughout the application of CAE speaking part 2, and an observation sheet. The processing of information will provide the required evidence to validate the hypothesis, or to reject it.

At the beginning, CAE speaking part 2 was applied to the students. Then, the researcher was able to determine qualitatively, and quantitatively the elements of the Communicative Competence that EFL learners have developed so far. Then, students were classified according to their speaking academic performance. As Szyszka (2015) did on his research "Good English Pronunciation Users and their Pronunciation Learning Strategies" the students were divided into two groups: Good pronunciation users (GPU), and Average Pronunciation Learners (APL). Once the speaking level of students was determined, an observation sheet was used to determine which PLS are used by the group of GPUs. Finally, the researcher provided a short reflection about the PLS that are used by the GPU, but not by the APL, so that it can be determined whether the pronunciation learning strategies that are not used by the APL influence the development of their communicative competence or not.

The expert judgment was required to validate the observation sheet. Two experts evaluated it in terms of suitability and wording. The 24 items of the observation sheet were assessed using a Likert scale from 1 to 10, in which 1 was the lowest score, and 10 the highest one. Once all the information was gathered, the validity was calculated using the Aiken's V coefficient, in which the values ranged from 0.00, and 1.00. The latter represents a complete agreement between the judgments of the experts. According to Field (2009), 0.70 represents an acceptable reliability of the items. Since all the elements of the observation sheet got 0.71, as can be seen in chart 2, it can be concluded that the instrument meets the requirements to be applied.

Table 1 Aiken's V Coefficient results

	Item	SUITABILITY	QUESTION WORDING	TOTAL
Affective PLS	1	0.71	0.71	0.71
	2	0.71	0.71	0.71
	3	0.71	0.71	0.71
	4	0.71	0.71	0.71
Metacognitive PLS	5	0.71	0.71	0.71
	6	0.71	0.71	0.71
	7	0.71	0.71	0.71
	8	0.71	0.71	0.71
Social PLS	9	0.71	0.71	0.71
	10	0.71	0.71	0.71
	11	0.71	0.71	0.71
	12	0.71	0.71	0.71
Cognitive PLS	13	0,71	0,71	0,71
	14	0,71	0,71	0,71
	15	0,71	0,71	0,71
	16	0.71	0.71	0.71
Compensation PLS	17	0.71	0.71	0.71
	18	0.71	0.71	0.71
	19	0.71	0.71	0.71
	20	0.71	0.71	0.71
Memory PLS	21	0.71	0.71	0.71
	22	0.71	0.71	0.71
	23	0.71	0.71	0.71
	24	0.71	0.71	0.71

Source: Validation sheet

Done by: Molina, C. (2019)

2.3 Hypothesis

2.3.1 Null hypothesis

The Pronunciation-Learning Strategies do not influence positively the development of the Communicative Competence

2.3.2 Alternative hypothesis

The Pronunciation-Learning Strategies do influence positively the development of the Communicative Competence

2.3.3 Variables of the hypothesis

Independent variable: The Pronunciation-Learning Strategies

Dependent variable: The Communicative Competence

<h1 style="text-align:center">CHAPTER III</h1>

<h1 style="text-align:center">RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</h1>

3.1 Speaking academic performance

In order to make the study groups for the research. The academic performance of the students in speaking was used. For the classification of students, it was also used the assessment scale and equivalences of Universidad Técnica Ambato, which is in the Internal Learning Evaluation System, that stipulates the following equivalences to grade students.

Table 2 Rating scales for grades.

Scale	Equivalence
9.0 a 10.0	Excellent
8.0 a 8.9	Very Good
7.0 a 7.9	Good
4.0 a 6.9	Regular
0.0 a 3.9	Deficient

Source: Academic Council Technical University of Ambato.

Based on the scale presented and the qualifications granted by the teacher of Advanced English III in the speaking tests (Annex 5), the 14 ninth semester students were placed in each of these levels. The GPU group was considered taking into account the students with very good and excellent scores, obtaining the following results:

Table 3 Speaking academic performance.

