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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



RESEARCH PROJECT:

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FLUENCY LEVEL OF ENGLISH REACHED BY STUDENTS OF ADVANCED ENGLISH I, SEMESTER II 2017, FROM THE MODERN LANGUAGES MAJOR AND THE ENGLISH TEACHING MAJOR AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR.

STUDENTS:

CARNET:

JESÚS ALEXIS BERNAL MENJIVAR

BM12040

HECTOR ERNESTO MARROQUIN AGUILAR

MA12017

KATYA GEORGINA ROMERO DÍAZ

RD10010

MAJOR: LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS

ADVISOR: LICENCIADO NELSON BLADIMIR ESCOBAR

COORDINATOR: LICENCIADO MAURICIO CONTRERAS

MAIN CAMPUS, DECEMBER 4th 2017

AUTHORITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

MaE. ROGER ARMANDO ARIAS ALVARADO

RECTOR

DR. MANUEL DE JESÚS JOYA ÁBREGO

ACADEMIC VICE RECTOR

ING. NELSON BERNABÉ GRANADOS

ADMINISTRATIVE VICE RECTOR

Mtro. CRISTOBAL HERNÁN RÍOS BENÍTEZ

GENERAL SECRETARY

AUTHORITIES OF SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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DEAN

McI. EDGAR NICOLÁS AYALA

VICE-DEAN

Msc. HÉCTOR DANIEL CARBALLO DÍAZ

SECRETARY

AUTHORITIES OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

LIC. JOSÉ RICARDO GAMERO ORTIZ

HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

LIC. MAURICIO SALVADOR CONTRERAS CARCAMO

GENERAL COORDINATOR OF THE DEGREE PROCESSES

LIC. NELSON BLADIMIR ESCOBAR

ADVISOR

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Katya Georgina Romero Díaz

Héctor Ernesto Marroquín Aguilar

Jesús Alexis Bernal Menjívar

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INTRODUCTION

Communicating by using a second or third language enable people to be more competent for the diversity of challenges found in everyday life. This characteristic enhances people to establish a better relationship with other people. It is not only what people say, but also the way they say it what can make them more reliable and skilled at the moment of performing a task, or encountering a situation in which the use of the mother tongue is not allowed.

This research tries to set the difference in fluency among both majors by questioning and reviewing the dedication consecrated to learn a second language. In order to gather the data, some placement tests and interviews were assigned and performed to evaluate the knowledge that students have acquired through the years of study. The information stored in their brains is clearly related to the fluency at the moment of communicating an idea since a person without enough vocabulary would not be able to produce a clear speech.

However, there are some blind spots that need to be covered in both majors but the main one is how to make students be aware about their speaking progress since there is a lack of consistency at the moment of delivering a message.

Thus, the following work aimed to compare the fluency level of English when using the second language in daily conversations, among second year students of the Modern Languages Major and the English Teaching Major, Semester II-2017 who were enrolled in Advanced English I course. In order to carry out this research, the study sample was 30 students, 15 students from the Modern Languages Major and 15 students from the English Teaching Major.

CHAPTER I

1. Statement of the problem

1.1 Description of the problem

Fluency is an important skill when learning a second language, but it might be one of the most difficult skills to master. Speaking English fluently can open more study or job opportunities to meet new people and cultures or it can be useful mainly to understand other people. However, the lack of fluency can affect the comprehension when people try to communicate.

Speech fluency refers to what Segalowitz (2010) called “utterance fluency”, that is, the ability to produce meaningful strings of linguistic symbols in a largely uninterrupted fashion (Crystal, 1997; Götz, 2013). It is understood as an automatic procedural skill (Schmidt, 1992), where automaticity implies that in proficient speakers, little attention and effort are needed to produce fluent speech.

At the University of El Salvador there are two majors related to languages; the Modern Languages Major and the English Teaching Major. According to some teachers from the Foreign Language Department, students from the Modern Languages Major tend to be more fluent than students from the English Teaching Major. This created an interesting and controversial situation since students that have to learn two languages at the same time seem to be more fluent than students that just learn one language at a time; these latter should be more fluent in English since that major is focused, based and addressed to one single language.

As mentioned before, fluency is one of the aspects of language that just a few students develop and that is the case of students from the English Teaching Major.

Students from the English Teaching Major just study English and they have a lower fluency level in comparison with the students from the Modern Languages Major. This is a problem since students that are just learning one single language should have a higher fluency level.

That is why this research touched important points regarding fluency level as **“Learning two languages at the same time become people more fluent”** which refers to the difference between learning one single language and two languages at the same time. **“Learning two languages at the same time develops more neurologic connections which facilitate the learning of more vocabulary”**, this point focuses on the idea that students who learn more than one language acquire more vocabulary allowing them to have a better fluency level since they have more ways to express their thoughts. Finally, **“Learning techniques and strategies”** is the last point taken into account regarding fluency since depending on the way students practice and learn the language they can develop a lower or higher level of fluency.

1.2 Rationale

Learning a second language can be undoubtedly difficult. Many people learn English and another language simultaneously and this could represent a problem because there are different factors interfering with the learning process of the student and one of the most important points being affected is fluency because not all the people learning a new language acquires this ability at the same level as other people do. The immersion in a different language is hard, but it is not impossible and all over the world there are people who decide to take the risk, and satisfy their ambition of becoming more competitive by studying a major concerning two or more foreign languages. Taking as example English and French, it is possible to mention that people who are in

contact with both languages are increasing their possibilities to find a job in such a demanding world since they are enriching their minds with a separate language that their own and expanding their knowledge due to the exposure of a different tongue, customs and cultures. These languages are a notable bound that contribute to build creative skills and productive communication.

The involvement in different activities that promote the interaction among people enhances the opportunities to practice the language being taught, as a result, people devote countless hours to increase their vocabulary which is essential at the moment of holding a conversation with a native speaker of the target language; this could not be possible without the self-motivation and discipline that encourages people to accomplish their goals. One of the things people dig with when learning is the reward of traveling since learning provides the opportunities to visit and to meet new people and civilizations. On the other hand, the process of acquiring a new language may present some barriers that make people struggle when learning. Since there is more than one language stored in the brain, it might be confusing at the moment of processing the information and deciding the right words that would come out of the mouth if there is not an active learning process that provides closeness to the new language.

When learning a new language there will always be a dominant language, which means a person will be more fluent in one language than in the other, or a person may have more knowledge in one language than in the other; in order to have the same level of fluency or knowledge in both languages it is advisable to study more to take advantage of the resources so that the limitations with the language can be easily overcome.

At the Foreign Language Department, University of El Salvador, there are two majors that teach English as main language but according to the opinion of the FLD students and teachers, there are many differences in the fluency level of English and when students from those majors graduate. It seems that there is a difference regarding skills and knowledge even though all students have been exposed to the same language and teaching methods.

The aim for this research is to assess the fluency and knowledge level that students have at the Foreign Language Department; it is intended to second year students, semester II-2017, specifically from Advanced English I from the majors in Modern Languages and English Teaching. By doing this research and based on the results obtained, it will be possible to improve the fluency level of students for both majors Modern Languages and English Teaching at the Foreign Language Department. This study will show the incompleteness in learning English at Advanced level, and it will help to determine what is happening during the learning of English in students from these two majors that affects the fluency level.

At the moment of carrying out this research, the different issues interfering with the fluency that FLD students have when they take courses in a foreign language and the weaknesses and strengths that students possess when they learn a second language in the classroom will be determined. This study will help to make changes at the Foreign Language Department in order to improve the teaching of English language, so students would become more fluent in English.

This research is helpful to understand the issues in the development of the fluency among these two majors and then provide different recommendations to the problematic situation because it is well known in the world of teaching and learning

languages that fluency is one of the most important factors not only to hold a conversation with foreign speakers but it also shows professionalism; fluency represents the time and hard work that both the teacher and student have invested when teaching and learning the language accordingly.

1.3 Objectives

General Objective

- To study the fluency level of the English language in 2nd year students, semester II, 2017 from the major in Modern Languages in comparison to the English Teaching Major.

Specific Objectives

- To assess the difference in the fluency level of the English language among students from the Modern Languages Major in contrast to the English Teaching Major through short tests.
- To assess the difference in knowledge level of English among students from the Modern Languages Major in contrast to the English Teaching Major through short tests.

1.4 Research questions

- What is the fluency level in English Advanced I students from Modern Languages and English Teaching major?
- What are the difficulties for students when speaking English at classroom?
- Is there any advantage in English fluency for Modern Languages Major students when they learn French and English at the same time?
- How many students have a lack of fluency when they try to communicate?

1.5 Assumptions

- Students from the Modern Languages Major speak more fluently than students from the English Teaching Major.
- Students from the English Teaching Major have more knowledge about English than students from the Modern Languages Major.
- When the placement test would be administered, students from the Modern Languages Major will have better results than students from the English Teaching Major.
- Students from the Modern Languages Major participate more in class than students from the English Teaching Major.
- Students from the English Teaching Major have more vocabulary than students from the Modern Languages Major.

