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TITLE OF PAPER

**Components of speaking skills that influence sophomore
high school students' spoken English abilities at Unidad
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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this research project was presented by **Karla Adriana Méndez Benavides and Emily Tatiana Torres Tapia** as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the **Bachelor's Degree in EFL Pedagogy**.

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We, **Méndez Benavides, Karla Adriana and Torres Tapia, Emily Tatiana,**

HEREBY DECLARE THAT:

The Senior Project: **Components of speaking skills that influence sophomore high school students' spoken English abilities at Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana in the year 2022** prior to obtaining the **Bachelor's Degree in EFL Pedagogy**, has been developed based on thorough investigation, respecting the intellectual property rights of third parties regarding citations within the corresponding pages whose sources are included in the bibliography. Consequently, this work is of our full responsibility.

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We, **Méndez Benavides, Karla Adriana and Torres Tapia, Emily Tatiana,**

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Guayaquil, on the 13th day of February of 2023

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URKUND REPORT

Guayaquil, Febrero 8, 2023.

Lcdo. Stanley González Ubilla, Mgs.
Director de Carrera de
Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros
Presente.-

De mi consideración:

Sírvase encontrar en la presente, el “*print*” correspondiente al informe del software URKUND, correspondiente tema de Trabajo de Integración Curricular «**Components of speaking skills that influence sophomore high school students’ spoken English abilities at Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana in the year 2022.**», una vez que él mismo ha sido analizado y se ha procedido en conjunto con sus autores, las estudiantes MÉNDEZ BENAVIDES, KARLA ADRIANA y TORRES TAPIA, EMILY TATIANA a realizar la retroalimentación y correcciones respectivas de manejo de citas y referencias en el mencionado documento, cuyo resultado ha obtenido el siguiente porcentaje: 0%

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Atentamente,



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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to those who kept me company in these four years and helped me to keep going in this journey.

Karla Adriana Méndez Benavides

I am dedicating this work to my loving family, dad, mom, and sisters. I encounter feelings of profound gratitude for being born in such a warm, caring, and encouraging home, from which I got the strength and support to keep on working toward my aspirations.

Emily Tatiana Torres Tapia



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ABSTRACT

Speaking is considered to be one of the hardest abilities to master when learning a foreign language, and English is no exception. The main goal of this research project is to identify the influence of the speaking components that affect verbal communication on second baccalaureate students from the Unidad Educativa Santa Ana (UEPSA). The study has both quantitative, and qualitative instruments, including an interview and two diagnostic tests, that will allow a greater outlook on the factors that play a part in the student's speaking abilities. Through the analysis of the data obtained it is possible to state that the components of speaking affect the English oral production of the students. Other findings reveal that most of the students present issues in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, likewise, introversion, student-teacher ratio, and time also play a role in the student's performance. To tackle these factors, a proposal that recommends the use of debates to improve verbal communication has been developed.

Palabras Claves: *skill, speaking components, comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, EFL.*

INTRODUCTION

Regardless of the language, speaking skills are probably one of the most important abilities due to the attribute of real communication. Oral skills give the concession to unlimited ways to express feelings and thoughts which is what individuals need in order to live and share with others in society. Rao (2019) mentioned “As English is widely used all over the world, there is a need for learners to acquire the communication skills of it to get success in their respective fields” (p. 6).

When learning a foreign language, speaking is categorized as a productive skill, along with writing, these competencies involve more effort from the learners when creating their own discourse or composition since it is necessary that they acquire other skills and take many factors into consideration. For instance, some factors that have an impact on speaking were proposed by Florez (1999, as cited in Torkey, 2006) are the following:

- Using grammar structures accurately.
- Selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs.
- Applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing keywords, rephrasing, or checking for listener's comprehension.
- Paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components. (p. 15)

Moreover, mastering the spoken skill requires a full understanding of five components: comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency, according to Harris (1964, as cited in Kurniati et al., 2015). Some learners might find some difficulties with at least one of these speaking skills components when acquiring the language. Nonetheless, it is crucial to incorporate all of them for quality speech production.

JUSTIFICATION

The mastery of all four English skills is of vital importance when learning the language. Regarding the acquisition of these skills, students need to be exposed to a variety of activities. However, some learners struggle at least with one of these skills. This is the case among sophomore high school students at Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana in the city of Guayaquil.

The importance of conducting this research study lies in understanding the causes that influence learners' production of speaking skills. Likewise, our results might provide answers about what needs to be considered in favor of boosting English oral development in students. Thus, new strategies can be developed and eventually implemented.

The whole educational community, including students, teachers, and the institution itself, could benefit from this research. The reality is that the same problem might happen to students of the same course level in other institutions in the target city. Students who are the subject of the study are the primary beneficiaries once the problem is identified, classes can be directed to target the components that influence speaking to prevent students' low performance levels on oral production from recurring.

Conversely, teachers can become aware of the factors that play a role when teaching and assessing speaking on their students. It would give teachers the opportunity to create lessons that bring together activities that focus on the development and practice of speaking involving all its elements and helping them to reach their expectations of the English course.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to the EF English Proficiency Index (2022), Ecuador is in 82nd place in their ranking of 111 countries, making it one of the two lowest-ranked countries in Latin America. This reflects the low-level the whole country faces with respect to English education. In addition, recent studies like Chamorro et al. (2020) concluded that speaking is considered to be one of the most difficult skill to be taught and learned.

Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana (UEPSA) is a religious school in the center of Guayaquil. Its student population falls under 1000. Observations made prior to this research, in the classrooms of the sophomore students of UESPA have shown that participation in EFL class is carried out by just a small handful of students who perform the language with short comments, most of the time using L1 (Spanish).

Multiple factors, indistinctly, can contribute to low-level speaking interaction. Oral communication deficiency may be linked to several motives, like teaching methodologies, practice outside the classroom, the school environment, or problems related to some speaking components such as comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency.

The English Language curriculum of Ecuador (2016) estimates that the sophomore high school student should manage well at the A2 level, in accordance with the standards of the Common European Framework of References (CEFR, 2020), but this estimation is not always certain when considering all four skills taught in the EFL class. This paper focuses on the deficiency of speaking skills in sophomore English language learners.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What components of speaking skills influence sophomore students' spoken English abilities at U.E.P. Santa Ana in the year 2022?

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To identify which of the speaking skills' components affect to a greater degree the spoken abilities of sophomore students at U.E. Santa Ana in the year 2022.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To identify the weaknesses concerning students' language production speaking skills of second baccalaureate at U.E. Santa Ana.
- To describe the impact of speaking components on students' English proficiency in communication.
- To design a plan that can be implemented, as a possible solution, to enhance the deficiency of the speaking component identified.

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Defining Speaking

Speaking is a fundamental aspect of human life because through this ability we are able to express our thoughts and feelings toward others. Speaking, as mentioned by Zuhriyah (2017), refers to the earliest means to establish relations with other people in society. Equally, countless concepts for defining the word "speaking" have been proposed by different experts. For instance, Bygate (1987, as cited in Leong, 2017) interpreted speaking as the generation of all kinds of tones, sounds, and spoken messages, which leads to getting a response from a person that is listening to your message. In line with this definition, Jones defined speaking as a "form of communication in which the effective conveyance of what the speaker says is very crucial" (1989, as cited in Dewi, Kultsum & Armadi, 2017).

The importance of the ability to speak in the acquisition of the English language is known worldwide. For this work, it is crucial to understand which are the components that make up a good performance in the production of language verbally. Therefore, key concepts are laid out throughout this section. The reviewed notions are displayed as follows: Speaking, Speaking Components, English as a Foreign Language, English Teaching Approach, and Communicative Language Teaching.

From what has been described, speaking goes along with communication. Thus, it is possible to highlight that in the context of learning a foreign language, English language in this case, speaking becomes an essential skill to acquire for communicative purposes and interests. Despite being a priority, spoken English skills seem to be not exactly that easy to master. The speaker requires a lot of practice to perfect the correct use of grammar, good intonation and pronunciation, extensive vocabulary knowledge, and meaning of the sentences (semantics) among other characteristics to be able to communicate effectively. As Taslim et al. (2019) said, "It takes a long time and requires consistency to practice it" (p.5). Additionally, Nunan (2018) explained in detail the reasons why speaking is one of the language skills that brings more challenges when learning another language, he claimed the following:

Speaking, like writing, is a productive skill, which means that learners have to generate their own language rather than process language produced by others. Unlike writing, the spoken language has to be produced in real-time, so in most conversational exchanges there is virtually no time to reflect on what we want to say or how we want to say it, to mentally rehearse the utterance, or to edit it. (p.2)

Based on this statement, it can be concluded that verbal communication conventions are more complex to perform due to the spontaneous nature in which it is developed. Subsequently, English language students may be quite knowledgeable of grammatical basis, pronunciation, and vocabulary, still, this does not guarantee that learners can successfully bring all that knowledge together in face of an unplanned conversation.