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	1	7%
Very good	4	28%
Good	5	36%
Regular	4	29%
Deficient	0	0%
TOTAL	14	100%

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)
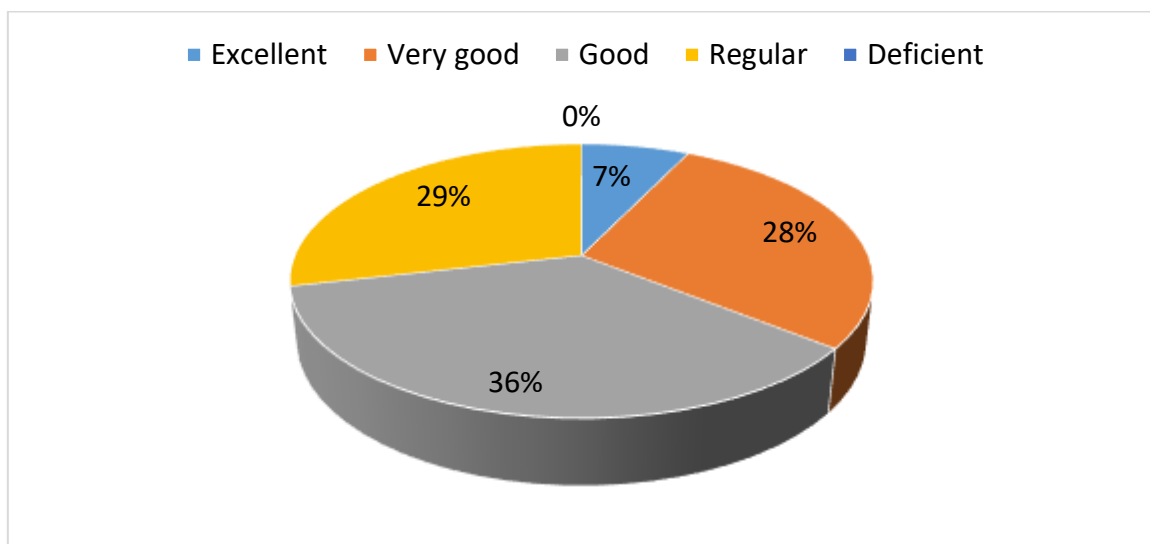
Figure 1 Speaking academic performance.

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

According to the qualifications of the speaking academic performance, the 36% of the ninth semester students had a good level of oral skill development, the 29% obtained a regular level, the 28% was very good and the last 7% was excellent. With this information, the majority of ninth semester students had a good level of development in speaking.

3.2 Communicative competence

To achieve the communicative competence of students, it was necessary to apply question number two of the speaking part from the CAE exam. A rubric was also used to evaluate the student's participation in the CAE exam. The initial rate was over 15 points, but for the research purposes, these results were converted over 10 points (Annex 6). The results obtained from the application of CAE speaking test were classified to determine the communicative competence of students.

Table 4 Communicative competence.

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
9.0 a 10.0	7	50%
8.0 a 8.9	2	14%
7.0 a 7.9	4	29%
4.0 a 6.9	1	7%
0.0 a 3.9	0	0%
TOTAL	14	100%