1.6 Definitions

For this study, it was necessary to define some terms in order to have a better comprehension of it:

Bilingualism: is commonly defined as the use of at least two languages by an individual (ASHA, 2004)

Cognitive strategies: are one type of learning strategy that learners use in order to learn more successfully. These include repetition, organizing new language, summarizing meaning, guessing meaning from context, using imagery for memorization. All of these strategies involve deliberate manipulation of language to improve learning. Classifications of learning strategies distinguish between cognitive strategies and two other types, metacognitive strategies, and social/ affective strategies. (British Council, 2017).

Fluency: the ability to speak or write a foreign language easily and accurately. (Oxford Living Dictionaries).

Language: The method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way. (Oxford University Press, 2017).

Proficiency: a high degree of ability or skill in something (Macmillan English Dictionary, 2017)

Metacognitive strategies: refers to methods used to help students understand the way they learn; in other words, it means processes designed for students to ‘think’ about their ‘thinking’. (Inclusive Schools Network, 2015).

Knowledge: all the facts that someone knows about a particular subject.

(Macmillan English Dictionary, 2017)

Vocabulary: a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined. (Merriam-Webster, 2017)

1.7 Limitations

In the implementation of this study, the researchers had different issues, for example these ones:

- ❖ To choose the sample is necessary to carry out a demographic study in order to know the major and year of students. However, the researchers had a statistical process and it was made for convenience due the lack of students.
- ❖ The lack of cooperation by students when they were asked completing the placement tests and being interviewed, some of them refused or had a bad attitude when taking the tests.
- ❖ During the observation, it was difficult that students spoke because they were shy or were afraid to express their ideas in public.

- ❖ In order to have better results it is necessary to follow up on students' fluency and vocabulary at least two semesters, since it was hard to determine the level of fluency in just one month observing the students.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Nowadays, learning to speak a second language can be very beneficial for professional and academic development, but when people are in the process of learning it they face several issues. There are many languages in the world, some of them seem to be easier than others, and some are more used than others. According to World Choice Education, "the English is considered as a universal language, mainly because it is the most spoken language worldwide" (World Choice Education, 2013). However, for people learning English as a second language the development of the four macro skills, reading, writing, speaking and listening means a challenge; nonnative speakers always seem to overcome any difficulty in most of these abilities yet, there is one in which people struggles most of the time and just a few seem to overcome it; this is the speaking skill and its sub-skill which is fluency. English learners acquire a good level of English in general terms with practice but there seems to be a phenomenon in which they reach a point where they struggle a lot with fluency proficiency.

It is well known that every English learner seek for the ability to clear and easily communicate in this language. Brumfit (1984) as cited in Al-Sibai, D 2004 states that "Speaking English fluently is a goal for all English learners. A person is said to be a fluent speaker of a language when he can use its structures accurately while concentrating on content rather than form, using the units and patterns automatically at normal conversational speed when they are needed". In this respect, the Merriam Webster Dictionary defines fluency as the ability to speak easily and smoothly; especially the ability to speak a foreign language easily and effectively. Besides this concept the Macmillan English Dictionary defines fluency as expressing yourself in a

clear and confident way without seem to make an effort. While according to Schmidt (1992), “fluency is understood as a primarily temporal phenomenon (i.e., not a vague notion of proficiency, but the way speech is processed and articulated in real time)”. So, fluency is an automatic skill when people speak without effort and in meaningful content.

Furthermore, fluency is not only the ability to speak a second language in a natural way where the speech is accurate but also the capacity to correct yourself when speaking in order to make the message that wants to be transmitted as clear as possible. It is also the ability “to play” with word choosing in order to transform or adapt the message to a different kind of public.

Fluency, in conclusion, is an important sub skill when speaking a foreign language since it helps to communicate the message in a clear manner and to make it easier to understand. Subsequently, learning two foreign languages at the same time could affect or improve the fluency level of the students. Thus, this literature review addresses the comparison between the fluency level of English reached by students of Advanced English I, from the Modern Languages Major and the English Teaching Major in three sections. The first one addresses the content related to learning two languages at the same time become people more fluent. The second section focuses on learning two languages at the same time develop more neurologic connections which facilitate the learning of more vocabulary. Finally, the third section discusses learning techniques and strategies.

2.1 Learning two languages at the same time become people more fluent.

English is the most spoken language around the world and the learners of it as a second language struggle to master it especially regarding fluency, which is the ability to easily and effectively speak a foreign language. It is well documented that people face different problems when learning a new language and it would be believed that learning two different languages at the same time may lead to have even more problems when learning them. So, as a consequence there is a general belief that people will not be able to become fluent if they are learning two languages at the same time. Certainly, not many people overcome this challenge but there are some who do and those who learn two languages at the same time seem to become better in fluency, which is very curious because they have to learn, to practice, to study and learn the double of vocabulary and material than a person who is just learning one language. This might be senseless because people are making a double effort to learn two languages when learning just one requires a lot of time, dedication and effort.

Besides the fact that students are learning two languages, many factors can affect the learning process of the students in order to become a fluent speaker; for instance, the teaching methods students are exposed to, the studying techniques students use in order to learn or practice the language they are learning, or even the environment in which they are learning the languages.

First, the fact that students learn two languages at the same time might sound impossible but actually it is not. Not only in universities but also in language academies that teach two languages simultaneously people by themselves learn one, two or even three languages at the same time; of course this demands a lot of time to practice and study, yet it is important not to forget that these are the basis when learning a new

language. It is through practice that students put into action the knowledge they have acquired inside the classrooms. “Actively producing phrases or sentences in the target language is an effective learning exercise since it prompts learners to ‘recognize consciously some of their linguistic problems’” (Swain, 2005, p. 27). It means that production, particularly when accompanied by corrective feedback allows you to better assess confidence leading to better produce spoken language.

Second, the more time a student spends practicing and studying a language the better the student becomes. To learn a language there are different skills which need to be mastered as the listening skill; this requires a student to train the ear by being exposed to the language through music, videos, and movies or listening to other speakers of the language. There is also the reading skill which is trained by reading from short and simple texts to larger and complex texts which lead to the acquisition of language knowledge like colloquial expressions, vocabulary, etc; then, there is writing which is very important at the time of addressing letters or writing documents to different persons or institutions and last but not least there is the speaking skill which is very important to communicate ideas to others.

Lexicon is very important to students because it demonstrates the capacity they have in order to interact with other people being these native or non-native speakers. In order to acquire speaking proficiency is mandatory to practice either with another learner or if possible, which would be a lot better, a native speaker or even the teacher so students are exposed to the language. The more exposed students are to the language the easier and the better they learn it.

Finally, as students are exposed to the two languages they are learning, the practice they have in one complements the other. Practice helps a lot either in one

language or in the other because they are getting their brain trained so they can acquire the information of both, compare it and make it their own. Even though learning two languages requires the double of effort than just learning one, it makes students learn faster, better and more effective because they become fluent speakers.

2.2 Learning two languages at the same time develops more neurologic connections which facilitate the learning of more vocabulary.

Learning two languages at the same time can become people more fluent, moreover there are more benefits than learning just one foreign language. Many people might think that learning two languages at the same time could be very hard or impossible and the brain might be blocked or might get confused because there are many factors that interfere in the learning process such as the misunderstanding of words between languages, the interference of the mother tongue and the lack of vocabulary. However, according to different studies, learning two languages can be very useful to generate more neurological connections for getting more vocabulary and to improve the memory retention of words.

Results of a study made on August 2016 indicate that L3 vocabulary learning benefits from each language and that bilinguals can flexibly transfer L1 and L2 knowledge to the L3, when appropriate, at early stages of instruction, Marian and Bartolotti (p. 20, 2016). It means that people who are trilingual can take words or over generalize from the mother tongue or from the second language to the third language. This can enrich the vocabulary in the foreign language process.

It is said in language classes that vocabulary is an essential part of the language but what is vocabulary exactly? Vocabulary, according to the Macmillan English

Advanced Dictionary is, “all the words that a person knows”. This meaning seems to have a complete and clear sense yet “vocabulary” is a lot more than just single words. Recent vocabulary studies draw on an understanding of *lexis*, the Greek for word, which in English “refers to all the words in a language, the entire vocabulary of a language”. (Barcroft, Sunderman, & Schmitt, 2011, p. 571). So, it will probably not surprise you that vocabulary also includes *lexical chunks*, phrases of two or more words, such as *Good morning* and *Nice to meet you*, which research suggests children and adults learn as single lexical units. Phrases like these involve more than one word but have a clear, formulaic usage and make up a significant portion of spoken or written English language usage. Also called *formulaic sequences* (Alali & Schmitt, 2012), they are central to English vocabulary learning and therefore worth teacher's' attention as they teach vocabulary (Lewis, 1993).