Parallel with grammar, listening, and writing competencies, instructing learners to be proficient in spoken English must be a matter of paramount importance in teaching the language. Though the significance of the four abilities, speaking seems to be distantly assimilated as an issue of first concern in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. This idea eludes the fact that some schools established in regions where English is not a dominant language, do not prioritize activities that bring students the opportunities to meet the speaking needs of the language. Khan (2013), for instance, conducted some research in schools in Saudi Arabia whose results were that in the vast majority, both teachers and students give close attention to skills like reading and writing, leaving aside activities related to speaking and listening. Likewise, Irawati (2016), in his study entitled "Supporting Student's English Speaking Achievement Using Video" described that teachers find some issues getting their students engaged in oral activities. As Derakhshan et al. (2016) argued "Opportunities for speaking require much structure and planning."

Teaching Speaking

According to Nunan in Bailey (n.d.), there are some principles to take into account concerning teaching speaking, these are (1) be aware of the differences between second language and foreign language learning contexts

(2) give students practice with both fluency and accuracy (3) provide opportunities for the students to talk by using group work or pair work, and limiting teacher talk (4) plan speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning (5) design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking (pp. 54–55–56), by acknowledging the cited points, the goal and application techniques that teachers use in their classrooms will center around the development of the speaking needs of the language.

Wijaya (2018) suggested that “Teaching speaking is not merely asking the student to speak up” (p. 76). Certainly, English language educators are expected to be familiar with some strategies that can be implemented during lessons in order to make the students engage in practice and so oral production of the language.

Instructing learners to be proficient in spoken English must be a matter of paramount importance in teaching the language. Though the significance of it, speaking seems to be distantly assimilated as an issue of first concern in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. This idea eludes the fact that some schools established in regions where English is not a dominant language, do not prioritize activities that bring students the opportunities to meet the speaking needs of the language. Khan (2013), for instance, conducted some research in schools in Saudi Arabia whose results were that in the vast majority, both teachers and students give close attention to skills like reading and writing, leaving aside activities related to speaking and listening. Likewise, Irawati (2016), in his study entitled “Supporting Student’s English Speaking Achievement Using Video” described that teachers find some issues getting their students engaged in oral activities. As Derakhshan et al. (2016) argued “Opportunities for speaking require much structure and planning.”

Furthermore, in terms of English language teaching practices, some researchers in the field, note that the deficiency of oral skills in EFL students is associated with the teacher’s selection of methods when teaching speaking. Research carried out by Arung & Jumardin (2016) revealed that having

students read dialogues in class did not improve their speaking abilities since those activities did not provide students with the chance to convey ideas spontaneously. These views about the ineffectual approach of traditional practices to exercise communication in the classroom were supported by Dewi et al. (2017) who claimed that every time the learning-teaching process is approached in a “conventional way” (traditionally) using memorization of texts, the result is that students show feelings of boring, low interest, and poor production of the language.

Speaking components

Certainly, to master the ability to speak the English language, it is essential to take into account many elements that go into producing the language orally. Five components introduced by Harris (1964, as cited in Kurniati et al., 2015) categorized this way: comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency, are analyzed in the evaluation of speech production. To be able to perform well on these constituents, students can be labeled as competent English speakers.

Comprehension

According to Berkategori (2015), comprehension refers to “an ability to perceive and process stretches of discourse, to formulate representations the meaning of sentences”. In other words, comprehension is the speaker’s capacity for understanding the message they are conveying to listeners, likewise, assimilating ideas when listening to others in order to generate meaningful responses and gestures. Moreover, based on the declaration, it can be inferred that comprehension is required for both, speaker and listener, for communication to take place.

In light of the usefulness of comprehension in a communicative act, Yadav and Mishra (2020), from “Extension Communication Models and Strategies” where it is explained the eight models of communication, emphasized that “Successful communication will require both the sender and the receiver to share responsibility in order to make communication smooth, effective and efficient” (pp. 45-46). Consequently, as long as the interlocutors have fully developed their comprehension abilities, communication can rise, otherwise

there would be no communication since there would be no exchange of information.

Grammar

A definition of grammar proposed by Harmer holds that grammar implies how words can be transformed and blended to build complex sentences (2001, as cited in Purnawati, 2020). The Cambridge Dictionary admits several definitions for the word “grammar”. Grammar is defined as: “(the study or use of) the rules about how words change their form and combine with other words to make sentences, a book of grammar rules and the rules of a language.”

Besides, Rossiter (2021) authentically explains the importance of grammar using an analogy in which language is a big highway, the words are the cars and trucks, and grammar is the road signs and markings that guide drivers in their way. A big highway lacking road signs would tend to fall into total confusion easily. Similarly, it would happen with grammar, people with poor grammar knowledge could carry on some communication acts as the example provided "Me Tarzan, you Jane", but just that sort of brief messages, nor the complex type which involves formulating more sophisticated ideas.

From the statements above can be assured that grammar is a critical component when performing a conversation. The awareness of the grammar rules of a language and its effective application facilitates the production of well-structured and comprehensible messages that at the same time lower the possibilities of a kind of misinterpretation resulting from the conveyance of unclear and poorly structured ideas.

Vocabulary

The term vocabulary as a component of speaking refers to the knowledge of words in a particular language. Berkategori (2015) added, “Students need to know words, their meanings, how they are spelled and how they are pronounced”. Accordingly, vocabulary knowledge helps speakers to be competent, which means, a learner who has an extensive vocabulary can express thoughts and ideas more easily and in different contexts. In detail, in the context of an oral intervention, while speaking, the learner requires to use

precise words that define what he is trying to communicate, if there is a wide range of vocabulary, it turns out to be just a matter of selecting the correct words from the stored vocabulary and using them in to convey the desired message.

Further, Hunt & Feng (2016) found that “Vocabulary knowledge has both breadth and depth”. The former corresponds to the quantity which is basically the number of words the learner knows. On the other hand, depth in vocabulary refers to quality, that is, how well the student understands the concept of the words learned (Ouellette, 2006, as cited in Tong & Tong, 2022). From what is stated above, learners should not only be exposed to different contexts to acquire a large number of vocabulary words, but also, be engaged with meaningful activities that help them to internalize those words, so then they can increase their lexicon in the language and consequently improve communication skills.

It can be said that vocabulary is a very determining factor in the production of language, knowing the words facilitates communication since the speaker does not need to stop and take time to think about a specific word. A learner who possesses an extensive vocabulary does not require effort when explaining themselves since words seem to be familiar and come spontaneously in different conversational situations.

Pronunciation

Stenberg (2001, as cited in Mulatsih, 2018) defines pronunciation as “The act of manner pronouncing words with reference to the production of sounds, the placing of stress, intonation, etc”. Along with this definition, Lihavi (n.d., as cited in Nurullayevna, 2020) argued that “the correct pronunciation, is a picture-puzzle consisting of 4 important elements: the correct articulation, stress, intonation, and connectedness of speech”. Alternately, Chan (2018) suggested that pronunciation is an act that is produced in speech, and “both cognitive control and automatization” are requested. Additionally, this author also pointed out a well-known technique to get better at this speaking component.

He advised that the incorporation of “gestures” and “other body movement” is helpful in the improvement of pronunciation abilities.

Pronunciation has an essential function in the comprehension of speech. As Nurullayevna (2020) declared “Improper pronunciation can lead to negative impression, misunderstanding, and ineffective communication”.

Though the generation of the correct sounds of the words is fundamental, it should not be misunderstood with the accent. Some researchers such as (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016) indicated that when instructing learners in language pronunciation, the goal is to get a native accent from the students rather than a pronunciation that is intelligible. Intelligibility refers to the extent to which oral speech is understandable to listeners. Learners are able to speak clearly and carry out effective oral communication without sounding like native speakers.

Fluency

In terms of fluency, in precise words, it is the “automaticity and speed of speech production” (Brand & Götz, 2011, p. 256, as cited in Albino, 2017, p. 2). Similarly, Mairi (2016) affirmed that fluency in speaking enables competence in the language, as well as for the speaker to bring a natural tone to their speeches and so impress listeners. Besides, in her research was listed several authors who agree that fluency in communication is perceived when the speech goes smoothly, the speaker does not manifest an excess of pauses, nor make use of fillers or hesitation before saying something. Moreover, communication turns more successful since there are no interferences in the production of language utterances.

In conformity with Jong and Hulstijn (2009, as cited in Mairi, 2016), there is a scale to measure the level of fluency. The scale comprises six levels listed as follows: Disfluent Level (0), Limited Level (1), Intermediate Level (2), Good Level (3), Advanced Level (4), and Native-Like Level (5).

Some research revealed that speaking fluency can be fostered by exposing learners to audiovisual content media and even that the application of this strategy works better than mere socialization (Shahini & Shahamirian,

2017). Regardless of knowledge of the best technique, it is undeniable that oral fluency represents an outstanding feature for the demonstration of expressive capability (Gorkaltseva et al., 2015).

