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FACULTAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA ORIENTAL
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Resumen

Este estudio cuantitativo investiga los problemas de producción oral de los estudiantes de tercer año de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas en la Facultad Multidisciplinaria Oriental de la Universidad de El Salvador durante el año académico 2024. La investigación aborda la brecha persistente entre el sólido conocimiento lingüístico teórico de los estudiantes y su desempeño en la comunicación espontánea, un problema previamente identificado en estudios nacionales. El objetivo del estudio fue describir cuantitativamente estos desafíos comparando el desempeño en tareas de habla espontánea y planificada en las dimensiones de fluidez, precisión y pronunciación. Se adoptó un diseño transversal y descriptivo, con una muestra de 30 estudiantes seleccionados por muestreo aleatorio simple. Los datos se recolectaron mediante un cuestionario autoadministrado de 12 ítems para medir las percepciones de los estudiantes y una tarea de elicitación oral en dos partes para medir el rendimiento. Los resultados revelaron una discrepancia significativa entre las tareas: la fluidez fue muy baja en el habla espontánea ($M=4.45$) pero mejoró drásticamente con la planificación ($M=7.44$), mientras que la precisión fue alta en ambas condiciones, especialmente en la tarea planificada ($M=9.15$). Sorprendentemente, el desempeño en la pronunciación fue más débil en la tarea planificada de lectura en voz alta ($M=5.64$) que en la tarea espontánea ($M=6.90$). Las percepciones de los estudiantes indicaron una ansiedad universalmente alta, incluso cuando el rendimiento fue sólido. El estudio concluye que el principal desafío de los estudiantes es la automatización del conocimiento lingüístico existente para su uso espontáneo y que las prácticas pedagógicas, como la lectura en voz alta para la pronunciación, requieren una reevaluación crítica.

Palabras claves: *producción oral, fluidez, precisión, pronunciación, adquisición de una segunda lengua*

Abstract

This quantitative study investigates the oral production challenges of third-year Modern Languages students at the University of El Salvador's Eastern Multidisciplinary Faculty during the 2024 academic year. The research addresses the persistent gap between students' strong theoretical linguistic knowledge and their performance in spontaneous communication; a problem previously identified in national studies. The study aimed to quantitatively describe these challenges by comparing performance in spontaneous versus planned speech tasks across the dimensions of fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation. A cross-sectional, descriptive design was adopted, with a sample of 30 students selected via simple random sampling. Data were collected using a 12-item self-administered questionnaire to gauge student perceptions and a two-part oral elicitation task to measure performance. Results revealed a significant discrepancy between tasks: fluency was very low in spontaneous speech ($M=4.45$) but improved dramatically with planning ($M=7.44$), while accuracy was high in both conditions, especially the planned task ($M=9.15$). Strikingly, pronunciation performance was weaker in the planned (reading aloud) task ($M=5.64$) than in the spontaneous task ($M=6.90$). Student perceptions indicated universally high anxiety, even when performance was strong. The study concludes that students' main challenge is the automatization of existing linguistic knowledge for spontaneous use and that pedagogical practices, such as reading aloud for pronunciation, require critical re-evaluation. This research provides empirical data to inform evidence-based instructional strategies aimed at improving communicative competence.

Keywords: *oral production, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, second language acquisition*

INTRODUCTION

This article, entitled “Study of the Problems in the Oral Production Skills in Third-Year Students of English as a Second Language,” explores the importance of developing oral English, a skill essential for academic success and professional growth in an increasingly globalized world. Learning English as a second language is a complex process requiring active participation from both students and teachers. Within higher education, the ability to speak English is particularly crucial, as it facilitates the transmission of knowledge and fosters meaningful interactions in multicultural environments. However, a persistent pedagogical problem has been observed among third-year Modern Languages students at the University of El Salvador's Eastern Multidisciplinary Faculty. At this advanced stage, a significant gap emerges between students' established linguistic competence and their actual communicative performance in spontaneous situations.

This challenge is not a new phenomenon within the institution. Previous national studies conducted at the University of El Salvador have consistently identified significant barriers to students' oral performance. Research by (Aguilar et al., 2012) revealed that a majority of students felt uncomfortable speaking English due to a lack of vocabulary, low confidence, and a pervasive fear of making mistakes. Similarly, a study by (Llanes et al., 2014) found that nervousness and time pressure were primary factors that negatively affected students' oral fluency during evaluated tasks. These foundational studies have established a clear pattern of affective and practical difficulties that impede progress. Based on these recurring findings, it became evident that a more granular and quantitative investigation was necessary to systematically measure the specific impact of these challenges on distinct components of oral production.