Source: Field research -CAE.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)
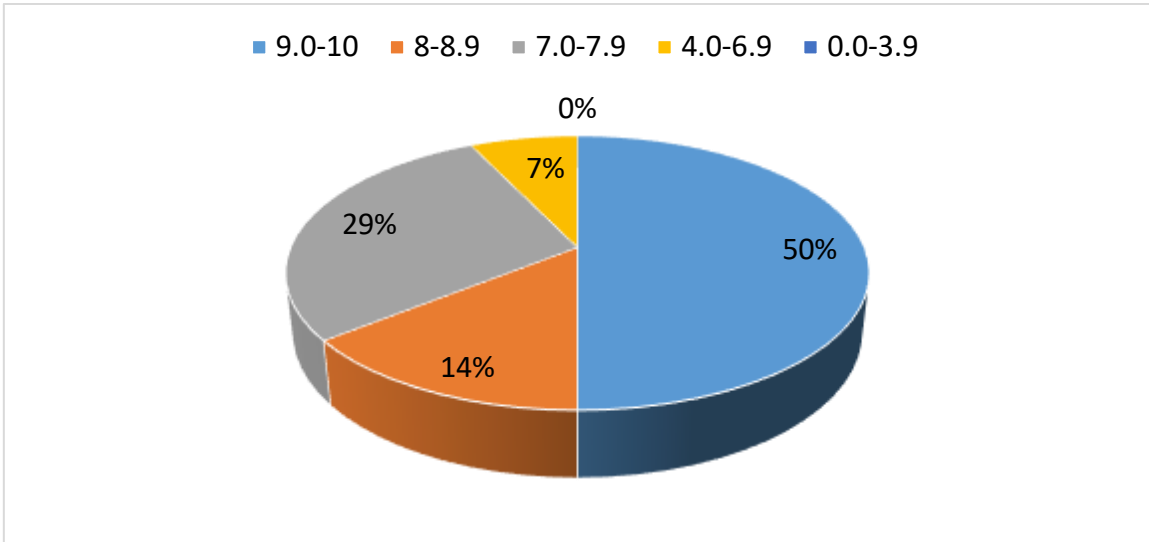
Figure 2 Communicative competence.

Source: Field research -CAE.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

Regarding the communicative competence, the 50% of the students had the ability to communicate effectively because they achieved a performance between 9.0 to 10.0 points, the 14% between 8.0 to 8.9 points of performance and the 29% between 7 to 7.9 points of performance. Additionally, only the 7% had a poor performance with ratings between 4 and 6.9.

3.3 Speaking academic performance and Communicative competence

For this research purposes, it was indispensable to average speaking academic performance and communicative competence individually, these results are presented below:

Table 5 Speaking academic performance and communicative competence.

Students	Speaking academic performance	Communicative Competence	Average	Level
Student 1	6,9	7	6,9	Regular
Student 2	6,5	8	7,2	Good
Student 3	8,1	9	8,5	Very Good
Student 4	7,1	7	7	Good
Student 5	7,3	7	7,1	Good
Student 6	6,7	6	6,3	Regular
Student 7	7,6	9	8,5	Very good
Student 8	7,5	10	8,7	Very Good
Student 9	8,3	9	8,6	Very Good
Student 10	9,0	10	9,5	Excellent
Student 11	7,6	7	7,3	Good
Student 12	8,1	9	8,5	Very Good
Student 13	6,5	8	7,2	Good
Student 14	8,9	10	9,4	Excellent

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

As shown in table 5, ninth semester students had a good level of performance on speaking skill because in both, the academic average of speaking performance and communicative competence, were similar. As proof of this, 2 students (student 10 and 14) who are part of the GPU group presented a very good average in speaking and excellent in communicative competence. In addition, other students such as 1 and 6 had regular

averages in both aspects, inferring that, those students with poor performance in the speaking skill does or do not have a good level of communicative competence.

Table 6 Speaking – Communicative Competence Average.

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
9.0 a 10.0	2	14%
8.0 a 8.9	5	36%
7.0 a 7.9	5	36%
4.0 a 6.9	2	14%
0.0 a 3.9	0	0%

Source: Field research

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

According to the averages obtained from the students of ninth semester, the 14% of the students presented an excellent level of performance with averages between 9 and 10 points in their speaking performance and the communicative competence. Then, the 36% of the students had a very good level of oral production because the average between speaking skill and communication competence was from 8 to 8.9 points. Also, the 36% of students presented a good level when relating both scores because averages between 7 and 7.9 were achieved. Finally, the 14% had difficulties in oral production because their averages were lower than 7 points in both, speaking and communicative competence.

3.4 Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and communicative Competence

3.4.1 Indirect Strategies

Table 7 Indirect strategies use.

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Affective	18	43%
Metacognitive	18	43%
Social	6	14%

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Figure 3 Indirect strategies use.

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

The 43% of students in the ninth semester used the indirect pronunciation-learning strategies of affective and metacognitive type, while the 14% used the social strategy. Assuming that, the indirect strategies most used is metacognitive and affective.