English as a Foreign Language

The expression English as a Foreign Language, best known as EFL, is the condition of learning the English language in a context where the target language (English) is not widely spoken in the society. That is, learners are taught the language in the classrooms, but once they are outside, they may not be able to practice it. Unlike English as a Second Language (ESL), in which English is learned in English-speaking countries and learners can use the language to communicate on a daily basis. The terms EFL and ESL encompass distinctive perceptions of language gaining. On the one hand, ESL students develop the language by “acquisition”, meaning that this process happens subconsciously. EFL students, on the other hand, gain language knowledge by “learning” which refers to the consciousness of the academic process (Setiyadi, 2020).

Then, English as a foreign language is characterized by a more limited exposure to the language due to the relationship of the non-English speaking context in which the student learns the language. Educators can incorporate various techniques in order to provide learners with the necessary experience of the language. Thus, Hamaniuk (2012, as cited in Onishchuk, et al., 2020) concluded that some methodologies for teaching the language in English foreign contexts have been developed and applied throughout the years. Among these methods are the Communicative Approach, the Grammar-Translation Method, and the Audio-lingual Method.

English Teaching Methods for Speaking

Numerous methods for teaching English in the EFL classroom have been designed over time. Some methodologies that focus on oral communication are: The Direct Method, Audio-lingual, Suggestopedia, Communicative language teaching, The Silent Way, Community Language Learning, among others (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, as cited in Renau, 2016).

Certainly, each method proposed has a theory and principles behind it that give foundations for its own practices and characteristics. Nonetheless, Hao (2017) indicated that the variable context is a prime feature to be considered when selecting teaching techniques. Methods successfully applied in one classroom may not work properly in other contexts.

The Direct Method

This method receives its name since meaning must come from visual aids like pictures, realia, or pantomime. The native language is never used in the classroom. The main purpose of this method is to teach students to think in the target language (English), therefore learning how to communicate using it (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual method corresponds to the idea of creating new habits from the target language to overcome the old ones of the native language in order to communicate effectively. This method focuses on the use of drills to present the class which is based around dialogues that often present daily situations or the culture of the target language (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

Desuggestopedia

The heart of this method comes from concept that the limitations or barriers of students can be overcome or 'desuggested' through the application of a positive classroom environment along with the integration of the arts like music, posters, pictures, games, etc. The students' needs and feelings play an important role in the classroom, prioritizing that they are able to feel relaxed and confident, this will cause the language to be produced naturally (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), also known as the Communicative approach, is a second and foreign language approach that dates back to the sixties when, renowned linguist, Noam Chomsky criticized other methods for being too focused on structure (UK Essays, 2017). This criticism spurred other

educators to note that to communicate, it was necessary more than mastering the linguistic structure, due to the fundamental social aspect of languages. (Halliday 1973, as cited in Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

The communicative approach possesses some unique characteristics, for instance, every activity that is done is with the intention of real communication, the use of authentic material, and the tendency to work in small groups inside the classroom to maximize the communication time for each student. Some benefits of this approach are the intrinsic motivation learners might get from learning the language in a way they can actually use it in their daily lives. Additionally, students get to share their own ideas and experiences inside the classroom and their confidence is pushed by the constant interactions with peers and teachers (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

The Silent Way

On the more unconventional side, we have 'The Silent Way' which requires a minimal participation of the teacher in the learning students, meaning that they are the ones responsible for their language acquisition through exploration and intuition by using the knowledge they already possess, the teacher will only be there to guide and give clues (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

Community Language Learning

Teaching with this method means considering the learners' intellect, feelings, relationships, reactions, and desires. In these classrooms students learn not only from their teacher, but also from their peers, collaborative learning is highly promoted, while the teacher adopts the role of counselor, who understands the challenges learning a new language can bring (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the objectives of this research paper which center around the identification of speaking skills for second baccalaureate students at UEPSA, this study focuses on measuring and identifying weaknesses in verbal communication abilities regarding its different components.

As mentioned by McNiff (2013, as cited by the University of Bristol, n.d.) action research refers to the investigation teachers can conduct as researchers of their own field. It centers around a problem and finding a possible solution, to later implementing and evaluating it. For these reasons, it is appropriate to conclude that the present research work falls under this category.

The approach selected for this study was a mixed-methods approach since it is necessary first to measure the students' level of speaking proficiency to recognize a possible weakness and then measure the impact of that factor on their speaking ability. Additionally, it is also considered important for this research to acknowledge the teacher's perspective of the EFL classroom. Hence the use of quantitative (diagnostic tests) and qualitative (interview) methods. Furthermore, it is stated by many authors as cited in Ivankova et al. (2006):

Neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient, by themselves, to capture the trends and details of a situation. When used in combination, quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other and allow for more robust analysis, taking advantage of the strengths of each. (p. 3)

Context and participants

A consent agreement (Annex 5) was previously signed between the students and the institution for the months of July and August. In those months, observations were made in the second baccalaureate classrooms during a week where it was noticed how students struggled to participate actively with their speech, with some of them using L1 and others demonstrating problems with the use of the language in the oral expression. The instruments used in this research work were applied at UEPSA in Guayaquil during the 2022-2023

scholastic year. The participants were the second baccalaureate students from the A and B classrooms which added up to 77 students in total; however, one of them was not able to participate in the first diagnostic test. The students were subject of two different types of diagnostic tests regarding their English abilities and knowledge. The corresponding English teacher for this course was also interviewed on his views of the classroom and their speaking abilities.

Study Instruments

Cambridge Speaking Test

In the first stage of the data recollection, a diagnostic test was implemented in pair or group interviews based on the Cambridge Assessment Scale accessible in the A2 Key Handbook for teachers for exams from 2020, the students were tested using an A2 sample speaking test (Annex 1). Sari (2022) corroborates that the test has the recognition in a total of 25,000 organizations around 130 countries. An approximate 100 universities in the US validate it.

In addition, an assessment rubric (Annex 2) was used along with the assessment scale with the intention of having a fair grading system for the first diagnostic test. All the resources were accessible from the Cambridge webpage (2020).

Two speaking test samples available on the Cambridge website, with the topics of "Eating" and "Holidays" were used, both belonging to the year 2020. Some arrangements were made to the structure of the traditional Cambridge test, for once there was only one person in charge of these interviews, this person took the role of interlocutor and assessor, therefore, all the interviews were recorded, with the purpose of revisiting and grading after the interviews took place. Also, the interviews took less time than the average Cambridge test, around 5 minutes each rather than 8 to 10.

Additionally, it is suggested that this test is taken in pairs unless there is an odd number of participants; however, groups 29 and 30 consisted of three participants each due to a lack of time on a day for this test to take place. Aside from these observations, the test was as faithful as possible to the authentic experience of a Cambridge speaking test. In the assessment of this evaluation,

three elements were considered, vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation, and interactive communication, which were assigned a grade from 0 to 5 according to the assessment scale that is provided by Cambridge itself.

As the 'interactive communication' element of this test is highly related to a clear understanding of the language and the ability to maintain exchanges with the interlocutor without the need for prompting or additional help, this aspect was considered for the evaluation of two components of the speaking skills, comprehension, and fluency.

Teacher interview

Along with the tests, an interview (Annex 3) was employed with the purpose of getting an insight into the EFL classroom of the second baccalaureate students from their English teacher. This interview consists of two parts, one more general where questions about the EFL classroom and the skills developed in it are asked, and a second one which is focused more on the speaking abilities in the EFL classroom and its effective instruction.

With the aim of getting an inside view of the situation of the class regarding their English classes and their relationship with speaking, an interview to the teacher was conducted. This interview was the result of two sources, six of the twelve questions were gathered from a research article that utilized a survey in a University of Riobamba in Ecuador (Chamorro et al., 2020), in order to measure which of the skills is the most difficult to teach according to the teachers, being this the main focus of this part of the interview. The first six questions of the survey were translated and modified to fit the structure of an interview. The other half of the instrument was taken from an interview by Cambridge (2017) with Andy French, an Academic Manager at Select English, an English Learning School in England. The questions fit the purpose of this research and were adapted in order to emphasize on the struggles of teaching speaking.

Productive Vocabulary Level Test

To conclude, the Productive Vocabulary Test (Annex 4) was sent to the students for them to upload their results on the Padlet platform. This test was chosen for its reliability, validity, and practicality regarding the measurement of

vocabulary growth and its helpfulness pertaining to research on some important issues in vocabulary acquisition (Laufer & Nation, 1999). The test was taken by each student on the website adaptation by Cobb (2019) of the Productive Vocabulary Level Test by Laufer and Nation (1999).

