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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH:**

**To what extent classroom teacher's methodology promotes effective classroom discussion for students on the Advanced English level XVII from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador.**

**IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF:  
LICENCIATURA EN IDIOMA INGLES OPCION ENSEÑANZA**

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## INTRODUCTION

Making reference to the role of a teacher a facilitator in different ways, The following research is based on describing some factors that influence the classroom discussion and explain some activities that can help the teacher to improve the effective classroom discussion in their English learning process with students from Advanced English level XVII from the Saturday's course from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador, and based on different ideas supported by philosophies about the way an English teacher can develop a student in the great skill of speaking as after previous research by Chomsky who proposed and defined the concepts of competence and performance, advocates for a communicative view in applied linguistics (e.g. Savignon, 1972) expressed their strong disapproval at the idea of using the concept of idealized, purely linguistic competence as a theoretical ground of the methodology for learning, teaching and testing languages. They found the alternative to Chomsky's concept of competence in Hymes's communicative competence which they believed to be a broader and more realistic notion of competence. The research group took in to account the result of two different English groups from CENIUES to prove that the teacher methodology is fundamental to let in higher proficiency levels perform a group discussion with the everyday topic in the classroom and let knowledge of those students serve as a reference to find the positives ways of applying a good methodology creating the perfect environment of a foreign language as English language.

The researchers present in the research the data from questionnaires and interviews, the information of each student as age, the place they studied English previously, relevant ideas about the way they think the teacher performance is in developing the topics, personal information relevant to the research question and what are the expectations towards finishing the current course at CENIUES, etc. Such important information is underlined in this under graduation work to prove that practicing of English during class time depending on the way the teacher explains contents and check constantly students' performance to improve the group discussions.

This research describes in different steps the previous thesis about the teacher methodology, the influence of different teaching methods and relevant information of them that in the graphics refer to the data found by the two groups. The information below also contains the findings of each group, the level of students, interest towards teacher attitude, the description of the problem, the objectives and the justification. Finally, the conclusions the teamwork reached after the discussion of the results and of course the recommendations will be found at the end of this research and supported by annexes.

## I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays many English academies, schools and universities of high standards around the world look for a golden key which creates a more successful classroom than others. The precious key bases itself in orienting students devotedly to effective discussions held in the classroom. However, what is a discussion? The *Dictionary of Education* describes discussion as "an activity in which people talk together in order to share information about a topic or problem, seeking available evidence or a solution". For this study, effective classroom discussion an activity in which will be define as the spoken communication between the teacher and students, but more prominently, among students themselves. Maloch (1999) seems to be in agreement with the previously mentioned idea, holding that the teacher should play the role of helping students build some sort of conversation, letting them discuss most of the available talk time about diverse topics. In this research we focus will be on the use of methodology in a variety of activities and what in the classroom and how the impact is in the students' English learning process.

One of the main concerns in the National University of El Salvador (UES) is that most of the classrooms have overpopulation of students. But the important question is, what would it be the wrong impact with students and what can be done about it?

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, (1992) considers that grouping students in the traditional lines, one student behind another is not profitable for classroom discussion because students have more opportunities to distract. On the other hand, Karl Krane (English Department, Colorado State University) notes that having students put their desks in a circle or horseshoe shape prevents them from hiding in corners, or behind other students' bodies. The circle improves communication by allowing students to see each other's faces and hear their opinions. Moreover, it is very important to note that the classroom environments on the Foreign Language Department can be improved in order to reach better results in students' discussions if fewer students are admitted.



Nowadays, most of the classrooms in the FLD usually have a number up to 45 students or more each which according to Napoleon Rodriguez, (Personal Communication) is non-pedagogical; while UNESCO (1992) states that the best results for effective discussion in the classrooms at university level must be between 20 and 25 students, and for master degrees no more than 20. As a group we consider an ideal classroom size, (amount of students) should have no more than 20 students, so that they unleash themselves better as they communicate and express their viewpoints in English.

The success for keeping up an active classroom discussion depends on several strategies that lead to the methodology used by the teacher. The first strategy motivates students to learn through the use of meaningful materials during tasks, activities and discussions that are held in the classroom (Sandra J. Sauvignon, CLT – LT and CP 8). Another element that makes up a meaningful material is the vocabulary that each lesson contains, as well as the way the Teacher conveys it. According to Roger Gower, Diane Philips and Steve Walters (2005) it should be taught through games (In the case of teaching children or adolescents), multimedia laboratories, Internet exercises and everything oriented to authentic vocabulary. Authentic English vocabulary is found in newspapers, brochures, songs and popular culture. This is supported for David Nunan (1991) because he pointed out the use of authentic texts into the learning situations. In addition, either text books or supplementary materials should include updated, fashionable topics that create controversy, looking attractive to students' eyes with lots of pictures as well. (Dos Santos workshop on Reaching Teaching Goals, 2010).

On the other hand, in order to propagate effective classroom discussion the teacher has to act a facilitator in the class, reducing his/her talking time and giving students most of the talk time available, though it is important to mention that there will be cases in which teachers may require longer time in the class for explaining about a topic (Cotter, 2001).

Moreover, there are more aspects to take into account in order to benefit students' discussion in the classroom. One of them alludes to the mistakes they make as they communicate in the classroom and during this scenario the teacher must be tactful, and must provide feedback properly. (Brookfield, Stephen P. and Preskill, 1999). It is really

well known that knowledge comes from experience and experience also means right or wrong speeches. Monitoring and observing a student is another point that allows teachers to check students' performance, especially when discussing among themselves, providing corrections as they work in groups or pairs. (Brookfield, Stephen P and Preskill, 1999).

On the last, but not the less important point, eye contact is to be dated. Krahnke agrees that it is an excellent tool in the classroom since it will open a communication channel with students and it will also provide the teacher the option to choosing students' speaking turn in the class. However, it is really significant to say that this weapon gets fragile if the teacher breaks eye contact with the student who is speaking. Then, the student will follow the teacher's gaze and will also seek out someone else to talk to, thinking that the teacher is not interested in his/her speech (Gower, 2005).

As a result, the researchers took into account the aspects previously mentioned and the research question came up **To what extent classroom teacher's methodology, promotes effective classroom discussion for students on the Advanced English level XVII from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador.**

## **A. OBJECTIVES**

### **1. General objectives**

- To describe factors that influence classroom discussion during the English learning process with students from Advanced English level XVII from the Saturday's course from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador.

### **2. Specific objectives**

- To explain some activities that can help the teacher to foster effective classroom discussion with students from Advanced English level XVII from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador.
- To describe how students react to the methodology used by the teacher with students of advanced English, level XVII from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador.

## **B. JUSTIFICATION**

Effective classroom discussion is based on how the students received input to produce later discussion. Since students are learning how to communicate in a foreign language, students should be able to use the language to accomplish some functions, such as arguing, persuading, or promising. Moreover, these functions are carrying out in a social context.

That's why the present research awoke interest in the fact that there are not enough paper works that provide information about how to hold an effective classroom discussion within English classrooms in our country. Most of the studies are focused on a few strategies that can be used but most of them were researchers held in foreign countries within different types of situations involved.

As a result, we try to show with this research how methodology can play an important role in the English learning process and which strategies are the most commonly used to promote the effective classroom discussion in advance levels of CENIUES at the Main Campus of the University of El Salvador.

### **C. LIMITATIONS**

The research project was carried out in one year at CENIUES with advanced English students. It was based on John Brilhart's theory which deals about group discussion. The scope of this project was about providing some suggestions but not to be prescriptions as things that you must do. Rather, think of them not as answers, but as questions. Ask yourself, "To what extent might these suggestions help the students in class discussions?" Since the focus of this paper was on effective classroom discussions. It is important to mention that in order to know the real students' English proficiency level was advisable to carry out a placement test, but the research team did not focus on that mostly because they did not have enough time for this, and the most important information to know was their opinion about the different aspects that contribute or influence in classroom discussions.

## **II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

There is a high level of agreement among theoreticians today on the basic content of the definition of communicative competence. However, it has been often pointed out in the literature on language testing that before undertaking research on communicative competence it is essential to examine and clearly determine the construct of communicative competence, namely, to formulate a definition which will enable a simple operationalization of that construct, that is why it is presented in brief the process of defining communicative competence which started in the late 1960s. Important definitions and models of communicative competence are presented in order to reinforce the historical events and teaching approaches as well as methods of second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence.

### **THE ROLE OF METHODOLOGIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION**

In our research, the role of each methodology was very important, has been regarded as an essential element in the success of any activity, are important keys that contributes positively in the learning process in any educational context. Each method is an important component in the learning process of any foreign language, because learning a foreign language implicates some tools to become more easy and understandable a process of learning, without then, perhaps this learning process would be impossible.

According of this, some pedagogical experts made investigations about some methods which help students to learn in a very easy way English language, we made a brief description about some of the most important methods we investigated to make our research:

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION:**

Since the beginning of educational times, discussion has been one of the most important techniques in the process of learning, and principally in the process of learning a foreign language in which discussion activities play an important role if the student wants to acquire a good development and improvement in his/her knowledge, without discussions, classes would be boring, and fewer students would be interested in learning a second or foreign language, and of course here the teacher makes an important roles in how to make students discuss a topic that would be interesting for them.

It's not enough for students to simply pay attention -- they need to be active participants to generate one of those great discussions that end far too quickly for both the teacher and students. The worst types of discussions are serial one-on-one talk between a student and teacher, leaving the rest of the class out of the process. Many students stop listening, begin to fade or disengage during this flawed procedure.

The best discussions keep everyone active, either by sharing or thinking. Even those students who rarely, if ever, contribute can still participate in other ways. Here are five of my favorite ways to design discussions in a dynamic and exciting manner.

