UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

"WHICH STUDENTS CAN REACH HIGHER PROFICIENCY IN SPEAKING AND READING, THOSE TAKING CLASSES WITH A BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH VERSUS THOSE TAKING CLASSES WITH A FACE-TO-FACE APPROACH IN ADVANCED INTENSIVE ENGLISH I AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING THE YEAR 2014".

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INTRODUCTION

The University of El Salvador is now implementing blended courses in some of its departments as a new tool in the teaching learning process. Blended classes are not mandatory for teachers, it depends on professors' teaching style. So there we have both, blended and face-to-face courses.

Most of the professors which are implementing blended classes at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador are teaching three hours in the classroom and one hour is being taught out of the classroom; this is how students have to sign up at a virtual platform, review, analyze and work on their homework assignments during the day, as long as they complete the required tasks by a given due date.

We propose to carry on a research as **a comparative study of English speaking and reading proficiency of students taking classes with a blended learning approach versus students taking classes with a face-to-face approach in Intensive Advanced English I at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014.** In order to find out the results of knowledge acquired by students in both groups, as well as their development of several sub-skills; we are going to take a sample of two whole groups and test them at the end of the course using a reading exam and an oral interview, then we will analyze and compare the results. This report includes an extensive qualitative analysis for the speaking and reading results, as well as quantitative analysis to support major findings. Every hypothesis is clearly presented so as to facilitate the comparison between the two groups. At the end, we will be able to draw out important conclusions.

ABSTRACT

Although many case studies and guidelines may have been published about blended learning, in our global world, there may be limited number of studies that compare blended learning approach with face-to-face learning approach carried out at the campus of the University of El Salvador, in the Foreign Language Department.

Nowadays, overpopulation is an issue that the Campus faces every year; this research will support data that can be used for future courses, enhancing the use of media resources, schedules, and getting a more efficient distribution of the courses. This research might be taken as a reference source for investment at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

This research is very significant as it will help to improve not only the Intensive Advanced English I courses, but also, its findings could be applied to other courses where a blended approach is applied. We aim to test whether or not the reading and speaking skills studied in the Intensive English Advance I courses are put into practice.

In addition, results on this research can lead to an improvement of methodologies, not only in blended courses, but also in traditional courses. As this kind of researches are very extensive, it is limited to the study and comparison of reading and speaking abilities. Findings on this report can be used as grounded theory for further research. Important conclusions and recommendations could be applied within different schools at the University.

Finally, we expect this research to contribute to a higher development of education in our campus.

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CHAPTER I

1.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1   HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK

Blended learning has become an important innovation around the world, as it offers so many advantages to students; for instance, learners are more engaged using a variety of content types, taking into account that students have different learning styles and through a blended learning class teachers are able to fulfill most of students 'needs; besides that, teachers can assess learners trends and act accordingly, feedback can be improved, it can lead to a practical learning , and most likely, blended learning allows flexible schedule availability to students.

Blended learning has been in use since 1990's with the advent of the internet and the World Wide Web. From 2006 to the present, blended learning has been understood as a combination of face-to-face and technology-mediated instructional forms and practices.

The University of El Salvador is now implementing blended classes in some of its departments as a new tool in the teaching learning process. Blended classes are not mandatory for teachers; it depends on professors' teaching style. So there are both, blended and face-to-face classes.

Most of the professors which are implementing blended classes at the foreign language department, are teaching three hours in the classroom and one hour out of the classroom, in which students have to sign up at the virtual platform, review and work on their homework assignments during the day, as long as they complete the required tasks by a given due date.

1.2   DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Blended learning is not well-known at the language Department, and only few professors are taking advantage of such important approach. Little or none information is yet known

on how effective this methodology can be on the learning of Intensive Advanced English I.

Blended learning is not applied as much as a face-to-face learning approach is at the Foreign Language Department. This led a research to find out and compare the results of both types of learning in the same course, focusing specially on the development of reading and speaking proficiencies. This research aims to find out whether a blended learning could impact in the learning and development of those skills.

1.3   OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To determine the elements in a blended and a face-to-face approach that influence to a higher performance in speaking and reading on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.

1.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1.3.2.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1

To find out which group of students reaches a higher speaking proficiency, those from a blended learning course or those from the traditional face-to face learning approach.

1.3.2.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2

To find out which group of students reaches a higher reading proficiency, those from a blended learning course or those from the traditional face-to-face learning approach.

1.3.2.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3

To identify how schedules influence speaking proficiency.

1.3.2.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4

To identify how schedules influence reading proficiency.

1.3.2.5 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 5

To establish whether or not gender can impact reading capabilities on students taking Intensive Advanced English I, by means of a blended and a face-to-face course.

1.3.2.6 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6

To establish whether or not gender can impact speaking capabilities on students taking Intensive Advanced English I, by means of a blended and a face-to-face course.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

"Which students can reach higher proficiency in speaking and reading, those taking classes with a blended learning approach vs. those taking classes with a face-to-face approach in Advanced Intensive English I at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014".

1.5 JUSTIFICATION

Although many case studies and guidelines may have been published about blended learning, in our teaching environment, there may be limited number of studies that compare an informal blended learning approach vs. a face-to face learning approach carried out at the campus of the University of El Salvador, in the Foreign Language Department.

Nowadays, overpopulation is an issue that the Campus faces every year; this research will support data that can be used for future studies, enhancing the use of media resources, schedules, and getting a more efficient distribution of the courses. This research might be taken as a source for investment at the Foreign Language Department. As many students who work and study at the same time, blended learning is providing them an opportunity to accommodate their schedules at their most convenient place and times.

The Intensive Advanced English I course is considered one of the most essentials for the development of a good English proficiency. Most of the reading and speaking skills are developed and trained there. We aim to test whether or not the reading and speaking skills studied in the Intensive English Advance I courses are developed and put into

practice by two groups of students: a group which learns only by means of a face-to-face approach vs. a group which learns the same course through an informal blended learning approach. Our research will contribute with future development on academic preparation for students.

Besides that, this research will spot the impact of applying blended courses in comparison to a traditional face-to-face methodology at the Foreign Language Department at UES. This will lead our research to highlight the areas of opportunities that can be considered for priority. Data collected during this research will contribute to future academic investment.

The purpose of this research is very significant as it will help to improve not only the Intensive Advanced English courses, but also, major findings could be applied to other courses where a blended approach can be implemented. It will contribute to the implementation of future blended courses at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

1.6. DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

In order to develop this study with students coursing the Intensive Advanced English I carried out during the term II-2014 in the Foreign Languages Department, Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching at the University of El Salvador. Due to the complexity of the English learning skills, this research was limited to focus in two main skills: speaking and reading. The instruments of data collection were done through to a reading exam and interviews to the students In order to obtain data from two groups of the Intensive Advanced English I, a group following a blended approach (group 04), and a group following the traditional face-to-face approach (group 03).

After collecting the data, it was proceeded to the analysis of these instruments in a quantitative and qualitative way, and the results were reflected in a statistical analysis in order to find out which students can reach a higher proficiency in speaking and reading, those taking classes with a blended learning approach vs. those taking classes with a face-to-face approach in Advanced Intensive English I at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014.

Group 03
Professor: Miguel Mata
Class: Tuesday through Friday
Schedule: From 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Classroom: IF9

Group 04
Professor: Alex Bruno
Class: Tuesday through Friday
Schedule: From 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Classroom: IF9

1.6.1. TIME AND PLACE

This research had its basis in the Literature Department specifically in the major of Bachelor of Arts in English with emphasis in Teaching at the University of El Salvador during the second semester with students from the Intensive Advanced English I during term II-2014 from June 2014 to December 2014.

1.6.2. POPULATION

The population involved in this study was students from groups 03 and 04 coursing the Intensive Advanced English I, term II-2014. The data was taken by means of a reading exam and interviews to those students.

Group 03 | Group 04

Group 03
Class: Tuesday through Friday
Schedule: From 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Classroom: IF9
Professor: Miguel Mata

Group 04
Class: Tuesday through Friday
Schedule: From 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Classroom: IF9
Professor: Alex Bruno

1.6.3 LIMITATIONS

These are some limitations this research faced:

Advisor for this research was assigned three times with severe delay due to schedule conflict.

Some students refused to take the interview due to time availability.

Some students refused to take the reading exam.

CHAPTER II

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to Nieto Lovo, Senior Director at UES, the university is expecting to launch its virtual modality by 2016. (Joma, 2015).

Lovo expressed that virtual learning is currently limited to those students who pursue the chance to pass the admission test, students who take self-assessment by means of a blended learning.

The faculty of Engineering and Architecture of The University of El Salvador is currently handling the project of the Virtual University. It is yet not officially announced which careers will use this modality. Authorities at UES estimate the Initial investment will be about 32 million dollars in the first five years.

An official virtual learning is currently limited to those students who pursue the chance to pass the admission test, students who take self-assessment by means of a blended learning. According to Lovo, the University of El Salvador has attended approximately 25,000 students through a virtual learning modality.

Oscar Picardo, currently the Research Director at Universidad Francisco Gavidia (UFG), expressed through a local newspaper how the university has launched not only a virtual learning platform, but also migrated its modality into compatibility with mobile devices.

The University of El Salvador is now implementing blended classes in some of its departments as a new tool in the teaching learning process. Blended classes are not mandatory for teachers; it depends on professors' teaching style. So there are both, blended and face-to-face classes.

Most of the professors which are implementing blended classes at the foreign language department, are teaching three hours in the classroom and one hour out of the classroom, in which students have to sign up at the virtual platform, review and work on their homework assignments during the day, as long as they complete the required tasks by a given due date.

As the purpose of this research is to determine if there is a significant difference on student's development on speaking and reading accomplishment through blended learning approach versus face to face approach. To reveal the results it is vital to appreciate all the theory of both fields: blended learning and face to face.

2.1.1 ORIGINS OF BLENDED LEARNING

"Blended learning" appears to have been in use since the popular advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web in the late 1990s. However, like many other Internet buzzwords around this time its precise connotations have changed and subsequently converged and stabilized. From 2006 to the present, blended learning has been understood as a combination of face-to-face and technology-mediated instructional forms and practices.

At the same time, the phrases "face-to-face" and "technological mediation" themselves may generally benefit from further definition and contextualization. As a result, this paper traces out the etymology of the evolving meaning of the term "blended learning," and it also maps out analytically the significance of the opposed terms that have come to be seen as "blended" in it. It offers these etymological and analytical accounts in order to provide clarity on the current meaning of "blended learning."

Part I: History and Etymology

2.1.2 ORIGIN AND DIVERGENCE: 1999-2004

The precise origin of the term "blended learning" is uncertain. However, one of the first occurrences that have been identified is its use in a 1999 news release from EPIC Learning, an Atlanta-based computer skill certification and software training business:

The company currently operates 220 on-line courses, but will begin offering its Internet course were using the company's Blended Learning methodology [sic].

Select courses will continue to offer the traditional course content online, but will also offer live instruction and other collaborative components, all from the student's desktop. (PR Newswire, March 5, 1999, n.p.; emphasis added)

The definition of blended learning implied in this announcement is ambiguous: Does "live instruction" suggest the physical co-presence of instructor and student? Or does it mean that the instructor is online at the same time as the student? Is the student's desktop a literal place, or is it the virtual one simulated on a computer screen?

Questions of these kinds are multiplied when other, relatively early definitions of blended learning are consulted. For the years 2002-2003 in particular, many eclectic definitions of blended learning seem to be available. For example:

Blend-ed learn-ing v. [sic]

- ✓ To combine or mix modes of web-based technology to accomplish an educational goal. (e.g., live virtual classroom, self-paced instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text).
- ✓ To combine various pedagogical approaches to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology. (e.g., constructivism, behaviorism, cognitivism).
- ✓ To combine any form of instructional technology (e.g., videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training.
- ✓ To mix or combine instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect of learning and working.

The point is blended learning means different things to different people. This may appear to be an academic point but in reality these definitions illustrate the untapped potential of blended learning. (Driscoll, 2003, p. 1) Blended learning, in other words, is almost any combination of technologies, pedagogies and even job tasks. It includes some of the oldest mechanical media (e.g., film) and theories of learning (e.g., behaviorism), as well as the newest. It is therefore not surprising that EPIC Learning, having referenced "blended learning methodologies" earlier, they found themselves trying to clarify their own use of the term. In a white paper written specifically for this purpose, another example of a definition is quoted –this time from training sector expert Elliot Masie– which is so broad as to again include nearly all forms of learning and instruction:

What is 'blended learning'? It is the use of two or more distinct methods of training. This may include combinations such as: blending classroom instruction with online instruction, blending online instruction with access to a coach or faculty member, blending simulations with structured courses, blending on-the-job training with brownbag informal sessions, blending managerial coaching with e-learning activities. (From: Clark, 2003 p. 4)

This white paper goes on to define blended learning as a mix appropriate to training and job performance, one which would include performance support technologies, knowledge management and online training technologies.

It is likely that the very breadth and inclusivity of these definitions of blended learning, as Driscoll suggests, initially helped make the term popular as a buzzword. Although these

early definitions provide3 little clarity in including or excluding courses in "blended learning," the way the term is defined or described indicates at least three things about this type of learning:

✓ First, in contradistinction to the Driscoll definition, blended learning is a noun or a noun-phrase (a gerund), not a verb. This underscores that it is not so much about students' activity (as in: "I'm blended learning today"), as it is a method of instruction, of greater concern to instructional and institutional personnel.

✓ Although blended learning can involve a combination of any number of technologies and techniques, most examples include only two, for example: classroom with online, online with coaching, instructional technology with actual job tasks, etc.

✓ Finally, the combination of classroom with online activities or modalities is conspicuous in the two definitions cited above (and in other examples from this time; e.g., Singh & Reed, 2001; Orey, 2003).

2.1.3 CONSOLIDATION AND CLARIFICATION: 2006-2012

The middle of the first decade of the 21st century marks a shift in the use of the term blended learning: The importance of this term in the higher education context (rather than industry and training) became clear, as did a broadly consensual understanding of its meaning. 2006 is the year of the publication of the first Handbook of Blended Learning, (Bonk, Graham, and Cross& Moore), and a year later, the book Blended Learning in Higher Education: Framework, Principles, and Guidelines by Randy Garrison and Norman Vaughan appeared. The first of these books was introduced with a chapter titled "Blended Learning Systems: Definition, Current Trends, and Future Directions," by Charles Graham. This chapter works towards a definition of blended learning that has come to be widely accepted; and it does so by first reviewing the very broad kinds of definitions cited above, and then concluding:

These positions suffer from the problem that they define [blended learning] so broadly that they encompass virtually all learning systems. One would be hard pressed to find

any learning system [or combination of methods] that did not involve multiple instructional methods and multiple delivery media. (Graham, 2006, p. 4) Speaking specifically of blended learning systems (from a systems-theory rather than a technical perspective); Graham then goes on to define such systems as ones "that combine face-to-face instruction with computer mediated instruction" (p.5). He justifies this approach as follows: This working definition … reflects the idea that blended learning is the combination of instruction from two historically separate models of teaching and learning: traditional F2F learning systems and distributed learning systems. It also emphasizes the central role of computer-based technologies in blended learning. (2006, p. 5)   Graham's definition and explanation are particularly helpful in that they reference traditions, practices and norms with which many educators will be long familiar. These are practices and norms of the physical, bricks-and-mortar classroom on the one hand, and of distance delivery.

2.2 DEFINITION OF BLENDED LEARNING

Let's establish the concept of blended learning: "Blended learning" designates the range of possibilities presented by combining Internet and digital media with established classroom forms that require the physical co-presence of teacher and students. (Norm Friesen, 2012) However face to face approach is where the instructor and learners are in the same geographical location at the same time. (From face to face teaching to online teaching: Pedagogical transitions Dr. Petrea Redmond Digital Learning Research Network Faculty of Education University of Southern Queensland)

What is 'blended learning'? It is the use of two or more distinct methods of training. This may include combinations such as: blending classroom instruction with online instruction, blending online instruction with access to a coach or faculty member, blending simulations with structured courses, blending on-the-job training with brownbag informal sessions, blending managerial coaching with e-learning activities. (From: Clark, 2003 p. 4).

In 2011 Insight Institute suggested a preliminary definition of blended learning:

Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path and or pace, and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home. (Staker, 2012).

The first component of the definition—online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace.

Online learning is defined as education where content and instruction are delivered primarily over the Internet. The term online learning is used interchangeably with virtual learning, cyber learning, and e-learning. We included the phrase "with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace" to distinguish blended learning from technology-rich instruction.

The second component of the definition specifies that the learning must be "supervised" and take place "away from home." This is to distinguish it from students learning full-time online at a brick-and-mortar location such as a coffee shop, public library, or home. Someone associated with the brick-and-mortar setting provides the supervision, rather than a parent or other adult who is associated primarily with the student.

Blended Learning is typically defined as a combination of traditional classroom training with some form of virtual learning, such as eLearning modules, webinars, or virtual classroom events.

We can define Blended Learning as a mix of classroom and virtual training events (Rabin, 2014).
According to Rob Rabin, True Blended Learning isn't merely mixing classroom and virtual training events. Instead, it's a combination of formal learning combined with workplace-based or "informal" learning opportunities.

Experts suggest that successful leaders learn within three clusters of experience: challenging assignments (70%), developmental relationships (20%), and coursework and training (10%). Most organizations acknowledge that formal training alone can be limited in impact. Yet they continue to invest most of their training budget in classroom events

and eLearning assets. They struggle with how to systemize and evaluate a learning strategy that also includes workplace experiences and relationships.

Many organizations embrace Blended Learning, which is typically defined as a combination of traditional classroom training with some form of virtual learning, such as eLearning modules, webinars, or virtual classroom events. The amount of classroom-based, instructor-led training in U.S. companies has recently dropped below50%, accompanied by a rise in virtual classroom events and online self-study (O'Leonard, 2013). And it's true that by combining the strengths of the classroom experience with the on-demand features of virtual learning, this form of Blended Learning can enhance workplace-based learning.

However, many of these Blended Learning programs—classroom or virtual—still fall into the 10% "coursework and training" cluster: a sequence of activities designed by a trainer to achieve specific learning objectives. While the on-demand or flexible elements are certainly more convenient to the learner—and often less expensive for the training department—traditional Blended Learning solutions often leave the critical 90% of leadership development experiences untouched.

2.2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF BLENDED LEARNING

The pedagogical rationale behind BLL [blended language learning] is the desire to allow for a higher degree of learner independence in the teaching and learning of second/foreign languages (Stracke 2007b, 1).

There are several characteristics that can be highlighted regarding a blended learning. The most remarkable characteristics on this methodology are listed as follows:

- ✓ It combines or mixes modes of web-based technology (e.g., live virtual classroom, self-paced Instruction, collaborative learning, streaming video, audio, and text) to accomplish an educational goal.
- ✓ It combines various pedagogical approaches (e.g., constructivism, behaviorism, cognitivist) to produce an optimal learning outcome with or without instructional technology.
- ✓ It combines any form of instructional technology (e.g., videotape, CD-ROM, web-based training, film) with face-to-face instructor-led training.
- ✓ It combines instructional technology with actual job tasks in order to create a harmonious effect of learning and working.

The point is blended learning means different things to different people. This may appear to be an academic point but in reality these definitions illustrate the untapped potential of blended learning. (Driscoll, 2003, p. 1)

Blended learning, in other words, is almost any combination of technologies, pedagogies and even job tasks. It includes some of the oldest mechanical media (e.g., film) and theories of learning (e.g. behaviorism), as well as the newest. It is therefore not surprising that EPIC Learning, having referenced "Blended learning methodologies" earlier; they found themselves trying to clarify their own use of the term. In a white paper written specifically for this purpose, another example of a definition is quoted –this time from training sector expert Elliot Masie– which is so broad as to again include nearly all forms of learning and instruction:

What is 'blended learning'? It is the use of two or more distinct methods of training. This may include combinations such as: blending classroom instruction with online instruction, blending online instruction with access to a coach or faculty member, blending simulations with structured courses, blending on-the-job training with brownbag informal sessions, blending managerial coaching with e-learning activities. (From: Clark, 2003 p. 4).

2.2.2 VIRTUAL TOOLS AND CHARACTERISTICS

INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

The teacher plans using the Virginia Standards of Learning, the school's curriculum, effective strategies, resources, and data to meet the needs of all students. (Virginian Teachers, 2012).

What does instructional planning mean?

In general terms, planning means the "act or process of making or carrying out plans." Instructional planning is a process of the teacher using appropriate curricula, instructional strategies, and resources during the planning process to address the diverse needs of students. A teacher's teaching begins before he/she steps into the classroom and starts talking. Prior to each lesson, unit, semester, or school year, while teachers are planning the content of instruction, selecting teaching materials, designing the learning activities and grouping methods, and deciding on the pacing and allocation of instructional time, they are actually determining what learning opportunities their students are going to have. Teachers could use state or district curriculum standards, school district curriculum goals and objectives, and learning outcomes developed by professional organizations to plot the scope and sequence of subject topics.

Teachers also could apply their knowledge of research-based practices to plan what strategies and techniques will be adopted to deliver instruction. Nevertheless, the most informative source for any instructional planning resides in the teachers' classrooms – the students.

What does research say about instructional planning of the teacher?

Planning is preparation for action. To improve practices, one needs to have prior thought and planning, ongoing review, and continuous adjustment as the plan unfolds in practice, and, finally, reflection on what worked, what didn't, and how to improve. Indeed, planning is an essential tool for effective teaching. Teaching is a complex activity that involves careful preparation and planning, both for short-term learning purposes or long-term

learning purposes. Misulis commented "regardless of the teaching model and methods used, effective instruction begins with careful, thorough, and organized planning on the part of the teacher." A solid planning process is integral to a teacher's efforts in identifying appropriate curriculum, instructional strategies, and resources to address the needs of all students. Furthermore, teachers' planning influences the content of instruction, the sequence and cognitive demands of subject topics, learning activities and students' opportunities to learn, and the pacing and allocation of instructional time.

Various research studies have found that effective teachers are more likely to have the following planning behaviors while deciding on subject content:

- Construct a blueprint of how to address the curriculum during the instructional time.
- Collaborate with one or more teachers while planning, rather than plan lessons alone.
- Facilitate planning units in advance to make intra- and interdisciplinary connections.
- Use student assessment data to plan what goals and objectives to address.
- Plan for the context of the lesson to help students relate, organize, and make knowledge become a part of students' long-term memory.
- Sequence material to promote student's cognitive and developmental growth.
- Use knowledge of available resources to determine what resources they need to acquire or develop.

Take into account the abilities of their students and the students' strengths and weaknesses as well as their interest level.

Comparatively, less effective teachers have more difficulty responding to individual student needs in their planning. They tend to develop a one-size fits all approach to planning; whereas, more experienced teachers build in differentiation and contingencies at different points during the lesson. To further assist with meeting individual needs,

effective teachers typically plan a blend of whole-group, small-group, and individualized instruction.

To highlight, a study by Haynie examined the planning practices of ten effective and ten less effective teachers, whose effectiveness was identified by their students' achievement gains. The most effective teachers collaborated with one or more teachers while planning lessons; however, the less effective teachers reported they always planned lessons alone. The most effective teachers also were not restricted by pacing guides, and reached beyond prepared resources to plan their own activities, while the less effective teachers used resources already prepared. The most effective teachers used student assessment data in the planning of instruction. Based on data drawn from frequent assessments, they made data-driven decisions about what goals and objectives to address.

Effective teachers also evaluate the quality of available resources when designing a unit or lesson. They use criteria such as appropriateness for grade level, alignment to national, state, or local standards, accuracy of information contained within the resource, the time allowed for the lesson or unit, and the learning benefits that come from using the resource. Effective teachers maximize the instructional benefits of resources while minimizing time allocated to less relevant or unnecessary material.

Research indicates the following key questions that teachers need to consider for effective instructional planning:

1)   What should be taught?

2)   How should it be taught?

3)   How should instruction and student learning be assessed?

What should be taught? Effective student learning requires a progressive and coherent set of learning objectives. Effective teachers excel in delineating the intended outcomes of each lesson and describing the behaviors or actions that students should be able to perform after participating in the learning activities. In deciding what should be taught, effective teachers often use prescribed textbooks, but they hardly ever follow traditional plans. In fact, they frequently have a blue print in their minds that has been formed and re-formed over time. Perhaps because of their expertise gained over time through a constant process of planning-reflection-refining, effective teachers are likely to rely on written, formalized lessons less than on their well-formed and fluid mental planning model. Expert teachers conceive a lesson along two dimensions simultaneously:

1)   Teacher's own actions, thoughts, and habits; and

2)   Students' thinking and understanding of the content.

Thus, effective teachers not only plan what to teach, but more importantly, they plan for whom they are going to teach. They exert effort to reach beyond their comfort zone of disciplinary thinking and actions to incorporate their students' learning need.

PEDAGOGICAL PLANS

The Pedagogical Plan model has been developed within the ReMATH project and has been then reified in a tool called PPM (Pedagogical Plan Manager).

According to the model, the pedagogical plan artifact seeks to embody a learning design, articulating it in a hierarchical structure that incorporates degrees of abstraction suitable for supporting reflection, communication and reuse.

The model encompasses 'elementary plans' (i.e. single entities or nodes of a hierarchical structure that are not further refined into more elementary plans), and the 'hierarchical organization' of the nodes.

Elementary plans comprise three distinct conceptual areas, with the purpose of fostering reflection on the pedagogical aspects of design.

The first area aims at describing through narratives the educational Target, i.e. what the outcomes of learning should be, who the learners are and in what context learning takes place.

The second area specifies how learning should take place by providing Specifications for the envisioned learning activities. More specifically, this includes description of activities and roles; besides, this area can also accommodate the actual resources and tools (or links to these) to be used by teachers and learners during enactment.

The third area specifies the pedagogical Rationale underpinning the different aspects of a plan (learning outcomes, educational strategies, choice of tool, etc). Specifically, pedagogical rationale includes the author's primary motivations (e.g. tackling a typical learning problem with a new approach), positioning of the plan's key ideas in terms of disciplinary/interdisciplinary concerns, significant innovation that the plan embodies, and, possibly, and the theoretical framework that has informed its design.

The three areas are intended as flexible entities that can in principle assume different weight in each plan, depending on the requirements imposed by different contents and different communities of users. This means that different descriptors and even different description languages (from natural to formalized, from narrative to machine-interpretable) can be adopted.

As already mentioned, a distinctive feature of the model is that pedagogical plans are organized as hierarchies where each node is an elementary plan. This

Choice derives directly from the main aim of the plan model, namely to enhance communication. The upper nodes in the hierarchy typically provide an abstract and summarized description of a plan, which is especially useful for fostering comprehension and communication. On the other hand, the lower levels, especially the leaves, provide more concrete and detailed information and are the actual entities to be enacted. This organization makes provision for a facilitated path of access to the complexities of a plan, where the many details become understandable in the framework of a small number of general ideas. Of course this implies some redundancy and results in extra work for authors because of the need to describe a plan at different levels of abstraction.

All the plans in a hierarchy share the same structure, i.e. they are all composed of the same three areas (Target, Pedagogical Rationale and Specifications) which in turn exhibit the same organization throughout the whole hierarchy.
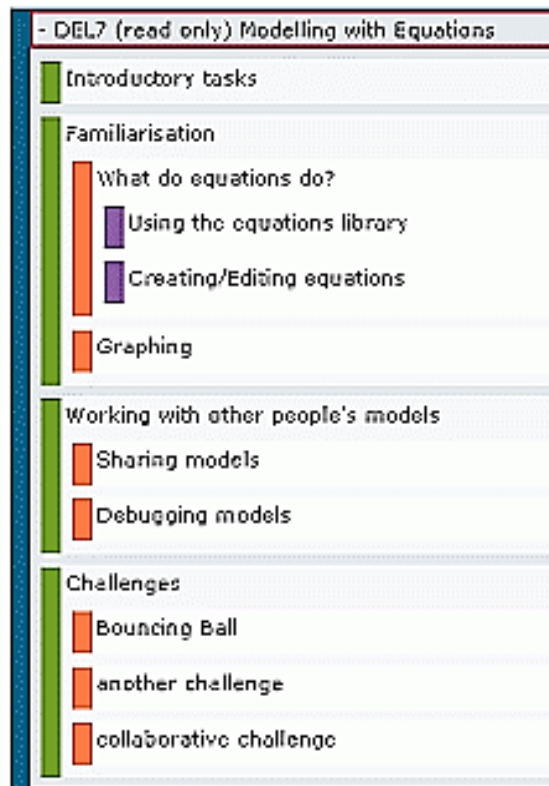
Example of a Pedagogical Plan (developed within ReMATH by IoE London; as this is visualized in the PPM.

MOODLE

Moodle is a learning platform designed to provide educators, administrators and learners with a single robust, secure and integrated system to create personalized learning environments. You can download the software onto your own web server or ask one of our knowledgeable Moodle Partners to assist you.

Moodle is built by the Moodle project which is led and coordinated by Moodle HQ, an Australian company of 30 developers which is financially supported by a network of over 60 Moodle Partner service companies worldwide.

Built for learning globally. Proven and trusted worldwide

Powering tens of thousands of learning environments globally, Moodle is trusted by institutions and organizations large and small, including Shell, London School of Economics, State University of New York, Microsoft and the Open University. Moodle's worldwide numbers of more than 65 million users across both academic and enterprise level usage makes it the world's most widely used learning platform.

✓ Designed to support both teaching and learning
With over 10 years of development guided by social constructionist pedagogy, Moodle delivers a powerful set of learner-centric tools and collaborative learning environments that empower both teaching and learning.

✓ Easy to use
A simple interface, drag-and-drop features, and well-documented resources along with ongoing usability improvements make Moodle easy to learn and use.

✓ Free with no licensing fees
Moodle is provided freely as Open Source software, under the GNU General Public License. Anyone can adapt, extend or modify Moodle for both commercial and non-

commercial projects without any licensing fees and benefit from the cost-efficiencies, flexibility and other advantages of using Moodle.

✓ Always up-to-date

The Moodle project's open-source approach means that Moodle is continually being reviewed and improved on to suit the current and evolving needs of its users.