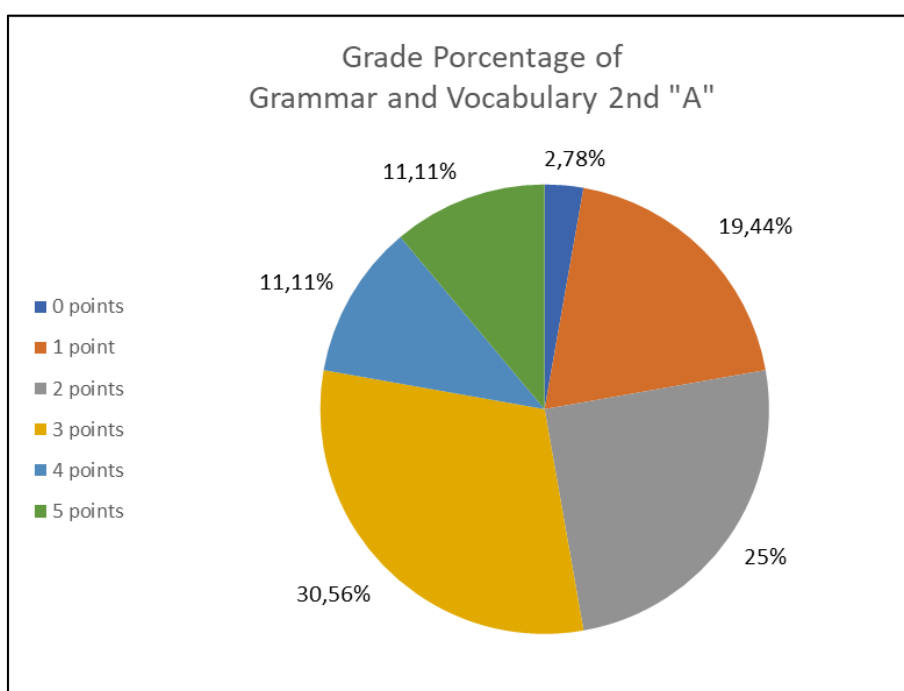
With the aim of making the test available for all the students, and making the results easier to handle, a set of slides with a tutorial on how to take the test and upload the results, for this step, a page on the Padlet platform was also created. The English teacher was contacted and asked to deliver these slides to the students conducive to the analysis of the results.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

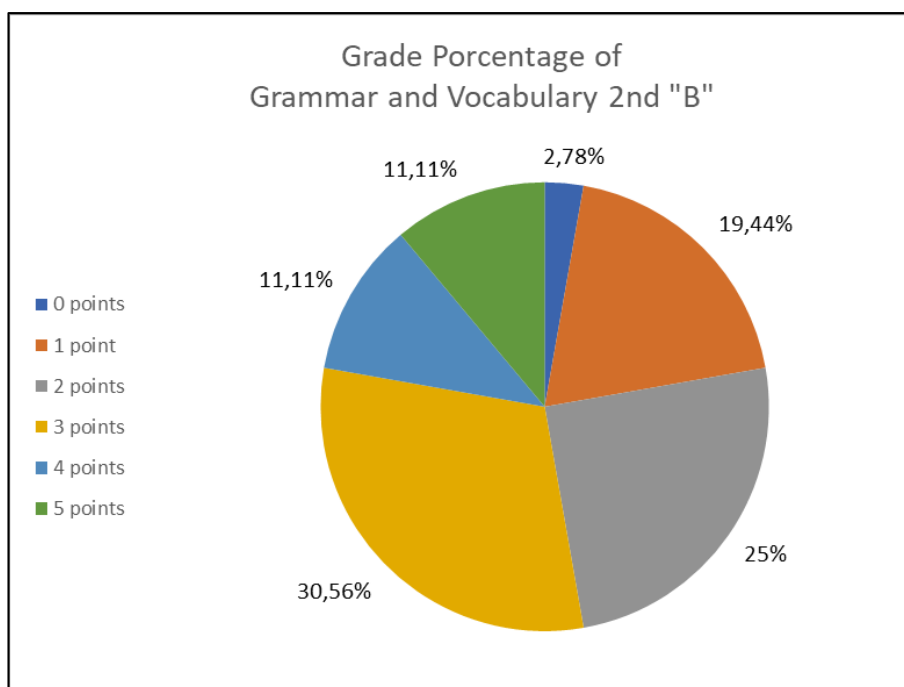
As stated in one of the objectives of this research project, one goal is to examine the students' language production in order to identify the weaknesses concerning their speaking skills. Three instruments were used in this research project, namely, a Cambridge speaking test, a teacher interview, and a Productive Vocabulary Test.

Cambridge Speaking Test

To measure the student's speaking ability in alliance with one of the objectives of this research, a Cambridge speaking test (2020) was used as the first instrument.



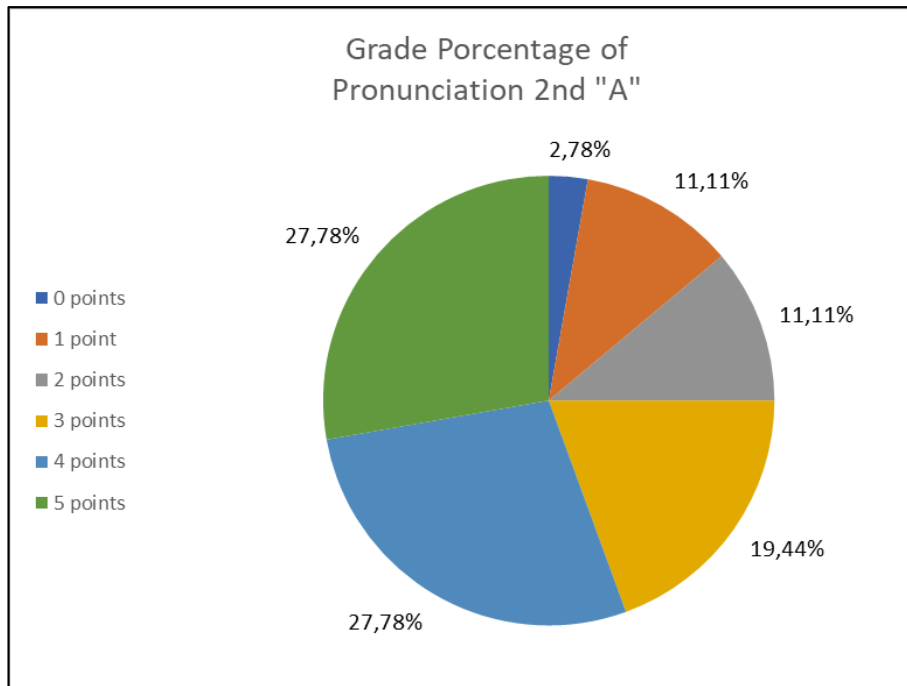
1 Grade Percentage of Grammar and Vocabulary 2nd "A", developed by the authors.



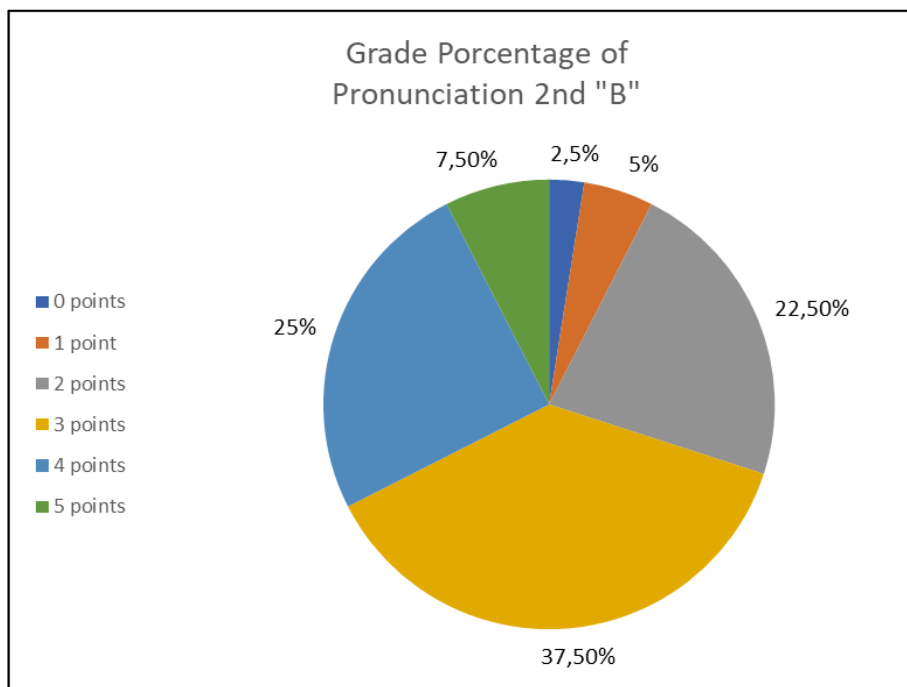
2 Grade Percentage of Grammar and Vocabulary 2nd "B", developed by the authors.

