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Evaluation of Communicative Strategies to Enhance Eleventh Graders' Oral Performance in Speaking Tasks Using the Communicative Approach at Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project in the Second Quarter of 2017

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Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

El desempeño oral del inglés ha sido uno de los mayores retos en la educación pública de Costa Rica. Son muy pocos los estudiantes que realmente entienden la lengua ya que tienen bases de conocimiento básico en vocabulario y estructuras gramaticales. Sin embargo, cuando se enfrentan a una tarea oral no saben de qué manera completarla. Este es el caso que enfrentan los estudiantes de undécimo año del Proyecto de Educación Abierta Los Pinos durante el segundo cuatrimestre del 2017.

Por esa razón, el propósito de este estudio es evaluar el desempeño oral usando tareas orales aplicando el método comunicativo enfocando las cuatro habilidades necesarias, estrategias y maneras de evaluar el desempeño oral. Por eso mismo, tareas orales fueron creadas basadas en necesidades de los estudiantes, y aplicadas; y de esa forma el investigador pudo evaluarlas para verificar si el objetivo fue alcanzado.

Como resultado, en el proceso de evaluación se encontró aspectos que afectan el desempeño oral como por ejemplo el nunca haber enfrentado alguna tarea oral por lo que el tono de voz y la fluidez eran bajos. Por otro lado, el inicio fue difícil ya que los estudiantes se sintieron nerviosos. Sin embargo la motivación y el apoyo grupal sirvieron para lograr el objetivo. Además, se encontró que se debe ayudar a los estudiantes en la pronunciación antes de las tareas orales para evaluar el desempeño oral.

Para finalizar, es recomendado el uso del método comunicativo para evaluar el desempeño oral, ya que se enfoca en las cuatro destrezas para comunicarse. Por otro lado, este método utiliza estrategias para mejorar el desempeño oral en los estudiantes, no solamente dentro de la institución sino fuera de la misma, para que los participantes practiquen en sus casas.

Table of Contents

Chapter I	1
Introductory Framework	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.2 Research question	5
1.3 Purpose and significance of the study	6
1.4 Research objectives	7
1.4.1 General Objective	7
1.4.2 Specific Objectives	8
1.5 Limitations of the study	8
Chapter II	11
Theoretical Framework	11
2.1 Antecedents	11
2.2 Literature review	18
2.2.1 Stephen Krashen’s Theory of Second Language Acquisition	22
2.2.3 Jim Cummins’ Theory of Bilingualism and Cognition (BICS)	28
2.2.4 Skill Theory in Language Teaching by W. J. M Levelt	31
2.2.5 Communicative Language Teaching by Robert Langs 1970	34
2.2.6 Oral performance Assessment by O’Malley and Valdez	38
Chapter III	42
Methodological Framework	42
3.1 Research method and scope	42
3.2 Selection and Description of Population and Participants	45
3.2.1 Description of the Institution	45
3.2.2 Description of the Population	47
3.3 Implemented Strategies	49
3.4. Data Collection Instruments	50
3.4.1 Observations	50
3.4.2 Pre-test	51
3.4.3 Speaking tasks application	52
3.4.3 Post-test	53
3.5 Validation of instruments	54
Chapter IV	57

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Data Analysis	57
4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results	58
4.1.1 Pre-test	58
4.1.2 Application of Speaking Tasks	67
4.1.2.1 Speech delivery	67
4.1.2.2 Phillips 66	74
4.1.3 Application of Post-test application	80
Chapter V	90
Conclusions and Recommendations	90
5.1 Purpose of the conclusion	90
5.2 Conclusions	90
5.2.1 To create communicative tasks to assess eleventh graders' oral performance using the Communicative Approach	90
5.2.2 To apply communicative tasks to assess eleventh graders' oral performance using the Communicative Approach	94
5.2.3 Examining the results in eleventh graders' oral performance after the implementation of the communicative tasks	95
5.3 Restatement of the Research Question	97
5.4 Recommendations	98
Appendixes	100
Pre-test Application	100
Speech Delivery: Illnesses and Famous people	102
Phillips 66	104
Post-test Application	106
References	108

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Table of Figures

<u>Figure 1 Pre-Test Results On Pronunciation</u>	60
<u>Figure 2 Pre-Test Results In Grammar</u>	61
<u>Figure 3 Pre-Test Results In Vocabulary</u>	62
<u>Figure 4 Pre-Test Results On Subject Knowledge</u>	63
<u>Figure 5 Pre-Test Results In Body Language</u>	64
<u>Figure 6 Pre-Test Results On Use Of Visuals</u>	65
<u>Figure 7 Pre-Test Results On Timing</u>	66
<u>Figure 8 Speaking Task Results On Pronunciation</u>	68
<u>Figure 9 Speaking Task Results On Grammar</u>	69
<u>Figure 10 Speaking Task Results On Vocabulary</u>	70
<u>Figure 11 Speaking Task Results In Self-Correction</u>	71
<u>Figure 12 Speaking Task Results On Accurate Information</u>	72
<u>Figure 13 Speaking Task Results On Body Language</u>	73
<u>Figure 14 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 On Pronunciation</u>	75
<u>Figure 15 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 On Grammar</u>	76
<u>Figure 16 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 On Vocabulary</u>	77
<u>Figure 17 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 On Self-Correction</u>	78
<u>Figure 18 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 On Timing</u>	79
<u>Figure 19 Post-Test Results On Pronunciation</u>	81
<u>Figure 20 Post-Test Results In Grammar</u>	82
<u>Figure 21 Post-Test Results On Vocabulary</u>	83
<u>Figure 22 Post-Test Results On Subject Knowledge</u>	84
<u>Figure 23 Post-Test Results On Body Language</u>	85
<u>Figure 24 Post-Test Results On Visual Aids</u>	86
<u>Figure 25 Post-Test Results On Timing</u>	87
<u>Figure 26 Excellence Comparison Results</u>	88

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

Building a better future in our country can be achieved through education and by having the necessary tools to carry it out. In Costa Rica, the needs of getting to know a second language increase every day due to the establishment of new international companies. However, the current communicative approach used throughout the years by our educational system does not seem to fully meet the required needs of these companies due to the lack of practice and assessment. Consequently, if we want our students to improve their oral skills, the methodology has to be reinforced.

Therefore, the communicative approach is going to be applied in this research project in order to assess oral performance focused on the speaking skill as it has good effects on the students' interaction, communication, and self-confidence. Furthermore, the reinforcement of this method will have benefits such as the development of the oral skill through group work, and the implementation of tasks related to daily situations.

1.1 Background of the study

Throughout the years, the process of teaching English in Costa Rica has had—as a main objective—to fulfill the needs that our country faces such as employment, daily routines, and provide the communication skills or tools to our students for them to be able to communicate with others outside the institutions. However, as Spanish native speakers, this has not been completely achieved due to the lack of oral practice as it happens in Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project in Alajuelita.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Even though the communicative approach is implemented in public institutions, grammar structures and reading comprehension are the areas with the most emphasis, but the listening and speaking skills are not reinforced as they should be in order to get the expected results with the methodology applied. As a result, when students should complete an oral task, they tend to get frustrated because of the many fears that they experience as they do not have the necessary tools to achieve it.

Consequently, according to the British Council (n.d), there are students who state that they understand their teacher in the classroom, but, when someone in the real world is speaking the target language, they cannot understand. As said, the students cannot face daily life situations with the basic vocabulary and grammar structures needed if the oral skill is not being practiced.

In addition, the lack of didactic resources in our educational system to carry out speaking tasks prevent students from communicating or understanding the target language. This does not mean that the communicative approach does not work, but the way in which it is being used is affecting the number of people who do not understand the language. And when they do, they do not know how to communicate their ideas using the target language. Another problem is that the educational system implemented in our country tells us to memorize or to use translators, which makes that students think in the native language and translate literally what has been thought.

According to La República (Rodriguez, 2015), in Costa Rica English is becoming one of the most important languages, and people are more willing to learn it because of the needs in our society nowadays and the requirements expected of some jobs. Having said that, 1.2

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

million young people and adults do not know how to speak the language even though they were taught the subject when they were in high school. This survey was made by the *Encuesta Nacional de Hogares* in 2014.

In fact, the aforementioned results show and set the problem that is being faced in our country, which makes us think on how we can decrease the number of people that struggle with the acquisition of the language, and why it is important to make more emphasis on the speaking skill and provide the students with the necessary tools and academic resources in order to improve their oral performance.

Following this further, some observations were made at Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project, and they have shown that 11th graders are having some difficulties when performing an oral task. There are many factors for this situation to happen: One is the anxiety that comes when students start wondering if what they are doing is well done as delivering an oral task. And another one is the lack of oral practice in the classroom. As a result, these kinds of factors hinder the development of the oral skill and students' progress. Therefore, oral performance is a good process to evaluate 11th graders' speaking skill in this institution, and the percentage of students who cannot communicate in the target language can be decreased if the focus is more on practicing oral tasks.

For example, oral performance includes active participation of the students when developing an oral task, so it is a good practice to improve speaking skills and students' participation at the time they are being evaluated. In addition, it is important to develop this type of tasks to build up confidence and motivation in the classroom, as those are keys to enhancing the learning process.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Besides, developing oral performance in the classroom will help the students to build a better professional future. Nowadays, international companies bring more opportunities for those who speak more than a language and provide well-paid jobs. Another important reason to develop speaking tasks to improve oral performance is that, when students want to learn more languages, it will be easier as they will be ready to speak and pronounce without fear.

On the contrary, in Costa Rican public high schools, English is taught for forty minutes three times a week, which means a total of 120 minutes every week, consisting only of grammar lessons and some reading comprehension exercises. On the other hand, the teacher does not speak the target language among the lessons as it should be done; this is because the students will not understand the topics. However, creating an English environment and providing feedback will make it easier for the students to work on their listening skills to make out the correct ideas, their knowledge on how to pronounce correctly in context, and their familiarity with fluency strategies.

It is well known that the communicative approach is based on the four skills (writing, listening, reading, and speaking), but, based on interviews to some teachers who handled the population where this research project took place, it is noticed that they do not practice oral tasks as the students get frustrated and do not like to participate. As a result, they do not complicate themselves and prefer to provide basic answers. As a result, these cases should be worked on with the teachers by reinforcing group work to build confidence among teacher and students.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

As a summary, the lack of oral development such as speaking tasks, didactic resources that should be applied in our institutions, and the fears that students have when delivering an oral activity cause students' oral performance to decrease, thus affecting the students' speaking abilities. Besides that, MEP's main objective for the students to communicate in the target language using daily topics given in our institutions is not being achieved as the basic topics are studied but not practiced for the students to become able to understand and deliver a speech with good oral performance.

1.2 Research question

Oral performance issues when students should deliver oral tasks is one of the most common situations that students should face every day as they are not accustomed to communicating in the target language. So, the methodology will target their oral performance and increase the students' engagement with the learning process. On the other hand, not only should students improve their oral skills, but teachers should practice every day with them by emphasizing oral tasks in the classroom, using of the target language, and avoiding the use of the native one.

Students from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project, face oral performance problems, so they get frustrated with the target language; therefore, more practice should be applied in order to focus on oral skills improvement to provide students with feedback when needed to keep track of their progress and make sure they are learning.

So, how eleventh graders' oral performance can be assessed with speaking tasks using the communicative approach at Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project in the second quarter of 2017?

1.3 Purpose and significance of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine how the lack of speaking tasks in the classroom affects eleventh grade students' oral performance. In order to achieve this objective, the current methodology applied in speaking tasks for public high schools will be improved and emphasized with some oral communicative tasks in order to make the lessons more appealing and meaningful for learners.

According to Brualdi (2017), performance includes knowledge of the topic, the required skills, and habits to make students focus on the subject at the moment that motivation is being worked on. When students develop a speaking task, they tend to get anxious and frustrated with not knowing how to complete it; consequently, their oral performance is affected and the required task is not completed properly.

Following this further, oral performance is linked to knowledge and if it is practiced every day through the speaking skill, an improvement should be noticed as practice makes perfect. Nevertheless, the speaking skill is seldom practiced in English lessons at public high schools. This lack of practice not only causes communication issues but also frustration and demotivation in the students. When they have to face a real conversation, they see that what is being taught in high school is not what they will need in order to perform an oral task.

Hence, oral performance should be enhanced through speaking tasks and activities that help students to overcome their fears and feel more confident, motivated, and open to learning. Throughout the research process with the eleventh graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project, the necessary resources and rubrics will be given to complete the speaking tasks in order to assess their oral performance and improve their

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

speaking skill. The rubrics are important to check the performance achieved from the beginning to the end of the project and the tasks carried out by the students.

Another important aspect to tap into is building confidence in the group for them to feel more comfortable during the English lessons and help them improve their oral performance. When students feel confident about the topic or subject, motivation increases, and the learning process becomes easier for them, as they get involved and feel better when participating and interacting instead of just writing, learning grammar structures, or reading without a special activity or further useful practice.

As discussed previously, this research will focus on students having low oral performance in order to improve this skill by using different speaking communicative tasks. These tasks are important because they can help students to communicate better outside the classroom without fear and being able to understand more what is said to them. Communicating in the target language is important nowadays as English is a universal language; students should be ready to face the real world with accurate resources.

1.4 Research objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

To assess eleventh grade students' oral performance in speaking tasks through the implementation of the communicative approach at Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project in the second quarter of 2017

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1.4.2.1 To design communicative tasks to assess eleventh grade students' oral performance using the Communicative Approach

1.4.2.2 To apply communicative tasks to assess eleventh grade students' oral performance using the Communicative Approach

1.4.2.3 To evaluate the results of eleventh grade students' oral performance after the implementation of the communicative tasks

1.5 Limitations of the study

Carrying out this research project with eleventh graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project may bring about some obstacles during this second quarter of 2017. Some of the reasons why there would be limitations include the time at which this investigation will take place, the population itself, and the location. Nonetheless, by organizing the time and the correct tasks to be applied for this population in order to improve their performance, this project should be developed successfully.

First, the infrastructure of the institution is a factor as they do not have audio visual equipment to work on some skills that may require it. Then, the lack of didactic material provided to the students in order to complete tasks more effectively instead of vocabulary only and grammar structures is another important factor when applying the study. Regarding the lack of oral practice for students, this is an inconvenience as the eleventh graders involved are not accustomed to completing speaking tasks such as oral speeches or role plays. However, in order to achieve this the researcher will apply tasks that involve more oral practice and dynamic activities to boost the students' confidence.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

On the other hand, the lessons will be developed at night and these students are adult eleventh graders, who have jobs in order to pay for the materials needed and other items. As a result, when they attend classes, they are already tired, which may hinder the learning process and the lesson development. Another factor will be their English level; some of the students will have issues completing a sentence due to grammar- or vocabulary-related issues, thus affecting the communication in the target language.

The English level and low performance that students have in Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project will also affect the communication among the researcher and the population. For example, when an instruction is given they could have issues understanding what was said, which will affect the effective completion of the task at hand. As a consequence, the student researcher may have to repeat the instructions or use the native language, which will not have a positive impact on the development of the research.

Another important obstacle is the students' attitude towards the methodology used in the research project. Some students do not like to participate or have behavioral problems towards the learning process, teacher, or the content. For this reason, the researcher should be careful when applying the oral tasks in order to gain students' confidence and respect. If a student does not behave properly and rejects the information provided or does not participate in the tasks that will be applied, this will affect the entire group entirely and the expected results.

It is important to focus on students' motivation through activities that will help increase it and make them focus on their speaking performance. In order to build confidence,

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

the researcher will observe and interact with the students for some days before starting to apply the corresponding tasks to get the expected results.

Another point is that students that go to high school at night do not get the appropriate class time for their own development, which is an important factor as a great deal of practice is the best way to improve oral performance. Practicing in the target language in order to improve the students' performance is the key to achieving the goal of having Costa Rican people prepared for real English.

On the other hand, the way that classes are planned does not cover the four skills that the communicative approach used by the MEP requires. It is more emphasized on grammar and reading. Even though oral sentences should be done as repetition, those are not the most required to improve real communication using the target language. (Karol, I don't follow this last sentence.) The lack of knowledge provided in the books used in public high schools do not allow students to get a better comprehension of what is being said. The books and didactic resources are not even updated and show an important lack of tasks that can help the students gain more knowledge about the topic taught.

As previously stated, English is one of the hardest subjects for these eleventh grade students, and these factors make it the more difficult for them to get the expected results on their oral performance due to the lack of speaking practice in the target language. As a result, more tasks should be applied and students' motivation should be strengthened.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

English oral performance is one of the most common problems that eleventh graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project are having as the students do not practice speaking tasks daily in order to achieve the performance required for the level achieved. This lack of speaking tasks causes an important decrease on students' oral performance and development of the speaking skill.

This investigation contains prior reviews related to oral performance assessment from countries where the ability to speak in English should be reinforced. Besides, it includes some theories and speaking tasks that could be reinforced to be applied by teachers in our institutions. These tasks will be used in order to assess students' oral performance and improve their communication throughout this research.

2.1 Antecedents

The lack of speaking tasks in the classroom is one of the main factors that causes students' low oral performance in the target language. Even though the communicative approach is implemented, teachers do not really emphasize the speaking skill to improve communication performance in students.

A study conducted by Karen Leonard in 2015 showed that there is an important relationship between the students' vocabulary and grammar knowledge for fluency development while speaking tasks were applied. The investigation focused on adolescents from Argentina, and its purpose was to prove if there were similarities or differences in the development of certain areas such as grammar, vocabulary, and the speed of language processing speed as important factors to improve students' fluency.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

In order to achieve the expected results, the investigation applied some speaking tasks such as oral description of pictures shown to the students. Then, students practiced vocabulary in context as a tool for them to communicate, and finally, they used sentence reading to test the students' speed in performing the tasks and a subsequent evaluation of these tasks through rubrics.

Moreover, Leonard's investigation (2015) also reflected that there are factors which affect language fluency. For example, the differences between Spanish and English are taken into account because the way we communicate in one language to another is totally different, and that really affects the students' learning process. Filmore (cited by Leonard, 2015) stated that there are four ways in which students and non-native English speakers can attain good fluency with everyday practice.

The first way in which students can start dominating fears and practicing speaking tasks refers to speaking with few pauses made as the sport reporters do in a soccer game. So, role plays can be a good task because the students can prepare a dialog about narrating a soccer game and try to speak as fast as they can. The second one stands for the ability to speak with coherence and to make meaningful sentences.

The way to enhance target language performance mentioned above applies the grammar rules which are important to communicate and convey a clear and understandable message by creating short sentences to provide a lot of information in one idea. This will also make the students feel more confident when speaking because it is a favorable task where they do not have to create a long paragraph that can take a lot of time, and can also make students forget the idea that they want to express.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

The third aspect explained by Filmore to help students' fluency development has to do with speaking about daily life situations. He stated that people speak better when they really know about the situation or the topic. Having said that, when students do not really know something, the fear of not having the correct response comes and it has a negative effect on students' participation.

The fourth manner relates to being a creative person using real life situations when working on fluency development and processing thoughts in speaking tasks. For example, telling jokes to others and gossip in English when the others do not understand the language or do not notice what is being talked about. These are situations and expressions that we use in real life in the native language, so they can be the best practice for students to get accustomed to the target language and enjoy it.

For these reasons, Leonards' investigation applied speaking tasks to improve students' oral fluency. To illustrate, she used tasks such as description of daily routines students have on weekends. She also requested the students to provide some advantages and disadvantages of getting a part time job or to engage in some story telling. All of the mentioned tasks that students had to complete were supposed to be done by using the vocabulary and the grammar structures learned.

In short, the final results of Leonard's investigation showed an important improvement on students' fluency and speed when they had to perform a requested speaking task. However, only twelve of the twenty students observed achieved the expected results due to some factors that affected students' performance from the beginning, such as the task's complexity level and students' differences. For example, some of them were advanced, others were at an intermediate level, and many of them were beginners in the

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

target language. As the investigation showed, this could happen in every investigation made because not everyone learns the same way and there will be differences between the students.

Another similar research was done by Lenka Temerova in 2007. She based her investigation on students' motivation in the acquisition of the language using the communicative approach. This investigation was made with one group of intermediate English level students from Czech Republic. The researcher had realized that in that country English is one of the most required languages to get a job and communicate. This is the same situation that the present investigation has pointed out because English is required nowadays for almost all the available positions, and it is important to develop tasks to improve the learning process, especially in their speaking abilities.

Temerová (2007, p.6-p.9) stated that teachers should use more practice than theory to activate students' prior knowledge. As the communicative approach was used, it focuses on fluency for the students to feel more self-confident and develop the speaking skill. However, it is hard for some students to develop this skill because they find it to be one of the most difficult ones due to the fact that they do not have all the knowledge or communicative competence required to master pronunciation and articulation of words taking extra time to utter sentences and process them into a conversation with others.

Temerová's investigation also showed the difference between speaking and having a conversation, which are totally different from what students think they are. She states that speaking as a skill is when students have to perform an oral task such as a speech, interviews in the class, storytelling, and presentations to practice the theory, so they can express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions. Those tasks do not take more than ten minutes approximately and the students can prepare the written material as a guideline. On the other hand, a

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

conversation takes longer and can last for hours, and it is a natural thinking process in the target language without a script.

This previous investigation made by Temerova also proved students' personality is an important factor in the development of speaking skills due to the way in which they are to manage their reaction when asked to speak. For example, there are some students who are risk-takers, so it is easier for them to speak in front others. It is not hard for them to develop this skill, which helps them to increase the ability to talk. As a result, fluency is practiced as well and they are not afraid of speaking and act in role-plays. They are also characterized for being creative and do things no matter what in order to enjoy what they do without caring what others will say.

On the contrary, there are students who are very shy, and it takes a great deal of time for them to develop this skill as they are afraid to speak in front of others and express their thoughts easily as others do. However, unlike risk-takers, this kind of students do not make as many errors as others do because their fear makes them think better what they will say, and fewer errors are made in the end. This is a positive aspect about having shy students; nevertheless, shy students sometimes do not want to participate in oral tasks, which affects their performance.

Besides that, there is another important factor that directly affects the development of oral skills. For example, the motivation transmitted by teachers to their students in the classroom (Temerová, 2007). It is clear that the way in which the teacher behaves and interacts with students has an impact in the learning process because teachers can make their students feel comfortable with them or not. The teacher has to be encouraged to assist their students not only with the language but also with letting them know that they are capable to

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

make a good job when studying the target language. These actions performed by the teachers really improve students' self-confidence and decrease their fears, thus enhancing performance. Finally, in her research, Temerová used some activities that were divided into some categories that focused on fluency, accuracy, and communicative skills. The first activities were made to focus on fluency where the students should be corrected when performing an oral task. For these activities the teacher should monitor the class and what the students say for minimum correction.