It is possible then, to define vocabulary as *the words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of several words which convey a particular meaning, the way individual words do*. Vocabulary not only addresses single lexical items which are words with a specific meaning but it also includes lexical phrases or chunks. Vocabulary is central to English language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. Wilkins (1972) wrote that “...while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary *nothing* can be conveyed (pp. 11-112).

Fluent people happen to have an extensive vocabulary to express their opinions or ideas; the more vocabulary they have the better they can transmit their thoughts to different types of public. People who have a great variety of vocabulary do not just know a lot of words but also they know how to transmit their ideas using the correct

words to the public they are talking to. The idea of being “fluent” in other languages is that you can communicate your thoughts in an easy way. If people understand what a person is saying, in a clear way, then that person is doing a great job.

Lewis (1993) argued, “lexis” is the core or heart of language” (p. 89). When students develop or reach a certain grade of fluency and expression in English, they find necessary and important to acquire more productive vocabulary knowledge and they also practice their own personal vocabulary learning strategies. As Schmitt (2010) noted, “learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books” (p. 4). Students understand the importance of acquiring new vocabulary because it is a tool that allows people to understand, modify, adapt and communicate a message. It is important to understand what other people say in order to reply to the message sent and it is also important to have an extensive vocabulary so the message can be modified in order to make it simple and own it and adapt it to communicate an answer, an opinion or a new message. It is important to understand that a fluent speaker is the one that not only speaks but also listens because it is important to understand what other person is saying in order to make up not only a creative but also an intelligent response.

2.3 Learning techniques and strategies

Learning a new language can be undoubtedly difficult if the correct approach is not used. There are different learning techniques that students may put into practice in order to learn new languages and it is very important to be aware that is necessary to consider that whenever the learners implement any learning strategy they have to be in a state of mind which enables the learners to be concentrated on what they want to learn; in other words learners who are starving do not pay attention to what they do; they have to be ready in order to receive the new information and also they have to be rested. It is

also important to consider that when students feel that something is unnecessary to learn or has not importance then learning becomes ineffective because they will not pay attention to it. Therefore, in order for the learning process to be effective the use of strategies is necessary.

The word “strategy” comes from the ancient Greek word “strategia” which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. The warlike meaning of strategia has fortunately fallen away but the control and goal-directedness remain in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 2003). An analogy thinking can be applied to learning. The steps or actions to be taken in order to acquire new knowledge are known as learning strategies.

First of all, it is necessary to define what learning strategies are. They are defined as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques - such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task - used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarella & Oxford,2003, p. 63). Whenever the learner decides to choose a learning strategy they first have to consider if the strategy to be used fulfills his necessities. The learning strategies are classified in six different groups which are: cognitive, metacognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective and social.

A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is completely considered. What makes a strategy positive and helpful for a learner? A strategy is useful if the following conditions are present: (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand, (b) the strategy fits the particular student’s learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) the student applies the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies. Strategies that fulfill these

conditions “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990, p.8). Learning strategies can also enable students to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners (Allwright, 1990; Little, 1991). Yet students are not always aware of the power of consciously using L2 learning strategies for making learning quicker and more effective (Nyikos & Oxford, 1993). Skilled teachers help their students in order to develop an awareness of learning strategies and make them possible to use a wide range of appropriate strategies (Oxford, 2003). As stated before, “strategies are neither good nor bad” because each strategy has benefits and results depending on the learning style of the student; if one strategy is not working for one student then that might mean that the strategy used is not the correct for the student and another strategy might function better or fits better for the learning style of the student.

Six major groups of L2 strategies have been identified by Oxford (2003). The Cognitive strategies, metacognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective and social strategies. At first place, **Cognitive strategies** enable the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways, e.g., through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally.

Second, **Metacognitive strategies** (e.g., identifying one’s own learning style preferences and needs, planning for a L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy) are employed for managing the learning process overall. Among native English speakers learning foreign

languages, Purpura (1999) found that metacognitive strategies had “a significant, positive, direct effect on cognitive strategy use, providing clear evidence that metacognitive strategy use has an executive function over cognitive strategy use in task completion” (p. 61). (Oxford, 2003). These strategies help learners to manage and check the progress they are having when learning a new language, allowing to detect the points of opportunities where they can improve what they are doing to learn.

Third, **Memory-related strategies** help learners link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Various memory-related strategies enable learners to learn and retrieve information in an orderly string (e.g., acronyms), while other techniques create learning and retrieval via sounds (e.g., rhyming), images (e.g, a mental picture of the word itself or the meaning of the word), a combination of sounds and images (e.g, the keyword method), body movement (e.g, total physical response), mechanical means (e.g, flashcards), or location (e.g, on a page or blackboard) (see Oxford, 1990 for details and multiple examples). Memory-related strategies have been shown to relate to L2 proficiency in a course devoted to memorizing large numbers of Kanji characters (Kato, 1996) and in L2 courses designed for native-English speaking learners of foreign languages (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995). However, memory-related strategies do not always positively relate to L2 proficiency. In fact, the use of memory strategies in a test-taking situation had a significant *negative* relationship to learners’ test performance in grammar and vocabulary (Purpura 1997). The probable reason for this is that memory strategies are often used for memorizing vocabulary and structures in initial stages of language learning, but learners need such strategies less when their arsenal of vocabulary and structures has become larger (Oxford, 2003). Memory-related strategies are really helpful when it comes to memorizing vocabulary and grammar structures in the early learning process but when

the learners acquired a more extensive vocabulary set, then these strategies become useless.

Fourth, **Compensatory strategies** (e.g., guessing from the context in listening and reading; using synonyms and “talking around” the missing word to aid speaking and writing; and strictly for speaking, using gestures or pause words) help the learner make up for missing knowledge. Cohen (1998) asserted that compensatory strategies are used for speaking and writing (often known as a form of **communication strategies**) are intended only for language use and must not be considered as language learning strategies. However, Little (personal communication, January 1999) and Oxford (1990-1990a) contended that compensation strategies of any kind, even though they can be used for language use, nevertheless aid in language learning as well. After all, each instance of L2 is an opportunity for more L2 learning. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) demonstrated that compensatory strategies are significantly related to L2 proficiency in their study of native-English-speaking learners of foreign languages (Oxford, 2003). These strategies are useful since they can be used in order to complete ideas or thoughts when speaking the language being learned, as for example during a practice or exercise of the language these strategies are useful because make the learner think and remember vocabulary that could be used to complete an idea.

Fifth, **Affective strategies**, such as identifying one’s mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self-talk have been shown to be significantly related to L2 proficiency in research by Dreyer and Oxford (1996) among South African EFL learners and by Oxford and Ehrman (1995) among native English speakers learning foreign languages. However, other studies such as that of Mullins (1992) with EFL

learners from Thailand, affective strategies showed a negative link with some measures of L2 proficiency. One reason might be that as some students progress toward proficiency, they no longer need affective strategies as much as before. Perhaps because learners' use of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies is related to greater L2 proficiency and self-efficacy, over time there might be less need for affective strategies as learners progress to higher proficiency (Oxford, 2003). Talking about affective strategies means to talk about self-confidence; when students come to have a better understanding and use of the language they feel more confident and as a result they do not have to pay attention to how they feel when speaking the language being learned, but they focus on what they want to express and how they are going to say it to make the message understandable.

Sixth, **Social strategies** (e.g. asking questions in order to get verification, asking for clarification of something that is a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms) help the learner work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language. Social strategies were significantly associated with L2 proficiency in studies by the South African EFL study by Dreyer and Oxford (1996) and the research of native-English-speaking foreign language learners by Oxford and Ehrman (Oxford, 2003). Social strategies are basically based on holding a conversation with native-speakers of the language being learned and not only speaking but also asking for help in order to clarify what is not so clear for the learner. Social strategies have to be with the social interaction that learners have with the L2 native-speakers. These strategies help students to develop their speaking and listening skill through real interaction with others.

In conclusion, these strategies are very useful to learn and practice a new language. They develop the students' skills step by step since they practice what they are studying. Learning strategies are important to develop skills and increase the knowledge acquired during the classes because it does not matter if students know a lot of some specific topic or if the students do not practice what they know since the brain tends to forget things. The more the students practice what they study, the more fluent they become and that is why the learning techniques are useful; students just have to adapt or take advantage of the strategy that they feel more comfortable with. To have a plan, in this case a strategy is very important and useful when it comes to learn because it makes the acquisition of knowledge more enjoyable and easier over time for the learners.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Type of Research

In order to carry out this research, it was decided to perform a non-experimental study as none experiment was performed on people nor variables were manipulated, besides that the research topic did not allow to do so. It was necessary to observe and asses during the investigation process and after that the results of the investigation were interpreted. The research methodology was a combination of qualitative and quantitative method since these were the ones that best fit to carry the research, to respond to the research questions and in order to accomplish the general and specific objectives. Through qualitative methods it was possible to obtain more information in order to describe and explain the phenomenon that was studied; and the quantitative part of the study helped to measure the fluency level phenomenon in both majors.