The results of the test in the Grammar and Vocabulary section showed that in both classrooms, only a minority, 10 out of 76 tested students, were able to get a full score of 5. Whereas 37 of the students, close to half of the students that were tested, only scored from 0 to 2 on this parameter, and no more than 30 students, almost 39 percent of both classes combined, could get 3 or 4 marks for this parameter.

This parameter consists of two separate elements, grammar, and vocabulary, which are also considered to be part of the five components according to Harris (1964, as cited in Kurniati et al., 2015). However, in the rubric used to assess these criteria, two sections are provided to comment on the performance of the test. Therefore, the interlocutor noted how a big majority of the students had problems with their vocabulary, they either used L1 during the test or presented a very limited lexicon respecting words that are considered to be in their range of knowledge, while in contrast to the grammar, a big part of students was able to use simple grammar forms rather easily.



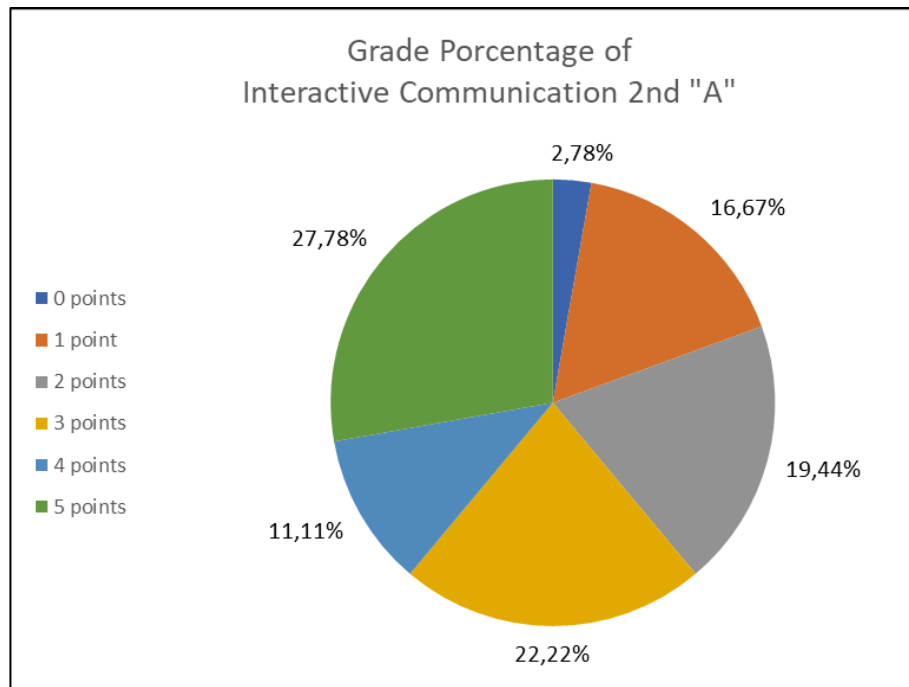
3 Grade Percentage of Pronunciation 2nd "A" , developed by the authors.



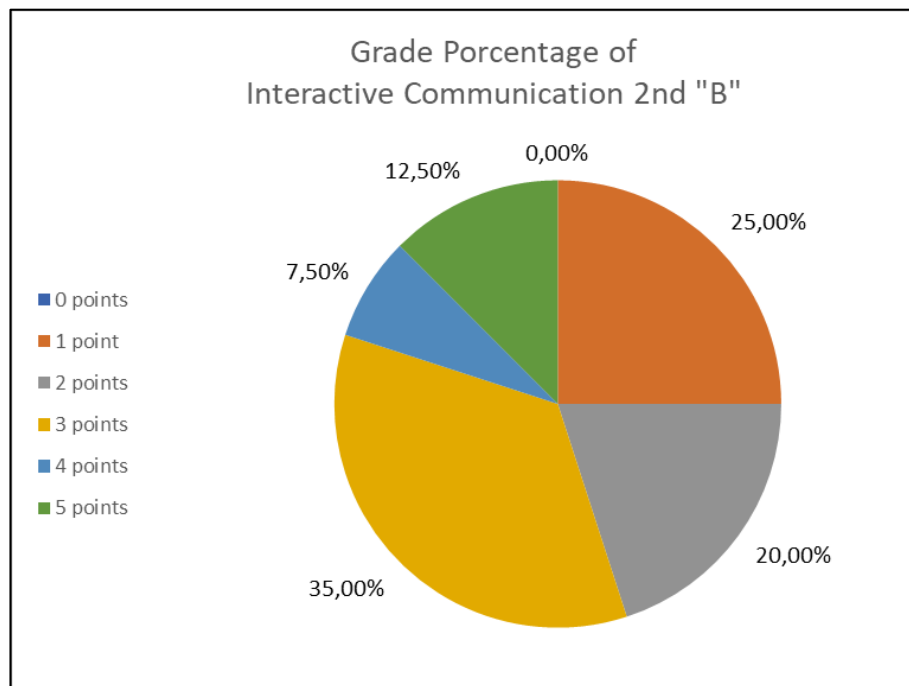
4 Grade Percentage of Pronunciation 2nd "B" , developed by the authors.

Regarding the element of pronunciation, it was noticeable that students in both courses were able to keep their scores on the average side with no more than 9 students in group A, and 12 in group B, scoring from 0-2, which means 72.37% of the other students were capable of getting 3 to 5 marks, which corresponds to a standard level in pronunciation with a big percentage of them not presenting any difficulties with this parameter. However, it is worth

mentioning that the interlocutor highlighted in their commentaries that the students who present problems had more conflict with the expression of common words.



5 Grade Percentage of Interactive Communication 2nd "A" , developed by the authors.



6 Grade Percentage of Interactive Communication 2nd "B" , developed by the authors.

As to the last parameter, interactive communication, the collected data shows that more than half of the students in both classes were able to accomplish scores of 3 and higher, which demonstrates sufficient control of this

component. Only one student of the 76 tested got a 0 because it was noted that the participant did not attempt to give a proper answer. While approximately 40 percent of the students only scored 1 or 2 marks. Moreover, it was noticed that students struggled a lot with comprehending what the assessor was asking. Additionally, some participants also made no effort to have a fluent conversation or answered with one-word answers only.

Teacher interview

The answers provided on the question and answer session (Annex 3) by the second baccalaureate teacher at Unidad Educativa Santa Ana were effective at delivering some insight into the reality of this class regarding learning English, as for the first and second questions “What do you think is the most challenging skill to teach?” and “What skill do you consider is the most difficult to learn for students?”, the teacher agrees that in both cases the answer is listening and speaking, being the latter one of our interests.

With respect to questions three and six, “What skill do you spend the most time teaching inside the classroom?” and “What do you think is the skill the English syllabus focuses more on?”, the teacher pointed out how in both cases there was a balance on the skills the syllabus focuses on and the skills the teacher spends the most time teaching inside the classroom which are listening, speaking and writing.

The teacher was also asked to say in question five “Which skill do the students show more interest in during the teaching process?”, for which his answer was:

“They love speaking but sometimes I see that they love reading, for example, when we have reading activities, and I ask them just to read for volunteers, they love to read because they love showing just their reading skills. So, I think that they have a good level just showing the reading. They enjoy reading.”

This answer mentions two skills, and while it gives more emphasis on reading, it specifically alludes to the fact that they enjoy reading out loud, which ties to the first idea of this answer which quotes “they love speaking”, showing how the students might present a strong link with the skill of speaking.

For the second part of this interview, the questions were now directed at knowing the specific opinions of the teacher on certain aspects of the skill of speaking.

According to question 7, “What do you enjoy most about teaching speaking?”, the teacher stated that it was when the students got to use the language and he was able to see their progress and that their strategies were working. Nevertheless, on question 8, he expressed that one of the biggest difficulties was the unwillingness of the students to participate orally due to introversion. In question 9 it may be explained by the inclination of the students to achieve perfection and avoid making mistakes; however, the teacher conveyed that is normal and all they need is practice. In order to overcome this, the teacher suggests on question 10 that it is necessary to create a safe speaking environment by not making them feel bad about their mistakes and not interrupting them when they speak. Additionally, on question 11, the teacher proposes that to achieve a good speaking topic, it should center around the students’ interests, like sports, style, celebrities, and science, to encourage classroom participation.

By the end of the interview, the teacher concludes, in question 12, that the most important role of the teacher is to be a guide for the students and give examples by speaking in English all the time, avoiding mistakes as much as possible. The teacher should always come prepared for the class, researching the topic to teach.