Therefore, this study was designed to quantitatively describe the main challenges third-year students encounter when speaking English, with a specific focus on the measurable differences between their performance in planned versus spontaneous speech contexts. In this framework, three core components of oral production are especially relevant: fluency, the ability to speak smoothly and naturally with minimal

hesitation (Derwing & Munro, 2015); accuracy, the correct application of grammar, vocabulary, and syntax to ensure comprehension (Swam & Smith, 2001); and pronunciation, which encompasses the correct articulation of sounds, stress, and intonation to make speech intelligible (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).

It is imperative to acknowledge that oral production is not merely a mechanical skill but a complex cognitive and psychological act. The theoretical basis for this study recognizes that meaningful language development is driven by learner output, as asserted by Swain's Output Hypothesis, which posits that learners improve when pushed to produce comprehensible speech, thereby noticing gaps in their own knowledge. However, this production can be severely hampered by internal factors. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis explains how variables such as anxiety, low motivation, and poor self-esteem can create a mental block that obstructs language acquisition and performance. Furthermore, learners face significant cognitive hurdles, including the strain described by Cognitive Load Theory, where an excess of new information can overwhelm working memory, and the persistent influence of their native language, as explained by the concept of Phonological Interference. These theories collectively provide a framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of the difficulties students face.

With the growing demand for highly proficient English-speaking professionals in El Salvador, research is urgently needed to guide pedagogical improvements that are based on empirical evidence rather than anecdotal observation. The deficiencies identified in prior studies highlight the need for a more precise understanding of student limitations. By quantitatively analyzing the discrepancy between performance in controlled and spontaneous tasks, this study provides the specific data necessary for curriculum designers and instructors at the University of El Salvador to develop targeted interventions. Fulfilling the institutional duty to provide effective education requires a commitment to innovative, evidence-based teaching practices. The insights recovered from this research can help strengthen instructional strategies, better preparing students

for the communicative demands of their future professions and ensuring the university produces graduates with robust and versatile oral communication skills.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This research was conducted within the post-positivist paradigm, which assumes that while an objective reality exists, our knowledge of it is always provisional and subject to revision. This paradigm relies on empirical observation, operationalization, and quantification as its methodological bases (Corbetta, 2003, p. 17). The study adopted a quantitative approach to investigate psychological and educational processes through the exploration of numeric patterns and statistical analysis.

The research design was cross-sectional, descriptive, and prospective. Data were collected at a single point in time from the selected sample to describe the characteristics of the phenomenon without influencing the variables under investigation (Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018, p. 106).

Participants

The population for this study consisted of 50 third-year students enrolled in the Reading and Conversation I in English course within the Modern Languages degree program at the Eastern Multidisciplinary Faculty, University of El Salvador, during the second semester of the 2024 academic year. This group was selected because students at this level are expected to have attained an advanced level of oral communication, making them a suitable cohort for investigating persistent production challenges. From this population, a sample of 30 participants was selected using a simple random sampling technique to ensure that each member of the population had an equal and independent chance of being included in the study.

Instrumentation

Data were collected using two primary techniques: the survey and the SLA Elicitation Task (Phakiti et al., 2018, pp. 269, 313). **The survey** was employed to gather

information on participants' language learning experiences, strategies, and perceptions of Second Language Acquisition, in the form of an **Online Self-administered Questionnaire**. On the other hand, the **SLA Elicitation Task** was a controlled activity where participants performed specific language tasks, with their language production recorded and analyzed. For this purpose, an **Oral Elicitation Task Guide** was carefully designed. This dual approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of both self-reported data and observed linguistic performance.

Self-Administered Questionnaire

To gauge student perceptions of their own oral production difficulties, a 12-item questionnaire was administered. The instrument utilized a 5-point frequency scale (Always, Sometimes, Seldom, Hardly Ever, Never) for all questions. Items were designed to probe self-perceived challenges related to fluency (e.g., frequency of pauses), accuracy (e.g., correct use of function words), pronunciation (e.g., difficulty with specific words or phonemes like /tʃ/ and /i/), and affective factors such as anxiety and stress when speaking English. As (Gass et al., 2018, p. 313) notes, structured questionnaires are effective tools for obtaining specific, comparable data on learners' linguistic knowledge in a controlled manner.