Furthermore, as Scrivener (cited in Temerová, 2007) stated that what can be applied are scaffolding tasks where a competent speaker of the target language assist others whose language skills are not accurate and fluent. This can be achieved by using certain elements of conversation as this encourages students to communicate in the target language. The fluency activities were based on students' self-correction with the teacher's assistance and knowledge of the language. For example, the researcher prepared some oral tasks to be performed by the population studied, and while the students were performing the activities, the investigator wrote the mistakes that the students made on the board. After that, she (or he) asked each student to correct their own mistakes on the board with the assistance of all his/her classmates and the teacher as well. This helped the students to deduct where the mistake was and how to correct it.

Finally, some of the communicative activities developed during Temerová's investigation were related to situations that can be used in real life contexts and can work for the students to apply their knowledge in their daily routines. For this kind of activities, the students had to be concentrate on what they were doing and write down their own mistakes and correct themselves at the time they were performing a role play or a debate. This activity

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

could be used for the current investigation focusing on real life situations, so for this to be applied, observations are being done to get to know the students better and look for interesting topics that they might know about. Besides, those activities can be performed in pairs or as group work for better results.

Similar to what was stated above, in the National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC, 2004), some teachers use minimal responses to work on oral skills which consists in the students working in pairs to talk to each other by asking questions to trigger conversations. Therefore, students showed improvement when they had to speak or deliver a speech in front of the class as they felt more confident and motivated. When students are surrounded by the target language in completing an oral task in every lesson, it is easier for them to get accustomed to producing the language and be open to receiving feedback to work on what should be improved.

Finally, there is another project that was done by Nadia Zitouni in mid2013, which focused on the oral tasks to improve the speaking skill. This investigation was about how oral presentations have a positive effect on the students' speaking abilities. Zitouni (2013) stated that, in order to better each student's oral performance in front of the class, the presentation had to contain specific details to support the ideas, such as careful planning, preparation, and time management. These aspects are relevant because teachers can provide a topic for students to prepare the speech and practice how many words they can say per minute.

Then, she also stated that some other aspects are good communication skills and active group participation in the development of the task. Communication skills can be worked throughout the lessons and with everyday speaking tasks to build up students' self-

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

confidence. On behalf of it, it is important that while a student is presenting, the rest of the group gets involved in the presentation by asking questions and providing feedback to their classmates for students' active listening and comprehension.

The aforementioned research projects showed similar problems in the population being investigated. They also show the methods and strategies that were used, the final results, and the recommendations that are stated as guidelines for this investigation which can be worked with the population studied: adolescents and adults. Some of the tasks that were applied to those investigations showed unexpected results that can be applied to the students from Alajuelita and make them have a perception of what oral performance is and how it can be worked for a better language acquisition.

2.2 Literature review

The acquisition of a second language (the knowledge and competence required to develop the expected communication skills) can be defiant as that requires practice and the necessary resources to achieve it. On the other hand, besides practice, motivation and students' self-confidence play important roles in the learning process to reach the proposed objectives.

The lack of practice and speaking tasks in our institutions are causing low proficiency levels in students' oral performance. According to Marin (2012), in Costa Rica, the English-teaching methods have been applied since the language was incorporated in our institutions years ago. This study was based on the evolution of the language in our country; but the results vary greatly with no objectives reached and without fulfilling the needs that our country has. This shows that the methodologies are not the ones that are not working but the way in which those methods have been applied in our institutions.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

One of the methods applied in our country since 1991 is the communicative approach which was created by Robert Langs in the early seventies. It has as a main objective to work on the four skills required to accomplish the required knowledge nowadays. The main objective that MEP has for our students is for them to communicate in context, apply the knowledge in real conversations, and speak with fluency and accuracy.

Nonetheless, this method has not reached the students oral performance and needed vocabulary in context for the students to be able to communicate in the real world. As stated by Paniagua (2005), teaching English in Costa Rica has been a useless effort for more than five years because teachers do not really know how to make students focus on the four skills and the class time is insufficient to accomplish the objectives stated in MEP's lesson plans.

The above describes the lack of results that strategies implemented in our educational system has had given the low success levels reached by those methodologies. To illustrate better the issue faced nowadays, the population studied in the current investigation has a low English level and the students are afraid of performing a task using the target language as they claim that no tools and insufficient knowledge have been provided in the lessons they attend. As a result, the main objective is not to remove the approach used but to reinforce the areas in which students need more assistance.

For those reasons regarding the needs of our country and the lack of resources to improve the oral performance, money has been spent in new English programs such as INA and Plan Nacional de Inglés (La Gaceta, 2008). Some of these programs are for free in order to get more people to take advantage and learn to speak the target language. Those programs' main objective is to supply the needs that each person has to fulfill themselves with a well-paid job in which English is used.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Nevertheless, the main problem relies on the education provided in public institutions where students are supposed to get the necessary knowledge that they will need after completing their studies and face real life. For that reason, speaking tasks should be more emphasized in order to improve students' oral performance.

Even though speaking and oral performance could be the hardest areas in the acquisition of a language, it is not impossible to achieve students' success in these language skills. Speaking tasks from the aforementioned investigations showed an increase in the students' oral performance and in their motivation.

Besides, teachers must develop a target language environment and try to avoid the native language in the classroom. According to Richards (2016), oral performance cannot be achieved if the teachers use textbooks to base their classes on; but if they use real context, analysis, and the target language for every request, students will get accustomed and more willing to understand the language to communicate.

Another important aspect that this research focuses on is the assessment of oral performance as assessing means to monitor and evaluate in which areas students are facing the major issues. This also helps students to know what they are struggling with and work with the instructor in order to improve the required skill. When the students get feedback from the teacher and also ways to improve their oral performance through knowledge and required tasks, students feel appreciated and important in the learning process; they feel that the teacher cares about their progress.

Now, communicating in the target language is important as globalization is growing each day and we have to face situations in which you should talk to a foreigner for whatever reason and use English to deliver correct and understandable information.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

For those reasons mentioned above, the development, assessment, and acquisition of a new language is very important even though it is not as easy as it seems because it takes time, practice, knowledge, and vocabulary using the correct structures and tenses; in addition, there are differences between the native language and the target language. Some differences range from the quantity of tenses that we have in Spanish, the way in which we use them to express simple ideas, and the usage of the grammar structures to the omission of nouns in phrases, along with our own way to say something specific.

However, in English, there are changes regarding some aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and/or context. For example, sometimes it is necessary to place a noun each time the language is produced even in its written or spoken form. This is an important aspect in which non-native speakers get confused and they can easily omit these details. Another difference is that there are fewer tenses in the target language than in Spanish; and finally we cannot forget aspects such as pronunciation as its elements are distinctive in any language we want to acquire; which is sometimes difficult to master.

Although it seems that oral performance cannot be achieved as the participants studied have not practiced it for long time, it can be accomplished if the tools, resources, and tasks needed are given to them to improve their performance. As we have seen in previously cited investigations related to oral performance and speaking, students may show an improvement in those areas where the correct and useful methods were applied. In addition, there are some theories and tasks that can be used as the basis of this investigation to get satisfactory results.

2.2.1 Stephen Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition

According to Krashen's (1998), to acquire a new language does not need to be tedious as there are not long grammatical requirements to communicate because the language acquisition is universal and we all can learn in the same manner. Language acquisition should be natural and contain social interaction where the speaker feels confident in order to be understood and persuade the audience. In order to achieve success in the skills required, students should know in what areas they are failing and how to improve them with everyday conversations.

The most important hypothesis of this theory to support the assessment in the current investigation is the monitor proposal. As Krashen stated, monitoring is essential in the acquisition of a language because the auditors are the teachers, and they have the obligation to plan, edit, and correct the work performed by the students. When students receive feedback, they feel that the task they have accomplished was important and the teacher really paid attention to it. Besides, students learn from their own mistakes in order to avoid them in the future. However, the monitor can also be the student as they prepare themselves before speaking. Krashen supported this with the idea of when someone is to give a speech: They firstly make a draft, modify it if errors are found, and make the necessary corrections.

This first hypothesis is relevant for this investigation because monitoring the performance and acquisition of the language is essential to focus on the problem. Checking oral performance of the population that is being studied gives the research more vision about what can be well-worked, which are the most common obstacles that interfere with the acquisition of their performance, and also how to work with the students to increase their performance. It also provides ideas on how to apply correct keys to decrease the difficulty of

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

English acquisition. Therefore, in order to work on the issue at hand, students will be required to perform speaking tasks to improve their own oral performance. For this reason, the student researcher will be monitoring the language acquisition of the 11th graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project from Alajuelita.

In order to base these theories, the student researcher has made observations and assisted students to perform tasks in the classroom. With those observations, the researcher has noticed that students would really like to acquire the language, but there are some areas that become a difficulty in the classroom. For example, spelling when writing is one of the areas that they struggle with; however, oral performance is one of the most common challenging tasks they should face as they do not take the necessary time to put it into practice. Besides the latter, it was also noticed that important aspects are not applied, which should make the acquisition of the language easier. Lesson plans do not involve speaking tasks as their main objective is not based on oral performance, and the second aspect is that students never receive feedback, nor are they corrected when they make mistakes.

Even though students do not get the corresponding feedback for their own benefit, it was observed that when they perform a speaking task, they ask themselves if what is being said is correct. They ask questions to the instructor, so he helps them for them to correct themselves. The students also keep practicing the correct way in which the task should be developed. This is how Krashen's principle relates to the current investigation as it shows that students are conscious of their mistakes when they get ready for a task. They also have ideas of how to self-correct in order to improve their performance.

Since this proposition is related to the investigation in progress, it will reflect the main failures and based on those results, lesson plans will be designed according to students'

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

needs. The main objective of the lesson plans should be speaking tasks, such as conversations about daily life situations and interests. After enough practice, speeches will be given by the students in order to check performance and their self-correction. Having useful tools in the application of tasks will help to decrease the quantity of people who show low oral performance within this second quarter of 2017.

The second hypothesis that this investigation focuses on is the affective filter. This one states that there are important aspects that students need to take into account in their learning process in order to achieve successful acquisition of the language and outstanding performance. For example, self-confidence when performing an oral task accompanied by motivation increases the natural way of delivering oral tasks. On the other hand, students should practice every day in order to avoid anxiety which can cause many fears, lack of confidence, and nervousness.

Krashen's hypothesis is very important in the present research project because the interaction in the classroom is very important for students' performance. When students are acquiring the language many fears come into play as it is a new experience, a new world full of knowledge, which requires attention and practice. It is relevant to apply this theory to the investigation because if confidence is not built up in the students, they will not be able to accomplish what the investigator requires as they are not going to feel comfortable.

The aforementioned is related to the investigation as it is important to make the students feel comfortable to avoid anxiety. If they learn to relax themselves, the results of task completion will be better. In the current investigation, students are afraid to participate as speaking tasks are not always applied; when the time comes, they get very anxious and cannot complete a task due to their lack of self-confidence.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Consequently, motivation will be worked on with the group through substantial practice and speaking tasks every time an opportunity is presented. One way to increase students' motivation is to provide them not only with negative feedback but also by telling them how well they are doing. Besides, it is important to make group work and let the students help each other to build their own confidence and reach the desired oral performance as a group. For example, students should be motivated to see the target language not as a subject for which they must learn and study for tests but a time where they can have fun when speaking tasks are applied working all together and helping each other.

Consequently, as discussed above, if factors that can cause negative effects in students are not avoided, the goal of oral performance cannot be reached. Teachers should not only assess the practical part as skills but also boost students' self-esteem and motivation. Otherwise, the mind and thoughts get blocked and students give up in the acquisition of the speaking skill when performing oral tasks.

This idea is very similar to what the acquisition of the language theory states. Grammar is the basis to hold a conversation, but there should be a balance between oral performance and the structure of the language for a message to be delivered correctly.

2.2.2 Discourse Theory on Second Language Acquisition by Evelyn Hatch

The way in which students can learn a second language at the same time is by having speaking tasks provided by the teachers and used by the students. According to discourse theory, when context is emphasized in the written and oral performance, amazing effects are obtained in students' oral development as the content of what is being expressed is understood. The first step in order to achieve the expected objective is for there to be interaction between students and teachers and inside the group itself. The main reason why

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

this interaction should be done is because this is the best way for students to share interests and opinions in the classroom to get a satisfactory experience in the learning process.

According to Hatch (1978), the acquisition of the language should be based on how the students discover the meaning guided by the surrounded context. This is related to the current investigation because the eleventh graders sometimes understand more than fifty percent of the context when they are said something or when reading tasks are given. So, they do not usually use dictionaries nor ask the teacher which is a good strategy in the language knowledge.

On the other hand, Hatch stated some principles that are relevant and necessary in order to achieve the main objective in this research. The first one stands for "nature route in syntactic development" which refers to speaking naturally by applying background of the language such as grammar structures that were learned. Then, there is another one making reference to the conventional strategies used to negotiate meaning. For example, clues given to the students for a better understanding of the language in context with no translation needed. Finally, the last principle states that the natural route is the final result of how the learners can communicate in the target language with the acquisition through the application of the principles.

In order to apply these principles of language acquisition, Hatch stated that students' performance should be evaluated through observations when learners complete a task. This is also related to the previous theory and the current investigation due to the observations made in order to have a clear idea of how to assess students' oral performance by using the correct speaking tasks.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

For example, in order to apply the speaking tasks, it is important that from the beginning students be asked to focus on the task and motivated to participate. This theory will also help the research by applying the principles and hypotheses that Krashen used in previous studies. In order to perform those tenets, the investigation will help students to acquire the language by applying speaking tasks whenever they have to work in groups to build confidence and also by providing the learners enough time to write down what will be presented. This way, when they write the information needed to perform the oral task, they get clear ideas of what to say.

Besides, students can start getting feedback before performing the task by evaluating the written part, so they can avoid structure-related mistakes and focus on the oral performance. Therefore, by doing this kind of evaluation teacher can interact with the students and help them to see their own mistakes and how to fix them, which is the reason that feedback is always a key in the acquisition of the language because they learn the correct way to perform structures.

Furthermore, students can be given instructions and simple explanations in the target language for them to get the message by acquiring gestures that are done when transmitting the message. The usage of the language in the classroom works for its acquisition in a natural way and also to apply the principle of getting the meaning and understand the complete message by the context involved.

This said, the application of grammar before the speaking tasks is relevant for the first principle about syntactic development to reach a great performance in the target language. There should be an acceptable balance to achieve this, so the time provided for preparation and corrections made with appropriate explanation of it will help for this balance to be done.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Then, it is important to avoid the usage of the native language as students can start memorizing instead of getting the real knowledge in the acquisition of the language. So, it is better to provide examples using context to the students to get the idea and help them think in the language that is being acquired.

Finally, by applying and practicing all of the mentioned above, students who know the basics can acquire the meaning easily, and they can also communicate with the student researcher in the target language. Acquisition of any language can be more enjoyable if there is sufficient practice during the time in which English lessons are developed. For this reason, this investigation will apply the hypotheses related to speaking tasks and the usage of the target language to communicate with the students about real life situations.

2.2.3 Jim Cummins' Theory of Bilingualism and Cognition (BICS)

Cummins claims that in the acquisition of English, there are communicative differences between non-native speakers and the target language; for example, the ability to think in the target language can be difficult if the students are immersed in an English environment through the development of the lessons or provided with speaking tasks during the lessons to work on language proficiency.

Moreover, English proficiency, according to Cummins, can be reached if the students' daily lessons promote interaction using the target language. On the other hand, the implementation of useful vocabulary and meaning for different contexts is an excellent tool in order to get the expected results on students' oral performance development. Besides, teachers should provide information on grammar structures that students can apply in a real conversation using the different tenses. This information will also allow the learners to understand the message that has been given to them.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Having said that, Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BCIS) are a way to get the surface of the listening and speaking skills developed by the students. The acquisition of knowledge about the target language accompanied by communication skills during the English lesson can show an important increase in students' oral performance. Cummins also stated in his theory of bilingualism and cognition that the way students feel and create a relationship among the group, also interferes with the expected results in the acquisition of a language.

Therefore, he points out the importance of developing students' confidence to reach an improvement on students' oral performance by promoting active participation among them. Social interaction between students and teachers is implemented through basic interpersonal communication skills as they really help students to practice the speaking skill and get not only a notable improvement on their performance but also appropriate feedback.

Illustrating the above social context for the speaking skill in the institutions can be applied by means of role-plays, debates, speeches, and/or any other speaking task for students to take advantage and practice to the fullest. He also highlighted the importance of these delivered tasks as they are ways to provide students with some feedback using the target language where they notice the mistakes made by their classmates or themselves and learn how to correct them.

For example, the investigator or the person in charge can apply one of the mentioned tasks as speeches through a TV show. Students are then given pieces of information on how to develop the show by providing them with the information they should use. Then, they get prepared and write down ideas to be developed in the presentation. After the speech has been

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

done, students can ask questions about what they know was mispronounced or an incorrect grammar structure, or wrong vocabulary.

On the other hand, the teacher should provide feedback to the students and provide them with the corresponding rubrics sheet for the students to know which the areas that require more attention and practice are. However, this kind of feedback is not always provided in the classrooms, so students do not really know they are performing the task.

For example, when teachers assess students' oral performance, they do not take rubrics into consideration as it should be in order to validate the progress that students show from the beginning of the quarter until its end. The lack of practice and social interaction using the target language can cause future problems in students' ability to communicate when having a real conversation such as low oral performance and the coherence of their ideas for not having the tools required in order to succeed in this area.

This is very similar to what is happening with the population studied as no speaking tasks are applied and no performance is being developed, so it is important to implement and practice speaking tasks to complete rubrics with the students' performance gotten. In addition, students will have to be given tasks where they can get the meaning of words orally and by guiding themselves with pictures or gestures.

As a summary for the discourse theory, it shows the importance of not using the native language as it makes that students memorize meanings with only one word and not many regarding contexts. It also states the importance of using the target language through speaking tasks for the students to acquire the language naturally by having the correct structures and not by memorizing. For those reasons, practicing speaking tasks will be the main tool used in the investigation to facilitate the acquisition of students' oral performance.

2.2.4 Skill Theory in Language Teaching by W. J. M Levelt

As Levelt mentioned, every skill has a structure and the performance of the skill requires some psychological and behavioral factors as they play an important role in every student's learning process. The importance of this theory is to focus on the main problems students have when learning a second language as it requires the development of the four skills in order to reach the sought-after performance level with a proper assessment of all. Based on the latter, the structure of the skill emphasizes the evaluation of any skill performance in order to determine the localization of the mental work required to achieve the knowledge and acquisition of the language.

Furthermore, the application of the speaking skill should be hierarchical. For example, Levelt explains that hierarchical structure means to apply different speaking tasks broken into many more for students' self-benefits and obtain better results. The reason why broken tasks should be done as explained is because the students can break the task by having more done and be able to choose and discuss the topic, brainstorm ideas or schemas, and further develop their ideas.

Another important reason for this to be applied is that when students are placing ideas, they have to add phrases and sometimes paragraphs; it shows that not only the speaking skill is applied but all the four together to emphasize the communicative approach. Therefore, when the speaking task has to be delivered, they will be well-prepared to perform it as they already have an idea on what will be said and how the speech will be delivered.

This proposal also states that rate of learning is not a relevant factor in the acquisition of the language, as is the initial performance level. To illustrate what has been stated, it refers to the way teachers introduce the language from the beginning. They do not focus on the

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

speaking skill in the institutions, so students' oral performance gets affected and their fears increase. Another important factor that affects students is the lack of relevant information that is provided in the English language class. Sometimes, teachers provide tons of vocabulary but it is not explained how it can be used in context, which makes students feel that the subject developed is not useful or meaningful to be learned.

Finally, the lack of attention that should be provided to the students cause low performance in our public high schools as teachers should know what the weak areas of their students are in order to assess them and solve future performance-related problems.

In contrast, reaching an outstanding performance can be easily done if the correct and appropriate tools to develop acquisition skills are applied in the teaching process. For example, work all the skills together by letting students apply their knowledge in grammar and writing when preparing a speech, and then they perform it orally. These kinds of speaking tasks where preparation can be applied is a good way for students to acquire knowledge with no confusion and a better development.

The importance of applying the four skills in the classroom is that at the end, students will reach the objectives needed in order to have a real conversation about any topic by applying the correct grammar structures, vocabulary, fluency, and also feeling confident when delivering a speaking task with no fears of making mistakes in any area of the target language. Then, teachers' correct application of speaking tasks can become the best tools for the students' knowledge throughout monitoring and giving feedback on students' performance in a speaking task.

Another aspect stated by Levelt was the mental work that is fulfilled with motivation and self-confidence in the acquisition of the language. Providing the information to the

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

students is not the main tool to acquire the language, but students' disposition is. When students stay positive and motivated, learning becomes better and so does the language acquisition. By saying this, it can be found out that it is relevant for the current research as the hypothesis can be a guideline to improve performance in the classroom. Even though the investigator is not focused on motivation in the research, it is important as it has been observed that the students are not motivated and because of it they do not like to participate; therefore, the observer will start working on motivation before applying the tasks.

The proposal stated in this theory is related to the current investigation because motivation is a clue to be used with the students to make the process of getting the expected results easier because the researcher starts to build confidence with the groups and then provides students with the importance of acquiring the language, so they can be aware of it and motivated to learn.

Besides that, the researcher will use this theory to apply the speaking tasks along with other skills. Practice that involves speed and fluency of the students can be applied by practicing within some weeks first and make students focus on the task. Then, motivation is worked on with the students for their active participation in the English lessons.

To sum up, there are factors that positively interfere with the acquisition of a language which means that they can be the attitude towards the process and the thoughts that the learners have throughout the process of getting the language naturally. It is also stated that for the tasks to be easier for the students, the teacher can assist them by breaking up each task. That is very important because if students are motivated with the importance of the language and supporting them day by day, they will change their attitude towards the acquisition of the skills required. Besides that, with teachers' assistance, they can learn how

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

to break a speaking task into smaller tasks that they can complete such as brainstorming, outlines, and short paragraphs.

2.2.5 Communicative Language Teaching by Robert Langs 1970

Previous theories of acquisition of the language have had an important development on task based learning as some of the mentioned before such as Krashen's theory which related to a natural environment when the language is being acquired. This approach is the result of previous investigations made by theories developers as linguistic professors and experts. It assists the way in which a language is taught in order to change the old methodologies that did not have the expected impact on the language acquisition such as translation method or audio-lingual.