Productive Vocabulary Level Test

Despite the efforts made to apply this instrument in optimal conditions and obtain results that can give an unbiased answer, the platform used on this occasion, Padlet, allowed students to observe the results of other students which may have caused untruthful answers and therefore did not qualify for the analysis of the data collected. Furthermore, only 61 of the 77 students of the second baccalaureate were able to send their results in the required time.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the analysis of the instruments applied in this research project, the following conclusions are presented:

- Based on the parameters measured on the Cambridge speaking test applied to the second baccalaureate students at UEPSA, and the correlation with the concepts on some authors talked about in the theoretical framework, it can be said that the components that affect the speaking abilities are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension.
- Speaking is difficult to evaluate as a consequence of the number of students per class, and the lack of knowledge on how to assess it properly.
- It can be concluded that vocabulary is one of the components that influence negatively and to a greater extent when producing the language orally, in the majority of sophomore students at UEPSA, highlighting that some issues with fluency and comprehension were also spotted.
- A big part of the students that struggle with the vocabulary component, resort to using L1 to describe words that should be part of their A2 level range of knowledge but are unfamiliar to them because of their limited lexicon of words in L2.
- All the speaking components analyzed throughout this project are significantly important and present a big impact in the performance of effective communication in the English language.
- Most of the students do not present major problems with the components of pronunciation and grammar.
- According to the teacher's perspective, it is challenging to instruct on speaking due to different factors, mainly due to students' introversion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been developed accordingly to the conclusions drawn from this research for the institution (UEPSA) and its community to benefit from.

- EFL teachers might consider the 5 components of speaking when assessing such skill, this will provide more structure to the evaluation process.
- Educational institutions should be more flexible with the English curricula, with the purpose of allowing teachers to have more freedom in their classrooms, therefore granting more opportunities to focus on speaking development.
- In order to achieve a better student-teacher ratio, educational institutions could reorganize how classrooms are distributed.
- Classes should be more focused on the students' interest with the goal of creating a more engaging learning environment.
- To develop the different components a proposal was generated with the aim of enhancing the underdeveloped areas of students, not only regarding speaking, but also the frequent introversion found in the classroom during oral participation.

PROPOSAL

As one of the recommendations suggested the design of a proposal was developed with the aim of improving the students' verbal communication through the use of debate activities.

General Data				
Project Title:	Debate Time!			
Project Team:	Emily Torres and Karla Méndez			
Main Objective:	To improve verbal communication of second baccalaureate students at Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana through dynamic debate activities along the scholastic year.			
Specific Objectives:	1 To expand vocabulary by learning expressions used during debates			
	2 To enhance lexicon by researching on topics of social interest			
	3 To debate over topics previously researched by the students with the help of the teachers			
Execution time:	Starting	20/03/23	Ending	28/01/24
Evaluation time:	Starting	29/01/24	Ending	04/02/24

1 General Data

Project Description

This project is designed for second baccalourate students from Unidad Educativa "Santa Ana", which consist on two classes of an approximate of 40 students each, with the objective of improving their English speaking skills through the implementation of debate related activities that will be introduced and guided by the English teacher and will be carried out during the entire scholastic year.

The activities are designed in three stages:

- **First:** The teacher will plan and teach a class on different expressions used to debate.

The teacher will show videos about people debating and play games with students in order to apply meaningful learning. In order to review this vocabulary throughout the year the teacher will create along with the students a poster and flashcards to paste around the classroom to make it easier for the students to use.

- **Second:** The teacher will create a Paddlet where students can find multimedia content about topics of social interest (<https://idebate.net/resources/debatabase>) that will be used for a future debate.

The platform will be available for students to access anytime.

The teacher will ask students to go to [StudyStack](#) and create a stack of 10 new words, with their definition, they are able to find on the information available at Padlet, they will then upload the link to their StudyStack to the School's platform.

- **Finally:** The teacher will take the class to a wide space of the school, the date set for the debate activities

Then, the teacher will divide the class according to the type of activity set for the day: "[Two circles](#)", "[Agree/disagree ball toss](#)", "[Opinion line](#)".

The teacher then will explain the rules set for each activity and answer students questions. A practice round will be played in order to see if the students understood what must be done.

After the time designated for the activity is done, the teacher will call the students to sit on the ground forming a circle around him or her.

The teacher will then ask students at random, questions related to what they were able to hear and what their position is.

Execution Matrix							
Objective (number)	Activity	What will be done	What change is expected - Outcomes	Resources	Time	Responsibility	Assessment
S.O.1	Teaching expressions used during debates	The teacher will plan and teach a class on different expressions used to debate. The teacher will show videos about people debating and play games with students in order to apply meaningful learning. In order to review this vocabulary throughout the year the teacher will create along with the students a poster and flashcards to paste around the classroom to make it easier for the students to use.	The students will learn some new expressions they can use for the scenary of a debate. The students will be able to review the vocabulary constantly with the help of the posters pasted on the classroom wallls.	- Link to get expressions to teach for the class. - Videos of people debating. - Games platforms/stategies to play with the students. - Colorful carboard to	4 weeks	English teachers	The teacher will ask questions to the students about the new expressions learned during the classes taught. The teacher will check the posters and flashcards created in class to make sure the grammar, spelling and

				write the expressions and paste it on the classroom. - Markers			legibility are correct.
S.O.2	Learn about topics of social interest on Paddlet provided by the teacher.	The teacher will create a Paddlet where students can find multimedia content about topics of social interest (https://idebate.net/resources/database) that will be used for a future debate. The platform will be available for students to access anytime. The teacher will ask students to go to StudyStack and create a stack of 10 new words , with their definition, they are able to find on the information available	The students will gain knowledge on the selected topic by practicing with the different resources aimed at the various learning styles. The students will expand lexicon by researching new words and relating them with their definition.	- Internet connection - Paddlet - Interactive media of selected topics - School's platform	4 weeks	English teachers and students	The teacher review the student's work in class by playing the games provided by StudyStack. The teacher will check the posters and flashcards created in class to make sure the grammar, spelling and

		at Padlet, they will then upload the link to their StudyStack to the School's platform.					legibility are correct.
S.O.3	Debate Time!	<p>The teacher will take the class to a wide space of the school, the date set for the debate activities</p> <p>Then, the teacher will divide the class according to the type of activity set for the day: "Two circles", "Agree/disagree ball toss", "Opinion line".</p> <p>The teacher then will explain the rules set for each activity and answer students questions.</p>	<p>The students will practice and improve their speaking skills.</p> <p>The students will be able to practice with their classmates the expressions for debates learned in class.</p> <p>The students will learn about different points of view on different topics, and this will encourage critical thinking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet connection - Laptop - Printer - School's grounds - Ball 	2 day through out the year	English teachers and students	The teacher will monitor the activity by helping out students if they need it, additionally, they will conduct a round of questions to see if students paid attention and understood

		<p>A practice round will be played in order to see if the students understood what must be done. After the time designated for the activity is done, the teacher will call the students to sit on the ground forming a circle around him or her.</p> <p>The teacher will then ask students at random, questions related to what they were able to hear and what their position is.</p>					<p>the information talked during the games.</p>
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3 Proposal Execution Matrix

Strategy	Starts	Ends	2023 - 2024													
			March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	January	February		
1 Design and planning of the proposal	20/03/23	02/04/23														
2 Diagnostic phase	03/04/23	09/04/23														
3 Create a Paddlet	10/04/23	16/04/23														
4 Plan and teach a class on different expressions	17/04/23	07/05/23														
5 Create a poster and flashcards	17/04/23	07/05/23														
6 Students create a StudyStack	08/05/23	04/06/23														
7 Debate Time!	05/06/23	28/01/24														
8 Project Assesstment	29/01/24	04/02/24														
Starts	20/03/23															
Ends	04/02/24															

4 Proposal Gantt Chart

PROJECT: Debate Time!			
RESPONSIBLE: Karla Méndez and Emily Torres			
INSTITUTION: Unidad Educativa "Santa Ana"			
		UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
1. Diagnostic Phase	Traveling spendings	\$2,50	\$15,00
	Laptop	\$600,00	\$600,00
	A4 printing sheets	\$5,00	\$5,00
	Printer ink	\$60,00	\$60,00
	Recorder	\$50,00	\$50,00
	Internet service	\$15,00	\$15,00
	Printer	\$200,00	\$200,00
2. Implementation Phase	Internet service	\$15,00	\$150,00
	A4 printing sheets	\$5,00	\$5,00
	Package of board markers (10 units)	\$6,50	\$26,00
	Printer ink	\$60,00	\$60,00
	A4 carboards	\$0,10	\$2,00
3. Project evaluation	Internet service	\$15,00	\$15,00
	A4 printing sheets	\$5,00	\$5,00
	Printer ink	\$60,00	\$60,00
	SUBTOTAL		\$1.268,00
	Contingency reserves	5%	\$63,40
	Total		\$1.331,40

5 Proposal Budget

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Cambridge 2020 A2 speaking sample tests available at the Cambridge website.

Test 1: Eating

Phase 1

Interlocutor

To both candidates Good morning / afternoon / evening.
Can I have your mark sheets, please?

Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.

I'm, and this is

To Candidate A What's your name?

To Candidate B And what's your name?

Back-up prompts

	B , do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
<i>For UK, ask</i>	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
<i>For Non-UK, ask</i>	Where do you live? Thank you.	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?

	A , do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
<i>For UK, ask</i>	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
<i>For Non-UK, ask</i>	Where do you live? Thank you.	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?