Table 8 Indirect Pronunciation-Learning Strategies.

Level	Students	Average	Strategies
Excellent	Student 10	9,5	Metacognitive
Excellent	Student 14	9,4	Metacognitive
Very good	Student 3	8,5	Metacognitive
Very good	Student 7	8,5	Metacognitive
Very good	Student 8	8,7	Affective
Very good	Student 9	8,6	Metacognitive
Very good	Student 12	8,5	Metacognitive
Good	Student 2	7,2	Affective
Good	Student 4	7	Affective
Good	Student 5	7,1	Affective
Good	Student 11	7,3	Social
Good	Student 13	7,2	Social
Regular	Student 1	6,9	Affective
Regular	Student 6	6,3	Affective

Source: Field research

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

According to the information presented, the indirect pronunciation-learning strategy most used by students of the GPU group with an excellent performance is metacognitive, which is often and always applied.

Inside the group of students with good performance, social and emotional strategy is often used.

Finally, the group of students with regular performance utilized affective strategies.

3.4.2 Direct Strategies

Table 9 Direct strategies use.

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Cognition	21	50%
Compensation	9	21%
Memory	12	29%

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

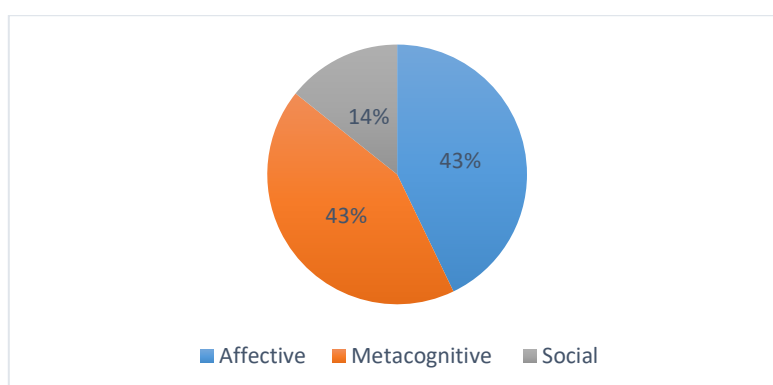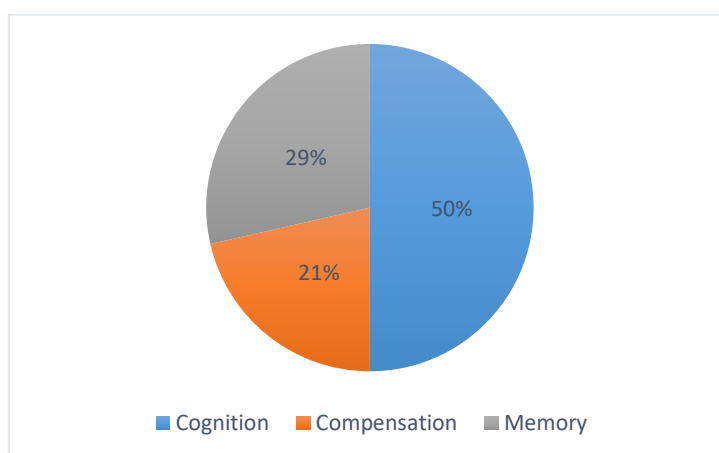**Figure 4** Direct strategies use.

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

The 50% of ninth semester students used direct cognition strategies, the 29% applied memory and the last 21% utilized compensation. Information that allows to assume that the pronunciation-learning strategy most used is cognition.

Table 10 Direct Pronunciation-Learning Strategies.

Level	Students	Average	Strategies
Excellent	Student 10	9,5	Cognition
	Student 14	9,4	Cognition
Very good	Student 3	8,5	Cognition
	Student 7	8,5	Cognition
	Student 8	8,7	Cognition
	Student 9	8,6	Cognition
	Student 12	8,5	Cognition
Good	Student 2	7,2	Compensation
	Student 4	7	Memory
	Student 5	7,1	Memory
	Student 11	7,3	Compensation
	Student 13	7,2	Compensation
Regular	Student 1	6,9	Memory
	Student 6	6,3	Memory

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

Students who got an excellent academic level always used cognitive strategies from the pronunciation-learning strategies; a situation similar to students of very good academic level.