On behalf of it, there are objectives that have been set for this proposal in order to apply its principles adequately. One of the main objectives is to use the language as a way of expression. It is said that the language is not to be taught and get structures or vocabulary, but it is a new process in which people can communicate with people from other cultures and share opinions for discussion and practice at the same time. Besides, that acquisition process should include effective relationships to construct an environment full of values and positive judgment.

As a result, according to Doughty and Long (2003), some principles were established to this theory to get an accurate application and development of it. The first principle is related to using organized tasks; for example, it states that teachers should have a designed plan to carry out the lessons and calculate the time that the tasks will take by breaking it up into smaller assignments. The reason why it should be done is because when we organized

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

the objectives that we would like to reach, it is easier to have an idea of what will be taught, how, and the corresponding products to accomplish it.

The second principle states that learning must be promoted by doing; to explain this further, it states that teachers should not only focus on what to teach and how but also aimed at having students practice, deduct the idea, or get information about the language rules and vocabulary with better results than only explaining repeatedly. Besides, the aforementioned hypothesis goes with the third one and the fourth principle as both state that input should be rich and it also needs to be elaborated, meaningful and comprehensible.

The input proposal was mentioned by Krashen in the theory of acquisition of a second language. It is said that if you speak in the target language by only talking and talking, the learners will not get the message as only words are being said. To illustrate this better, Krashen explained this principle by having English native speakers in an audience where his theory was developed; then, he started speaking German but no one could understand a word. After that, he said the same but by touching his ears and speaking German by touching his body parts and repeating. Finally, the audience got the idea that what he was teaching was the body parts in a language that the audience did not know.

For this reason, this input is related with the learning-by-doing approach as learners get the message even in the target language through gestures and expressions. If teachers apply the target language every day and not only for providing instructions or checking tasks, but when greeting or when asking personal information to their students, the acquisition of the language will be natural and easy.

On the other hand, as we reviewed the first principles about the teaching process, now we can move forward to the acquisition of the language by involving the learning

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

environment. For example, as another principle for this approach is that collaborative learning is essential when we are acquiring a new language as we can also learn from our classmates. As students can work peer to peer or in small or larger groups, it is easier for them to deduct language structures, vocabulary in context, and help each other to find out the correct pronunciation of words. Besides that, they can find solutions for problems they have when facing a language task and they can also learn from mistakes and corrections made to their peers.

Nonetheless, there are some negative aspects to this approach. For example, it is said that some students will have fun by interacting and using the language, but others will feel no motivation as they are requested to perform oral tasks with the group and this can be challenging. However, instructors can find ways to motivate students to participate if topics of interest are used and all as a group interact.

As this has been mentioned, not only peer feedback is needed, but the final principle states that teachers should provide feedback to their students to reinforce what they have acquired by respecting students' opinion and make discussions about what they are struggling with in order to assess them for their improvement. Besides, it is also stated that recognition is very important due to students feel confident and motivated about what they are trying to acquire and learn to continue working on it.

Having those principles stated above, we can conclude that both students and teachers play an important role in the approach in order to accomplish the main objectives. It is said that students should accommodate to the tasks development and base those ones on the approach. In order for the students to achieve this, teachers are the ones who help the

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

students to acquire the language by providing the correct information and materials to the students, analyzing the group, and getting involved in the students' tasks performance.

To better illustrate the roles in this approach, some procedures that were stated will be mentioned such as games, role-plays, simulations, cards, and pair work. For example, monopoly with dice can be played in the target language. In order to apply this game, teachers can elaborate a kind of monopoly that include questions for the students to speak and analyze situations. Besides, role-playing is an excellent way to work with small or larger groups where the student break the task into smaller ones such as ideas and dialogues to be learned. Then, they perform the task in front of the class. Another speaking task is to provide the students with newspaper articles for group discussion using Phillips 66.

Having this theory developed, we can say that by applying the communicative approach to assess oral performance in eleventh graders is an exceptional process as the method requires the usage of the four skills to achieve communication among students and the outside world. Then, the approach requires instructor's task assessment to check students' oral performance within the acquisition of the language, and this can only be reached through speaking tasks application and social interaction in context to provide confidence and motivation to our students, as those are keys to avoiding failure in the students' learning process.

As a summary, the communicative approach in language teaching is important for the acquisition of the language as it provides accurate information and explanation as to why the speaking tasks should be applied, and how the students can get involved in real life situations to improve their oral performance by applying simple group discussions where they can share opinions and at the same time they reinforce classroom's environment.

2.2.6 Oral performance Assessment by O'Malley and Valdez

According to Lee (2000), a task is a classroom activity that is developed through interaction. The usage of a task is important for teachers to help students to develop the required skills in the acquisition of the language in social context. The purpose of this is for the students to gain self-confidence and learn the language in a natural manner to avoid memorizing dialogues and structures.

This task's purpose cannot be achieved only through application of practice exercises for the students to complete but by making the corresponding assessments and evaluations to the learners to measure the results. In order to clarify this idea, assessment refers to methods that teachers should use to evaluate the students' performance in the skill. On the other hand, the evaluation relies on the observations and tools applied to check the progress students have had and get the final results. For example, the current investigation will assess students' oral performance by applying tasks such as role-plays and speeches. Then, what the students performed will be evaluated through rubrics to observe the students behavior and progress.

As O'Malley and Valdez (1996) stated, assessment of any oral language should be based and emphasized on the ability that each student has. It should include social interaction inside the classroom, fluency, and accuracy, which are the main tools to learn the language rules and the acquisition of the language. It is also stated that in order to achieve success while assessment is being provided, the instructor should take into consideration some important aspects based on the assessment itself and the place where the application of the assessment is being done.

For example, teachers should make observations to check what level the students have reached throughout the acquisition of information and language rules. After that, it is

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

necessary to know the students' interests and needs in order to implement them within the development of the tasks. Then, we should observe students' confidence and group interaction to make sure how to apply the tasks. Besides, the researcher should take into consideration which tasks can be applicable depending on all the aspects that interfere among the students. Then, it is mentioned that it is important to describe specifically the tasks that will be applied to check the association between students and tasks' difficulty.

Regarding assessments, a good assessment should contain a planning of how the tasks will be, what will be evaluated, and why it is important to follow up the evaluation process. Besides, assessments should have a body divided into parts such as procedures, speaking tasks, and rubrics. The latter has a significant importance because, when a task is well explained through procedures to follow, students understand better what objective they should achieve.

In order to apply the correct assessments, it is important to know that there are informal and formal assessments according to North Carolina Public Schools Organization (n.d). Informal assessments include regular tasks such as dialogues, games, and speeches that can be evaluated by peers or by teachers with a rubric. On the other hand, formal assessments require planning the tasks specifically with time allowed, development of other skills, and self-preparation. The formal tasks are well designed by the students with teacher assistance because most of the times, they are recorded for a deep evaluation.

As this has been stated, we can move forward to what oral performance assessment requires and how to achieve it. First, after observations are made, speaking tasks should be applied as oral performance is the main objective to reach. Therefore, teacher should advise students to accomplish tasks such as role-plays with a topic provided and time for

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

preparation, then meanwhile students are presenting, the teacher is taking control of the progress by evaluating through rubrics and providing feedback to the learners. As cited in Education Glossary, assessments will work better to help student in the acquisition of the language in simple steps than it is made through tests.

Some tasks that can be applied to assess students are oral interviews. This kind of practices help the students to investigate or to provide information about a topic that they already know and are interested in as the topic can be related to sports, music, and technology. Furthermore, picture description is another speaking task that can be used as students can provide information what they see or what is happening in the pictures shown, which makes learners provide their own information and speak more. However, the pictures chosen can be colorful, but what is most relevant is their content. They should be full of information for the students to elaborate on them.

To summarize, this theory is very important for the current study as it provides researchers with significant information that should be taken into account in order to assess students in a correct way and evaluate accordingly the performance delivered by learners. It also provides ideas on how to apply tasks based on students' needs and language acquisition levels.

This research project will apply some of the mentioned tasks in order to improve the eleventh graders' speaking skill and assess their performance. Previous research projects have helped to understand better how a non-native speaker can acquire the language naturally with no need of complex applications but with the corresponding tasks' development.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Then, according to this theory, after assessment is planned and the speaking tasks are applied, the instructor should implement peer feedback and keep a record of the individual assessment of each student to find out if an improvement was made or not. The instructor should base the feedback on the evaluation through rubrics when a student delivers a speaking tasks in order to let the students know how they can improve and make them aware of their mistakes.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

The current chapter starts with an explanation of the methodology, scope, and type of investigation that are being used throughout the investigation process. Besides, this chapter will show the description of the population being studied, the participants in the application of the research, and description of the institution for a better understanding of the reasons that the students were chosen. Furthermore, it will include the development of the instruments that are going to be applied to get the expected results from the students' oral performance after their validation.

3.1 Research method and scope

The mixed method approach is the one that the current investigation will use to analyze the collected data. According to the Resourcecentre, the mixed method analyzes data obtained by means of the quantitative and qualitative instruments in order to analyze the information for better comprehension. Besides, it is mentioned that it includes triangulation which is important in order to have a clear idea of what the problem is, how it is fixed, and the final expected results that the researcher wants to get.

In addition, strategies were developed for the mixed method by Jhon Cresswell (2003). One of them is the exploratory strategy which guides the investigation by collecting qualitative data, and, based on the issue, the researcher can go deeper and analyze it, so the investigation can start applying quantitative instruments to get the results.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

The research will use the mixed method which includes qualitative and quantitative data due to the kind of investigation that has been developed. The mixed method should be used in order to provide deeper substantiation of the problem and gain better understanding of it. Besides, the mixed method approach will also allow the researcher to collect data not only through instruments to get the expected results but also by observing the behavior of the studied population and the performance before collecting the expected results.

In order to support what has been said, both the qualitative and the quantitative approaches will be better explained. According to Atlasti (n.d), it is important to apply the qualitative approach to set up a natural environment for the observer and the population, to look for both opinions and explore the situation that is faced, and to go deeper into each situation for the researcher to get a clearer idea of how to work with the group. It is also important for the researcher to build confidence with the group and have a vision of what instruments can be applied to assess the students.

For example, the qualitative approach is used to explore and go further into the investigation of the problem (Wyse, 2011). Therefore, it uses instruments such as interviews, researcher's involvement, and observations in order to verify the factors that are keeping the population from delivering the desired performance in the target language. Besides, by applying this method, there is an advantage for the investigator, of knowing the population further in order to interact with them.

On the other hand, the quantitative approach explores the problem by providing data through statistics and numerical information. This approach is important in order to collect all data from the instruments applied and check if the research question that was stated really

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

worked. According to statistical solutions, the results obtained prove the theories about the issue and the process that it took in order to resolve the issue stated from the beginning of the investigation.

According to FoodRisc (2016), the mixed approach has a great impact on the investigation as it expands the problem by describing it with the support of the observations, interviews, and interaction with the population. Then, the researcher supports the proposal that can help to fix and improve the presented issue with the final results obtained from the strategies applied to the population. Therefore, the mixed method approach is relevant to be used in the current investigation to support the instruments that will be applied.

Furthermore, the type of study applied will be the descriptive one as the problem has been identified and analyzed based on the observations. Throughout the investigation, the teacher researcher has described the phenomenon and the influence that it has in the students' performance. Besides, it includes the case study to analyze specific issues on a specific situation and by answering the question of what the issue is and who the affected participants are.

To illustrate this, observations were made in order to study the participants and the interaction or behavior that they have towards the language. Besides, the most important thing was to check what the level that the students have is when performing an oral task and the interest that they show when learning. This was made in order to get the information mentioned to get an idea of how to create the corresponding instruments to assess their oral performance. Nonetheless, after collecting the students' observations, the investigator started creating tools that assist students to improve their oral performance by using different

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

difficulty levels. After validating those instruments, the investigator will start applying them with the students by using speaking tasks.

For example, in order to start, the researcher will apply a pre-test to check the current performance; then, some tasks will be developed into smaller ones in order to increase the difficulty level. Finally, a post-test will be passed in order to verify and compare the performance that the students have had from the beginning to the end.

3.2 Selection and Description of Population and Participants

The main issue of the present research project is 11th graders' oral performance, which needs to be improved by means of the course that they are taking. At this point, they should be able to have an outstanding performance, but unfortunately it has not been focused or assessed properly. For those reasons, the teacher researcher has chosen two groups from Los Pinos educational project, which respectively have B1 and B2 proficiency levels

3.2.1 Description of the Institution

The institution where this investigation takes place is called Escuela Los Pinos; however, it is used by Ministerio de Educacion Publica (MEP) for open education projects for those who did not conclude their studies for some reason. As it has been said, Liceo Nocturno is called Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project, Alajuelita. There are many of these kinds of projects due to the increase of students who left dropped out of high school in this area years ago, so this works as an opportunity for them to get a better future.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

The project's main purpose is to provide assistance to people that could not study and help them to get their bachelor's degree within two years only. This project was not only open for those who ask for an opportunity but also those who needed to leave school to start working or because some of the students were raising a family at a very young age. Besides, it is an outstanding project because the students' age can vary, and students get four lessons per night (two per subject) on Mondays, Tuesdays, and on Thursdays. The students are also are taught with the same programs that any day-shift institutions use but with the difference that they use books called "El Maestro en Casa" for each specific grade.

On the other hand, the institution has a lot of classrooms as it is big; so, not all of the classrooms are used. The institution is in a good condition. It has a gym, a playground, and many green areas where students learn the importance of planting trees. Besides, it has fans in the classroom to refresh them. There are large white and black boards in every classroom, and they also have good lighting and many comfortable desks. However, not all of them are occupied by the night-shift students. There are also recreational areas where the students can sit to talk or receive extra classes before the lessons start. Nonetheless, for English lessons, there is only one classroom, which unfortunately lacks audiovisual material, and the books used are from "El Maestro en Casa" series, which are not very helpful as they only teach reading comprehension, and no other skills are developed. Besides, the teacher does not try to improve the students' knowledge in order for them to learn the language for real-life purposes.

Nonetheless, the enrollment process to sign up for this program is hard because there are many people who would like to participate, but there are only one hundred spaces per grade every year. However, it has been said by one of the teachers that the students only

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

participate to obtain benefits such as the monthly scholarship that they get to pay for didactic materials, but when they get it, the whole class attends, and by the third week, more than the half does not come back anymore.

3.2.2 Description of the Population

The population (a sum total of ninety one students currently at this institution) is not that numerous as there are only two groups of seventh graders, one of eighth graders, one of ninth graders, and two groups of eleventh graders. The students' ages range from 18 to 55 years old, and the students who are less responsible are the youngest as they are attending just because their parents make them go. On the other hand, the older students like to attend because they see it as an opportunity to grow, learn more, and they see it as a way to escape their routines.

In each group, there are old and young people. Most of them are women, and each group has at least eight to thirteen students. The learning process is easy because teachers can explain better and focus more on each student. However, there are many factors due to which students do not attend classes, and one of them is because some of them have jobs and get tired. There are others who consume drugs or bring them to the institution, and for that reason they come to the institution and go out in the middle of the lessons in order to go to parties they organize instead of staying in class. The investigator also noticed that there is one teacher assigned per subject and there is a MEP's coordinator who monitors the lessons for each group; besides, she gets reports on each student's performance.

One of the main reasons for students to skip classes is that they are the ones in charge of themselves, and the teachers do not take action regarding attendance issues or assigned

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

homework that the students do not do. As mentioned previously, the observer could notice that the population feels that teachers are not interested in what they teach, how they do, and what the students' performance is. Nonetheless, there are students who go the extra mile, do not let barriers interfere with their learning process, and always attend classes as they get interested in building a future and have a clear vision of where they would like to become someday.

3.2.3 Description of the Participants

The participants in the current investigation are 11th graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project. The groups that are participating have B1 and B2 proficiency levels, in which the "B" stands for eleventh grade, of which there are two groups. They were chosen because students try to speak in the target language as they have the necessary skills and basic vocabulary related to eleventh grade programs in order to sustain a conversation. Each time that they have an opportunity, they say at least one sentence or ask for something in English.

Based on the observations made to both groups, the investigator could notice that the group is composed of 20 students each, but only 12 students attend classes and not every week. In both groups, the students' age ranges from 18 to 45 years old, and most of them love to speak in the target language as they have learned new vocabulary. Others stated that they took an English course in the past, but as they did not practice it, they have forgotten many important aspects needed to speak the language properly.

Besides, most of the students are open to learn and behave properly in order to pay attention. The students sometimes state that they would like to speak more instead of just

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

writing because they would really like to learn the language in order to work in a call center. However, the investigator has noticed that the teacher in charge does not support them and does not enhance the students' learning process. When the students speak in English, he replies to them in the native language. This makes students feel demotivated and uncomfortable in the classroom.

On the other hand, concerning the students' oral performance, they need to improve their ability to complete a speaking task, but they meet the expectations about their pronunciation. For this reason, tasks will be applied in order to improve their oral performance and make them practice a little more for them to take advantage of the investigation and produce sentences or speeches orally.

3.3 Implemented Strategies

As it is well-known, oral performance is important for students to communicate better in the target language, so it is clear that they should have proper grammar structures to have a conversation with fluency and accuracy. Based on the observations made, the 11th graders receive English lessons focused on vocabulary and grammar structures. However, students do not always practice speaking skills in the classroom even though they try; therefore, their oral performance is low. For this reason, this current investigation will use some strategies as observations to check some important aspects that interfere with the acquisition of the language and get a clearer idea of how their oral performance can be increased or improved.

Besides, speaking tasks will be employed as strategies to help students' oral performance that will be applied for four weeks for ninety minutes each approximately. First, the researcher will work on some strategies by applying vocabulary related to the topics that

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

students should learn and increasing the tasks' difficulty little by little. In addition, participants will deliver oral tasks as speeches and group conversations, which will help them to avoid fears and feel better in the classroom. Students will also do a pre-test to evaluate the oral performance that they have. After tasks, a post-test will evaluate the improvement of their performance.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

3.4.1 Observations

The current investigation with eleventh graders from B1 and B2 from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project includes three observations to the participants in order to check and get more information about their behavior related to attendance, commitment to the learning process, and perspectives that students have towards the language. Besides, the observations provide further information about the students' fears when they perform a speaking task or the thoughts they express about the language and learning process.

The observations include statements to evaluate students' participation, interaction, teacher's classroom management, students' performance, and the environment in everyday classes. However, one of the most important aspects to evaluate and get further information on is the didactic materials and topics developed in the classroom in order to have an idea if those tools provided to the students really work to improve their knowledge to perform a speaking task. Based on these observations, the researcher will provide students with more vocabulary and context that can be used to perform any kind of speaking tasks.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

3.4.2 Pre-test

Another instrument that will be used in the current research is a pre-test which is designed to start evaluating participants' oral performance. This pre-test is divided in three parts, where two of them is a question-answer part as an introduction of Tourism in Costa Rica. Students should answer complete questions in a piece of paper in order to verify structures that they use to communicate ideas and provide feedback on how they can use better words in context.

On the other hand, the second part of this used pre-test consists in creating a short vacation story, not by using their own experiences, but by using tourism- and family-related flashcards as guidelines for the students to write a complete story using all the information provided. The main purpose of this second part is to evaluate students' vocabulary, grammar, knowledge of the topic, and visual materials usage. Besides, this allows students to use the written form of their ideas not only to perform the oral task, but by putting into practice what they have learned into real life experiences. Those assignments will be completed in a designed test and evaluated.

Now, the last part of this pre-test is to perform orally the first two written tasks contained in the test. For example, researcher will assign a number to each participant and she will start asking the questions stated in the first part of the test in order to start a little conversation and for the students to steer clear of any fears that can get in their way. Then, the investigator will request the student to perform the story that he or she wrote, not by reading it, but by reminding him or herself of an idea using the flashcards. So, the investigator will use a rubric to evaluate each student individually in each group.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

This pre-test will be used in order to check what the students' English level is at this point, how they get involved in the tasks, and how their performance progresses from the first instrument to the final one. This will also help students to receive feedback individually and know positive aspects about their performance to motivate them to perform more challenging tasks to get the expected results.

3.4.3 Speaking tasks application

In order to improve students' performance, investigator will apply two speaking tasks such as speech delivery and Phillips 66. These discussions will allow the students to make investigations and preparations before delivering the tasks. They will also learn further vocabulary, and the teacher will provide them with some strategies that can be applied by themselves at home such as practicing in front of a mirror, listening to songs in English, and watching movies without captions. This will help them to improve knowledge and fluency.

3.4.3.1 Speech delivery

Another important instrument to assess oral performance is to provide the participants with the opportunity to deliver a speech to deliver information about an assigned topic. This is helpful as students have the chance to investigate further about it, create their own ideas, and use key words that will help them to remember what they searched for. The investigator will give the students flashcards that contain the name of an illness and the name of a famous person who has the illness. As a result, the students have to investigate about the illness itself first. For example, what the illness stands for, look for the symptoms, and special care that a person who has it should have.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

On the other hand, students should do some investigation about the life of the famous person and how this person has faced this illness. After the investigation has been completed by the participants, they should give a speech by performing the character and speaking about their lives with the illnesses. This will help participants to get more knowledge on the topic, what special care and treatment the famous person should have, and find out about famous people with illnesses.

3.4.3.1 Phillips 66

As it is well-known, oral performance is important to communicate with others for them to get the message that we try to convey. For this reason, speaking and listening skills play an important role when people speak to each other. Therefore, Phillips 66 is a useful tool that can be applied to assess students' oral performance and increase the task difficulty after a speech has been delivered. This is also a working speaking task to be applied to 11th graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project as they understand the message in the target language even if they do not know all the words.

In order to reach the main objective, the instructor will read an article that contains information about some illnesses for the students to pay attention and get the idea of what is being said. Then, in a round table, the researcher will give a minute to each student for them to give an opinion about what they will listen to. After that, the investigator will ask the students some questions for them to talk about a specific illness and how it is treated.

3.4.3 Post-test

In order to evaluate the students' progress of their oral performance, a post-test will be applied after the speaking tasks throughout the data collection process. Students will have

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

to perform a TV show about politics, participate in a debate about the topic, and talk a little more. The instructor will provide customs to the students and they will perform the TV show in groups of three to feel more comfortable and have fun by speaking in the target language. Of course, students will have time to prepare the show and the roles that each of them will have. On the other hand, to assess and evaluate students' performance, rubrics will be applied in the tests and tasks. At the end, the results can be compared, and feedback can be provided to each student.

