

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT



Universidad de El Salvador
Hacia la libertad por la cultura

GRADUATION WORK

**MAIN FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ORAL
PROFICIENCY: CASE OF ADVANCED INTENSIVE ENGLISH I
STUDENTS AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING THE SECOND
SEMESTER 2007.**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our more sincere thanks to all those persons who contributed to make our dream come true, first of all, we want to give a special gratitude to God for giving us the chance to finish our University Studies despite many difficulties that we had to face throughout our career. Jesus gave us strength in the moments of weaknesses, confidence in ourselves when we felt that we could not go on with our studies. Without Him, nothing would have been possible.

This work is dedicated with a special feeling to our mothers: Marta López and Angela Escobar because they are the most important persons for every one of us and without them we could not be what we are. They always have sacrificed a lot in order to give us the level of education we have obtained so far because they think that the best heritage they can give to their kids is education.

Besides, we thank our advisor M.A. Jorge Homero Llanes for having devoted part of his time to advise us on this work, and for having facilitated us useful information concerning the research we have written about.

We are grateful with Lic. Sarita Méndez and Lic. Andrés Rosales Baltés, who were the two professors in charge of giving classes at the Advanced Intensive English I courses, because they allowed us to be inside their classrooms when we needed it in order to carry out some class observations to know the way in which English is taught at those levels, they also gave us the opportunity to interview some of their students. Also, we want to thank the students who cooperated with us in the oral interview that we made to Advanced Intensive I students because they helped us to know the level of oral proficiency they reached at the end of the course.

Finally, we would like to offer gratitude to all the members of our families, especially to our dear and wonderful mothers because they always told us not to give up in the moments of difficulties we had to deal with; and also because they provided the economic resources we needed to finish our studies.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to specify the main factors that affect the oral proficiency of Advanced Intensive English I students, during semester II of the year 2007 at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador in the English language learning process. In order for researchers to guide the students to perform their functions indicative of their speaking level proficiency providing real communication strategies, pronunciation techniques, and audio-visual sources that help the students to achieve their communication goals and obtain better results in their oral performance.

This research project was possible, in the way that the researchers just worked coordinately with the professors who were in charge of the Advanced Intensive English I courses, like professor Sara Méndez, professor Roberto Andrés Rosales Baltes, and some students who were interviewed about their speaking proficiency problems.

The researchers took into account the rules and requisites from the professors who were in charge of Advanced Intensive English I courses of the F.L.D at the U.E.S. The first requisite from professors was to look at the instruments for leaving doubt neither in the teachers' standards nor in the students' oral proficiency, so when the professors gave the permission for passing the surveys, the researchers applied such instruments like: questionnaires, observation guide, and students and teachers interviews. After having that experience and the information of the Advanced Intensive English I students, the research group noticed the necessity of accounting on an academic assistance outside the classrooms by the students who manifested to have problems in their speaking proficiency, so researchers evaluated the rate of competence in the oral level of the students using a proficiency scale of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTLF.)

Therefore, it was for that reason this project appeared, for making this research process an interesting reading for further students and providing real communication strategies, pronunciation techniques, and audio-visual sources that help the students to achieve their communication goals and obtain better results in their oral performance.

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1. TOPIC, OBJECTIVES AND THESIS STATEMENT

A. TOPIC

Main factors that affect the English language oral proficiency: Case of Advanced Intensive English I students at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

B. OBJECTIVES

a) GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

- To specify the main factors that affect the Advanced Intensive English I students' oral proficiency in the English language learning process in order to guide the students to perform a natural conversational language providing them with communication strategies.

b) SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- To identify the quantitative factors that affect the speaking proficiency of the students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses during semester II of the year 2007 in order for the students to achieve their communication goals.
- To evaluate the rate competence of the students' speaking proficiency, i.e., pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, content, and comprehension with the purpose of guiding the students to handle the communicative skill.

- To present a document stating discussion-building techniques, communication strategies, and audio-visual sources for guiding students to enhance their pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, content, and comprehension.

C. THESIS STATEMENT

The purpose of this project is to achieve a better development and obtain better results in the oral proficiency of students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses, during semester II of the year 2007.

- How do these factors affect the students' oral proficiency?

2. JUSTIFICATION

The learning of a second language is a difficult task, which requires too much dedication and desire of improving, especially the oral proficiency. However, when there are some learning problems or factors (obstacles) that learners have to face in learning to speak like affective factors, the interaction effect, pronunciation, accuracy and fluency, the lack of bilingual environments, and others, these restrain students from the task of learning the English language. This job becomes even more difficult when there is not any English speaking campus outside the classrooms to help students, in order to assist them with some useful techniques for speaking. So learners with speaking proficiency problems and few bibliographic and economic resources desist and discontinue their careers when facing mental barriers, which prevents them from going beyond. But these problems are surpassed when there are the suitable resources and a bilingual place for speaking and learning English.

The purpose of this project is to specify the main factors that affect the students' oral proficiency of Advanced Intensive English I courses, during semester II of the year 2007 at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. So the importance of this study lies on the following facts: Firstly, the students attending the Advanced Intensive English I courses must have an obstinate longing of surpassing focus on the oral proficiency learning. Secondly, the students need the help for overcoming their oral proficiency problems when using English. This task can be taken by the researchers to help the students using a different bilingual place for encouraging students to practice English. And, finally, with the help of audio-visual and pedagogical resources, researchers will facilitate support to students to speak and learn English in a better way. With these activities, researchers will make further students become competent by giving them possible and effective solutions to the main factors that affect their speaking proficiency.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Nowadays, speaking another language besides one's mother tongue is very important because of the social requirements. Therefore, one's proficiency in speaking a second language plays an important role in the learning process. This is due to the fact that the target language learners have to be able to express their ideas in this language (L2) in their interactions with others. However, there are many factors that affect this process. So it is important to know the main factors that affect the learning process of the students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. For the purposes of this particular research, the authors of this graduation work will perform such research on the students of Advanced Intensive English I courses at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

Students of English, no matter what level they are, usually experience anxiety and other psychological barriers when they are learning their target language. This is something that happens to all students learning any language around the world. In his book **Teaching by Principles**, H. Douglas Brown shows some of the factors that affect the speaking process in which the affective factors were found. He says that *“one of the major obstacles learners have to overcome in learning to speak is the anxiety generated over these risks of blurting things out that are wrong, stupid or incomprehensible. Because of the language ego that informs people that if ‘you are what you speak’; learners are reluctant to be judged by hearers”*. Besides that, Brown states that *“the job as teacher is to provide the kind warm, embracing climate that encourages students to speak”* however, *halting or broken their attempts may be*”. For that reason, the main objective of this research will be to specify the main factors that affect the Advanced Intensive English I students' oral proficiency in order to guide students to perform their functions indicative of their speaking level.

¹ Brown, Douglas H. (1994), *“Teaching by principles”*; San Francisco, State University

Brown contends that *“in the beginning through intermediate levels of proficiency most of the efforts of students in oral production come in form of conversation, or dialogue. As the teacher plans and implements techniques in his/her interactive classroom, he/she makes sure the student can deal with both interpersonal (sometimes referred to as interactional) and transactional dialogue and that they are able to converse with a total stranger as well as someone with whom they are quite familiar”*. However, the role of the teachers in their classrooms can be sometimes the big obstacles that students face in their efforts to improve their proficiency level of speaking because the students do not feel comfortable with the techniques or the teaching way applied by their teacher. For that reason, it is important to know that beginning students are highly dependent on the teacher for models of language. Brown says that *“In the beginning levels students are able to initiate few questions and comments, so it is the teacher’s responsibility to keep the ball rolling. Still the beginning level classes need not be devoid of modicum of student-centered work.”*

According to what Brown has stated above, the input of the teacher in the class is crucial in order to make students feel comfortable to develop their speaking skill. So with the necessity of providing solutions to the students’ oral proficiency problems, the researchers will analyze and evaluate the main factors that affect the development of the students’ oral proficiency in their English learning process. This research will take into account the theoretical basics provided by experts on the matter, the researchers’ own English teaching experience and what they observe in the classrooms.

¹ Brown, Douglas H. (1994), *“Teaching by principles”*, San Francisco, State University

This research project provides the following operating definitions within the context of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) technique using vocabulary that is very important to clearly understand the different terms used in this document.¹ The list of these special terms is presented below.

ACTFL: American Council for Teaching Foreign Languages.

OPI: Oral Proficiency Interview.

It is a standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability, or oral proficiency. It is a standardized instrument since, to assure reliability in assessing different speech samples, a prescribed procedure must be observed.

Evaluation is a judgment of the grades of the assessment.

Grading is to apply a scale to a test and put a number or a grade in a test.

Assessment is a process of collecting analyzing, synthesizing information to get decisions quickly.

Testing is to pass the exam to your students' paper.

Scoring is to check the correct answers and the wrong ones.