Students who had a good academic level often used compensation and memory strategies.

Finally, regular students often used direct memory strategies.

Table 11 Pronunciation-Learning Strategies and communicative Competence

Level	Students	Average communicative Competence	Strategies Indirect	Direct
Excellent	Student 10	9,5	Metacognitive	Cognition
	Student 14	9,4	Metacognitive	Cognition
Very good	Student 3	8,5	Metacognitive	Cognition
	Student 7	8,5	Metacognitive	Cognition
	Student 8	8,7	Affective	Cognition
	Student 9	8,6	Metacognitive	Cognition
	Student 12	8,5	Metacognitive	Cognition
Good	Student 2	7,2	Affective	Compensation
	Student 4	7	Affective	Memory
	Student 5	7,1	Affective	Memory
	Student 11	7,3	Social	Compensation
	Student 13	7,2	Social	Compensation
Regular	Student 1	6,9	Affective	Memory
	Student 6	6,3	Affective	Memory

Source: Field research.

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Analysis and interpretation:

According to the information described above, the indirect pronunciation-learning strategy most used was metacognitive and affective. On the other hand, the direct pronunciation-learning strategy most applied was the cognitive. So, GPU students utilized the metacognitive strategy as indirect, and as direct, the cognitive.

The students of good academic level employed the affective and social strategy as indirect, and as direct, the compensation and memory strategy. Finally, regular level students used the affective as indirect learning, and, as a direct, the memory strategy.

3.5 Hypothesis Validation

Null hypothesis

The Pronunciation-Learning Strategies do not influence positively the development of the Communicative Competence

Alternative hypothesis

The Pronunciation-Learning Strategies influence positively the development of the Communicative Competence.

Once the analysis and interpretation of the results had been developed, the hypothesis was verified using the chi-square test, which helped determine the correlation direction between the two variables.

Selecting the significance level

To calculate the chi-square, the significance level was 5% or $\alpha = 0.05$.

Degrees of freedom
gl= (f-1)(c-1)
gl= (4-1)(3-1)
gl=(3)(2)
gl=6

According to the chi-square distribution table, with 6 degrees of freedom, the theoretical chi-square value is:

$x^2{}_t = 12,59$

Statistical method

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

x^2 = chi-square

O= Observed frequencies

E= Expected frequencies

∑= Summary

The following table shows the information regarding the calculation of this test in the statistical program IBM Statistic SPSS.

Observed frequencies

Table 12. Observed Frequencies

			INDIRECT _STRATEGIES			
			Metacognitive	Affective	Social	Total
COMMUNICATIVE_CO MPETENCE	Excellent	Count	2	0	0	2
	Very Good	Count	4	1	0	5
	Good	Count	0	3	2	5
	Regular	Count	0	2	0	2
Total		Count	6	6	2	14

Source: IMB Statistic SPSS
Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Expected Frequencies

Table 13 Expected Frequencies

			INDIRECT_STRATEGIES			
			Metacognitive	Affective	Social	Total
COMMUNICATIVE_CO MPETENCE	Excellent	Expected Count	,9	,9	,3	2,0
	Very Good	Expected Count	2,1	2,1	,7	5,0
	Good	Expected Count	2,1	2,1	,7	5,0
	Regular	Expected Count	,9	,9	,3	2,0
Total		Expected Count	6,0	6,0	2,0	14,0

Source: IMB Statistic SPSS
Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Decision rule formulation

The decision rule is: if the calculated chi square value $(x^2{}_c)$ is equal to or less than the theoretical chi square value $(x^2{}_t)$ which is equal to 12.59, it is accepted the null hypothesis (H0) and rejected the alternative hypothesis (H1), while if the calculated chi-square value is greater than the theoretical chi-square, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table 14. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13,067[a]	6	,042
Likelihood Ratio	16,385	6	,012
Linear-by-Linear Association	5,935	1	,015
N of Valid Cases	14		

a. 12 cells (100,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is, 29.
Source: IMB Statistic SPSS
Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Decision making