Oral Elicitation Task Guide

An oral elicitation task guide was designed to collect performance data in two distinct conditions. According to (Phakiti et al., 2018, p. 313), such tasks are highly effective for observing fluency, pronunciation, and accuracy under controlled conditions.

Spontaneous Speech Task: To assess performance in unplanned discourse, participants were asked to respond orally to five general, open-ended conversational prompts (e.g., "Tell me about yourself," "What are your goals and dreams?").

Planned Speech Task: To assess performance in a more controlled context, participants were asked to read a 118-word passage about influencer marketing aloud. This task was designed to evaluate pronunciation and fluency when linguistic planning is possible.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was conducted individually with each of the 30 participants. Anonymity was ensured by assigning each participant a unique identification code. First, each student completed the self-administered questionnaire. Immediately following, their oral responses to both parts of the elicitation task were digitally recorded for later analysis.

Oral Performance Scoring

The recorded audio from the elicitation tasks was analyzed and scored by the research team. A standardized, 5-level holistic rubric was used to independently rate each of the three dimensions of oral production: fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation. The rubric assigned scores on a 10-point scale based on the frequency of errors and their overall impact on intelligibility, with categories ranging from Native-like (9-10), characterized by few to no errors, to Very Limited (0-2), where errors were so pervasive that speech was largely unintelligible.

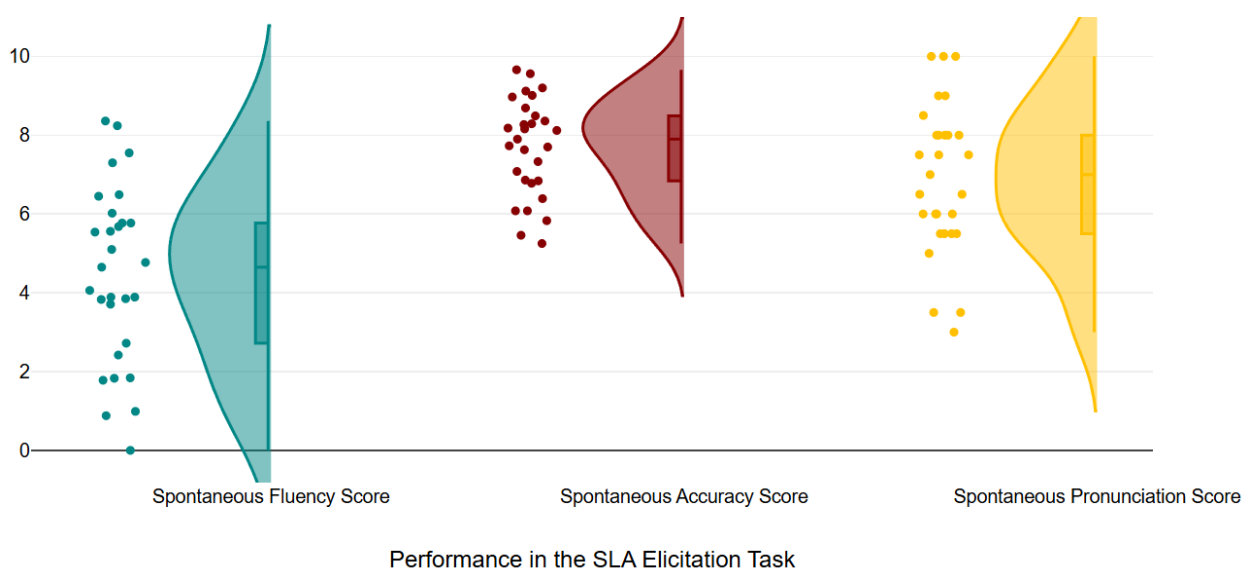
Statistical Analysis

The quantitative data from both the questionnaire and the scored oral tasks were organized and processed using Microsoft Excel. As noted by (Agresti et al., 2021, p. 31), descriptive statistics are essential for organizing and summarizing data in an interpretable manner. Frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations were calculated to analyze the results. For an additional layer of objective analysis, the pronunciation dimension of the oral tasks was processed using the Microsoft Foundry—Pronunciation Assessment tool to generate detailed linguistic data that supplemented the holistic scoring. Finally, results were presented using violin plots and frequency tables to provide a clear visual representation of the findings and support informed conclusions.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings related to the oral production skills of third-year English as a second language students. The results are organized into three main categories: fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation, aligning with the research objectives. Each category integrates data from the student perception survey and the oral elicitation tasks (spontaneous and planned speech).