## **TYPES OF ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION**

The researchers want to present some examples about different class activities which promote discussion during class:

Dr. Richard Curwin presents some examples about class discussion activities:

### **1. Lightning Rounds**

Just the name "lightning round" suggests energy. Make it even more dramatic by playing up the concept of speed, fun and excitement. Have your discussion questions prepared in advance so that you can ask them faster. Short-answer questions obviously work best for this technique. Students have 30 seconds (or a more appropriate time for your particular class) to answer. They can either answer or pass -- and no negativity is associated

with passing. Ask the questions rapidly while growing the anticipation for each next question by imitating quiz show lightning rounds: "Are you ready for the next question? Here it comes." Ask the question before calling on a student so that all students must be ready to answer. The lightning round should take no longer than ten minutes, the approximate time that the energy begins to diminish.

## **2. Throw the Ball**

When you ask a discussion question, call on students by letting them catch a ball. With young children, you can use a beach ball and roll it to students in a circle. Older students can catch a beach ball or nerf football. This way of calling on students can either be a lot of fun and full of energy, or it can be a disaster. Be sure to keep the throwing distance short enough to prevent chaos. Make the rules clear and stop if they are broken:

1. Do not intercept the ball.
2. Do not throw the ball at another student.
3. Do not try to break anything in the class with the ball.

In spite of the potential danger with using a ball, I have seen this done with much success and great student involvement. A variation that is safer and fun for grades 1-3 is to pass a teddy bear to the student who will answer the next question.

## **3. Group Answers**

Two commonly used discussion techniques can be put together to allow a discussion that involves everybody at the same time. One is to form small groups of about three students. When the teacher asks a discussion question, every group has a small discussion of its own to come up with an answer. Questions of complexity work best with this method. Add to that the use of small cards with each having a method of group identification. After allowing enough time for each group to develop its answer, randomly pick a card and let that group give their answer. You can pick more than one card for each question. When the answer has been completed, put the used card back in the deck, so that no group can relax and think that their turn is over.



#### **4. Agreements**

Keep each question going longer by engaging more students in the discussion. When the first student answers a question, ask another student if he or she agrees or disagrees with that answer. Then ask another student, and keep going until at least five students have participated in each question.

#### **5. Questionnaires**

A fun way to discuss famous people or fictional characters is to choose someone you are studying. Divide the class into groups of two or three, and have each group come up with three to five questions they would like to ask that person in an interview style. All group members should agree on all the questions. Each group then passes their questions to another group so that all groups have someone else's questions. Each group then has the task of answering one question in writing, with full agreement, and in a way they imagine the person might answer. Papers are changed until all questions are answered. Then encourage each group to share their questions and the answers they received.

One final point about good discussions: most students can easily hear the teacher, but depending on room arrangement, it can often be difficult for students to hear each other. Have you ever tried to follow a press conference on television when you could not hear the question, only the answer? Our response ranges from frustration to giving up listening. Be sure to repeat student answers if any class member can't hear it.

I'm sure that every reader has either a variation of these discussion methods or some great ones of your own. I hope that many of you are willing to add yours to my humble list. Let's create a dynamic discussion of ideas in this space.

## SOME RESEARCH RELATED TO ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION

**The Grammar-Translation Method.** The grammar-translation method was the standard way languages were taught in schools from the 17th to the 19th century. Despite attempts at reform from Roger Ascham, Montaigne, Comenius and John Locke, no other methods gained any significant popularity during this time.

Later, theorists such as Viotor, Passy, Berlitz, and Jespersen began to talk about what a new kind of foreign language instruction needed, shedding light on what the grammar translation was missing. They supported teaching the language, not about the language, and teaching in the target language, emphasizing speech as well as text. Through grammar translation, students lacked an active role in the classroom, often correcting their own work and strictly following the textbook.

The grammar-translation method is still in use today in hybrid forms in many different countries, including many parts of India.

Grammar-translation classes are usually conducted in the students' native language. Grammar rules are learned deductively; students learn grammar rules by rote, and then practice the rules by doing grammar drills and translating sentences to and from the target language. More attention is paid to the form of the sentences being translated than to their content. When students reach more advanced levels of achievement, they may translate entire texts from the target language. Tests often consist of the translation of classical texts.

There is not usually any listening or speaking practice, and very little attention is placed on pronunciation or any communicative aspects of the language. The skill exercised is reading, and then only in the context of translation.

**The Direct Method** was an answer to the dissatisfaction with the older grammar translation method, which teaches students grammar and vocabulary through direct translations and thus focuses on the written language.

There was an attempt to set up conditions that imitate mother tongue acquisition, which is why the beginnings of these attempts were called the *natural method*. At the turn of the

18th and 19th centuries, Sauveur and Franke proposed that language teaching should be undertaken within the target-language system, which was the first stimulus for the rise of the direct method.

The direct method achieved worldwide publicity through Berlitz, since Maximilian Berlitz had created a form of this method. An increase in travel in the second half of the 19th century created the need to speak languages. It was noted (not for the first time) that children learn to speak with no reference to grammar at all. The Direct Method put proficiency in speaking the language at the top of the agenda and was the first of many 'natural' methods that claim to teach a second language the way first languages are learned. Lessons were taught exclusively in the target language. Teachers were usually native speakers and used a lot of demonstration, pictures, gestures, and association of ideas to make meaning clear. The goal was to build up communication skills through question and answer drills between teacher and student, and there was a carefully graded progression from simple grammar structures to more complex. Grammar was taught through the use of examples chosen to help the student 'work out' the rules and there was a focus on everyday vocabulary. The role of the teachers was very important as they were expected to go to any length to avoid translation, and there was very little use of textbooks or the written word in class. In class, there was plenty of drilling and correction, no translation, and no rules. The Direct Method was influential into the 1950's and beyond. Its principles are still significant in language teaching today, but there is now much more emphasis on student-centered instruction, and a greater understanding of how to build communicative competence, other than through drilling correct forms.

The audio-lingual method was developed in an attempt to address some of the perceived weaknesses of the direct method.

**The Audio lingual Method.** Charles Fries, the director of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan, the first of its kind in the United States, believed that learning structure, or grammar was the starting point for the student. In other words, it was the students' job to orally recite the basic sentence patterns and grammatical structures. The students were only given "enough vocabulary to make such drills possible." (Richards, J.C.

et-al. 1986). Fries later included principles for behavioral psychology, as developed by B.F. Skinner, into this method.

In the 1960s both Grammar-Translation and the Direct Method were questioned as applied linguistics became a mature discipline. US entry into the Second World War created the need to teach oral proficiency in foreign languages quickly to troops. Behavioral psychology also influenced the development - speech was just another habit to be acquired. No rules, no needs to even comprehend (at least not at first). Dialogues and drills form the basis of classroom activities according to the Audio lingual Method: dialogues are used for repetition and memorization, and then specific grammatical patterns in the dialogue are selected and become the focus of between 10 and 15 possible types of drill exercise. While the role of the students is almost entirely reactive, and they have little control over the content, pace, or style of learning, the role of the teacher is central and active. The teacher models, controls the direction and pace of the lesson, and monitors responses to correct all mistakes. The teacher would focus on pronunciation, intonation and fluency, and would correct immediately. Principles of Audio lingualism can still be identified in the type of “learn-in-a-month” programs that promise “You listen, you repeat, you understand!” Today there is greater understanding of the student’s role in learning, and the need for real communication as a key aspect in language learning.

Fall from popularity: In the late 1950s, the theoretical underpinnings of the method were questioned by linguists such as Noam Chomsky, who pointed out the limitations of structural linguistics. The relevance of behaviorist psychology to language learning was also questioned, most famously by Chomsky's review of B.F. Skinner's *Verbal Behavior* in 1959. The audio-lingual method was thus deprived of its scientific credibility and it was only a matter of time before the effectiveness of the method itself was questioned.

In 1964, Wilga Rivers released a critique of the method in her book, *The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher*. Subsequent research by others, inspired by her book, produced results which showed explicit grammatical instruction in the mother language to be more productive. These developments, coupled with the emergence of humanist pedagogy led to a rapid decline in the popularity of audio-lingualism.

Philip Smith's study from 1965-1969, termed the Pennsylvania Project, provided significant proof that audio-lingual methods were less effective than a more traditional cognitive approach involving the learner's first language.

In the 1970s the humanistic values that informed the times led to a series of methods that focused more fully on the learners' needs and abilities:

**The Silent Way** is a language-teaching method created by Caleb Gattegno that makes extensive use of silence as a teaching technique. It is not usually considered a mainstream method in language education.<sup>[1]</sup> It was first introduced in Gattegno's book *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools: The Silent Way* in 1963.<sup>[2]</sup> Gattegno was skeptical of the mainstream language education of the time, and conceived of the method as a special case of his general theories of education.

The method emphasizes the autonomy of the learner; the teacher's role is to monitor the students' efforts, and the students are encouraged to have an active role in learning the language. Pronunciation is seen as fundamental; beginning students start their study with pronunciation, and much time is spent practicing it each lesson. The Silent Way uses a structural syllabus, and structures are constantly reviewed and recycled. The choice of vocabulary is important, with functional and versatile words seen as the best. Translation and rote repetition are avoided and the language is usually practiced in meaningful contexts. Evaluation is carried out by observation, and the teacher may never set a formal test.

The teacher uses silence for multiple purposes in the Silent Way. It is used to focus students' attention, to elicit student responses, and to encourage them to correct their own errors. Even though teachers are often silent, they are still active; they will commonly use techniques such as mouthing words and using hand gestures to help the students with their pronunciation. Teachers will also encourage students to help their peers.