Since the calculated chi square $x^2{}_c = 13,067$ and is greater than the theoretical chi square value that is equal to 12.59, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted, that is: The Pronunciation-Learning Strategies influence positively the development of the Communicative Competence.
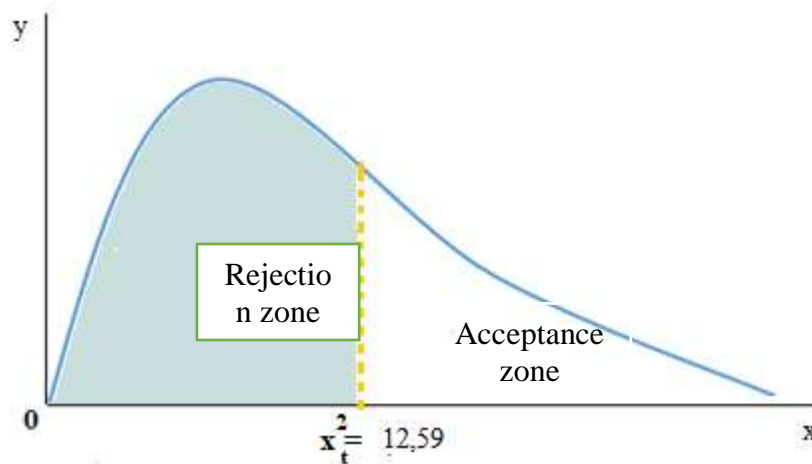
Figure 5. Chi square distribution
Source: IMB Statistic SPSS
Author: Molina, C. (2019)

3.6 Discussion of results

According to the opinion of Tugce (2012), in the last decade, there have been a series of studies that have addressed learning strategies in relation to the pronunciation of a second language, where almost all inventories of learning strategy are divided into two: direct and indirect. The former includes those of memory (for example, using keywords), cognitive (for example, recognizing and using formulas) and compensation (for example, avoiding the use of unknown words, using mime and gestures). And the indirect ones are: metacognitive (for example, focusing on specific sounds, organization), affective (for example, rewarding oneself) and social (for example, asking for a correction).

Each one of these strategies has shown good results in communicative competence, however, in the current study, where the academic qualifications and pronunciation-learning strategies used were related, it was found that the cognitive (direct) and metacognitive (indirect) strategies give better results about the oral performance of the students of the 9th semester of Idiomas major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Result that resembles to the report developed by Rokoszewska (2014), who, after his research about the use of pronunciation-learning strategies, emphasized that the strategy

most used by students is cognitive and metacognitive because they provide better results. Students base their performance in cognitive tactics, such as reading aloud, phonetic exercises and transcription exercises, which are taught through different formal activities during their classes.

To support this, Veliz (2018) added that the pronunciation-learning strategies most used for their results were the metacognitive because they allow the student to apply techniques for their own learning based on error recognition, identification of difficult sounds or communication problems.

CAPÍTULO IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

- The development of this investigative study, allowed to know that the PLS used by the GPU group are the cognitive (direct strategies) and, in a lesser extent, the compensation strategies which are also part of the direct strategies, while in the indirect strategies, the metacognitive and affective strategies are the most used.

- Through the application of CAE speaking part two, the study could show that the majority of students in the ninth semester of Idiomas major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato are competent at talking and using the language. It is evident in the results because students got over six points on the 0-10 scale.

- It was possible to determine that pronunciation-learning strategies are related to the communicative competence achieved by students, because in the group of GPUs, the ones who got excellent and very good level utilized cognitive strategies (direct). And, those in good and in regular academic levels more frequently applied compensation and memory strategies, although they favor communicative competence, cannot be as effective as cognitive ones.

4.2 Recomendations

- Further research on pronunciation strategies is recommended. Likewise, it is suggested to continue applying the direct strategies which were found effective for students. On the other hand, the indirect strategies must be reinforced too that way students will get better results in their language learning.