✓ Moodle in your language

Moodle's multilingual capabilities ensure there are no linguistic limitations to learning online. The Moodle community has begun translating Moodle into more than 120 languages (and counting) so users can easily localize their Moodle site, along with plenty of resources, support and community discussions available in various languages.

✓ All-in-one learning platform

Moodle provides the most flexible tool-set to support both blended learning and 100% online courses. Configure Moodle by enabling or disabling core features, and easily integrate everything needed for a course using its complete range of built-in features, including external collaborative tools such as forums, wikis, chats and blogs.

✓ Highly flexible and fully customizable

Because it is open-source, Moodle can be customized in any way and tailored to individual needs. Its modular set up and interoperable design allows developers to create plug-in and integrate external applications to achieve specific functionalities. Extend what Moodle does by using freely available plug-in and add-ons - the possibilities are endless!

✓ Scalable to any size

From a few students to millions of users, Moodle can be scaled to support the needs of both small classes and large organizations. Because of its flexibility and scalability, Moodle has been adapted for use across education, business, non-profit, government, and community contexts.

✓ Robust, secure and private

Committed to safeguarding data security and user privacy, security controls are constantly being updated and implemented in Moodle development processes and software to protect against unauthorized access, data loss and misuse. Moodle can be easily deployed on a private secure cloud or server for complete control.

✓ Use anytime, anywhere, on any device

Moodle is web-based and so can be accessed from anywhere in the world. With a default mobile-compatible (soon to be responsive) interface and cross-browser compatibility, content on the Moodle platform is easily accessible and consistent across different web browsers and devices.

✓ Extensive resources available

Access extensive Moodle documentation and user forums in multiple languages, free content and courses shared by Moodle users across the world, as well as hundreds of plugging; contributed by a large global community.

✓ Backed by a strong community

The Moodle project is well-supported by an active international community, a team of dedicated full-time developers and a network of certified Moodle Partners. Driven by open collaboration and great community support, the project continues to achieve rapid bug fixes and improvements, with major new releases every six months.
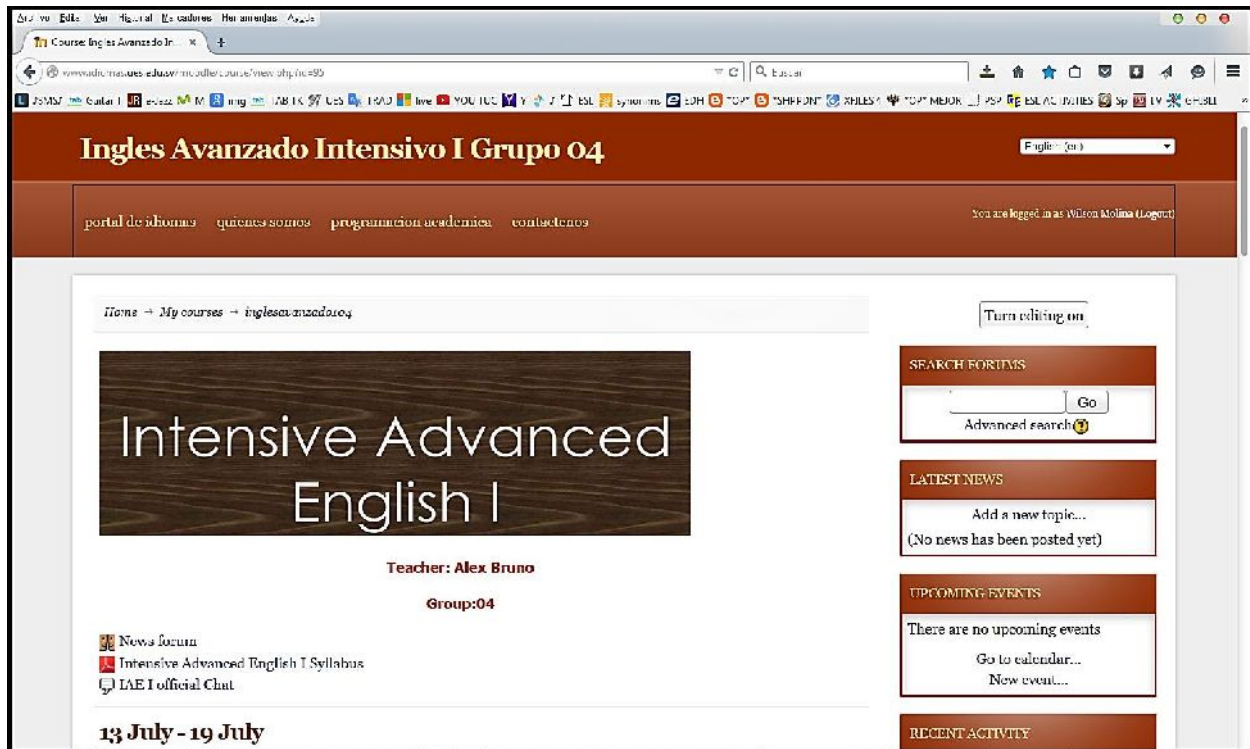
Screenshot taken from the Intensive Advanced English I blended course, semester II, 2015.

SOFTWARE

Sometimes abbreviated as SW and S/W, software is a collection of instructions that enable the user to interact with a computer or have it perform specific tasks for them. Without software, computers would be useless. For example, without your Internet browser software you would be unable to surf the Internet or read this page and without a software operating system the browser would not be able to run on your computer. In the picture are a Microsoft Excel software box and an example of a software program.

How do you get software?

Software can be purchased at a local retail computer store or online, usually in a box that contains all the disks (floppy diskette, CD, DVD, or Blue-ray) required for the program, manuals, warranty, and other necessary documentation.

Software can also be downloaded to a computer over the Internet. Once downloaded, setup files are run to start the installation of the program on your computer.

Free software

In addition to purchasing software, there are also millions of free software programs available that are separated into different categories.

•   Shareware or trial software is software that gives you a few days to try the software before you buy the program. After the trial time expires you'll be asked to enter a code or to register the product before you can continue to use it.

•   Freeware is completely free software that never requires payment, as long as it's not modified.

•   Open source software is like freeware but not only is the program given away, but the source code used to make the program is as well, allowing anyone to modify the program or view how it was created.

How is software created?

A computer programmer or several computer programmers write the instructions using a programming language that tell the software how to work. Once the program has been completed it is compiled into a language that the computer can understand.

•   How do I create my own computer program?

Examples of types of software

Below is a list of the different varieties of software that a computer may have installed with examples. Click the links for additional information.

PODCAST

The word "podcasting" is a portmanteau combining the words "broadcasting" and "iPod." In case you have had your head in the sand recently or don't keep up with popular

technology an iPod is a portable music player produced by Apple Computers. Apple was lucky, smart enough that their brand was wrapped into a term for a new technology much like the Sony Walkman becoming the popular name for a portable radio/cassette player or inline skates being called "rollerblades", which is brand name for a company that produced inline skates. The most popular format of a podcast is MP3.

FAQ

FAQ is an acronym for Frequently Asked Questions. It is also sometimes used as the singular Frequently Asked Question.

 Some have called it Frequently Answered Questions as well. This isn't necessarily correct, but it isn't necessarily wrong either. It effectively has the same meaning.

 A compilation of Frequently Asked Questions (and their answers) is referred to as a FAQ list or FAQ article. Sometimes the term FAQ itself is used to refer to the article - as an example, I refer to this article as a FAQ about FAQs.

The term FAQ has a meaning of its own that could almost qualify it as a word of its own. Sometimes, FAQs are full of answers. Other times they are policy statements for USENET groups, without the Question and Answer format that is popular.

FAQs fall into the realm of articles called "Periodic Postings". In addition to FAQs, other articles or compilations of information are posted and/or archived.

CHAT

Chat refers to the process of communicating, interacting and/or exchanging messages over the Internet. It involves two or more individuals that communicate through a chat-enabled service or software.

Chat is also known as chatting, online chat or Internet chat.

Technopedia explains Chat

Chat may be delivered through text, verbal, audio, visual or audio-visual (A/V) communication via the Internet. If conducted through a desktop, chat requires software that supports Internet Relay Chat (IRC) or an instant messenger application, where a central server manages chat communication between different end user clients.

There are also online chat services that require users to sign up with a valid email address. After signing up, a user may join a group chat room or send a private message to another individual. Online chat services have purpose-built chat interfaces that manage the entire communication processes**.**

2.3 TYPES OF BLENDED LEARNING

Four models of Blended learning

The diagram in **Figure 2** depicts four models of blended learning that categorize the majority of blended-learning programs for the rationale behind.

Figure 2. Blended-learning models
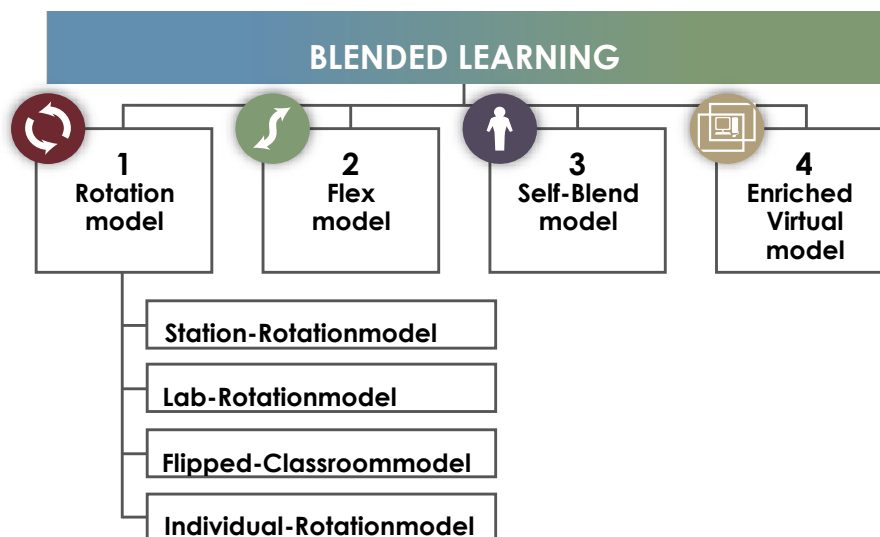
The following are definitions of the models and sub-models from **Figure 2**, as well as an example of each model.

2.3.1 ROTATION MODEL

Is a program in which within a given course or subject, students rotate on a fixed schedule or at the teacher's discretion between learning modalities, at least one of which is online learning. Other modalities might include activities such as small-group or full-class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil-and paper assignments.

2.3.2 STATION ROTATION

A Rotation-model implementation in which within a given course or subject (e.g., math), students rotate on a fixed schedule or at the teacher's discretion among classroom-based learning modalities. The rotation includes at least one station for online learning. Other stations might include activities such as small-group or full-class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil-and-paper assignments. Some implementations involve the entire class alternating among activities together, whereas others divide the class into small group or one-by-one rotations. The Station-Rotation model differs from the Individual-Rotation model because students rotate through all of the stations, not only those on their custom schedules.

Example: The KIPP LA Empower Academy equips each kindergarten classroom with 15 computers. Throughout the day the teacher rotates students among online learning, small-group instruction, and individual assignments. **Figure 3** depict some example.

Figure 3 *Station-Rotation model, KIPP LA Empower Academy*
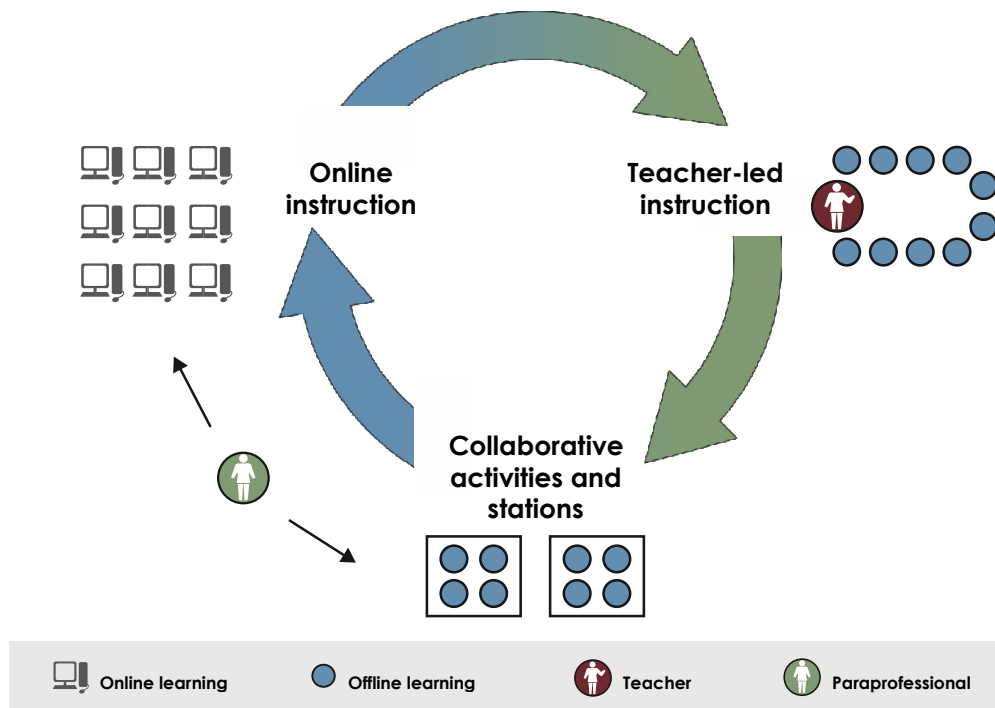
2.3.3 LAB ROTATION

A Rotation-model implementation in which within a given course or subject, students rotate on a fixed schedule or at the teacher's discretion among locations on the brick-and-mortar campus. At least one of these spaces is a learning lab for predominantly online learning, while the additional classroom(s) house other learning modalities. The Lab-Rotation model differs from the Station-Rotation model because students rotate among locations on the campus instead of staying in one classroom for the blended course or subject. **Figure 4** illustrates this rotation.

Figure 4. Lab-Rotation model, Rocket ship Education
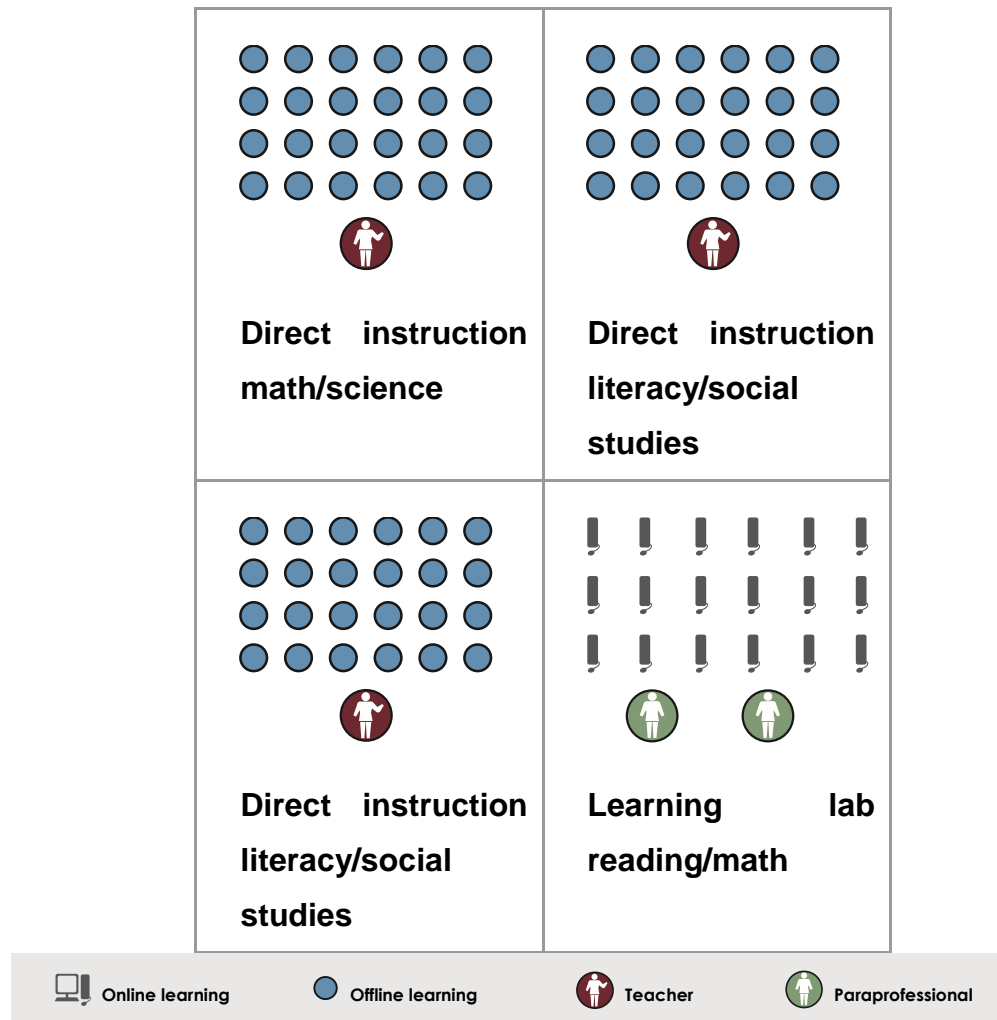
2.3.4 FLIPPED CLASSROOM

A Rotation-model implementation in which within a given course or subject, students rotate on a fixed schedule between face-to-face teacher-guided practice (or projects) on campus during the standard school day and online delivery of content and instruction of the same subject from a remote location (often home) after school. The primary delivery of content and instruction is online, which differentiates a Flipped Classroom from students who are merely doing homework practice online at night. The Flipped-Classroom model accords with the idea that blended learning includes some element of student

control over time, place, path, and/or pace because the model allows students to choose the location where they receive content and instruction online and to control the pace at which they move through the online elements.

Example: At Stillwater Area Public Schools along the St. Croix River in Minnesota, students in grades 4–6 math classes use Internet-connected devices after school at the location of their choice to watch 10- to 15-minute asynchronous instruction videos and complete comprehension questions on Moodle. At school they practice and apply their learning with a face-to-face teacher. **Figure 5** illustrates a Flipped-Classroom rotation.

Figure *5. Flipped-Classroom model, Stillwater Area Public Schools*
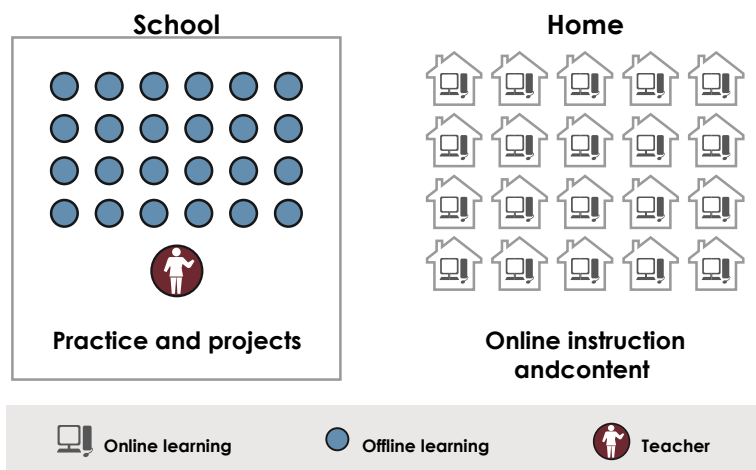
2.3.5 INDIVIDUAL ROTATION

A Rotation-model implementation in which within a given course or subject, students rotate on an *individually customized, fixed schedule* among learning modalities, at least one of which is online learning. An algorithm or teacher(s) sets individual student schedules. The Individual Rotation model differs from the other Rotation models because students do not necessarily rotate to each available station or modality.

Example: Carpe Diem Collegiate High School and Middle School assigns each student a specific schedule that rotates them between online learning in the learning center and

offline learning. Each rotation lasts 35 minutes. **Figure 6** illustrates the Carpe Diem model.

Figure 6. Individual-Rotation model, Carpe Diem Collegiate.

2.3.6 FLEX MODEL

A program in which content and instruction are delivered primarily by the Internet, students move on an individually customized, fluid schedule among learning modalities, and the teacher-of-record is on-site. The teacher-of-record or other adults provide face-to-face support on a flexible and adaptive as-needed basis through activities such as small-group instruction, group projects, and individual tutoring. Some implementations have substantial face-to-face support, while others have minimal support. For example, some flex models may have face-to-face certified teachers who supplement the online

learning on a daily basis, whereas others may provide little face-to-face enrichment. Still others may have different staffing combinations. These variations are useful modifiers to describe a particular Flex model.

Example: **Figure 7** illustrates the San Francisco Flex Academy.

Figure 7 *. Flex model, San Francisco Flex Academy*
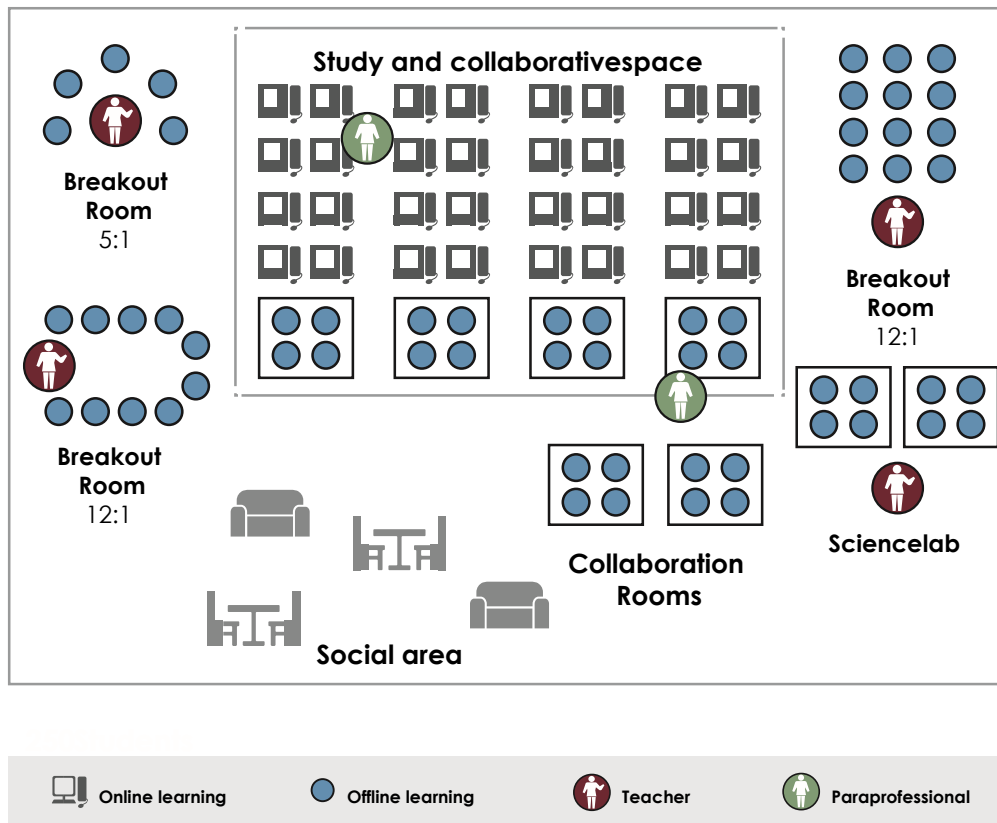
2.3.7 SELF-BLEND MODEL

Describes a scenario in which students choose to take one or more courses entirely online to supplement their traditional courses and the teacher-of-record is the online teacher. Students may take the online courses either on the brick-and-mortar campus or off-site. This differs from full-time online learning and the Enriched-Virtual model (see the next definition) because it is not a whole-school experience. Students self-blend some

individual online courses and take other courses at a brick-and-mortar campus with face-to-face teachers. **Figure 8** illustrates the Self-Blend model.

Figure 8. Self-Blend model, Quakertown Community School District.
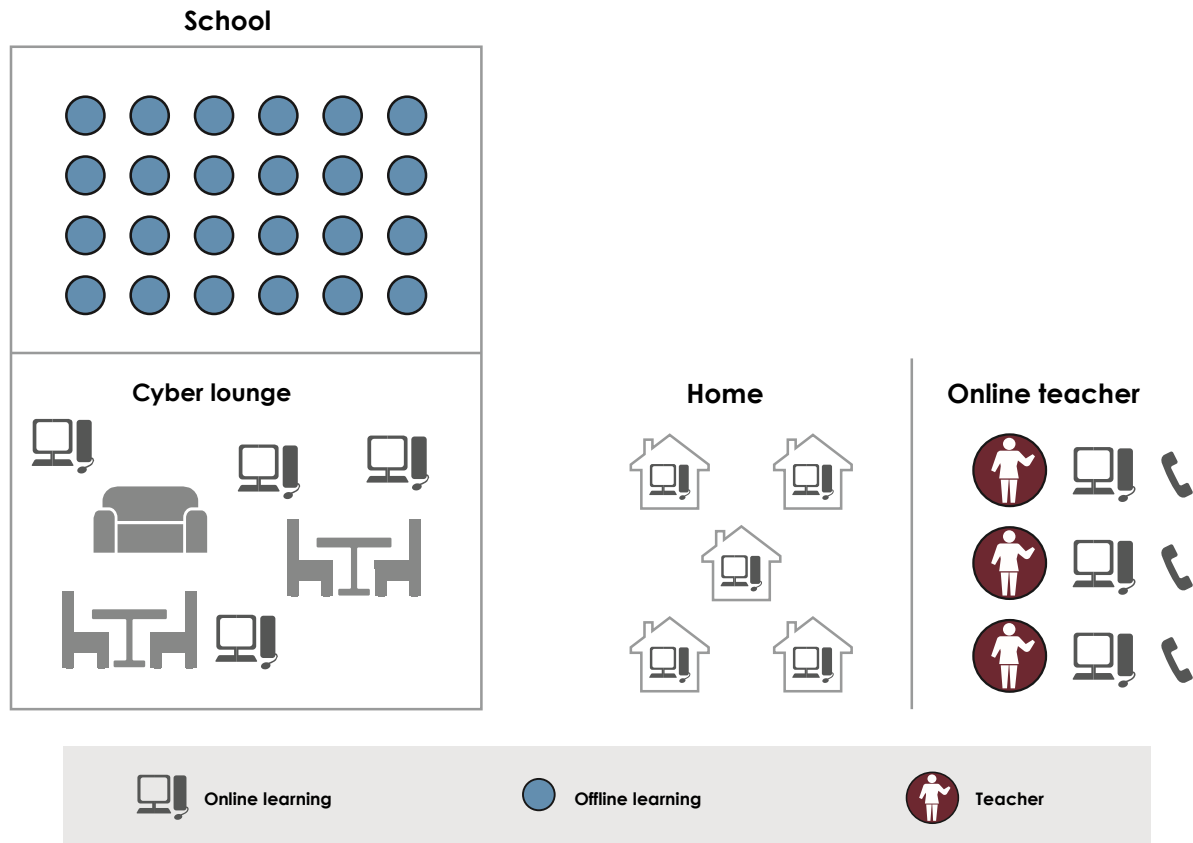
2.3.8 ENRICHED-VIRTUAL MODEL

A whole-school experience in which within each course (e.g., math), students divide their time between attending a brick-and-mortar campus and learning remotely using online delivery of content and instruction. Many Enriched Virtual programs began as full-time online schools and then developed blended programs to provide students with brick-and-mortar school experiences. The Enriched-Virtual model differs from the Flipped

Classroom because in Enriched-Virtual programs, students seldom attend the brick-and-mortar campus every weekday. It differs from the Self-Blend model because it is a whole-school experience, not a course-by-course model. **Figure 9**illustratesanexample of Enriched-Virtual model.

Figure 9. Enriched-Virtual model, Albuquerque Academy.
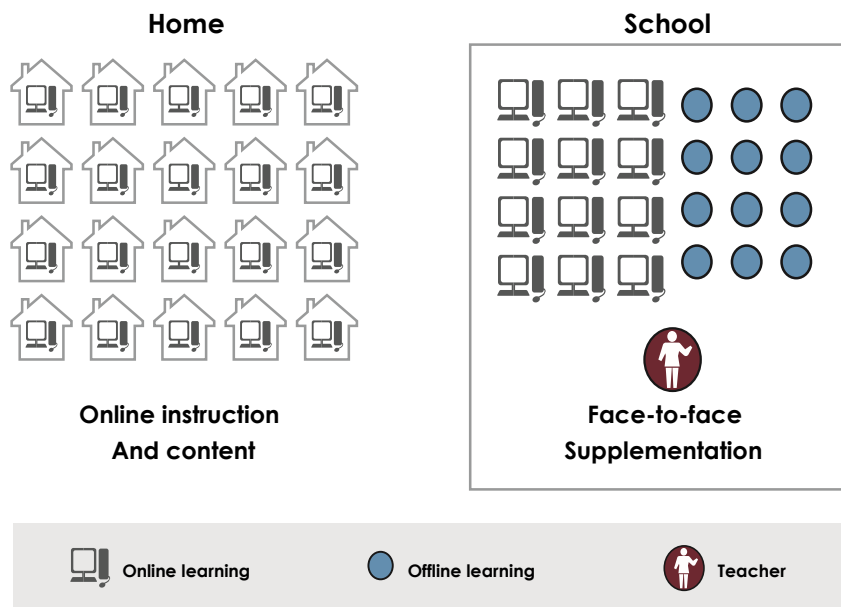
2.4 DEFINITION OF FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING

Thus this type of learning is the most traditional, it is necessary to define the meaning of face-to-face in order to expose its meaning within the educational area. Some definitions are listed below:

According to the Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary (2010), face-to-face is defined as: "having the fronts or faces toward or close to each other; involving close contact or direct opposition".

Face-to-face is also defined as: "within each other's presence" (e.g. "she met the president face-to-face") (WorldNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection, 2012).

Based on these definitions, we can tell how important is the presence of the teacher and the student in the classroom to carry on a Face-to-face learning.

Face-to-Face Instruction:

According to the University of Ohio, a "Face-to-face instruction," as the phrase suggests, is when an instructor and students at a non-profit educational institution are together in a single place devoted to instruction, and where the teaching and learning takes place at the same time. In this setting all performances and displays of a work are allowed, provided that all the materials are legally acquired.