Silent Way teachers use specialized teaching materials. One of the hallmarks of the method is the use of Cuisenaire rods, which can be used for anything from introducing simple commands to representing abstract objects such as clocks and floor plans. The method also

makes use of color association to help teach pronunciation; there is a sound-color chart which is used to teach the language sounds, colored word charts which are used to teach sentences, and colored Fidel charts which are used to teach spelling.

**Community language learning (CLL)** is an approach in which students work together to develop what aspects of a language they would like to learn. The teacher acts as a counselor and a paraphraser, while the learner acts as a collaborator, although sometimes this role can be changed.

The CLL method was developed by Charles A. Curran, a professor of psychology at Loyola University in Chicago. This method refers to two roles: that of the know-er (teacher) and student (learner). Also the method draws on the counseling metaphor and refers to these respective roles as a counselor and a client. According to Curran, a counselor helps a client understand his or her own problems better by 'capturing the essence of the clients concern ...[and] relating [the client's] affect to cognition...;' in effect, understanding the client and responding in a detached yet considerate manner.

To restate, the counselor blends what the client feels and what he is learning in order to make the experience a meaningful one. Often, this supportive role requires greater energy expenditure than an 'average' teacher.

The foreign language learner's tasks, according to CLL are (1) to apprehend the sound system of the language (2) assign fundamental meanings to individual lexical units and (3) construct a basic grammar.

In these three steps, the CLL resembles the Natural Approach to language teaching in which a learner is not expected to speak until he has achieved some basic level of comprehension.

There are 5 stages of development in this method.

1. "Birth" stage: feeling of security and belonging are established.
2. As the learners' ability improve, they achieve a measure of independence from the parent.
3. Learners can speak independently.

4. The learners are secure enough to take criticism and being corrected.
5. The child becomes an adult and becomes the know-er.

**Suggestopedia** is a teaching method developed by the Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov. It is used in different fields, but mostly in the field of foreign language learning. Lozanov has claimed that by using this method a teacher's students can learn a language approximately three to five times as quickly as through conventional teaching methods.

Suggestopedia has been called a "pseudo-science". It strongly depends on the trust that students develop towards the method by simply believing that it works.

The theory applied positive suggestion in teaching when it was developed in the 1970s. However, as the method improved, it has focused more on "desuggestive learning" and now is often called "desuggestopedia." Suggestopedia is a portmanteau of the words "suggestion" and "pedagogy". A common misconception is to link "suggestion" to "hypnosis". However, Lozanov intended it in the sense of offering or proposing, emphasising student choice.

The intended purpose of Suggestopedia was to enhance learning by tapping into the power of suggestion. Lozanov claims in his website, Suggestology and Suggestopedy, that "suggestopedia is a system for liberation"; liberation from the "preliminary negative concept regarding the difficulties in the process of learning" that is established throughout their life in the society. Desuggestopedia focuses more on liberation as Lozanov describes "desuggestive learning" as "free, without a mildest pressure, liberation of previously suggested programs to restrict intelligence and spontaneous acquisition of knowledge, skills and habits." The method implements this by working not only on the conscious level of human mind but also on the subconscious level, the mind's reserves.

**Total Physical Response** was also developed in the 1970's. TPR is a language-teaching method developed by James Asher, a professor emeritus of psychology at San José State University. It is based on the coordination of language and physical movement. In TPR,

instructors give commands to students in the target language, and students respond with whole-body actions.

The method is an example of the comprehension approach to language teaching. Listening serves a dual purpose; it is both a means of understanding messages in the language being learned, and a means of learning the structure of the language itself. Grammar is not taught explicitly, but is induced from the language input.

Asher developed TPR as a result of his experiences observing young children learning their first language. He noticed that interactions between parents and children often took the form of speech from the parent followed by a physical response from the child. Asher made three hypotheses based on his observations: first, that language is learned primarily by listening; second, that language learning must engage the right hemisphere of the brain; and third, that learning language should not involve any stress.

Total physical response is often used alongside other methods and techniques. It is popular with beginners and with young learners, although it can be used with students of all levels and all age groups.

Principles: Total physical response is an example of the comprehension approach to language teaching. Methods in the comprehension approach emphasize the importance of listening on language development, and do not require spoken output in the early stages of learning. In total physical response, students are not forced to speak. Instead, teachers wait until students acquire enough language through listening that they start to speak spontaneously. At the beginning stages of instruction students can respond to the instructor in their native language.

While the majority of class time in total physical response is spent on listening comprehension, the ultimate goal of the method is to develop oral fluency. Asher sees developing listening comprehension skills as the most efficient way of developing spoken language skills.

Lessons in TPR are organized around grammar, and in particular around the verb. Instructors issue commands based on the verbs and vocabulary to be learned in that lesson. However, the primary focus in lessons is on meaning, which distinguishes TPR from other grammar-based methods such as grammar-translation.



Grammar is not explicitly taught, but is learned by induction. Students are expected to subconsciously acquire the grammatical structure of the language through exposure to spoken language input, in addition to decoding the messages in the input to find their meaning. This approach to listening is called *code breaking*.

Total physical response is both a teaching technique and a philosophy of language teaching. Teachers do not have to limit themselves to TPR techniques to teach according to the principles of the total physical response method. Because the students are only expected to listen and not to speak, the teacher has the sole responsibility for deciding what input students hear.

**The Communicative Approach** grew out of sociolinguistics in the 1970s and the view that there is more to communication than just grammar and vocabulary. Communication involves ‘communicative competence’ – the ability to make yourself understood in socially appropriate ways. The claim is that L2 is learned best when the students try to communicate, i.e., to say something that they really want or need to say. Nowadays most teachers and students take the need for real communication in class for granted, but English as a Foreign Language (EFL) history clearly shows that this has not always been the case!

Within the Communicative Approach itself the precise role of communication is debated. The so-called ‘weak’ form of the approach sees communicative activities as opportunities for students to practice new language and develop fluency. A weak version of language teaching using this approach might simply mean adding more opportunities to communicate to a traditional grammar based curriculum.

The ‘strong’ Communicative Approach on the other hand states that language is acquired through communication. It is not just a question of using communicative activities to activate passive knowledge of the language that has been pre-taught at an earlier stage. The belief is that communicative confidence only develops if students are thrown in at the deep end and required to carry out tasks that demand real-life communication. Rather than a communicative activity being a chance for students to show what they can do or to use

what they have learned, it is through working on a task that the students learn what they need.

It is impossible to make sense of current EFL teaching, especially in the west, without reference to the Communicative Approach. The weak Communicative Approach has had the most far-reaching impact on the EFL world, probably because its acceptance meant adapting rather than rejecting existing materials and methodology. The strong Communicative Approach has been very influential in the development of Task Based Learning.

**Natural Approach** is a method of language teaching developed by Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It aims to foster naturalistic language acquisition in a classroom setting, and to this end it emphasizes communication, and places decreased importance on conscious grammar study and explicit correction of student errors. Efforts are also made to make the learning environment as stress-free as possible. In the natural approach, language output is not forced, but allowed to emerge spontaneously after students have attended to large amounts of comprehensible language input.

The natural approach has become closely associated with Krashen's monitor model, and it is often seen as an application of the theory to language teaching. Despite this perception, there are some differences, particularly Terrell's view that some degree of conscious grammar study can be beneficial. The syllabus focuses on activities which Terrell sees as promoting subconscious language acquisition. He divides these activities into four main areas: content activities, such as learning a new subject in the target language; activities which focus on personalizing language, such as students sharing their favorite music; games; and problem-solving activities.

The natural approach enjoyed much popularity with language teachers, particularly with Spanish teachers in the United States. Markee (1997) puts forward four reasons for the success of the method. First, she says that the method was simple to understand, despite the complex nature of the research involved. Second, it was also compatible with the knowledge about second-language acquisition at the time. Third, Krashen stressed that teachers should be free to try the method, and that it could go alongside their existing

classroom practices. Finally, Krashen demonstrated the method to many teachers' groups, so that they could see how it would work in practice.

**Immersion Teaching.** Krashen's acquisition theory also provides a rationale for Immersion Teaching, which is an approach that has developed to meet the linguistic needs of people who live in bilingual communities, and Content Teaching, which is the idea that language can be learned through studying another subject like cookery. Within the Immersion approach, students study subjects in both languages from the day they start school, often with no formal language teaching at all.

**Language immersion**, or simply **immersion**, is a method of teaching a second language in which the learners' second language (L2) is the medium of classroom instruction. Through this method, learners study school subjects, such as math, science, and social studies, in their L2. The main purpose of this method is to foster bilingualism, in other words, to develop learners' communicative competence or language proficiency in their L2 in addition to their first or native language (L1). Additional goals are the cognitive advantages to bilingualism.

Immersion programs vary from one country or region to another because of language conflict, historical antecedents, language policy or public opinion. Moreover, immersion programs take on different formats based on: class time spent in L2, participation by native speaking (L1) students, learner age, school subjects taught in L2, and even the L2 itself as an additional and separate subject. The first modern language immersion programs appeared in Canada in the 1960s. Middle-income Anglophone (English-speaking) parents there convinced educators to establish an experimental French immersion program enabling their children 'to appreciate the traditions and culture of French-speaking Canadians as well as English-speaking Canadians'.

**Task-based language learning (TBLL)**, also known as **task-based language teaching (TBLT)** or **task-based instruction (TBI)** focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. Such tasks can

include visiting a doctor, conducting an interview, or calling customer service for help. Assessment is primarily based on task outcome (in other words the appropriate completion of real world tasks) rather than on accuracy of prescribed language forms. This makes TBLL especially popular for developing target language fluency and student confidence. As such TBLL can be considered a branch of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

TBLL was popularized by N. Prabhu while working in Bangalore, India. Prabhu noticed that his students could learn language just as easily with a non-linguistic problem as when they were concentrating on linguistic questions. Major scholars who have done research in this area include Teresa P. Pica and Michael Long

According to Jane Willis, TBLL consists of the pre-task, the task cycle, and the language focus.

