

**UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR
FACULTAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA ORIENTAL
DEPARTAMENTO CIENCIAS Y HUMANIDADES
SECCIÓN DE IDIOMAS**



**INFORME FINAL DEL CURSO DE ESPECIALIZACIÓN:
EN LINGÜÍSTICA**

TÍTULO DEL INFORME FINAL:

LACK OF SPEAKING PRACTICE OF ENGLISH AND THE EFFECTS IN STUDENTS'
LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE DEVELOPMENT.

PARA OPTAR AL GRADO ACADÉMICO DE:

LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS: ESPECIALIDAD EN FRANCÉS E INGLÉS

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Abstract

The present work: Lack of speaking practice of English and the effects in students' language communicative development was conducted with the objective of analyzing the lack of practice in oral production and the effects on the communicative development of third year students of Modern Languages degree at the University of El Salvador. The investigation used quantitative approach research with an explanatory design in order to seek the reasons for the problem, identifying the causes of the lack of oral production and the effects produced in the communicative development. The variables under study: oral production and communicative development. The former is one of the four language skills that refers to the ability to produce and convey meaning through spoken language. And, the latter is a process by which the student acquires the ability and knowledge enough to receive and release their ideas correctly. The question to be answered was: How does lack of practice in oral production of English language affect the communicative development of students? The technique applied was a survey, and an instrument was used as a questionnaire with ten questions. It was administered to ten third year students as a sample. The results showed how the students' communicative development is affected, since students not only have awareness, motivation and knowledge of the need to practice the language and improve their vocabulary, but also, they have limitations in their speaking skills, since they pause and hesitate when speaking, while at the same time they do not carry out activities in class to improve their fluency.

Key words: Communicative development, Fluency, Lack of practice, Oral production, Vocabulary

Resumen

El presente trabajo: Falta de práctica oral en los estudiantes del idioma inglés y los efectos en su desarrollo comunicativo. se realizó con el objetivo de analizar la falta de práctica en la producción oral y sus efectos en el desarrollo comunicativo de estudiantes de tercer año de la carrera de Lenguas Modernas de la Universidad de El Salvador. La investigación utilizó el enfoque cuantitativo con un diseño explicativo con el fin de buscar las razones del problema, identificando las causas de la falta de producción oral y los efectos producidos en el desarrollo comunicativo. Las variables en estudio: producción oral y desarrollo comunicativo. La primera es una de las cuatro habilidades lingüísticas que se refiere a la capacidad de producir y transmitir significado a través del lenguaje hablado. Y, el segundo es un proceso mediante el cual el alumno adquiere la habilidad y el conocimiento suficiente para recibir y emitir sus ideas correctamente. La pregunta por responder fue: ¿Cómo afecta la falta de práctica en la producción oral del idioma inglés al desarrollo comunicativo de los estudiantes? La técnica aplicada fue la encuesta, y se utilizó como instrumento un cuestionario con diez preguntas. Se administró como muestra a diez estudiantes de tercer año. Los resultados mostraron que la falta de práctica del idioma en los estudiantes afecta su desarrollo comunicativo, ya que, a pesar de tener conciencia, motivación y conocimiento de la necesidad de practicar el idioma y mejorar su vocabulario, muestran limitaciones en su expresión oral, ya que realizan pausas y dudan al hablar, a la vez que no desarrollan actividades en clase para mejorar su fluidez.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo comunicativo, Fluidez, Falta de práctica, Producción oral, Vocabulario

Introduction

This report presents the scientific article entitled: Lack of speaking practice of English and the effects in students' language communicative development. This research was carried out with the purpose of making known and analyzing the causes that hinder the practice of the English language in order to understand the effects it has on the communicative development of the students.

This research was conducted at the Multidisciplinary Eastern Faculty, in the Department of Sciences and Humanities of the University of El Salvador, in San Miguel, with third year students of the Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages: Specialization in French and English during the year 2023.

Oral production is an important skill in language learning, as it involves the ability to use spoken language to convey meaning. This skill, along with listening, reading and writing, is one of the four fundamental language skills. Oral production involves the correct use of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and intonation to communicate effectively. Language learners need to practice and improve their oral production skills to develop their communicative competence in different social contexts. This involves not only language proficiency, but also the social and practical aspect of language.

The significance of this study was derived from the observations made during two four-hour class sessions. It can be posited that a considerable number of the most prevalent challenges encountered by language learners pertain to oral language production. In the classroom setting, students exhibited difficulties in maintaining active engagement and making pertinent contributions to the subject matter under discussion, and also demonstrated shortcomings in

pronunciation, intonation, the articulation of certain sounds, and the accurate accentuation of words and phrases.