3.2 Instruments

To carry out this research, it was decided to use the techniques that allowed to get the necessary information; the interview and observation technique permitted to gather the information about the fluency and knowledge level of the students of the Advanced English I class from both Majors, Modern Languages and English Teaching Major. Besides this, the instruments used during the research process were two interviews, an observation rubric and two placement tests and a tool called “randomizer” to choose the placement test taken as a sample of the universe.

The interviews were administered to teachers who were in charge of Advanced English I course from the Foreign Language Department, since they were the ones

aware of the fluency level of their students, and they were as well the main contact with the language that these students had at the classroom; besides the interview of the teachers; an interview to the students was administered in order to gather information that was processed to obtain the results regarding their fluency level; the students interviewed were volunteers even though the tool “randomizer” was used in order to choose the participants.

The reason why this instrument was administered to volunteers was because not all the students chosen by the tool wanted to participate or they did not have enough time to participate in the interviews. Next, an observation rubric which was used to observe the classes and obtain information regarding their speaking and fluency performance during the activities done in class. As this was just an observation a y interruption, modification or interference was done during the class, letting students perform each activity in an environment where they could freely speak.

The aspects taken into consideration in the observation rubric were the use of vocabulary and expression, the use of grammar structures and its error during its use, if there were hesitation that interfered with the communication, that students stayed on task and effectively communicated the ideas. Responding appropriately and trying to develop interaction, the pronunciation and intonation when expressing the ideas or thoughts.

Then additionally to the observation rubric two placement tests which were designed by Macmillan, one of the most prestigious institutions around the world when it comes to the teaching English field, reason why their placement tests were chosen. They were taken by students from Modern Languages and Teaching Major.

These placement tests were administered to the students from both majors in order to gather information regarding their English level of knowledge acquired during

the time they had studied English. The first placement test administered to students from both majors was the “Straightforward Quick Placement and Diagnostic Test”, which consisted of 50 questions being the first 40 grammar questions and the last 10 vocabulary questions. The second placement test administered was “The New Inside Out Quick Placement Test” that consisted of 60 questions, divided into 6 different sections of multiple choice.

Each section has its difficulty regarding grammar and vocabulary. In order to classify the knowledge level of English of each student according to the placement tests administered the results were based on the conversion tables corresponding to each test. Both conversion tables were divided into six different levels, starting from beginner, then Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper- Intermediate and finally Advanced level. Each level was assigned a specific score in order to identify in which level the students got and that is how the results of the placement tests were obtained.

3.3 Setting

This research took place in the main Campus of the University of El Salvador, located at the department of San Salvador, the only public higher education institution in the country. Specifically in the School of Arts and Sciences, at the Foreign Language Department. The placement tests were administered at the beginning of the investigation but also at the end of the research in order to gather the information regarding the knowledge level of English because in that way it was possible to do a comparison between the results obtained at the beginning and at the end in order to see if there was an improvement in the scores obtained by the students. The interviews for teachers and students were done after passing the last placement test.

3.4 Participants

The population of interest for this study was the students from the Foreign Languages Department enrolled in Advanced English I, semester II 2017. For this research the whole class of each major were taken as the population; then, a sample was chosen to explain and measure the phenomenon of interest for this study. The sample were 15 students from each major; the sample was chosen by using the tool called “randomizer” which is an online tool that allows to arrange items from a list in random order. The placement tests were administered to 15 students of both majors in order to obtain the results; even though the same students were chosen to be interviewed. However, due to the lack of collaboration of students, the interviews were done by convenience. Just 7 volunteers of each major were interviewed.

3.5 Procedure

On one hand, an observation was done during class time of the Advanced English I course from both majors; the researchers did not make any interruption during the observation and they used an observation rubric adapted from “Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners by J. Michael O’Malley and Lorraine Valdez Piece, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.” This observation rubric was adapted by the research with the help of the advisor so it could be used in the study. The observation process lasted an entire month and for each observed class, the research team filled out the observation rubric according to the criteria perceived in the sample of 15 students.

On the other hand, at the beginning and at the end of the observation process, two placement tests were administered to students from both majors. The first one to be administered was the Straightforward Quick and Diagnostic Placement Test. It was administered to the whole class; students had 40 minutes maximum in order to complete

the test. The second placement test administered was The New Inside Out Quick Placement Test; this placement test was administered one month after the first one, meaning at the end of the observation process. In this test, the students also had 40 minutes to answer the 60 items. Even though the placement tests were administered to the whole class in both majors the sample was randomly chosen. Using the tool “Randomizer”; a sample of 15 students from each major were chosen to evaluate the results from both majors. The same students were chosen to be interviewed in order to get a score to label students in a specific level of fluency. However, due to the lack of participation of students at the time of interviews, this was administered to volunteers of both majors; many of them were part of the actual sample. The interviews lasted between 5 and 7 minutes and they were recorded with previous authorization of the students.

Moreover, FLD teachers who had taught Advanced English I in Modern Languages and English Teaching majors were interviewed during 7-10 minutes. Their opinions were recorded and attached to the research project because they are of great importance to know more about the student’s fluency since their point of view.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data was collected through observation rubrics, interviews and placement tests that were administered to students from Advanced English I of the Modern Languages and English Teaching Majors.

During the observation process no interference was caused by the researcher allowing participants to remain in a natural and non-manipulative setting; information of the observations was collected through an observation rubric in order to measure the fluency level of the students. Researchers did not participate during the class in which they remained sit in one corner of the classroom to avoid any interruption in the setting in every class. This data collection process took place over four weeks time period; the observations took place three days per week for one hour and forty five minutes time period. Totaling eleven observations which means a total of 17 hours and 40 minutes of observation time.

The interviews were conducted in the Foreign Language Department and the procedure did not interrupt regular classes since the interviews were conducted individually with each participant during lunch time in a different classroom; interviews were taped-recorded for accuracy and lasted between five to eight minutes and were evaluated according to the selected rubric for this research.

Finally the placement tests were administered twice during the observation process with the permission from the teacher in charge of the course when classroom activities for those days were finished; the first placement test was administered at the beginning of the observation and the second placement test was administered at the end

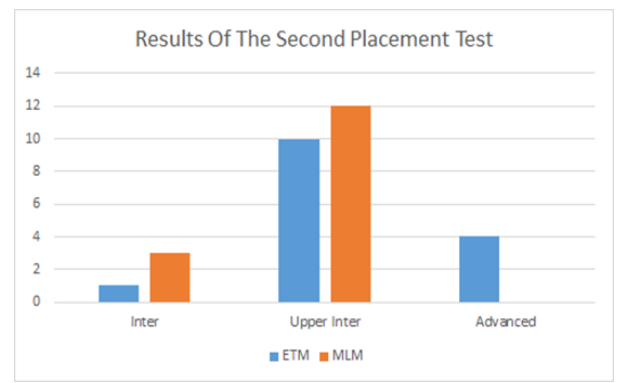
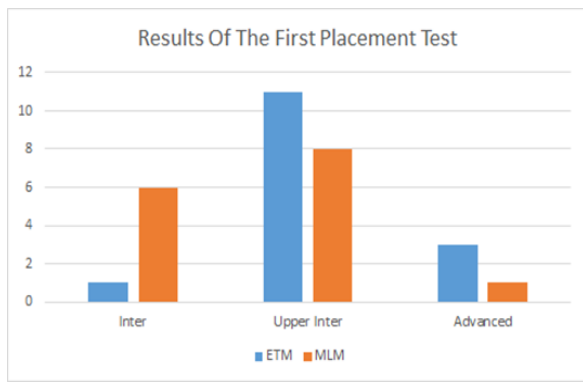
of the observation process. They were administered to all the students from the course yet just a sample of 15 students were taken into consideration for the research using the tool randomizer.com. Before the administration of the test, students were provided with the instructions in English. At the completion of the administration, placement tests were collected and scored by the researchers. The results were quantitatively analyzed and represented in different bar graphs. Each, observation rubrics, interviews and placement tests has its own graphic to represent the results obtained by both majors.

4.1 Results of the first and second placement test.

It was necessary to contrast the results gathered from the observation and interviews therefore, to determine student's English level two tests were administered. These were standard placement tests from Macmillan. The first one is "The Straightforward Quick and Diagnostic Placement Test"; the second test was "The New Inside Out Placement Test". The results were put into tables and graphs. Comparing the results obtained between the first and second placement test from both majors is possible to notice a difference; in the first placement test, 6 students from Modern Languages Major obtained an intermediate level but on the second placement test just 3 of them remained in this level as they passed to upper I level; this is an improvement from the previous test. On the other hand, after both placement tests 1 student from the English Teaching Major remained in intermediate level while the majority of students from both majors obtained an upper intermediate level. There was also a little improvement in the results of the second placement test from Modern Languages Major since none of them advanced to Advance level, in the case of English Teaching Major in the first placement test 3 students were ranked in Advance level while in the second test 4 were the students who reached this level.