Another definition of "Face-to-face teaching" is defined in the Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2013 as: Regular rostered teaching sessions in a documented course of study approved by the employer for which the teacher has primary responsibility for educational delivery; and includes sessions of direct student instruction rostered or required by the employer for curricular or pastoral functions involving student supervision, student counseling and consultation.

2.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF FACE-TO-FACE METHODOLOGIES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

Face-to-Face learning is carried on in the classroom following different types of methodologies.
This chapter shows a brief summary on some of the most common methodologies.

2.5.1 The Grammar-Translation Method

The grammar-translation method (also known as the classical method) was based on the belief that different kinds of knowledge were located in separate sections of the brain. Mathematic knowledge, for example, was thought to be located in one area, art in another, language in another, and so on. It was believed that studying different subjects was a good way of exercising the brain. Thus, learning another language provided the necessary mental exercise to develop the part of the brain believed to be earmarked for languages.

The main goal for learning a language was not for speaking and/or communication. The driving force was to exercise the mind and at the same time to be able to read in that language. The languages taught in those early days were Latin and Greek, so another reason for studying foreign languages was to appreciate the classics in their original language. It must be pointed out that education was the privilege of an elite class, thus it was a "mark of an educated person" to be able to read the classics.

The name of the method, grammar-translation, captures the main emphases of this method (i.e., the study of grammatical aspects of language and the use of translation as a means of ascertaining comprehension). Communicating in the language was not a goal, so classes were taught primarily in the students' native language, and the teacher made no effort to emphasize correct pronunciation of the language. Grammar study was the focus of the lessons, with much rote memorization of grammatical aspects such as verb conjugations and recitation of rules that described language functions.

It was not surprising, then, that even students who spent several years studying a foreign language were not able to speak that language. Much time was spent in learning about the language, not the language itself. Fortunately, this method is not widely used today in teaching English to English language learners. Yet, unfortunately, some aspects of this method are still employed to teach modern languages in the United States, primarily at the high school and university levels. Emphasis on reading and translating passages,

conjugation of verbs, and explanation and memorization of grammatical rules still are observed in foreign language classrooms today.

2.5.2 THE DIRECT METHOD

The direct method was a complete departure from the grammar-translation method. This method dates back to 1884 when the German scholar and psychologist F. Frankle provided a theoretical justification for the method by writing about the direct association between forms and meaning in the target language. It is also based on the work of Gouin, who in the 1880s observed children learning language in natural settings.

The emphasis is on the direct associations the student makes between objects and concepts and the corresponding words in the target language. The use of the native language, as in the grammar translation method, is avoided; the use of the target language is emphasized at all times. In this method, the primary goals are for students to think and speak the language; thus, no use of the native language is allowed. Teachers employ objects, visuals, and Realia to make the input comprehensible. Instruction revolves around specific topics.

Aspects of grammar are taught inductively through the handling of the topic. For example, when studying different types of sports that people practice, students are also introduced to verbs. The focus is not verbs and verb conjugations, but the context is a logical way to expose students to aspects of grammar. By much exposure and handling of the content, students inductively learn the appropriate use of different verbs that relate to sports. In addition, cultural aspects of the countries where the target language is spoken are also included in the lessons. For example, when studying Spanish, students would discuss the sports that are widely practiced in Spain or Mexico. This also brings in aspects of geography—where are these countries located? What aspects of language are related to directionality in describing the location, such as the names of the cardinal points (norte/ north, sur/south, este/east, oeste/west)? How should these be used appropriately when referring to location (al norte de . . .; al sur de . . .; al este de . . .; al oeste de . . .)? In this

process, vocabulary is emphasized, and interaction among students and with the teacher is fostered, although it is limited to mostly asking and responding to questions.

Reading and writing are also taught from the beginning. The most widely known application of the direct method is practiced at the Berlitz language schools located throughout the world. Although the founder, Maximilian Berlitz, referred to the method as the Berlitz method, the principles applied have been and continue to be those of the direct method. Berlitz classes are generally for highly motivated adults who need to speak a foreign language for business purposes. Although many of the techniques developed for the direct method have also been used in other methods, applying the direct method in noncommercial schools fell out of favor as early as 1920 (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). The grammar-translation method dominated public school and university language teaching in the United States until World War II.

2.5.3 AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD (ALM)

The United States involvement in World War II brought a significant change in the teaching of languages in U.S. schools. It quickly became apparent that the grammar-translation method had not produced people who were able to speak the foreign languages they had studied. The U.S. government asked the universities to develop foreign language programs that produced students who could communicate effectively in those languages. Changes in the beliefs about how people learn impacted the teaching methodologies being developed.

Based on the behavioristic psychology, the audio-lingual method was developed. In the audio-lingual method, the emphasis was on the memorization of a series of dialogues and the rote practice of language structures. The basic premises on which the method was based were that language is speech, not writing, and language is a set of habits. It was believed that much practice of the dialogues would develop oral language proficiency.

The use of the native language was avoided. The method became very popular in the 1960s. Language laboratories began to surge, and students were required to listen to audiotapes and repeat dialogues that captured aspects of daily living. In addition, specific structural patterns of the language studied were embedded in those dialogues. Students were required to participate in a number of practice drills designed to help them memorize the structures and be able to plug other words into the structure. For example, in a substitution drill, the structure might have been: I am going to the post office. Students were then required to substitute the word post office for other words, such as supermarket, park, beach, or drugstore. The belief was that students, through much practice, would form a "habit" and be able to speak the language when needed. Although the intent was to develop fluent and proficient speakers by providing much oral practice of the dialogues and the use of numerous drills to help in this endeavor, the reality was that language proficiency was not the outcome. Years later, students who studied with the audio-lingual method still remembered the dialogues but could not speak the foreign language they had studied. Thus, the method was not successful at accomplishing the main goal. It was too prescriptive; there was no opportunity provided for "true" communication to take place in the ALM classroom. Students had been taught a "script," and people do not speak following a particular script.

2.5.4 SUGGESTOPEDIA

Suggestopedia was developed by Bulgarian psychiatrist– educator Georgi Lozanov (1982), who wanted to eliminate the psychological barriers that people have to learning. It uses drama, art, physical exercise, and desuggestive–suggestive communicative psychotherapy as well as the traditional modes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to teach a second language. The influence of the science of suggestology is clear in this method that calls class meetings "sessions" (Freeman and Freeman, 1998). 66 Part Two: Principles and Practices in Language Teaching In this method, the classroom atmosphere is crucial. Creating a relaxed, nonthreatening learning environment is essential for its success.

The goal is that students will assimilate the content of the lessons without feeling any type of stress or fatigue. Classrooms are equipped with comfortable seating arrangements and dim lighting in an effort to provide an inviting and appealing environment. Soothing music is employed to invite relaxation and allow students to feel comfortable in the language classroom. The use of the native language is also allowed, especially to give directions and to create that welcoming atmosphere. Based on the belief that how students feel about learning will make a difference in the learning process, Suggestopedia takes into consideration the affective domain. It could be said that the philosophy of the little engine that could—"I think I can, I think I can, I know I can" (Piper, 1976)—is one of the basic underlying principles of Suggestopedia. If the students feel they can learn, they will. The use of drama, songs, and games provides for much practice, yet in a less-threatening and more enjoyable fashion.

As in the ALM, dialogues are employed, but they are presented in an enhanced fashion through creative dramatics. The rehearsing of roles provides the necessary practice, yet there is a purpose for practicing. When people are preparing for dramatic roles, they most likely spend much time rehearsing. Despite the advancements over the audio-lingual method, Suggestopedia has not been widely adopted in the United States. It is impractical for large classes. In addition, current textbooks do not embrace this methodology, thus making it difficult for teachers to apply the principles in regular classrooms.

2.5.5 THE SILENT WAY

Developed by Caleb Gattegno, the Silent Way requires that the teachers remain silent much of the time, thus its name. In this method, students are responsible for their own learning. Based on the belief that students are initiators of learning and capable of independently acquiring language, the Silent Way provides a classroom environment in which this can take place. The teacher models once and the students are then given the

opportunity to work together to try to reproduce what has been modeled. Beginners are initially taught the sounds of the new language from color-coded sound charts.

Next, teachers focus on language structures, sometimes using colored, plastic rods to visually represent parts of words or sentences. As students begin to understand more of the language, they are taught stories using the rods as props. At all stages of the method, the teacher models as little as possible, and students try to repeat after careful listening with help from each other. The teacher leads them toward correct responses by nods or negative head shakes (Ibid). The Silent Way is a fairly complex method that requires the teacher to receive extensive training in the use of the methodology.

Students also need to be well versed in the use of the charts and the rods to participate effectively in the lessons. Because, according to research, teachers speak from 65 percent to 95 percent of the time in traditional classrooms, it is difficult to find teachers who are comfortable with the required "silence" of the Silent Way, thus limiting the number of teachers available to teach employing this method.

2.5.6 TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)

The total physical response (TPR) method was developed by psychologist James Asher (1974). This Method is based on the principle that people learn better when they are involved physically as well as mentally. In TPR, students are required to respond nonverbally (physically) to a series of commands.

As the teacher gives a command and the students respond physically, the teacher ascertains students' comprehension of the command. Initially, the teacher begins with simple commands such as:

Teacher: Stand up! (Teacher models)

Students: Respond by standing up. (Physical response, not verbal)

Teacher: Walk to the front of the room.

Students: Respond by walking to the front of the room.

Teacher: Turn around and walk back to your seats.

Students: Respond by turning around and walking to their seats.

Teacher: Sit down.

Students: Respond by sitting down.

Once the students have practiced a number of times, the teacher simply gives the command and the students respond. Eventually the students will give the commands, thus developing oral proficiency.

In TPR, teachers can employ pictures, objects, and Realia for students to manipulate as they respond nonverbally. For example, the students are studying a unit on "emotions." The teacher can pass out pictures of people displaying different emotions. Then, the teacher can give the following commands:

Teacher: Raise the picture of the girl who seems sad.

Student(s): Raise(s) picture of sad girl.

Teacher: Stand up if you have a picture of two boys who seem happy.

Student(s): (who has/have that picture): Stand(s) up.

Teacher: Place on the board the picture that shows a woman who seems surprised.

Student(s): (who has/have that picture): Walk(s) up to the board and place(s) the picture on the magnetic board?

Commands become more complex as the students continue to develop listening comprehension and knowledge of subject matter. For example, with the assistance of pictures, students can be asked to categorize modes of transportation by land, water, or air, or they could be asked to rearrange pictures to show the life cycle of a butterfly.

Once students are able to respond to a series of commands and can give the commands themselves, the teacher can introduce the reading and the writing aspects of language. However, the emphasis in TPR is on listening comprehension until oral proficiency is developed.

TPR is an excellent method to employ with students who are in the preproduction/silent stage of language development. Students who are not yet speaking are able to be involved in lessons and respond nonverbally. Thus, these students begin to feel a sense of belonging and success as they participate in the lessons. The students benefit from the involvement in the lessons, and the teachers are able to ascertain whether or not the students are developing listening comprehension.

TPR is somewhat limited within the confines of a classroom; however, with the use of pictures, and other types of manipulative, a resourceful teacher can bring the outside world into the classroom. For example, a teacher may prepare a transparency of a picture that depicts many actions. Each student gets a copy of the picture (black and white is acceptable for this type of activity). The teacher employs the transparency to demonstrate the actions following the commands given. Students imitate and follow along. This is an excellent way to introduce verbs and new vocabulary using TPR.

2.5.7 The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

2.5.7.1 Language Teaching Methodology and Approach

There are many ways of defining methodology in language teaching. A universally accepted formulation describes that methodology is that which links theory and practice in teaching a language. Theory states what language is and how language is learned. Such theories are linked to various design features of language instruction. These features might include stated objectives, syllabus specifications, and types of activities, roles of teachers, learners, materials, and so forth. Design features in turn are linked to actual teaching and learning practices as observed in environments where language teaching and learning take place, namely the classroom. This whole complex of elements formulates language teaching methodology. (T.S. Rogers: 2001)

Within methodology there is a distinction made between methods and approaches. Methods are held to be teaching systems with prescribed techniques and practices,

whereas approaches represent language teaching philosophies that can be interpreted and applied in a variety of different ways in the classroom.

2.5.7.2 The Linguistic Jargon

Major influences on how a language is taught and learnt have often come from work in linguistics. Language teachers have long looked for guidance from linguists on how to teach languages and linguistics theories are often reflected in practices of the language teaching classroom.

Many theories have been evolved in the history of the learning and teaching of a foreign language. These theories, usually influenced by developments in the fields of linguistics and psychology, have inspired many approaches to the teaching of foreign languages. The study of these theories and how they influence language teaching methodology is called applied linguistics.

Communicative Language Teaching began in Britain in the 1960s as a replacement to the earlier structural method, Situational Language Teaching. This came partly in response to Chomsky's criticism of structural theories of language and partly based on the theories of functional linguistics Firth and Holliday, American sociolinguists Hymes, Gumpers and Labov and the writings of Austin and Searle on speech acts.

Chomsky challenged previous assumptions about language structure and language learning methodologies of the Grammar Translation Method (the language is graphed) and the Audio-lingual Approach (habit formation as a mode of learning). He took the position that language is creative and ruled governed. He believed that there was a set of rules and instructions governing the language system, which if followed rigidly would produce an infinite number of grammatically correct sentences. This transformational Generative Grammar, began as a study of syntactic structures in linguistics, gradually became an elaborate scheme trying to embrace the whole of linguistic analysis. However, most of these analyses were done without reference to meaning. Sentences which were generated from these 'tree-structure' paradigms could easily be senseless.

For example:

S

_____

NP   VP   NP

The girl   smokes   a chair
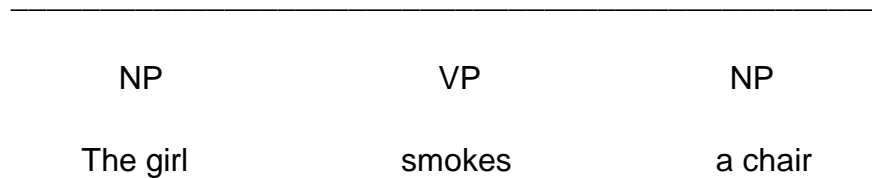
Chomsky's linguistic theory stressed that language had two components: competence and performance. Competence refers to knowledge of the rules of grammar and the language structure while performance refers to how the rules are used in an actual sentence. Chomsky focused his linguistic theory on the knowledge and ability to produce grammatically correct sentences.

On the other hand, Hymes held a view that Chomsky's view is sterile. Linguistic theory needed to be incorporated into a broader view of communication and culture.

The notion is intended to replace Noam Chomsky's dichotomy of competence and performance. Speakers draw on their competence in putting together grammatical sentences, but not all such sentences can be used in the same circumstances: Close the window and would you mind closing the window, please? are both grammatical, but they differ in their appropriateness for use in particular situations. Speakers use their communicative competence to choose what to say, as well as how and when to say it. He made the point that (1979: P5):

'There are rules of use, without which the rules of grammar would be useless'.

Hymes argues that linguists of the transformational school have been so concerned with the 'possible' structure alone that little was learnt about how language is used as a mean of communication. He pointed out (1979: P.15):

'We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of a sentence, not only as grammatical, but also appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about, with whom, when, where, in what manner.'

Hymes further stated that there were four aspects of this communicative competence (1979: P.19):

'Whether something is formally possible;

Whether something is feasible;

Whether something is appropriate;

Whether something is in fact done.'

These features form integral part of the interaction in language. Hymes' view had been extremely influential in steering development in secondary language theory and practice. He exemplified a move away from the study of language purely as an analytical system towards the study of language as social communication and appropriateness. This shift has provided the theoretical plan round to communicative language teaching.

2.5.7.3 Interactive Nature of Communicative Competence

Canale and Swain (1980) adopted the term communicative competence to refer to the relationship and interaction between grammatical and sociolinguistic competence.

Canale and Swain advocated (1980: P.6):

'If a communicative approach to second language teaching is adopted, then principles of syllabus design must integrate of both grammatical and sociolinguistic competence.'

They identified four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic and they regarded them as (1980: P.20):

'A synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles; knowledge of how a language is used in social context to perform communicative functions and the knowledge of how utterance and communicative functions can be combined; according to discourse.'

They also viewed such theories as:

'An integrative in that they focus on speaking, listening, writing and reading rather than on a subset of these skill areas.'

Canale and Swain took the theory a big step closer to the classroom and the teaching of language as a social tool.

2.5.7.4 The Characteristics of CLT

The fundamental principle of CLT is to enable learners to understand and use the target language for communication. Two basic assumptions underlying this approach to language learning are that the core of language learning is the development of communicative competence and that the starting point for language learning is not grammatical rules but context, function, meaning and the appropriate use of the language.

Richards and Rogers identify the distinct characteristics of communicative language teaching as (1986: P.71):

'Language is a system for the expression of meaning.

The primary function of language is for interaction and communication function of language.

The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.

The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

This approach calls for radically different ideas of language teaching. One major shift is that language learning has become student-centered. Lessons are planned in such a way that all the students can engage in interactive activities.

Authentic and meaningful communication should be goal of classroom activities. Group work and pair work are employed to promote communication and getting the meaning across. Authentic materials, such as newspaper articles, radio programs, video-tapes, train-timetables etc., are used to bring the real world elements into the classroom. Situations are simulated but interaction and task complete within real-time are genuine. Role-plays center on communicative functions.

Fluency is an important dimension of communication. The objective of language learning is to communicate; attempts to communicate are encouraged at the very beginning. Errors are unavoidable but accuracy is judged in context rather in structures and forms. Errors which are concerned with structures are not corrected openly and simultaneously because the main concern is fluency and getting meaning through communication. Learning is a process of creative construction and involves errors.

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in terms of three components:

1. Grammatical competence: words and rules
2. Sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
3. Strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies.

Canale (1983) refined the above model, adding discourse competence: cohesion and coherence.

A more recent survey of communicative competence by Bachman (1990) divides it into the broad headings of "organizational competence," which includes both grammatical and discourse (or textual) competence, and "pragmatic competence," which includes both sociolinguistic and "illocutionary" competence (Bachman, 1990.). Strategic Competence is associated with the interlocutors' ability in using communication strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Lin, 2009).

Through the influence of communicative language teaching, it has become widely accepted that communicative competence should be the goal of language education, central to good classroom practice (Sauvignon, 1997.). This is in contrast to previous views in which grammatical competence was commonly given top priority. The understanding of communicative competence has been influenced by the field of pragmatics and the philosophy of language concerning speech acts as described in large part by John Searle and J.L. Austin.

2.6 CHARACTERISTICS AND ADVANTAGES OF FACE-TO-FACE INSTRUCTION

For the past two decades, there has been an increasing emphasis on the use of e-learning, with many e-learning advocates arguing that not only is e-learning less expensive than bringing employees together in a classroom, but also that e-learning is actually a more effective learning method than face-to-face instructor-led training. Some e-learning zealots have even claimed that e-learning is *always* the better solution to learning needs.

E-learning, certainly can be an effective learning method for some subjects and an effective adjunct to instructor-led training in many other instances. There is no doubt that e-learning can reduce costs for participant travel, for building and maintaining classroom facilities, and for instructors. But there are many instances in which face-to-face instructor-led training is still the best solution to learning needs. Here we present ten advantages for face-to-face instructor-led training that cannot be matched by any form of e-learning.

Advantage #1: Focus

When employees attend an instructor-led training session in a classroom, they are better able to focus on what it being taught. Compared to participating in an e-learning session, synchronous or asynchronous, from their workplaces, they have fewer distractions. People are not stopping by their office, their phone isn't ringing, they are not getting signals from their PCs that they have a new mail message, etc. They are therefore more able to focus on the live training than if they are taking any type of e-learning in their offices. I have seen too many instances where an employee clicks through e-learning screens while "multi-tasking" are accomplishing little if any learning, although the company's learning management system may give them credit for completing the e-learning course.

E-learning advocates have recognized these problems and have attempted to resolve them by including frequent short quizzes or polls that require the participants to "pay

attention," but the fact remains that there are many more distractions for the learner in an e-learning environment than in an actual classroom.

Advantage #2: Confidentiality

A good classroom instructor will create a safe environment for learning and get the participants to agree that anything that is said or done in the classroom is confidential ("What's done in the classroom stays in the classroom"). For example, in a management training class, a participant may want to discuss a specific problem he or she is having with a particular employee. In an asynchronous e-learning environment, this isn't possible. In a synchronous e-learning environment, the manager may be leery of talking about a specific employee problem because he or she doesn't know who else is participating in the class and is worried about the discussion becoming known by that employee.

Advantage #3: Practice

Some of the better e-learning programs I have seen provide opportunities for practice of new skills via simulation exercises, and some of these simulations are very good. But they cannot duplicate having students in a classroom practice their newly-acquired skills with the instructor and each other.

For example, I have taught coaching skills to hundreds of managers around the world. One feature of the program I present is to have participants bring into the classroom a current or past problem on which they feel they could benefit from coaching themselves. During the class, they are coached by other participants, using what they are learning. When the participants see that they can be helped by coaching, they are much more likely to use the coaching techniques they are learning when they return to the job. This experience cannot be duplicated with e-learning.

Does this mean that e-learning cannot be used to teach coaching skills? In fact, you can use e-learning to present much of the material that I teach in the classroom, for example, how to ask good coaching questions, how to set the proper environment for coaching, etc. But you cannot duplicate the practice of those skills in an e-learning environment.

Advantage #4: Adaptability

A good instructor can adapt the training content to the specific needs of the participants in the classroom. For example, while a training program may focus on a full overview of a topic, members of the class may point out one specific area with which they continue to have problems. A good instructor will follow the lead of the class and help them find ways to solve that problem. With asynchronous e-learning, there is little adaptability to address this type of issue.

Advantage #5: Individual Attention to Participant Needs

In a face-to-face instructor-led class, the trainer may notice that one or more participants are having specific problems, either in understanding some topic or in applying the learning to their particular situation. A good instructor will watch for signs of these problems and will offer to help those participants during breaks or after class. E-learning instructors, even using synchronous e-learning, can't read these types of body-language signs.

Advantage #6: Establishing a Dialogue

With asynchronous e-learning, there is no opportunity to ask questions of an instructor. Even with synchronous e-learning, participants may type a question for the instructor, but there is little opportunity to ask a follow-up question or to establish any type of dialogue with the instructor or with other participants. In many face-to-face classes, these types of dialogues, when they take place, can add a huge value to the participants by being able to dig deeply into a subject that interests the participants.

Advantage #7: Learning From Other Participants

In every class or conference I have ever attended, I have found that at least half the value I receive comes not from the training content (no matter how good it may be), but from my informal interaction with other participants, during the class, at breaks, or over lunch,

dinner, or drinks. While on-line discussion groups can offer such opportunities for informal interaction, they cannot match the experience of interacting face-to-face.

Advantage #8: Building Personal Relationships

It is virtually impossible to build a personal relationship with an instructor or other program participants using e-learning, but it happens all the time with face-to-face instructor-led training. These relationships can lead to sharing experiences, job offers, personal coaching, and reinforcement as two or more people try out what they have learned on the job, and even to marriages (yes, I have a documented case).

Advantage #9: Breaking Down Silos

Getting people from different business units and functional groups together in a classroom can help to break down the silos that inhibit cross-unit dialog and cooperation. At one company, a management training program that brought people together from different business units around the globe resulted in two managers from different business units developing an idea for a new company business that resulted in a new business unit that yielded hundreds of millions of dollars a year in new revenue, and the new business unit could not have been created by either of the business units alone. In many other cases, I have seen problems solved more quickly because a participant was able to get help from another person in a class instead of sending a request up through his business unit, across the top level to another unit, and then down that hierarchy to get the help that was needed.

Advantage #10: Building a Personal Network

This is an adjunct to the previous advantages of breaking down silos and building personal relationships. For example, in a leadership development program I designed and led, we brought together 36 high-potential mid-level managers from multiple business units, geographies, and functional areas. At the end of the first session of this program, several participants remarked that even if there had been no educational content, just

having the opportunity to build a network with the other participants would have been worth the company's investment in bringing them together for several days.

There is no doubt that e-learning can be an effective training method for specific topics. But the e-learning zealots who argue that all classroom training can and should be replaced by e-learning are overlooking the many unique benefits of bringing together a group of employees in a classroom. This article has presented 10 advantages that face-to-face instructor-led training has over e-learning in its many forms. I am certain that there are other advantages I have failed to mention in this article, and I would appreciate hearing your ideas on the subject.

2.7 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BLENDED LEARNING AND FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING.

One of the principal differences in online and face-to-face learning resides in the realm of affect, but there is little consensus with respect to which modality is conducive to generating the most effective social and cultural community. It is possible to have effective communication and/or a meaningful cultural ethos online or in face-to-face environments, yet the communication itself and the means to that communication is quite different. There is no denying that the physical space in a face-to-face environment is conducive to creating an atmosphere and a sense of belonging largely defined by the physicality of the learning environment. At the same time, however, many learners feel peripheral to what others consider the nurturing and hallowed halls of academe. Digital communities can and do generate the same feelings in learners who identify strongly with a technological age and whose cultural mindset is not contained by the physical space of a learning environment.

An additional important factor is the communication that occurs within the learning environment. Some people find face-to-face conversation, with its capacity for nonverbal expression and body language, to be spontaneous and liberating, while others consider dialogue a two-edged sword. The synchronicity in online communication gives learners, especially those having language and cultural differences, time to reflect and think about

what is being said (Soefijanto, n.d.). Others, however, find the constraints of online communication, with its heavy emphasis on writing, to be onerous. Some learners find themselves adopting different personae if their form of communication is written, making communication difficult and contentious (Rhem, 2000). But others find that the classroom can be vague and ambiguous, making the communication troublesome, and conclude that affect and the emotionality of the classroom can be the biggest strength and greatest weakness in the face-to-face environment (Edelson, 2000).

The differences between the two learning environments suggest that different learning styles and levels of academic proficiency can be addressed by certain features of each instructional approach. Learners who tend to avoid face-to-face learning will find online communication more adaptable to their needs, while those who prefer nonverbal cues to their communication style may need and require the instructional benefits which accrue to sessions which occur in person. Students who write well will be more comfortable in online settings. Those students who struggle with the written word or who have limited keyboarding skills may find it inhibiting to write e-mail or meet in a chat room. Independent learners with high proficiencies in reading and writing will relate to online situations which allow the freedom and flexibility to develop in-depth knowledge. Conversely, students who will need more personal guidance will find online classes isolating and frustrating.

The differences inherent in the two methods of learning do not obviate giving careful consideration to the communication dictated by each learning approach. Perceptive instructors are generally cognizant of the needs of their students and can and do adapt their communication styles accordingly, regardless of the learning environment in which they are teaching. The important thing to consider, for the purposes of this discussion, is that both methods of learning are equally conducive to effective means of communication, regardless of the idiosyncratic nature of the communication.

TABLE 1	Face-to-Face Learning	Blended Learning
Inherent characteristics	▪ Synchronous learning. ▪ Learning occurs in specified time and space. ▪ Teacher directed pace.	▪ Synchronous and asynchronous learning ▪ Time and space for learning is flexible. ▪ Self-paced learning allowed.
Methods of communication	▪ Verbal and non-verbal communication	▪ Heavy emphasis on writing
Technical knowledge	▪ Not a pre-requisite for course	▪ Technical knowledge required
Access to learning materials	▪ Lectures or discussions are real time. ▪ No detail records archived.	▪ Lectures and discussions archived and can be accessed anytime.
Cost	▪ Cost for setting up physical space, commuting, parking, etc. may be high	▪ Cost for initial installment of hardware and software as well as constant upgrade may be high.
Learning Process	▪ Allows learners and instructors to bond socially	▪ Allows learners and instructors to exchange idea in a more thoughtful fashion.
	▪ May inhibit reticent learners to participate.	▪ Allows reticent learners to speak up more easily and actively.
	▪ Human interaction tends to reduce high dropout rate.	▪ Conducive to learning new skills in technology.
	▪ Discussion is limited to the pre-defined time frame. Immediate adjustment to repair misunderstanding is possible.	▪ Dropout rates are higher due to lack of human contact and technical problems. ▪ Discussion is not limited to the class time. ▪ Misunderstanding in discussion may not be adjusted in time, causing unnecessary rift in class.
	▪ Teacher exercises strong leadership.	▪ Conducive to student-centered learning.
	▪ Feedback is immediately delivered through.	▪ Feedback is usually delayed and is given mostly through text.

2.8 MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FACE-TO-FACE AND BLENDED

Another significant difference between face-to-face and online learning relates to the role of the instructor, with the correlate implications that this has for the learner. In face-to-face learning situations, instructors can maintain a stronger sense of leadership over classroom processes. They can exercise greater control of learners' attention, motivate learners and do immediate adjustments if communication breaks down. Although some may decry a strong leadership role for the instructor, others suggest that a teacher-directed approach in a face-to-face environment is beneficial in certain situations. There is evidence favoring the teacher-centered instructional approach, even with regard to "higher order" achievements, especially with disadvantaged students (Chall, 2000, as cited in Stone, 2001).

Everyone agrees that the role of the instructor changes in online environments and a number of advocates propose this change calls for altering how online courses are structured. Some scholars indicate the technologically-enhanced instructional/learning environment makes it possible for educators to bring about a shift in pedagogy, which necessarily shift implies a repositioning of the instructor and learner roles (Rudestam &Schoenholtz-Read, 2002). Palloff and Pratt (1999) delineate important directions and advocate a collaborative learning approach that concentrates on the interaction of student to student rather than student to instructor. Knowlton (2000, as cited in Hutchins, 2003) also addresses the advantages of a student-centered in online courses, suggesting that collaborative learning with students guiding discussions and working in cohorts on assignments provides the best approach for online instruction.

2.9 ENGLISH SKILLS

When we learn a language, there are four skills that we need for complete communication. When we learn our native language, we usually learn to **listen** first, then to **speak**, then

to **read**, and finally to **write**. These are called the four "language skills". This research has focused specifically in two of them: Reading and Speaking.

2.9.1 READING

Reading is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear).

Reading is a *receptive* skill - through it we *receive* information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).

Here we present some of the most common reading techniques.

2.9.2 BRAINSTORMING

Strategies for reading factual texts (1997). New South Wales, Au.