The components of a Task are:

1. Goals and objectives
2. Input
3. Activities
4. Teacher role
5. learner role
6. Settings

The core of the lesson or project is, as the name suggests, the task. Teachers and curriculum developers should bear in mind that any attention to form, i.e. grammar or vocabulary, increases the likelihood that learners may be distracted from the task itself and become preoccupied with detecting and correcting errors and/or looking up language in dictionaries and grammar references. Although there may be several effective frameworks for creating a task-based learning lesson, here is a basic outline:

### **Pre-task**

In the pre-task, the teacher will present what will be expected of the students in the task phase. Additionally, in the "weak" form of TBLL, the teacher may prime the students with key vocabulary or grammatical constructs, although this can mean that the activity is, in effect, more similar to the more traditional present-practise-produce (PPP) paradigm. In

"strong" task-based learning lessons, learners are responsible for selecting the appropriate language for any given context themselves. The instructor may also present a model of the task by either doing it themselves or by presenting picture, audio, or video demonstrating the task.

### **Task**

During the task phase, the students perform the task, typically in small groups, although this is dependent on the type of activity. And unless the teacher plays a particular role in the task, then the teacher's role is typically limited to one of an observer or counselor—thus the reason for it being a more student-centered methodology.

### **Review**

If learners have created tangible linguistic products, e.g. text, montage, presentation, audio or video recording, learners can review each others' work and offer constructive feedback. If a task is set to extend over longer periods of time, e.g. weeks, and includes iterative cycles of constructive activity followed by review, TBLL can be seen as analogous to Project-based learning.

## **BENEFITS OF INTEGRATING ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION**

According to Ma. Socorro C. Bacay, Senior Instructor of the school of management and information technology, De la salle University, College of St. Benilde, Philippines, the benefits of promote discussion activities in class are many; In terms of encouraging students to take a more active role in their learning, few strategies outweigh the benefits of class discussions. When one focuses on the potential rewards of effective class discussions, one will in all likelihood, see the great potential looming behind a well-planned class discussion and reap the corresponding rewards that come with it—a group of students learning from each other in ways that extend beyond the social and academic.

When students participate in an ideally open-minded class discussion, they learn to express their ideas and listen to their classmates' ideas as well, thus enriching their learning

experiences through this exchange. Not only do such discussions serve as an avenue for students to express criticism without being offensive, but they also train the students to accept criticism without being offended.

Classroom discussions that allow students to discuss their lessons with their peers help the students understand and apply what they have learned. Classroom discussions also provide feedback that may prove valuable to the teacher. By encouraging students to ask questions and give their comments or responses, the teacher can gauge from the responses, whether the students have understood the lesson, how they have understood it, and if necessary, what kind of clarifications or corrections need to be made to rectify any miscommunications in the lesson.

The teacher would do best to set the tone at the start of the course, to set guidance and direction. On the first day of class, the teacher makes it clear to the students that they are expected to play an active role in their learning, and one such way would be to actively participate in class discussions, thus implying that attention to the lesson and preparation for classroom discussions is necessary.

It may be difficult at first to engage students in class discussions. The fear of social evaluation is inherent in most of us. Many students may refuse to ask questions for fear of being thought 'stupid' or slow. In a diverse class, some students fear ridicule for their accents. The teacher, therefore, must create a 'safe' environment, with the understanding that each person is respected for his/her uniqueness. The teacher, as a good role model, is responsible for creating an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance of each person in the class. As the course progresses, the students become more confident of themselves and less anxious of social evaluation.

Being aware that the teacher expects students to actively participate in class discussions makes the student pay close attention to what is being discussed. To help ensure that students come to class prepared (i.e. they have read about the topic for discussion), it is helpful to ask each student to turn in one essay question to be answered in class. The question may require further explanation of a topic or how a topic may be practically

applied. Oftentimes, the teacher may find some of the students' questions very interesting for group discussions and some questions might even qualify as an exam question.

The physical set up of the classroom may pose a challenge to class discussions when everyone is facing the teacher who is standing on the platform upfront. Some teachers might find it helpful to move around the classroom, as it gives the teacher a chance to be sensitive and attentive to all students regardless of their seat location. Furthermore, by moving around, students would follow the teachers' movements with their eyes and anyone who asks a question, argues a point or gives an example to a particular issue, makes his/her statement to the whole class and not just to the teacher.

To better facilitate the exchange of ideas among students and to break the monotony, it is also helpful to schedule a group discussion within the class period. Students may be allowed to choose their groups or be assigned to groups. The group composition could range from two to five, depending on the preference of the teacher. To ensure each member's active participation, it is advisable for the teachers to assign in each group, a facilitator, a reporter and a recorder. These positions may be rotated among the members of the group.

The teacher spends the first 20–30 minutes of the class presenting the lesson material. The next 20–30 minutes may be allotted to a group discussion where each member is expected to air his/her view of the lesson and argue for or against a topic presented by the teacher. In the closing minutes of the period, the class listens to the summary reports of the reporters from each group and the teacher synthesises the reports and brings the topic to a conclusion.

A class session that allows for class discussions naturally takes longer than a class in which the teacher simply delivers the lectures and tests students' knowledge periodically. For this reason, class discussions are sometimes curtailed due to time constraints, or simply sacrificed for expediency. A teacher has a syllabus to cover in a specified term or semester period. Unfortunately, by not allotting time for class discussions, the teaching-learning process may suffer.

Nowadays Thanks to technology, class discussions can now be done online—beyond the confines of the traditional classroom. One argument for such a medium of discussions is that students, who may have been diffident in class, will have the chance and opportunity to participate in a ‘less threatening’ environment. Online discussions, therefore allow less assertive or aggressive students an equal opportunity to participate. This is also a good medium for students who are not verbal or who prefer to put their ideas in writing, having completely ruminated on their ideas. In an online discussion, the teacher may pose a probing question that students will need to think about or read about in preparation for the next class meeting.

Clearly, whether the discussion is conducted in the classroom or via an extension of the classroom, the teacher plays a central role in the effective conveyance of the discussions. The teacher needs to be comfortably cognizant of his/her field so that s/he does not feel intimidated when students ask questions, give comments or responses. Reasonable preparations should also be made so that questions or issues for discussion are clearly understood by students. In addition, the teacher must be a good facilitator, ensuring that the discussions are not confined to a few students. By creating an atmosphere where students feel safe in sharing their views, by allocating time within a class session for group discussions, by moving around the classroom and calling on different students to participate, by asking students to provide a discussion questions for the next meeting, or by providing a mode of discussion outside the classroom, the teacher creates an environment where teaching-learning interactions are enhanced, where students take an active role in their learning, and where the teacher’s teaching experience continues to be enriched.

### **ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION VS. TRADITIONAL SPEAKING ACTIVITIES**

Sometimes traditional activities are just focused in a constant repetitions of new and different kinds of words, but maybe the most important problem here is that students would get the custom of just repeat, and then, they wouldn’t be conscious that the most important



fact if they want to learn a foreign language as English is to break the ice and start practice more and more, for acquiring more fluency and also new vocabulary.

Class discussion activities are useful for this reason, making the pupils talk, and get of them their own ideas about an specific topic, at the same time they practice and know more about the language they are learning and fluency and the end of the course would be something that they are going to have in a very easy way.

### **INCREASING THE USE OF ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION**

Principally this is focused in the management of the student participation, how the student feels the wish of being part of the class, while increasing participation is an obvious goal in courses that include frequent discussions and small-group work, it is also important in a lecture course. In short, if only a few students participate by volunteering answers, asking questions, or contributing to discussions, class sessions become to some extent a lost opportunity to assess and promote learning. We can improve student participation in our course by devoting time and thought to shaping the environment and planning each class session. Furthermore, the way in which you interact, both verbally and non-verbally, communicates to students your attitude about participation.

Ideally, the goal of increasing participation is not to have every student participate in the same way or at the same rate. Instead, it is to create an environment in which all participants have the opportunity to learn and in which the class explores issues and ideas in depth, from a variety of viewpoints. Some students will raise their voices more than others; this variation is a result of differences in learning preferences as well as differences in personalities. For example, some students who do not speak often in class are *reflective learners*, who typically develop ideas and questions in their minds before speaking; others are shy students who feel uncomfortable speaking in front of groups (at least initially). Many students who frequently volunteer to contribute are *active learners*, who typically think while they speak. The instructor's goal is to create conditions that enable students of various learning preferences and personalities to contribute. To reach this goal, we need to

take extra steps to encourage quiet students to speak up and, occasionally, ask the more verbose students to hold back from commenting in order to give others a chance.

As an alternative or supplement to lecture, classroom discussions offer students the opportunity to actively participate in the education process. Studies and experience suggest that when students are more involved in class, they retain more information and hone their critical thinking skills. Although many instructors wish to increase classroom discussion, integrating and evaluating student discussions can be difficult, but need not be as time consuming as some may suggest.

**1. Learn students' names:** Students are more willing to speak openly when they feel comfortable in the classroom, and when they feel a personal connection to their instructor.

**2. Have students respond to your questions, not comments:** A question allows for a number of different possible responses, whereas a comment possesses a definitive quality, especially coming from the professor, which discourages creative student responses.

**3. Keep discussion focused:** There is always the risk for the conversation to move off-topic. It is important to have educational "goals" for any discussion (i.e. what you wish to accomplish by the end of the conversation). When you feel the discussion moves beyond your stated goals, steer the conversation back by introducing new questions and restating previous questions and topics.

**4. Include as many students as possible in the discussion:** Most classes have a few students that dominate class discussions and conversations. It is important to discourage talkative students from monopolizing the discussion. Use low-ball questions (questions anyone—whether they have done the assigned reading or not—can answer) to engage less vocal students in discussions. Once you involve the student in the discussion with a low-ball question, you can work from their up to higher-order/level questions.