The principal objective of this study was to identify the reasons that cause the lack of practice in the oral production of the English language of the students and to find their effects in the students' language communicative development. To this end, a research question was formulated: How does lack of practice in oral production of English language affect the communicative development of students?

This article presents its objectives, methodology, results, discussion, conclusions, and references employed in the investigation.

Objectives

Overall Objective:

- To determine the causes of the lack of practice in the oral production of the English language, and the effects they produce in students' communicative development.

Specific Objectives:

- To identify the reasons that cause the lack of practice in the oral production of the English language of the students
- To evaluate the factors that affect the communicative development of students' language communicative development.

Methodology

The research design applied for this investigation was the explanatory design in order to find answers to the problem, besides the reasons for the problem identifying the causes of the lack of oral production and the effects produced in the communicative development of the third-year students of Modern Languages Major. So, the approach used for this study was the quantitative approach.

Regarding the variables of this work were the oral production and communicative development, it can be said: According to (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997), Oral production or also called speaking skill “is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information”. And, the other was communicative development that according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary ("Definition of Communication," 2023), is a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior.

Moreover, seven indicators were taken into account to identify the lack of oral production of students and to evaluate the effects in their communicative development. First, to evaluate oral production: lack of motivation, limited vocabulary, limited interaction, and fear of making mistakes. Finally, for communicative development: fluency, oral practical activities and confidence in speaking. In the same way the role of the teacher was mentioned since they influence the effective communication of students. English language teaching brings benefits for both students and teachers: increasing student engagement, learning with a purpose, and, developing all core language skills.

The question to be answered by doing this research was: How does lack of practice in

oral production of English language affect the communicative development of students in the third year of the Modern Languages degree who are currently taking the Intensive Advanced English II course at the University of El Salvador?

The population for the collection of the data was about 60 students of the third year of Modern Languages degree who were taking the Intensive Advanced English II from which 10 were chosen by applying the non-random sampling method.

The technique used for collecting data was a survey, due to the quantitative approach adopted in this research with a questionnaire as the instrument. To elaborate it Microsoft Word was used, which only requested the date on which the survey was conducted, the number of students counted, and the person's gender. Also, it had ten closed-ended questions with three multiple choice answers having as options, never, sometimes and always. From the first to the fifth question were evaluating the first variable: oral production; and, from the sixth to the tenth question the second variable: communicative development was evaluated. So, the researchers provided instructions to students on how to fill it out.

In order to gather the information from the students, it was necessary to ask permission to the teacher in charge of that group of students since we took time away from her class to conduct the printed survey. The research team followed up personally and confidentially to monitor the number of students and whether they had satisfactorily completed the instrument as honestly as possible.

To tabulate the answers from the questionnaires, the research team elaborated two tables of results that were organized into three columns, each representing a response option. The objective was to obtain the frequency of the answers and compare it with the total sample. The

first table showed the frequency indicating the results for each variable in question, and the second presented the frequency in general for each question.

Subsequently, when all the data was tabulated in the Microsoft Excel tool in order to obtain the absolute frequency's results. So, the information was processed in SPSS Program for data analysis and create tables and graphs with the information obtained for each question. A frequency and percentage table and graph were obtained. The table presented the statistical results showing the frequency and the valid percentage per question and the graph is a representation of said information, this allows later to verify the hypotheses in the research.

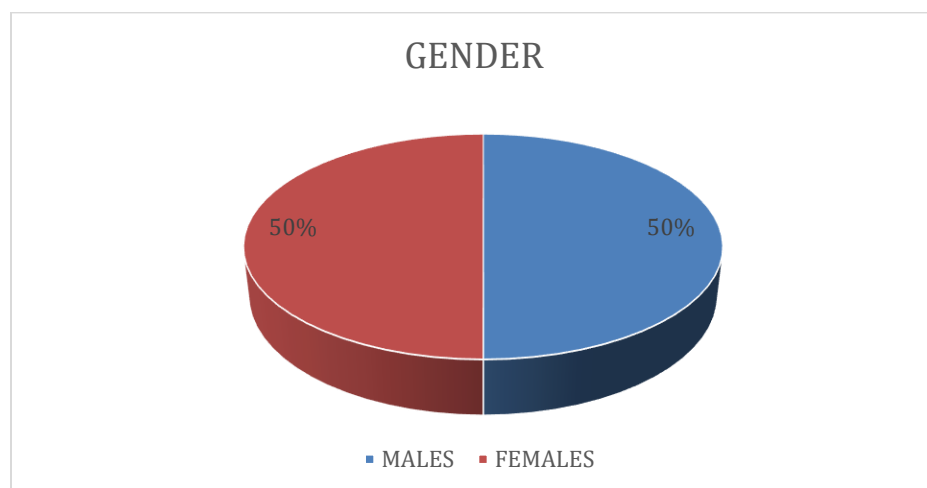
Results

Below we develop the results section, which shows the facts that were found in this investigation, according to its objectives and according to the sample taken for its development.