Elicitation is to involve a mandatory structure of four phases: warm up, levels check, probes, and wind-down.

Rating is a two-step process: It is an on-going process during the OPI itself. At the conclusion of the OPI the interviewer listens to an audiotape of the entire OPI before assigning a final rating.

Accuracy refers to the acceptability, quality and precision of the message conveyed.

² Byrnes Heidi, Irene Thompson, and Katheryn Buck. "American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages." February (1989), 6 Executive Boulevard, Yonkers, New York 10701. All rights reserved. ACTFL, Inc., Pages 3-10. Assessment Criteria.

Fluency is a rate of speech and the use of cohesive devices to bind discourses together.

Pragmatic Competence is the ability to use various discourse management devices to get the message across and to compensate for imperfect control of the language.

Pronunciation is the ability to reproduce segmental and suprasegmental (pitch, stress and intonation) features of the language.

Sociolinguistic Competence is the ability to use a language appropriately in different registers in various situations within a particular culture, and to use cultural references and idioms.

Vocabulary is the size of lexicon and adherence to norms of usage.

Novice Level is characterized by the ability to communicate minimally with learned material.

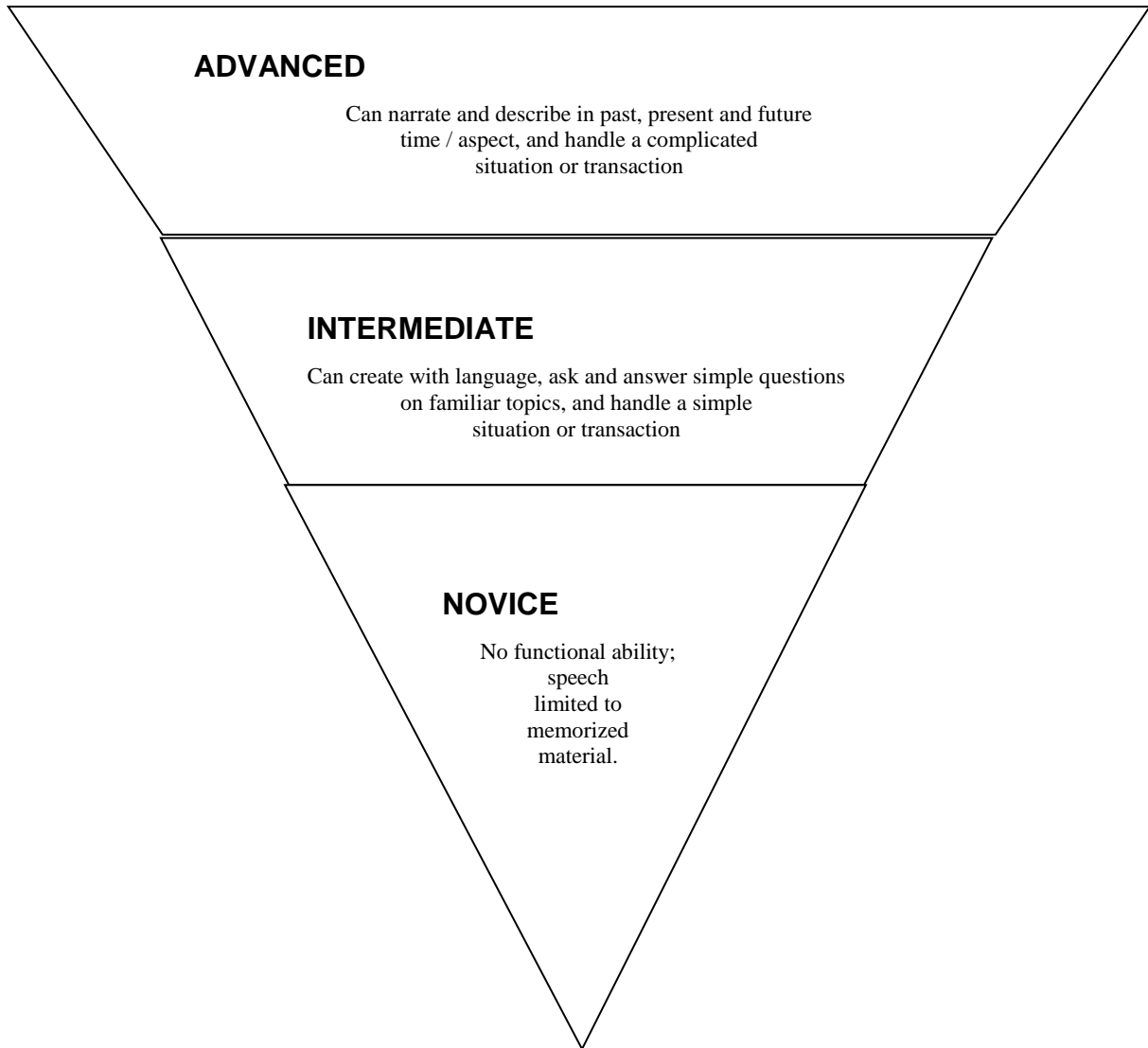
Intermediate Level is characterized by the ability to maintain simple face-to-face conversations in highly predictable settings.

Advanced Level is characterized by the ability to narrate and describe in paragraphs of connected discourse in major time/aspect frames.

Accuracy refers to the ability to adhere to the rules of phonology, lexis, morphology, syntax and to observe the sociolinguistic and pragmatic norms of the target language.

Communication is the transmission of information (message) between a source and a receiver using a signaling system such as language.

What comes next is an inverted pyramid showing the different levels reached by second language learners as designed by the American Council Teaching Foreign Language.



Inverted Pyramid Showing Major Levels of ACTFL Rating Scale Illustration 2-A

WHAT IS THE “ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW”?

Conversational format

The OPI takes the form of a 10 to 30 –minute tape-recorded conversation between a trained interviewer and the interviewee whose speaking proficiency is being assessed. The OPI should resemble, to the greatest extent possible, a natural conversation.

Elicitation and rating

There are two major interrelated aspects of the **ACTFL OPI** process: the elicitation of the speech sample and the rating of the speech sample. **Elicitation** involves a mandatory structure of four phases: warm-up, level checks, probes and wind-down. **Rating** is a two-step process: it is an on going process during the OPI itself, and at the conclusion of the OPI the interviewer listens to an audiotape of the entire OPI before assigning a final rating. In each instance, features of the speech sample are first compared to the criteria for each major level (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior) of the rating scale, and then assigned a sublevel rating (Low, Mid, High) by carefully comparing the sample with the appropriate sublevel descriptions in the ACTFL Guidelines.

Preliminary and final rating

There is an intricate and dynamic relationship between elicitation technique and rating. If the sample is not properly elicited, it cannot be rated. To be properly elicited, the speaker’s language must be continuously evaluated by the interviewer during the OPI itself. Although this preliminary rating process must take place during the interview if the OPI is to be at the proper level, a final rating cannot be assigned until the recorded interview has been heard. This affords the interviewer the opportunity to concentrate solely on assigning the correct rating. Ideally, the interviewer confirms or modifies only slightly the preliminary assessment made during the OPI².

³ Byrnes Heidi, Irene Thompson, and Katheryn Buck. “American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages”, February (1989), 6 Executive Boulevard, Yonkers, New York 1070. All rights reserved. ACTFL, Inc., Pages 1-2, Assessment Criteria.

THE OPI AS INTERACTIVE, DYNAMIC PROCESS

The structure of the OPI is standardized, but since the interview is based on as natural conversation as possible between the two conversational partners, its content is unique to each interview and to the interviewee and his or her responses, responses reflecting individual background, life experiences, interest and opinions. In this adaptive, interactive process, the interviewers' line of questioning and tasks-posing is determined by the responses of the interviewee, and the level of difficulty is adjusted continuously according to the interviewee's responses. Although there are standard question types related to proficiency level, the specific content of the OPI is determined in large part through conversational negotiation, depending on information offered in response to the interviewer's lines of questioning and the tasks posed. An experienced interviewer formulates questions based on continuous assessment of the interviewee's proficiency and on the topics which emerge in the conversation.

Reliability of the OPI

Criterion-referenced

The OPI is a criterion-referenced, rather than a norm-referenced assessment. Each speech sample is rated solely according to the criteria of the rating scale rather than being compared to performances of other speakers. Because of the global, holistic nature of the assessment procedure, there will be a variety of individual performances within the same rating level. Yet each individual performance must evidence certain required features to be rated at a given level.

Consistent, sustained performance

The OPI assesses functional language skills as they exist at the moment of assessment without reference to the circumstances under which learning took place. Its goal is to permit the extrapolation of global linguistic competence on the basis of necessarily limited performance in the interview situation.

One reflection of this goal is that the rating is based on determining a level of performance which the speaker can consistently sustain during the interview. That sustained level of communicative ability must be demonstrated in the OPI across the level-appropriate range of assessment criteria: global tasks, formal and informal contexts, content areas, accuracy features and text type.