**5. Maintain an environment of positive reinforcement:** There are numerous occasions when students are incorrect in their answers or their contributions. However, to keep those students active in discussion, you must always demonstrate the importance of their

contributions and correct them in a tactful manner. Explain how their answer would be right in a different context, or how you can see how they arrived at that conclusion, but how it's not optimum for the case at hand.

**6. Add incentives for classroom participation:** Adding incentives to student contributions encourages them to participate in classroom discussions. Evaluating students' contributions, however, may present possible difficulties. There are many remedies to evaluating contributions, which include a tally sheet that records when students contribute or assigning students to lead classroom discussions. Many instructors simply build a participation component into their syllabi.

**7. Use written discussion questions to spur thinking:** Students feel more comfortable expressing ideas and answering questions if they have some time to think about them first. So, give students five minutes or so to write answers to discussion questions, and maybe another five minutes to share and reflect on them with one or more of their classmates, before coming together as a class to discuss. This will alleviate most of the intimidation factor that contributes to low participation in class discussions. Discussion questions can also be posted online the night before, or distributed at the end of class in preparation for your next meeting.

**8. Place responsibility on students themselves:** Toward the beginning of the semester, ask students to write about and discuss what qualities mark good and bad discussions. Use their papers and discussion to draft a set of goals for classroom discussion. Write these goals up and distribute them to the class.

**9. Solicit Student Evaluations:** Have students evaluate the quality of the overall class discussion mid-semester. Share with students the results of this informal survey, as well as how you plan to augment discussion in the latter half of the course by taking into consideration their comments and ideas about the topics during classes.

**10. Develop Sense of Community:** Put chairs in a semi-circle; leave room for announcements at the beginning of class; interact with students outside of class; send class links to articles you find on the web that relate to the material you are currently covering;

encourage online discussions and group meetings outside of class. And, always remember that laughter aids learning. Asking students about their other courses, their summer/holiday plans, and their mental state during midterms and finals is an effective method for showing students that you care about them as human beings, and that you are concerned with their development as students.

**11. Ask different kinds or levels of questions:** Solicit input from students with different abilities and learning styles (e.g. requests for description, analysis, comparison, prediction, justification, generalization, application, and simple information).

**12. Stick with it:** The first attempt to promote classroom discussion may be a bit rocky. If so, that is not a reason to abandon the pedagogical effort. It will take time for a rapport to develop and for students to feel comfortable in the classroom environment.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INCORPORATION OF ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE CLASS DISCUSSION TO THE CURRICULUM**

Aldous Huxley (1958) once wrote, "Language has made possible man's progress from animality to civilization" (p. 167). In doing so, he effectively summarized the importance of language in humans' lives. It is through language that we are civilized. One could argue that nothing is more important to the human species than that. But Huxley wasn't done there; he continued by explaining the value of language:

Language permits its users to pay attention to things, persons and events, even when the things and persons are absent and the events are not taking place. Language gives definition to our memories and, by translating experiences into symbols, converts the immediacy of craving or abhorrence, or hatred or love, into fixed principles of feeling and conduct. (p. 168)

Language, in other words, is how we think. It's how we process information and remember. It's our operating system. Vygotsky (1962) suggested that thinking develops into words in a number of phases, moving from imaging to inner speech to inner speaking to speech.

Tracing this idea backward, speech—talk—is the representation of thinking. As such, it seems reasonable to suggest that classrooms should be filled with talk, given that we want them filled with thinking!

Academic discourse has always been part of the classroom. Teachers have long understood the importance of using language to transmit ideas. In the early history of education, teachers talked for most of the instructional day while students were quiet and completed their assigned tasks. Students were expected to memorize facts and be able to recite them. Remember that in most classrooms of the late 1800s, the age range was very diverse. In the same classroom, teachers might have students who were 5 or 6 years old and others who were 15 to 18. Talking by students was not the norm. In fact, students were punished for talking in class, even if the talk was academic.

Over time, educators realized that students had to use the language if they were to become better educated. As a result, well-intentioned educators called on individual students to respond to questions. Teachers expected them to use academic language in their individual responses, and as students spoke, teachers would assess their knowledge.

Wilkinson (1965) introduced the term *oracy* as a way for people to think about the role that oral language plays in literacy development, defining it as "the ability to express oneself coherently and to communicate freely with others by word of mouth." Wilkinson noted that the development of oracy would lead to increased skill in reading and writing as users of the language became increasingly proficient—as James Britton (1983) put it so eloquently, "Reading and writing float on a sea of talk" (p. 11).

Put simply, talk, or oracy, is the foundation of literacy. This should not come as a surprise to anyone. We have all observed that young children listen and speak well before they can read or write. Children learn to manipulate their environment with spoken words well before they learn to do so with written words. It seems that this pattern is developmental in nature and that our brains are wired for language. Young children learn that language is power and that they can use words to express their needs, wants, and desires.

The problem with applying this developmental approach to English language learners and language learning in the classroom is that our students don't have years to learn to speak before they need to write. Historically, teachers did not introduce English language learners to print until they had developed their speaking skills—a misguided approach that does not take into account the fact that, in developing their primary language, English language learners have already learned much about language, including the role that it plays in interacting with others. At the other end of the spectrum of instructional practice, many teachers did not provide any oral language instruction because they believed that their students needed to develop reading proficiency (and make adequate yearly progress) as soon as possible.

Instead of this either/or approach, English language learners need access to instruction that recognizes the symbiotic relationship among the four domains of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Clearly, students must reach high levels of proficiency in reading and writing in order to be successful in school, at a university, and in virtually any career they may choose. We know that it takes time to reach those levels. We know that opportunities for students to talk in class also take time. So, given the little instructional time we have with them, how can we justify devoting a significant amount of that time to talk? We would argue, How can we *not* provide that time to talk? *Telling* students what you want them to know is certainly a faster way of addressing standards. But *telling* does not necessarily equate to *learning*. If indeed "reading and writing float on a sea of talk," then the time students spend engaged in academic conversations with their classmates is time well spent in developing not only oracy but precisely the high level of literacy that is our goal. In Chapter 3 we will explore how we can maximize use of instructional time to that end.

Classroom talk is frequently limited and is used to check comprehension rather than develop thinking. Consistent with the example from the beginning of the chapter, researchers have found that teachers dominate classroom talk. For example, Lingard, Hayes, and Mills (2003) noted that in classrooms with higher numbers of students living in poverty, teachers talk more and students talk less. We also know that English language learners in many classrooms are asked easier questions or no questions at all and thus rarely

have to talk in the classroom (Guan Eng Ho, 2005). Several decades ago, Flanders (1970) reported that teachers of high-achieving students spent about 55 percent of the class time talking, compared with 80 percent for teachers of low-achieving students.

In addition to the sheer volume of teacher talk in the classroom, researchers have identified the types of talk that are more and less helpful. For example, Durkin's (1978/1979) seminal research on comprehension instruction confirmed that teachers rely primarily on questioning to check for understanding. Questioning is an important tool that teachers have, but students also need opportunities for dialogue if they are to learn. And, unfortunately, most questioning uses an initiate–respond–evaluate cycle (Cazden, 1988) in which teachers initiate a question, a student responds, and then the teacher evaluates the answer.

In sum, talk is used in most classrooms but could be more effectively used to develop students' thinking. Teachers must take into account their English language learners' current proficiency levels when planning instruction.

One of the most important things to recognize about teaching English language learners is that they are not a monolithic group. They differ in a number of important ways, including the following:

**Linguistic.** Although Spanish is the most common second language in the United States, students in a given school district might speak more than 100 different languages. These languages differ in their pronunciation patterns, orthographic representations, and histories—and thus in the ease with which students can transfer their prior knowledge about language to English.

**Proficiency in the home language.** Students who speak the same language and are in the same grade may have very different levels of academic language proficiency in their home language depending on such factors as age and prior education. The development of a formal first language facilitates learning in additional languages.

**Generation.** There are recognized differences in language proficiency for students of different generations living in the United States. First and second generations of English

language learners differ in significant ways, including the ability to use English at home. Because protracted English language learners born outside the United States attempt to straddle their old world and the new world in which they live, they experience greater difficulty in developing English proficiency.

**Number of languages spoken.** Some students enroll in schools having mastered more than one language already and thus have gained a linguistic flexibility that can aid in learning additional languages. Others have spoken one language at home for years, and their exposure to English is a new learning experience.

**Motivation.** Students differ in their motivation to learn English depending on their migration, immigration, or birthplace. Immigrant families leave their homelands for a variety of reasons—political and economic are perhaps the most common. Many of our students have left loved ones behind, along with a familiar and cherished way of life. Some even hope to return when a war is ended or when the family has enough money to better their life in their home country. These students may not feel a great need to become proficient in a language they don't intend to use for very long.

**Poverty.** Living in poverty and experiencing food insecurity have a profound impact on learning in general and language learning in particular. Simply said, when students' basic needs are met, they are more likely to excel in school.

**Personality.** Some students are naturally outgoing and verbal; others are shy or prefer more independent activities. Some are risk takers who are not afraid to make mistakes; others want their utterances to be perfect. These differences in personality can lead to differences in the rate at which students gain proficiency in listening and speaking or reading and writing.