3.5 Validation of instruments

The instruments were validated at Liceo Teodoro Picado with thirty 11th graders on June 8th and June 9th as observations were made in that high school previously, so the investigator already knew the students' attitude and English level. These students know more about vocabulary and grammar structures, but they do not like to speak in the target language as they never perform oral tasks. Then, the pre-test was evaluated, so the investigator provided the test to every student and read it together. Some understood and others had questions about the answers of the first part, as it was not clear if they had to provide short information or complete answers.

Then, almost all of them (as there were five students who never participate or complete tasks) wrote the short story about their vacation and did not make many mistakes; their grammar was satisfactory, and they had knowledge about the topic already. After that, in the speaking part, many of them were afraid to perform the task and started saying that it was hard for them. However, the researcher assisted them and provided some advice. At the end, fifteen students did it.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

In the second lesson, the first task about the illness speech was applied by the researcher and the students delivered the speech as requested. They felt a little comfortable and started investigating about the illness and the famous person that they were in charge of. They finished the task fast, and then only ten students participated as the others were afraid of speaking in front of the class. They stated that they had never made any oral presentation and then started making fun of themselves. Some stated that they really like the language, but they do not have any idea on how to pronounce the words.

The next day the investigator asked the group if they had any lessons learned, but only twenty students attended. As a result the Phillips 66 was applied, and they understood the instructions. The researcher started reading the article about insomnia, depression, and eating disorders. However, the investigator noticed that some got the idea, but other were lost, so she read it once more; after that, the students had a clearer idea about the text. After that, the post-test was applied, and they felt confident. When they saw the customs, they started laughing and making jokes.

Nonetheless, as they had to wear masks, they felt better by going in front. The investigator explained the instructions, but they were not that happy about politicians; however, when they were told about making groups of three, they accepted. They had time to be creative and investigate about any politician and prepare ideas of what to say or ask to provide information about the selected character.

At the end, the students from Liceo Teodoro Picado were asked how they felt and if everything was clear, so the ones who answered said that they do not like to participate that much as English is not their favorite or native language. Besides, they were afraid of what

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

their classmates say when someone performs an oral task. However, at the end they felt better and motivated by having fun while learning.

The investigator will apply these instruments in order to improve the students' oral performance. After those instruments are applied, the researcher will provide the final results, strategies, and recommendations.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

As instruments were already applied with 11th graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project, the results gotten obtained from implementing the mixed approach will be explained in this chapter. Detailed information is important because readers can get a clearer idea of how the students did completing the speaking tasks in order to assess their oral performance. Besides, this chapter provides an explanation of the strategies, tasks, and theories followed to achieve the objectives set at the beginning of the research project. The data collected and analysis will also help to challenge the proposed theories and check if the tasks and tests actually worked with the participants.

According to Kalpesh (2013), the data analysis structure with the mixed approach transform results and remodel data in order to reach the expected results. Therefore, the investigator can go further and deeper into the investigation. The researcher observes and sets a problem, and it breaks it into others to deeply study each specific detail found in the investigation. For those reasons, the mixed method was applied first through observations and the instruments that better fitted the participants and the problem at hand.

As a strategy to check the students' oral performance from the beginning to the end, the same rubric was used with a minor change in the timing for the post-test because in the post-test students were requested to perform a longer speech. This will help us to compare the final results from both tests. However, the strategies were similar; for example, students were given homework to practice speaking and listening at home, and then before the pre-test they were given some minutes to give an introduction about themselves. And for the

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

post-test, in the previous classes they were advised to use the target language only and were given phrases to be used in the classroom.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

In the current segment, instruments and results will be explained and shown in charts for a better understanding of the information obtained from the students' oral performance. The charts will reflect the achievement percentage that the participants obtained through the application of the instruments to assess their oral performance.

4.1.1 Pre-test

The pre-test was applied to the students was applied on June 1st, 2017 in order to evaluate their oral performance at the beginning and check their body language while delivering a conversation. The participants were students from 11th grade where only 12 students participated in the process as the others did not come back to classes. First, the investigator asked them questions such as how they were and what they did during the day in order to have a little conversation about themselves to know each other. This was a strategy to let them practice before the application of the pre-test.

Then, having studied vocabulary about "Tourism in Costa Rica" previously seen in class, the teacher reviewed this vocabulary with the students. After that, they were given the pre-test, which made them nervous and a little indisposed; however, the teacher-researcher informed them that it was just practice to start working on their oral skills, and they liked it. After that, the investigator gave the test to each participant and let them know the instructions about the first part, which was about answering some open questions about a

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

recent trip made; they were provided some introductory information about what was requested, and they wrote their answers on a blank page.

The second part was for students to write down a short story about their vacation, in which they had to use the vocabulary from a word bank. This was a strategy for them to be ready for what to say before delivering a 5-7 minute speech. Then, when they had it ready, they started delivering their speeches, which were checked for pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, knowledge, body language, use of visuals, and timing. The results are presented through charts later in this chapter.

The rubric metrics for the pre-test were:

- "Excellent", where no mistakes were made and they could get up to 4 points;
- "Very good" where 3 to 5 mistakes were found for up to 3 points.
- "Good" where they could get up to 2 points if 5 to 7 mistakes were made, and
- "Needs improvement" in case 7 mistakes had been made.

Then the pronunciation criteria evaluated the speaking and oral communication skills that students had. In grammar, the corresponding usage of structures were assessed; besides, vocabulary was evaluated based on correct word choice. On the other hand, subject knowledge was another criterion in order to check how much information the participants knew about the topic.

Moreover, body language was also taken into consideration when students performed an oral speech because it can be noticed if they are nervous or insecure about themselves by checking postures and eye contact. Finally, although timing was the last criterion being

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

assessed, it was not the least important as the researcher needed to check if they effectively used the given time for the assignment.

4.1.1.1 Pre-test: Pronunciation in Oral Performance

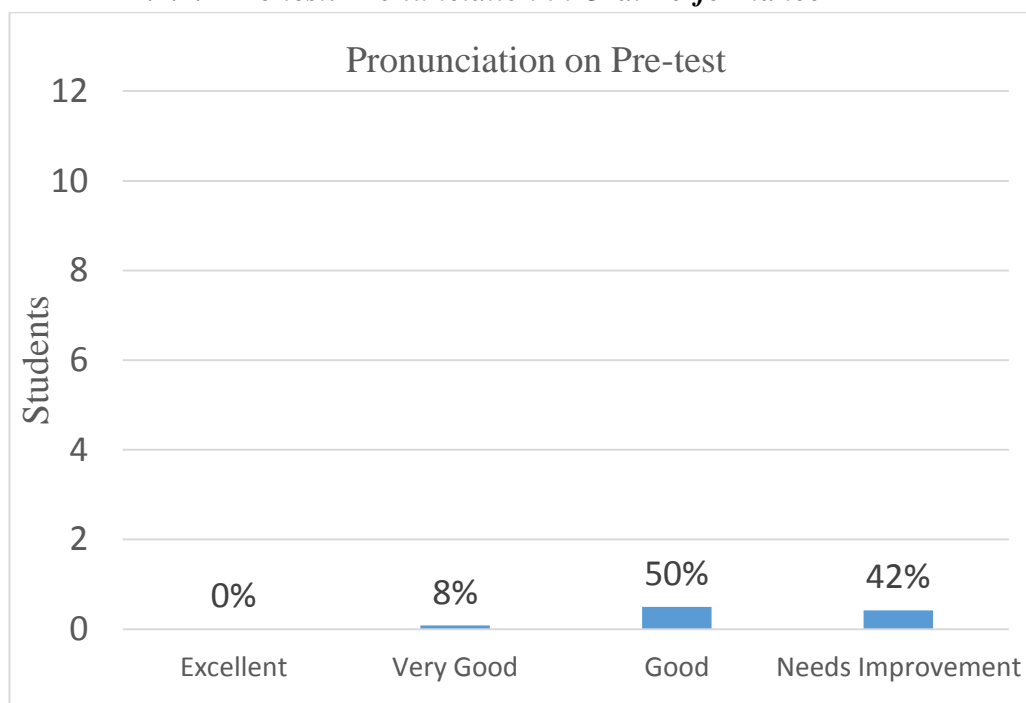


Figure 1 Pre-test Results on Pronunciation

Figure 1 shows how students performed in pronunciation, if they made a lot of mistakes or only minor mistakes when pronouncing a word in the target language. None of the participants did an excellent job, meaning that no one did it correctly the first time. Only 8% of the participants did a very good job; this represents a student who has taken an English course already. On the other hand, there was a 50% of the population who did a good job in the pre-test oral assignment as no more than 7 errors were made by the 6 students. Finally, 42% of the students needed improvement when speaking in the target language as more than 7 mistakes were made by another 5 students when they were speaking in the target language.

4.1.1.2 Pre-test: Grammar in Oral Performance

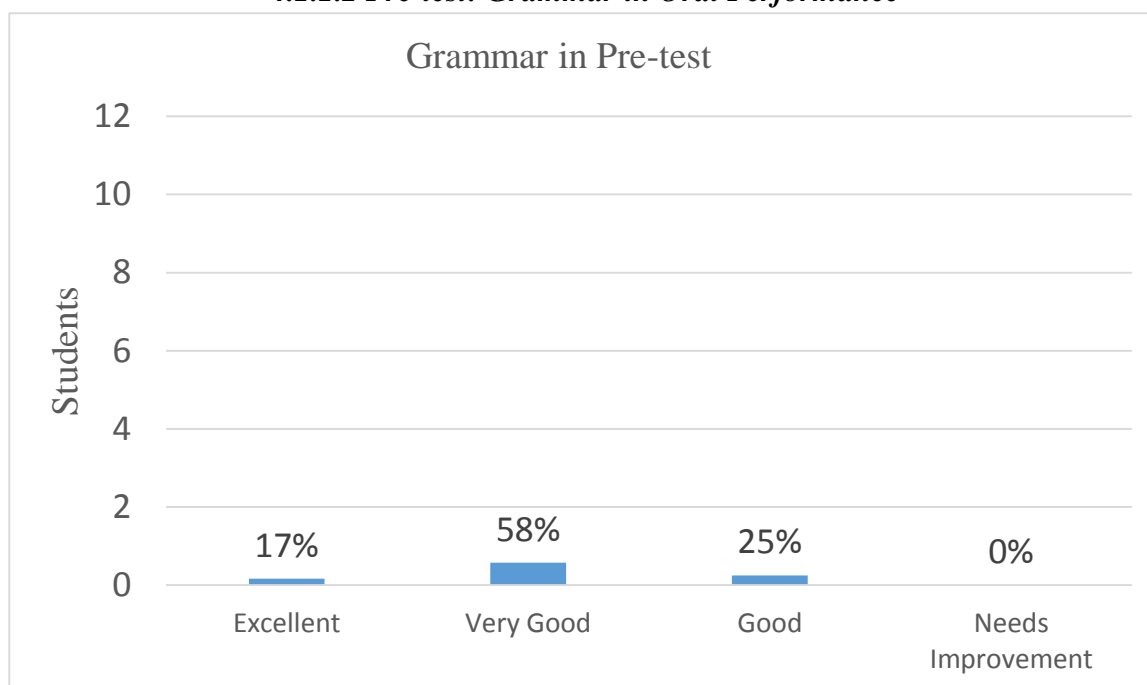


Figure 2 Pre-Test Results in Grammar

In Figure 2 we can check how students applied grammar structures while speaking in the pre-test and it shows that most of them met the expectations in grammar structures and correct word choice. There were 2 students that represent a 17% of the participants who did excellently in the process of delivering the story as no mistakes were made. There were also 7 students –59% of the population—who used correct structures but sometimes made mistakes using verbs and tenses. Moreover, there were 3 students—25% of the population—who did a good job as only 5 to 7 mistakes were made. Finally, none of the participants needed improvement on grammar as they can manage this skill very well even though sometimes they make mistakes.

4.1.1.3 Pre-test: Vocabulary in Oral Performance

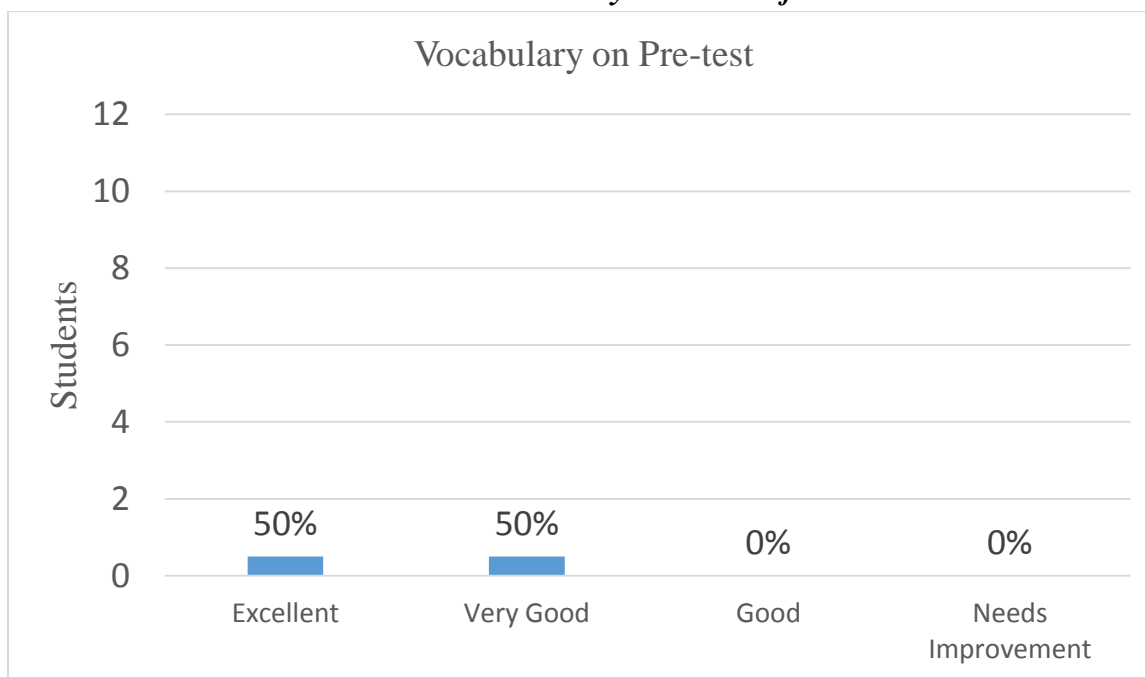


Figure 3 Pre-Test Results in Vocabulary

In Figure 3, the participants exceeded the expectations because even though not all of them did it excellently, they showed variety in their word choice. The graph shows that 6 students (50% of the participants) were rated as “excellent” because they did not make any mistake when choosing a word, but the other 6 students (the other 50% of the participants) were rated as having done a very good job because they made 1 to 3 mistakes. They got these results because:

1. The project focuses more on vocabulary, and
2. They also had access to dictionaries and didactic material.

When they gave their speech, they used the correct words in context to transmit the message about the vacation story. Therefore, none of the participants got “good” or “needs improvement” ratings as no more than 5 mistakes were found.

4.1.1.4 Pre-test: Subject Knowledge in Oral Performance

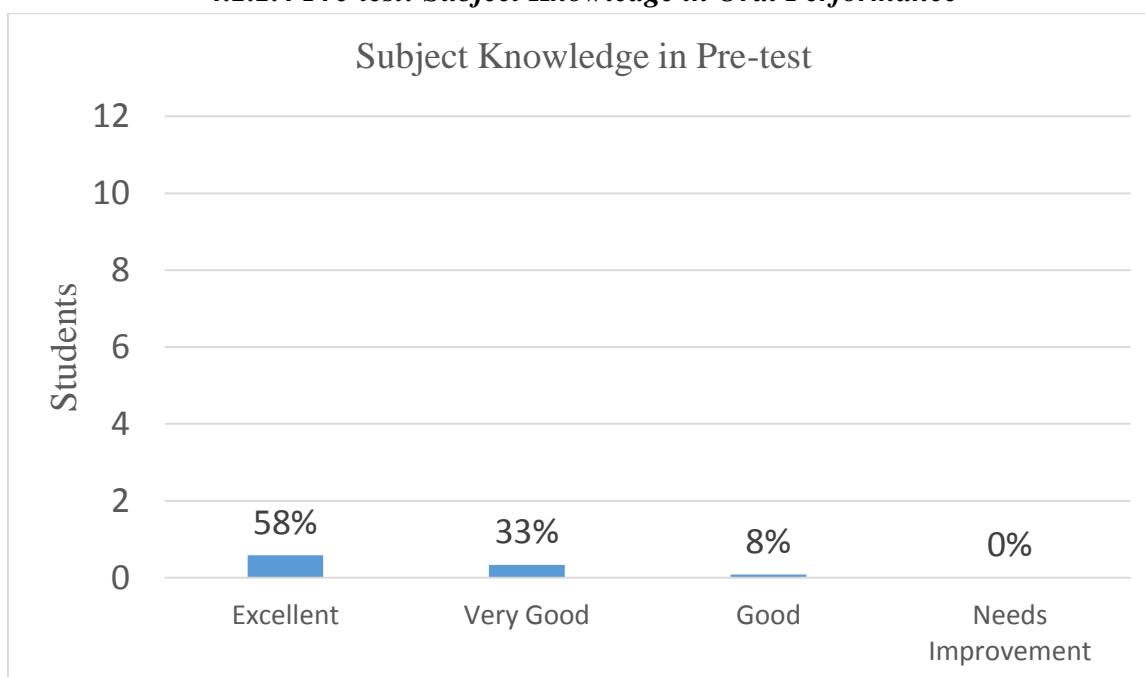


Figure 4 Pre-Test Results on Subject Knowledge

In Figure 4 it is shown the knowledge acquired by the students, how much they knew about the topics given and how they used any related information. According to the results in the chart, there were 7 students (58% of the participants) who did a great job as it shows; they knew how to relate topics about family members to the topic of tourism without mistakes. Furthermore, there were 4 participants (33% of the population) who did a very good job at using the words given to create the story; only few errors were made. On the other hand, one student (8% of the population) did not understand what activities could be done, and the investigator had to provide assistance because she did not know much about tourism, so there was a misunderstanding on how to create a story, but in the end she could perform it. Finally, the graph shows that none of the participants showed total misunderstanding of the topic, which means that all of them could use the information to complete the assignment.

4.1.1.5 Pre-test: Body Language in Oral Performance

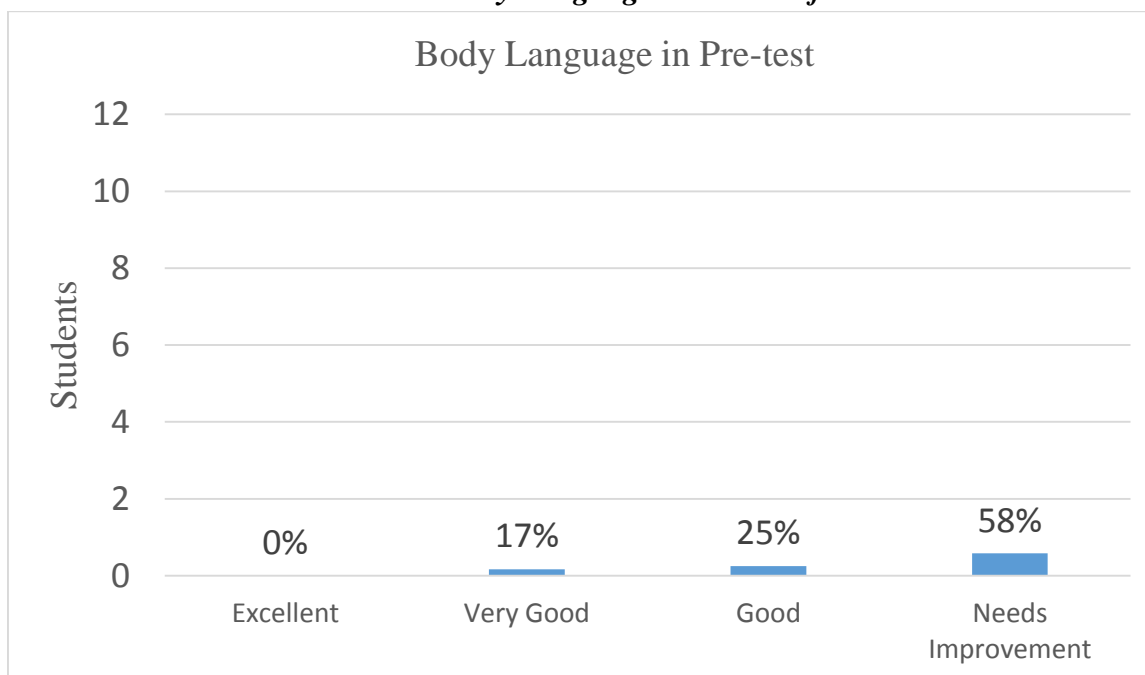


Figure 5 Pre-Test Results in Body Language

Figure 5 shows the way in which students deliver a conversation in the target language. Body language is how a person communicates how she or he feels. As we can see, 0% of the students did an excellent job in body language. Besides only 2 students (17% of the participants) were able to keep eye contact although they looked nervous in the “very good” category. There were another 3 students (25% of the participants) showed good, but they could not keep eye contact for a long time. On the other hand, most of the students need improvement, which means that 7 students (58% of the population) as they did not look confident, and no eye contact was made. Besides, their posture transmitted a message of avoidance.