Brainstorming is a means of activating and recording information about current knowledge, range of vocabulary and perceptions of a given topic. This information can include vocabulary, questions, known facts, predictions, links and ideas.

Brainstorming can be done individually or in groups by listing all that is known about a particular topic or idea. You can act as the scribe to assist in listing all contributions quickly and accurately. It is important to list all contributions offered without making comments, judgments or expressing opinions about any contribution. You can return to the lists at a later time to make judgments on the suitability of the information gained.

Brainstorming can be recorded on chalkboards, overhead transparencies, whiteboards or butcher's paper, or individually, using post-it notes or cards.

2.9.3 FLOORSTORMING

One way of brainstorming is the technique known as floor storming. In this technique the teacher needs to prepare a collage of pictures related to a topic to be studied (Vaucluse Public School, 1997) e.g. the Great Barrier Reef: pictures of islands, sea life, leisure activities, flora and fauna.

Place blank letter sized paper and stimulus pictures on the floor. Have groups of children look at the pictures and, on the blank paper, record words or phrases that describe something in the pictures. Note that each group does not have to have the same pictures. A variety of pictures on the same topic can often elicit broader responses.

After groups have listed everything that they want, ask them to examine the words and challenge words and ideas, cross out similar words and ideas, and classify the words into broad terms.

Strategies for reading factual texts (1997). New South Wales, Au.

Asking one child to scribe the group's response allows for the free flow of ideas.

2.9.4 CATEGORIZING

Categorizing, also referred to as classifying, is a means of organizing items of information by grouping or linking them according to attribute, category, theme or other common feature. (South Coogee Public School, 1997).

Information could be derived from brainstorming sessions, individual or group reading or research, surveys, lists provided by the teacher or viewing activities.

One method is to use the post-it notes or cards from a brainstorming session. After categorizing, the students can be encouraged to give grouped items of information a heading or descriptor.

One way of organizing the information collected is to prepare a concept map.

Strategies for reading factual texts (1997).New South Wales, Au.

Students are encouraged to give headings to their grouped information.

2.9.5 PREDICTING

Predicting involves readers or viewers considering what they expect a text to contain or what might happen next in a text. The stimulus for predicting could be a title, a picture or reading or viewing part of the text.

Prediction activities involve students in activating prior knowledge, motivating interest and enthusiasm and recognizing a purpose for reading.

Before they read or view a text, tell students the title and ask them to predict what the text might be about. Then show students the cover and, through discussion, encourage them to confirm or revise their predictions. If using a book, ask students to predict the subject matter before referring them to the contents and index pages to confirm or revise their predictions.

Teaching explicitly about prediction encourages students to understand that they already have valuable information in their heads about the ideas to be found in texts and that bringing these understandings to the surface will assist their search for meaning.

Predicting is a valuable strategy for providing opportunities for students to evaluate whether the text fulfilled their expectations.

2.9.6 DEVELOPING A VISUAL TEXT OUTLINE

According to Daceyville *School (1997)*, a visual text outline is a representation of the visual aspects of a written text. These visual aspects include diagrams, flow charts, illustrations, graphs, timelines, etc.

By focusing on the elements of the visual text, a visual text outline makes students aware that information is contained not just in written text.

To complete a visual text outline, the reader starts at the beginning and works through the book, making a list of the types of visual texts included and what they are about. For example, a book about Anzac Day might have a visual text outline of the first few pages that looks like this:

Page 5 Map Europe during World War 1

Page 6 Poster Conscription

Photograph Soldiers leaving Sydney

Page 7 Map The Middle East.

A completed visual text outline can be used as a summary of the text and as an easy reference guide to locate information.

Strategies for reading factual texts (1997). New South Wales, Au.

Teachers can ask questions about information contained in the visual text.

2.9.7 INTRODUCING KEY WORDS

According to the staff of Chiefly School (1997), in order to prepare students for reading or viewing it is necessary to familiarize them with any words from the text that might hinder their understanding. These words may include terms specific to the topic or grammatical features which are important in making links between ideas e.g. "Later on ..." in recounting, "On the other hand..." in discussing, or "Nevertheless..." in arguing.

When key words are introduced it is essential to ensure that they are presented in meaningful contexts i.e. the meaning intended in the text. Students need to understand not just the dictionary meaning of a word, but the concept it conveys within the text.

There are several ways of introducing key words. This includes:

✓ Prior selection by the teacher of vocabulary which is treated separately through examples and discussion to develop understanding of meaning.

✓ Identification of unfamiliar words by students by, for example, brainstorming, skimming and scanning, discussion, viewing, etc. These words are then discussed or placed within contexts which clarify their meaning.

✓ Cloze activities which provide opportunities to place key words in context.

✓ Vocabulary prediction, where students identify new or unfamiliar words in the text and attempt to clarify their meaning from the surrounding text.

✓ Definition matching activities, where students match key words with given definitions. This is most effective where words and definitions are written separately on cards and can be physically manipulated by students.

Incorporating key words in class or individual spelling lists assists students to read and use the words independently.

Strategies for reading factual texts (1997). New South Wales, Au.

Working in small groups provides opportunities for discussion

2.9.8 USING KEY WORDS

Students can use key words to assist them to gain access to the meaning of a text. This could involve scanning the text to locate the section where the key word is used or re-reading these sections in order to clarify the meanings.

This strategy would be successful only where students had previously been introduced to the key words.

2.9.9 READING FOR A PURPOSE

Students need to have an understanding of the purpose for reading and viewing particular texts before they commence. Teachers can assist students to clarify the purpose of reading by asking the questions:

Why are you reading this text?

Are you reading for enjoyment, to retell, to answer questions, to gain information?

Once a purpose for reading is established, students can be directed about which method of reading best will achieve that purpose. These methods for reading include:

Skimming: Reading to gain an overall understanding of the content of the text.

Scanning: reading to locate specific information re-reading: reading to confirm meanings and understandings, and to clarify details.

Strategies for reading factual texts (1997).New South Wales, Au.

Having a purpose for reading will assist students to choose the most appropriate method of reading.

2.9.10 CLOZE

Cloze is an activity in which parts of the text are covered or deleted.

Students are required to complete the missing parts of the text, using clues which the existing text provides. Cloze requires students to predict appropriate words which maintain the text's meanings. This may not necessarily be the exact words of the original text.

When constructing a cloze it is useful to leave the first and last sentence intact. This provides a context for students. Deletions might include technical terms, grammatical items such as reference links, verbs (for tense and subject–verb agreement) and structural features of texts, such as a step in a procedure. The deleted words may be provided separately to assist those students requiring support.

Skills can be developed in students to assist them in completing cloze activities successfully. These skills include:

- ✓ Skimming to get an overall idea of the text
- ✓ Scanning for clues to indicate meaning
- ✓ Re-reading and reading on to check predictions, and
- ✓ A final re-reading to ensure meaning is consistent across the whole text.

2.9.11 NOTE-MAKING

Note-making involves extracting and recording the main ideas of a written or media text in an organized and systematic way. Its purpose could be to assist understanding, to identify key concepts, to plan speaking or writing, to assist recall of information or to express ideas clearly and succinctly.

Teachers can develop students' note-making skills by:

- ✓ Providing opportunities for students to practice skimming, scanning and identifying key words
- ✓ Posing key questions prior to reading and viewing
- ✓ Providing a scaffold or work sheet for the notes
- ✓ Modeling the process of extracting information and recording ideas in clear and succinct language.

2.9.12 COMPARING WRITTEN TEXT AND VISUAL TEXT

In factual texts information can be conveyed in the written text and in the visual text. Looking closely at the visual text and comparing it to what is written on the page allows students full access to all information included by the author. It also allows students to make judgments about the suitability of the visual text used and connections between the visual and written texts.

2.10 SPEAKING SKILL

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving.

2.10.1 STAGESOF LANGUAGE LEARNING - SPEAKING

Individuals learning a second language use the same innate processes that are used to acquire their first language from the first days of exposure to the new language in spite of their age. They reach similar developmental stages to those in first language acquisition, making some of the same types of errors in grammatical markers that young children make, picking up chunks of language without knowing precisely what each word means, and relying on sources of input humans who speak that language-to provide modified speech that they can at least partially comprehend (Collier, 1998). Second language learners are usually observed developing a new language system that incorporates elements from the native language and elements from English they recently learned.

Inter-language actually helps second language learners test hypotheses about how language works and develop their own set of rules for using language.

Stage I: Pre-production

This is the silent period. Beginners only listen but rarely speak. English language learners may have some words in their receptive vocabulary but they are not yet speaking. Some students will be able to repeat only everything that someone says. They are not really producing language but are imitating. Students may duplicate gestures and movements to show comprehension. Teachers should focus attention on listening

comprehension activities and on building a receptive vocabulary because English language learners at this stage will need much repetition of English.

Speaking Skills

The learner can hardly understand anything at all, unless the speaker is talking about things the learner is observing, or unless the language being learned is closely related to some other language the learner knows. Through comprehension activities the learner can internalize some vocabulary and some grammatical structures, which will help the learner to understand more in stage two, when she or he knows enough to actually converse in a simple way. The result of getting through stage one is that the learner has acquired enough of the basic building blocks of the language to begin to function in real communication situations in a halting way. In stage one there is very little real speaking ability, apart from some words and sentences that can be built on the comprehension exercises. In real communication situations the learner has to depend on memorized survival phrases to meet the most immediate needs.

Stage II: Early production

At this stage students try to speak some words. Students can use short language chunks that have been memorized although these chunks may not always be used correctly. Learner listen more their talkative classmates and extend his vocabulary.

Speaking Skills

In stage two inputs is comprehensible if the learner already knows the nonlinguistic content what he or she is hearing or if the communication situation is very predictable. There are more genuine two-way conversations with speakers of the language, although it takes a very patient native speaker to persevere in trying to communicate with a learner at this stage. The result of getting through stage two well is quite a bit of "fluency" in comprehending language which uses a variety of structures in connected discourse, with

an ever growing vocabulary. In stage two, the learner is able to speak well in tasks that are fairly structured and predictable.

Stage III: Speech emergence

At this stage, Students have a good vocabulary of words and uses simple phrases and sentences in his communication with others. They are able to ask simple questions, which may be grammatically correct or wrong. Students try to initiate short conversations with classmates. They are able to read and understand easy stories.

Speaking Skills

In stage three the learner can understand new information, but it still helps if that information is still specially geared to a new speaker's needs. This means that meanings must often be negotiated. In order to keep increasing in comprehension fluency during this stage, the key ingredient is coming to understand the background information that everyone in the culture knows about, and in particular, learning this information in connection with the language that is associated with them. Because the learner can by now understand a lot of the linguistic content, it is possible to develop more ability for top-down processing of "new" information of the nonlinguistic content. If there is adequate input, the learner should be developing a sense of the different discourse genres and registers of speech. The result of getting through stage three is that the learner is able to comprehend language related to a vast range of topics, situations and contexts, as well as easily process many social nuances. In stage three, the learner has increasing facility to produce connected narrative discourse.

Stage IV: Intermediate fluency

At the stage of intermediate fluency, English language learners able to use more complex sentences in speaking and writing to express opinions and share their thoughts. They are able to ask questions to clarify what they are learning in class. Learners are able

to work with some teacher support. Comprehension of all subjects' content is increasing. At this stage, students are able to use different strategies to learn content in English. Teachers have to focus on learning strategies. Students in this stage can understand more complex concepts.

Speaking Skills

In Stage Four the learner learns most from normal native-to-native speech as it occurs in the whole range of life experiences. The learner will understand most input, provided he attends to it. For example, native speakers may talk about the learner right in his presence, intending to tease him and get a reaction. He will certainly hear that they are talking, but may not in the deeper sense "hear" a thing they say, unless he is attending to it. In Stage Four, the learner has increasing facility in abstract and hypothetical discussions

Stage V: Advanced Fluency

Student at this stage will be near-native in their ability to perform in content area learning. Students have needed continuous support from classroom in reading writing and speaking.

Speaking Skills

In Stage five, the learner has increasing facility in discussions using his vocabulary without any proper preparation.

2.10.2 GENERAL FEATURES OF SPOKEN ENGLISH

Backchannels

Listeners may show the speaker that they are listening and understanding by saying mmm or little words like yeah, usually skillfully placed at the end of a clause. These are called backchannels or, sometimes, minimal responses.

Clause combining

When they are speaking spontaneously people do not usually have time to combine their clauses in the varied ways that they might use in writing (when they might have many subordinate clauses introduced by a range of conjunctions such as however, therefore or since). The most frequent conjunction in spoken English is the all-purpose. So and but are also frequent, but less so since they have more specific meanings (so suggests that what follows is the result of what has just been said, and but suggests a contrast).

Deixis

When they are speaking people often refer to things that are in the immediate context. The pronouns I and you are very frequent, referring to the speaker and the listener, and so are words such as here and now. This and that are used to 'point' to things that are present or that have just been mentioned. Indefinite this is often used metaphorically, to introduce something that is new to the discourse as if it was actually present. Like the conversational historic present tense, using indefinite this involves the listener and helps to make the discourse more vivid.

Conversational historical present

When people are talking about something that happened in the past the verbs are usually in the past tense, but they are sometimes in the present tense instead (even though they are talking about the past). The present tense makes the discourse more involving and lively because events are presented as if they were actually happening right now. When a present tense verb refers to a past event the tense is termed the conversational historical present.

Examples:

Past tenses   I thought "what on earth is he up to?"

                                        I was thinking "what on earth is he up to?"

Conversational historical present   I think "what on earth is he up to?"

                                        I'm thinking "what on earth is he up to?"

Discourse markers

These include well, oh, like, of course, yeah, right, oh, and many more.

Discourse markers are important features of spoken language with many different functions. They usually perform several functions at the same time. Their overall function is to show the listener how to interpret what the speaker is saying (so they don't affect the literal meaning of what is being said). The discourse markers in the extracts illustrate some of their most typical functions:

- marking the beginning or end of a turn

- marking grammatical structure by being placed at the beginning or end of a clause, or at the start of reported speech

- marking information that is new to the discourse or marking the start of a new topic

- showing how the speaker feels about what they are about to say or about what they have already said

- checking that the listener is following

- creating solidarity with the listener

- appealing to the listener for understanding

Like intensifiers, there are often striking differences between the discourse markers that younger speakers like to use and those that older speakers use.

General extenders

These are phrases like and stuff, and things, or something or and all that. They are termed 'general extenders' because they often indicate that the previous word is part of a set, so they extend the meaning of that word without having to specify all the members of the set. For example, and stuff in I used to wear punk ear rings and stuff refers to a set of things that people wear when they want to look like a punk. Referring to a set is not necessarily their most important function though. Sometimes people use these little words to be purposely vague, to signal that they are not quite sure about something. However their most important function seems to be to create solidarity between speakers. By using a

general extender the person speaking suggests that their interlocutor shares their knowledge or opinion, so there is no need to be explicit.

Hedges

These are words that down tone the meaning of the following word (e.g. that's a bit odd) or add a note of intentional vagueness to what someone is saying (e.g. she's about thirty years old; I may come along later).

Intensifiers

These are words like very or really that occur before an adjective or an adverb and boost the strength of its meaning (very fast, really delicious, well funny). Young people often choose intensifiers that are different from those used by older generations, so intensifiers tend to fall in and out of fashion in spoken language.

Monopthong

This is a vowel sound that is 'pure' in that the beginning and the end of the vowel are more or less the same. This is by contrast with a diphthong, which glides from one position to another. In Multicultural London English some vowels that for older Londoners are diphthongs, such as the vowel in words that rhyme with GOAT, are now Monopthong (the spelling of GOAT reflects the two different articulations of the beginning and end of the diphthong).

Narrative structure

People often tell stories about past events, and when they do the stories often have a structure to them. They may begin with an abstract, where the speaker says what the

story will be about. This is usually followed by an orientation section where people mention relevant aspects of the story such as who was involved, where they were and when the events happened. The main events of the story are given in the complicating action: a series of short clauses, in the order in which the events happened. There may then be a resolution, where the speaker tells listeners what happened in the end and a coda which rounds off the story. Stories do not always have all these sections, but the complicating action and orientation sections are usually present. Throughout their narrative, people use different ways of making it interesting for their listeners so that they realize the point of the story.

Nonstandard grammar

The extracts contain some of the nonstandard forms that are frequent throughout the English-speaking world. The main nonstandard forms in the extracts are past tense and past participle verb forms.

These are very variable, even in standard English where, for example, the past participle of LEARN can be learned or learnt (I've learned this and I've learnt this); and the past tense of RING can be rang or rung (I rang the door bell and I rung the door bell). Some of the most frequent nonstandard forms are the past tense forms of DO (I done it) and COME (I come here yesterday), but there are many more.

Past tense forms of BE are also very variable. In standard English the past tense forms are I was, you were, he/she/it was, we were and they were: except for you, they mark a distinction between singular subjects (I and he, she, it) and plural subjects. In most nonstandard varieties the tendency is to use just one form – either were where standard English has was, or was where standard English has were – though speakers vary between using the standard and the nonstandard forms. In most urban nonstandard varieties in the UK there is a tendency to use weren't in negative contexts and was in

positive contexts, though this is changing in areas influenced by other varieties such as Afro-Caribbean English or postcolonial varieties of English.

Non-fluency features

These include

- silent pauses

- filled pauses (er and erm – spelt uh and um in American English)

- repetition

- false starts (like crossings out in writing)

They have many functions in spoken language, including dramatic effect, highlighting what is coming next, and showing that the speaker is planning what to say next but doesn't yet want to give up their turn at speaking. Individual speakers vary in the frequency with which they use these features.

Er and erm tend to occur either at the beginning of a clause or before a new topic is introduced. They also occur when speakers are searching for a word. Unfilled (silent) pauses are often used in the same way. These are all planning points in spoken language.

Repetition of a single word is often at the start of a clause or a noun phrase, showing that the speaker has mapped out the rough grammatical outline of what they want to say but have not yet produced the detail (e.g. I I'll go out soon; I'd like a large vanilla ice cream). In these cases the repetition is usually of a function word. Sometimes speakers repeat a word but add something extra (e.g. that's lovely really lovely). Here the repeated word is more likely to be a content word. Like false starts, repetitions allow listeners to hear speakers' corrections. This is very different from writing, where in a final draft there is no trace of revisions.

Note: Content words provide the main information (what the speaker is talking about): function words have grammatical functions or relate parts of the clause together. So in the cat sat on the mat the content words are cat, sat and mat and the function words are the and on.

Quotative expressions

People often report what they or other people said. Direct reported speech (the little bear said "someone's been sitting on my chair") is more lively and interesting than indirect reported speech (the little bear said that someone had been sitting on his chair) because by appearing to quote someone, the speaker almost acts out what they are reporting.

When they introduce direct reported speech older speakers of English mainly use SAY or GO to introduce the quote, or there may be no introduction at all (known as a zero quotative) if it is clear whose speech is being reported. Younger speakers have an additional quotative expression – also BE LIKE – and in London there is an even newer quotative expression, THIS IS +speaker. Other quotative expressions are also heard.

Researchers usually analyze not only the quotative expression that's used but also the content of the quote, which can be:

• reported direct speech e.g. they said "move away"

• reported thought (sometimes termed internal dialogue): I was thinking "move away!"

• non-lexicalized sound: I was like "ugh"

• gesture: I went <shrugs shoulders>

Rhetorical strategies

Speakers seem to like to use three part lists (for example, we like strawberries, mangoes and apples). Sometimes they utter three consecutive clauses with the same grammatical structure but slightly different lexical content (this strategy is much loved by politicians, as listeners often spontaneously applaud after the third clause or the third item in the list).

Other strategies allow speakers to emphasize different parts of their discourse. For example they may put part of an utterance in an unusual position, as happens with 'fronting' (see Stan's story about Life in the Army).

Slang

For linguists, 'slang' refers to the vocabulary typically used by a particular social group (for example, army slang or Cockney rhyming slang). In the extracts young people sometimes use words or phrases that are typical of Multicultural London English (for example, Angela in her story about Street Trouble).

2.10.3 THE CEFR

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (abbreviated to CEFR, or CEF) is a description of language ability. It is divided into six main levels, ranging from A1 (beginner) to C2 (advanced). It is 'language neutral' and describes what learners can do in terms of the different language **skills** like speaking or reading, as well as looking at language **competencies** like the learners' vocabulary range, and **communication strategies -** how learners use their resources to communicate.

Since its publication in 2001, the CEF has been translated into 37 languages, and widely disseminated in Europe and parts of Asia and Latin America. The six levels have been particularly influential and have generated a great deal of discussion in the fields of curriculum development, language teaching, and especially in assessment.

English Profile follows this philosophy, and aims to **describe** what learners can do at each level. To do this, EP researchers are using a corpus of learner language which allows them to investigate what learners are actually doing with the English language as they progress through the levels.

The Global Scale descriptors for CEFR levels [Council of Europe 2001: 24]

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express himself/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

| Basic User | A2 | Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. |
| | A1 | Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. |

2.11 DIFFERENCES IN GENDER AND EDUCATION.

Sex-based cerebral differences are real and permanent. These differences are not just structural in nature, but also functional, and are directly related to perception and ability. While men and women have equivalent general IQs, their intelligence is manifested through activation of different cerebral structures. Female brains tend toward greater bilateral brain symmetry than male brains, while males display greater intra-hemispheric localized activity during task processing. These processing variations contribute to inherent gender-based strengths. For instance, girls tend to naturally excel at activities that require multi-tasking, and boys tend to perform well at tasks that require a more narrow focus. Brain maturation rate differences, such as those involving the language-specialized and spatial-mechanical regions also affect boys' and girls' aptitudes and readiness for learning. Furthermore, amygdale and prefrontal cortex interactions play large roles in mediating behavior – especially in school-aged children. During adolescence, synaptic pathways are strengthened and others are pruned back according to use. Thus, there are large implications for the role of education in preparing the brains of children for adulthood. Since training has been demonstrated to improve and broaden

cognitive skill sets in both males and females, a solid educational foundation is crucial for producing well-rounded individuals.

Due to their unique developmental needs, boys and girls benefit from gender-tailored instructional methods to enhance enjoyment, target cerebral aptitudes, and improve the areas of their brains that are weakest. It is not a 'one size fits all' concept. For boys, physical tasks and experiential learning should be used to stimulate interest and teach to their strengths. Kinesthetic activities can also be used to introduce tasks that develop weaker areas such as language and fine motor skills. Visual methods of delivering instructional concepts (such as using maps, charts, symbols, and models) are preferable. Providing opportunities for boys to become more emotionally vested in school through competition, personalizing instructional spaces and the introduction of positive male role models can help male students see school as relevant and important. Environmental requirements such as room to move around, bell schedule adjustments, fewer distractions, and cooler classroom temperatures are also important considerations in the education of boys.

The following sections deal with ideas on how to provide a gender-specific education for boys and girls. These sections are meant to be speculative, looking to collate brain research and current best practice pedagogy – particularly best practice techniques established by single-sex school educators. While much has been published in this area, not all of the literature is previewed. It remains to be seen if the causal relationships that are hypothesized to exist between the brain and learning can ever be conclusively proven.

2.11.1 The Education of Boys

Many educators and parents agree that boys, in particular, are increasingly more at risk in our current Canadian school climate. For example, results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2000) show that males in all countries (and in all 10 Canadian provinces) lag significantly behind females in most school subjects, with only math and science showing small gender gaps (Statistics Canada, 2008). This does

not necessarily mean that achievement needs to be equal between boys and girls, but large performance differences indicate systemic educational shortcomings. In addition to gender gaps in learning, Statistics Canada reports that 15% of male Canadian students drop out of high school, compared to only 9% of females (1999 data). Despite there being a call to address the failings of schools in girls' education less than a generation ago (e.g. Lee & Bryk, 1986), it is boys who currently seem to be the most disadvantaged.

In addressing the apparent shortcomings of boys, the research provides a strong caution about the limits of neuroplasticity (the brains ability to be altered). Science shows us that brains develop thicker neural networks and greater dendritic connections with learning. With practice, girls and boys can develop strengths that do not naturally come easily to their gender. However, "the gender of the human brain is not plastic…. You cannot change the brain of a boy into the brain of a girl". (Gurian& Stevens, 2006, p. 91). Thus, we are left with the need to accommodate gender differences without the hope of a universal education prescription for all brains. The question is: how?

Educational literature is rich with books and articles about how best to address gender differences through teaching methodology. In fact a Google search of "brain AND teaching strategies AND gender differences" yielded 160 000 listings! While some of the methods suggested in the literature may leave educators baffled (such as instructions to use pink in all-girls classrooms and soft blue for all-boys classrooms), many of the brain-based gender strategies will not seem particularly new, and have been in use within co-educational classrooms for some time. Other strategies are significantly different for each gender and suggest the need for a gender specific education system.

The literature is clear that to address boys' multivariate needs, one requires a multitude of strategies. For instance, practically all educational theorists encourage teaching through the provision of hands-on and experiential activities. For boys, this is particularly important because their brains (with their innate spatial-mechanical and gross motor skills aptitude) are highly geared toward the physical universe. When boys are engaged in kinesthetic activities, such as using manipulative in mathematics or building a model of a fur trading fort in social studies, they will not only be more interested in what they are doing, but they will also be strengthening neural connections within the most active areas

of their brains. However, hands-on activities can also be designed to help improve boys' fine motor skills, which are weaker than girls'. Activities such as beadwork, creating circuit boards in science, and detailed map sketching are engaging and will improve their small muscle hand-eye coordination.

2.11.2 The Education of Girls

Many of the strategies designed to improve boys' achievement may also be good pedagogy for teaching girls. Like boys, girls also need opportunities to foster school ownership and form bonds. They too benefit from decorating their cubbies and seeing their art and pictures on the wall. However, it is more important for girls than boys that learning objectives and activities are connected to real life situations and problems. Theoretical concepts, without practical application are of little interest to most girls. It is also of particular importance to girls to bond with their teacher, as many girls will not take intellectual or emotional risks before those relationships are established (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004). To help establish trusting and caring relationships, teachers should speak softly with girls (unlike with boys), smile often, and maintain eye contact.

Teachers should seek always to be positive and fair with both boys and girls. Special treatment (both positive and negative) will distance children from the teacher and increase feelings of distrust.

Bonding to classmates comes easier for girls than for boys, as their greater oxytocin levels make them more socially motivated (Campbell, 2008; Gurian & Stevens, 2004; Wilson, 2006). Most girls will readily look for ways of being part of a group. Within classroom small group settings, even timid girls, whose voices are not always heard in a larger setting, can discuss their ideas. Working together in this manner will strengthen the connections within female cortical language regions and improve listening skills. Teachers should look to scramble group compositions often so girls become used to leaving their comfort zones and gaining exposure to new ideas. Shifting group dynamics will also create increased opportunities for leadership roles and breaking out of established patterns of behavior. Moreover, using small groups to break down social barriers within the classroom may help prevent the pervasive girl-girl psychological bullying that affects many females.

Girls need positive female role models in their lives. Meeting successful female professionals, especially women in the sciences, can help to break down perceived barriers, and lead to higher performance (Marx, 2002). In fact, while enrolment in the traditionally male dominated subjects of Physics and Calculus is generally lower for girls than boys at co-educational schools, it is certainly not because of a lack of intelligence or aptitude for these disciplines. Lack of confidence, low self-esteem, and being inordinately critical of their own performance are some of the major hurdles that prevent girls from choosing these subjects (Feingold, 1994). Moreover, self-esteem tends to be lower for females in general, which is thought to be partly a mechanism of the higher levels of serotonin released in female brains (Taylor, 2004). For instance, many educators have stories of boys who get B's and think they're brilliant, while girls, who get B's, think they're dumb. When this lack of confidence creates stress, brain studies show this inhibits learning in girls. Furthermore, girls are more likely than boys to attribute academic difficulty to lack of ability, rather than lack of effort - especially in mathematics (Lloyd, Walsh, &Yailagh, 2005). When girls are trained in the concepts of neuroplasticity (that the brain can grow greater neural density and form more connections with increased effort), then attitudes, effort, and performance have improved (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007; Halpern, Aronson, Reimer, Simpkins, Star & Wentzel, 2007; Utman, 1997). Thus teachers of Science and Mathematics, in particular, need to be more patient with girls, work to boost their self-confidence, and focus on the concept of 'success through effort', rather than 'success through ability'.

Physical games and activities should be used to supplement sedentary tasks so girls can improve their gross motor skills, which lag behind males of the same age. These activities do not have to take place only in Physical Education (P.E.) or on the sports field, but can also be a part of academic classes. For instance girls can act out a scene from a story in English class or go outside to estimate the height of trees through trigonometric triangulation in Mathematics class. Such activities will improve the connections within the cortical regions that process spatial-mechanical skills, which tend to be their least developed cerebral areas, in addition to providing meaningful applications of learned skills. Through the use of puzzles (such as Rubik's Cube and tan grams), and other hands-on spatial training activities, girls' logical and abstract brain regions in both

hemispheres will also be strengthened (Delisi & Wolford, 2002; Halpern, 2000). These same neural connections help enhance the abstract/symbolic brain structures that process higher level mathematical relationships so girls are more prepared for the rigors of high school and university level science and mathematics in later years (Sorby, 2001).

Despite the results of pen and paper testing, some may also debate whether girls are truly more successful than boys. How is this success measured best? By test scores, self-esteem levels, or the percentage of girls who enter university? By job salaries or upper-level job titles? Many would agree that success is multivariate and not always quantifiable. Regardless of the measuring stick used, few believe that traditional school environments have been tailored to provide all of girls' needs.

2.11.3 Gender Training and Single-Sex Education

Single sex education is an old idea that has gained new relevance and support in light of brain studies. Research findings increasingly show that boys and girls in single sex schools outperform their peers in co-ed schools (Hamilton, 1985; Lee & Bryk, 1986; Sax. 2007; Shapka & Keating, 2003). For instance, Sax (2007) reports on a three-year pilot project within a Florida public school that separated students into three groups: co-ed, all girls, and all boys. All the groups were roughly equal in terms of ethnicity, intellectual ability and socio-economic factors. At the end of the project, the percentages of 4th Grade students who met grade proficiency on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test were found to be: boys in co-ed classes 37%; girls in co-ed classes 59%; girls in single-sex classes 75%; boys in single-sex classes 86%. This study clearly shows significant advantages for children educated in a single-gender classroom. However, details about the methods of instruction and whether they matched brain-based gender strategies were not offered in Sax's analysis.