### **Levels of Proficiency**

Having acknowledged various differences among students, we also recognize the need to cluster them into levels of proficiency for instructional purposes. There are a number of ways to do this, but we have chosen the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other



Languages (TESOL) levels: Starting, Emerging, Developing, Expanding, and Bridging (TESOL, 2006). Figure 1.1 provides an overview of each of these proficiency levels, and they are summarized here as well:

**Figure 1.1. Performance Definitions of the Five Levels of English Language Proficiency**

<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>
<b>Starting</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Expanding</b>	<b>Bridging</b>
English language learners can understand and use ...				
-language to communicate with others around basic concrete needs.	- language to draw on simple and routine experiences to communicate with others.	-language to communicate with others on familiar matters regularly encountered.	-language in both concrete and abstract situations and apply language to new experiences.	-a wide range of longer oral and written texts and recognize implicit meaning.
-high-frequency words and memorized chunks of language.	-high-frequency and some general academic vocabulary and expressions.	-general and some specialized academic vocabulary and expressions.	-specialized and some technical academic vocabulary and expressions.	-technical academic vocabulary and expressions.
-words, phrases, or chunks of language.	-phrases or short sentences in oral or written communication.	-expanded sentences in oral or written communication.	-a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral and written	-a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral
-pictorial, graphic, or	-oral or written language, making errors	-oral or written language, making errors		

nonverbal representation of language.	that often impede the meaning of the communication.	that may impede the communication but retain much of its meaning.	communication. -oral or written language, making minimal errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication.	or written discourse. -oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers.
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**Starting.** At this entry level, students have virtually no understanding of English and do not use English to communicate. They might respond to simple commands or questions, often nonverbally. Over time, they begin to imitate the oral language of those around them and will speak in one-word responses. Reading in English is very difficult, but students might recognize sight words or words that are similar to those in their home language. Pictorial representations are helpful, as are physical responses. When students who are starting to learn English write, they exhibit a number of unconventional spellings and grammatical errors.

**Emerging.** As students are introduced to academic English appropriate for their age, their language emerges. Students at this level begin to understand phrases and simple sentences. They begin to communicate their needs, wants, and desires, especially using familiar and often memorized phrases or word groupings. In addition, they begin to speak in sentences but often make syntax errors in doing so. When they read and write in English, they can recognize familiar and high-frequency words. They can also copy information but make errors in grammar that interfere with effective communication.

**Developing.** During this phase, students add considerably to their vocabulary. They use English spontaneously and are generally understood but often experience difficulty expressing feelings and other abstract ideas and continue to make grammar errors. As a

group, they continue to produce simple sentences but understand sentences that are much more complex. They read increasingly complex texts and write more coherent information. Although their writing typically contains a number of errors and nonconventional forms, students in this place are able to demonstrate their thinking and understanding of the tasks at hand.

**Expanding.** At this level, students' language skills are sufficient for most daily communication tasks. Although they make occasional structural errors, the majority of their communication is clear. They participate in discussions and use English in unfamiliar settings, though idioms and other figurative language forms may present a challenge. Generally, students at this level can read well enough to gain information from a text and write fairly independently; however, their writing is typically scored below grade level because they use less sophisticated text structures and vocabulary.

**Bridging.** At this advanced level of proficiency, students generally perform well across the language domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Their speech becomes increasingly fluent, and they can discuss a variety of topics with ease. They can do grade-level work but may need some guidance for technical writing and reading.

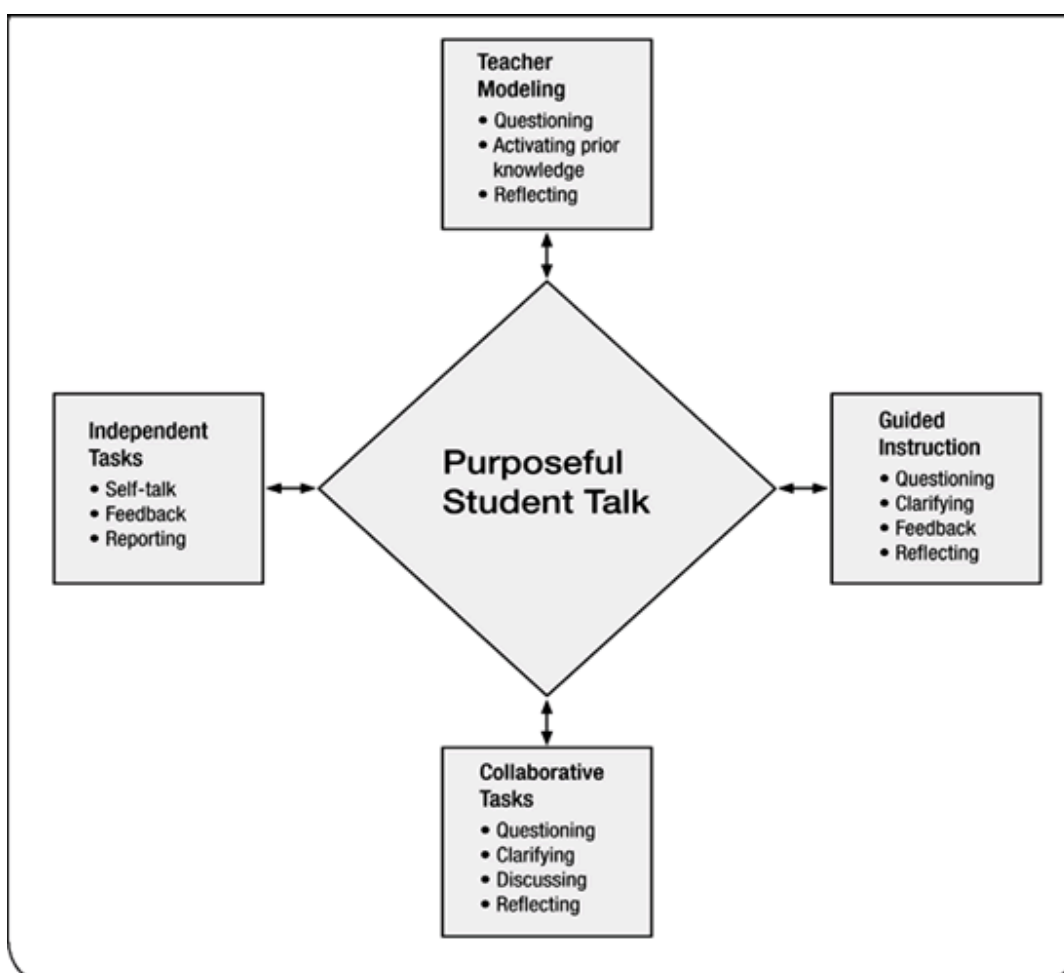
After considering each of these proficiency levels, it's easy to see the importance of talking. At each level, the development of oral language is related to developing skills in written language. Equally important is the fact that reading and writing are not deferred while speech develops; rather, students are reading, writing, speaking, and listening from the beginning of their introduction into English. In addition, these English language learners are wrestling with what they know and do not know regarding language functions and registers, both of which are informed by the context of the discourse—mode, topic, purpose, audience, setting, and so forth.

### **When Talk Facilitates Learning**

Figure 1.2 provides a graphic representation of the opportunities for integrating talk in the classroom. We've divided the opportunities for talk into four major categories. These categories are consistent with a gradual release of responsibility model of instruction,

which acknowledges that students must assume increasing responsibility if they are to learn (Fisher & Frey, 2008). This does not mean that students are supposed to become independent learners in the absence of the teacher but, rather, that classrooms are structured in such a way that students are introduced to ideas and then have opportunities to work with these ideas before being expected to complete tasks independently. As you'll see throughout this book, a number of instructional strategies are available for integrating purposeful student talk. For now, let's consider the instructional routines in which talk can be integrated.

**Figure 1.2. Types of Talk**



During whole-class instruction, teachers model behaviors, skills, and strategies that they expect to see from their students, this modeling is based on an established purpose and provides students with a mental model for completing tasks they will encounter in another phase of instruction. We've already seen that questioning can be used during teacher modeling, but teachers can also activate their students' background knowledge during this time (for example, a 10th grade biology teacher might ask his students to talk with a partner about cell life before he explains cell division to them). In addition, teachers model the use of academic language as they engage in think alouds, shared readings, read aloud, lectures, and other whole-class events. After modeling, students can reflect on what they learned through both writing independently and talking with a partner.

During guided instructional events, teachers use talk to determine what students know and what they still need to know. This is an opportunity to use questions, prompts, and clues to help students complete tasks. Although guided instruction is teacher led, this does not mean that students are not talking. They use talk to ask questions—of the teacher, of peers, and of themselves—as well as to clarify understanding, provide feedback to a partner, and reflect once more on their learning.

Teachers can use talk during guided instruction in a number of ways. For example, an art teacher might meet with a small group of students who have difficulty with perspective in their drawings. He asks them to compare and contrast several drawings from his collections of books and then has them give one-word explanations of the differences. The students use words such as *proportion*, *line*, and *shading*. Through talk, this art teacher is able to facilitate increased understanding for his students.

In this phase of instruction, students are provided an opportunity to work together, with the teacher monitoring and supporting as needed. Talk becomes critical when students discuss tasks or ideas and question one another, negotiate meaning, clarify their own understanding, and make their ideas comprehensible to their partners. It is during collaborative tasks that students must use academic language if they are to focus on the content. Here again, their understanding grows as they talk with their partners to reflect on their learning. A number of classroom structures, such as reciprocal teaching, literature

circles, partner discussions, and so on, require students to talk together. The experience suggests that this phase of instruction is critical for English language learners to use the language and, as Bakhtin noted, own the words and ideas.

As we analyze why many students are not learning what we are teaching, we must evaluate our own practice for evidence of student talk throughout the day. Oral language is the foundation of literacy, and as such, it requires focused attention in planning.

### **The Communicative Approach**

The Communicative Approach is an approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence. It is also called Communicative Language Teaching.

The Communicative Approach has been developed particularly by British applied linguists as a reaction away from grammar-based approaches such as the Audio-lingual Method.