Test / re-test and inter-rater reliability

It is important that the OPI evidence test / re-test reliability and inter-rater reliability. **Test/re-test reliability** means that the speaker tested two or more times will be assigned the same rating in the re-test as in the initial test, assuming that the proficiency level is in fact the same at the time of the re-test. **Inter-rater reliability** refers to the degree to which two testers listening to the same OPI will assign it the same rating.

THE TESTING OF SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKING

The testing of second language speaking is a relatively new field, even within the young discipline of applied linguistics. Among the reasons for this, linguistics can list the ephemeral nature of speech, the relative lack of interest in the spoken language shown by pre-1970s linguists, and the difficulty of devising objective assessment criteria. Glenn Fulcher's book *Testing Language Speaking* Second Edition, a new addition to the Pearson Longman series *Applied Linguistics and Language Study*. This book leads "gently into the subject with an outline for

the history of speaking tests in English since 1913, which concludes that speaking tests have been credited with importance, but that the lack of consensus regarding criteria, and the difficulty of fitting speaking into the framework of quantitative psychometric testing fashionable in the USA, meant that until the 1970s, speaking tests were generally not placed on the same level as pencil-and-paper tests.”

“One of the main problems underlying speaking tests is that **speaking** is a difficult construct to define. Speech can be broken down into pronunciation and intonation, accuracy and fluency, or it can be categorized in terms of strategies, or it can be regarded as a form of interaction and analyzed using the method of pragmatics or discourse analysis. The problem is that in the course of a normal conversation, all of these aspects are important. If testers try to separate out the strands, they may well find that the ecology of speaking is different in different successful speakers. This means that the accurate speaker may communicate effectively, but slowly, whereas the fluent speaker may sacrifice accuracy for the sake of rapid communication” (Skehan, 1998).

Fulcher says that *“the purpose of testing second language speaking is similar to that of a driving test”*. *The purpose of a speaking test is to collect evidence in a systematic way (through elicitation techniques or tasks) that will support an inference about the construct as he defines it from the summary of the evidence the ‘score’*. *To provide a valid speaking test, it is necessary to capture the relevant aspects of speaking on the hand, and prevent interference in the score from irrelevant factors, on the other.*”³ Although Fulcher maintains that the tasks type is important, he makes a strong case for difficulty not residing in the task itself, but in an interaction of tasks, conditions and test-takers. He therefore underlines the importance of the rating scale as the main means of operationalizing the construct that a particular test is supposed to measure, which means that this

⁴ Fulcher Glen. *Testing Second Language Speaking*, First Edition. Pearson Longman, 1970, page 47.

construct should be absolutely central to the rating scale. This leads into the question of how to devise specifications for particular speaking tests, which should bring together the various theoretical aspects of language testing in a concrete, usable form. This part of the book will be useful for anyone involved in developing new speaking tests, and is of some interest to oral examiners. More than anything else, this section of the book, with its analysis of various examples of real test specifications, underlines the difficulty involved in moving from a needs analysis, to a test specification, to a real test with tasks and a rating scale.

The reliability of any test of spoken language hinges on the role of oral examiners or raters. Unfortunately, there is abundant evidence that inter-rater reliability tends to be low, which is why large examination boards are now devoting considerable time and effort to examiner training and standardization. This is a costly procedure, but as Fulcher points out, it may only be the tip of the iceberg as far as the costs of testing speaking are concerned. In the chapter on “Raters, training and administration”

The section on quantitative analysis of speaking test results begins with a short introduction to the statistical methods used for the benefit of the non-specialist, although Fulcher feels that he would have benefited from a lengthier explanation of how each quantitative experiment was set up, how the statistics were obtained, and what they were supposed to show. He found the section on qualitative data far more revealing, particularly the brief samples of self-report data. Since the examinee’s perceptions are fundamental to the functioning of the basis test constructs, Fulcher found it surprising that so little space was devoted to this aspect, or to the burgeoning literature concerning the ethnography of communication in classrooms and tests (Mercer, 1995; van Lier, 1996, 1998)

Apart from these minor points, this book provides a much-needed overview of the issues involved in second language speaking tests. Fulcher succeeds in integrating practice and theory, meeting the challenge of making a difficult area accessible to busy language professional. *Testing Second Language Speaking* is an essential book for anyone involved in the design of speaking tests, and is useful reading for examiners, test administrators, MA students and anyone interested in gaining a thorough understanding of testing spoken language.

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize spoken language use. Each of the six “base levels” (coded 00, 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50) implies control of any previous “based level’s” functions and accuracy. The “plus level” designation (coded 06, 16, 26, etc.) will be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one base skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next “base level.” The plus level” description are therefore supplementary to the “base level” descriptions. A skill level is assigned to a person through an authorized language examination. Examiners assign a level on a variety of performance criteria exemplified in the descriptive statements. Therefore, the examples given here illustrate, but do not exhaustively describe, either the skills a person may possess or situations in which he / she may function effectively.

Statements describing accuracy refer to typical states in the development of competence in the most commonly taught languages in formal training programs. In other languages, emerging competence parallels these characterizations, but often with different details. Unless otherwise specified, the term “native speaker” refers to native speakers of a standard dialect. “Well-educated,” in the context of these proficiency descriptions, does not necessarily imply formal higher education. However, in cultures where formal higher education is common, the language-use abilities of persons who have had such education is considered the standard. That is, such a person meets contemporary expectations for the formal, careful style of the language, as well as a range of less formal varieties of the language.



Speaking 0 (No proficiency)

Speaking 0 (No Proficiency) means that the learner is unable to function in the spoken language. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words. The language learner has essentially no communicative ability. (Has been coded L-O in some no automated applications). [Data Code O]



Speaking 0 + (Memorized Proficiency)

Speaking 0 + (Memorized Proficiency) is a level at which the language learner is able to satisfy immediate needs using rehearsed utterances. The learner shows little real autonomy of expression, flexibility or spontaneity. He/she can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only with memorized utterances or formulae. Examples: The students' vocabulary is limited to areas of immediate survival needs. Most utterances are telegraphic; that are, factors (linking words, markers and the like) are omitted, confused or distorted. An learner can usually differentiate most significant sounds when he / she produces in isolation but, when he/she combines in words or groups of words, errors may be frequent. Even with repetition, communication is severely limited even with people that use to dealing with foreigners. Stress, intonation, tone, etc. are usually quite faulty. (Has been coded S-0+ in some no automated applications.) [Data Code 06]



Speaking 1 (Elementary Proficiency)

Speaking 1 (Elementary Proficiency) is a level to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations on familiar topics. A native speaker must often use slowed speech, repetition, paraphrase, or a combination of these to be understood by this individual. Similarly, the native speaker must strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand even simple statements / questions from this individual. This speaker has a functional, but limited proficiency. Misunderstandings are frequent, but the students are able to ask for help and to verify comprehension of native speech in face-to-face interaction. The learners are unable to produce continuous discourse except with rehearsed material. Examples: Structural accuracy is likely to be random or severely limited. Time concepts are vague. Vocabulary is inaccurate, and its range is very narrow.

The students often speak with great difficulty. By repeating, such speakers can make themselves understood to native speakers who are in regular contact with foreigners but there is little precision in the information conveyed. Needs, experience or training may vary greatly from individual to individual; for areas. However, the learners can typically satisfy predictable, simple, personal and accommodation needs; can generally meet courtesy, introduction, and identification requirements; exchange greetings; elicit and provide, for example, predictable and skeletal biographical information. He / she might give information about business hours, explain routine procedures in a limited way, and state in simple manner what actions will be taken. He / she is able to formulate some questions even in languages with complicated question constructions. Almost every utterance may be characterized by structural errors and errors in basic grammatical relations. Vocabulary is extremely limited and characteristically does not include modifiers. Pronunciation, stress, and intonation are generally poor, often heavily influenced by another language. Use of structure and vocabulary is highly imprecise. (Has been coded S-1 in some no automated applications.) [Data Code 10]



Speaking 1 + (Elementary Proficiency, Plus)

Speaking 1 + (Elementary Proficiency, Plus) is a level at which students initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands. He / she may, however, have little understanding of the social conventions of conversation. The interlocutor is generally required to strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand even some simple speech. The speaker at this level may hesitate and may have to change subjects due to lack of language resources. Range and control of the language are limited. Speech largely consists of a series of short, discrete utterances.

Examples: The student is able to satisfy most travel and accommodation needs and a limited range of social demands beyond exchange of skeletal biographic information. Speaking ability may extend beyond immediate survival needs. Accuracy is a basic grammatical relation and it is evident, although it is not consistent. Students may exhibit the most common forms of verb tenses, for example, but they may make frequent errors in formation and selection. While some structures are established, errors occur in more complex patterns. The students typically cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances or unfamiliar situations. Learners have the ability to describe and give precise information. Space and time references are often used incorrectly. Speech will usually be labored. Frequently students have to repeat utterances to be understood by the general public. (Has been coded S-1+ in some no automated applications.) [Data Code 16]



Speaking 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)

Speaking 2 (Limited Working Proficiency) is a level at which the students have to satisfy social demands and limited work requirements. Learners can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope. In more complex and sophisticated work-related tasks, language usage generally disturbs with the native speaker. Students can handle with confidence, but students can not do it with facility so they apply most normal, high-frequency social conversational situations including extensive, but not casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.