Results of The First Placement Test				
Majors	INT	Upper INT	ADV	Total
English Teaching Major	1	11	3	15
Modern Languages Major	6	8	1	15

Results of The Second Placement Test				
Majors	INT	Upper INT	ADV	Total
English Teaching Major	1	10	4	15
Modern Languages Major	3	12	0	15



This demonstrates that students from Modern Languages have a lower level of knowledge than students from the Teaching Major according to the results obtained from the first placement test. The results show that students from English Teaching Major possess more knowledge of the English language and that is the reason why they obtained better results in the placement tests. Even though students from English Teaching Major obtained better results, it was demonstrated through observations and interviews that the outcome of students of Modern Languages Major was better when actually using the language. This means that although students from English Teaching Major know more about the English language, they do not put that knowledge into practice when speaking and as a result their fluency has not been developed as it should be since the English Teaching Major students only learn English and they should speak

more fluent than students from the Modern Languages Major who are learning two languages at a time which are English and French.

4.2 Observation rubric analysis

The next table represents the number of times that students participated in class while the researcher was observing and those participations were ranked according to the observation rubric. The rankings represent the level of fluency that students have; the rankings go from the top to the bottom.

In order to make the rankings clear here it is a short explanation about them: **ranking 4** the highest rank in which students are considered to have a fluency level which allows them to use a variety of vocabulary and expressions, to effectively communicate ideas, to appropriately respond and to clearly pronounce words. The second highest ranking is **ranking 3** in which students are considered to use a variety of vocabulary, expressions and grammar structures but makes some errors in word choice and that pronunciation is usually clear with few problem areas.

Ranking 2 is one of the lowest; according to this ranking students are able to use vocabulary and expressions but in a limited way, a variety of grammar structures with frequent errors or basic structures with only occasional errors. In this ranking students also tend not to clearly communicate ideas or not to appropriately respond and pronunciation errors make it difficult to understand the students. Finally **ranking 1** is the lowest of the rankings and in this ranking, students are only capable of use basic vocabulary and expressions; purpose is not clear and needs a lot of help communicating and there are a lot of frequent problems with pronunciation.

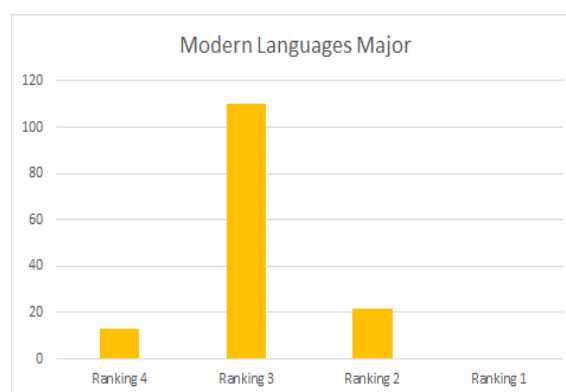
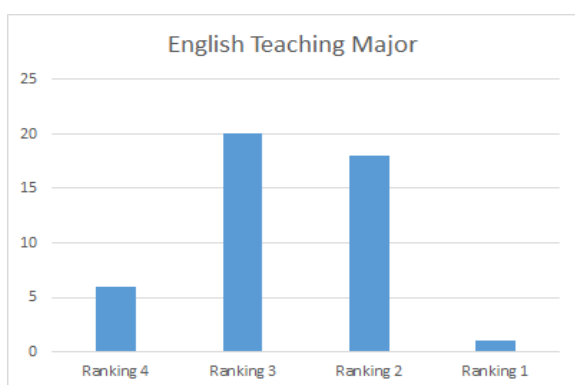
4.3 Results of the Observation Rubrics

During the period of this research an observation rubric was used in order to gather information about the fluency level of each student from both majors. These results are represented in the following bar graphs; they are represented according to the number of times that students participated in each opportunity that the researcher observed the setting. According to the results obtained, the English Teaching Major (ETM) students who participated in class obtained 6 participations in ranking 4, 20 in ranking 3, 18 in ranking 2 and 1 in ranking 1. On the other hand, the results of the students from the Modern Languages Major (MLM) are the following: 13 participations in ranking 4, 110 participations in ranking 3, 22 in ranking 2 and 0 in ranking 1. This means that since students from Modern Languages participate more actively during classes, they have a greater level of fluency than participations from students in the Teaching Major.

Results of the Observation Rubrics					
Majors	Ranking 4	Ranking 3	Ranking 2	Ranking 1	total
English Teaching Major	6	20	18	1	45
Modern Languages Major	13	110	22	0	145

When comparing the results obtained, the majority from Modern Languages students were ranked 3 which means that they use a variety of vocabulary, expressions

and grammar structures but they make some errors in word choice. However, their pronunciation is usually clear with just few issues. According to the table it is observable that there is a difference between both majors regarding participation since students from Modern Languages Major obtained ranking 4 participated 13 times and on ranking 3 they participated 110 times while students from English Teacher Major who obtained ranking 4 participated 6 times and on ranking 3 they participated 20 times. Total number of times students from English Teacher Major participated is 45 times and the total times that students from Modern Languages Major participated is 145 times. This means that participation in class is a great factor which allows students to develop their fluency and it is also the reason why students from Modern Languages obtained better results. The more students participate, the more fluent they become.

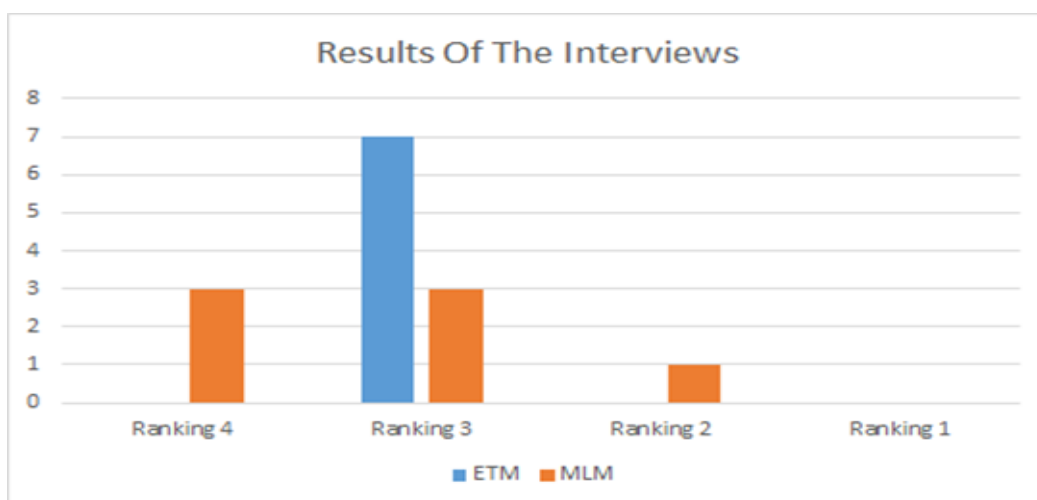


The results from the interviews were obtained after analyzing the recordings. These results are also based on the rankings from the observation rubric. These results are represented in a table and a bar graphs. According to the results obtained among the seven students from the Teaching Major who were interviewed the seven of them obtained ranking 3. On the other hand, Modern Languages (ML) students who were interviewed obtained the following results: 3 in ranking 4, 3 in ranking 3 and one in ranking 2. This demonstrates that students from Modern Languages have a greater level

of fluency than students from the Teacher Major according to the rankings established in the observation rubric.

Results of the interviews					
Majors	Ranking 4	Ranking 3	Ranking 2	Ranking 1	total
English Teaching Major	0	7	0	0	7
Modern Languages Major	3	3	1	0	7

The results demonstrate that students from Modern Languages do have a greater fluency level of English than students from the English Teaching Major. Taking into consideration previous information from the observation process the reason why students from the Modern Languages Major possess a better fluency level is because they do participate more in class; participation is very important since students have the opportunity to practice, to communicate and to verbally use the language. The more students participate in class, the more they practice the language.



4.5 Interviews with teachers

Teachers in charge of Advanced English I were interviewed in order to obtain more information regarding the student's fluency level. This information is relevant to

the research since teachers are the ones who are the first contact that students have with the language and also teachers have been part of the FLD department since a long time ago, that is significant to the research since they provided their opinion and what they have noticed regarding student's fluency level since they are teaching at the FLD.

According to the teachers in charge, in the past there was a difference among both majors since it was perceived more interest from students from the Modern Languages major but nowadays is quite similar to work with both students from Teaching Major. Students from both majors get good scores and they participate in class. This is very curious since it is quite similar to the opinion of the other teacher in charge. Nowadays, students from both majors show a similar level of interest regarding learning English.