Teaching materials used with a Communicative Approach often teach the language needed to express and understand different kinds of functions, such as requesting, describing, expressing likes and dislikes. The approach follows a Notional Syllabus or some other communicatively organized syllabus and emphasizes the processes of communication, such as using language appropriately in different kinds of tasks, e.g., to solve puzzles, to get information, and using language for social interaction with other people.

The term «communicative competence» is comprised of two words, the combination of which means «competence to communicate». This simple lexico-semantic analysis uncovers the fact that the central word in the syntagm «communicative competence» is the word «competence». «Competence» is one of the most controversial terms in the field of general and applied linguistics. Its introduction to linguistic discourse has been generally associated with Chomsky who in his very influential book «Aspects of the Theory of Syntax» drew what has been today viewed as a classic distinction between

competence (the monolingual speaker-listener's knowledge of language) and performance (the actual use of language in real situations)<sup>1</sup>. Soon after Chomsky proposed and defined the concepts of competence and performance, advocates for a communicative view in applied linguistics (e.g. Savignon, 1972) expressed their strong disapproval at the idea of using the concept of idealized, purely linguistic competence as a theoretical ground of the methodology for learning, teaching and testing languages. They found the alternative to Chomsky's concept of competence in Hymes's communicative competence<sup>2</sup> which they believed to be a broader and more realistic notion of competence.

Namely, Hymes (1972) defined communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations, thus bringing the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence.

During the 1970s and 1980s many applied linguists with a primary interest in the theory of language acquisition and/or the theory of language testing gave their valuable contribution to the further development of the concept of communicative competence. Just a few of them will be mentioned in the following, namely those whose theoretical reflections and empirical work seem to have had the most important impact on the theory of communicative competence.

In an attempt to clarify the concept of communicative competence, Widdowson (1983) made a distinction between competence and capacity. In his definition of these two notions he applied insights that he gained in discourse analysis and pragmatics. In this respect, he defined competence, i.e. communicative competence, in terms of the knowledge of linguistic and sociolinguistic conventions. Under capacity, which he often referred to as procedural or communicative capacity, he understood the ability to use knowledge as means of creating meaning in a language. According to him, ability is not a component of competence. It does not turn into competence, but remains "an active force for continuing creativity", i.e. a force for the realization of what Halliday called the "meaning potential" (Widdowson, 1983:27). Having defined communicative competence in this way, Widdowson is said to be the first who in his reflections on the relationship between competence and performance gave more attention to performance or real language use.

Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) understood communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication. In their concept of communicative competence, knowledge refers to the (conscious or unconscious) knowledge of an individual about language and about other aspects of language use. According to them, there are three types of knowledge: knowledge of underlying grammatical principles, knowledge of how to use language in a social context in order to fulfil communicative functions and knowledge of how to combine utterances and communicative functions with respect to discourse principles. In addition, their concept of skill refers to how an individual can use the knowledge in actual communication. According to Canale (1983), skill requires a further distinction between underlying capacity and its manifestation in real communication, that is to say, in performance. 3. Unlike Hymes, Canale and Swain or even Widdowson, Savignon (1972, 1983) put a much greater emphasis on the aspect of ability in her concept of communicative competence. Namely, she described communicative competence as «the ability to function in a truly communicative setting – that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors» (Savignon, 1972:8). According to her, and many other theoreticians (e.g. Canale and Swain, 1980; Skehan, 1995, 1998; Bachman and Palmer, 1996 etc.), the nature of communicative competence is not static but dynamic, it is more interpersonal than intrapersonal and relative rather than absolute. It is also largely defined by context.

4. As to the distinction between competence and performance, Savignon referred to competence as an underlying ability and to performance as an open manifestation of competence. In her opinion, competence can be observed, developed, maintained and evaluated only through performance. Like many theoreticians in the field of language learning and teaching (e.g. Stern, 1986), Savignon equates communicative competence with language proficiency. Due to this, as well as to the controversial use of the term «competence», Taylor (1988) proposed to replace the term «communicative competence» with the term «communicative proficiency».

At approximately the same time and for similar reasons, Bachman (1990) suggested using the term «communicative language ability», claiming that this term combines in itself the



meanings of both language proficiency and communicative competence. Leaning especially on Hymes, Widdowson and Candlin, Bachman defined communicative language ability as a concept comprised of knowledge or competence and capacity for appropriate use of knowledge in a contextual communicative language use. In elaborating on this definition, Bachman devoted special attention to the aspect of language use - that is, the way how language is used for the purpose of achieving a particular communicative goal in a specific situational context of communication.

## **Background**

Towards the end of the 1960s there went on a growing dissatisfaction among foreign language teachers and applied linguists with the dominating language teaching method of the time. Language learners were then required, above all, to master grammatical forms accurately, and this mastery of language structures was the main measure of competence in a foreign language. The criticism was that this kind of teaching produced structurally competent students who were often communicatively incompetent .

Another reason for this dissatisfaction was undoubtedly the fact that, by the late 1960s, there were increasing possibilities for international communication, professional cooperation and travel, whether for business, further study, or other purposes. These changes attracted the attention of the Council of Europe. Then a number of experts proposed to set up a scheme to teach the languages of Europe, particularly with the needs of adult learners in mind.

Meanwhile, some theoretical linguists had become conscious of the fact that in linguistic research meaning and context were neglected. People began to consider semantics to be basic to any theoretical model of language. Meaning was seen to depend to a large degree on the sociocultural contexts in which speech acts occurred. Sociocultural aspects of language in use had been particularly stressed by the functionalists, who considered the purposes language serves in normal interaction to be basic to the determination of syntactic functions.

All this was reflected in some proposals to reconstruct the language syllabus so that learning communicative conventions would become as important as learning grammatical conventions. D. A. Wilkins was instrumental in setting out the fundamental considerations for a "functional-notional" approach to syllabus design based on communicative criteria.

The distinguishing characteristics of the Notional-Functional Syllabus (NFS) were its attention to functions as the organizing elements of English language curriculum, and its contrast with a structural syllabus in which sequenced grammatical structures served as the organizers. Reacting to methods that attended too strongly to grammatical forms, the NFS sought to focus strongly on the pragmatic purposes to which we put language.

"Notions", according to Van Ek and Alexander (1975), are both general and specific. General notions are abstract concepts such as existence, space, time, quantity, and quality. They are domains in which we use language to express thought and feeling. Within the general notion of space and time, for example, are the concepts of location, motion, dimension, speed, length of time, frequency, etc. "Specific notions" correspond more closely to what we have become accustomed to calling "contexts" or "situations." Personal identification, for example, is a specific notion under which name, address, phone number, and other personal information is subsumed. Other specific notions include, travel, health and welfare, education, shopping, services, and free time.

The "functional" part of the NFS corresponds to language functions.

Curricula are organized around such functions as identifying, reporting, denying, accepting, declining, asking permission, apologizing, etc. Van Ek and Alexander list some seventy different language functions.

Wilkins analyzed the communicative meanings that a language learner needs to understand and express, and he insists that the structural component cannot be ignored. However, the orientation of the teaching is essentially toward the purposes and social uses of communication, rather than the understanding and acquisition of linguistic features. For the learning sequence, Wilkins proposed a cyclical, rather than a linear presentation of concepts and functions, so that as students advance they will be learning to express the same semantic notions with more depth and appropriacy.

Wilkins's book *Notional Syllabuses* (Wilkins, 1976) had a significant impact on the development of Communicative Language Teaching.

Courses for different languages were then developed based on his semantic/communicative analysis. A basic course was developed that set out in specific detail exactly what students at threshold level should know in order to communicate in particular situations. Later, these materials were adapted to the needs of secondary schools and incorporated in television programmes for a wider public.

The NFS did not necessarily develop communicative competence in learners. First of all, it is not a method. It was a syllabus. However, by attending to the functional purposes of language, and by providing contextual (notional) settings for the realization of those purposes, it provided a link between a dynasty of methods that was now perishing and a new era of language teaching - Communicative Language Teaching.

The Communicative Approach was founded by Robert Langs. Psychoanalysis has turned reality on its head: We are taught to think of ourselves as distorters and misperceivers, unreliable slaves to our inner fantasies - especially when we are patients in therapy. But the communicative approach has shown that it is more accurate and compelling to see ourselves as highly reliable perceivers, with the understanding that our most valid perceptions are experienced unconsciously and encoded in the stories we tell to ourselves and others. Knowing how to decode these stories is the key to a truly accurate view of the human emotion-processing mind and emotional life.

The full name of the Communicative Approach (CA) is "The Communicative-Adaptive approach." This highlights the two most distinctive features of the CA: first, that it is a new way to understand human emotionally-laden communications and second, that it has shown that the primary function of the emotion-processing mind is to cope with - adapt to - immediate emotionally-charged triggering events.

The communicative approach (CA) was developed by Robert Langs MD, In the early 1970's. It is a new theory or paradigm of emotional life and psychoanalysis that is centered on human adaptations to emotionally-charged events--with full appreciation that such adaptations take place both within awareness (consciously) and outside of awareness

(unconsciously). The approach gives full credence to the unconscious side of emotional life and has rendered it highly sensible and incontrovertible by discovering a new, validated, and deeply meaningful way of decoding unconscious messages. This procedure-called trigger decoding--has brought forth new and highly illuminating revisions of our understanding of both emotional life and psychotherapy, and it calls for significant changes in presently accepted psychoanalytic thinking and practice.

The CA has exposed and offered correctives for much of what's wrong with our current picture of the emotional mind and today's psychotherapies-critical errors in thinking and practice that have cause untold suffering throughout the world. In essence, the approach has shown that emotional problems do not arise first and foremost from disturbing inner memories and fantasies or daydreams; nor do they arise primarily from consciously known thoughts and patterns of behavior. Instead, emotional disturbances arise primarily from failed efforts at coping with current emotionally-charged traumas. The present-day focus by mainstream psychoanalysts (MP) on the past and on inner fantasies and memories has been replaced in this CA with a focus on the present, as experienced and reacted to consciously and unconsciously-in brief, the primacy afforded by MP to fantasy and imagination has been replaced by the primacy afforded by the CA to reality, trauma, and perception (especially unconscious perception).