The students can get the gist of most everyday conversations but they have some difficulty understanding native speakers in situations that required specialized or sophisticated knowledge. The students' utterances are minimally cohesive. Linguistic structure is usually not very elaborate and not thoroughly controlled; errors are frequent. Vocabulary use is appropriate for high-frequency utterances. But it is unusual or imprecise elsewhere.

Examples: While these interactions will vary widely from individual to individual, the individual can typically ask and answer predictable questions in the workplace and give straightforward instructions to subordinates. Additionally, individual can participate in personal and accommodation-type interactions with elaboration and facility; that is, students can give and understand complicated, detailed, and extensive directions and make non-routine changes in travel and accommodation arrangements. Simple structures and basic grammatical relations are typically controlled; however, there are areas of weakness. In the commonly taught languages, these may be simple markings such as plurals, articles, linking words, and negatives and more complex structures such as tense / aspect usage, case morphology, passive constructions, word order, and embedding. (Has been coded S-2 in some no automated applications.) [Data Code26]



Speaking 2 + (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)

Speaking 2 + (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus). This is the level at which the students are able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective. The learners show considerable ability to communicate effectively on topics relating to particular interest in special fields of competence. Often the students show a high degree of fluency and ease of speech, yet when the students are under tension or pressure, the ability to use the language effectively may deteriorate. Comprehension of normal native speech is typically nearly complete. The learners may miss cultural and local references and may require a native speaker to adjust to his / her limitations in some ways. Native speakers often perceive the individual's speech to contain awkward or inaccurate phrasing of ideas, mistaken time, space and person references, or to be in some way inappropriate, if not strictly incorrect.

Examples: Typically the students can participate in most social, formal, and informal interactions, but limitation either in a range of contexts, types of tasks or level of accuracy hinder effectiveness. The learners may be ill at ease with the use of the language either in social interactions or in speaking at length in professional contexts. He / she is generally strong in either structural precision or vocabulary, but can not always easily produce general vocabulary. Discourse is often incohesive. (Has been coded S-2 + in some no automated applications.) [Date Code 26]



Speaking 3 (General Professional Proficiency)

Speaking 3 (General Professional Proficiency). This is the level at which the students are able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively and most formal and informal conversations in practical, social and professional topics. Nevertheless, the learners' limitations general restrict the professional contexts of language use to matters to shared knowledge and / or international convention. Discourse is cohesive. The students use the language acceptably, but which some noticeable imperfections; yet, errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. The learners can effectively combine structure with vocabulary to convey his / her meaning accurately. The students can speak readily and fill pauses suitably in face-to-face conversation with native speakers.

4. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this project is to specify the main factors that affect the students' oral proficiency: Case of Advanced Intensive English I Students, during semester II of the year 2007 at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador in the English language learning process in order to guide students to perform their functions indicative of their speaking level of proficiency for obtaining better results in their oral performance. This research was exploratory because there was not any study of this topic and by the way of obtaining the information on the possibility of carrying out a full research on a given real-life context.

The first step was to take some bibliographic sources such as books, magazines, web sites, handouts, and also to make use of techniques like questionnaires, teachers interview, and students interview for determining the main factors that affect the learning process of students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses, during semester II of the year 2007 at the Foreign Language Department at the UES. The questions of the students' and teachers interviews were open and closed. Furthermore, the researchers elaborated a questionnaire with eleven questions, which contained open and closed questions. Also, the researchers made an observation guide, which was used to identify the main factors that were involved in the oral skill development of the students, so it was necessary to use some extra technical sources such as cameras, cell phones, tape recorder, pictures, and applying a proficiency scale of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL), called OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) for identifying those specific factors that affect the speaking learning process of the students.

The second step was to interview the professors in charge of the groups 4 and 5 in the evening classes, professors Sara Méndez and Roberto Andrés Rosales Baltes. The instrument was an interview with closed and open questions

for determining the main factors that affect the learning process of students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses, during semester II of the year 2007.

The third step was to observe some classes of students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses, during semester II of the year 2007. The researches took some notes like authentic materials, real life situations, students' practicing, and teacher's techniques, so with that information the researchers evaluated and identified the main factors that affect the learning process of students.

The fourth step was to evaluate the speaking level or rate competence in oral level of the students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses, during semester II of the year 2007, that was taken through a recorded interview, in which the student answered some questions made by the researchers and performed a real conversation in front of the researchers with the purpose of identifying the student's mistakes using a proficiency scale of the American Council on the Teaching of the Foreign Language Oral Proficiency Interview (ACTFL), called OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview). After that, in order to identify the students' mistakes and main problems that they were facing at that moment, the researchers applied the Tester Evaluation Form of the ACTLF, OPI. And then, with the students' results, the researchers determined how much the students had improved their speaking competence and the researchers found the main factors that affect the oral proficiency of students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses.

With the outcomes and findings of students' oral proficiency, the researchers analyzed the main problems of students in their oral production. So the researchers recorded the students' conversations and the interviews for analyzing and evaluating the rating of all these factors that affect the overall level of their proficiency, e.g., pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, content, and comprehension. So the aim of using the interviewing was to assess how well a student could speak his or her second language at a given point in time and with

the goal of guiding students to perform their functions indicative of their speaking level and evaluate the rate competence in oral level of the students using a proficiency scale of the ACTFL.

The last step was the elaboration of the report of the investigation that was elaborated with the aim to reflect the findings and main factors that affect the learning process of students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses during semester II of the year 2007.

The graduation process timetable was very important in the case of how researchers set the time and applied the activities, in the way of obtaining specific information from students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses during semester II of the year 2007 and teachers in charge of those groups of the Foreign Language Department at the UES. The activities that were developed from Friday 1st of June, 2007 to Monday, 3rd of March, 2008 were fundamental in the research process in the way of guiding the activities to the students in a suitable time for not interrupting the teachers' classes while the learning process was being worked by each teacher in their classrooms. Consequently, in the timetable were reflected the specific dates and moments about the main activities done by the researchers to the students and the teachers at that precise moment.

5- DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The process of collecting data was very complex and it had to be carefully structured for a good quality and usefulness of data. For that reason, the data collection techniques considered the most appropriate for this research were interviews, questionnaires, and guide observations. These techniques were very useful because a wide variety of information was gathered without spending too much time. Therefore, the application of these techniques was not expensive because the data was gathered by taking notes and was obtained directly from students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses during semester II of the year 2007 and interviews to teachers in order to guide the students to perform their functions indicative providing them with communication strategies, pronunciation techniques, and audio-visual sources that help them to achieve their communication goals.

Therefore, with those essential techniques made by the researchers it was possible to analyze the essential core of the main problems that affected students' oral proficiency and other important aspects that caused the phenomenon that was being searched by the researchers at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. With the help of the interviews, questionnaires, and guide observations, the researchers identified the main factors that affect their speaking proficiency and gave effective solutions providing the students with effective communication strategies, pronunciation techniques, and audio-visual sources for helping them to achieve their communication goals and enhancing their oral performance.

6- DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The Data Analysis was based on the results gathered from the student interview. The student interview was taken using the questionnaire with the main objective of identifying the main factors that affect the speaking proficiency of the students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses during semester II of the year 2007. With this data collection technique, the researchers applied nine.

1. The first question was about how many years the interviewed students had been studying in the Foreign Language Department. The objective of this first question was to determine the length of the presence time of the interviewed students in the classrooms and the analysis of the graphics showed that most of the interviewed students were in the third and second year of studies which means that almost two thirds of the subjects under study are in the middle of their major studies.
2. The second question was about what kind of problems the interviewed students had faced during their learning process. The objective of this second question was to identify the main problems during their learning process. The analysis of the graphics showed that the most troublesome domains or areas for the FLDs' interviewed students were the listening comprehension and speaking skills whereas pronunciation did not represent an obstacle for their learning process, which meant it was important to notice that while 26 of them (65%) did not have any problems with regard to pronunciation, 20 of them (50%) admitted they had problems regarding speaking, so that imbalance between pronunciation and speaking revealed that most students highlighted the sub skill of pronunciation where the macro skill of speaking was not attended the same way as pronunciation on their part.