Regarding student's motivation to acquire more knowledge, one of the teachers in charge stated that it depends on the methodology used to teach. This teacher says that grammar in context let students participate and practice in class, and it is easier for them to learn. They also agree that students must do oral activities that allow them to improve their oral performance; as for example sets of questions for discussion, group work activities, debates, role plays, etc.

Finally, according to the teachers in charge, what influences student's development of fluency is the interaction they have with others and also the participation in class.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Different conclusions were reached based on the results of this study. One of the conclusions is that students from English Teaching Major demonstrated to have more knowledge about English in grammar and vocabulary than students from Modern Languages Major, since the first ones obtained better results in both placement tests. Although English Teaching Major students only study one language and are supposed to master it faster, Modern Language students show more fluency than Teaching Major students when talking. The observation rubrics and the interviews to students showed that Modern Languages students reached a better level of fluency in contrast to Teaching Major who were labeled in lower levels of fluency.

Students from English Teaching Major showed more English knowledge but they did not put this knowledge into practice when speaking; therefore, their fluency has not been developed as expected, this was demonstrated in the interviews and observations since students had issues expressing their ideas. In contrast to the placement tests done, those students proved having better levels of vocabulary and grammar. However, students from Modern Languages Major showed the contrary; in the placement tests, they had lower grades but in the interviews they got better levels of fluency than English Teaching Major students.

Students face different difficulties when speaking English in the classroom since they do not want to participate because they are afraid of what other students may say about them if they make a mistake; other difficulty is that they are too shy to participate even though they know the answer to the exercises they are working on. They might not

only be shy but they also do not like to participate. Even though students from both majors, Modern Languages and English Teaching, face the same difficulties in their English class; students from the Modern Languages show more interest in participating in class than students from the English Teaching Major.

The researchers could answer the research question that students from Modern Languages Major have better level of fluency in English since they have more neurological connections because they speak three different languages; and students from Teaching Major have more knowledge in vocabulary and grammar because they have been learning just one foreign language and they have had the chance to enrich their vocabulary in English but they have not been able to develop their fluency as second language. Since students from Modern Languages Major are learning two languages at the same time there is a neurological explanation for them to become more fluent in English; the reason why is because they are practicing more, they are making use of the strategies to learn two languages.

Modern Languages Major students acquire better levels of English fluency because being trilingual people facilitate the transfer of L1 and L2 knowledge to the L3, they can take words or over generalize from the mother tongue or second language to the third language, so trilingual people can take different words or phrases from their linguistic background in order to communicate them verbally in a clear way, in contrast to English Teaching Major students, they are bilingual people, but they just take words from their mother tongue, so they use few words when they speak to other people, contrary to writing, students from Teaching Major know the importance of vocabulary, so they use learning strategies in order to acquire more productive vocabulary.

According to the results of the interviews to students from English Teaching Major, 0 percent of them have a high level of fluency and 46.6 percent of them have a regular level of fluency, meaning that the 53.4 percent of the remaining students have a lack of fluency. On the other hand, 20 percent of the students from Modern Languages have a high level of fluency; other 20 percent of them have a regular level of fluency and just 6.6 of the remaining students from this major have a lack of fluency. In other words, the high level of fluency was only reached by Modern Languages students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was about the level of English fluency among students from Modern Language Major and students from Teaching Major who were taking the course of Advanced English I, semester II-207 at the Foreign Language Department, University of El Salvador. Based on the results we recommend the following:

Recommendations for the FLD and the English teaching program

- It is recommendable to review the curriculums for both majors in order to include more subjects that help students improve not only their skills when speaking but also their vocabulary and grammar.
- The FLD should facilitate debates or discussions with professional people about specific topics, so students can develop their oral skills in public.

Recommendations for teachers

- FLD teachers should keep students' motivation to improve their fluency in English and raising awareness students of the importance of their level of fluency; and encourage them to have interest in improving their fluency in English, since it is a very essential part of the oral proficiency level.
- Teachers should use diverse types of strategies to drive their students' motivation in order to improve their fluency level in English and give confidence to students when talking in English inside and outside the classroom.

Recommendations for students

- Students should get more exposed to the second language and practice it outside the classroom.
- Learners need to have intrinsic motivation because if they are not motivated, it will be difficult for them to master a second language.
- It is necessary that students have an extended vocabulary that allows, so students put into practice the new vocabulary learned in class; they have to learn new words each day by themselves.

Recommendations for the Foreign Language Department

- More research should be conducted in this area in order to clearly assess the level of fluency in both majors and to identify the factors that affect the lack of fluency in students.

Future research could include larger sample sizes and observations for more time with the aim of obtaining more detailed and significant information. Future research could take into consideration innovating classroom activities, students' personality types, and learning strategies.

If the previous recommendations are followed it is probable to overcome the fluency problem faced by students from the English Teaching Major. Furthermore, it will help to improve the fluency level of students from the Modern Languages Major. As a result of following the recommendations, students from both majors will improve their fluency level.

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Teacher's Interview

Teacher's name: Rolando Guzmán

Subject currently in charge: English Advanced I and English Composition I.

1. What subjects have you taught? I have taught several courses from Beginners to English Advanced, Grammar, Conversation, Composition, Didactics, most of the courses of the major.

2. What differences could you mention among Modern Language Major and English Teaching Major students? I have a perception that students from Modern Language Major were more dedicated, they were more active in classes and interested in learning; but in the last 5 years I have seen a decrease in the motivation in the Modern Language students compared now to Teaching Major students that had the same characteristics of the group.

Sometimes it's difficult to get students motivated to study and practice English inside and outside of the classroom.

3. How do you think students get motivated to increase their knowledge? Students and teachers have to become aware that there is a need to improve, to increase and to develop different skills, subskills and life skills in life. Students have to be more initiative and be more autonomous and independent in learning and teachers have to motivate, to trigger students' motivation and desire of learning by their own and become them responsible of the learning process.

4. What kind of activities promote students' oral practice? There are a lot of speaking activities and dynamics and you can have students conversations, role plays, debates, speeches, you can have students present different activities such as investigate about a research and tell the students and show their findings. Also, you can have students give speeches students have to speak a couple of minutes and then they have to talk a minute or two minute. You have to make more interactive and communicative activities, so they can participate.

5. What do you think influence students development of fluency?

Motivation, and that is one, they have to be motivated, they should know a little bit about the background, the knowledge and context of the topic so they feel more motivated to contest and participate. As well, teachers have to motivate students to participate and give them some speaking techniques and strategies, so students have tools to use in classes and practice.

6. Do you allow your students to talk to you in their native language outside the classroom? Why? There is a kind of tradition, most of the time students avoid me in their second language but they feel a kind of embarrassed and nervous, they don't feel confident and ask to switch into Spanish, in my case if students start speaking English, I continue speaking English and if they don't want to continue speaking English, I speak English so they can be forced to express their ideas in the second language.

7. What would you recommend to keep students' interest in learning?

Learning is part of the life, learning is an ongoing process, everybody learns everything and if they aware of that, they will be more interested in their

own learning and development their skills, so I think that you have to teach them strategies, you have to provide them tool, you have to give them the chance for them to apply it what we call metacognitive skills of critical thinking, so they can be more creative, critical and active in the language.

8. Do you have discussions in class that encourage students to talk?

Yeah, you can have controversial issues, you can divide the class in two groups, one agree and one disagree or in the group work you tell the students to choose one side of the topic agree or disagree, so they start giving their arguments, it's like a kind of debate and discussion so they can express their ideas and it is time for students to review the arguments and counterarguments to have an interactive scenario where students can participate and speak in English.

9. How do you motivate students who are too bashful to talk? You have to find a way to try or force them to talk, if you have a group work and you know a person is not participating, you tell the group to let other students who have not participated to do so you rotate and students take turns, it will be a time for students to talk by forced or motivated by other students. Otherwise students will be passive all the time.

Teacher's Interview

Name: Ana Carolina Ramos de Gómez

Subject currently in charge: English Composition I for the teaching option and Advanced English I.

- 1. What subjects have you taught?** Mostly the subjects that I teach are related to the skill development area, I taught Didactics as well as Grammar and Practica Docente.
- 2. What differences could you mention among Modern Language Major and English Teaching Major students?** In terms of fluency and knowledge, in the past I can tell you, I used to perceive a little bit more interest from students of Modern Languages but nowadays I can tell you is similar to anyone in other careers, I don't know what happened but they are working similar. In terms of proficiency, they have been more applied; in terms of going a little bit up for students in terms of scores students from Modern Languages but I don't think that is too different. Eventually, we have more participation, I can tell you for students from Modern Languages but not in all cases, there are some students that even when they are part teaching option like for example the group of teaching right now, they are most of them for the teaching option, they participate and they have a really nice level of proficiency.
- 3. How do you think students get motivated to increase their knowledge?** It depends on the methodology used because it is just focused

on grammar structures but becomes a little bit tiring for them but if you consider context

for the different topics that gives you the whole package for them in order do things, for example if I'm working with something related to the topic traditions and I include the grammar part there plus any other activity that I could consider not only focused on the grammar point but the rest of vocabulary related to the topic itself that gives them a lot of opportunities to practice, so that's why they are enjoying, that's why they are needing.