According to Magon (2009), there are some differences in the type of instruction given to boys and girls. Those are detailed in the following chart.

Gender Differentiating Instructional Strategies Derived From the Literature

2.11.4 Instructional Strategies for Boys

Mannerisms

- Use a loud voice when speaking to class
- be directive, concise and brief with instructions
- minimize verbal and written instructions
- call on boys, rather than waiting for volunteers (slight pressure/stress enhances performance)
- question boys while they are doing an activity
- avoid lots of transitions and give adequate time to transition between topics
- when confronting a boy for a more serious talk, sit or stand beside them rather than in front of them (less intimidating) or use a physical activity, such as passing a ball to mediate discussion
- foster ownership of learning by displaying boys' work and personalizing material
    - provide opportunities for boys to relate to male role models

Environment

- maintain a slightly cool temperature in the classroom
- ensure boys have enough physical space to move freely in classroom (e.g. arm swinging) -   provide an environment free from external distractions

Activities

- provide learning opportunities that are physical in nature
- provide activities that don't have too many things to focus on
- use games and other ways to build competition into lessons
- provide activities to build fine motor skills
- provide visual means of learning material (maps, diagrams, charts, models, etc.) when possible
- provide activities that promote male bonding between students and with teacher

2.11.5 Instructional Strategies for Girls

<u>Mannerisms</u>
- use a soft and gentle voice
- use body language that conveys openness and approachability including smiling and good eye contact (crucial for girls to trust and bond with teacher)
- allow girls to volunteer answers without pressure (stress/pressure situations lessen performance)
- avoid creating high stress situations in class when possible
- be consistent and even-tempered
- seek privacy when confronting girls for behavior
- provide opportunities for girls to relate to female role models
- provide connections between what girls are expected to learn and real life and/or their interests
- scramble group compositions so girls become used to working outside their circle of friend and so they have different opportunities for leadership and followership
- be particularly supportive and encouraging when teaching science and math (girls can lack confidence in these areas)
- teacher's appearance is important for establishing relevance and respect – following current fashions is recommended

<u>Environment</u>
- maintain a slightly warm temperature in the classroom
- try to use materials that make the classroom more homely, such as plants and warm colors

<u>Activities</u>
- provide lots of opportunities for girls to work in small groups (cooperative learning is particularly important for girls)
- make learning fun by providing girls an opportunity to join in non-competitive games and group tasks
- provide hands-on activities that reinforce real world applications

2.11.6 Differences in Language learning.

According to a 2008 study of young learners at Northwestern University, girls and boys process language differently. The study revealed that, when learning language, girls' brains show greater activity in the areas used for language encoding.

Boys' brains, on the other hand, show activity in the areas associated with visual and aural functions. This means that while girls can process an abstract piece of language more efficiently, boys need some sensory reinforcement to process the data.

For males, the most effective way to study language is to learn visually (seeing a written word or illustration) as well as orally (through listening and repetition).

They use more study strategies
According to the language journal Porta Linguarum, studies from Europe, East Asia, and Latin America have all concluded that female foreign language learners tend to use more varied study methods than their male peers.

Female learners engage more skills (speaking, reading, etc.) and elements of language (vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.), than males, who tend to stick with only a handful of study methods.

A variety of review methods and subjects helps language learners build their skills holistically while preventing boredom.

For learners who may be stuck in a rut, there's no shortage of language study apps, workbooks, podcasts and websites, all targeting different skills.

2.12 Glossary on key terms

CEFR : The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (abbreviated to CEFR, or CEF) is a description of language ability.

Coherence linguistically is what makes a text semantically meaningful.

Cohesion: It is the grammatical and lexical linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning. It is related to the broader concept of coherence.

Details: The specific information about the main idea or support for the main idea.

Inference: An inference is an idea or conclusion that's drawn from evidence and reasoning. An inference is an educated guess.

Main Idea: A statement that tells the author's point about the topic. The main idea provides the message of a given paragraph or the argument that is being made about the topic.

Methodology: a branch of pedagogic dealing with analysis and evaluation of subjects to be taught and of the methods of teaching them. A set or system of methods, principles, and rules for regulating a given discipline, as in the arts or sciences.

Paragraph: A group of sentences organized around a topic, a main idea about the topic, and details that support the main idea.

Reading: to comprehend the meaning of (something written or printed) by looking at and interpreting the written or printed characters.

Scanning: reading to locate specific information re-reading: reading to confirm meanings and understandings, and to clarify details.

Skimming: reading to gain an overall understanding of the content of the text. Skimming is the very rapid reading of whole text in order to grasp sense of the main ideas and some of the supporting details. It implies an intentionally lower attention to all the details of a text in exchange for a quick sense of the entire piece.

Topic: The overall subject of a paragraph.

Word: It is defined as a single distinct meaningful element of speech or writing, used to form sentences with the others. (Concise Oxford English dictionary, 2008, 1660-1661).

CHAPTER III

2 TYPE OF STUDY

It is well-known that in the research field of the human behavior there are four different and unique types of study, which are classified in: descriptive, explorative, explicative and co relational.

This research is classified as a descriptive study which aims to highlight important properties of people, groups, communities or any phenomenon submitted to analysis. Therefore, this research is aimed to describe findings on events happening at a specific time, without interfering or modifying the conditions on those events. This research is only describing results.

This research describes the differences in speaking and reading performance of students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course through two different methodologies: a Blended course vs. a face-to-face course. The Foreign Language Department is not officially implementing blended courses yet, and this research will contribute to the Implementation of future different courses for students who expect to obtain the Bachelor of English Teaching Language.

Finally, this research will describe which methodology produces a higher impact in students' academic performance. All findings described in this research will lead to future investigations related to the same methodologies.

CHAPTER IV

4. HYPOTHESIS

4.1   GENERAL HYPOTHESIS

A face-to-face course develops a higher reading and speaking proficiency than a blended course on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.

4.2 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS
4.2.1   SPECIFICHYPOTHESIS 1

Ha. A Traditional face-to-face approach produces higher spoken discourse using a wide fluency when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Ho. A Traditional face-to-face approach does not produce any difference in spoken discourse or fluency when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

4.2.2   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 2

Ha. A Traditional face-to-face approach produces a higher development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Ho. A Traditional face-to-face approach does not produce any difference in the development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

4.2.3   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 3

Ha. Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher speaking abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

Ho. Subject schedules do not produce any difference in the development of speaking abilities for students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course.

4.2.4   PECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 4

Ha. Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher reading abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

Ho. Subject schedules do not produce any difference in the development of reading abilities for students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course.

4.2.5   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 5

Ha. The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the reading proficiency of men and women

Ho. There is no difference in the development of reading proficiency between men and women regardless the methodology.

4.2.6   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 6

Ha. The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the speaking proficiency of men and women.

Ho. There is no difference in the development of speaking proficiency between men and women regardless the methodology.

4.3 MATRIX OF CONGRUENCE BETWEEN HYPOTHESIS AND OBJECTIVES

Specific objective 1
To find out which group of students reaches a higher speaking proficiency, those from a blended learning course or those from the traditional face-to face learning approach.

➡

Specific hypothesis 1
A Traditional face-to-face approach produces higher spoken discourse using a wide fluency when taking Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Specific objective 2
To find out which group of students reaches a higher reading proficiency, those from a blended learning course or those from the traditional face-to-face learning approach.

➡

Specific hypothesis 2
A Traditional face-to-face approach produces a higher development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Specific objective 3

To identify how schedules influence speaking proficiency.

➡

Specific Hypothesis 3

Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher speaking abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

General objective
To determine the elements in a blended and a face-to-face approach that influence to a higher performance in speaking and reading on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.

➡

General Hypothesis
A face-to-face course develops a higher reading and speaking proficiency than a blended course on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.

Specific objective 4

To identify how schedules influence reading proficiency.

Specific Hypothesis 4

Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher reading abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

Specific Objective 5

To establish whether or not gender can impact reading capabilities on students taking Intensive Advanced English I, by means of a blended and a face-to-face course

Specific hypothesis 5

The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the reading proficiency of men and women

Specific Objective 6

To establish whether or not gender can impact speaking capabilities on students taking Intensive Advanced English I, by means of a blended and a face-to-face

Specific hypothesis 6

The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the speaking proficiency of men and women.

4.4 OPERACIONALIZATION OF HYPOTHESIS

General Objective	**To determine the elements in a blended and a face-to-face approach that influence to a higher performance in speaking and reading on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.**	
General Hypothesis	A face-to-face course develops a higher reading and speaking proficiency than a blended course on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.	
variables	**Independent Variable**	**Dependent Variable**
	X. Methodology	**Y^1. Spoken discourse** **Y^2. Reading Proficiency**
Conceptual definition	**Part A** **Face-to-Face Instruction:** It occurs when an instructor and students at an educational institution get together in a single place, where the teaching and learning takes place at the same time. **Part B** **Blended learning:** It is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path and or pace, and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home.	Part A Spoken Discourse: Conversation or discussion between people. Part B Reading: It is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.
Operational definition	Application of a questionnaire to describe methodology used during each Course.	Part A: Application of an oral interview Using the CEFR Scale. Part B: Application of a written exam.

Indicators	**Part A**
	   1. Assessment,
	   2. Approach
	   3. sources
	
	Part B
	   1. Assessment,
	   2. Approach,
	   3. Management
	   4. Resources
	   5. Software
		Part A
		1. Ability to express topics of personal interest
		2. Production of suitable phrases
		3. A clear broad range of language use
		4. High degree of grammatical fluency
		5. A range of discourse and structured speech
		6. Smooth flow of connectors and cohesive range
		Part B
		   1. topic and main ideas
		   2. vocabulary in context
		   3. facts and details
		   4. referents
		   5. inferences

Research Instrument	**Questionnaire**	**Part A:**

		Spoken Interview. **Part B:** **Reading Exam.**
Objective 1	To find out which group of students reaches a higher speaking proficiency, those from a blended learning course or those from the traditional face-to face learning approach.	
Hypothesis 1	A Traditional face-to-face approach produces higher spoken discourse using a wide fluency when taking Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.	
variables	**Independent Variable** **X. Methodology**	**Dependent Variable** **Y. spoken discourse**
Conceptual definition	**Methodology:** **It is a branch of pedagogic dealing with analysis and evaluation of subjects to be taught and of the methods of teaching them.** **Part A** **Face-to-Face Instruction:** It occurs when an instructor and students at an educational institution get together in a single place, where the teaching and learning takes place at the same time. **Part B** **Blended learning**: It is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path and or pace, and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home.	Conversation or discussion between people.
Operational definition	Application of a questionnaire to describe methodology used during each Course.	Application of an oral interview. Using the CEFR Scale

Indicators	**Part A**
	    4. Assessment,
	    5. Approach
	    6. sources
	
	Part B
	
	    6. Assessment,
	    7. Approach,
	    8. Management
	    9. Resources
	    10. Software
		1. Ability to express topics of personal interest
		2. Production of suitable phrases
		3. A clear broad range of language use
		4. High degree of grammatical fluency
		5. A range of discourse and structured speech
		6. Smooth flow of connectors and cohesive range

Research Instrument	**Questionnaire**	**Spoken Interview.**

Objective 2	**To find out which group of students reaches a higher reading proficiency, those from a blended learning course or those from the traditional face-to-face learning approach.**	
Hypothesis 2	A Traditional face-to-face approach produces a higher development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.	
variables	**Independent Variable**	**Dependent Variable**
	X. Methodology	**Y. Reading Skills**
Conceptual definition	**Methodology:** **It is a branch of pedagogic dealing with analysis and evaluation of subjects to be taught and of the methods of teaching them.** **Part A** **Face-to-Face Instruction:** It occurs when an instructor and students at an educational institution get together in a single place, where the teaching and learning takes place at the same time. **Part B** **Blended learning**: It is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path and or pace, and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home.	Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.
Operational definition	Application of a questionnaire to describe methodology used during each Course.	Application of a written exam.
Indicators	**Part A** 7. Assessment, 8. Approach 9. sources **Part B** 11. Assessment, 12. Approach, 13. Management 14. Resources **15.** Software	1. **topic and main ideas** 2. **vocabulary in context** 3. **facts and details** 4. **referents** 5. **inferences**
Research Instrument	**Questionnaire**	**Reading Exam.**

Objective 3	**To identify how schedules influence speaking proficiency.**	
Hypothesis 3	**Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher speaking abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.**	
variables	**Independent Variable**	**Dependent Variable**
	X. Class schedules	**Y. spoken discourse**
Conceptual definition	**Class schedule:** A student's program of classes. A program of events or appointments expected in a given time.	Conversation or discussion between people.
Operational definition	Checkup of the schedules published by the Foreign Language Department during semester II 2014.	Application of an oral interview. Using the CEFR Scale
Indicators	**Time scheduled for each course.**	1. Ability to express topics of personal interest 2. Production of suitable phrases 3. A clear broad range of language use 4. High degree of grammatical fluency 5. A range of discourse and structured speech 6. Smooth flow of connectors and cohesive range
Research Instrument	**Direct observation**	**Reading Exam.**

Objective 4	**To identify how schedules influence reading proficiency.**	
Hypothesis 4	Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher reading abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.	
variables	**Independent Variable**	**Dependent Variable**
	X. Class schedules	**Y. Reading Skills**
Conceptual definition	**Class schedule:** A student's program of classes. A program of events or appointments expected in a given time.	Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.
Operational definition	Checkup of the schedules published by the Foreign Language Department during semester II 2014.	Application of a written exam.
Indicators	**Time scheduled for each course.**	1. **topic and main ideas** 2. **vocabulary in context** 3. **facts and details** 4. **referents** 5. **inferences**
Research Instrument	**Direct observation**	**Reading Exam.**

Objective 5	**To establish whether or not gender can impact reading capabilities on students taking Intensive Advanced English I, by means of a blended and a face-to-face course**	
Hypothesis 5	The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the reading proficiency of men and women	
variables	**Independent Variable**	**Dependent Variable**
	X. Gender	**Y. Reading Skills**
Conceptual definition	**Gender:** Either the male or female division of a species.	Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.
Operational definition	Making a list of students on each group.	Application of a written exam.
Indicators	• **Male** • **Female**	1. **topic and main ideas** 2. **vocabulary in context** 3. **facts and details** 4. **referents** 5. **inferences**
Research Instrument	**Direct observation**	**Reading Exam.**

Objective 6	**To establish whether or not gender can impact speaking capabilities on students taking Intensive Advanced English I, by means of a blended and a face-to-face course.**	
Hypothesis 6	The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the speaking proficiency of men and women.	
variables	**Independent Variable** **X. Gender**	**Dependent Variable** **Y. spoken discourse**
Conceptual definition	**Gender:** Either the male or female division of species.	Conversation or discussion between people.
Operational definition	Making a list of students on each group.	Application of an oral interview. Using the CEFR Scale
Indicators	 • **Male** • **Female**	1. Ability to express topics of personal interest 2. Production of suitable phrases 3. A clear broad range of language use 4. High degree of grammatical fluency 5. A range of discourse and structured speech **6.** Smooth flow of connectors and cohesive range
Research Instrument	**Direct observation**	**Reading Exam.**

CHAPTER V

5 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research was conducted under a non-*experimental- transactional* design, supported on a descriptive research type.

There was no situation created, this research was made without manipulating deliberately the variables; this focuses on the given reality phenomenon in its natural context, without intervention or direct influence, for further analysis.

This research was aimed to describe the incidence of several variables and their connection during a specific period of time. This descriptive design was chosen since it gives an idea about the state of one or more variables in one or more groups of people or things. The process consisted in measuring the speaking and reading abilities of two groups of students, and their connection with other independent variables.

CHAPTER VI

6 POPULATION AND SAMPLE
6.1 POPULATION

This study took place at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, on semester II, 2014. The population was the students from the major "Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching" taking the course "Intensive Advanced English I".

6.2 SAMPLE

In order to carry on this investigation, a Convenience Sampling was taken from the students who were taking the Intensive Advanced English I. There were a total of 4 groups taking this course during semester II in 2014; students from groups 03 and 04 were selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to our research and because of the type of methodology carried on each group. There were 19 students in group 03, and 27 in group 04.

This sampling technique was non-probabilistic (there was no criteria to select the students), and this allowed the research to obtain basic data and trends that represented the whole population.

CHAPTER VII

7   DATA GATHERING PROCESS

7.1 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

7.1.1   READING TEST INSTRUMENT

A sample of a reading section from the TOFEL was taken to assess students of the Advanced Intensive English I. It consisted of two reading sections, and two different subjects; the first one was a 12 lines paragraph with 9 selective questions, on the topic "Atherosclerosis"; the second reading was a paragraph of 24 lines and 8 selective questions, on the topic "Cross-pollination by bees".

7.1.2 **ORAL INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT**

All students who took the reading test were also evaluated in speaking performance through a short interview. The instrument used was a questionnaire composed of the following open-ended questions:

- What is your name?
- Tell me a good memory about your childhood.
- When did that happen?
- Why was it special?

- What do you like about the Advanced English I subject?
- Why?
- What is the most challenging task during this major?
- Why was it challenging?

- What are your expectations when you get graduated?
- Are there any other expectations you have?

7.1.3 SURVEY INSTRUMENT

All students who took the reading and oral interview evaluation were given a short survey. A unique survey was designed for each group based on key indicators taken from the hypothesis operational. The purpose of this was to describe the differences in the methodologies they worked with since in this research those were considered as the independent variables.

7.2   DATA GATHERING PLAN

7.2.1   DATA GATHERING PLAN IN THE READING ASSESSMENT

A reading exam based on a TOEFL preparation book was edited, and prepared in 2 pages, along with an answer sheet. Two groups of students of the advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 were tested with a short reading exam. Several factors were taken into consideration such as the answers, the methodology, the sources they reviewed the most, and the time they took to finish the reading test. During the test each student had time to read the paragraphs. After that they marked their answers in the answer sheet based on the skills they used to read the paragraphs.

The answer key was used to determine the correct responses on student´s performance, all skills related to find the topic and main ideas, vocabulary in context, facts and details, referents, and inferences. This information was stored in our database, and then the correct responses were highlighted out of all responses for each student. Using filters, we were able to extract the percentage of correct answers so that a score could be given to each student and to get an average of the total score for each group. This information was useful to depict and compare important data and major findings.

7.2.2 DATA GATHERING PLAN FOR THE SPEAKING ASSESSMENT

After reviewing several models of speaking proficiency test, our group composed a questionnaire with open-ended questions.

A rubric format was prepared for each student. An appointment was set and we took the time to interview each student from the Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04.

Interviews took place in an empty classroom. All interviews were recorded using mobile devices; this data was downloaded and stored in a data base, then it was reviewed and discussed to grade each student´s recording.

A rubric based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was used to assign a scale to each performance.

A data base was built to classify the amount of students graded on each scale. This information allowed depicting data discovered, and making comparisons among different variables. Interviews will also be given a numerical score in order to determine averages between the two groups in the research.

7.2.3 DATA GATHERING PLAN FOR SURVEY

After collecting and reviewing student´s surveys, all answers were added in an excel database, in order to highlight several aspects on the methodology, such as the evaluation type, the approach, and sources used during the course.

In the survey designed for the blended course, additional aspects were included such as the type of instructions handled for the virtual platform, and other details related to such methodology.

CHAPTER VIII

8 DATA ANALYSIS

8.1 DATA BASE

During this research, the information collected was related to two major skills to develop on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course: Reading and Speaking. As these skills were measured on two different methodologies: face-to-face learning vs. Blended learning. It was necessary to build a database composed of two main worksheets, then the information was classified and listed for each methodology.

8.1.1 READING – DATA BASE

After the selected population of students was assessed the reading exam, those were classified according to their methodology. (Face-to-face vs. Blended learning).

A summary chart was designed using Microsoft Excel. All students were registered listing their first and last name, time spent during reading test, and a detailed answer pattern in which the answer selected for each item in the reading test was filed (A,B, C or D). Scores were graded based on the number of correct answers.

The amount of correct answers on each item was obtained by means of using filters.

Using the answer key, it was possible to classify and number the answers each student provided for each reading skill (topic and main ideas, vocabulary in context, facts and details, referents and inferences). Therefore, this database was able to list the amount of correct answers the whole group obtained for each item. The same process was calculated in both main worksheets. This information was the basis for depicting percentages and numerical results in the data analysis.

The scores for both groups was were transferred into the SPSS software in order to test any difference in the average for each group.

8.1.2 SPEAKING – DATA BASE

Both Intensive Advanced English I groups, 03 and 04 were assessed through an oral interview. Each conversation was recorded and evaluated based on the CEFR rubric for speaking skills. In order to store such records, it was necessary to build a database using Microsoft Excel. Besides Storing the reading results in two main worksheets, the results for speaking were allocated according to their methodology (Face-to-face vs. Blended). A second list on each group was created in which it was registered each student's name and proficiency scale (Early Intermediate, Intermediate Speaker, Early Advanced, and Advanced Speaker). Then the number of students on each scale was obtained, and therefore, graphics could be created upon this data, to depict and make comparisons between these two groups. By using this information it will be possible to make a qualitative analysis.

In the other hand, a numerical score for speaking proficiency will be assigned to each student, in order to calculate whether the results are significant. The software to execute and carry a quantitative analysis will be SPSS.

8.2 STATISTICAL PROCEDURES
8.2.1 READING STATISTICAL PROCEDURE

In this research we aim to highlight which group performs with a higher reading proficiency. The process used for this research was a comparison of means.

The software used to obtain such elemental data was Microsoft Excel.

The process to obtain such results is detailed as follows:

Below are listed the results for the Students from Intensive Advanced English I courses, groups 03 and 04.

Face-to-face Reading Scores. (19 students)

4.12, 3.53, 8.82, 4.71, 5.29, 7.65, 6.47, 4.71, 8.24, 7.06, 2.94, 6.47, 7.65, 6.47, 7.65, 5.29, 5.29, 5.29, 5.98.

Blended Reading Scores (27 students)

2.35, 4.71, 3.53, 1.76, 5.88, 6.47, 5.88, 3.53, 5.29, 4.71, 5.29, 1.76, 2.35, 5.88, 7.06, 5.88, 5.29, 2.94, 5.29, 2.35, 1.76, 1.18, 5.29, 7.06, 4.71, 4.12, 4.71.

In order to obtain the Arithmetic Mean for each group, the following formula is used:

$$A = \frac{S}{N}$$

Where

A = average (or arithmetic mean)
N = the number of terms (e.g., the number of items or numbers being averaged)
S = the sum of the numbers in the set of interest (e.g., the sum of the numbers being averaged)

Then we have the Arithmetic mean for each group as follows:

Face-to-Face Course **Reading proficiency**	Blended Course **Reading proficiency**
Mean Formula $$A = \frac{S}{N}$$	Mean Formula $$A = \frac{S}{N}$$
$A = \frac{113.63}{19} = \textbf{5.98}$	$A = \frac{117.06}{27} = 4.34$
Face-to-face Course Average =5.98	**Blended Course Average** **=4.34**

The result shows that the Face-to-face course has developed a higher reading proficiency over the Blended course. A significant difference of 1.64 shows the advantage of the Face-to-face course.

In order to find out whether this difference is significant, a t-test will be used on this results. Such test will be carried by using the software SPSS. Further calculation and hypothesis test will be developed in chapter IX.

8.2.2 SPEAKING STATISTICAL PROCEDURE

In this research it is also important to highlight which group performs with a higher speaking proficiency. The process used in this data was a comparison of Means. As each spoken performance was classified using a CEFR scale, a separate analysis was built upon each level. The software used to obtain such valuable data and percentages was Microsoft Excel.

The interviews were recorded for later analysis. Each recording was labeled with the name of the student, level and course. A level (rank) was assigned based on the CEFR scale. From the data base, it was necessary to calculate how many students there were in each level. Then those numbers were converted into percentages.

Since there was a difference in the number of students on each course, the data was turned into percentages for a better comprehension, and for a better interpretation of numerical data.

The results obtained upon each level are distributed as follows:

CEFR Scale	Spoken Proficiency	Face-to-Face Course	Blended Course
A2	Early Intermediate	5.26%	23.8%
B1	Intermediate	57.89%	42.9%
B2	Early Advanced	26.31%	23.8%
C1	Advanced Speaker	10.52%	9.5%

8.3 DATA ANALYSIS

8.3.1 UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS

8.3.1.1   READING PROFICIENCY RESULTS

READING PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS

	Topic and main ideas	Vocabulary in context	Facts and details	Referents	Inferences
■ Face-to-Face Course	86.11	43.33	66.67	68.52	77.78
■ Blended Course	44.32	19.09	22.16	26.52	31.82
Difference	41.79	24.24	44.51	42.00	45.96

■ Face-to-Face Course   ■ Blended Course   --

Source: Reading exam administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Inferences

The Blended course scored 31.82% in this section. They showed some difficulties drawing conclusions and making inferences in the text.

The Face-to-Face course scored 77.78% on correct answers that required to make a logical judgment on the basis of circumstantial evidence prior to set any conclusions.

Referents.

The Blended course scored 26.52% on correct items where referents were required to be identified.

The Face-to-Face course was able to reach a higher score, since they were able to identify more referents during the test**.**

Facts and Details

The Blended course was able to score only the 22.16% of correct items where they were required to identify facts and details. The Face-to-Face course was able to identify most of them, scoring a 66.67% of correct answers.

Vocabulary in context.

The Blended course scored only 19.1% of correct answers for this section showing some difficulties to identify vocabulary in context. The reading exam contained some technical vocabulary; the meaning of some words could be deducted by reading the context within the paragraphs.

In the other hand, the Face-to-Face course was able to answer correctly almost half of the total items for this section. They scored 44.3% showing advantage over the blended course.

Topic and Main Ideas.

The Blended coursed indicated some difficulties when determining the topic of the paragraphs, as well as main ideas on each of them. They scored 44.32%.

In the other hand, the Face-to-Face course scored 86.11% of correct items for this section. This shows how this course had a considerable advantage recognizing and establishing the topic of reading paragraphs along with their main ideas.

Reading proficiency Final Scores.

The average on their score is depicted as follows:
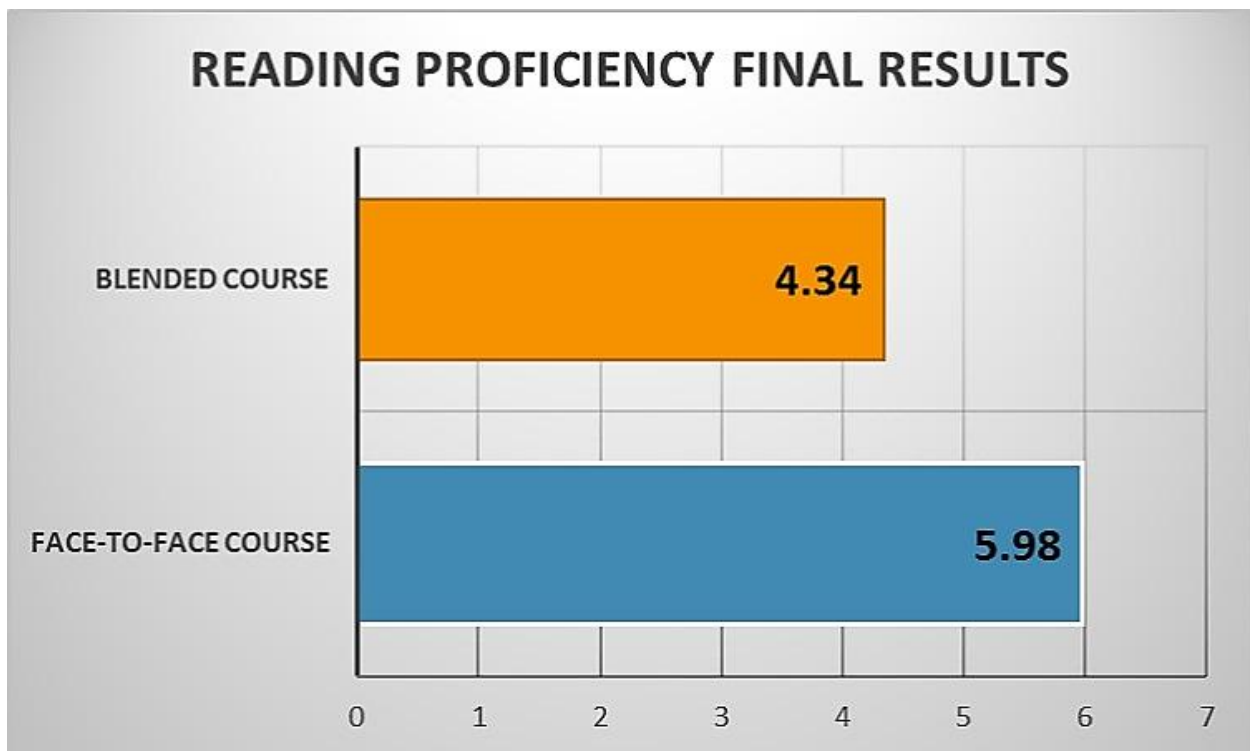
Source: Reading exam administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

The difference in the results for reading proficiency was 1.64. This results determined the advantage on reading skills from the Face-to-Face course over the Blended course.

8.3.1.2   SPEAKING PROFICIENCY RESULTS

8.3.1.3   QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

8.3.1.3.1 FIRST ANALYSIS

After carried on some interviews to the students from the Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04, it was possible to build comparative charts in order to highlight the most relevant speaking characteristics on each group.

The Common European Framework divides learners into three broad divisions:

A	Basic user
B	Independent user
C	Proficient user

Those stages can be divided into six levels:

CEFR Scale	Spoken Proficiency
A1	Beginning speaker
A2	Early Intermediate speaker
B1	Intermediate speaker
B2	Early Advanced speaker
C1	Advanced speaker
C2	Proficient speaker

For each level, the CEFR scale describes what a learner is supposed to be able to do in reading, listening, speaking and writing.

In this research it was used to focus on the speaking proficiency.