3. The third question was related to the kind of speaking techniques which brought more difficulty to the students in their learning process. The objective of that question was to identify the most troublesome speaking-related techniques for the FLD students in their learning process. The analysis of the graphic showed that 26 of 40 interviewed students had difficulties to hold oral presentations and 14 of them said they did not have any difficulty. In the role play technique, 8 said they had problems and 32 claimed not to have any problems with regard to asking questions, 9 of the students said they had problems and 31 said they did not. 20 of the students said they had problem with conversation techniques and 20 claimed not to have any problem with it. That meant most students showed difficulties to hold oral presentations and conversations whereas they demonstrated a considerable control on role-playing and in asking questions. This revealed the students' tendency to participate in speaking activities prepared by their teachers rather than creating their own dialogues or interaction.

4. The fourth question was about how the interviewed students overcame their speaking problems. The objective of that question was to discover how the students solved their speaking-related problems. The analysis of the graphic showed that 23 of the 40 interviewed students overcame their speaking problems using an English dictionary; meanwhile 21 of them preferred asking their classmates for help instead of asking the professor. That meant students under study had the tendency of using their dictionaries or resorting to peers for help when they needed to solve their speaking-related problems. Only one out of four consulted his/her teacher, which revealed a little confidence on the students' part with regard to their teachers.

5. The fifth question was related to the kind of teaching strategies teachers use at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. The objective was to find out the teaching strategies used by teachers at the FLD. The analysis of the graphic showed that the FLD professors usually apply teacher-guided (as stated by 50% of students) and teacher-controlled (as stated by 45% of students) activities. Only one out of four students admitted that teachers applied tutoring and just 12.5% of the students said that teachers resorted to student-centered activities. As revealed by the subjects interviewed, their teachers usually applied teacher-guided and teacher-controlled activities to conduct their classes, so a little attention was given to teacher-tutoring and student-centered activities, which implied a reduced participation of the students in their learning process.

6. The sixth question was about how the Foreign Language Department teachers' methodologies affected their learning process. The objective of that question was to determine the FLD teachers' role influencing their students' academic achievement. According to the results taken from the graphic, the majority of the students thought that their teachers' methodology affected their learning process. That meant there was a considerable tendency on students' part to accept their teachers' methodology as something that affected their learning process and only one third of them disagreed with that opinion, so there was a considerable tendency on the students' part to accept their teachers' methodology as something that affected their academic achievement.

7. The seventh question was about how often the interviewed students asked questions during the class in a week. The objective of that question was to discover to what extent the FLD students interact with their teachers in terms of asking information during the class in a week. According to the results, most of the students did not ask questions during the class for different reasons, which meant that the interviewed students had the strong tendency of avoiding making questions when they were in class so that was one of the main factors that affected their oral proficiency.

8. The eighth question was regarding the most troublesome speaking techniques for the students during their learning process. The objective was to identify which speaking techniques were more difficult for students in their learning process. The results of that graphic showed a significant mastery of oral proficiency when asking questions and role-playing whereas, they needed to improve their use of English. That meant the interviewed students had considerable difficulty for making oral presentations whereas, they showed a little difficulty for asking questions and doing role-playing.

9. The ninth question was about the language predominantly used in the classroom. The objective of that question was to determine the language students usually use to communicate. According to the results, most of the students used the English Language in the classroom. That meant there was a very strong tendency on the students' part to use English in the classroom.

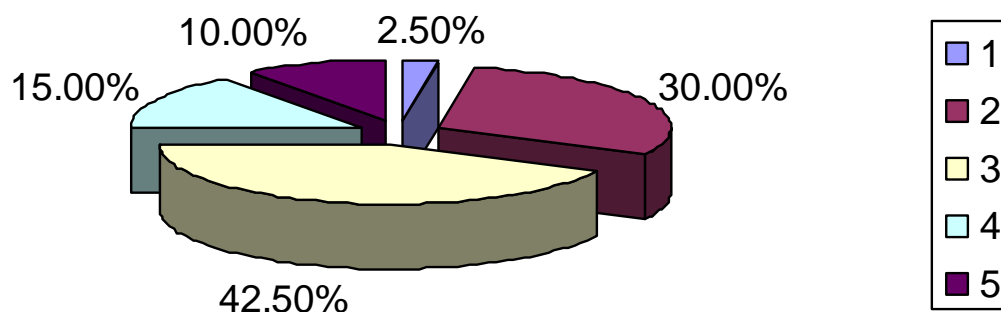
7- FINDINGS

The next graphs and tables show the results and main findings, which were found in the data analysis and interpretation about the main factors that affect the Advanced Intensive English I students' oral proficiency in the English language learning process. Those results and findings helped the researchers to arrive at the conclusions and facilitated the corresponding recommendations for the teachers and students at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. These results are shown below.

1- How many years have you been studying in the Foreign Language Department?

Objective: To determine the length in terms of time of the presence of the interviewed students in the classroom.

Year	Interviewed students
1	1
2	12
3	17
4	6
5	4
TOTAL	40



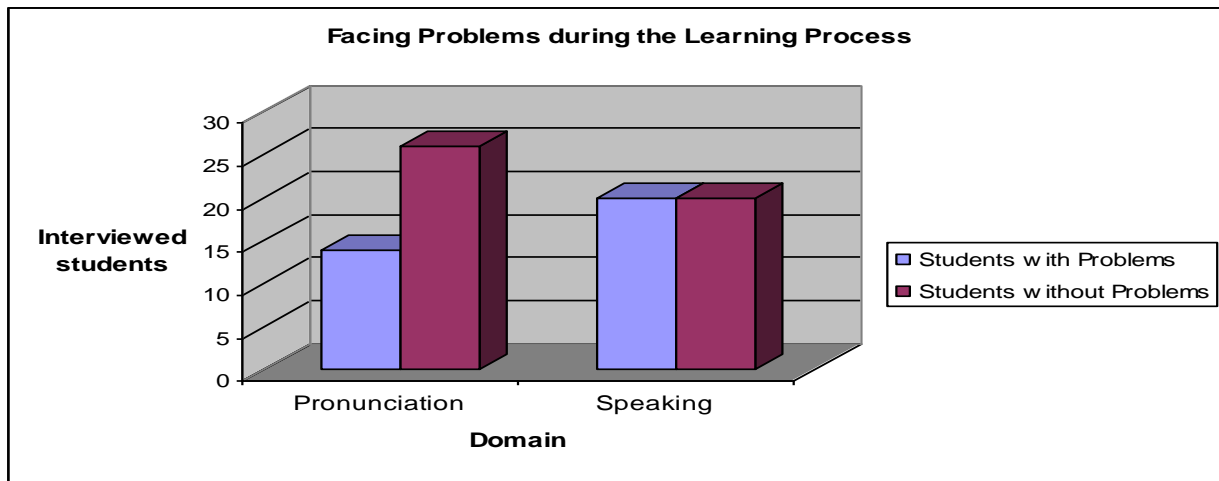
Analysis: 42.5% of the interviewed students were in the third year of studies, 30% were in the second year, 15% were in the fourth, meanwhile 10% of the students were in the fifth year and only 2.5% were in the first year.

Interpretation: Most students interviewed are in the third and second year of studies, which means that almost two thirds of the subjects under study are in the middle of their major studies.

2- What kind of problems have you faced during your learning process?

Objective: To identify the problems that the students have faced during their learning process.

Domain	Students with problems	Students without problems
Pronunciation	14	26
Speaking	20	20
Others	5	35



Analysis: The most troublesome domains or areas for the FLD students are listening comprehension, grammar, and speaking as revealed by their answers. It is important to notice that while 26 of them (65%) do not have any problems with regard to pronunciation, 20 of them (50%) admit they have problems regarding speaking.

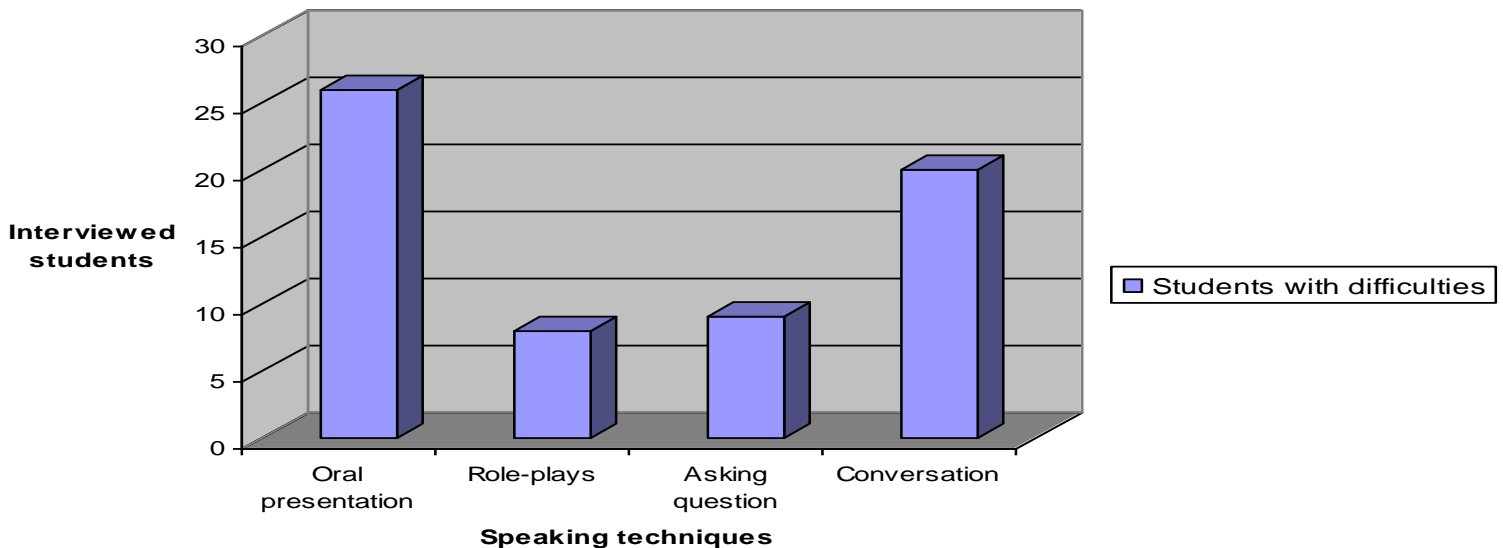
Interpretation: This imbalance between pronunciation and speaking reveals that most students highlight the sub skill of pronunciation, whereas the macro skill of speaking is not attended the same way on their part.