Phase 2

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about **friends**.

A, how often do you see your friends?

What do you like doing with your friends?

B, where do your friends live?

When do you see your friends?

Extended Response

Now **A**, please tell me something about one of your friends.

Back-up prompts

Do you see your friends every day?

Do you like going to the cinema?

Do your friends live near you?

Do you see your friends at weekends?

Back-up questions

Do you like your friend?

Where did you meet your friend?

Did you see your friends last weekend?

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about **home**.

B, who do you live with?

How many bedrooms are there in your house / flat?

A, where do you watch TV at home?

What's your favourite room in the house?

Back-up prompts

Do you live with your family?

Are there three bedrooms in your house / flat?

Do you watch TV in the kitchen?

Is your bedroom your favourite room?

Extended Response

Now, **B**, please tell me something about the things you like doing at home, at the weekends.

Back-up questions

Do you like cooking at the weekends?

Do you play computer games at the weekends?

What did you do at home, last weekend?

Phase 1

Interlocutor

⌚ 3-4 minutes

Now, in this part of the test you are going to talk together.

Place Part 2 booklet, open at Task 2a, in front of candidates.

Here are some pictures that show **different places to eat**.

Do you like these different places to eat? Say why or why not. I'll say that again.

Do you like these different places to eat? Say why or why not.

All right? Now, talk together.

Candidates

.....
⌚ Allow a minimum of 1 minute (maximum of 2 minutes) before moving on to the following questions.

Interlocutor / Candidates

Use as appropriate.
Ask each candidate at least one question.

- Do you think...
- ... eating on the beach is fun?
- ... eating in restaurants is expensive?
- ... eating at home is boring?
- ... eating at college/work is cheap?
- ... eating in the park is nice?

Optional prompt
Why?/Why not?

What do **you** think?

Interlocutor

So, **A**, which of these places to eat do you like best?
And you, **B**, which of these places do you like best?

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

Phase 2

Interlocutor

⌚ Allow up to 2 minutes

Now, do you prefer eating with friends or family, **B**? (Why?)

And what about you, **A**? (Do you prefer eating with friends or family?) (Why?)

Do you prefer eating at home or in a restaurant, **A**? (Why?)

And you, **B** (Do you prefer eating at home or in a restaurant?) (Why?)

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Do you like these different places to eat?



Test 2: Holidays

Phase 1

Interlocutor

To both candidates

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

Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.

I'm, and this is

To Candidate A

What's your name?

To Candidate B

And what's your name?

Back-up prompts

	B , do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
<i>For UK, ask</i>	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
<i>For Non-UK, ask</i>	Where do you live? Thank you.	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?
	A , do you work or are you a student?	Do you work? Do you study? Are you a student?
<i>For UK, ask</i>	Where do you come from?	Are you from (Spain, etc.)?
<i>For Non-UK, ask</i>	Where do you live? Thank you.	Do you live in ... (name of district / town etc.)?

Phase 2

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about **music**.

A, how often do you listen to music?

What music do you like best?

B, what is your favourite instrument?

Where do you like listening to music?

Extended Response

Now **A**, please tell me something about your favourite singer or group?

Interlocutor

Now, let's talk about **shopping**.

B, where do you like to go shopping?

What do you like to buy with your money?

A, who do you like to go shopping with?

What can you buy near your house?

Extended Response

Now, **B**, please tell me something about presents you buy for your friends.

Back-up prompts

Do you listen to music every day?

Do you like rock music?

Do you like the piano?

Do you like going to concerts?

Back-up questions

Where is your favourite singer from?

Why do you like them?

Do your friends like them too?

Back-up prompts

Do you like to go to shopping centres?

Do you like to buy clothes with your money?

Do you like to go shopping with your friends?

Can you buy food near your house?

Back-up questions

Where do you buy presents?

Do you like giving presents?

Have you bought a present recently?

Phase 1
Interlocutor
 ⌚ 3-4 minutes

Now, in this part of the test you are going to talk together.

Place **Part 2** booklet, open at **Task 2b**, in front of candidates.

Here are some pictures that show **different holidays**.

Do you like these different holidays? Say why or why not. I'll say that again.

Do you like these different holidays? Say why or why not.

All right? Now, talk together.

Candidates

.....
 ⌚ Allow a minimum of 1 minute (maximum 2 minutes) before moving on to the following questions.

Interlocutor / Candidates

Use as appropriate.
 Ask each candidate at least one question.

- Do you think....
- ...beach holidays are fun?
 - ...city holidays are interesting?
 - ...camping holidays are exciting?
 - ...walking holidays are expensive?
 - ...holidays in the mountain are boring?

Optional prompt
 Why?/Why not?
 What do **you** think?

Interlocutor

So, **A**, which of these holidays do you like best?
 And you, **B**, which of these holidays do you like best?

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

Phase 2

Interlocutor

⌚ Allow up to 2 minutes

Now, do you prefer to go on holidays with your friends or with your family, **B**? (Why?)

And what about you, **A**? (Do you prefer to go on holidays with your friends or with your family?) (Why?)

Which country would you like to visit in the future, **A**? (Why?)

And you, **B**? (Which country would you like to visit in the future?) (Why?)

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Do you like these different holidays?



Annex 2: Rubrics for Assessment of A2 speaking test adapted from the 2019 KET for schools available at the Cambridge website.

Rubric for Grammar and Vocabulary Assessment

STUDENT 1
Does the speaker use simple grammatical forms with sufficient control?
Does the speaker use simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control?
Does the speaker use appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations?

Rubric for Interactive Communication Assessment

STUDENT 1
Can the speaker maintain simple exchanges with the interlocutor (Part 1)?
Does the speaker react appropriately to what the interlocutor or other candidate says?
Does the speaker need any prompting or support?

Rubric for Pronunciation Assessment

STUDENT 1
Are the utterances mostly clear? Can the speaker be mostly understood?
Does the speaker show limited control of intonation?
Does the speaker show limited control of word and sentence stress?
Are individual sounds mostly clear?

Annex 3: Teacher's interview transcript adapted from a survey in a university of Riobamba in Ecuador to measure which of the skills is the most difficult to teach according to the teachers, and a Cambridge interview an Academic Manager at Select English.

Interviewer (00:03):

Good afternoon. Today is the 7th of December. It's 6:00 PM and this is a teacher interview for a thesis project. The following questions will be asked to Mr. Emerson Arias, who is currently the English teacher of the students of the second baccalaureate from Unidad Educativa Santa Ana. This interview has a total of 12 questions. The first part of this interview are questions about the EFL classroom and English skills according to the English teacher. So, for question number one, **what do you think is the most challenging skill to teach?**

Mr. Emerson (00:45):

Thank you for this opportunity. I consider that the most difficult and challenging skill to teach, I think it is speaking, I could say speaking and listening. Yes.

Interviewer (01:12):

Yes. And question number two. **What skill do you consider is the most difficult to learn for students?**

Mr. Emerson (01:23):

Yeah, the same for students. Listening and speaking.

Interviewer (01:29):

Yes. Okay. And **what skill do you spend the most time teaching inside the classroom?**

Mr. Emerson (01:36):

Well, I consider, I spend the most time teaching speaking, writing, and listening as well. Speaking and listening and writing because they develop different activities and always they have to write.

Interviewer (01:58):

Yes. **For which skills is it more difficult to find effective activities and materials?**

Mr. Emerson (02:09):

Well, mm I don't know. I think I have effective activity material, but I could say that maybe, the more difficult effective activities to find sometimes is listening.

Interviewer (02:38):

Which skill do the students show more interest in during the teaching process?

Mr. Emerson (02:46):

Well, they show interest during, maybe... They love speaking but sometimes I see that they love reading, for example, when we have reading activities, and I ask them just to read for volunteers, they love to read because they love showing just their reading skills. So I think that they have a good level just showing the reading. They enjoy reading.

Interviewer (03:29):

Okay. And finally, for this part, **what do you think is the skill the English syllabus focuses more on?**

Mr. Emerson (03:40):

I think it is balanced. Yes. I think it's balanced for all the skills. I know I cannot say the syllabus, just focuses more on a specific skill because I consider that the syllabus just has a balance.

Interviewer (04:09):

Okay. Now, the second part of the interview, it's related to questions about the importance of effective teaching speaking in ELT. Now, **what do you enjoy most about teaching speaking?**

Mr. Emerson (04:26):

Well, that's a nice question. So, what I enjoy most about teaching speaking is just when they speak. When they speak, it's just awesome. Yeah. Because no matter if they make mistakes, when you hear your students are speaking, so you know, you...

Interviewer (04:56):

Feels like a reward.

Mr. Emerson (04:57):

So, yes. You know that it is working, so that's the most important part, which I enjoy.