Students who attended to the interviews were ranked from levels A2 until C1.

The outcomes were assorted to make a contrast and comparison for each proficiency level**.**

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST FOR STUDENTS- RANK LEVEL

Face-to-face Course vs. Blended Course, Intensive Advanced English I

Level A2

Early Intermediate Speakers
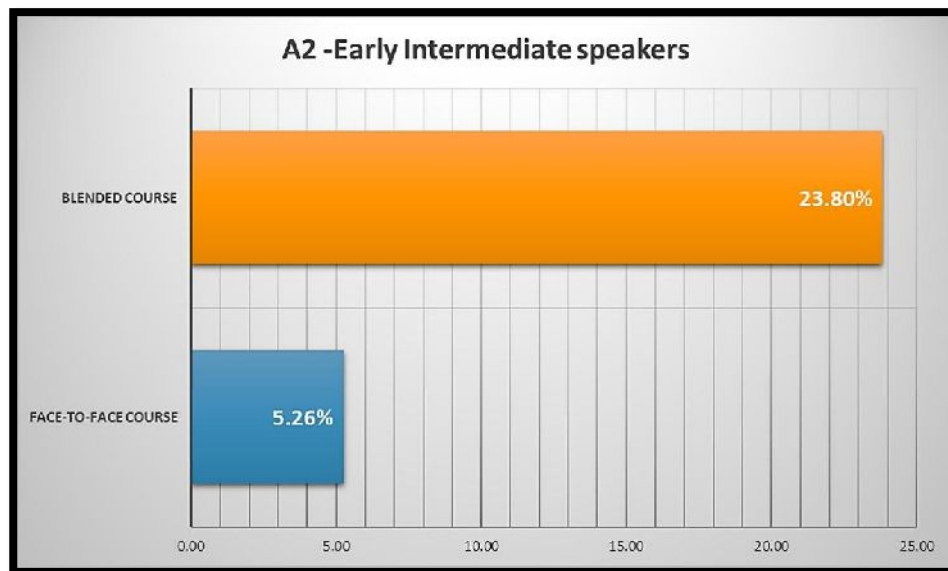
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

<u>**Early Intermediate Speakers - Main attributes**</u>

Early Intermediate speakers are close to achieve an intermediate proficiency. The speaker has a sufficient range of discourse and produces relatively high stretches of utterances. They can initiate discourse, take can use a limited number language to be able to give degree of grammatical language with a fairly even their turn when of cohesive devices to link clear descriptions, express control. They do not make tempo; although they can appropriate and end their utterances, into viewpoints on most general errors witch cause to be hesitant as their conversations when they are clear, coherent

discourse, topics, without much understanding. They search for patterns and needs to, although they consider there may be conspicuous searching for correct most of their expressions. There may not always commit some jumpiness in words, using some complex mistakes, noticeably long pauses, elegantly. They can help the long contribution, such as sentence forms to do so, discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in and many others.

❖ **Face-to-Face Course Performance 5.26%**

On this level, students showed relatively high stretches in their speaking; they used a very limited vocabulary and some grammatical errors that resulted into hesitation during the conversation. They did not understand some ideas during the interview. They also committed jumpiness in sentences made long pauses.

❖ **Blended Course Performance 23.8%**

This group of students made clear descriptions, expressed control of their ideas; although they could appropriately made their utterances and they had clear and coherent discourse but sometimes without much of understanding. A searching for correction was noticeable in their expressions.

Contrast analysis - A2 speakers

✓ **Face-to-face Course.**

Students from the Face-to-face course expressed themselves with long pauses, hesitation, and miss pronunciation of words. In addition, they demonstrated poor self-confidence, little use of connectors, and incorrect use of connectors. Self-correction was barely used.

✓ **Blended course:**

Unlike the face-to-face course, students from the Blended course shown a little less grammar mistakes (e.g.: "I was used to play"), few pauses to build sentences, and hesitation. They expressed several attempts to give supporting ideas. This course demonstrated a little more degree of fluency over the face-to-face course. In addition they used a little non-verbal intonation in their speech.

Level B1

Intermediate Speakers
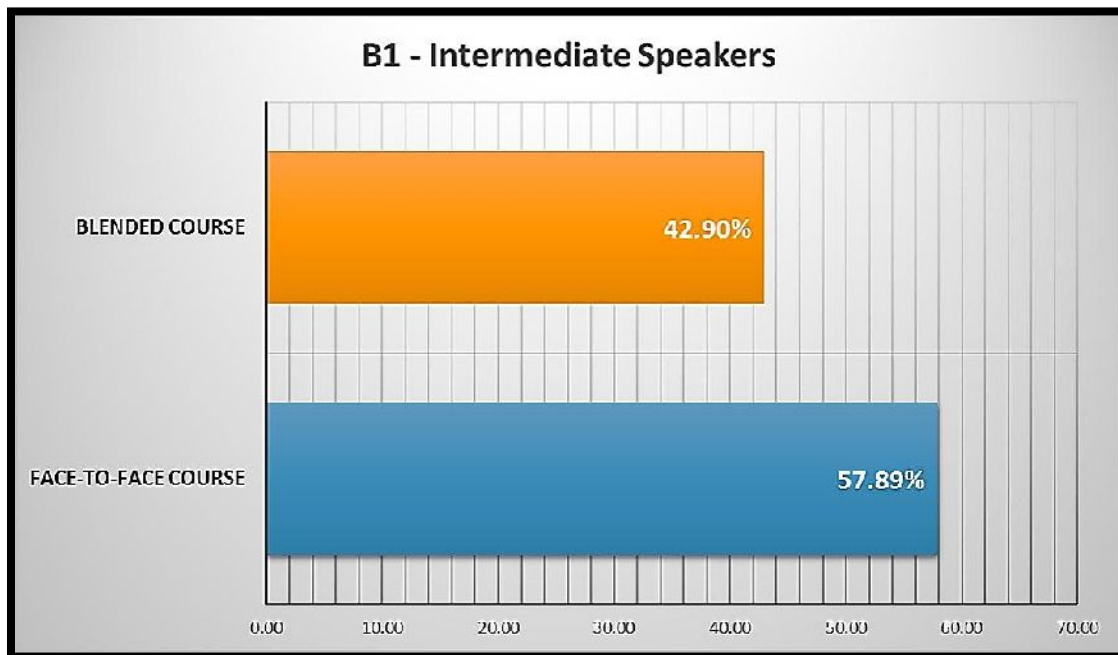
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Intermediate Speakers - Main attributes

Intermediate speakers can express themselves, can select suitable phrases, can produce clear, broad range of language, high degree of grammatical fluently and spontaneously, from a readily available smoothly flowing, well allowing themselves to

select an accuracy; errors are rare, almost effortlessly. Only a range of discourse structured speech, formulation to express themselves difficult to spot and conceptually difficult functions to preface his showing controlled use of herself clearly in an generally corrected when subject can hinder a natural, remarks in order to get organizational patterns, appropriate style on a wide they do occur smooth flow of language to keep the floor and to connectors and cohesive range of general, academic, relate their own devices, professional or leisure contributions skilful to topics without having to question those of other speakers and restrict what they want to say.

❖ **Face-to-Face Course Performance 57.89%**

Students from the Face-to-face course were able to express themselves. They spoke with confidence, and fluency. Besides selecting suitable phrases, they had the ability to produce clear, broad range of language, high degree of grammatical fluently and spontaneously; errors were very few, almost effortlessly. They could express clearly in a natural way.

❖ **Blended Course Performance   42.9%**

 Students from the blended course in this level answered to our questions giving the right information, but they showed lack of fluency while speaking. They also showed themselves with poor confidence.   Their ideas were shown with poor grammar complexity. Errors were few; they could express themselves clearly in a natural way. There was some vocabulary still unknown for some of them.

Contrast Analysis – B1 Speakers

✓ **Blended Course:**

Interviews on this course took longer than those from the face-to-face course due to several pauses in their speech. This group practiced strategy of the language. A lower fluency was noticed in comparison to the face-to-face group.

✓ **Face-to-face Course**.

Unlike the blended course, this course did not show too many difficulties when giving information and supporting ideas. Although there were few grammatical errors, there was less hesitation and more fluency than the blended course.

Level B2

Early Advanced Speakers
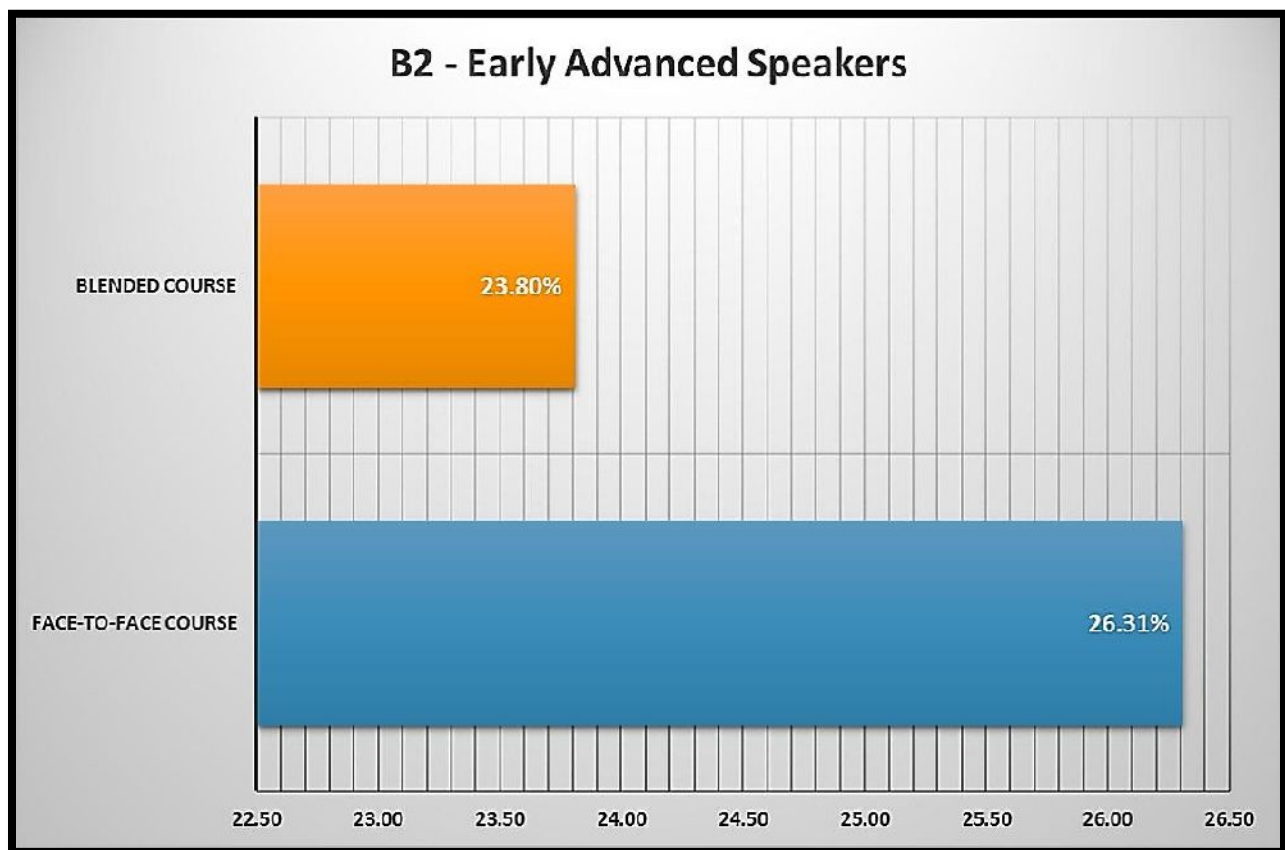
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Early Advanced Speakers - Main attributes

Early advanced speakers are close to reach an advanced proficiency. During this stage, speakers show a great flexibility during their interactions, they maintain consistency and are able to express with ease. Speakers can create coherent and reformulating ideas by keeping a grammatical control of their sentences, built spontaneously at length with skill, gathering and using cohesive discourse and differing linguistic forms of complex language.

These speakers can even make use of a natural colloquial flow, a non- verbal intonation, and make full appropriate statements. They can convey finer shades of attention, avoiding or backtracking cues. They make use of a variety of precise and meaningful expressions, moving forward without any difficulty, so effortlessly.

They can interweave organizational patterns and make emphasis to differentiate planning. They monitor smoothly their contribution into and use a wide range of expressions to reduce ambiguity.

These speaker are hardly the joint discourse by using connectors, they are aware of their good command of speech. Their expressions are made naturally, using cohesive devices of idiomatic expressions, referencing allusion and colloquialisms.

In this analysis, the students from the Face-to-face course performed with a higher speaking proficiency level than students from the blended course.

✓ **Face-to-Face Course Performance   26.31%**

Students on this phase expressed themselves with flexibility and good consistency, their ideas were expressed with grammatical control at length with skills, picking up cohesive discourse connectors and linguistic forms of complex language. Ideas were expressed without any grammatical errors.

Great degree of fluency and accuracy. These students showed little or none pauses to build statements. They combined organized patterns, and made little emphasis through

their speech. Unlike the blended course, these students showed use of non-verbal intonation, a good command on their tone of voice and a natural manner. They expressed themselves effortlessly to some extent, without any difficulties. Several connectors were noticed as well as some idiomatic expressions.

✓ **Blended Course Performance   23.8%**

These students are able to create and express ideas, almost effortlessly, picking up and using cohesive discourse, using complex language to some extend. They show little hesitation prior to express ideas. They commits a few grammatical errors, such as wrong tense on verbs. ("Looked" pronounced as "look").

These students make little pauses in order to build up some complex sentences. They express themselves with ease, organizing patterns carefully to improve fluency. Besides this, they create coherent ideas and make use of cohesive discourse connectors. Speakers uses some non-verbal intonation. No idiomatic expressions were noticed. There was a smooth pace and timing during their conversations.

Contrast Analysis - B2 Speakers

✓ **Blended Course**

Students from the Blended course were able to express their ideas with consistency on fluency, using little non-verbal intonation. Unlike the face-to-face course, they made several pauses and had some difficulties connecting ideas. They showed hesitation during their statements. Some minimal pairs were mispronounced. (/d/ pronounced as /t/). They were constantly making self-correction in some sentences. Few grammar mistakes were present (i.e.: verbs conjugated in 1st person used instead of verbs conjugated in 3rd person). Interviews for this course took longer than those from the face-to-face course. (1-2 more minutes). This group supported their statements with few details.

✓ **Face-to-face Course**

Students on this course made evident more fluency and less hesitation than the Blended course. Most of their ideas were expressed with no gaps of silence. Almost no pauses were present during their speaking.

Although few grammatical errors were evident during their speech. (i.e.: missing particle "to" when trying to use an infinitive form), they incorporated more details in their speech than the Blended course.

Level C1

Advanced Speakers
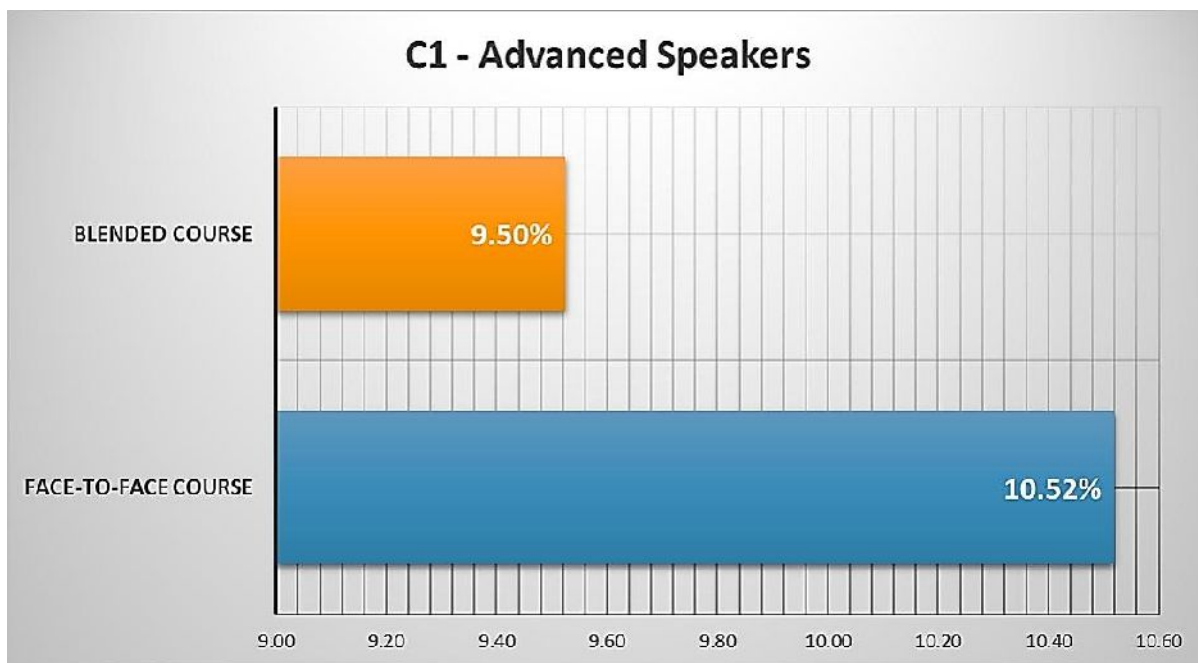
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Advanced Speakers - Main attributes

During this level, speakers show great flexibility and maintain consistency. They can express and interact with ease. They create coherent and reformulating ideas in grammatical control of spontaneously at length with skill, picking up and using cohesive discourse differing linguistic forms complex language, even a natural colloquial flow, non- verbal and intonation, making full and appropriately convey finer shades of while attention is otherwise avoiding or backtracking intentional cues. They use a variety of meaning precisely. These speakers move in forward around without any difficulty so effortlessly. They can interweave organizational patterns and add emphasis to differentiate planning, in monitoring smoothly their contribution into a wide range of vocabulary and expressions, to eliminate ambiguity. These speakers are aware of it. Their discourse has appropriate connectors. They also have a good command, and fully natural turn taking, they use cohesive devices of idiomatic expressions referencing allusion and colloquialisms.

✓ **Face-to-Face Course Performance   10.52%**

Students on this course showed little hesitation in their speech. They clearly pronounced tenses on verbs and expressed a wide vocabulary use. Some non-verbal intonation was noticeable. They focused a little more on accuracy than fluency. They provided supporting details while speaking. They had no issues on preparing answers. Although they showed no issues preparing their answers, it was noticeable some gaps between ideas.

✓ **Blended Course Performance   9.5%**

Students in this course expressed themselves almost with no hesitation. They used non-verbal intonation and almost no pauses to interact during the conversation. They provided details and supporting ideas. They used a wide and complex vocabulary.

Tenses were used appropriately. These Students corrected themselves in few occasions. They showed no problems when building up their sentences. They expressed themselves with ease, so effortlessly as if they were enjoying the conversation. This group showed more confidence than the Face-to-face course.

Contrast Analysis – C1 Speakers

✓ **Face-to-face Course:**

This group expressed their ideas in a concise way. They mastered a high level of fluency and made use of several connectors. Minimal pairs were clearly stated.

Despite the fact that they made little or no pauses between statements, they did not hesitate during their speech. In fact, they showed themselves more confident than the Blended course while expressing their points of view.

✓ **Blended Course**

Students on this course, expressed themselves with few hesitations. They used non-verbal intonation, smooth pace and great consistency of fluency.

Unlike students from the Face-to-face group, these students clearly stated their ideas and supported details using more complex sentences. In addition to this, they spoke without any gaps of silence. They showed a little more confident than the Face-to-face course.

8.3.1.3.2 SECOND ANALYSIS

8.3.1.3.3 COMPARISON AND CONTRAST FOR STUDENTS- MODALITY LEVEL

Face-to-face Course vs. Blended Course, Intensive Advanced English I

Based on the previous analysis, it is possible to determine the areas in which each group performs with a higher speaking proficiency.

Several aspects were considered when grading spoken performance on students from groups 03 and 04 at the Intensive Advanced English I course. These aspects were:

- The ability to express topics of personal interest
- Production of suitable phrases
- A clear broad range of language use
- High degree of grammatical fluency
- A range of discourse and structured speech
- Smooth flow of connectors and cohesive range

All students who attended the interview were given a rank based on their performance. All interviews were recorded by using mobile devices. It was necessary to listen to each recording multiple times, then after discussing it, a rank was assigned to each student. Then the recordings were played contrasting the same level on both courses.

Although, students fulfilled the required criteria on each level (Ranks from A2 to C1), it was possible to determine which group performed with a higher speaking abilityon each level.

A small difference was found among students in the same speaking proficiency.

The following chart depicts only the levels of proficiency in which each modality had advantage and higher performance over the other course.
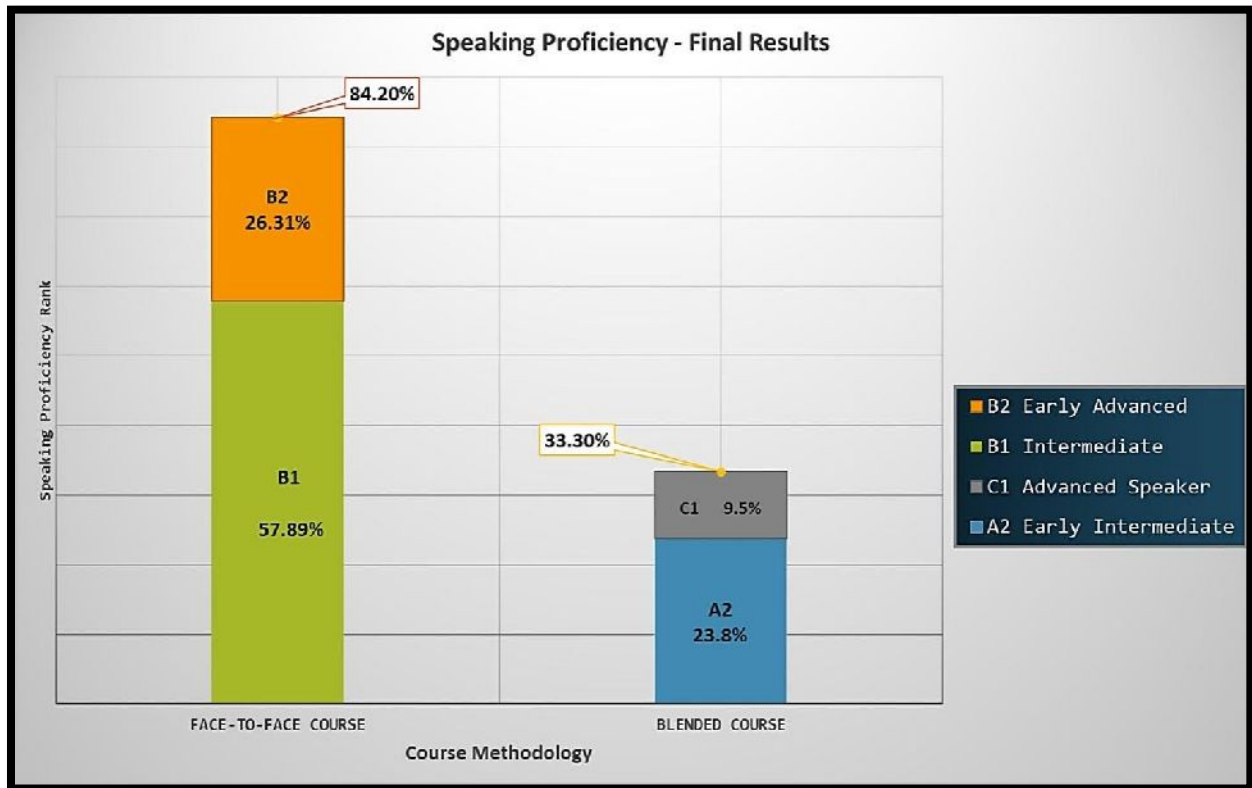
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Students from the Face-to-face course performed higher in speaking proficiency over the Blended course in levels B1 (57.89%) and B2 (26.31%).

In the other hand, students from the Blended course performed higher in speaking proficiency over the Blende course most likely in levels A2 (23.8%) and C1 (9.5%).

84.2% of the population in the Face-to-face course developed a higher speaking ability over the Blended Course. The highest part of the course is composed of students from levels B1 and B2. Students who manage an intermediate and early advanced speaking proficiency seem to develop a higher speaking ability in comparison to a Blended course.

Only 33.3% of the population in the Blended course performed with a higher speaking ability over the Face-to-face course.

Even though only a small amount of students developed a higher speaking proficiency in comparison to the Face-to-face course, it is composed of students who are located in an early intermediate level and an early advanced level. Students who are still struggling to reach an intermediate proficiency and those who manage great speaking ability seem to fit to this methodology. In such a way that they can produce and manage a higher speaking proficiency in comparison to those students in the same levels, taking the traditional methodology.

8.3.1.4 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS ON SPEAKING PROFICIENCY RESULTS

Students´ performance on speaking proficiency was graded not only with a CEFR scale, but also with a numerical score. The purpose of this action was to build a deep quantitative analysis. Differences in the results were tested through a t-test, by using the SPSS software. Conclusions were highlighted at the end of each hypothesis test.

The average on each group was obtained. The results can be depicted as follows:
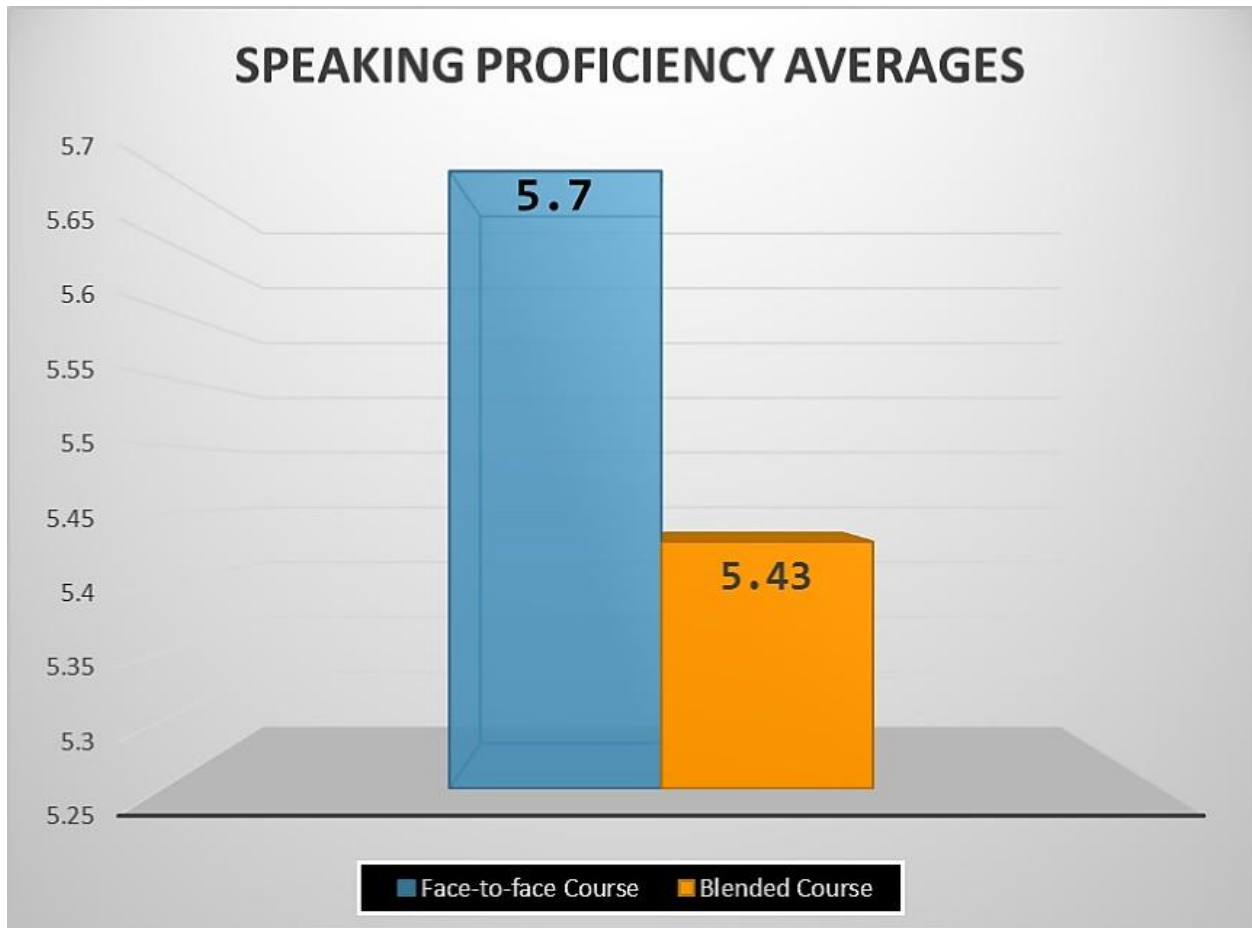
SPEAKING PROFICIENCY AVERAGES

Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

The Face-to-face course scored an average of 5.7 in speaking proficiency. The Blended course scored an average of 5.43 in speaking proficiency. Although there is only a small difference of 0.27 in favor of a traditional learning methodology, it is necessary to execute a t-test for such results. That will lead this research to answer whether there is a difference in the development of speaking proficiency on those courses or not. Further development is stated in chapter IX.

8.3.2   BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

8.3.2.1 READING PROFICIENCY RESULTS BY GENDER

As part of this research, we want to find out whether there is a difference in the development of reading and speaking abilities on men and women.