4. What would you recommend to keep students' interest in learning?

Not to consider that it is the teacher's responsibility of their learning but the way they may use the time outside the classroom.

5. What kind of activities promotes students' oral practice?

We have a lot, I can tell you just to mention a few some sets of questions for discussion, word games, interviews, and group work activities even the use of videos.

6. What do you think influence students development of fluency?

Any activities that can promote interaction because it is not the same to let them do activities by individually than to interact. It is not a matter of requesting to do something inside the classroom that's something important. We as teachers we have to consider there are more possibilities they have to interact even here as a community with teachers, classmates and people who come eventually to do different things and they have to basically to interact that's really useful for them.

7. Do you allow your students to talk to you in their native language

outside the classroom? Why? Almost never, unless I see them in shock like

for example having something bad that has happened to them when

somebody of their family has passed away, that is maybe the only moment that I allow them to talk to me in Spanish.

8. Do you have discussions in class that encourage students to talk? All the time, I try to give them as many opportunities as possible in order to exchange opinions and argue different topics.

9. How do you motivate students who are too bashful to talk?

Motivation is intrinsic, but part of the things that I can do in order to force them to participate is remind them that this is a process and the more they practice, the more they try to express what they think, the better for them in the learning process.

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***Straightforward* Quick Placement & Diagnostic test**

The *Straightforward* Quick Placement & Diagnostic test has been designed to help you decide which of the five levels of the *Straightforward* series is the most appropriate for you.

The *Straightforward* test has 50 questions, each worth one point. The first 40 are grammar questions and the final 10 are vocabulary questions. To decide your level, use the conversion chart below. Please note that these bandings are a guide. You have to completely circle your answer for each question.

Total score	Level
0 - 15	Beginner
16 - 24	Elementary
25 - 32	Pre-intermediate
33 - 39	Intermediate
40 - 45	Upper Intermediate
46 - 50	Advanced

Grammar

1. I _____ from France.

Beginner Unit 1

- a) is
- b) are
- c) am
- d) be

2. This is my friend. _____ name is Peter.

Beginner Unit 1

- a) Her
- b) Our
- c) Yours
- d) His

3. Mike is _____.

Beginner Unit 4

- a) my sister's friend

- b) friend my sister
- c) friend from my sister
- d) my sister friend's

4. My brother is _____ artist.

Beginner Unit 2 / Elementary Basics 2

- a) the
- b) an
- c) a
- d) —

5. _____ 20 desks in the classroom.

Beginner Unit 7 / Elementary Unit 3

- a) This is
- b) There is
- c) They are
- d) There are

6. Paul _____ romantic films.

Beginner Unit 5

- a) likes not
- b) don't like
- c) doesn't like
- d) isn't likes

7. Sorry, I can't talk. I _____ right now.

Beginner Unit 11

- a) driving
- b) 'm driving
- c) drives
- d) drive

8. She _____ at school last week.

Beginner Unit 8 / Elementary Unit 5

- a) didn't be
- b) weren't
- c) wasn't
- d) isn't

9. I _____ the film last night.

Beginner Unit 9 / Elementary Unit 5

- a) like
- b) likes
- c) liking
- d) liked

10. _____ a piece of cake? No, thank you.

Elementary Unit 1

- a) Do you like
- b) Would you like
- c) Want you
- d) Are you like

11. The living room is _____ than the bedroom. **Elementary Unit 10 / Pre-int Unit 6**
- a) more big
 - b) more bigger
 - c) biggest
 - d) bigger
12. The car is very old. We're going _____ a new car soon. **Beginner Unit 12 / Elementary Unit 11**
- a) to buy
 - b) buying
 - c) to will buy
 - d) buy
13. Jane is a vegetarian. She _____ meat. **Beginner Unit 6 / Elementary Unit 4**
- a) sometimes eats
 - b) never eats
 - c) often eats
 - d) usually eats
14. There aren't _____ buses late in the evening. **Elementary Unit 3 / Pre-int Unit 3**
- a) some
 - b) any
 - c) no
 - d) a
15. The car park is _____ to the restaurant. **Elementary Unit 3 / Pre-int Unit 3**
- a) next
 - b) opposite
 - c) behind
 - d) in front
16. Sue _____ shopping every day. **Elementary Unit 8 / Pre-int Unit 4**
- a) is going
 - b) go
 - c) going
 - d) goes
17. They _____ in the park when it started to rain heavily. **Intermediate Unit 4**
- a) walked
 - b) were walking
 - c) were walk
 - d) are walking

18. _____ seen fireworks before? **Pre-intermediate Unit 7 / Intermediate Unit 2**

- a) Did you ever
- b) Are you ever
- c) Have you ever
- d) Do you ever

19. We've been friends _____ many years. **Pre-intermediate Unit 10 / Intermediate Unit 2**

- a) since
- b) from
- c) during
- d) for

20. You _____ pay for the tickets. They're free. **Intermediate Unit 3**

- a) have to
- b) don't have
- c) don't need to
- d) doesn't have to

21. Jeff was ill last week and he _____ go out. **Pre-intermediate Unit 11**

- a) needn't
- b) can't
- c) mustn't
- d) couldn't

22. These are the photos _____ I took on holiday. **Pre-intermediate Unit 12**

- a) which
- b) who
- c) what
- d) where

23. We'll stay at home if it _____ this afternoon. **Pre-intermediate Unit 8**

- a) raining
- b) rains
- c) will rain
- d) rain

24. He doesn't smoke now, but he _____ a lot when he was young. **Pre-intermediate Unit 2**

- a) has smoked
- b) smokes
- c) used to smoke
- d) was smoked

25. Mark plays football _____ anyone else I know. **Pre-intermediate**
Unit 6 / Intermediate Unit 5

- a) more good than
- b) as better as
- c) best than
- d) better than

26. I promise I _____ you as soon as I've finished this cleaning.
Pre-intermediate Unit 5 / Intermediate Unit 6

- a) will help
- b) am helping
- c) going to help
- d) have helped

27. This town _____ by lots of tourists during the summer.
Pre-intermediate Unit 9 / Intermediate Unit 11

- a) visits
- b) visited
- c) is visiting
- d) is visited

28. He said that his friends _____ to speak to him after they lost the football match.
Intermediate Unit 12 / Upper-intermediate Unit 10

- a) not want
- b) weren't
- c) didn't want
- d) aren't wanting

29. How about _____ to the cinema tonight? **Pre-intermediate Unit 4**

- a) going
- b) go
- c) to go
- d) for going

30. Excuse me, can you _____ me the way to the station, please? **Pre-**
intermediate Unit 3

- a) give
- b) take
- c) tell
- d) say

31. I wasn't interested in the performance very much. _____.
Intermediate Unit 4

- a) I didn't, too.
- b) Neither was I.
- c) Nor I did.
- d) So I wasn't.

32. Take a warm coat, _____ you might get very cold outside.
Upper Intermediate Unit 4
- a) otherwise
 - b) in case
 - c) so that
 - d) in order to
33. _____ this great book and I can't wait to see how it ends.
Intermediate Unit 7 / Upper Intermediate Unit 4
- a) I don't read
 - b) I've read
 - c) I've been reading
 - d) I read
34. What I like more than anything else _____ at weekends.
Upper Intermediate Unit 1
- a) playing golf
 - b) to play golf
 - c) is playing golf
 - d) is play golf
35. She _____ for her cat for two days when she finally found it in the garage.
Upper Intermediate Unit 5
- a) looked
 - b) had been looked
 - c) had been looking
 - d) were looking
36. We won't catch the plane _____ we leave home now! Please hurry up!
Upper Intermediate Unit 6
- a) if
 - b) providing that
 - c) except
 - d) unless
37. If I hadn't replied to your email, I _____ here with you now. **Upper Intermediate Unit 6**
- a) can't be
 - b) wouldn't be
 - c) won't be
 - d) haven't been
38. Do you think you _____ with my mobile phone soon? I need to make a call. **Upper Intermediate Unit 7**
- a) finish
 - b) are finishing
 - c) will have finished
 - d) are finished

39. I don't remember mentioning _____ dinner together tonight.
Upper Intermediate Unit 10

- a) go for
- b) you going to
- c) to go for
- d) going for

40. Was it Captain Cook _____ New Zealand? **Upper Intermediate Unit 12**

- a) who discovered
- b) discovered
- c) that discover
- d) who was discovering

Vocabulary

41. You may not like the cold weather here, but you'll have to _____, I'm afraid.

- a) tell it off
- b) sort itself out
- c) put up with it
- d) put it off

42. It's cold so you should _____ on a warm jacket.

- a) put
- b) wear
- c) dress
- d) take

43. Paul will look _____ our dogs while we're on holiday.

- a) at
- b) for
- c) into
- d) after

44. She _____ a lot of her free time reading.

- a) does
- b) spends
- c) has
- d) makes

45. Hello, this is Simon. Could I _____ to Jane, please?

- a) say
- b) tell
- c) call
- d) speak

46. They're coming to our house _____ Saturday.

- a) in
- b) at
- c) on
- d) with

47. I think it's very easy to _____ debt these days.

- a) go into
- b) become
- c) go down to
- d) get into

48. Come on! Quick! Let's get _____!

- a) highlight
- b) cracking
- c) massive
- d) with immediate effect

49. I phoned her _____ I heard the news.

- a) minute
- b) during
- c) by the time
- d) the moment

50. I feel very _____. I'm going to go to bed!

- a) nap
- b) asleep
- c) sleepy
- d) sleeper

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Name _____

QUICK PLACEMENT TEST

Section 1

Choose the best word or phrase (a, b, c or d) to fill each blank.