In order to describe the sample: 50% of the students were males, and 50% were females. Since no personal information was taken from the sample for this research, the only characteristic that describes our sample is gender. But, by observation it could be deduced that the 100% students are between 20 and 25 years old. (See figure 1).

Figure 1.

Sample description in percentage according to gender



Note: This graph represents the number of students that integrates the sample or the research. Number of boys = 5, number of girls = 5, total = 10.

According to the data collected per question that is related with each indicator it can be stated: The lack of motivation indicator asked in question one showed that 70% of students sometimes feel motivated to practice English while 30% always is motivated. So, the students have the awareness that being motivated is important in the practice of English.

Moreover, for the indicator of lack of vocabulary the question two was answered by 30% of students that consider vocabulary sometimes influence their speaking and the other 70% consider vocabulary always influence their practice of English. Therefore, this showed that students managed the information of this indicator knowing vocabulary is important since it directly influences oral practice of English.

The limited interaction indicator represented in question three was answered by 60% of students affirming that they sometimes practice the learning language both inside and outside the

classroom while the 40% always do that. That means, the students create the opportunities to experience the language in real and authentic situations.

The next indicator was fear of making mistakes, in question four 20% of students answered never have felt uncomfortable participating in class, 60% sometimes feel nervous when they participate in class and the other 20% always feel nervous. Question five showed that 40% of students sometimes have felt afraid of make a mistake when they speak English while 60% always have afraid of making mistakes. Then, English students have a natural reaction when they speak the language, however, it is important to remember that making mistakes is part of the learning process.

Besides, the fluency factor is important in the process of communication. According to question six 10% of students never hesitate when they are speaking English, 80% sometimes use pauses and hesitate and 10% always hesitate too much. So, the level of fluency can affect language learners' ability to communicate effectively.

In the same way, oral practical activities indicator represented in question seven and eight showed that 10% of students never develop activities in class in order to improve their fluency, while the 50% sometimes develop activities in class that help them to improve their English and 40% always do activities for improving their fluency. Then, the population know that the unique way to improve their speaking ability is practicing the language by oral activities.

Finally, confidence in speaking in question nine was answered by 30% of students showing that they have never had enough confidence in an English conversation, while 60% had sometimes enough confidence in an English conversation, and 10% had always enough confidence in an English conversation. For question ten, 20% of the students have never felt

confident speaking different topics in English, 60% say that they have sometimes felt confident speaking different topics in English, and the remaining 20% say that they have always felt confident speaking different topics in English. As a result, we have a population that understands the importance of being confident in speaking different topics in the learning language.

By considering the investigation question: How does lack of practice in oral production of English language affect the communicative development of students in the third year of the Modern Languages degree who are currently taking the Intensive Advanced English II course at the University of El Salvador in the semester I-2023? It can be established from the results that the students showed having awareness, motivation and knowledge of the need to practice the language and to improve or expand their vocabulary. Despite that, they show limitations in their speaking skills, since they make use of pauses and hesitate a lot when speaking, at the same time that they do not develop activities in class to improve their fluency.

The following table shows the results of gathering data and includes the indicators and variables evaluated to which each question belongs with the corresponding percentages of each option of answers.

Table 1.

Results table and percentages of the research sample

Variables	Indicator	Statements	Never	Sometimes	Always	TOTAL
Lack of practice	Lack of motivation	1. Are you motivated to practice English in class?	0%	70%	30%	100%
	Limited vocabulary	2. Do you consider lack of vocabulary	0%	30%	70%	100%

	influence your speaking practice?				
Limited interaction	3. Do you practice English outside and inside the classroom?	0%	60%	40%	100%
Fear of making mistakes	4. Do you feel uncomfortable or nervous when participating in English classes?	20%	60%	20%	100%
	5. Have you ever felt afraid of making mistakes when speaking in English?	0%	40%	60%	100%
Fluency	6. Do you use pauses and/or hesitate too much when speaking?	10%	80%	10%	100%
Oral practical activities	7. Do you develop activities in class that improve your fluency in speaking?	10%	50%	40%	100%
Oral production	8. Do you practice your speaking in oral activities developed in class?	0%	30%	70%	100%
Confidence in speaking	9. Do you have enough confidence in a conversation English?	30%	60%	10%	100%
	10. Do you feel confident to talk different topics in	20%	60%	20%	100%

English?				
TOTAL	9%	54%	37%	100%

Note: This table shows the percentage of each question related to the indicators of the research.

Discussion

For the purpose of expressing the theory established in this research work, the gathered data and the researchers' point of view, it is done as follows:

According to (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2023) The term "speaking" originates from the Old English word "specan," which means "to speak or talk."