Figure 1. *Distribution of students' performance in the Spontaneous SLA Elicitation Task*

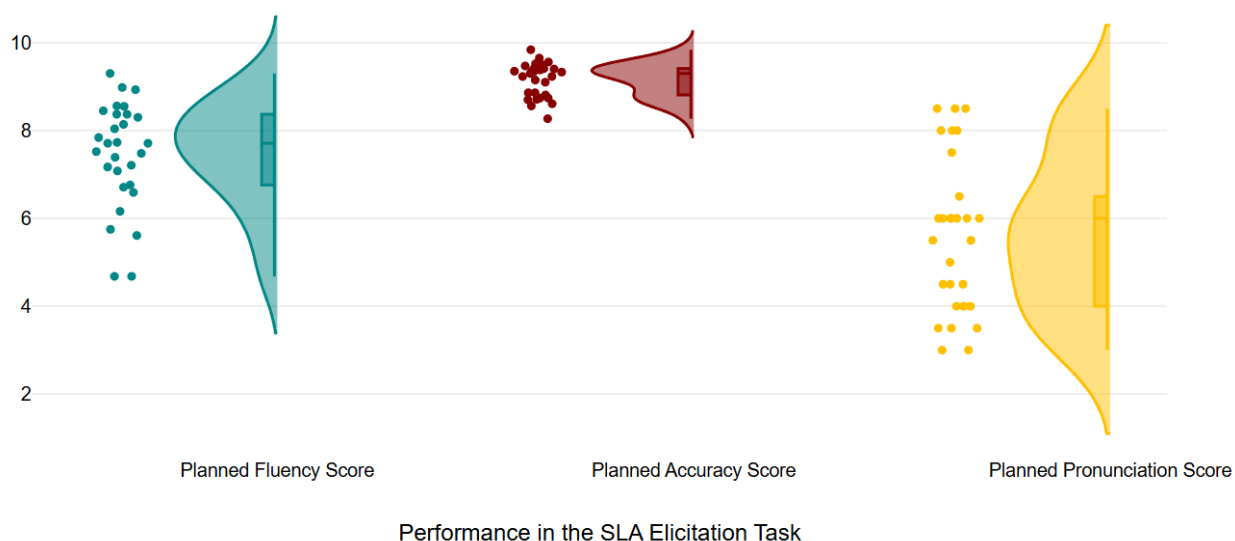


Source: figure based on the SLA Elicitation Task

The graph in the spontaneous test shows that pronunciation is the strongest aspect, with the highest median and a concentration of high values, reflecting consistent and solid performance among students; accuracy occupies an intermediate position, with a considerably high median and less dispersion than fluency, indicating an acceptable level of grammatical and structural accuracy; in contrast, spontaneous fluency has the lowest median and the greatest instability, showing that it is the most challenging and diverse area, where some participants achieve good results, but many still show difficulties in producing language continuously and naturally. Overall, the results reflect a common pattern in second language acquisition: pronunciation and

accuracy tend to strengthen before fluency, which requires more time and practice to fully develop.

Figure 2. *Distribution of students' performance in the Planned SLA Elicitation Task*



Source: figure based on the SLA Elicitation Task

The graph in the planned test shows that in terms of fluency, the scores are mostly distributed between 6 and 9, with a median around 8. The dispersion is relatively wide, indicating variability among students. In accuracy, the scores are fairly stable, clustered closely between 7.5 and 9, indicating that most students obtained good grades, with less variability compared to the other two indicators. Finally, pronunciation shows a wider and more dispersed distribution, with values ranging from 4 to 9. The density indicates a higher concentration of data in the middle ranges, suggesting that this aspect was more challenging for participants compared to accuracy and fluency. Overall, students obtained better and more consistent results in accuracy and fluency, while pronunciation showed greater variability and lower scores.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of the Prevalence of Fluency, Accuracy, and Pronunciation Errors

Frequencies of Survey Fluency Error Prevalence Level			
Survey Fluency Error Prevalence Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High Prevalence	13	43.3 %	43.3 %
Mid Prevalence	17	56.7%	100.0 %
Low Prevalence	0	0.0 %	100.0 %