(1) Roberta _____ from The United States.

- a) are
- b) is
- c) am
- d) be

(2) What's _____ name?

- a) -
- b) his
- c) him
- d) he

(3) My friend _____ in London.

- a) living
- b) live
- c) lives
- d) is live

(4) Where _____?

- a) works Tom
- b) Tom works
- c) Tom does work
- d) does Tom work

(5) I _____ coffee.

- a) no like
- b) not like
- c) like don't

- d) don't like
- (6) ' _____ to Australia, Ginny?' 'Yes, two years ago.'
- a) Did you ever go
 - b) Do you ever go
 - c) Have you ever been
 - d) Are you ever going
- (7) Tokyo is _____ city I've ever lived in.
- a) the most big
 - b) the bigger
 - c) the biggest
 - d) the more big
- (8) A vegetarian is someone _____ doesn't eat meat.
- a) who
 - b) what
 - c) which
 - d) whose
- (9) _____ these days.
- a) I never a newspaper buy
 - b) I never buy a newspaper
 - c) I buy never a newspaper
 - d) Never I buy a newspaper
- (10) I _____ watch TV tonight.
- a) am
 - b) go to
 - c) going to
 - d) am going to
- (11) I wish I _____ more money!
- a) have
 - b) had
 - c) would have
 - d) was having
- (12) _____ be famous one day?
- a) Would you like
 - b) Would you like to
 - c) Do you like
 - d) Do you like to

Section 2

Choose the best word or phrase (a, b, c or d) to fill each blank.

- (13) It's my birthday _____ Friday.
- a) on
 - b) in
 - c) at

d) by

(14) I _____ eighteen years old.

- a) am
- b) have
- c) have got
- d) -

(15) I _____ a headache.

- a) am
- b) do
- c) have
- d) got

(16) Do you _____ a uniform at your school?

- a) carry
- b) wear
- c) use
- d) hold

(17) 'What time is it?' 'I have no _____.'

- a) idea
- b) opinion
- c) answer
- d) time

(18) The meal was very expensive. Look at the _____!

- a) ticket
- b) receipt
- c) invoice
- d) bill

(19) How many _____ of trousers have you got?

- a) items
- b) pairs
- c) sets
- d) times

(20) Joel came back from his holiday in Brazil looking really _____.

- a) tanned
- b) sunned
- c) coloured
- d) darkened

Section 3

Choose the best word or phrase (a, b, c or d) to fill each blank.

(21) Harry can _____ English.

- a) to speak

- b) speaking
- c) speak
- d) speaks

(22) I'm not interested _____ sports.

- a) for
- b) about
- c) in
- d) to

(23) She likes _____ expensive clothes.

- a) wearing
- b) to wearing
- c) wear
- d) is wearing

(24) Harry _____ his father's car when the accident happened.

- a) was driving
- b) drove
- c) had driven
- d) has been driving

(25) I was wondering _____ tell me when the next plane from Chicago arrives?

- a) could you
- b) can you
- c) if you could
- d) if could you

(26) If I _____ him, I would have spoken to him, wouldn't I?

- a) saw
- b) had seen
- c) have seen
- d) would have seen

(27) I like your hair. Where _____?

- a) do you have cut
- b) have you cut it
- c) do you have cut it
- d) do you have it cut

(28) I think Joey must _____ late tonight. His office light is still on.

- a) have worked
- b) work
- c) be working
- d) to work

(29) John tells me Jack's going out with Helen, _____ I find hard to believe.

- a) which
- b) who
- c) whose
- d) that

(30) What _____ this weekend, Lance?

- a) will you do
- b) are you doing
- c) will you have done
- d) do you do

(31) The weather has been awful. We've had very _____ sunshine this summer.

- a) little
- b) a little
- c) few
- d) a few

(32) Did you hear what happened to Kate? She _____.

- a) is arrested
- b) arrested
- c) has been arrested
- d) is being arrested

Section 4

Choose the best word or phrase (a, b, c or d) to fill each blank.

(33) I usually _____ up at about 7.30.

- a) go
- b) be
- c) do
- d) get

(34) I _____ football every week.

- a) play
- b) go
- c) do
- d) have

(35) My sister _____ the cooking in our house.

- a) does
- b) makes
- c) cooks
- d) takes

(36) Don't forget to _____ the light when you leave the room.

- a) turn up
- b) turn in
- c) turn off
- d) turn over

- (37) She was in _____ when she heard the tragic news.
a) crying
b) tears
c) cries
d) tearful
- (38) He _____ that he hadn't stolen the computer, but no one believed him.
a) reassured
b) informed
c) insisted
d) persuaded
- (39) Could you _____ me that book for a couple of days, please?
a) lend
b) owe
c) borrow
d) rent
- (40) Greg is _____ a lot of time at Yvonne's house these days!
a) taking
b) spending
c) having
d) doing

Section 5

Choose the best word or phrase (a, b, c or d) to fill each blank.

- (41) Who _____ in that house?
a) does live
b) lives
c) does he live
d) he lives
- (42) I'll call you when I _____ home.
a) get
b) 'll get
c) 'll have got
d) 'm getting
- (43) If you _____ me, what would you do?
a) was
b) would be
c) were
d) have been
- (44) I don't know where _____ last night.

- a) did he go
 - b) he did go
 - c) went he
 - d) he went
- (45) John and Betty are coming to visit us tomorrow but I wish _____.
- a) they won't
 - b) they hadn't
 - c) they didn't
 - d) they weren't
- (46) I'm so hungry! If only Bill _____ all the food in the fridge!
- a) wasn't eating
 - b) didn't eat
 - c) hadn't eaten
 - d) hasn't eaten
- (47) I regret _____ harder in school.
- a) not studying
 - b) not to study
 - c) to not study
 - d) not have studied
- (48) Surely Sue _____ you if she was unhappy with your work.
- a) will tell
 - b) would have told
 - c) must have told
 - d) had told
- (49) Our neighbours aren't very polite, and _____ particularly quiet!
- a) neither they aren't
 - b) either they aren't
 - c) nor are they
 - d) neither did they be
- (50) We had expected that they _____ fluent English, but in fact they didn't.
- a) were speaking
 - b) would speak
 - c) had spoken
 - d) spoke
- (51) I'd rather I _____ next weekend, but I do!
- a) don't have to work
 - b) didn't have to work
 - c) wouldn't work
 - d) wasn't working
- (52) Harriet is so knowledgeable. She can talk about _____ subject that comes up.
- a) whatever

- b) whenever
- c) wherever
- d) whoever

Section 6

Choose the best word or phrase (a, b, c or d) to fill each blank.

- (53) I always _____ milk in my coffee.
- a) have
 - b) drink
 - c) mix
 - d) make
- (54) I _____ TV every evening.
- a) watch
 - b) look at
 - c) see
 - d) hear
- (55) Can you give me a _____ with my bag.
- a) leg
 - b) back
 - c) hand
 - d) head
- (56) Before you enter the triathlon, please bear in _____ that you're not as young as you used to be!
- a) thought
 - b) question
 - c) mind
 - d) opinion
- (57) The breath test showed he had consumed more than three times the legal limit of alcohol, so the police arrested him for _____.
- a) trespassing
 - b) mugging
 - c) speeding
 - d) drunk driving
- (58) The meeting was _____ and not very interesting.
- a) time-wasting
 - b) time-consuming
 - c) time-using
 - d) out of time

- (59) After the movie was released, the main _____ point was its excessive use of violence.
- a) discussion
 - b) speaking
 - c) conversation
 - d) talking
- (60) There have been several big _____ against the use of GM foods recently.
- a) campaigns
 - b) issues
 - c) boycotts
 - d) strikes