- It is suggested that students' progress in oral skill should be evaluated periodically. This way teachers can have a record of the progress that students have achieved with the pronunciation strategies. On the other hand, it is important for teachers to promote activities where students have the opportunity to use the target language.

- It is recommended to use Pronunciation-Learning Strategies from the early stages of students' learning. It is also recommended that teachers promote the use of direct and indirect strategies that contribute most to the development of communicative competence.

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Anexe 1: Question two of speaking part from CAE

1 Doing things together 2 Student life	Part 2 4 minutes (6 minutes for groups of three)

Interlocutor In this part of the test, I'm going to give each of you three pictures. I'd like you to talk about **two** of them on your own for about a minute, and also to answer a question briefly about your partner's pictures.

(Candidate A), it's your turn first. Here are your pictures. They show **people doing things together.**

Place Part 2 booklet, open at Task 1, in front of Candidate A.

I'd like you to compare **two** of the pictures, and say **why the people might be doing these things together, and how the people might be feeling.**

All right?

Candidate A
🕐 *1 minute* ....

Interlocutor Thank you.

(Candidate B), **in which situation do you think the people benefit most from being together?** .... **(Why?)**

Candidate B
🕐 *approximately 30 seconds* ....

Interlocutor Thank you. (Can I have the booklet, please?) *Retrieve Part 2 booklet.*

Now, *(Candidate B)*, here are your pictures. They show **students doing different activities.**

Place Part 2 booklet, open at Task 2, in front of Candidate B.

I'd like you to compare **two** of the pictures, and say **how students can benefit from doing these different activities, and how helpful the activities might be in preparing them for their future lives.**

All right?

Candidate B
🕐 *1 minute* ....

Interlocutor Thank you.

(Candidate A), **which of these activities do you think is most useful?** ...... **(Why?)**

Candidate A
🕐 *approximately 30 seconds* ....

Interlocutor Thank you. (Can I have the booklet, please?) *Retrieve Part 2 booklet.*

- Why might the people be doing these things together?
- How might the people be feeling?

1

- How can students benefit from doing these different activities?
- How helpful might the activities be in preparing them for their future lives?

2

Source: (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2014)

Annex 2: Rubric

Score	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation
5	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.	Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. Uses a range of cohesive devices.	It is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.
4	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.	Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices.	It is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.
3	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.	Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices.	It is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.
2	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics	Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Repeats information or digresses from the topic.	It is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at word levels.
1	Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics	Produces responses which are characterised by short phrases and frequent hesitation. Repeats information or digresses from the topic.	It is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.

Source: (University of Cambridge, 2016)
Adapted by: Molina. C, (2019

Annex 3: Observation sheet

OBSERVATION SHEET							
Teacher's name:							
Class:				**Date:**			
Aim of the lesson:							
Type of strategy		**Description**	**Frequency**				
			Never	**Occasionally**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**
INDIRECT STRATEGIES	1. Affective	Students use mechanisms to reduce stress/anxiety in speaking activities					
	2. Affective	Students promote a good learning environment during communicative activities.					
	3. Affective	Students uses effective methods, by themselves, to control the concentration during speaking activities.					
	4. Affective	Students set goals by themselves, and persists until those objectives are reached.					
	5. Metacognitive	Students notice when a speaker makes mistakes.					

	6. Metacognitive	Students identify the sounds that are difficult to pronounce for them.					
	7. Metacognitive	Students record their own speech, and listen for mistakes.					
	8. Metacognitive	Students correct their pronunciation if people do not understand their pronunciation.					
	9. Social	Students practice their pronunciation with other people.					
	10. Social	Students ask for feedback to the teacher, or classmates.					
	11. Social	Students ask for clarification when they do not understand something.					
	12. Social	Students ask for help to qualified people.					
DIRECT	13. Cognition	Students repeat the words silently.					
	14. Cognition	Students pronounce difficult words out loud when they read silently.					
	15. Cognition	Students change the speed of the speech when people do not understand their pronunciation.					