3- What kind of speaking techniques brings you more difficulties in your learning process?

Objective: To identify the most troublesome speaking – related techniques for the FLD students in their learning process.

Techniques	Interviewed students	
	With difficulties	Percentage
Oral presentation	26	65%
Role-plays	8	2%
Asking questions	9	22.5%
Conversation	20	50%
	63	

Difficult Speaking Techniques



Analysis:

26 of the 40 interviewed students have difficulties with the oral presentation and 14 of them do not, in the role play technique 8 have problems and 32 do not to have any problem with regard to asking questions, 9 of the students have problems and 31 do not. 20 of the students have problems with the conversation technique and 20 express the opposite.

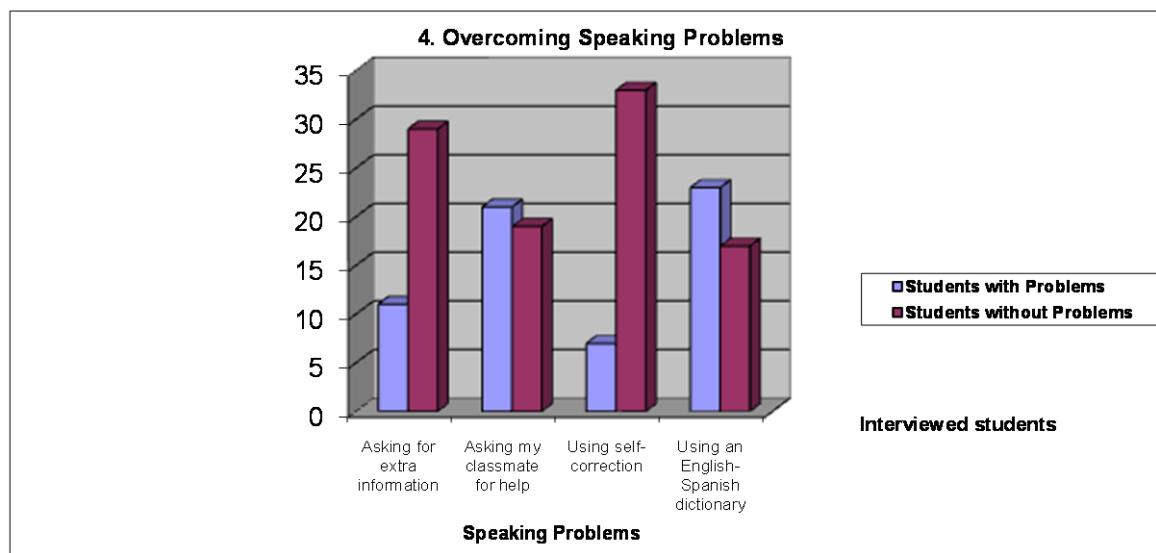
Interpretation:

Most students show difficulties to hold oral presentation and conversations, whereas they demonstrate a considerable control on role-playing and in asking questions. This reveals the students' tendency to participate in speaking activities prepared by their teachers rather than creating their own dialogues or interaction.

4- How do you overcome your speaking problems?

Objective: To discover how the students solve their speaking- related problems.

Speaking Problems	Interviewed students
	Students with Problems
Asking for extra explanation	11
Asking their classmates	21
Self-correction	7
Using English dictionary	23
Others	10
Total	72



Analysis:

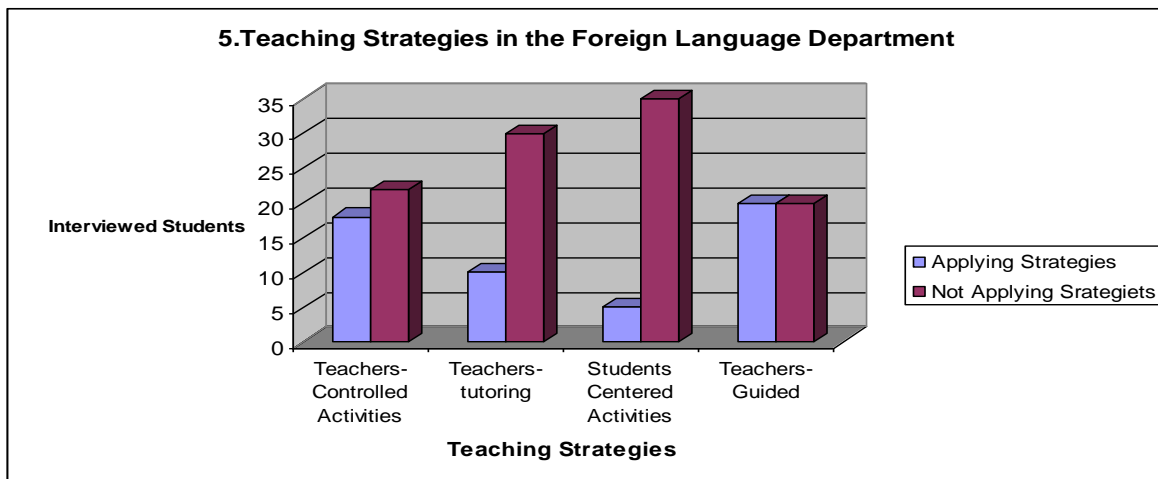
According to the results, 23 of the 40 interviewed students overcome their speaking problems using an English – Spanish dictionary; meanwhile 21 of them prefer asking their classmates for help instead of asking the teacher.

Interpretation: The students under study have the tendency of using their dictionaries or resorting to peers for help when they need to solve their speaking related problems. Only one out of four students consults his /her teacher, which reveals a little confidence on the students' part with regard to their teachers.

5- What kind of teaching strategies do teachers use at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador?

Objective: To find out the teaching strategies used by teachers at the Foreign Language Department.

Teaching strategies	Interviewed students	
	Apply	No apply
Teacher-controlled activities	18	22
Teacher tutoring	10	30
Student centered activities	5	35
Teacher-guided activities	20	20
Total	53	107



Analysis:

The interview reveals that the FLD professors usually apply teacher-guided (as stated by 50% of students) and teacher-controlled (as stated by 45% of students) activities. Only one out of four students admits that teachers apply tutoring and just 12.5% of students say that teachers resort to student-centered activities.

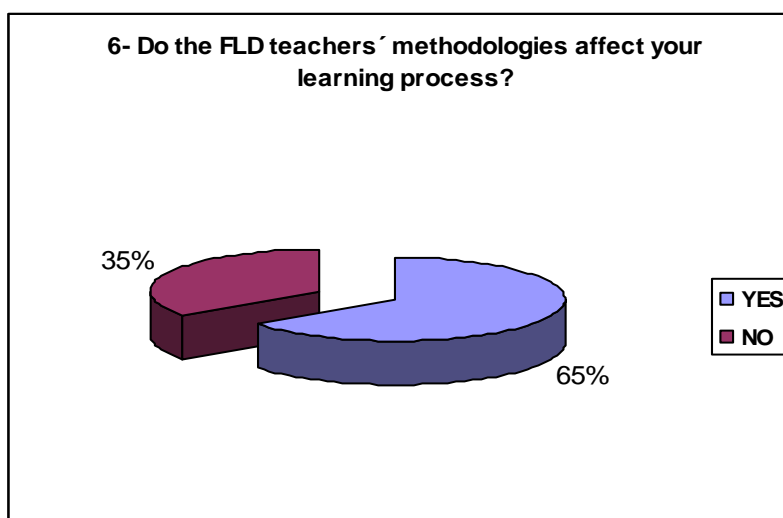
Interpretation:

As revealed by the subjects interviewed, their teachers usually apply teacher-guided and teacher-controlled activities to conduct their classes. A little attention is given to teacher tutoring and student-centered activities, which implies a reduced participation of students in their learning process.