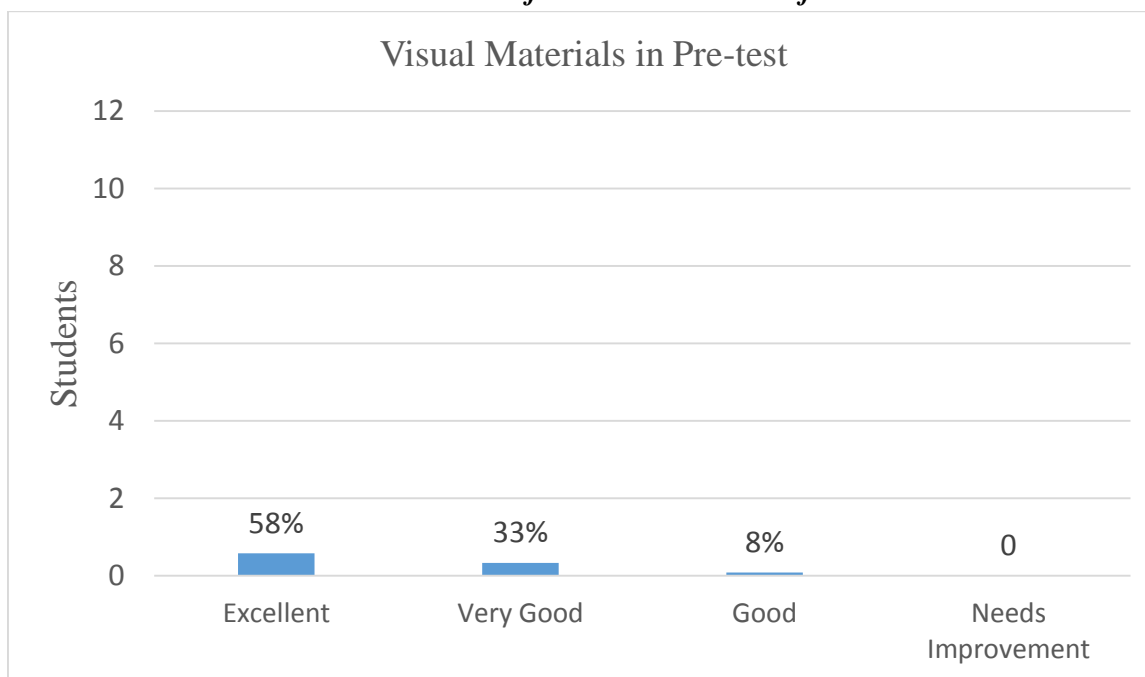
4.1.1.6 Pre-test: Use of Visuals in Oral Performance*Figure 6 Pre-Test Results on Use of Visuals*

Figure 6 shows how students used the materials to prepare the speech that had to deliver. As we can see, 7 students (58% of the participants) used the words provided properly and created a coherent story about a vacation, so they got the whole 4 points in the evaluation. There were also 4 students (33% of the population) who fell in the “very good” category because of missing information and lack of creativity. Besides, there was 1 student (8% of the population) who did a good job with the story, but he did not use all the material, and his speech took less than 5 minutes. Finally, as all the students used the corresponding material provided, all the participants accomplished what was established.

4.1.1.7 Pre-test: Timing in Oral Performance

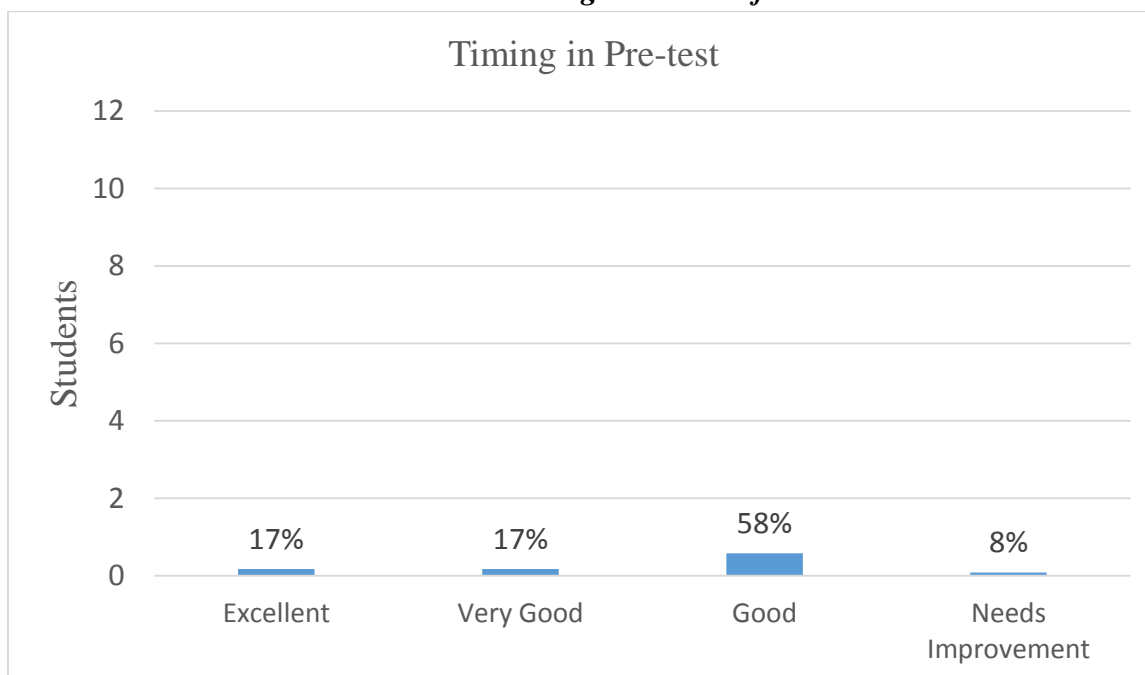


Figure 7 Pre-Test Results on Timing

Figure 7 shows the usage of time provided to each student to deliver what they had prepared. Only 2 students (17% of the participants) did an excellent job by taking 5 to 7 minutes to complete the speech. Besides, there were another 2 students (17% of the population) who still had one minute left to reach the 5-minute mark, so it means that they did a very good job as they almost reached the goal. Under the "good" category, there is a 58% of the population (7 students) whose speeches took less than 3 minutes when performing the assignment. On the other hand, 1 student (8% of the participants) only read two sentences and did not want to continue.

After the first instruments were applied and the rubric was checked, feedback was provided to the students for them to know where they were failing and how to improve over the next days. Besides, the researcher advised the students to read articles in the target language in front of their relatives and practice conversations in front of a mirror.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

4.1.2 Application of Speaking Tasks

After applying the pre-test, the researcher conducted two speaking tasks in the classroom for the students to investigate, learn about a new topic, and improve their oral performance. Those tasks were based on illnesses as they should know about symptoms and treatment. Some students did a better job in completing the tasks because it was emphasized that motivation and attitude towards the acquisition and improvement of oral performance are two important factors in this investigation.

4.1.2.1 Speech delivery

The first task was to deliver a speech where students had to investigate about an illness and talk about it by pretending to be a famous person. The students had the opportunity to talk about the famous person even though the biography was not accurate, but the information on the illness had to contain the actual symptoms and treatment. Besides, they had the opportunity to have a brainstorming session about the illness and perform a conversation in front of their classmates in order to get feedback on their oral performance. In the speaking tasks, a different rubric with other evaluation criteria was used. Students were evaluated on accuracy, fluency, structures and vocabulary as in the pre-test, but now, the rubric included self-correction to check if students were aware of mistakes; besides, they had to provide accurate information about the illness as it was an investigation. Finally, body language was also evaluated to check the progress on self-confidence. The following charts will show the results that the students obtained when performing this first speaking task.

4.1.2.1.1 Speech Delivery: Pronunciation in Oral Performance

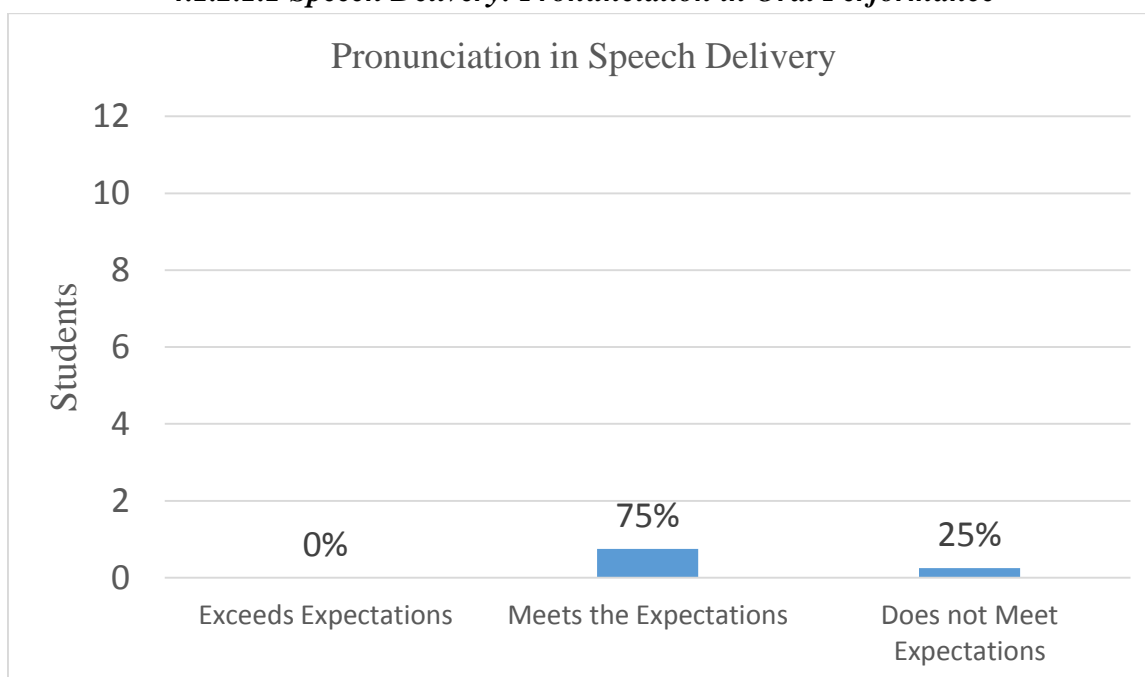


Figure 8 Speaking Task Results on Pronunciation

Based on Figure 8, it can be argued that that the students' pronunciation did not exceed expectations, which means that 0% of the population exceeded the expected results. However, 9 students (75% of the population) have appropriate fluency and accuracy with a few errors. On the other hand, it shows that 3 students (25% of the participants) did not meet the expectations due to the many mistakes made in performing the task. Only these evaluation points were considered for each student in order to check their progress after the first speaking class. Some feedback and strategies were given to students as the teacher researcher was allowed to work more with them individually.

4.1.2.1.2 Speech Delivery: Grammar in Oral Performance

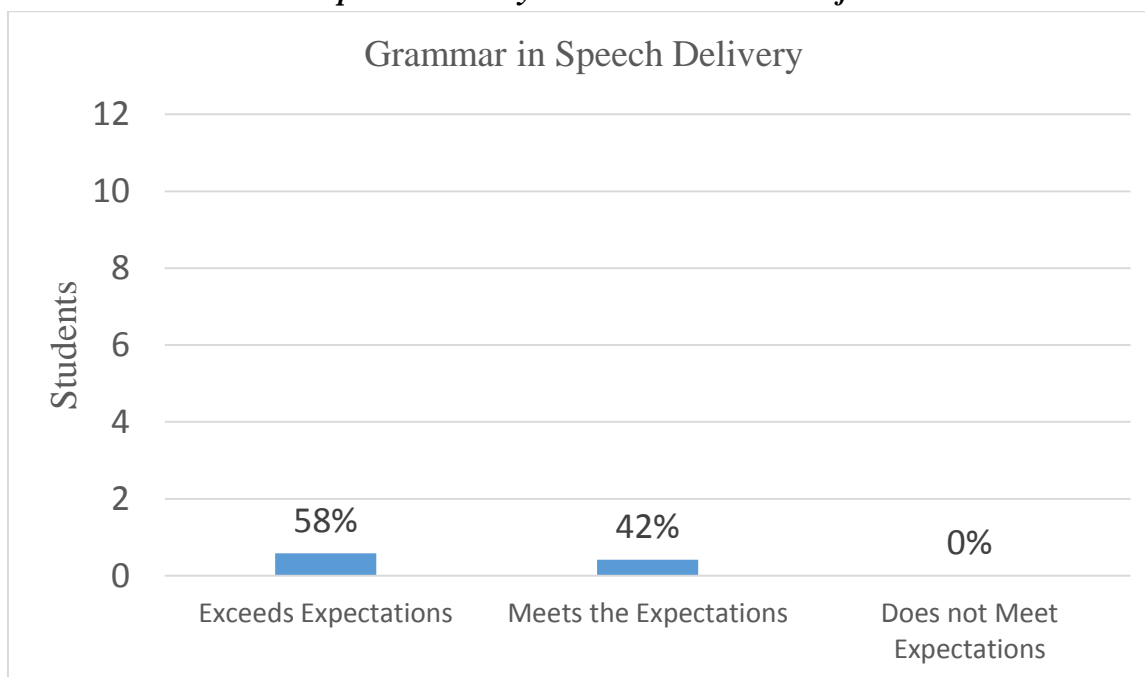


Figure 9 Speaking Task Results on Grammar

Based on Figure 9, it is observed how students did in grammar on the first speaking task. Grammar is the hardest aspect for them as has been reading and vocabulary because they practice enough structures and reading comprehension considerably. The above-mentioned skills are important for better accuracy and fluency. As seen, 7 students (58% of the population) exceeded the expectations regarding grammar structures and tenses correctly when delivering the task. This means that students did not make any mistake when providing the information requested. Nonetheless, the other 5 students (42% of the participants) met the expectations, meaning that no more than 7 errors were made while speaking about their corresponding illness. Besides, there was a 0% of the population who needed improvement.

4.1.2.1.3 Speech Delivery: Vocabulary in Oral Performance

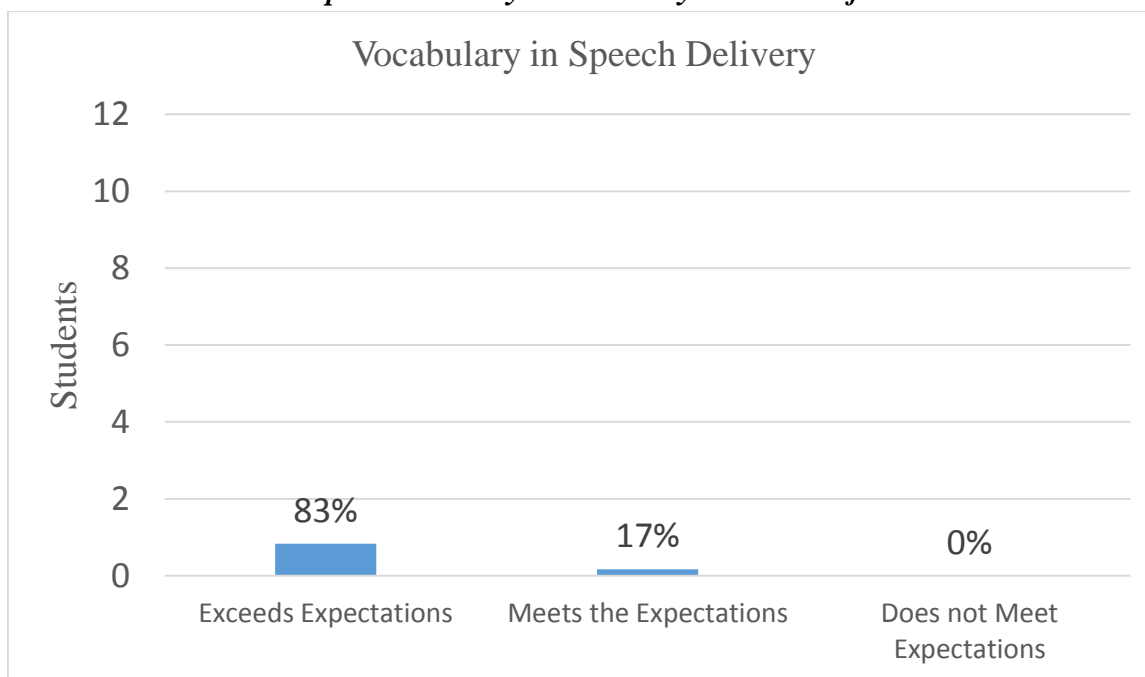


Figure 10 Speaking Task Results on Vocabulary

Figure 9 shows the performance that students had on vocabulary about illnesses for the first speaking task. Students were allowed to investigate about a specific illness and an actor or actress in order to perform the task. Besides, they were allowed to use dictionaries as it is a common practice in their course. As shown, 10 students (83% of the population) exceeded the expectations by using a word in the correct context. However, only 2 students (17% of the population) met the requirements which means that they confused a word with the native language or used false cognates. Finally, all participants generally met the expectations.

4.1.2.1.4 Speech Delivery: Self-correction on Oral Performance

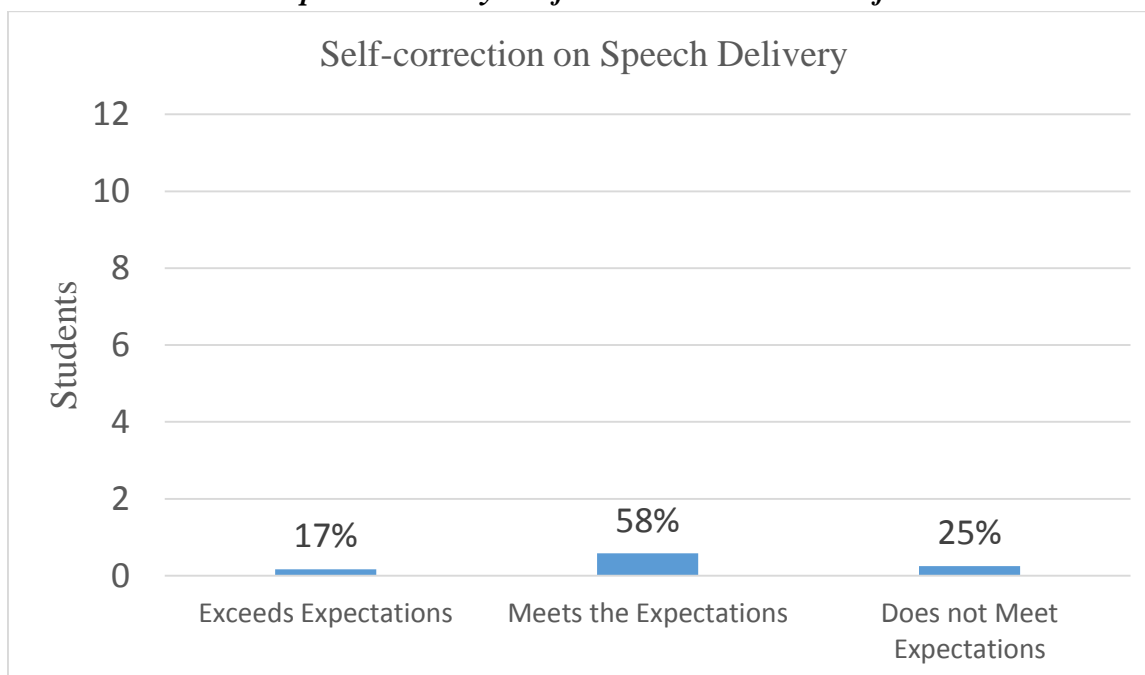


Figure 11 Speaking Task Results in Self-correction

Figure 11 shows the results on students' self-correction skills, which took into consideration how aware the students were of their mistakes while speaking. Students were advised that self-correction would be considered, and the teacher-researcher had them practice it for them to have an idea. Only 2 students (17% of the participants) exceeded the expectations and knew when a mistake was made, but only sometimes they corrected themselves. In addition, 7 students (58% of the participants) met the expectations about correcting themselves, but not all the time they were aware of such mistakes. On the other hand, 3 students (25% of the population) could not correct themselves as they did not recognize their errors.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

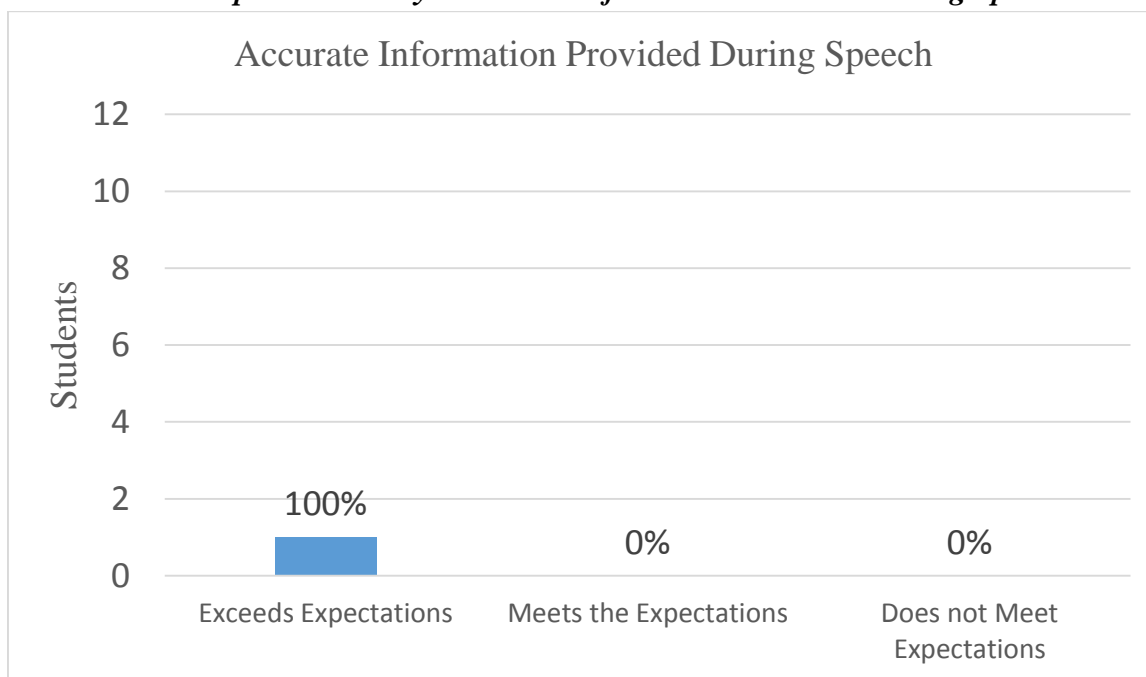
4.1.2.1.5 Speech Delivery: Accurate Information Provided During Speech

Figure 12 Speaking Task Results on Accurate Information

Figure 12 shows the results of the initial speaking tasks based on accurate information provided by the participants when delivering the speech. All 12 participants exceeded the expectations in this regard. They learned more about different illnesses and used their creativity in representing a famous person. Some of the students did not investigate about a famous person. They just created a false biography and added the information about the illness that they had investigated. Therefore, there was a 0% of students that met the expectations, which means that no one of the students provided information that was not accurate, and there was also a 0% of the students that were under the “did not meet expectations” criteria as all the information provided was accurate.