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16. Cognition	Students imitate English speakers.					
17. Compensation	Students guess the pronunciation of words.					
18. Compensation	Students make up new words when they do not know the right one.					
19. Compensation	Students avoid pronouncing words that are difficult.					
20. Compensation	Students infer the pronunciation of words based on their previous knowledge.					
21. Memory	Students memorize the pronunciation of words that are difficult for them.					
22. Memory	Students use phonetic symbols to improve their pronunciation.					
23. Memory	Students use dictionaries to find out the pronunciation of words.					
24. Memory	Students put together the sound of individual letters to sound out words they do not know how to pronounce					

Source: Véliz-Campos, M. (2018)
Adapted by: Molina, C. (2019)

Annex 4: Validation of the observation sheet

VALIDATION OF THE OBSERVATION SHEET

Name of the expert: *Mg. Edgar Encalada T* Date: 27/11/2019

Instructions: *On the scale 1-10, being 1 the lowest, and 10 the highest, rate the items of the observation sheet based on the following criteria.*

Item	Suitability — In which extent do you think this item and scale should take part in the observation sheet?	Question wording — In which extent do you think this is a well-thought-out item?	Observations
1	10	10	
2	10	10	
3	10	10	
4	10	10	
5	10	10	
6	10	10	
7	10	10	
8	10	10	
9	10	10	
10	10	10	
11	10	10	
12	10	10	
13	10	10	
14	10	10	
15	10	10	
16	10	10	
17	10	10	
18	10	10	
19	10	10	
20	10	10	
21	10	10	
22	10	10	
23	10	10	
24	10	10	

VALIDATION OF THE OBSERVATION SHEET

Name of the expert: Mg. Xavier Sulca   Date: 27-11-2019

Instructions: On the scale 1-10, being 1 the lowest, and 10 the highest, rate the items of the observation sheet based on the following criteria.

Item	Suitability In which extent do you think this item and scale should take part in the observation sheet?	Question wording In which extent do you think this is a well-thought-out item?	Observations
1	9	9	
2	9	9	
3	9	9	
4	9	9	
5	9	9	
6	9	9	
7	9	9	
8	9	9	
9	9	9	
10	9	9	
11	9	9	
12	9	9	
13	9	9	
14	9	9	
15	9	9	
16	9	9	
17	9	9	
18	9	9	
19	9	9	
20	9	9	
21	9	9	
22	9	9	
23	9	9	
24	9	9	

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Annex 5: Speaking academic performance

Speaking academic performance					
Students	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Average
Student 1	7,1	6,5	6	7,8	6,9
Student 2	7,6	7,3	6	5	6,5
Student 3	6,5	7,7	9	9	8,1
Student 4	7,1	7,2	7,4	6,5	7,1
Student 5	8	7,3	7,7	6	7,3
Student 6	6	7,6	6	7	6,7
Student 7	8,3	7,8	8,4	6	7,6
Student 8	7,8	8	8	6	7,5
Student 9	8	8,4	8	8,7	8,3
Student 10	9	8,8	9	9	9,0
Student 11	7,1	7,4	7,8	8,1	7,6
Student 12	8	8	7,9	8,6	8,1
Student 13	6	6	6,5	7,3	6,5
Student 14	8,9	9	8,8	9	8,9

Source: Field research

Author: Molina, C. (2019)

Annex 6: Communicative competence scores

Communicative competence scores of 9th level students		
Students	Grades over 15	Grades over 10
Student 1	10	7
Student 2	12	8
Student 3	13	9
Student 4	11	7
Student 5	10	7
Student 6	9	6
Student 7	14	9
Student 8	15	10
Student 9	13	9
Student 10	15	10
Student 11	11	7
Student 12	13	9
Student 13	12	8
Student 14	15	10

Annex 7: **Photographs of students of ninth level**

Annex 8: Urkund

Estimado Cristian

Felicitaciones su urkund es de 1% por favor imprima la primera hoja y proceda con los tramites para su graducación, estoy orgullosa de ud, bendiciones.

Saludos cordiales,

Mg.Verónica Chicaiza Redin Ph.D
COORDINADORA CARRERA DE IDIOMAS

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