6-Do you think that the Foreign Language Department teachers' methodologies affect your learning process?

Objective: To determine the FLD teachers' role in influencing their students' academic achievement.

Teachers' methodologies	Interviewed Students' answers	
	YES	NO
	26	14
		Total
		40



Analysis:

According to the results, the majority of the students think that the teachers' methodology affects their learning process. Only one third of them disagree with that opinion.

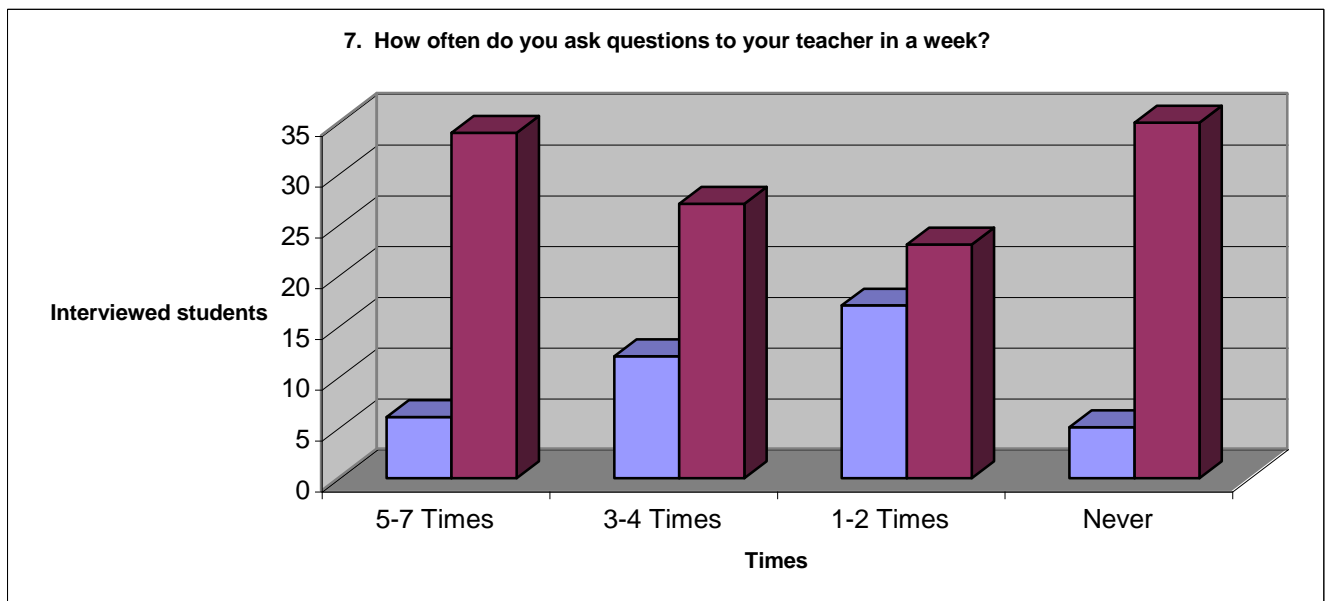
Interpretation:

65% of the students believe that teacher's methodologies affect their learning process, and 35% of them express the opposite. There is a considerable tendency on the students' part to accept their teachers' methodology as something that affects their academic achievement.

7-How often do you ask questions to your teacher during the class in a week?

Objective: To discover to what extent the FLD students interact with their teachers in terms of asking information.

Frequency	Interviewed Students	
	Ask Questions	Do not ask questions
1-2 Times	17	23
3-4 Times	12	27
5-7 Times	6	34



Analysis

17 of the 40 interviewed students ask questions 1-2 times during the class in a week, and 34 of them said they do not, 12 of them said they ask questions 3-4 times and 27 do not; meanwhile 6 of the students said they ask 5-7 times and 23 of them do not, and 5 students said they never ask. The other 35 of them said they do not usually do it.

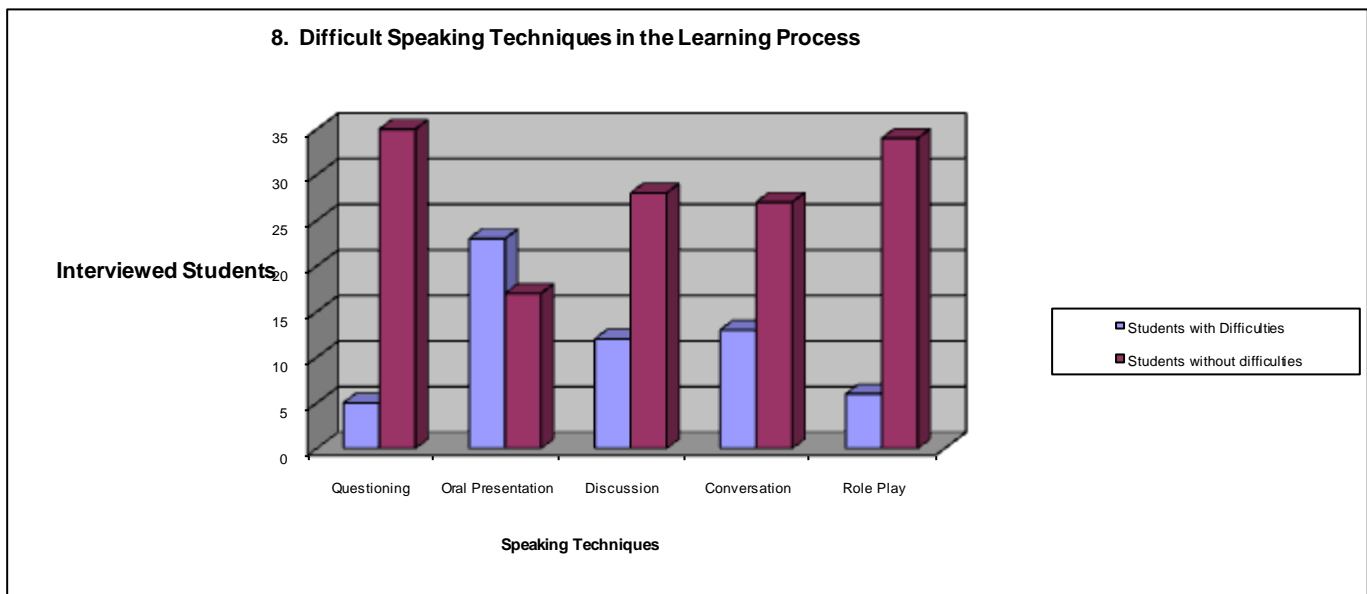
Interpretation:

Students have the strong tendency of avoiding interaction with their teachers in terms of asking information.

8- In which of these speaking techniques have you found more difficulties during your learning process?

Objective: To identify which speaking techniques are more difficult for the students in their learning process.

Speaking Techniques	Interviewed Students	
	With difficulties	Without difficulties
Oral Presentation	23	17
Conversation	13	27
Discussion	12	28
Role Play	6	34
Questioning	5	35
TOTAL	59	141



Analysis:

According to the results, most of the students have difficulties with the oral presentation techniques, whereas a few of them have difficulty with regard to asking questions.

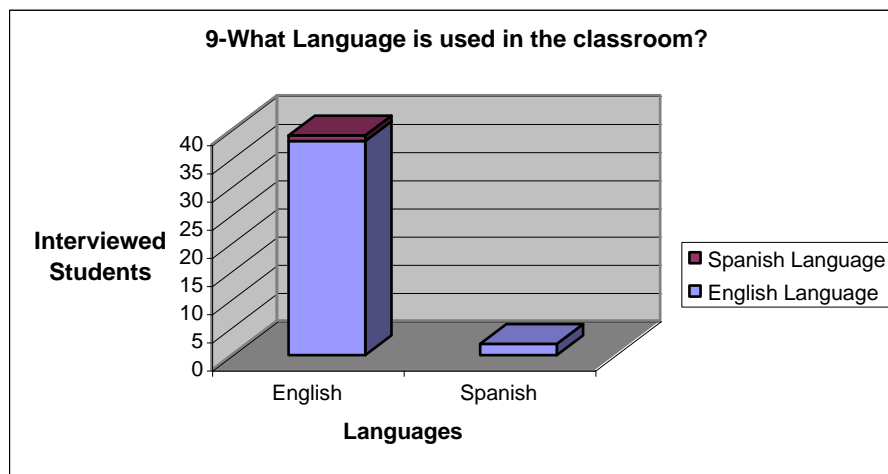
Interpretation:

Students show a significant mastery of oral proficiency when asking questions and role playing, whereas they need to improve their use of English when having oral presentations and holding discussions and conversations.

9- What language is more used in the classroom?

Objective: To determine what language is predominantly used in class.