Frequencies of Survey Accuracy Error Prevalence Level			
Survey Accuracy Error Prevalence Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High Prevalence	14	46.7 %	46.7 %
Mid Prevalence	16	53.3 %	100.0 %
Low Prevalence	0	0.0 %	100.0 %

Frequencies of Survey Pronunciation Error Prevalence Level			
Survey Pronunciation Error Prevalence Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High Prevalence	10	33.3 %	33.3 %
Mid Prevalence	20	66.7 %	100.0 %
Low Prevalence	0	0.0%	100.0 %

Source: table based on the Self-administered Survey

The results from the Likert-scale survey show that students are consistently aware of significant challenges in their English oral production, particularly in fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation. Regarding fluency, 56.7% of participants (17 students)

reported a mid-level prevalence of errors, while 43.3% (13 students) indicated a high prevalence. In terms of accuracy, 53.3% (16 students) perceived a mid-level prevalence of grammatical errors and 46.7% (14 students) a high prevalence. Similarly, for pronunciation, 66.7% (20 students) of students identified a mid-level prevalence of errors and 33.3% (10 students) a high prevalence. Notably, no students rated their errors as having a low prevalence in any of the three categories. Altogether, the findings reveal that every student acknowledges experiencing moderate to high difficulties across these three areas, highlighting the need for pedagogical strategies that directly support the development of oral communicative competence in English.

Table 2. Fluency Performance in Spontaneous and Planned Speech

Frequencies of Spontaneous Fluency Level			
Spontaneous Fluency Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High level	2	6.7%	6.7%
Mid-level	12	40.0%	46.7%
Low level	16	53.3%	100.0%

Frequency of Planned Fluency Level			
Planned Fluency Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High level	11	36.7%	36.7%
Mid-level	17	56.7%	93.3%
Low level	2	6.7%	100.0%

Source: table based on the SLA Elicitation Task

To evaluate fluency, students were tested in both spontaneous and planned speech tasks. The results show a clear difference between the two situations. In the spontaneous task, where students had to answer right away, the average fluency score was low ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 2.24$). Most students were at a Low level (53.3%), some were at a Mid-level (40.0%), and only a few reached a high level (6.7%). In the planned task,

where students had time to prepare, scores were much higher, with an average of ($M = 7.44$, $SD = 1.20$). In this task, most students reached a Mid-level (56.7%), many achieved a high level (36.7%), and very few remained at a Low level (6.7%). These results show that having time to plan and organize ideas helps students speak more fluently, even though most still do not reach a high level.

Table 3. Overall Accuracy Performance in Spontaneous and Planned Speech

Frequency of Spontaneous Accuracy Level			
Spontaneous Accuracy Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High level	15	50.0 %	50.0 %
Mid-level	15	50.0 %	100.0 %
Low level	0	0.0 %	100.0 %
Frequency of Planned Accuracy Level			
Planned Accuracy Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High level	30	100.0 %	100.0 %
Mid-level	0	0.0 %	100.0 %
Low level	0	0.0 %	100.0 %

Source: table based on the SLA Elicitation Task

As shown in the accuracy dimension table, the frequency and percentage distribution reveal clear differences between spontaneous and planned accuracy, providing a detailed view of the students' grammatical competence. In spontaneous oral production, the students were evenly split between two performance categories: 50.0% (15 students) reached a high level of accuracy, and the other 50.0% (15 students) performed at a Mid-level. No participants scored in the low-level category. The mean accuracy score was $M = 7.69$ ($SD = 1.233$) on a 1–10 scale, indicating a good, though not completely error-free, performance under cognitive pressure.

In planned oral production, all students achieved a high level of accuracy, with a mean score of $M = 9.15$ ($SD = 0.385$), reflecting an almost error-free performance. These results demonstrate that students can produce grammatical structures more accurately when they have time to plan their speech.

Table 4. Pronunciation Performance in Spontaneous and Planned Speech.

Frequency of Spontaneous Pronunciation Level			
Spontaneous Pronunciation Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High level	11	36.7 %	36.7 %
Mid- level	16	53.3 %	90.0 %
Low level	3	10.0 %	100.0 %

Frequency of Planned Pronunciation Level			
planned pronunciation Level	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
High level	6	20.0 %	20.0 %
Mid-level	13	43.3 %	63.3 %
Low level	11	36.7 %	100.0 %

Source: table based on the SLA Elicitation Task

Students' pronunciation skills were tested in both spontaneous and planned speaking tasks to see how they performed under different conditions. In the spontaneous task, the average score was ($M = 6.90\%$ $SD = 1.90$) Most students were at a Mid-level (53.3%), some reached a high level (36.7%), and a small group was at a Low level (10.0%). In the planned task, where students read a text aloud, performance declined. The average score dropped to ($M = 5.64$, $SD = 1.76$). Only 20.0% reached a high level, 43.3% were at a Mid-level, and a large group (36.7%) performed at the Low level. This planning does not always help and may even make pronunciation more difficult.