By using filters in our database, it was possible to get the scores on each ability for both genders. The results are depicted as follows:
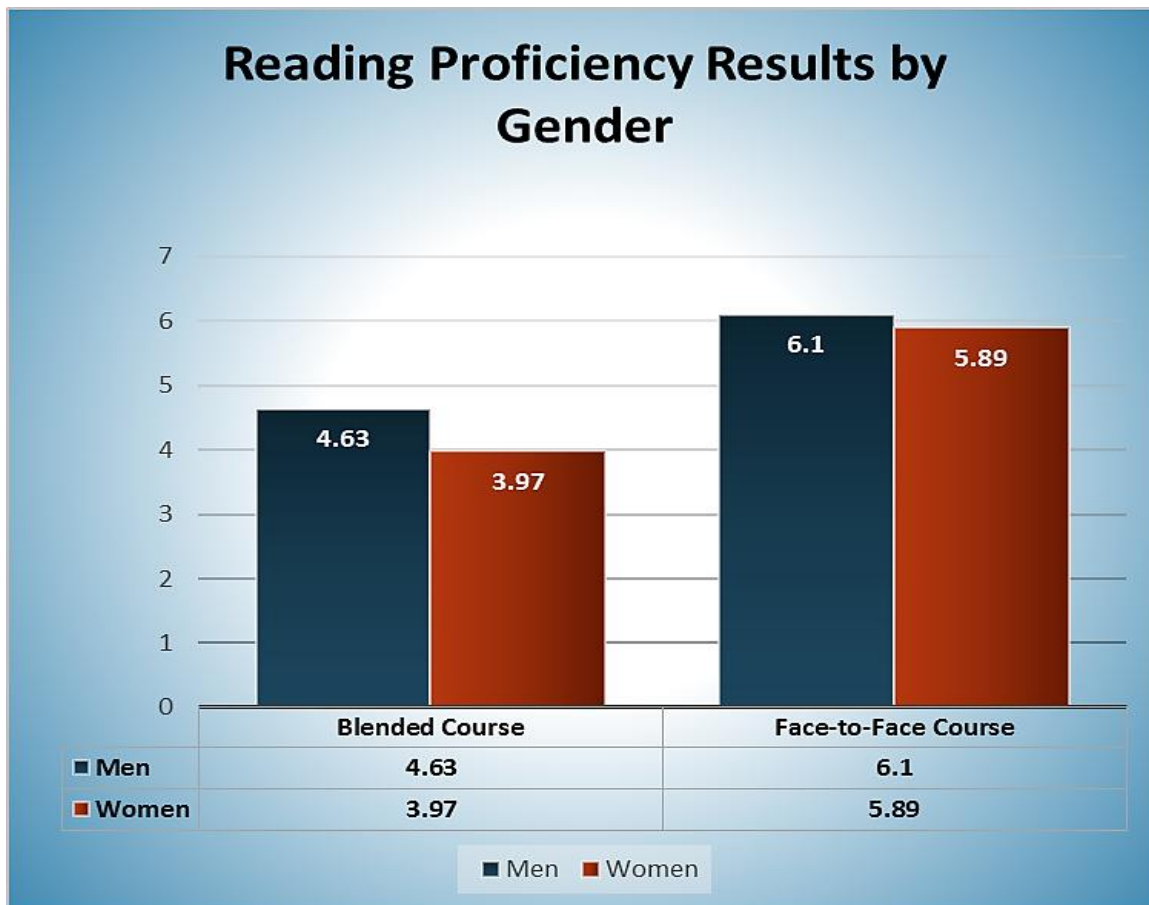
	Blended Course	Face-to-Face Course
■ Men	4.63	6.1
■ Women	3.97	5.89

Source: Reading exam administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Blended course.

Men scored 4.63 on reading proficiency. Women scored 3.97. There is a little difference of 0.66 in favor of men for this ability.

Face-to-face course.

In this modality, men scored 6.1 in reading proficiency. Women scored 5.89. There is only a small difference of 0.21 in favor of men in the development of reading abilities.

Although men have a little advantage in the development of reading skills in comparison to women, the difference is too small to spot any conclusions at this point. Regardless of the methodology, seems to be almost no difference in the performance of reading skills for both, men and women. Further analysis is developed in chapter IX.

8.3.2.2 SPEAKING PROFICIENCY RESULTS BY GENDER – RANK LEVEL

By using filters in our database, it was possible to determine the amount of students on each speaking proficiency rank, and it was possible to determine the amount of men and women on each level.

8.3.2.2.1 SPEAKING PROFICIENCY RESULTS BY GENDER – FACE-TO-FACE COURSE
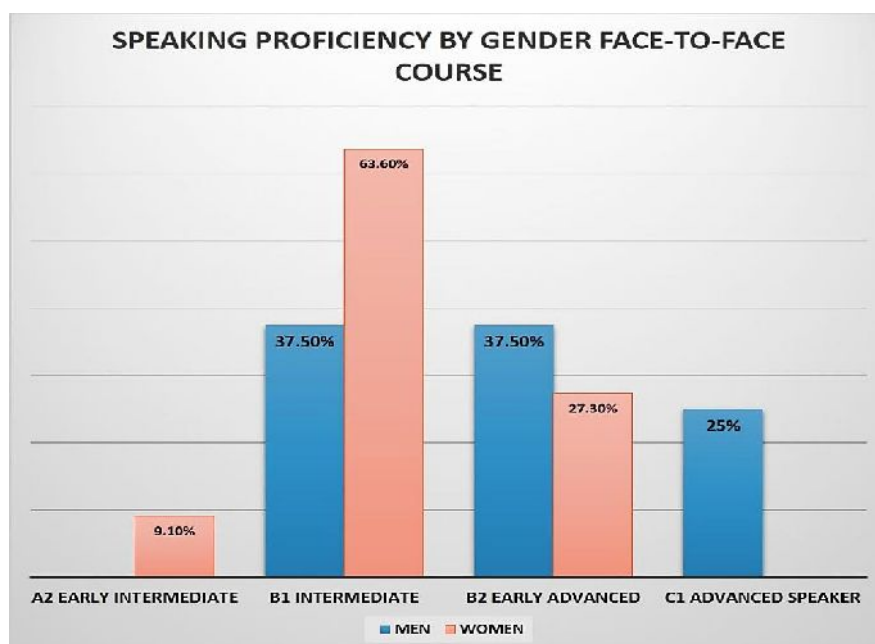
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Early Intermediate speakers –A1

Only a small group was located in this level: 9.10%. There were only women. There were not any men located in this level. Seems to be that men overcame this proficiency level in previous courses.

Intermediate Speakers -B1

37.5% of the population was composed of men and 63.6% of the population was composed of women. Most of the female population on this modality was located in this level, which is the expected level of proficiency to develop according to the syllabus for intensive Advanced English I.

Early advanced speakers -B2

Only 37.5% of the population were men, whereas 27.3% of the population was composed of women. It is noticeable that only this amount of students has overcome the expected B1 level suggested by the course syllabus.

Advanced Speakers – C1

Only 25% of the men were located in the highest level for students taking the Intensive advanced English I course. Unlike the A2 level, there were not any women who had reached this proficiency level, only men.

In this methodology, most of the students are located in the B1 level, which is expected according to the syllabus for Intensive Advanced English I course.

Most of the women are located in the first levels, from A2 –B2. Whereas Men are located in the same and higher levels, from B1 – C1. We can highlight how a traditional learning lead men to higher levels than women regarding the development of speaking

proficiency. There is only a slight difference among genders, yet this could lead to further research. More details are presented in the next chapter.

8.3.2.2.2 SPEAKING PROFICIENCY RESULTS BY GENDER – BLENDED COURSE
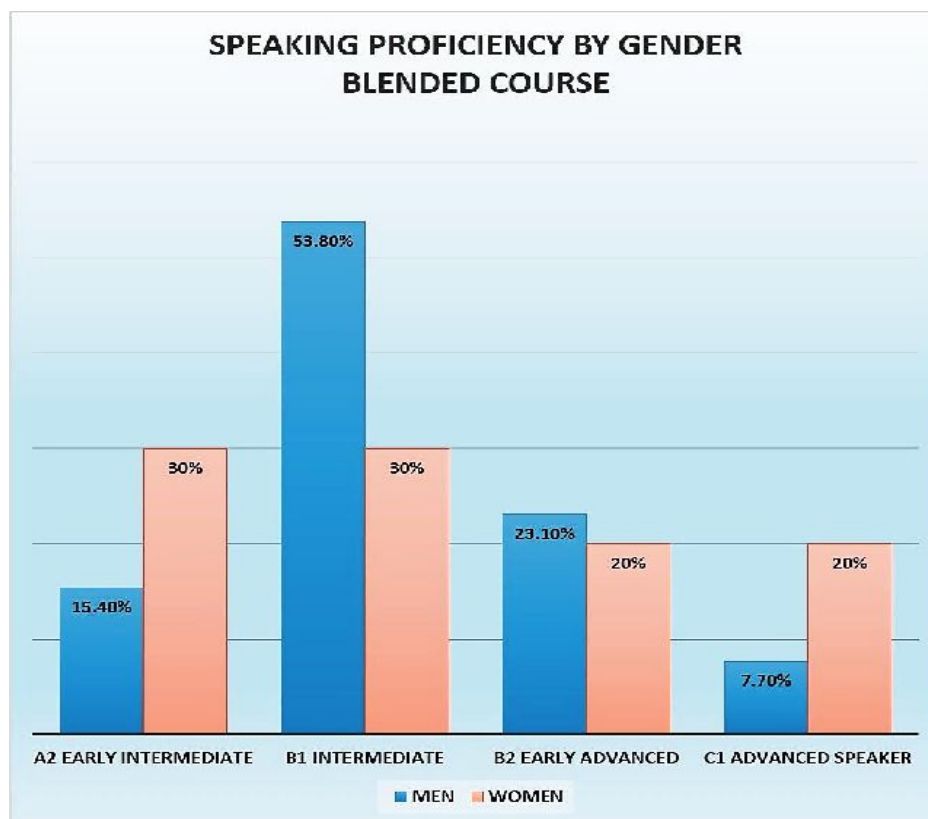
Source: Spoken Interview administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014

The results obtained on the blended course are quite different from the ones obtained in the Face-to-face course. Here we present a detailed description of such data.

Early Intermediate speakers –A1

In this level, we could locate 15.40% of men, and 30% of women. We can express that, there is a man for every two women in level A1.

Intermediate Speakers -B1

53.8% of men and approximately 30% of women are located in this level. Almost half of the male population has achieved the expected level described in the syllabus course. Whereas almost a third of the female population has reached this level of proficiency.

Early advanced speakers -B2

Only 23.10% of men and 20% of women were located in this level. It is noticeable how few students have reached this proficiency level in comparison to students who reached the same proficiency level in the Face-to-face course.

Advanced Speakers – C1

Only 7.7% of male population and 20% of the female population reached this proficiency level. Unlike the Face-to-face course, in this level we could locate not only men but also women. We could estimate there is approximately one C1 boy for every three C1 girls in the Blended course.

In the blended course, there was a more equitable balance among genders in all levels. There were men and women on each level of proficiency. Approximately 40% of the population was either in the B2 level or the C1 level; whereas approximately 76.9%of the male population was located in the B1 and B2 levels. We can notice how most of men are under the expected level of speaking proficiency according to the course syllabus. Only a few men have reached a higher than expected proficiency level.

8.3.2.2.3 SPEAKING PROFICIENCY RESULTS BY GENDER – SCORE LEVEL.
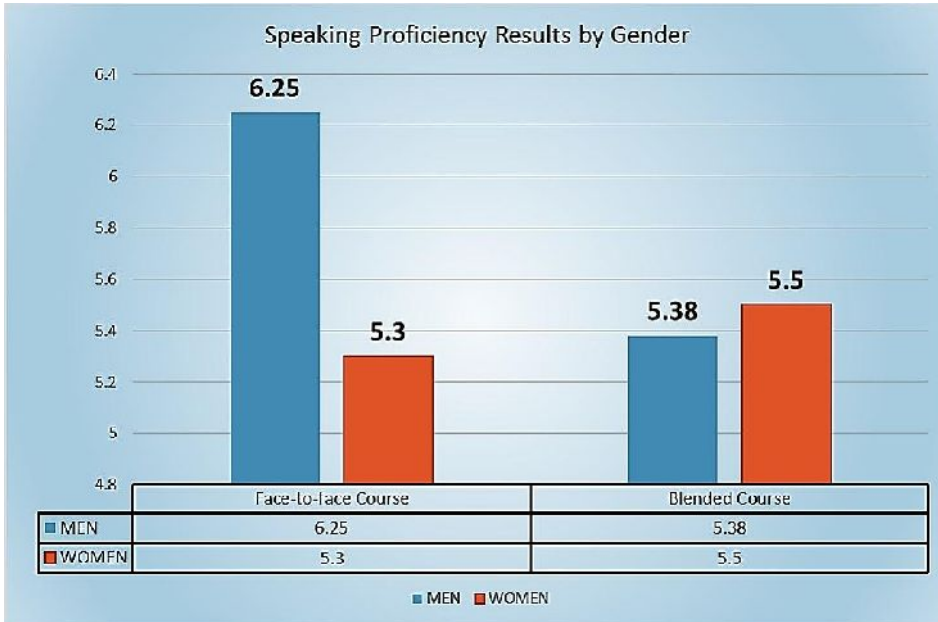
Source: Reading exam administered to students from Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04 during semester II, 2014.

Face-to-face course.

The average on speaking proficiency for men was 6.25. The average of speaking proficiency for women was 5.3. The difference is of 0.95 in favor of men. As an overall course, this seems to be almost an authentic advantage in the development of speaking abilities for men in comparison to women in a traditional learning style

Blended course.

The average on speaking proficiency for men was 5.38. The average of speaking for woman was 5.5. This seems to be the only advantage of women in the development of speaking proficiency in comparison to men´s. there was a narrow difference of 0.12 in the results. We could say that this methodology has almost equal effects in the development for speaking abilities in men and women. The results showed almost no difference; yet, further development to test this results is stated in chapter IX.

CHAPTER IX

9 FINDINGS

9.1 HYPOTHESES´ TEST.

Using the IBM SPSS it was possible to execute a **t-test**, in order to compare the results of two sets of quantitative data. Samples were collected independently of others.

The probability used on the tests was P< 0.05.

A reliability of 95% and an error possibility of 5% was based.

The results led to the following findings:

9.1.1 GENERAL HYPOTHESIS

A face-to-face course develops a higher reading and speaking proficiency than a blended course on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.

In order to test the general hypothesis it is necessary to test all the subsidiary hypothesis first. .Results are highlighted on each hypothesis as follows:

9.2 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 1

Ha. A Traditional face-to-face approach produces higher spoken discourse using a wide fluency when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Ho. A Traditional face-to-face approach does not produce any difference in spoken discourse or fluency when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

T-test

Estadísticos de grupo					
	MODE	N	Media	Desviacióntíp.	Error típ. de la media
SPEAKING	FACE TO FACE	19	5.702	1.2812	.2939
	BLENDED	23	5.432	1.6053	.3347

Prueba de muestra sin dependientes									
		Prueba de Levene para la igualdad de varianzas		Prueba T para la igualdad de medias					
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Error típ. de la diferencia	95% Intervalo de confianza para la diferencia
									Inferior	Superior
SPEAKING	Se han asumido varianzas iguales	.810	.374	.593	40	.557	.2699	.4552	-.6501	1.1899
	No se han asumido varianzas iguales			.606	39.965	.548	.2699	.4455	-.6304	1.1703

The results obtained on the spoken interview were:

Face-to-face course average: 5.70 vs. Blended course average: 5.43

The results on the T-test for P $\leq$0.05 were 0.557 and 0.548. Higher than P.

Therefore, the **null hypothesis is accepted**. The Alternate hypothesis is rejected.

> **Ho. A Traditional face-to-face approach does not produce any difference in spoken discourse or fluency when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.**

Conclusion:

__There is no significant difference__ in the results of the two groups.

Both groups keep the same trend in the development of speaking proficiency

9.2.1 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 2

Ha. A Traditional face-to-face approach produces a higher development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Ho. A Traditional face-to-face approach does not produce any difference in the development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

T-test

			Estadísticos de grupo		
	MODE	N	Media	Desviacióntíp.	Error típ. de la media
READING	TRADITIONAL	18	5.9806	1.66734	.39300
	BLENDED	27	4.3344	1.74351	.33554

		Prueba de muestra sin dependientes								
		Prueba de Levene para la igualdad de varianzas		Prueba T para la igualdad de medias						
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Error típ. de la diferencia	95% Intervalo de confianza para la diferencia	
									Inferior	Superior
READING	Se han asumido varianzas iguales	.093	.762	3.157	43	.003	1.64611	.52149	.59442	2.69780
	No se han asumidovarianzasiguales			3.186	37.715	.003	1.64611	.51675	.59974	2.69248

The results on the T-test for P $\leq$0.05 were 0.003 and 0.003. Lower than P.

Therefore, the **Alternate hypothesis is accepted**. The Null hypothesis is rejected.

Ha. A Traditional face-to-face approach produces a higher development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

The results obtained in the Reading test were:

Face-to-face course average =**5.98**   vs.   Blended course average = **4.34**

Conclusion:

There is a significant difference in the results from the two groups.

The face-to-face group has advantage in Reading proficiency over the Blended Course.

9.2.2   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 3

Ha. Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher speaking abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

Ho. Subject schedules do not produce any difference in the development of speaking abilities for students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course.

T-test

Estadísticos de grupo					
	MODE	N	Media	Desviacióntíp.	Error típ. de la media
SPEAKING	FACE-TO-FACE (afternoon schedule)	19	5.702	1.2812	.2939
	BLENDED (evening schedule)	23	5.432	1.6053	.3347

Prueba de muestras independientes										
		Prueba de Levene para la igualdad de varianzas		Prueba T para la igualdad de medias						
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Error típ. de la diferencia	95% Intervalo de confianza para la diferencia	
									Inferior	Superior
SPEAKING	Se han asumidovarianzasiguales	.810	.374	.593	40	.557	.2699	.4552	-.6501	1.1899
	No se han asumido varianzas iguales			.606	39.965	.548	.2699	.4455	-.6304	1.1703

The Face-to-face group attended to classes from 1:00pm -3:00pm. The Blended course group attended to classes from 5:00 pm -7:00 pm.

The results obtained on the spoken interview were:

Face-to-face course average: 5.70 vs. Blended course average: 5.43

The result on the T-test for P ≤0.05 were 0.557 and 0.548. Higher than P.

Therefore, **the null hypothesis is accepted**. The Alternate hypothesis is rejected.

Ho. Subject schedules do not produce any difference in the development of speaking abilities for students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course.

Conclusion: _There is no significant difference_ in the results from the two groups.

9.2.3   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 4

Ha. Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher reading abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

Ho. Subject schedules do not produce any difference in the development of reading abilities for students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course.

T-test

Estadísticos de grupo					
	MODE	N	Media	Desviacióntíp.	Error típ. de la media
READING	TRADITIONAL	18	5.9806	1.66734	.39300
	BLENDED	27	4.3344	1.74351	.33554

Prueba de muestras independientes									
		Prueba de Levene para la igualdad de varianzas		Prueba T para la igualdad de medias					
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Error típ. de la diferencia	95% Intervalo de confianza para la diferencia
									Inferior	Superior
READING	Se han asumido varianzas iguales	.093	.762	3.157	43	.003	1.64611	.52149	.59442	2.69780
	No se han asumido varianzas iguales			3.186	37.715	.003	1.64611	.51675	.59974	2.69248

The results on the T-test for P ≤0.05 were 0.003 and 0.003. Lower than P.

Therefore, the **Alternate hypothesis is accepted**. The Null hypothesis is rejected.

Ha. Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher reading abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

The results obtained in the Reading test were:

Face-to-face course Average =**5.98**   vs.   Blended course Mean = **4.34**

Conclusion:

There is a significant difference in the results from the two groups.

The face-to-face group has advantage in reading proficiency over the Blended Course.

9.2.4   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 5

The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the reading proficiency of men and women.

Ho. There is no difference in the development of reading proficiency between men and women regardless the methodology.

Averages from students in the Blended Course

Estadísticas de grupo					
Blended course	GENDER	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar
Reading score	MALE	15	**4.6260**	1.81795	.46939
	FEMALE	12	**3.9700**	1.64861	.47591

Average difference: 0.65

Averages from students in the Face-to-face Course

Estadísticas de grupo					
Face-to-face Course	GENDER	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar
Reading score	MALE	8	**6.1012**	1.63217	.57706
	FEMALE	10	**5.8840**	1.77648	.56177

Average difference: 0.22

The differences between genders is less than 1.0 in the two groups.
A t-test was executed for all students in the two groups.

Averages for students in both groups.

Estadísticas de grupo					
	GENDER	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar
Reading scores	MALE	23	**5.1391**	1.86196	.38825
	FEMALE	22	**4.8400**	1.93073	.41163

Even though men scored higher than women in reading proficiency, the difference among genders is 0.29. The difference is still less than 1.0

T-test for students in both groups.

Prueba de muestras independientes										
		Prueba de Levene de calidad de varianzas		prueba t para la igualdad de medias						
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Diferencia de error estándar	95% de intervalo de confianza de la diferencia	
									Inferior	Superior
Reading scores	Se asumen varianzas iguales	.353	.556	.529	43	**.599**	.29913	.56538	-.84106	1.43932
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			.529	42.715	**.600**	.29913	.56584	-.84222	1.44048

The results on the T-test for P $\leq$ 0.05 were 0.599 and 0.600, higher than P.

Therefore, the **Null hypothesis is accepted**. The Alternate hypothesis is rejected.

Ho**. There is no difference in the development of reading proficiency between men and women regardless the methodology**.

The overall results obtained in the Reading test were:

Men = **5.13**   vs.   Women = **4.84**

Conclusion:

There is no significant difference in the results of the two groups.

Although there was a small difference in the results by gender between the students in the Face-to-face group and the students in the Blended course, such results were not significant. Both genders keep the same trend in reading proficiency.

9.2.5 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 6

Ha. The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the speaking proficiency of men and women.

Ho. There is no difference in the development of speaking proficiency between men and women regardless the methodology.

Averages from students in the Face-to-face Course

	GENDER	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar
			Estadísticas de grupo		
SPEAKING_SCORE	MALE	8	**6.25**	1.476	.522
	FEMALE	11	**5.30**	1.007	.304

There is a small difference of 0.95 showing advantage on men, however this difference is lower than 1.0. It is still not reliable.

Averages from students in the Blended Course

	GENDER	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar
			Estadísticas de grupo		
SPEAKING_SCORE	MALE	13	**5.3823**	1.38544	.38425
	FEMALE	10	**5.4970**	1.93177	.61088

There is a little difference of 0.11 in favor of women. This is still a non-reliable result since it is less than 1.0

Averages for students in both groups.

	GENDER	N	Media	Desviación estándar	Media de error estándar
			Estadísticas de grupo		
SPEAKING_SCORE	MALE	21	**5.7129**	1.44944	.31629
	FEMALE	21	**5.3957**	1.48194	.32339

The difference is 0.31. It is still too small to rely on a conclusion at this point.

T-test for both groups.

Prueba de muestras independientes									
		Prueba de Levene de calidad de varianzas		prueba t para la igualdad de medias					
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)	Diferencia de medias	Diferencia de error estándar	95% de intervalo de confianza de la diferencia
									Inferior	Superior
SPEAKING PROFICIENCY SCORES	Se asumen varianzas iguales	.021	.886	.701	40	.487	.31714	.45235	-.59709	1.23138
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			.701	39.980	.487	.31714	.45235	-.59710	1.23139

The results on the T-test for P $\leq$0.05 were 0.487 and 0.487. Lower than P.

Therefore, the **Alternate hypothesis is accepted**. The Null hypothesis is rejected.

Ha**. The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the speaking proficiency of men and women**.

The average results obtained on the spoken interview were:

SPEAKING PROFICIENCY AVERAGES	Men	Women
Blended course	5.38	**5.49**
Face-to-face course	**6.25**	5.30

Conclusions:

There isa significant difference in the results from the two groups taking the Intensive Advanced English I course.

- ✓ ***Men*** *developed higher speaking proficiency than women through a traditional **Face-to-face** methodology.*
- ✓ ***Women*** *developed higher speaking proficiency than men through a **Blended** methodology.*
- ✓ ***Men*** *developed the highest speaking proficiency overall through a Face-to-face methodology.*

9.3 ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

9.3.1 GENERAL HYPOTHESIS

A face-to-face course develops a higher reading and speaking proficiency than a blended course on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I.

This hypothesis could not be proved to be completely true. After carrying out the hypothesis´ tests, it was possible to determine, that the Face-to-face course does not produce a significant difference in speaking proficiency in comparison to a Blended course; however, it was possible to determine that it does produce a higher reading proficiency than the blended course.

9.3.2 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 1

A Traditional face-to-face approach produces higher spoken discourse using a wide fluency when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

This hypothesis could not be proved to be true since the results highlighted that there was not any significant difference in the results of their speaking proficiency. This shows that methodologies on both groups produce the same trend in the development of speaking proficiency.

9.3.3 SPECIFICHYPOTHESIS 2

A Traditional face-to-face approach produces a higher development of reading skills when taking the Intensive Advanced English I, in comparison to a blended course.

Tests on this hypothesis proved to make it an accurate statement. With a very significant difference in the results, it was possible to reveal how a face-to-face course develops a higher Reading proficiency in comparison to a Blended Course.

9.3.4   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 3

Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher speaking abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

It was possible to determine that there was no significant difference in the speaking proficiency results between the students in the face-to-face course and the students in the blended course. Regardless the schedule in which they attended to the Intensive advanced English I, this did not result into any advantage or disadvantage in speaking proficiency over the other group.

9.3.5   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 4

Students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the afternoon develop higher reading abilities than those taking the same course later in the evening.

This hypothesis proved to be an accurate statement. A significant difference in the results was found. Results revealed that students attending to the Intensive Advanced English I Course during the afternoon showed to develop a higher reading proficiency over those students attending to the same Course during evening time.

9.3.6   SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 5

The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the reading proficiency of men and women.

This hypothesis proved to be inaccurate. After testing the results for reading proficiency in both methodologies, it was possible to determine that there is little or none difference in the reading proficiency for men and women who attended Intensive Advanced English I. Both genders keep the same trend regardless the methodology.

9.3.7 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS 6

The use of a Face-to-face methodology and a blended methodology produce difference in the speaking proficiency of men and women.

It was possible to prove this hypothesis as accurate. The results revealed a difference in the speaking proficiency for men and women through different methodologies. Men developed higher speaking proficiency than women through a traditional Face-to-face methodology. In the other hand, Women developed higher speaking proficiency than men through a Blended methodology. We can point out that men developed the highest speaking proficiency overall through a Face-to-face methodology.

9.4. MOST OUTSTANDING FINDINGS
9.4.1 METHODOLOGY

Based on the results from the survey administered to students from the Intensive Advanced English I, groups 03 and 04. During the second semester of 2014. It was possible to describe key elements for each methodology on each course.

9.4.1.1   FACE-TO-FACE COURSE METHODOLOGY

Based on a short survey administered to students from the Intensive Advanced English I group 03, it was possible to determine and describe this methodology.

Assessment

A <u>Formative evaluation system</u> was used during the course.

Students expressed that besides homework assignments, the teacher took into consideration aspects like attendance, participation and different in-class activities.

Approach

A <u>Communicative approach</u> was used during the course.

Students learned through several communication in-class activities. As fluency is an important dimension to develop communication, and the role of the teacher was to facilitate the communication process, he is also expected to act as a resource of motivation during the class.

Resources

Students reported the different sources they used the most during the course,

Traditional resources such as the course book, the work book, dictionaries, the projector, whiteboard, tape recording and MP3 players, were used the most.

 In the other hand, high- Tech resources like Computers, the use of Internet, Emails, Social networks, blogs, E-books were used to supply the course assignments.

9.4.1.2   BLENDED COURSE METHODOLOGY

Based on the survey administered to students from the Intensive Advanced English I group 04, it was possible to determine and describe this methodology. The results are as follows:

Assessment

A <u>Formative evaluation system</u> was used during the course.

Students expressed that besides homework assignments, the teacher took into consideration aspects like attendance, participation and different in-class activities.

Approach

A <u>structural approach</u> was used during the course.

Teacher gave specific instructions for homework assignments. Students followed the same pattern during most of the assignments. Most of the time, students had to prepare, upload, download or read material from the virtual platform. This lead to a behaviorist trend. It is important to point out that in-class activities were also graded for students 'performance.

Management

Students expressed that the teacher was very knowledgeable in managing a blende course. Also they expressed that instructions and objectives are always available for every single activity, not only for in-class tasks, but also for virtual assignments.

Resources

Students reported the different sources they used the most during the course,

Traditional resources such as the course book, the work book, dictionaries, the board, the projector, whiteboard, tape recording and MP3 players, were used during the course.

In the other hand, high- Tech resources like Computers, a virtual platform, the computer lab, the use of Internet, e-mails, Social networks, blogs, and even e-books were used to supply the needs for assignments during this course.

SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

This research demonstrated that there was no significant difference in the development of speaking proficiency between students taking the Intensive Advanced English I course through a face-to-face methodology, and through a Blended methodology.

Although the results showed a little difference in their scores, this was not enough so as to highlight a remarkable difference. Methodologies produced almost the same tendency.

READING PROFICIENCY

This research contributed to highlight how a traditional face-to-face course produces a higher development of reading skills on students over a blended course. Results showed advantage on students who attended a traditional methodology.

SCHEDULES INFLUENCE

Regardless of the schedules, the results showed the same tendency of results for both groups. There was no significant difference in speaking proficiency. And there was a considerable reading proficiency on the face-to-face course (afternoon schedule), over the blended course (evening schedule).

DIFFERENCE IN GENDERS

In this research, it was possible to determine that there was no significant difference in the development of reading proficiency between men and women. Both genders kept the same trend regardless the methodology.

In the other hand, there were some differences in the development of speaking proficiency. Men reached higher scores than women through a traditional face-to-face methodology and women scored higher than men through a blended course methodology.

It can be concluded that men reached the highest speaking proficiency score over women overall by attending to a traditional course. In other words, a face-to-face methodology produces higher development of speaking proficiency for men. A blended course produces higher development of speaking proficiency for women.

CHAPTER X

10 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the outcomes of this research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The approach applied in the blended course during the Intensive advanced English I at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador is a combination of a self-blended and an enriched-virtual model**.**

The approach applied in the face-to-face course during the Intensive advanced English I at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador is based on the communicative approach.

The main objective on this research was to highlight whether there is any difference in the development of speaking and reading abilities in two groups who attended the Intensive Advanced English I simultaneously through different methodologies.

The results did not favor any of the two groups as it was expected. The results barely exposed significant differences. Speaking abilities in both groups are located within the same levels of proficiency.