Languages	Interviewed Students
English	38
Spanish	2
TOTAL	40



Analysis:

According to the results, most of the students use the English Language in the classroom.

Interpretation:

There is a very strong tendency on the students' part to use English in the classroom.

8- CONCLUSIONS

According to the results obtained from the teachers' view point, as well as our own experience as foreign language learners, there are many factors that affect the students' oral proficiency, but the most important factors found in the research were the following:

- a) Speaking-related factors: the problem regarding this skill was the ***lack of practice of the English language in and out of the classroom*** and it was not rare to observe that the students kept quiet through the whole class. When the class finished, they began talking using their mother tongue. That meant that if they did not practice the language inside the classroom, not by any means they would practice English somewhere else so they would not be as proficient as someone devoted to speaking English and participating in class more time.
- b) Oral Presentation-related factors: This has to do with ***how much students knew about the language, and how much they had learned about how to prepare an oral presentation in previous levels and the instructions they would follow for the presentation***. That meant that if they did not have the previous knowledge as to how to perform the oral presentation, students would not have the possibility to have success in the oral presentation, so for students who did not have the previous knowledge of what an oral presentation was, it was more difficult to speak in front of others.
- c) Asking questions-related factors: It is another factor that affected students and it had to do with one of the speaking techniques and the research showed ***asking questions brought too much problem*** to the students' oral proficiency. Also it revealed students' tendency to participate in speaking activities prepared by their teachers rather than creating their own

dialogues or interaction. Most of the students refused to ask questions to their teachers because they were afraid of making mistakes and being in front of their classmates. Instead of asking questions to their teachers, the majority of the students preferred to ask their classmates or to use a dictionary, which represented one of the main factors that affected their oral proficiency, because they did not practice the language and also they did not improve their pronunciation subskill.

d) Teacher-controlled and teacher-guided activities factors: The teachers usually apply those common strategies like teacher controlled activities and teacher-guided activities to conduct their classes so that the professors ***reduced participation of students in their learning process*** and little attention was given to the other important strategies like:

- ✓ Topics which were relevant and interesting to the learner.
- ✓ Introducing communication strategies, vocabulary, and useful expressions around each topic, providing opportunities for meaningful practice through pair and small-group activities.
- ✓ Using a supporting framework for learning that would provide learners with the language and opportunity to express themselves accurately- and with confidence.
- ✓ Encouraging learners to get involved in the learning process, through high-interest topics that are relevant to their daily lives.
- ✓ Including further activities in each unit could provide the creative teacher with additional material to use as required.
- ✓ Ensuring that the learners receive sufficient opportunities to review new language points.

As a manner of concluding this work, it can be said that throughout the development of this research project the researchers identified the main factors that affected the English Language Oral Proficiency of Advanced Intensive English I Students at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador during the second semester 2007, by which students showed the main factors that affected their oral proficiency as follows: ***Lack of interaction, few questions, lack of participation in class, lack of confidence, poor knowledge of English, lack of tools to prepare an oral presentation, and many others which were revealed by the data analysis. For example, one of the strongest tendencies was that the students thought the teachers' methodology affected their learning process***, which meant lack of performance in their level of oral proficiency required in the English learning process.

The required level of proficiency depends on a variety of factors which in a certain way were in the teacher's responsibility. When this is so, then teachers have to reflect new techniques in their current teaching practice, and identify the main problems that need to be reinforced by a more accurate way of teaching the oral skill, providing real communication strategies, pronunciation techniques, and audio-visual sources that help students to achieve their communication goals for obtaining better results in their oral performance. Moreover, students have to be active participants in their learning process, and they have to be more aware about their learning process.

9- RECOMMENDATIONS

1. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TEACHERS

How can teachers improve the students' oral proficiency? (helping lower level students to speak)

Taking into account the main factors that affect the speaking proficiency of the students attending Advanced Intensive English I courses during semester II of the year 2007 at the Foreign Language Department at the UES, the researchers suggest the following recommendations to increase the students speaking oral proficiency as follows:

- a) Teachers must identify the students' weaknesses in order to help them to emphasize their communication as much as their grammar from the beginning and keep them balanced, because when they identify the students' weaknesses and their main problems, the teachers notice that some of their students have troubles using the language in an oral form and also they have problems for performing the communicative tasks assigned by teachers.
- b) After teachers have identified their students' weaknesses, teachers should look for more communication strategies or pronunciation techniques in order to increase the level of oral proficiency of those students, demonstrating and discussing both accuracy and fluency and make sure they know their objective within any activity, e.g. Is (an exercise) primarily for fluency or accuracy? And then correct (or not) appropriately.
- c) Among the communication strategies and pronunciation techniques, teachers should apply some of the next ones to increase the students' second language oral proficiency:

- Demand students' active participation.
- Emphasize communication as much as grammar.
- Define their oral syllabus for each semester early so their students can be aware about clear what they are expected to say and their weaker students to know exactly what they have to learn to catch up.
- Encourage a culture of 'everybody speaking a lot' in class so students have to speak with each other as much as possible including the shyest or the least confident student.
- Prioritize and teach idiomatic phrases, e.g., "That is the way the cookie crumbles" and other phrases the students need to know for interacting and increasing their expectation.
- Set oral homework for virtually every class and teach specific techniques the students can use to practice speaking outside class, e.g., working with a homework partner. Give plenty of help with listening, pronunciation and spelling too, e.g., set listening homework, use and encourage systematic stress-marking on words in the students' vocabulary notebooks.
- Teach specific conversation strategies to help cover gaps in their knowledge, e.g. circumlocution (It is what you say when...../It is another word for.....), simplification, e.g., "A small red fruit" instead of worrying so much whether they know "strawberry" or "raspberry".
- Give the students ways to measure their own oral progress, e.g. check lists of 'idiomatic phrases' or presentations about their interest.
- Give plenty of controlled oral practice; drills, structured-speaking activities from model, questions prompts, flow-chart. Allow time for rehearsal and preparation pre-roleplay ensuring lots of changes of partner so they do not get bored practicing with the same classmate.
- Revise often to build oral confidence, e.g., Practice what students know in a variety of situations so language become more automatic.
- Create opportunities to exchange real ideas, opinions, for learning new information about each other or about the world so students really

communicate and interact across the class e.g., begin a lesson with students talking about themselves, saying their opinions avoiding heads-down, speaking about to the book activities.

- Correct in a variety ways, e. g. visually. Have a clear, explicit, negotiated marking policy which should encourage the students to relax about errors and not lose face and so they continue contributing orally.
- Promote extra classes.
- Practice speaking through oral dialogue journals.
- Introduce topics that are relevant and interesting to the learner.
- Introduce communication strategies, vocabulary, and useful expressions around each topic, providing opportunities for meaningful practice through pair and small-group activities.
- Fully integrate collocations and language patterns in natural contexts, and summarize these in a convenient alphabetical list at the end.
- Use a supporting framework for learning which provides learners with the language and opportunity to express by themselves accurately- and with confidence.
- Encourage learners to get involved in the learning process, through high-interest topics that are relevant to their daily lives.
- Include further activities in each unit that provide the creative teacher with additional material to use as required. Feature a page for consolidation and recycling at the end of each unit.
- Ensure that the learners receive sufficient opportunities to review new language points.
- Above all, create a need to speak by making oral performance a key element in passing and failing, e.g. A substantial proportion of their mark should be for oral tests and above all, for regular ongoing continuous assessment.
- **Enjoy your teaching: if you do not, who will!!!!!!!!!!?**

2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STUDENTS

What can students do to improve their speaking proficiency?

- a) The students who faced the problems mentioned in this paper must be responsible for their own learning and they should not expect their teachers to be the only ones who will bring to the class all what they need to become proficient in the English language.

- b) Here are some techniques that students could take into account in order to improve their speaking ability:
 - ✓ They need to practice the English language as much as they have the opportunity to do it.
 - ✓ They must not be afraid of making mistakes.
 - ✓ They should ask the teachers for help when it is needed.
 - ✓ They should look for extra information according to the level they are at.
 - ✓ They need to do oral practices in groups in order to improve their pronunciation.

By having suggested some of the ways in which oral proficiency can be improved by the students attending Advanced English I courses during semester II, it can be said that it is a matter in which all the participants have their own style of learning and it is an important role for each student to have identified the main factors that affect their speaking proficiency and have considered the most effective pronunciation techniques, communication strategies, and audio-visual sources for enhancing their oral performance in a natural conversational language that in this case is English, and achieving their communication goals getting better results.

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WEBSITE ADDRESSES

- Oral Proficiency Interview. Information for examinees, **[http:// www.dielc.org/testingOPlexaminees.htm](http://www.dielc.org/testingOPlexaminees.htm)**
- How to evaluate an grade oral skill course, **<http://www.amityfoundation.org/amity/teacher/resource/toolkit/teachorally/evaluate.htm>**

APPENDIX

SECTION