Speaking production refers to the ability to produce and convey meaning through spoken language. It is one of the four language skills, along with listening, reading, and writing. Speaking production involves the use of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and intonation to communicate effectively in a given language (Language Learning Strategies - The Theoretical Framework and Some Suggestions for Learner Training Practice, 2009)

In accordance with the communication variable as defined by Berlo (1960), Communication is a dynamic process that involves encoding, transmitting, and decoding messages. It is influenced by context, culture, and the communicators' backgrounds, making it a multifaceted aspect of human interaction.

Communication development in students is the advancement of their capacity to express ideas and emotions effectively and to engage in meaningful dialogue with peers and educators. It involves cultivating skills such as clarity, conciseness, and active listening, which are essential

for academic achievement (Fisher & Frey, 2014).

Lack of practice in learning a new language refers to the insufficient engagement in activities that foster the use of the target language in various contexts, leading to slower acquisition and limited proficiency. According to Ellis (2005), language learning is a gradual process that requires consistent interaction with the language. Lack of practice leads to minimal exposure to real-life language use, which affects both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills. Without sufficient opportunities to use the language, learners may experience delays in fluency and accuracy.

In the context of language learning, a lack of motivation can be defined as the absence of personal incentives or reasons for engaging in language study. This may result in disinterest and ineffective learning. As emphasized by Dörnyei (1994), motivation is a dynamic and context-dependent construct that influences learners' persistence and effort. The author highlights that, learners who lack motivation may fail to perceive the relevance or importance of learning the language, which can lead to disengagement from the learning process. As the results show, motivation plays a crucial role in language acquisition. According to the study, 70% of students indicated that they sometimes feel motivated to practice English in class, while 30% are always motivated. This shows a moderate level of awareness regarding the importance of language practice. Similarly, vocabulary limitations also impacted oral production, with 70% of students agreeing that vocabulary sometimes affects their speaking abilities.

Another key factor was limited interaction, where 60% of students only sometimes practice English inside and outside the classroom. Limited interaction can hinder authentic language usage, reducing opportunities for real-world application of language skills.

Additionally, the fear of making mistakes was a prominent barrier, with 60% of students reporting feeling nervous when participating in class. This suggests that students are hesitant to speak due to fear of errors, which can inhibit communicative competence. This is consistent with findings from Horwitz (1986), who observed that language learners often suffer from anxiety, which directly influences their speaking performance.

Additionally, the research also highlighted issues with fluency, where 80% of students sometimes hesitated or paused while speaking, indicating a lack of confidence and insufficient practice. Fluency is essential for communication, and hesitation can interrupt the flow of speech, making it harder for students to convey their thoughts clearly (Skehan, 1996). Furthermore, only 50% of students reported sometimes participating in oral activities in class designed to improve fluency. This suggests that more interactive, speaking-centered classroom activities could benefit students by increasing their fluency and reducing hesitation.

Finally, a lack of confidence was identified as a significant issue, with only 10% of students reporting that they consistently felt confident engaging in conversation. Confidence is a crucial factor for language learners, as it influences their willingness to communicate and engage in discussion (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The study revealed that students generally lack the confidence to discuss a range of topics in English, which impedes their communicative development.

Conclusions

- The first point of the variable "lack of practice", which includes questions 1 to 5, we can verify that most of the students feel motivated to practice the language, being aware that aspects such as vocabulary influence language practice both inside and outside the

classroom.

- Students are aware that the lack of practice of the language is a factor that influences their speaking, which could affect their communicative development.
- It is evident that students are afraid of making mistakes in speaking English, as nerves also play an important role at that moment and these factors affect them to such an extent that they are not able to share their opinion or participate during class.
- Considering the second variable, "communicative development", which includes questions 6 through 10, it can be that the students' communicative skills are affected because they do not develop activities in class to improve their fluency, which is reflected in the pauses and hesitations they make when speaking.
- It is observed that most students feel confident enough to engage in a conversation in English, however, they do not present such confidence in all occasions, as this could depend on the topic of conversation and the vocabulary that students have inside and outside the classroom.
- Considering answering the research question, it was found that the students' lack of language practice affects their communicative development, since they show limitations in their speaking skills making use of pauses and hesitate a lot when speaking, at the same time that they do not develop activities in class to improve their fluency, but in a positive way, the results showed students have awareness, motivation and knowledge of the need to practice the language and to improve or expand their vocabulary.
- Taking into account the objectives, it is established that some of the causes of the lack of language practice are: limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes when speaking, feeling nervous to participate in class, and the possibility of being teased, thus creating

discomfort or insecurity in the student. In this way, factors that affect the communicative development of students arise, such as limited opportunities in the classroom to practice, since there are not enough strategies to develop different oral activities in class, affecting the fluency of the language.

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