4.1.2.1.6 Speech Delivery: Body Language in Oral Performance

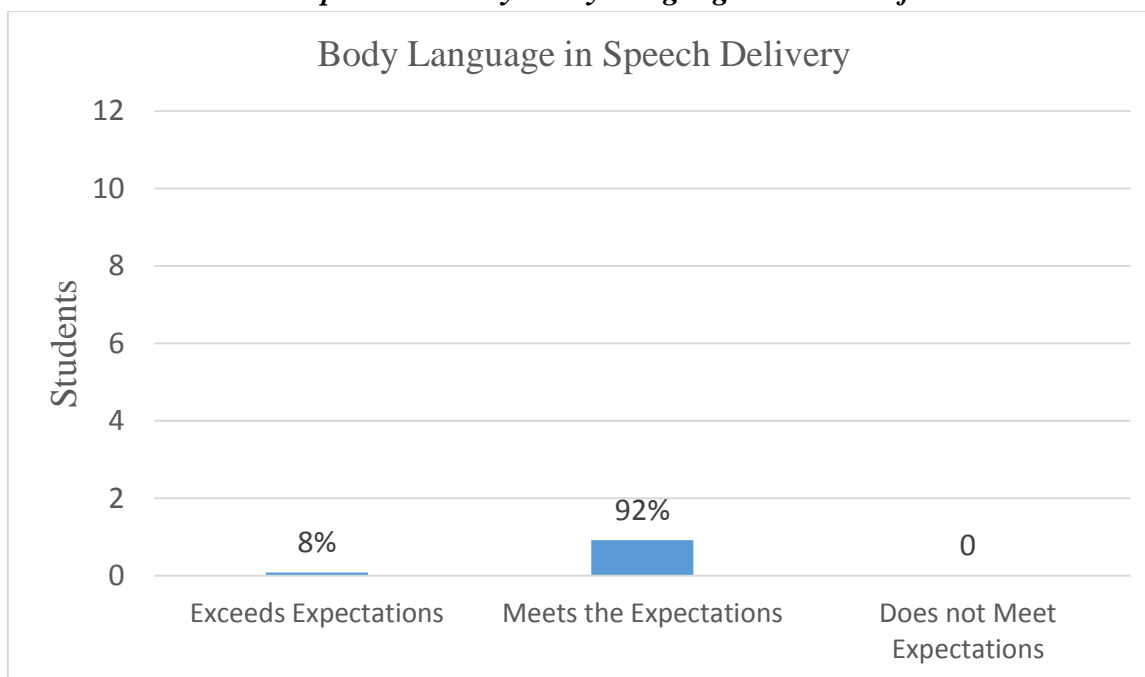


Figure 13 Speaking Task Results on Body Language

Figure 13 shows how students used their body language, for example, in their postures, gestures, and eye contact. Only 1 student (8% of the population) the participants, exceeded the expectations as this percentage represents the amount of students who really felt comfortable and could keep an appropriate posture and eye contact. Besides, it is natural that students feel a little uncomfortable, but the other 11 participants (92% of the population) met the expectations as they tried to keep eye contact and a good posture even though they were nervous. As a result, the entire population met the expectations and no one of the students were under "did not meet the expectations" scale.

4.1.2.2 Phillips 66

Phillips 66 was applied as a second task with the difficulty of adding a listening task for the students to perform with no previous preparation or use of visual aids. This was made this way as oral performance should include listening in order to prepare students for speaking situations. Besides, students had practiced vocabulary about illnesses previously and had been given homework to practice at home; they already had enough information about the topic. What the teacher-researcher did was read a piece of information about "Illnesses Caused by Stress" twice, which contained information about insomnia, eating disorders, and depression, so the students could take notes for the speaking part.

Moreover, the researcher took some strategies into consideration for the students to better understand the words provided. For example, while reading, the investigator performed some gestures for the students to get an idea of what was being said; besides repetition of words and reading also helped them to know how to perform the task. The results obtained will be explained for each rubric criterion in the charts below. The criteria include fluency, accuracy on pronunciation, structures and verb tenses on grammar, word choice on vocabulary, self-correction, and time adherence.

4.1.2.2.1 Phillips 66: Pronunciation in Oral Performance

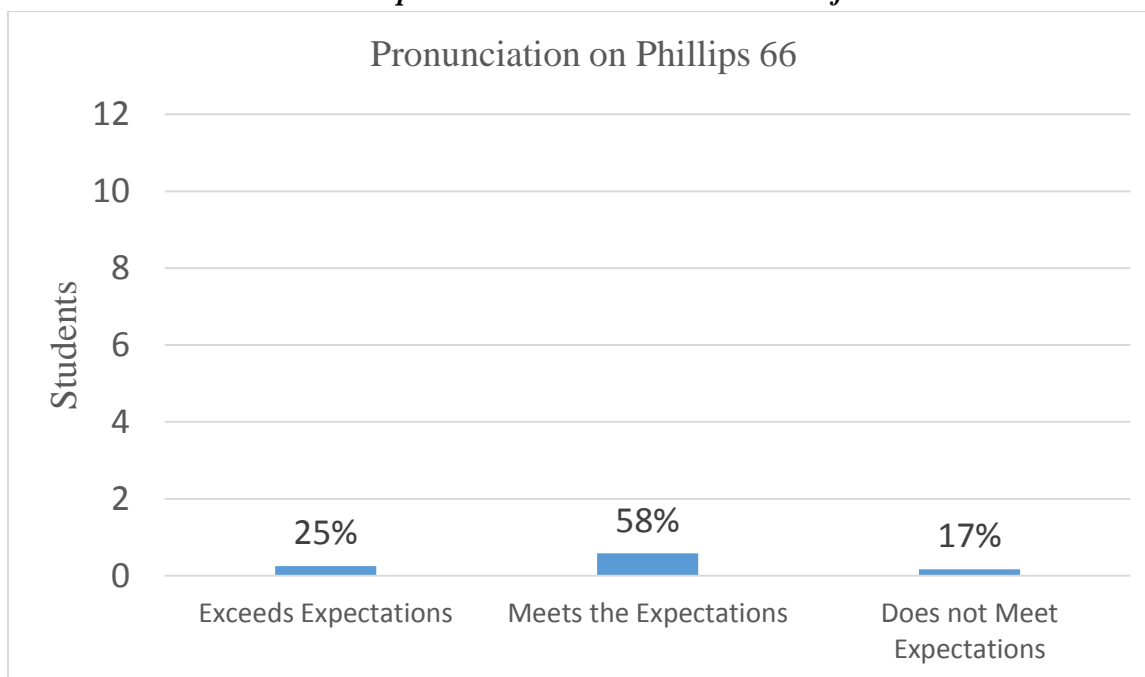


Figure 14 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 on Pronunciation

Figure 14 shows the pronunciation criteria based on students' own performance when providing the information requested on the task. As shown, 3 students (25% of the population) exceeded the expectations as there were no mistakes. When delivering the task they pronounced well and tried to be as fluent as possible. Seven students that made a 58% of the students met the requirements; even though some errors were made, they made their best effort to pronounce well despite their lack of fluency. On the other hand, it is noticed that there were 2 participants (17% of the participants) struggled with pronunciation, which affects their fluency to reach acceptable oral performance levels.

4.1.2.2.2 Phillips 66: Grammar in Oral Performance

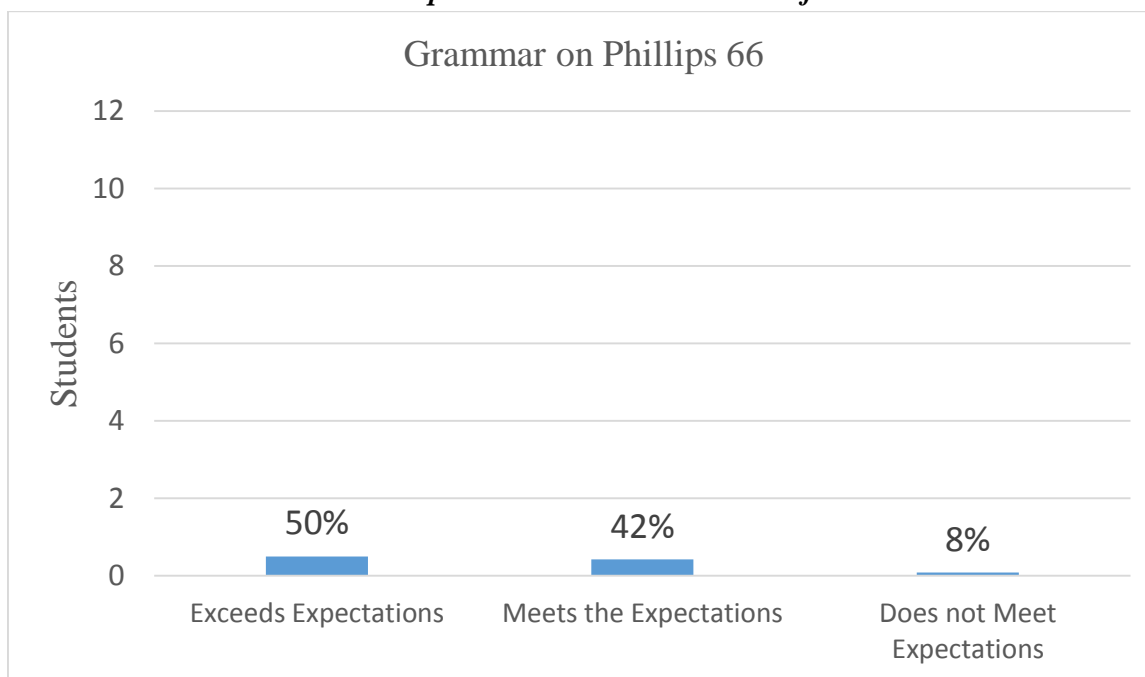


Figure 15 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 on Grammar

Figure 15 shows the results on grammar structure used by the participants when providing information about what they had heard. As can be seen, 6 students (50% of the participants) exceeded the expectations as they showed acceptable grammar structures when speaking and did not miss verbs or nouns in their sentences. Then, the graph shows that there were 5 students (42% of the population) who met the expectations meaning that sometimes there were minor errors as word avoidance such as verbs, nouns, and conjunctions. Finally, it is noticed that 1 student (8% of the participants) did not meet the requirements as he did not complete the task appropriately.

4.1.2.2.3 Phillips 66: Vocabulary in Oral Performance

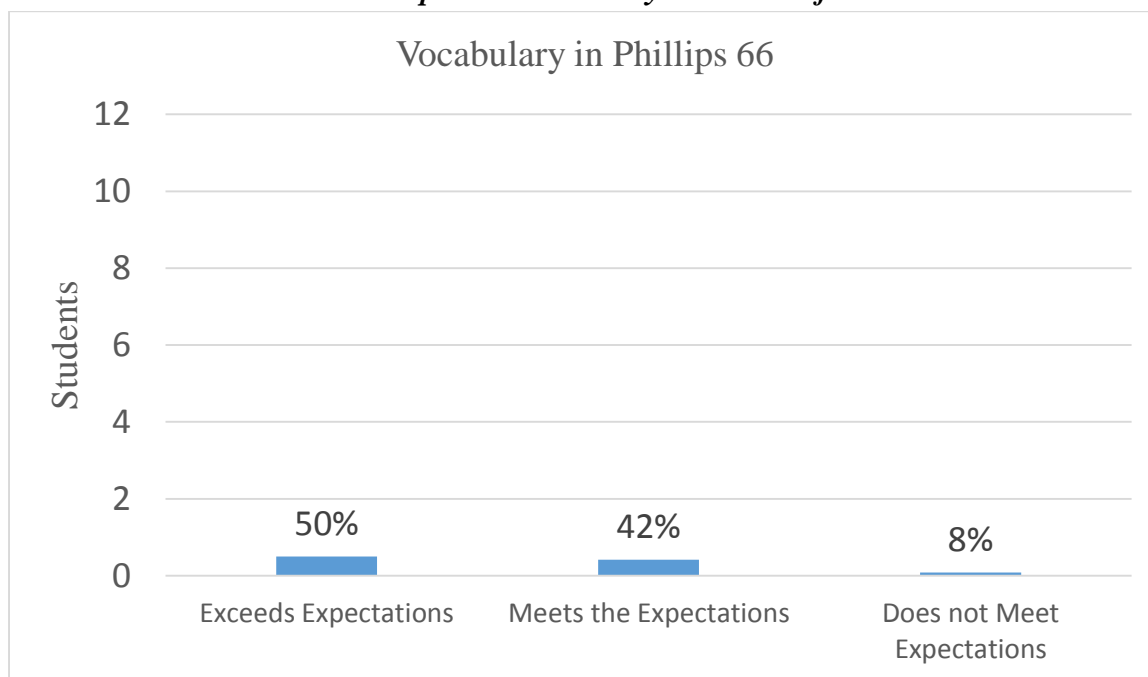


Figure 16 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 on Vocabulary

Figure 16 shows the results obtained by the students regarding vocabulary. Vocabulary usage was acceptable in general as the graph above shows, and half the students (50% of the population) exceeded the expectations. This percentage is about correct word choice in order to express their ideas based on the reading. Besides, there were 5 students (42% of the participants) that met the expectations because they made 5 to 7 errors when expressing their thoughts even though they used dictionaries. Nonetheless, there was 1 student (8% of the students) who did not want to provide any thoughts about the reading. In general, they had good vocabulary skills that allowed them to communicate more.

4.1.2.2.4 Phillips 66: Self-correction in Oral Performance

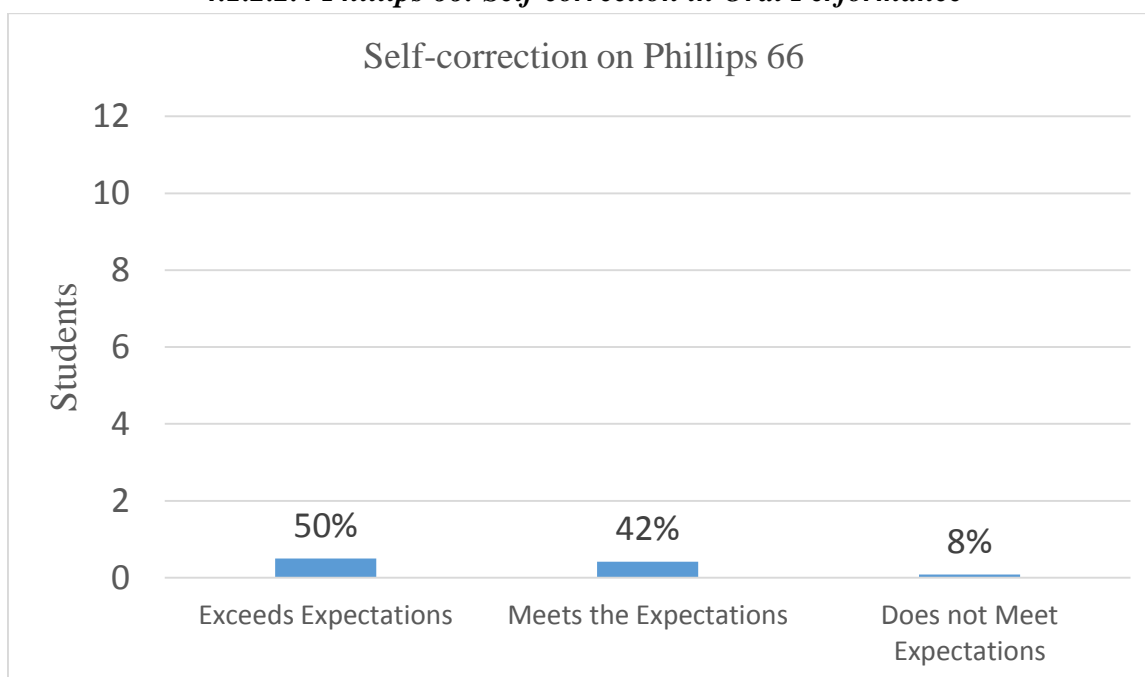


Figure 17 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 on Self-correction

Figure 17 shows the results found in students' self-correction abilities. The graph shows that there were 6 students (50% of the students) who did a great job because they knew exactly what the errors were and how to fix them. They would ask first and then correct them. Besides, there were 5 students (42% of the students) who met the expectations because sometimes they were aware of errors but were not totally able to fix them by themselves. On the contrary, there was 1 participant (8% of the participants) who was not aware of any mistakes or how to fix them.

4.1.2.2.5 Phillips 66: Timing in Oral Performance

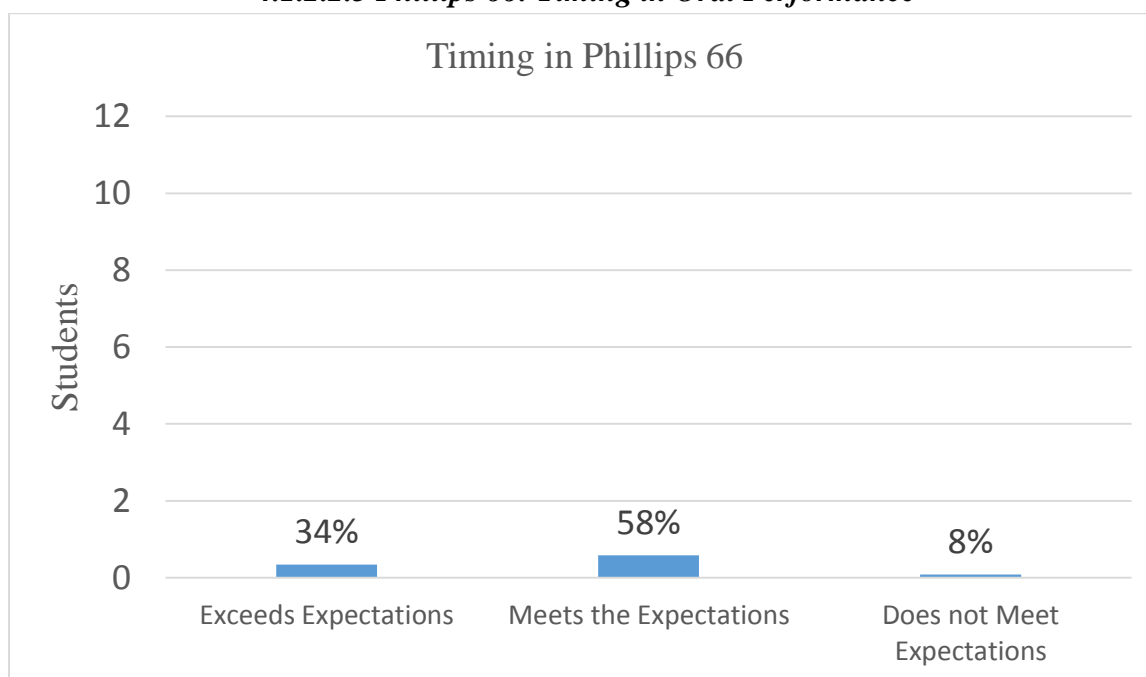


Figure 18 Speaking Task Results: Phillips 66 on Timing

Figure 18 shows how students managed the time limit that the students had to complete the tasks and see if they met the expectations or not. Students were advised that they should take one minute to give an opinion no more than it nor less. They understood and did their best to make it. Therefore, the graphic shows 4 students (34% of the participants) that exceeded the expectations, which means that they did it for a full minute. There were 7 students (58% of the participants) who almost achieved the goal; however, there were students that provided more or less information than expected. Finally, 1 student (8% of the students) did not accomplish the task as no opinion about the topic was given at all.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

4.1.3 Application of Post-test

The post-test was about a T.V show that students had to perform about a politician, his wife, and the interviewer. This post-test did not have a specific topic, but that way they could practice how to give personal information and how to talk about their lives. Students had twenty minutes to practice for the test before delivering the T.V show. That way they could ask questions about vocabulary and pronunciation for a better delivery of the speech.

Furthermore, the investigator provided some party customs for the students to wear such as glasses and hats, but only three of them wore them as the others were shy or simply did not want to. Then, after they had written and practiced the dialogue, they had to deliver what they wrote. Some students were really afraid and ashamed to go as they had never performed such a task. The rest of the class was motivated and assisted their other classmates. The results are shown in the following graphs where the same rubric for the post-test was used, but students had 5 to 10 minutes to complete it as it was their final test. This was made in order to check the initial results with the last ones.

4.1.3.1 Post-test: Pronunciation in Oral Performance

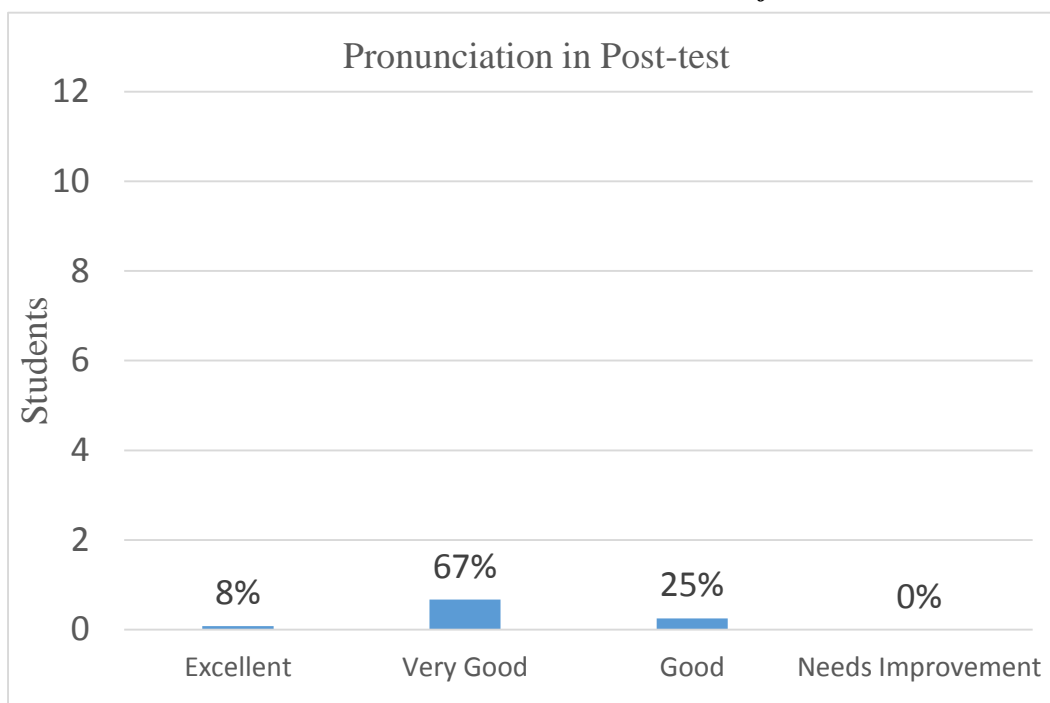


Figure 19 Post-Test Results on Pronunciation

Figure 19 shows the results on the post-test on pronunciation. This post-test was meant to evaluate if students improved their oral performance. Only 1 student who made an 8% of the students did an excellent job, which means that no mistakes were made when pronouncing words during the speech using the target language. Eight students (67% of the population) did a very good job on pronunciation, which means students made minor mistakes when delivering the oral test. Besides, only 3 students (25% of the population) did a good job, which means that they made several acceptable mistakes when speaking. Generally, they did more than expected as 0% of the population needed improvement.