Linguistic Typology

The analysis of the oral production data from the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) elicitation task identified a total of 1,177 linguistic errors. These errors were classified into three primary categories: Fluency, Accuracy, and Pronunciation. The distribution of these errors, including their linguistic typology and frequency, is detailed below.

Table 5. *Typology and Frequency of Major Linguistic Errors.*

CATEGORY	TOTAL ERRORS	LINGUISTIC TYPOLOGY	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY	RELATIVE FREQUENCY
Fluency	754	Fillers	395	52.39%
		Repetitions	192	25.46%
		False Starts	59	7.82%
Accuracy	247	Verb Tense	62	25.10%
		Prepositions	35	14.17%
		Plural Nouns	29	11.74%
		-ed Omission	15	6.07%
Pronunciation	176	Segmental	118	67.05%
		Suprasegmental	58	32.95%

Source: table based on the SLA Elicitation Task

As indicated in Table 5, Fluency was the most frequent error category, with a total of 754 instances recorded. The table details the most common subtypes, of which the use of fillers was the most prevalent, accounting for 395 occurrences (52.39% of all

fluency-related issues). Repetitions were the second most common sub-type with 192 instances (25.46%), followed by false starts, which occurred 59 times (7.82%).

The second major category was Accuracy, with a total of 247 grammatical errors recorded. Among the most significant challenges identified, incorrect verb tense was the most frequent, accounting for 62 errors (25.10% of accuracy issues). This was followed by difficulties with prepositions (35 errors, 14.17%) and the correct formation of plural nouns (29 errors, 11.74%). The omission of the "-ed" suffix on past tense verbs was the least frequent error in this category, with 15 occurrences (6.07%).

Finally, Pronunciation errors were recorded 176 times. The analysis distinguished between segmental and suprasegmental errors. Segmental errors, which relate to individual phonemes, were the more dominant type, with 118 instances (67.05% of pronunciation errors). Suprasegmental errors, concerning features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation, accounted for the remaining 58 instances (32.95%).

DISCUSSION

The quantitative results of this study offer a detailed view of the oral production challenges faced by third-year Modern Languages students, revealing a complex interplay between task condition, skill component, and student perception. The findings confirm that while students possess a solid linguistic foundation, significant barriers hinder its effective application, particularly in spontaneous communicative contexts.

Fluency

The data present a stark contrast in fluency levels between spontaneous and planned tasks. The low mean score in the spontaneous task ($M=4.45$), where over half the students performed at a "low level", strongly suggests that students struggle with the cognitive demands of real-time speech production. This aligns with Cognitive Load Theory, which posits that the simultaneous need to formulate ideas, retrieve vocabulary, and apply grammar can overwhelm working memory, leading to hesitations and disfluent speech. The dramatic improvement in the planned task ($M=7.44$) underscores the critical role of preparation time in offloading this cognitive burden. However, the fact that all students perceived their fluency as a moderate-to-high challenge is a crucial

finding. This suggests that the affective filter, as described by Krashen, remains a potent barrier; even when students perform better, their underlying anxiety and lack of confidence may persist, preventing them from feeling truly fluent.

Accuracy

The findings for accuracy highlight a key distinction between linguistic knowledge and application. The near-perfect scores in the planned task ($M=9.15$), which involved reading a text aloud, indicate a high level of decoding proficiency and careful articulation. While this task does not measure grammatical generation, the result suggests that when cognitive load is focused solely on vocalizing pre-existing correct sentences, students perform with near-perfect fidelity. This contrasts with the spontaneous task, where their strong, but not perfect, performance ($M=7.69$) reflects the challenge of applying their robust grammatical knowledge under communicative pressure. This aligns with Krashen's Monitor Model, where the "monitor" for grammatical correctness functions most effectively when cognitive demands for content generation are removed. The solid performance in the spontaneous task ($M=7.69$), where students were split between high and mid-levels of accuracy, further indicates this monitor is active even under pressure. Intriguingly, there's a disconnect between this high performance and students' self-perception, as nearly half reported a high prevalence of accuracy errors. This suggests that their general anxiety about speaking may cloud their ability to assess their grammatical correctness accurately.