Interviewer (05:06):

Mm-Hmm. Nice. And **what's the biggest challenge with teaching speaking?**

Mr. Emerson (05:14):

Yeah. I consider that the biggest challenge with my teaching speaking is just overcoming their obstacles, for example, because they are shy sometimes they don't wanna speak because they consider that they cannot speak fluently. I think that is a huge challenge just to teach them "don't be shy", "cannot speak", "talk", because sometimes they hear their classmates that probably they speak better than them. "No, because I cannot speak English well". Yes. But you know, that is your challenge.

Interviewer (06:01):

Yes. And **some students struggle to express themselves verbally. What do you consider are the main reasons for students having anxieties about speaking English?**

Mr. Emerson (06:13):

Yeah. The same, because they're shy maybe sometimes they want to speak perfect English, for example. But I just, I always teach them that just to get perfection, they have to practice. It doesn't matter if they make a mistake,

because it is a process. Yeah. Like a baby, you know, when babies just learn to speak. So, it's normal. So, I think that is.

Interviewer (06:52):

Yes. Now for question number 10 **to face up to this, how do you create a safe speaking environment?**

Mr. Emerson (07:04):

Yeah. I never make them feel, for example, sad, or horrible. Because I think it is a secret. So you should let just them speak. Your students speak no matter if they made mistakes because you need to create a safe speaking environment because when you correct them when you stop them, they will not speak or they will not participate with confidence, you know, because they don't like just to be interrupted with a "No, you're not speaking well", just let them speak, and then you will find different ways to correct them. I know that they have mistakes, so I let them finish, and then I find good or effective ways just to correct their pronunciation, the words, or the grammar. So that's a good thing that teachers must know.

Interviewer (08:27):

Yes. And **what do you consider makes a good speaking topic?**

Mr. Emerson (08:34):

Okay, could you repeat, please?

Interviewer (08:36):

What makes a good speaking topic?

Mr. Emerson (08:41):

Hmm. Well, that is a difficult question. But I don't know what makes a good speaking topic. I think that what makes a good speaking topic is, for example, when you talk about their interest. For example, young people love talking about sports, style, celebrities, about science. So I consider when you want to

have a good speaking activity or to, to have a good speaking topic, talk about what they like, what they love. They would be probably motivated just to speak.

Interviewer (09:44):

Okay. And for the last question **what is the role of a teacher during a speaking activity?**

Mr. Emerson (09:51):

Well, I think that the most important role as a teacher, as an English teacher, when you are teaching, when you're working during a speaking activity well, it's you are a guide. But I think that the most important role is just to manage your students and to give examples. Speak English every time, always, of course, try to speak English correctly because they are learning from you. So I think that the first person who is learning is yourself. So, you have to practice, you have to work more on your speaking. You have to increase your speaking skills because you cannot... well, you can make mistakes, but try not to make mistakes because you are the teacher, because the students, see you as an example, as a... you know, as a gringo for example. I think that that is the most important role. Just prepare your classes, study your classes. Because for example, if the content has words that you don't know the meaning of you must first find the meaning. Learn the meaning. Because you will have students that will ask you, "Hey, what's the meaning of this word?" And you should be ready to answer them. So I think it is just in simple words, be ready for them, prepare for them, and speak English always for them.

Interviewer (11:50):

Okay. So that is the end of the interview. Thank you.

Annex 4: Productive Vocabulary Test

Version A

[Home >](#)
[Test Menu](#)

Vocabulary Levels Test (PRODUCTIVE)

Use these tests to select the best word list for you on the [Learn Words from Lists](#) page

Instructions: 1000-level test is multiple choice. Others are gapped word completion.

Click **Check** at bottom of each test for score.

1. I'm glad we had this opp[] to talk.
2. There are a doz[] eggs in the basket.
3. Every working person must pay income t[].
4. The pirates buried the trea[] on a desert island.
5. Her beauty and ch[] had a powerful effect on men.
6. La[] of rain led to a shortage of water in the city.
7. He takes cr[] and sugar in his coffee.
8. The rich man died and left all his we[] to his son.
9. Pup[] must hand in their papers by the end of the week.
10. This sweater is too tight. It needs to be stret[].
11. Ann intro[] her boyfriend to her mother.
12. Teenagers often adm[] and worship pop singers.
13. If you blow up that balloon any more it will bu[].
14. In order to be accepted into the university, he had to impr[] his grades.
15. The telegram was deli[] two hours after it had been sent.
16. The differences were so sl[] that they went unnoticed.
17. The dress you're wearing is lov[].
18. He wasn't very popu[] when he was a teenager, but he has many friends now.

Test A / 2000 level

Version B

[Home >](#)
[Test Menu](#)

Vocabulary Levels Test (PRODUCTIVE)

Use these tests to select the best word list for you on the [Learn Words from Lists](#) page

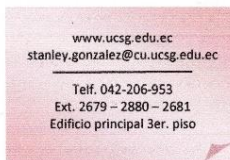
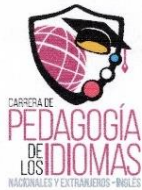
Instructions: 1000-level test is multiple choice. Others are gapped word completion.

Click **Check** at bottom of each test for score.

1. It is the de[] that counts, not the thought.
2. Plants receive water from the soil through their ro[].
3. The nu[] was helping the doctor in the operating room.
4. Since he is unskilled, he earns low wa[].
5. This year long sk[] are fashionable again.
6. Laws are based on the principle of jus[].
7. He is walking on the ti[] of his toes.
8. The mechanic had to replace the mo[] of the car.
9. There is a co[] of the original report in the file.
10. They had to cl[] a steep mountain to reach the cabin.
11. The doctor ex[] the patient thoroughly.
12. The house was su[] by a big garden.
13. The railway con[] London with its suburbs.
14. She wan[] aimlessly in the streets.
15. The organisers li[] the number of participants to fifty.
16. This work is not up to your usu[] standard.
17. They sat down to eat even though they were not hu[].
18. You must have been very br[] to participate in such a dangerous operation.

Test B / 2000 level

Annex 5: Permit application



FAH-PINE-005-2022

Miércoles, 6 de julio del 2022

Mgs. Hna.
Maura Benigna Barriga C.
Rectora
Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana


De mis consideraciones:

Reciba un cordial saludo. Por el presente solicito a usted muy comedidamente, salvo su mejor criterio, se permita a las Srtas. Emily Tatiana Torres Tapia con C.I. 1206569665 y Karla Adriana Méndez Benavides con C.I. 0959417254, estudiantes del 7mo ciclo de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros – inglés, de la Facultad de Artes y Humanidades de la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil, realizar observaciones áulicas que les permita definir su tema de Trabajo de Integración Curricular.

Las Srtas. Torres y Méndez estarían visitando constantemente la clase de inglés que reciben los estudiantes, durante los meses de julio y agosto del presente, para recopilar la información necesaria para el desarrollo de su trabajo de graduación.

De antemano agradezco la atención brindada.

Atentamente,


Lcdo. Stanley González Ubilla, M.Ed.
Director
Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros – inglés
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DECLARACIÓN Y AUTORIZACIÓN

Nosotras, **Méndez Benavides, Karla Adriana**, con C.C: # 0959417254 y **Tapia, Emily Tatiana**, con C.C: # 1206569665 autoras del trabajo de titulación: **Components of speaking skills that influence sophomore high school students' spoken English abilities at Unidad Educativa Particular Santa Ana in the year 2022** previo a la obtención del título de **Licenciadas en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros-Inglés** en la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil.

1.- Declaramos tener pleno conocimiento de la obligación que tienen las instituciones de educación superior, de conformidad con el Artículo 144 de la Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior, de entregar a la SENESCYT en formato digital una copia del referido trabajo de titulación para que sea integrado al Sistema Nacional de Información de la Educación Superior del Ecuador para su difusión pública respetando los derechos de autor.

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Guayaquil, **13 de febrero** de **2023**

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C.C: **0959417254**

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Torres Tapia, Emily Tatian

C.C: **1206569665**



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AUTOR(ES)	Karla Adriana Méndez Benavides; Emily Tatiana Torres Tapia		
REVISOR(ES)/TUTOR(ES)	Liz Stephanie Espinoza Pinzón		
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FACULTAD:	Facultad de Artes y Humanidades		
CARRERA:	Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros-Inglés		
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RESUMEN/ABSTRACT (150-250 palabras): Speaking is considered to be one of the hardest abilities to master when learning a foreign language, and English is no exception. The main goal of this research project is to identify the influence of the speaking components that affect verbal communication on second baccalaureate students from the Unidad Educativa Santa Ana (UEPSA). The study has both quantitative, and qualitative instruments, including an interview and two diagnostic tests, that will allow a greater outlook on the factors that play a part in the student's speaking abilities. Through the analysis of the data obtained it is possible to state that the components of speaking affect the English oral production of the students. Other findings reveal that most of the students present issues in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, likewise, introversion, student-teacher ratio, and time also play a role in the student's performance. To tackle these factors, a proposal that recommends the use of debates to improve verbal communication has been developed.			
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