4.1.3.2 Post-test: Grammar in Oral Performance

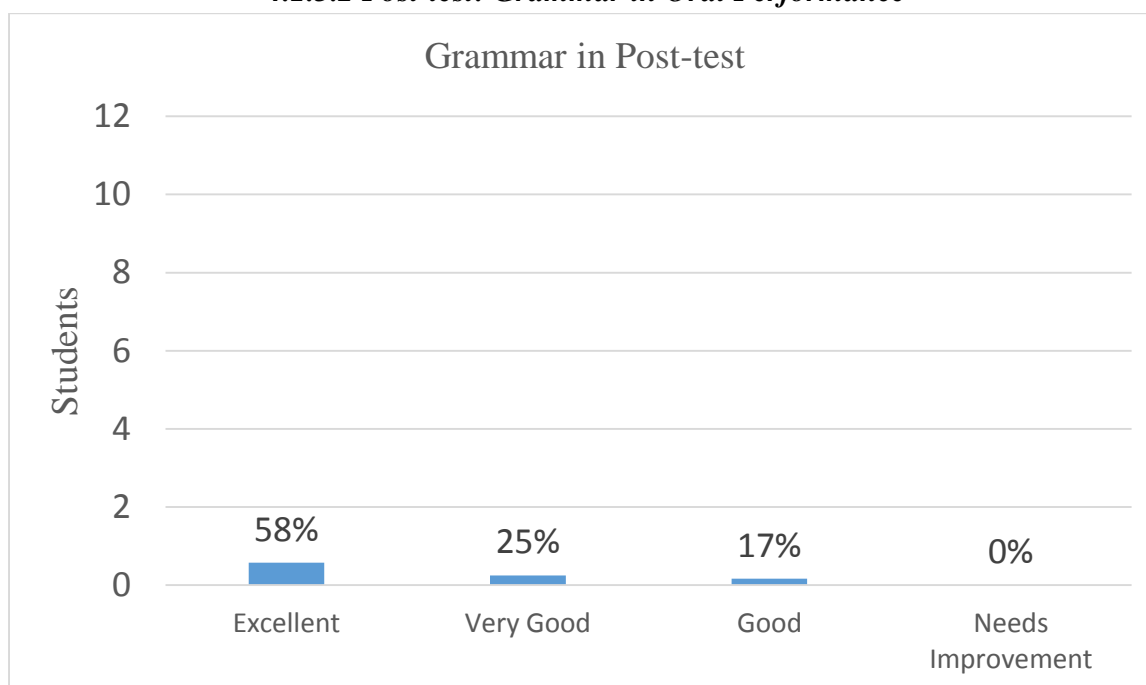


Figure 20 Post-Test Results in Grammar

Figure 20 shows the final results on grammar that students attained on the post-test. The participants have always had acceptable usage of structures since the beginning. The graphic above shows that 7 students (58% out of the population) did a great job on structures, verb tense (present), and choice of words. Besides, only 3 students (25% of the students) did a very good job, which means that they made few errors in completing the assignment. Only 2 students (17% of the population) did a good job because several errors were made. Finally, the graph also shows that none of the participants used structures inappropriately for the level.

4.1.3.3 Post-test: Vocabulary in Oral Performance

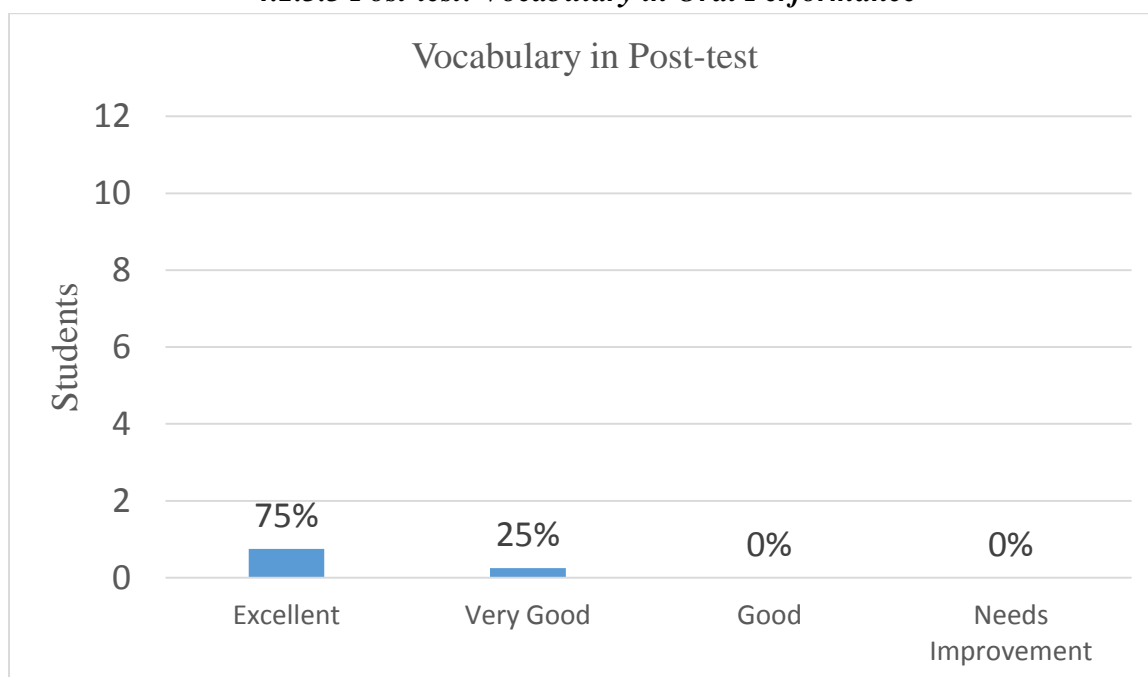


Figure 21 Post-Test Results on Vocabulary

Based on Figure 21, it can be demonstrated how the students did on the post-test regarding vocabulary criteria.. As shown, there were 9 students (75% of the students) who did an excellent job choosing the correct words in context while performing the test, which means that there were no errors in it. Besides, there were 3 students (25% of the participants) who did a very good job, which means that they chose less than 5 incorrect words when performing the test. None of the participants made more than 5 errors in the test, and none of them needed improvement due to inappropriate usage of words in context.

4.1.3.4 Post-test: Subject Knowledge in Oral Performance

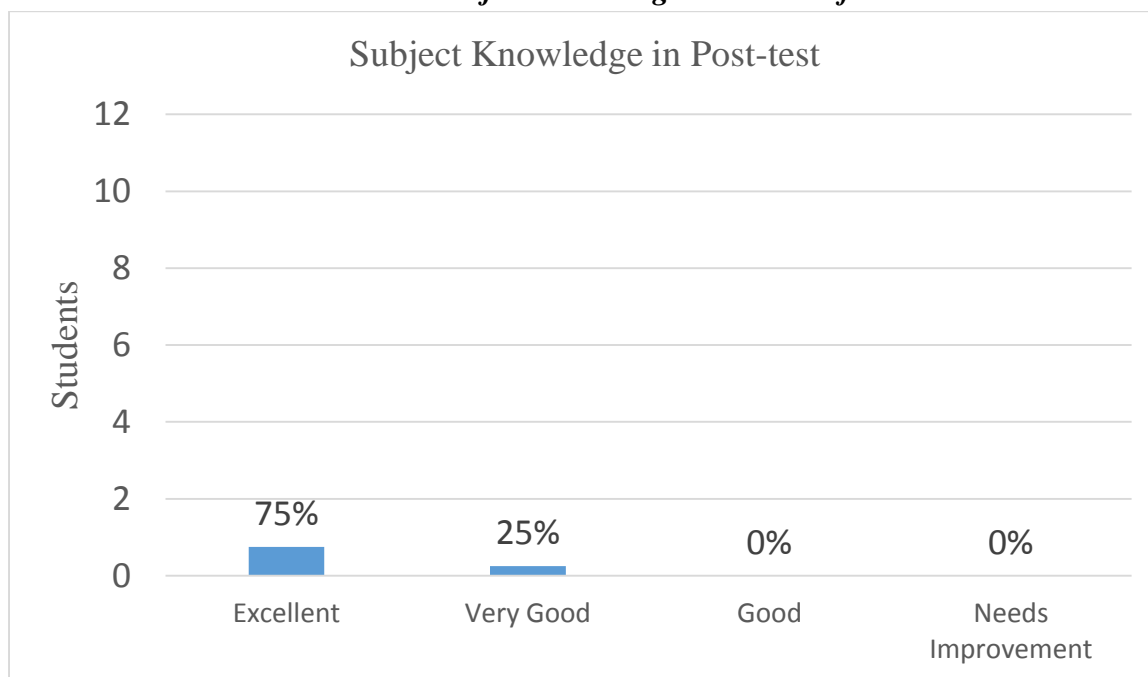


Figure 22 Post-Test Results on Subject Knowledge

Figure 22 details the final results on the post-test based on subject knowledge to check if there was understanding of the information researched by the students. Based on it, 9 students (75% of the population) showed excellent results in understanding the information. There were also 3 students (25% of the participants) did a very good job performing the task; however, they did not add further information about the character performed. Lastly, none of the participants were in the good or improvement needed categories, which means that they did not struggle with anything.

4.1.3.5 Post-test: Body Language in Oral Performance

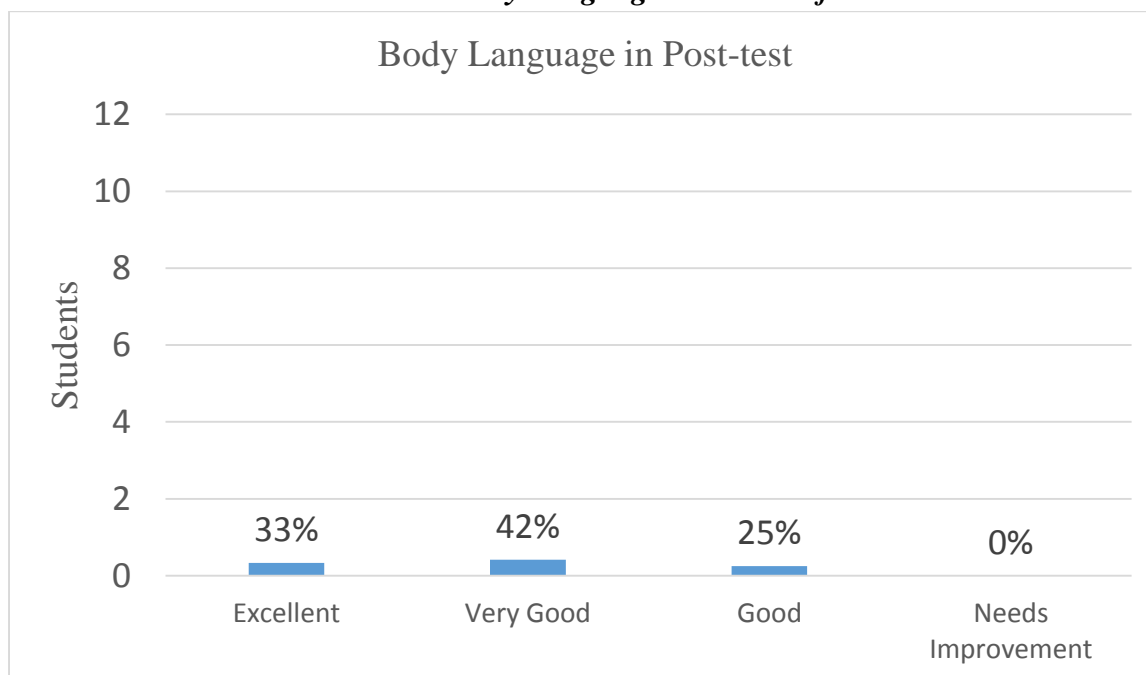


Figure 23 Post-Test Results on Body Language

Figure 23 shows the final results of the post-test on body language in order to check the students' confidence in performing the conversations after practicing every other class. The results show that 3 students (33% of the students) did an excellent job as they looked very confident by their postures and eye contact. There were 5 students (42% of the population) who did a very good job in body language as they looked a little nervous and did not make eye contact at times. Besides, there were 3 students (25% of the students who did a good job, but there was not enough eye contact and proper posture as expected. Finally, none of the participants made the minimum efforts as all 12 did a good job, even more than expected.

4.1.3.6 Post-test: Visual Materials in Oral Performance

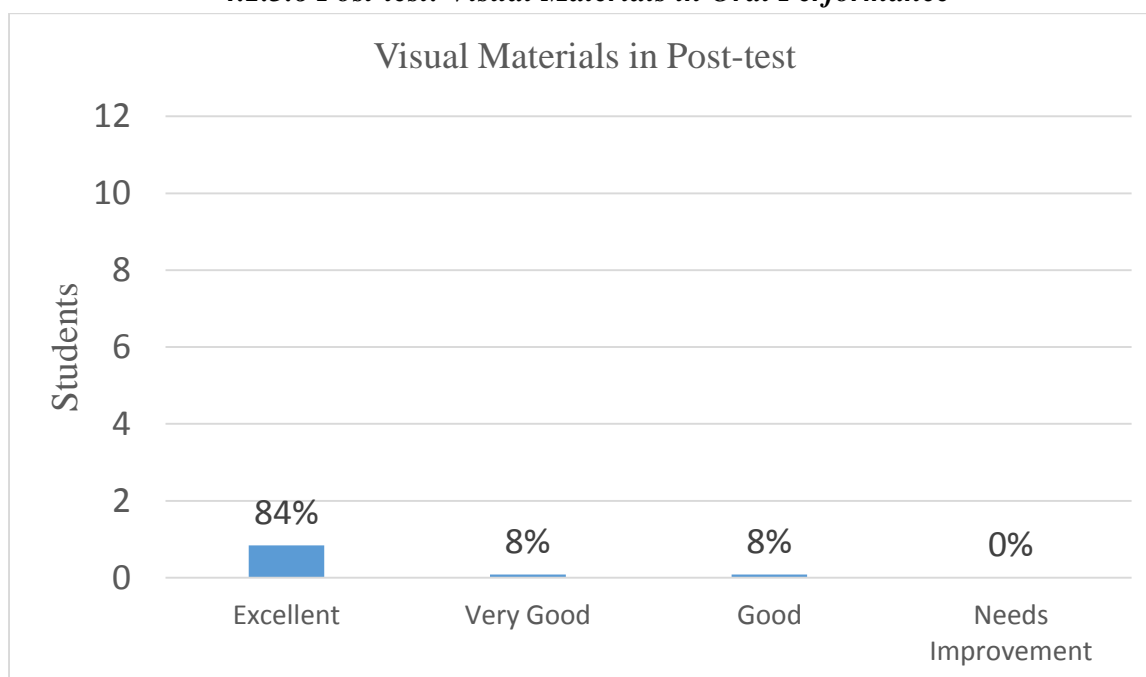


Figure 24 Post-Test Results on Visual Aids

Figure 24 shows the results in the usage of visual aids in order to see if they had understood how to perform a T.V show through investigation and dialogue. Therefore, there were 10 students (84% of the participants) who did an excellent job using the materials provided and assigned to each group. Then, there was 1 student (8% out of the population) who did a very good job as his use of visuals was not the best. Then, there was another student (8% out of the participants) who did a good job because not enough information was developed with the materials. Finally, all the participants completed the task by using the materials available.

4.1.3.7 Post-test: Timing in Oral Performance

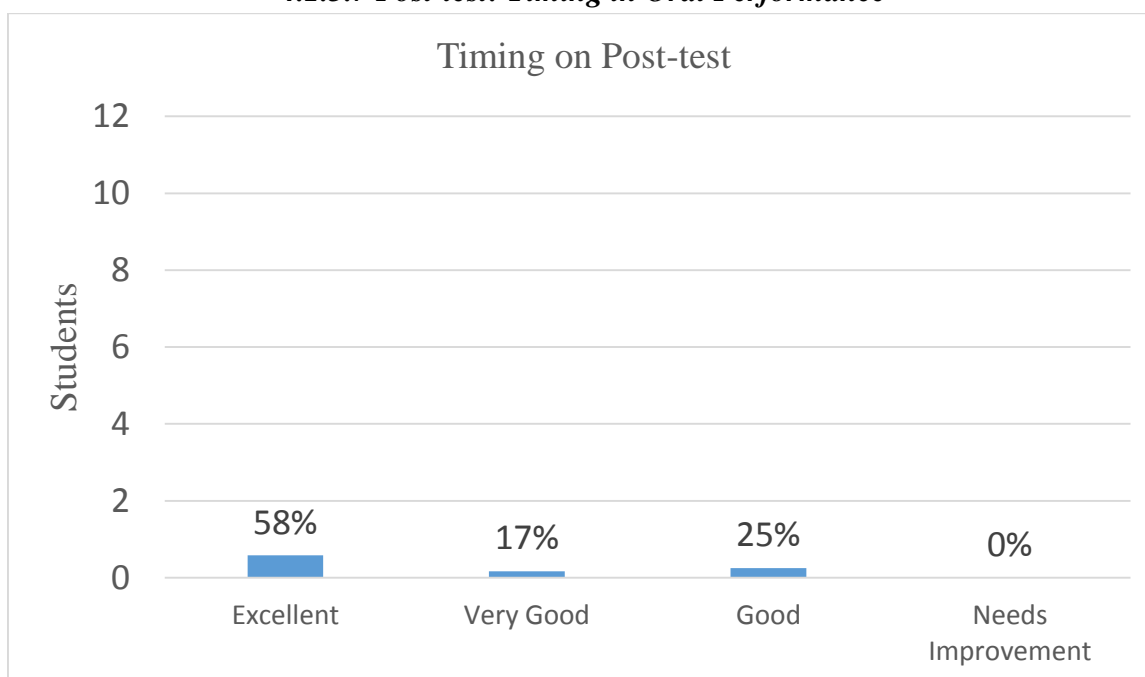


Figure 25 Post-Test Results on Timing

Figure 25 shows the final results from the post-test regarding timing in order to check if students met the requirements on how much time they had to perform the assignment. Seven students (58% out of the population) did an excellent job in timing themselves because they spoke from 5 to 10 minutes as required. Two students (17% out of the participants) did a very good job with time but did less than 5 minutes. Besides, there were 3 students (25% of the students) who tried, but as they said no more than 2 sentences, they did not last more than 3 minutes. And finally, none of the students needed improvement as they all delivered the task.

Comparative Graph: Final Improvement Results

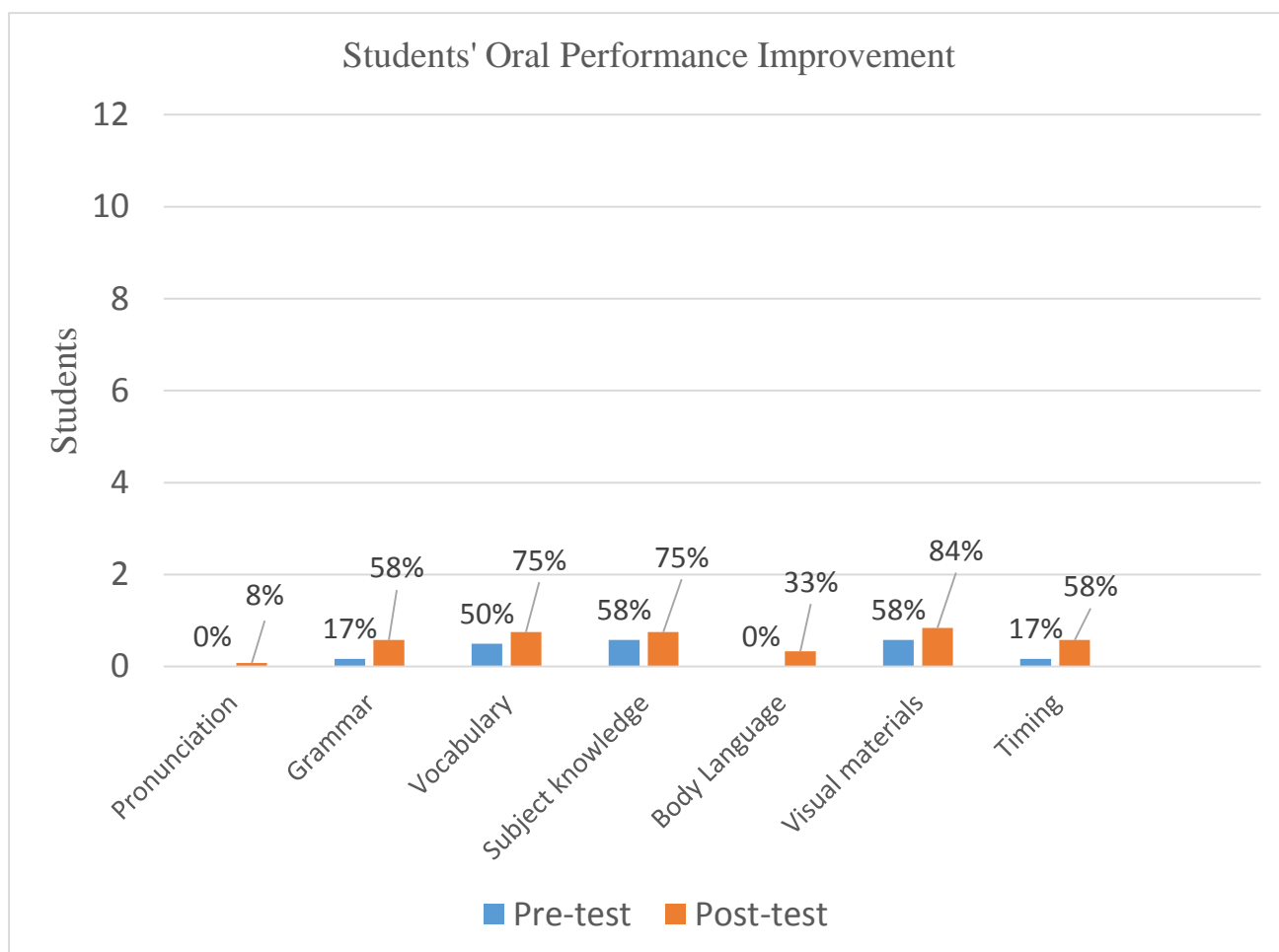


Figure 26 Excellence Comparison Results

To sum up, the speaking tasks developed with the students as the graphic showed on the final results where a comparison is made between the final results from the pre-test with the post-test' results. Students were given strategies for them to practice at home such as speaking in front of a mirror and listening to music in English to discuss a little before starting the lessons; and besides, the students had to watch movies in the target language

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

using subtitles. However, not all of them followed that advice or did the assignments, but the ones who did improved and learned a lot.