Pronunciation

Perhaps the most striking finding is the significant degradation of pronunciation performance in the planned (reading aloud) task compared to the spontaneous one, where the average score dropped from $M=6.90$ to $M=5.64$. This result challenges the pedagogical assumption that reading aloud is an effective tool for improving pronunciation. The data suggest that the cognitive load of decoding written text—mapping graphemes to phonemes—interferes with their ability to apply their existing phonological knowledge of stress and intonation. This may be explained by the concept

of Phonological Interference; when speaking spontaneously, students likely rely on practiced lexical chunks, but when reading, they process words individually, which may trigger interference from their L1 phonological rules.

Pedagogical Implications

Overall, the findings point to several key implications for instruction. First, there is a clear need for pedagogical strategies that bridge the gap between planned and spontaneous speech to build automaticity and lower the affective filter. Second, instruction should shift from a focus on explicit grammar knowledge toward task-based approaches that require students to use language accurately under communicative pressure, thus fostering the transition to implicit knowledge. Finally, the counterintuitive results for pronunciation call for a re-evaluation of reading-aloud tasks. Instruction should instead focus on integrating pronunciation with meaning in communicative contexts, using techniques like shadowing authentic audio and explicitly teaching the rules of connected speech.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that offer avenues for future research. The planned task for accuracy involved reading a pre-written text, which may have inflated scores by testing decoding rather than grammatical generation. A task requiring students to generate their own content after a planning period would provide a more valid comparison. Finally, the study did not control for the potential phonological complexity of the vocabulary in the reading passage, which may have impacted pronunciation scores.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to quantitatively describe the oral production problems experienced by third-year Modern Languages students at the University of El Salvador, focusing on the measurable differences between their performance in spontaneous and planned speech. The analysis of student performance and self-perceptions yielded several key conclusions that provide a deeper understanding of the challenges these advanced learners face.

First, students' fluency is critically dependent on cognitive load and planning time. This conclusion is substantiated by the fluency data, which showed a marked degradation in performance during spontaneous tasks, followed by a substantial improvement under conditions that permitted pre-task planning. This variance indicates that the necessary linguistic resources are available to the learners but cannot be retrieved and operationalized with sufficient automaticity. This challenge is compounded by a universally high affective filter, as shown in the survey, where students' self-perceived persistent problems point to their inability to feel fluent even when the communicative situations evolve.

Second, learners possess strong explicit grammatical knowledge but struggle with its automatization. Grammatical accuracy remained consistently high across both spontaneous and planned conditions, confirming that students possess a well-established explicit knowledge of English morphosyntactic rules. Their difficulty lies in applying this knowledge implicitly and accurately during the rapid cognitive processing required for spontaneous conversation. This highlights a crucial gap between linguistic competence and communicative performance, where the conscious "monitor" is effective when given time but less reliable in dynamic interaction.

Furthermore, a notable counterintuitive result emerged in the domain of pronunciation, which exhibited a significant degradation during the planned reading task relative to the spontaneous task. This finding suggests that the cognitive load associated with grapheme-to-phoneme mapping interferes with the application of suprasegmental and segmental phonological skills. When synthesized, these results and the theoretical models indicate that student performance is critically mediated by

cognitive load and that their explicit linguistic knowledge has not been sufficiently automated for effective use in authentic linguistic activities.

Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed for educators and curriculum designers:

To improve fluency, instruction must focus on building automaticity through structured, low-stakes activities that bridge the gap between planned and spontaneous speech. Timed conversational tasks and role-playing can help reduce both cognitive load and the affective filter.

To enhance accuracy, pedagogical strategies should shift from a focus on explicit rule-drilling to task-based approaches that require learners to use grammar correctly under communicative pressure, thereby fostering the transition from explicit knowledge to implicit, automatic application.

For pronunciation, the use of decontextualized reading-aloud exercises should be re-evaluated. Instead, instruction should integrate pronunciation with meaning, focusing on suprasegmental features like stress and intonation within authentic communicative contexts, using techniques such as shadowing and mirroring.

Ultimately, this study showed the necessity of an evidence-based approach to teaching oral skills, one that treats fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation as distinct but interconnected challenges, each requiring targeted pedagogical solutions.

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