The intermediate level of speaking proficiency is expected to be achieved during this level according to the course syllabus and most of the students are located on this level of proficiency (B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

In the other hand, we can conclude that a traditional face-to-face methodology can produce a higher development of reading proficiency over a blended course. We can conclude that the most in-class interaction students are exposed to, the more they develop different reading skills. In addition, we can conclude that a traditional environment is at some extend, free of distractors such as social networks.

There were no significant differences in the speaking proficiency results for men in comparison to women taking the Intensive Advanced English I course. Both methodologies did not produce any advantage in any gender in particular.

Besides that, we can conclude that a traditional face-to-face methodology does not produce any difference in reading proficiency for men or women in comparison to a blended course. There is no advantage or disadvantage for any gender in particular. The results on both groups kept the same trend regarding reading abilities.

Further implementation of blended courses may produce any significant differences in the future, yet, it is subject to future changes in the methodology and further research in the area. Meanwhile, we can state that either a traditional face-to-face course or a blended course can lead to the expected tendency not only for speaking development, but also for reading development on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

CHAPTER XI

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcomes of this research, the following recommendations can be drawn:

The research team considers important to highlight some recommendations based in the results from the project: "Which students can reach higher proficiency in speaking and reading, those taking classes with a blended learning approach vs. those taking classes with a face-to-face approach in Advanced Intensive English I at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014.

Based on the qualitative analysis made on the speaking proficiency results, we can recommend to implement a training for students regarding managing the virtual platform and other tools prior to open blended courses for students. It is also recommended to train the teachers in care of the Intensive Advanced English courses on how to manage properly a virtual course, prior to start a blended course.

Based on the reading proficiency results from students taking the Advanced English I course through a blended course during semester II 2014, it is recommended to implement more reading activities, especially when students attend to an Intensive Advanced English I course by means of a virtual learning. This can help to increase their practice and their reading development at their own pace, on their own time and whenever they consider it more convenient.

In the long-term, we recommend the university to invest in computer equipment, appropriate software and internet services in order to extend blended courses for students with low resources. Students could develop other abilities in addition to English proficiency. Yet further research will prove new findings.

In the short-term, we recommend the University of El Salvador to extend and facilitate the use of wireless broadband within the campus so that students who own a laptop or a mobile device with internet capabilities can access different English resources.

Besides that, we recommend the University of El Salvador to boost more virtual projects in different majors at the Foreign Language Department, this will expand the availability to assist alternatively more students.

Finally, we recommend the University of El Salvador, to carry on more researches on how to implement and manage blended courses before moving to a new stage.

CHAPTER XII

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1 READING EXAM

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

Foreign Language Department

Research Project

Answer sheet. Toefl Reading Section

Student´s Name:_____

We are doing a research based on the following research question .

*"**Which students can reach higher proficiency in speaking and reading, those taking classes with a blended learning approach vs. those taking classes with a face-to-face approach in Advanced Intensive English I at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014".***

We appreciate your contribution.

TIME	
Start	End
Total:_____	

Directions: Answer the questions by filling the circle with the best option.

Reading 1

1	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
2	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
3	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
4	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
5	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
6	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
7	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
8	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
9	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

Reading 2

10	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
11	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
12	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
13	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
14	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
15	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
16	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
17	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

Reading Section

Reading 1.

- **Question 1-10**

In recent years evidence has accumulated that polyunsaturated fatty acids function in protecting humans and some laboratory animals from diseases of the arteries and heart such as atherosclerosis. In this disease, small patches of fatty material, composed mostly of cholesterol, form on the inside lining of the

Line (5) arteries. As the deposits increase in thickness, they may cut down on the blood flow to the organs supplied by the arteries until the structures are severely damaged. If this occurs in a branch of the coronary artery supplying the heart muscle, that portion of the muscle dies, and the person experiences a painful and sometimes fatal heart attack. Another danger of atherosclerosis is that pieces of

Line (10) the fatty deposits may break free and travel in the bloodstream until they lodge in small vessels and block the flow of blood. This blockage may also cause heart damage, or, if it occurs in the brain, may damage brain cells and lead to a stroke.

1. What does this passage mainly discuss?

(A) Atherosclerosis

(B) Fats

(C) Cholesterol

(D) Heart damage

2. The world "accumulated" in the line 1 is closest in meaning to

(A) accelerated

(B) accrued

(C) circulated

(D) dismissed

3. The author of the passage describes atherosclerosis as

(A) a reaction to polyunsaturated fatty acids

(B) a disease causing heart damage

(C) a blood disease

(D) a heart attack

4. The word "deposits" in the line 5 refers to

(A) inside lining of the arteries

(B) organs supplied by the arteries

(C) small patches of fatty material

(D) polyunsaturated fatty acids

5. According to the passage, the parts of the body most directly affected by cholesterol buildup are

(A) the brain cells

(B) the major organs

(C) the arteries

(D) the muscles

6. The word "this" in the line 7 refers to all of the following EXCEPT

(A) the size of the deposits increases

(B) blood flow to the organs in restricted

(C) fatty material dissolves

(D) organs supplied by the arteries are badly damaged

7. According to the passage, atherosclerosis may cause all of the following EXCEPT

(A) a stroke

(B) a heart attack

(C) blockage of the arteries

(D) cholesterol breakdown

8. The pronoun "it" in line 12 refers to

(A) heart damage

(B) the flow of blood

(C) a blockage

(D) a stroke

9. The word "lodge" in line 10 is closest in meaning to

(A) stick

(B) return

(C) penetrate

(D) dissolve

Reading 2.
Question 10-20

Although most grain crops have light dry pollen and are wind-pollinated, the pollen of other plants including legumes, fruits, and many flowers and vegetables is moist and sticky. It cannot travel on air currents and must be transferred from anther to stigma by external agents. This process is known as cross-pollination.

Line (5)   Cross-pollination allows plants to evolve and to adapt to changing environments. Cross-pollination is accomplished mainly by insects and, among pollinators, the honeybee reigns supreme. Bees collect nectar and pollen from flowers to use And food and unwittingly transfer pollen from flower to flower as they go about their work.

(10)   A bee's body is ideally adapted to carry pollen. Its body and legs are covered with stiff, branched hairs, with catch and hold pollen grains. The hind legs are equipped with pollen baskets that are concave areas of the hind leg edged with long curving hairs. In these baskets, the worker bee deposits pollen and carries it back to the hive where it serves as a major food source for the young brood.

(15)   As bees are busy gathering pollen, their bodies become almost entirely covered with sticky pollen grains. Field bees inadvertently transfer pollen from one flower to another as they make their rounds.

For many plants, cross-pollination is essential. Some fruits, vegetables, and nut trees would be unable to set fruit or would have extremely poor yields without

(20)   the aid of bees or other pollinators.

Experiments have proved that plants exposed to bees produce far greater yields than those which are not visited by colonies of bees. Apple orchards are a good example. Most apple growers rent bee colonies in early May to guarantee cross-pollination.

10. What is the topic of this passage?

(A) A description of bees

(B) Types of pollen

(C) Cross-pollination by bees

(D) Sources of pollen

11. The word "It" in line 3 refers to

(A) light, dry pollen

(B) a kind of flower

(C) moist, sticky pollen

(D) an external agent

12. The phrase "This process" in line 4 refers to

(A) the transfer of pollen by external agents

(B) the transfer of pollen by wind

(C) the contrast of two types of pollen

(D) the production of moist, sticky pollen

13. According to the passage, cross-pollination may occur in a of the following plants EXCEPT

(A) legumes

(B) grain crops

(C) fruits

(D) flowers

14. The phrase "reigns supreme" in line 7 is closest in meaning to

(A) lives the longest

(B) in the largest

(C) does the best job

(D) is the most numerous pollinating insect

15. According to the passage, why do bees collect pollen?

(A) For use as food

(B) As a complement to nectar

(C) To help plants evolve and change

(D) To cover their bodies

16. We can infer from the passage that bees are well suited to collecting pollen because of

(A) their attraction to flowers

(B) their ability to fly

(C) the structure of their bodies

(D) their ability to work hard

17. The word "edged" in line 12 is closest in meaning to

(A) hidden

(B) bordered

(C) decorated

(D) protected

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ORAL INTERVIEWS.

1. What is your name?
2. Tell me a good memory about your childhood.
3. When did that happen?
4. Why was it special?
5. What do you like about the Advanced English I subject?
6. Why?
7. What is the most challenging task during this major?
8. Why was it challenging?
9. What are your expectations when you get graduated?
10. Are there any other expectations you have?

APPENDIX 3 -   RUBRIC FOR ORAL INTERVIEWS

			Yes	No
6	Proficient Speaker C2	Shows great flexibility Maintains consistent Can express him/herself Can interact with ease and reformulating ideas in grammatical control of spontaneously at length with skill, picking up and using cohesive discourse Can create coherent and differing linguistic forms complex language, even a natural colloquial flow, non-verbal and intonation- making full and appropriate convey finer shades of while attention is otherwise avoiding or backtracking cues apparently ate use of a variety of meaning precisely, to give engaged (e.g. in forward around any difficulty so effortlessly. Can interweave organizational patterns emphasis, to differentiate planning, in monitoring smoothly that the contribution into and a wide range of and to eliminate ambiguity others' reactions) interlocutor is hardly the joint discourse with connectors and other Also has a good command aware of it fully natural turn taking, cohesive devices of idiomatic expressions referencing, allusion and colloquialisms. etc.	Yes	No
5	Advanced Speaker C1	Shows great flexibility Maintains consistent Can express him/herself Can interact with ease and Can create coherent and reformulating ideas in grammatical control of spontaneously at length with skill, picking up and using cohesive discourse differing linguistic forms complex language, even a natural colloquial flow, non-verbal and intonation- making full and appropriately convey finer shades of while attention is otherwise avoiding or backtracking intentional cues apparently ate use of a variety of meaning precisely, to give engaged (e.g. in forward around any difficulty so effortlessly. Can interweave organizational patterns emphasis, to differentiate planning, in monitoring smoothly his/her contribution into and a wide range of and to eliminate ambiguity. others' reactions). Speaker is aware of it. Speaker's discourse has appropriate connectors and other. Also has a good command fully natural turn taking, cohesive devices of idiomatic expressions referencing, allusion and colloquialisms.		
4	Early Advanced Speaker B2	Shows great flexibility. Maintains consistent Can express him/herself Can interact with ease and Can create coherent and reformulating ideas in grammatical control of spontaneously at length with skill, picking up and using cohesive discourse differing linguistic forms complex language, even a natural colloquial flow, non-verbal and intonation- making full and appropriate convey finer shades of while attention is otherwise avoiding or backtracking intentional cues apparently ate use of a variety of meaning precisely, to give engaged (e.g. in forward around any difficulty so effortlessly. Can interweave organizational patterns emphasis, to differentiate planning, in monitoring smoothly his/her contribution into and a wide range of and to eliminate ambiguity. Others' reactions). speaker is hardly the joint discourse with connectors and other Also has a good command aware of it. fully natural turn taking, cohesive devices. of idiomatic expressions referencing, allusion and colloquialisms. making, etc.		
3	Intermediate Speaker B1	Has a good command of a Consistently maintains a Can express him/herself Can select a suitable phrase Can produce clear, broad range of language high degree of grammatical fluently and spontaneously, from a readily available smoothly flowing, well allowing him/her to select a accuracy; errors are rare, almost effortlessly. Only a range of discourse structured speech, formulation to express him/ difficult to spot and conceptually difficult functions to preface his showing controlled use of herself clearly in an generally corrected when subject can hinder a natural, remarks in order to get or organizational patterns, appropriate style on a wide they do occur. smooth flow of language. to keep the floor and to connectors and cohesive range of general, academic, relate his/her own devices. professional or leisure contributions skilful to topics without having to those of other speakers. restrict what he/she wants to say.		
2	Early Intermediate Speaker A2	Has a sufficient range of Shows a relatively high Can produce stretches of Can initiate discourse, take Can use a limited number language to be able to give degree of grammatical language with a fairly even his/her turn when of cohesive devices to link clear descriptions, express control. Does not make tempo; although he/she can appropriate and end his/her utterances into viewpoints on most general errors which cause mis- be hesitant as he/she conversation when he/she clear, coherent discourse, topics, without much understanding, and can searches for patterns and needs to, though he/she though there may be conspicuous searching for correct most of his/her expressions. There are few may not always do this some 'jumpiness' in a words, using some complex mistakes. noticeably long pauses. elegantly. Can help the long contribution. sentence forms to do so. discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.		
I	Beginning Speaker A1	Has enough language to get Uses reasonably accurately a Can keep going Can initiate, maintain and Can link a series of by, with sufficient repertoire of frequently used comprehensibly, even though close simple face-to-face shorter, discrete simple vocabulary to express him/ 'routines' and patterns pausing for grammatical and conversation on topics that elements into a herself with some hesitation associated with more lexical planning and repair is are familiar or of personal connected, linear and circumlocutions on predictable very evident, especially in interest. Can repeat back sequence of points. topics such as family, longer stretches of free part of what someone has hobbies and interests, work, production. said to confirm mutual travel, and current events. understanding.		

APPENDIX 4

SURVEY FOR METHODOLOGY – BLENDED COURSE

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE
Thesis group Semester II / 2014

Topic: "**Which students can reach higher proficiency in speaking and reading, those taking classes with a blended learning approach vs. those taking classes with a face-to-face approach in** <u>**Advanced Intensive English I**</u> **at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014**"

Objective: To determine the elements in a <u>blended</u> and a face-to-face approach that influence to a higher performance in speaking and reading on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in teaching in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador.

Professor's name: Lic. Jose Ricardo Gamero
Students´ names:

Wilson Jonathan Molina Cruz	MC08027
Elsy Noemy Aguilar de Orellana	AR01091
Walter Francisco Córdoba Carvajal	CC91219

DIRECCTIONS: *Please, read carefully the following questionnaire and check the best category that you consider adequate based on your experience and your point of view as a student. The Indicators we are focusing on are the type of assessment, the approach, management and resources used during the course.*

Assessment

1. What aspects did your teacher take into consideration when grading your academic performance during the Intensive Advanced English I course?

◯ *My Behavior*   ◯ *In-class Participation*   ◯ *Homework assignments*

◯ *My attendance*   ◯ *In-class Presentations*   ◯ *Exams*

Approach

2. Mark the option that best describes the way English was taught during the class.

◯ *The teacher gives specific instructions for assignments. Students follow the same pattern during most of the assignments.* *(Structural approach).*

◯ *The teacher allows students to get involved into real and meaningful communication activities. Instructions are free and may vary in most activities. (Communicative approach).*

Management

3. Do you consider the teacher is knowledgeable in managing homework assignments?

◯ *Yes*　　　　　　　◯ *No*　　　　　　　◯ *To some extend*

4. Were there any instructions available for each activity assigned during the course?

◯ *Yes*　　　　　　　◯ *No*　　　　　　　◯ *Sometimes*

5. Does the teacher include the objectives for each homework assignments?

◯ *Yes*　　　　　　　◯ *No*　　　　　　　◯ *Sometimes*

Resources

6. Please mark all resources that were used to accomplish all tasks and homework assignments during the Intensive Advanced English I course.

Traditional Resources

◯ *Course book*

◯ *Workbook*

◯ *Dictionary*

◯ *Board*

◯ *Computer*

◯ *Projector*

◯ *Tape Recording*

◯ *Mp3 player*

Other:_____

High-tech instruments

◯ *Internet*

◯ *Computer*

◯ *Moodle Platform*

◯ *Mobil Applications*

◯ *Email*

◯ *Social networks*

◯ *Blogs*

◯ *Chats*

◯ *E-books*

◯ *Computer Lab*

◯ *Computer Software:*

_____

Other:

_____

Software

7. Please mark all items available to you in the platform during your Intensive Advanced English I course.

◯ A banner at the front of the Webpage

◯ Course Syllabus

◯ Chat

◯ Blog

◯ FAQ section

8. Please mark the different programs you used to carry on your activities during the Intensive Advanced English I course.

◯ Microsoft Word

◯ Excel

◯ Power Point

◯ Media player

◯ Internet browser

Other: _____

9. Did you have all the necessary software and equipment available at home to develop your homework assignments?

◯ Yes

◯ No

APPENDIX 5

SURVEY FOR METHODOLOGY – FACE-TO-FACE COURSE

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE
Thesis group Semester II / 2014

Topic: "**Which students can reach higher proficiency in speaking and reading, those taking classes with a blended learning approach vs. those taking classes with a face-to-face approach in <u>Advanced Intensive English I</u> at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014**"

Objective: To determine the elements in a blended and a face-to-face approach that influence to a higher performance in speaking and reading on students taking the Intensive Advanced English I in the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in teaching in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador.

Professor's name: Lic. Jose Ricardo Gamero
Students´ names:

Wilson Jonathan Molina Cruz	MC08027
Elsy Noemy Aguilar de Orellana	AR01091
Walter Francisco Córdoba Carvajal	CC91219

DIRECCTIONS: *Please, read carefully the following questionnaire and check the best category that you consider adequate based on your experience and your point of view as a student. The Indicators we are focusing on are the type of assessment, the approach and the sources ever used during the course.*

Assessment

What aspects did your teacher take into consideration when grading your academic performance during the Intensive Advanced English I course?

◯ *My Behavior*

◯ *My attendance*

◯ *In-class Participation*

◯ *In-class Presentations*

◯ *Homework assignments*

◯ *Exams*

Approach

Mark the option that best describes the way English was taught during the class.

◯ *The teacher gives specific instructions for assignments. Students follow the same pattern during most of the assignments.* *(Structural approach).*

◯ *The teacher allows students to get involved into real and meaningful communication activities. Instructions are free and can may vary in most activities. (Communicative approach).*

Resources

Please mark all resources that were used to accomplish all tasks and homework assignments during the Intensive Advanced English I course.

Traditional Resources

◯ *Course book*

◯ *Workbook*

◯ *Dictionary*

◯ *Board*

◯ *Computer*

◯ *Projector*

◯ *Tape Recording*

◯ *Mp3 player*

Other:_____

High-tech instruments

◯ *Internet*

◯ *Computer*

◯ *Moodle Platform*

◯ *Mobil Applications*

◯ *Email*

◯ *Social networks*

◯ *Blogs*

◯ *Chats*

◯ *E-books*

◯ *Computer Lab*

◯ *Computer Software:*

_____

Other:

_____

Cursos masivos en línea, nuevo reto en educación

- Una modalidad de enseñanza que ya es muy usada en Estados Unidos y Europa
- Algunas universidades locales están dando pasos para incursionar con este servicio

Susana Joma
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La educación superior del país no solo enfrenta el reto de brindar servicios de calidad, sino también el de embarcarse en trabajar con nuevas modalidades de enseñanza, como el caso de los cursos especializados en línea masivos gratuitos que están abiertos para toda persona o profesional interesado en profundizar el conocimiento en algún tema.

Si bien esa modalidad de enseñanza, conocida en inglés como Massive Open On Line Courses, MOOC's, es aprovechada por instituciones prestigiosas de Estados Unidos (Harvard y el Instituto Tecnológico de Massachusetts, entre otros), así como por otras tantas de Europa y de algunos países de América Latina, acá los centros universitarios apenas empiezan a dar pasos en esto.

Según el especialista en Educación, Óscar Picardo Joao, estos cursos masivos que reúnen a gente de todas partes del mundo son parte de lo que se podría llamar educación continua o abierta, suelen ser de alta calidad y se encuentran en plataformas virtuales educativas, entre ellas Coursera y Miríada X.

Tanto Picardo como Ana Ligia Rodríguez, directora de Educación Virtual de la Universidad Doctor José Matías Delgado, advierten que el montaje de esta modalidad no es sencillo ni barato para los centros.

Entre otras cosas tienen que firmar convenios con los propietarios de las plataformas educativas que existen en el mercado, sean gratuitas o pagadas, y se tiene que invertir en capacitar a los profesores, que en este caso pasan a denominarse tutores.

Los dos profesionales reconocen que esto resulta ventajoso para el estudiante porque con solo tener acceso a Inter-

ENCIFRAS

25

MIL ESTUDIANTES aspirantes a ingresar a la universidad de El Salvador han recibido un curso de preparación en línea en los últimos años.

5,355

PERSONAS atendieron el curso Introducción al Desarrollo de Aplicaciones Móviles, uno de dos que ofreció la Universidad Francisco Gavidia en 2014.

net puede acceder a los cursos a cualquier hora y en cualquier lugar, pero a la larga también favorece a los centros porque hacen proyección social local e internacional y resulta ser un gancho para captar estudiantes.

"Lo que el usuario recibe es actualización y lo que la universidad recibe es prestigio internacional, presencia en la web y capta estudiantes", resume Rodríguez.

Quienes toman estos cursos, aunque se especialicen en un tema no ganan créditos o un título, pero si lo quieren obtener tienen que pagar a las instituciones que los imparten.

Rodríguez aclaró que las capacitaciones de este tipo, que actualmente se sirven a nivel

Una de las ventajas de los cursos masivos abiertos en línea es que se pueden atender desde cualquier lugar. FOTO EDH/ARCHIVO

internacional, son para nivel de licenciaturas, ingenierías y arquitecturas.

En la UES

El rector de la Universidad de El Salvador (UES), Mario Lovo, afirmó que en los últimos años ellos han montado en internet un aula virtual en la que se dan cursos de refuerzo gratuitos.

No obstante, los cursos de la universidad estatal solo están dirigidos a los estudiantes que cada año buscan ingresar a la institución.

"Nosotros tenemos récord del país sobre la cantidad de alumnos atendidos en línea con el nuevo ingreso, porque hemos estado atendiendo de forma simultánea más de 25 mil estudiantes o aspirantes", manifestó Lovo.

Óscar Picardo, quien también es director de investigación de la Universidad Francisco Gavidia (UFG), expresó que esa institución ya entró al proceso de educación virtual.

Eso implica que los profesores que brindan algunas carreras elaboran materiales y los suben al sitio en línea que maneja la institución para que sus estudiantes puedan consultarlo; pero además, aseguró que el año anterior el centro ya brindó dos cursos MOOC a través de la plataforma Miríada X.

Uno de ellos fue Introducción al Desarrollo de Aplicaciones Móviles con Windows Phone, y el otro Crecimiento en la Economía Global.

De acuerdo con los datos brindados por Carlos Urias, el

director de Tecnologías de la UFG, el primero de los cursos cubrió un total de 5 mil 355 alumnos y el segundo 2 mil 618.

Hubo participantes de 32 países, entre ellos España, México, Perú, Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador, Venezuela, Argentina y Chile.

Urias sostuvo que se están preparando para retomar los cursos citados, pero también para brindar dos más.

"Se esperan estar ofreciendo el segundo semestre del año", explicó Urias por medio de un correo electrónico.

Proyectos en UFG y Matías

Picardo agregó que la idea de la Gavidia es la de producir la mayor cantidad de cursos posibles y colgarlos en la UFG en línea.

"Eso creemos que ese es el proceso: la universidad en línea, los cursos en línea, los profesores en línea y los estudiantes en línea", subrayó el especialista educativo.

La Universidad Doctor José Matías Delgado también trata de hacer lo propio y de acuerdo con lo externado por Ana Ligia Rodríguez, directora de Educación Virtual, se están preparando para dar bien el salto a los cursos masivos abiertos en línea para que sean de calidad.

Así prevé que lanzarán sus MOOC en dos años.

"En el Plan Quinquenal que presentamos en 2012 - 2018 está contemplado trabajar con los MOOC, salir ya de la universidad a nivel local y ofrecer cursos en forma internacional", agregó.

EL CAMINO HACIA LOS CURSOS MASIVOS ABIERTOS EN LÍNEA

Las primeras iniciativas de los cursos en línea masivos y abiertos en línea, que en inglés se conocen como Massive Open On line Course (MOOC's), empezaron a surgir en 2007. Algunos señalan a David Wiley como autor del primer MOOC conceptual iniciado en la Universidad de Utah. Según el especialista educativo, Óscar Picardo, inició como una oferta educativa estructura. Para 2011 ya se tenían más de 150 mil MOOC de las universidades más prestigiosas, como Stanford, MIT y luego trascendió a Latinoamérica.

UNA FORMA PRÁCTICA DE DIFUNDIR LOS CONOCIMIENTOS EN EL MUNDO

Según el especialista en educación, Óscar Picardo, los cursos masivos abiertos en línea responden a una nueva dinámica de hiperespecialización y van en la línea de los planteamientos de Manuel Castells sobre la sociedad en red, la sociedad en libertad y la sociedad en conocimiento. En opinión de Picardo, en el país esta forma de enseñanza, como ya lo ha señalado la especialista de USAID, Michele Davenport, podría utilizarse para elevar la escolarización de la población hasta bachillerato, con la suma de créditos.

LOS MOOC´S, MODALIDAD QUE TAMBIÉN HA RECIBIDO MUCHAS CRÍTICAS

Los cursos masivos en línea no han estado exentos de la crítica. Más allá de la facilidad de acceso a contenidos actualizados, sin importar el tiempo y lugar, se cuestiona el hecho de que en estos cursos hay mucha deserción, y de hecho eso se plantea como uno de los retos para las instituciones que los brindan. De igual forma se cuestiona que la información se brinda descontextualizada y eso afecta el aprendizaje. Además, se ha visto que la participación masiva de estudiantes complica los procesos de evaluación.

OPINIONES

"El MOOC es un cambio radical en el paradigma educativo, porque (aquí) el alumno es el centro, él selecciona lo que le interesa (aprender) y se va formando"

ÓSCAR PICARDO
Especialista educativo

"Los MOOC's los veo como una nueva revolución. Está cambiando las concepciones de la educación y mostrando nuevas corrientes de pensamiento sobre aprendizaje"

ANA LIGIA RODRÍGUEZ
Univ. Matías Delgado

UES contempla que universidad en línea será lanzada en 2016

La facultad de Ingeniería y Arquitectura de la Universidad de El Salvador está a cargo de formular el proyecto de la universidad virtual pública, pero aún no se define qué carreras se impartirá. Las autoridades del centro dicen que inicialmente se prevé invertir cinco millones de dólares

Susana Joma
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La universidad virtual estatal pública, uno de los proyectos insignia del gobierno en turno, empezaría a funcionar el próximo año, según informó el rector de la Universidad de El Salvador (UES), Mario Nieto Lovo.

El funcionario de la UES, institución a la que ha sido confiada el lanzamiento del centro que brindaría carreras en línea, indicó que la facultad de ingeniería y arquitectura está trabajando en ello y enviaron un primer informe al gobierno.

"Se está trabajando cuáles son las carreras que se van a ofertar porque se necesita escuchar al ministro (de Educación) sobre cuáles son las que ellos quisieran ofrecer. No se trata de que van a ser las mismas que da la universidad. Se ha establecido contacto con las universidades de Costa Rica, de México y España que trabajan educación virtual para asesoría. Así que el proyecto está caminando", aseguró Nieto Lovo.

Aunque no han definido carreras, el rector de la UES dijo que podrían brindarse carreras vinculadas a informática,

profesorados y licenciaturas como la de Administración de Empresas y en el caso de carreras que utilicen laboratorios, se verá la necesidad de hacer alianzas con empresas y otras universidades.

¿Cuánto se invertirá? Nieto Lovo expresó que le van a presentar al ministro de Educación, Carlos Mauricio Canjura, un presupuesto de cinco años por un monto de 32 millones de dólares. Sin embargo, inicialmente prevén invertir cinco millones. "Es la meta nuestra iniciar en 2016", citó.

El rector del alma máter sostiene que es una modalidad diferente donde los estudiantes no tendrían limitación geográfica y podrán optar a una carrera superior sin moverse del lugar donde residen.

Otra ventaja que ve es que podrán formular programas de formación profesional acordes a las necesidades que hay en las diferentes regiones del territorio. Sin embargo, reconoce que tienen el reto de asegurar que los estudiantes tengan acceso a internet.

Además, buscarán estrategias para evitar que haya alta deserción de los cursos virtuales como ha ocurrido en centros de otras naciones.

La UES se asesora con universidades de otras naciones para montar el proyecto.
FOTO EDH

Rodríguez sostiene que tienen que definir qué contenidos se van a brindar en esos cursos, pero también capacitar a los profesores en el manejo de la plataforma que escojan para trabajar (actualmente trabajan con Universia) y en la elaboración de material de aprendizaje. En junio tienen proyectada una capacitación al respecto. "Viene una experta en elaboración de objetos de aprendizaje y diseño instruccional", citó.

Según externó, la preparación a estos cursos tiene que ser muy cuidadosa, pues no se trata de subir cualquier documento o video.

"Recuerde que la Matías se caracteriza por ofrecer calidad, antes que cantidad", sostuvo la experta en educación virtual.

Los especialistas en educación afirman que esta forma de enseñar no es una moda, y aunque no sustituirá a la formación que se da en las universidades, se prevé que ha llegado para quedarse. Esto

debido a la demanda creciente de acceso al conocimiento, lo cual viene de la mano con las Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación.

"El MOOC es un cambio radical en el paradigma educativo, porque el alumno es el centro y él selecciona lo que a le interesa. Él se va formando y haciendo especialista, tenga o no tenga la credencial, tenga o no tenga títulos, pero muchos padres de la tecnología ni siquiera tenían títulos", añadió Picardo.

APPENDIX 7

TIMETABLE

TIMETABLE 2014

	MONTHS	APR				MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUG				SEPT				OCT				NOV				DEC			
	WEEKS	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
	ACTIVITIES																																				
1	Advisor's assignation	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓															
2	Tutoring																						▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
3	Elaboration of the research´s profile											▓	▓	▓	▓																						
4	Elaboration of statement of the problem																					▓															
5	Elaboration of the historical background and theoretical framework																						▓	▓													
6	Elaboration of type of study																								▓												
7	Elaboration of research design																									▓											
8	Elaboration of population and sample																										▓										
9	Data gathering process																											▓	▓								

TIMETABLE 2015

	MONTHS	JAN				FEB				MAR				APR				MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUG			
	WEEKS	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
	ACTIVITIES																																
1	Data gathering process									▓	▓	▓	▓																				
2	Elaboration of data analysis													▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓												
3	Presentation of major findings																					▓	▓	▓	▓								