On the other hand, concerning grammar, vocabulary, and knowledge, there were very good results from the beginning as the participants had access to dictionaries and the Internet. Additionally, participants learned vocabulary through images and mimics made by the instructor. Concerning the material provided to students, they had a positive attitude and willingness to help the instructor to participate and expand their knowledge. On the other hand, in regards to body language, they did improve because they built confidence and gave support to one another, especially when one of them was nervous.

However, the tasks worked on some students, feedback provided individually, and some recommendations given to each student, improved their speaking skills and oral performance. In addition, their motivation was boosted with the strategies that were put into practice.

In this chapter, the final and comparative results have been provided to better understand the improvement that the students had while performing what was assigned to start practicing and assess their oral performance. Besides, the observation and analysis made to the background of the students to check their performance at the beginning helped out in order to look for strategies that better work for them. As shown, not all of the participants achieved the goal, but at least they improved their oral performance when delivering a task though some mistakes are still being made, but it is a process to stimulate.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to provide final statements on the investigation and how the application of the instruments helped the investigator to get the expected results when assessing oral performance with 11th graders from Los Pinos Night High School Open Education Project. Besides, these conclusions will show further information related to the specific objectives stated at the beginning of the investigation to confirm whether they were reached or not; and the furthermore, the researched question will be answered by stating how oral tasks were used to assess oral performance.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 To design communicative tasks to assess eleventh graders' oral performance using the Communicative Approach

The first specific objective stated at the beginning of the research was to design speaking tasks to have the students practice the speaking skill by using correct structures and work on accuracy and pronunciation for fluency improvement. In order to apply the tasks properly, observations were made for the teacher-researcher to check how much the students know about the target language, their reaction towards the learning process, interests on learning, and the interaction with the teacher. Therefore, with the information on the students' general behavior, the teacher-researcher had an idea on how to start developing the adequate tasks for the participants.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

As a result, as soon as the researcher paid attention to all of the important aspects found in the observations, the pre-test instrument was developed; its main purpose was to evaluate students' oral performance at the beginning of the application of the instruments. Consequently, based on the results gotten on their oral performance evaluated through rubrics, the researcher could create further instruments that help on students needs.

The pre-test consisted of 2 written parts and a speech section: The first written part had some informative questions about a recent place visited, and the second part was about writing a short story about their vacation using a specific touristic place and family members provided by the investigator. For the speech, they had to guide themselves with the short story that they had just written.

The pre-test allowed the teacher-researcher to assess the students' oral performance before applying the tasks. This way, the researcher could identify major oral problems that the students struggled with the most. Besides, applying informative questions about students' own experiences helped them to provide accurate information about what they did in the past, which made it easier.

Then, as the investigator had an idea of what the tasks would be, based on the results from the pre-test and the institution's program, the first speaking tasks were created as practice for the students, where the topic of illnesses was used. Therefore, for the speaking task, the students had to give a speech about an illness impersonating a famous person. The rest of the students had to investigate about the definition, cause, symptoms, and treatment of the illness being discussed. Besides, there was a reading comprehension section with some questions for the students to answer written and orally.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

For the speech, there was also a rubric in which additional criteria was taken into consideration to help the students to improve other aspects such as body language and self-correction. This first task helped the students to lose their fears and feel more confident because each of them had to develop it in front of their classmates; besides, students had to gather the corresponding information to complete the task.

On the other hand, there was a second speaking task where Phillips 66 was applied and the difficulty of the task increased because with this instrument the students did not have the opportunity to write a prepared idea with grammar structures to perform it later. This task was about reading an article about “Illnesses Caused by Stress,” and the students only had to pay attention to what was being said by the instructor. Then, the researcher requested the students to provide an opinion about what they listened to, so they should speak for at least one minute, and they could speak for longer than that once all of them had participated.

For Phillips 66, there was also a rubric to evaluate students’ progress from the first pre-test up to the second speaking task. This task works when assessing oral performance because, instead of working on the speaking skill only, students really need to listen to what is being said to share their opinions and complete the task. Besides, when opinions are given, students can provide information about their own experiences with the topic related. This way, having completed the second task and provided students with feedback, they were ready for the last instrument, which was a post-test.

Finally, the post-test was designed to evaluate the final progress that students achieved throughout the application of the instruments. This last instrument was a test in groups of three students for which they performed a T.V show about a president’s life. For this post-test, students had the opportunity to investigate, write the dialogue, and they had 15

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

minutes to practice it before performing it. The investigator expected better results with the students' performance as this was the last instrument that was going to be applied.

This post-test application was created in order to check previous criteria and review the students' performance. There are some outstanding benefits, such as being able to compare the initial and final results, but the most important one is that students get prepared before the speaking part throughout practice and written dialogue. Besides, the conversation among three people facing real life situations help the participants to feel comfortable and to have fun while practicing.

These instruments were created using the communicative approach because those included grammar, reading (when investigating), vocabulary for the correct word choice in context, besides listening and speaking that go together. Therefore, the students could apply those four skills and work on their pronunciation to improve their fluency. Besides, with the rubrics that were created to check students' performance, the researcher could provide individual feedback and strategies, such as practicing in front of their relatives or the mirror, listening to music in English, writing sentences about what they have done during the day and performing them; that way they could practice and improve by themselves as well.

To conclude, in order to create the appropriate speaking tasks to assess oral performance, the teacher-researcher had to make observations about their behavior, expectations, and knowledge about the language. Then, the investigator created a pre-test to get the most common mistakes and problems students have when speaking in the target language. Finally, based on all the information collected, the researcher will be able to design the corresponding tasks for assessing oral performance.

5.2.2 To apply communicative tasks to assess eleventh graders' oral performance using the Communicative Approach

As a strategy for the students to feel less nervous during the pre-test, before applying the instruments, the investigator had a round table with the students for them to provide personal information such as name, age, hobbies, work, and family. At the beginning, they were scared to speak, and none of them wanted to start, but one by one they eventually did.

Next, the corresponding tasks were applied to assess students' oral performance. When all the tasks were applied, the comparison was made between the speech delivery and Phillips 66 regarding oral performance. It was found that, after giving the strategies and practicing in advance, there was an improvement on students' oral performance.

To illustrate this, it was noticed that, after applying the pre-test, the speech results on pronunciation (fluency, accuracy, and volume) show that 75% of the students met the expectations, but none of the students could exceed the expectations. However, looking into the results for the second task, students got better results. For example, 25% of the students exceeded the expectations.

Regarding grammar (coherence of structures), the students' knowledge has been accurate from the beginning. Therefore, upon applying the first task, the students achieved more than expected in written and spoken output because they exceeded the expectations by 58%, and another 42% met the expectations due to few mistakes, but generally they did a great job. On the other hand, this aspect was not improved as expected on the second task because only 50% of the population exceeded the expectations, meaning that this aspect decreased by 8% compared to the first task. The researcher noticed that if students do not

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

have time to prepare a written part first, they will struggle in the oral part as happened in the second task.

Then regarding vocabulary, 83% of the population did a great job exceeding the expectations. However, as in grammar, the percentage of the population who had done a great job in the first task decreased. For example, 50% of the students exceeded the expectations, a 33% decrease compared to the application of the first task. Besides, in regards to self-correction, in the first speaking task, only 17% exceeded the expectations, but in the second one 50% of them exceeded the expectations. These speaking tasks helped the students to improve their oral performance to an extent.

These speaking tasks used the topics specified in the program that teachers should follow, but the investigator applied those with real life situations; this way, the students can gather further information through research and apply said information by impersonating famous people. As a result, when a student performs a speaking task with relevant information, his or her classmates listen and try to interpret what they have heard. The instructor does not have to explain or provide related vocabulary as they can use dictionaries and get new words through research. On the other hand, the application was excellent as all the students participated, felt more confident, had fun working in groups, and further helped each other.

5.2.3 To evaluate the results in eleventh graders' oral performance after the implementation of the communicative tasks

After the tasks were applied, and a comparison made with the pre-test and the post-test, it can be said that only 8% of the students achieved good pronunciation when delivering an oral task, whereas the others did a very good job but with some errors found. Then,

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

regarding grammar, vocabulary, visuals, knowledge, and timing, they did an excellent job. However, body-language-wise they are still having issues with eye contact and feeling confident speaking in front of others.

For example, at the beginning, none of the students achieved excellent pronunciation, but in the post-test, one student did. Then, in the pre-test, almost all the other 11 students made more than 10 errors, which means that they really needed assistance with it. But in the post test, the number of students that needed assistance decreased to 0%, and 67% did a very good job which means that no more than 3-5 errors were made. This means that they did not do it perfectly but did exceed the expectations.

Regarding grammar, in the pre-test most of them did a very good job as they just had to improve some structures and context, but in the post-test, they improved even better as 58% of the population did an excellent job on grammar when performing the task. Besides, regarding vocabulary usage, 50% of them did an excellent job, and the other 50% did a very good job meaning few mistakes were made. On the other hand, in the post-test, 75% of them did an excellent job (25% increase from pre-test), and only a 25% made a few mistakes.

Then, regarding subject knowledge (that is, understanding and using the information appropriately for the tasks), students did excellently from the beginning as 58% of the population got 4 points in this category, whereas 33% got 3 points, meaning that they did a very good job. Then in the post- test, 75% of the students got 4 points meaning an excellent job. Overall, it appears that they understood better the information that they had read and were able to use it properly.

On the other hand, regarding body language criteria in the pre-test, most students needed improvement when they gave the speech because 58% of the population did not

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

appear confident or make eye contact. However, with the application of other tasks and feedback, the improvement in this area was noticed in the post-test as 33% of the population did an excellent job and another 42% a very good job in body language, achieving a good posture and looking confident.

In regards to visual aids, already in the pre-test they had done a good job with 58% of the population showing great results, but in the post-test, 84% of the population did excellent, a significant increase in this area. Finally, on timing, 58% of the students needed improvement based on the pre-test, and in the post-test the same percentage was achieved, so it means that they did not improve on this area, but a good job was done.

In conclusion, it can be said that the application of the speaking tasks using the communicative approach helped the students to deliver a speech. However, they still need assistance with pronunciation and body language as those areas were the ones with the lowest results; but in general terms, students significantly improved their oral performance after having applied the research instruments.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

As stated at the beginning of this report, the main objective of this investigation was to assess students' oral performance through speaking tasks to help them give a speech related to real-life situations as proposed by the communicative approach. The applied tasks had different criteria for the students' evaluation progress such as pronunciation, sentence structure, word choice, usage of visual aids, understanding of the material, body language, and timing.

To assess students' oral performance by applying speaking tasks using communicative language teaching strategies, the researcher created those tasks and, before applying them,

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

put into practice some speaking strategies to help the students understand and perform in the target language.

The first strategy that the investigator applied was to speak to the students in the target language and make some movements about personal information for the students to understand what was being said. Then, the researcher asked the students to provide their personal information giving information about themselves such as name, age, and hobbies.

In addition, as CLT states, those tasks were applied with the students in a way that they had time to prepare a written part, such as dialogues, stories, brainstorming, and ideas for them to know what exactly to say. Besides, the investigator had time to check their written grammar and vocabulary in order to provide them with feedback before presenting.

Furthermore, the researcher also modeled the pronunciation of some of the words for the students. After all this preparation for the tasks, students were able to perform conversations about their own experiences, speeches impersonating a famous person, T.V shows, and interviews, each of which had a specific rubric to assess them.

Furthermore, the investigator provided individual feedback to the students after every task. On the other hand, strategies were given to the students to improve their pronunciation, such as repetition of recorded audios (What audios exactly?). Besides, sometimes the students requested the investigator to record her voice pronouncing what they had performed for their own practice at home. This practice had a positive impact on the students' oral performance as noticed during the tasks.

5.4 Recommendations

Having completed this research project, here are some recommendations for future teacher-researchers with similar projects in mind. First, there should be previous exercises

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

done with the students to work on their pronunciation. For instance, the researcher can give the students a piece of paper with words with similar vowel sounds and let them read those words and then the investigator can verify the sounds that students struggle with the most, and incorporate more practice on them as was done in the current investigation.

Then, future investigators should provide students with listening and speaking practice for them to work on fluency and improve their oral performance. Besides, it is recommended to apply more speaking tasks (at least 2 more before the post-test) in order to have students practice more and get better results in the post-test. On the other hand, it is important to allocate some 10 minutes during the class for the students to speak for the investigator to monitor their performance and the students to do a better job in the tasks.

For future recommendations related to other skills such as in grammar, it is advisable to have these kind of tasks in grammar and other skills because the communicative language approach uses the four skills in language acquisition. Therefore, speaking tasks can be applied to evaluate or assess sentence structures and coherence.

To conclude this chapter, for future research projects in which the communicative approach will be used to assess students' oral performance, it is important to provide feedback to each student and also build motivation in the population to work with. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, students enjoyed the tasks, and it was noticed that the strategies practiced in the classroom, helped on the students' improvement. Besides, more tasks would have been applied, but the time did not allow the investigator to consider doing a third task.

Appendixes



Pre-test Application

Los Pinos School	Percentage: 25%
English Department	Percentage obtained: _____
I test II quarter 2017	Points obtained: _____
Total points: 46 points	Final Grade: _____
Level: 11 th Grade	
Teacher: Karol Jarquín	
Student's name: _____	

General objective: Students will answer some questions and create a vacation short story to perform tasks assigned orally. 8 pts

I Part: Answer the following questions.

1. Mention a place recently visited. (1 pts)
2. When did you visit it? (1 pts)
3. Was that vacation made with your family or friends? (1 pts)
4. Did you enjoy it? Explain (5 pts)

II Part: Write a vacation short story on your notebook by using the tourism and family members' flashcards provided by the teacher. 10 pts

III Part: Tell your classmates about your recent vacation and perform the story you have created with the flashcards given. 28 pts

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Student: _____ Points obtained: _____ / 28 Percentage: _____ / 15%

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Very Good (3)	Good (2)	Needs Improvement (1)	Score
Pronunciation	Correct performance and no mistakes made.	There are minor mistakes in pronunciation.	There are several mistakes, but acceptable.	Student makes a lot of mistakes.	
Grammar	Student applies correct grammar structures and word choice.	Student uses grammar structures and word choice, but with few errors.	Student uses grammar structures and word choice, but with several errors.	Student makes inappropriate usage of grammar structures and word choice.	
Vocabulary	Students uses appropriate word in context.	Students uses appropriate word in context, but confusion with few words	Students has many errors with the word choice and meaning.	Students uses inappropriate word in context.	
Subject knowledge	Student shows understanding of the topic.	Student shows understanding but misconceptions are presented.	Student struggle with understanding and knowledge.	Student does not follow instructions and could not perform the task.	
Body language	Student shows confident, comfortable. Correct postures, and eye contact.	Student shows consistent postures and eye contact. Few times looks nervous.	Student shows minimal eye contact, low postures and a little confident.	Student shows no minimal eye contact, incorrect postures and no confidence	
Use of visual materials	Student makes correct usage of visual materials.	Clear content, but does not use it properly.	Inappropriate usage of visual materials.	No usage of visual materials for guideline.	
Timing	Student uses time appropriately (5-7 minutes).	Oral pre-test took less than 5 minutes.	Oral pre-test took less than 3 minutes.	Student shows no preparation at all.	

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Speech Delivery: Illnesses and Famous people

Toni Braxton
//Lupus

Michael J. Fox //
Pakinson disease

Halle Berry //
Diabetes type 1

Kristen Chenoweth
// Asthma

Bret Michaels
//Heart disease

Rita Wilson //
Breast cancer

Tom Hiddleston //
Diarrhea

Vin Diesel //
Terrible Flu

Paul Walker //
Cough and sore
throat

Scarlet Johanson //
overdose on drugs

Chris Hemsworth //
mumps

Robert Downey //
tuberculosis

Christina Aguilera //
measles

Chayanne //
Chicken pox

Ricky Martin //
Depression

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Rubric for Speech Delivery

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (3)	Meets Expectations (2)	Does not Meet Expectations (1)	Score
Pronunciation	Accuracy and fluency is better than expected with no pronunciation mistakes.	Accuracy and fluency is appropriate for the level with acceptable errors.	Accuracy and fluency is not acceptable for the level reached. Many mistakes made per sentence.	
Grammar	Grammar structures are excellent and no mistakes made.	Grammar structures are good and few mistakes made.	Grammar structures are incorrect. Student mixes verb tenses and avoids subject in the sentences.	
Vocabulary	Appropriate usage of words, excellent word choice for context.	Good usage of words, but some mistakes on word choice for context.	Inappropriate usage of words, many mistakes on word choice for context.	
Self-correction	Every opportunity corrects mistakes noticed.	Sometimes makes self-correction, but not all the time it is needed.	No self-correction at all, which makes the message unclear.	
Accurate Information	Investigation is noticed through the delivery of the speech.	Investigation is noticed through the delivery of the speech, but some information was not accurate.	Investigation is not really noticed through the delivery of the speech.	
Body Language	Student shows confident, comfortable. Correct postures, and eye contact.	Student shows consistent postures and eye contact. Few times looks nervous.	Student shows minimal eye contact, low postures and a little confident.	

Phillips 66: Illnesses caused by Stress

There are many kinds of illnesses caused by stress involving both the body and the mind.

1. Insomnia

Stress keeps people awake at night due to worry, anxiety, or uncertainty about the future. Some people worry about their jobs, while others are concerned over family issues or health problems. Many things in life can be stressful and stress, if left unmanaged, can interrupt or delay sleep.

To combat sleeplessness caused by stress, try drinking a glass of milk before bedtime, avoid caffeine, do not exercise at least four hours before going to bed and keep your bedroom cool, dimly lit and comfortable.

Do not think about stress-related problems when you get ready for bed. Instead, fill your mind with peaceful or happy thoughts to prepare for a good night's rest.

Keep the television in the family room, since many violent or dramatic programs can increase stress.

2. Eating disorders

Thousands of people react to stress by feeding an eating pattern that typically reaches for sweets or carbohydrate-laden foods for a quick sugar rush. While your blood sugar may skyrocket briefly, it is sure to plummet afterward, often leaving you feeling worse than before.

If you must nibble when stress has you in its clasp, stick to crisp veggies or light butter popcorn. Fiber will make you feel full and keep you healthy, too. Don't let stress drive you to the cookie jar or candy counter. Eat a balanced diet to calm your nerves and stay on top of stressful situations.

3. Depression

Unresolved stress can make a person feel angry or hopeless, both of which can lead to depression. If you feel chronically sad, have trouble thinking clearly, feel alone or unloved, struggle with guilt or shame, chances are you are battling a serious case of depression related to stress. Illnesses caused by stress may appear unrelated, but when doctors, counselors, or the patients themselves take a closer look, often there is a cause-and-effect relationship between stress and conditions like depression. A doctor should be able to diagnose the source of the stress-related depression and prescribe appropriate treatment.

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Rubric for Phillips 66

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (3)	Meets Expectations (2)	Does not Meet Expectations (1)	Score
Pronunciation	Accuracy and fluency is better than expected with no pronunciation mistakes.	Accuracy and fluency is appropriate for the level with acceptable errors.	Accuracy and fluency is not acceptable for the level reached. Many mistakes made per sentence.	
Grammar	Grammar structures are excellent and no mistakes made.	Grammar structures are good and few mistakes made.	Grammar structures are incorrect. Student mixes verb tenses and avoids subject in the sentences.	
Vocabulary	Appropriate usage of words, excellent word choice for context.	Good usage of words, but some mistakes on word choice for context.	Inappropriate usage of words, many mistakes on word choice for context.	
Self-correction	Every opportunity corrects mistakes noticed.	Sometimes makes self-correction, but not all the time it is needed.	No self-correction at all, which makes the message unclear.	
Timing	Accurate usage of time per opinion (1 minute)	More or less than 1 minute giving opinion	Opinion was not provided at all	

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

**Post-test Application**

Los Pinos School

Percentage: 15%

English Department

Percentage obtained: _____

I test II quarter 2017

Points obtained: _____

Total points: 30 points

Final Grade: _____

Level: 11th Grade

Teacher: Karol Jarquín

Student's name: _____

General objective: To evaluate students' progress on oral performance by performing a T.V show.

I Part: Make groups of three people. Then, investigate about a politician given by the teacher and prepare a T.V Show by making a dialogue. 15 pts

➤ Roles:

- Student A: Politician
- Student B: Politician's wife or husband
- Student C: Interviewer

Note: You can use cellphones to investigate about the politician given and you can also use customs provided by the instructor.

II Part: Perform your dialogue from the investigation made, be as creative as possible. 15 pts

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

Student: _____ Points obtained: _____ / 30 Percentage: _____ / 15%

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Very Good (3)	Good (2)	Needs Improvement (1)	Score
Pronunciation	Correct performance and no mistakes made.	There are minor mistakes in pronunciation.	There are several mistakes, but acceptable.	Student makes a lot of mistakes.	
Grammar	Student applies correct grammar structures and word choice.	Student uses grammar structures and word choice, but with few errors.	Student uses grammar structures and word choice, but with several errors.	Student makes inappropriate usage of grammar structures and word choice.	
Vocabulary	Students uses appropriate word in context.	Students uses appropriate word in context, but confusion with few words	Students has many errors with the word choice and meaning.	Students uses inappropriate word in context.	
Subject knowledge	Student shows understanding of the topic.	Student shows understanding but misconceptions are presented.	Student struggle with understanding and knowledge.	Student does not follow instructions and could not perform the task.	
Body language	Student shows confident, comfortable. Correct postures, and eye contact.	Student shows consistent postures and eye contact. Few times looks nervous.	Student shows minimal eye contact, low postures and a little confident.	Student shows no minimal eye contact, incorrect postures and no confidence	
Use of visual materials	Student makes correct usage of visual materials.	Clear content, but does not use it properly.	Inappropriate usage of visual materials.	No usage of visual materials for guideline.	
Timing	Student uses time appropriately (5-10 minutes).	Oral pre-test took less than 5 minutes.	Oral pre-test took less than 3 minutes.	Student shows no preparation at all.	

Assessing Oral performance vs Speaking

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