The Communicative Approach is essentially a manifestation of the 1970s, in the sense that this was the decade when the most explicit debate took place, especially in the U. K. The subsequent period has been characterized by explorations of other, related possibilities for the design of materials and methods. Though it has been criticized in one way or another, its central tenets have not been rejected, and we shall find them incorporated in a great deal of current thinking. More importantly, perhaps, teachers in many parts of the world are finding that they need to come to terms with changes in their role, as communicative principles in language teaching become central goals of their educational systems.

These educational perspectives evolved alongside, and to some extent were derived from, significant developments in linguistics, sociolinguistics and psychology. There are a number of quite well-known arguments which will be explained in the next section.

**Theoretical Basis** Theory of language The Communicative Approach in language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication. When we communicate, we use the language to accomplish some functions, such as arguing, persuading, or promising. Moreover, we carry out these functions within a social context. A speaker will choose a particular way to express his thought not only based on his intent and his level of emotion, but also on whom he is addressing and what his relationship with that person is. For example, he may be more direct in arguing with his friend than with his employer.

The Communicative Approach has a theory of language rooted in the functional school. Functional linguistics is concerned with language as an instrument of social interaction rather than as a system that is viewed in isolation. It considers the individual as a social being and investigates the way in which he acquires language and uses it in order to communicate with others in his social environment. Moreover, real-world language in use does not operate in a vacuum. When we give advice, we do so to someone, about something, for a particular reason. So in addition to talking about language function and language form, there are other dimensions of communication to be considered if we are to be offered a more complete picture. There are, at least, topics (e.g. health, transport); context and setting (both physical and social); and roles of people involved. According to Halliday, a British linguist, social context of language use can be analyzed in terms of three factors: 1. The field of discourse: what is happening, including what is being talked about; 2. The tenor of discourse: the participants who are taking part in this exchange of meaning, who they are and what kind of relationship they have to each other; 3. The mode of discourse: what part the language is playing in this particular situation, for example, in what way the language is organized to convey the meaning, and what channel is used written or spoken or a combination of the two.

This analysis leads to a new branch, discourse analysis, the study of how sentences in spoken and written language form larger meaningful units such as paragraphs, conversations, and interviews. These reflect how language is used in real communication

and what rules of use must be observed. Therefore, discourse analysis becomes an indispensable part of Communicative Language Teaching.

(Littlewood, 1981) In talking about CLT, one cannot avoid talking about 'communicative competence', a term coined by Hymes (1972) in order to contrast a communicative view of language with Chomsky's (1965) theory of competence.

Chomsky claimed that every normal human being was born with a language acquisition device (LAD). The LAD is a sort of mechanism or device which contains the capacity to acquire one's first language. The LAD includes basic knowledge about the nature and structure of human language. That is why children develop competence in their first language in a relatively short time, merely by being exposed to it. For Chomsky, the focus of linguistic theory was to characterize the abstract abilities speakers possess that enable them to produce grammatically correct sentences in a language.

Hymes, on the other hand, held that linguistic theory needed to be seen as part of a more general theory incorporating communication and culture. In Hymes's view, "communicative competence" refers to the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to know when and where to use these sentence, and to whom.

Hymes's emphasis on the importance of context in determining appropriate patterns of behaviour, both linguistic and extralinguistic, appealed to teachers who found an overemphasis on accurate use of language structures to be confining and unrealistic. Teachers and material writers began to realize that if students were really to communicate with speakers of the language, they need to know not only the grammar of the language, but also the culturally acceptable ways of interacting orally with others. In other words, they need to know rules of language as well as rules of language use.

Soon the study of the culture in which the second language is embedded became a preoccupation of second language teachers. Teachers and students alike realized that, if this type of culturally based competence was to be acquired, lectures and readings were not enough. Students must also have opportunities to interact with native speakers in natural settings.

Classroom activities centered more and more on simulating interactional contexts, in which language might be used in a normal way. Teachers began to recognize how artificial and unnatural many language exercises were and set about adapting them so that they would reflect more authentic uses of language. In this they were supported by material writers.

Textbooks soon began to provide more realistic activities, in which language could be used in a likely context.

Another linguistic theory of communication favored in CLT is Halliday's functional account of language use. Halliday (1975) described seven basic functions that language performs for children learning their first language. Language can be used to get things; to control the behavior of others; to create interaction with others; to express personal feelings; to learn and to discover; to create a world of the imagination and to communicate information: This powerful theory of the functions of language complements Hymes's view of communicative competence for many other writers on CLT.

Another source of a communicative view of language can be found in Henry Widdowson, (1978) who presented a view of the relationship between linguistic system and their communicative values in text and discourse. He focused on the communicative acts underlying the ability to use language for different purposes. His distinction between appropriacy and accuracy, communicative competence and grammatical competence, use and usage threw much light on CLT.

According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence entails four dimensions. They are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.

Grammatical competence refers to what Chomsky calls "linguistic competence." Sociolinguistic competence refers to an understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including role relationships, the shared information of the participants, and the communicative purpose for the interaction. Discourse competence refers to the interpretation of individual message elements in terms of their interconnectedness and of how meaning is represented in relationship to the entire discourse or text.

Strategic competence refers to the coping strategies that communicators employ to start, end, keep, repair and redirect communication.

To sum up, a communicative view of language has the following four characteristics:

1. Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
2. The primary function of language is for interaction and communication.
3. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
4. The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

(Richards & Rodgers, 1986;71) Theory of learning Most contributors to the," Communicative Approach share the view that language is used for communication and are more concerned with meaning than with structure. They tend to argue that language is best learned through use in social context. Candlin (1976) believes that communicative language learning is "a highly socialized activity where learners are engaged in a negotiative process, with themselves in terms of what they already know, with others in terms of sharing and refining knowledge and with the curriculum content in terms of what has to be learned. In such a classroom, one clear condition for action is prominent - the need to offer learners a variety of alternative and differentiated options in the choice of classroom activity, subject matter and modes of working.. .

For Candlin, the negotiation involved in making choices and decisions lies at the heart of the language learning process.

Yalden (1983) thinks that more effective second language learning will take place if the emphasis is on getting one's meaning across or understanding the speaker rather than on formal accuracy. Obviously Yalden is more concerned with getting meaning across in a given context.



The focus on communicative and contextual factors in language use can be traced back to the work of the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski and his colleague, John Firth, a linguist. Firth stressed that language needs to be studied in the broader sociocultural context of its use, which includes participants, their behaviour and beliefs, the objects of linguistic discussion, and word choice. Individual learners were also seen as possessing unique interests, styles, needs and goals, which should be reflected in the design of methods of instruction. Teachers were encouraged to develop materials on the basis of the particular needs manifested by the class.

The Communicative Approach attempts to follow the natural acquisition process in the classroom. The learner following this way of language acquisition tries from the very beginning not only to understand messages produced by other speakers but also to produce his own utterances in the target language expressing his own meanings, ideas and opinions. He also has to be meaningfully exposed to the target language because without a certain amount of meaningful input there cannot be any acquisition at all.

According to Krashen, language learning comes about through using target language communicatively (learners' needs considered ), rather than through practicing language skills.

Some contemporary researchers and language educators claim that the learning process is responsible for first and naturalistic second language acquisition available to classroom learners. It can also guarantee the development of a "real" competence, allowing the learners to function spontaneously in communicative situations. They believe that fully successful, language acquisition is a by-product of communication, of negotiating meaning, so that the traditional attitude to language learning and teaching has to be completely reversed. Traditional attitude can be described as the belief that we learn and teach languages in order to be able to communicate, while the new approach assumes that in order to learn a language we have to try to communicate in it.

Basic Principles Main features David Nunan (1991 :279) offers five points to characterize the Communicative Approach: 1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language; 2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning

situation; 3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process itself; 4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

### **Characteristics**

The most obvious characteristics of the Communicative Approach is that almost everything that is done is done with a communicative intent. Students use the language a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks. In this process, the focus is on meaning, rather than on language form. The teacher would correct for content. She has to take advantage of all situations in which real communication occurs naturally. She should be more concerned with creating many more suitable situations in which students can practice their communicative skills.

A Communicative Approach teacher is concerned with the learners themselves, their feelings and ideas. For learners who are studying in a non-English-speaking setting, it is very important to experience real communicative situations in which they learn to express their own views and attitudes, and in which they are taken seriously as people. Meaningful activities on a personal level improve performance and generate interest. And talking about something which affects them personally is eminently motivating for students.

Another characteristic of the teaching/learning process of the Communicative Approach's the use of authentic materials: The Communicative Approach teacher often uses texts which are taken from newspapers, magazines, etc. and recordings of natural speech taken from ordinary radio or TV programs. The philosophy behind this is that the students should be exposed to real language use in the classroom since they are to use the language for communication when they leave the classroom. Another idea is that students can see the usefulness of the target language and this provides them with a purpose of learning. It is considered desirable to give students an opportunity to experience real language use and to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used by native speakers. For example we skim an article in order to get the general idea; we scan a book to find the

specific information we want; we infer the real meaning of the writer by looking for clues, etc.

Learning is more effective when the learners are actively involved in the learning process. The degree of learner-centered activity depends, among other things, on the type of material they are working on. Unlike some contemporary methodologies such as Community Language Learning; practitioners of Communicative Approach view materials as a way of influencing the quality of classroom interaction and language use. Materials thus have the primary role of promoting communicative language use. Here three kinds of materials currently used in the Communicative Approach will be introduced and they are labeled "text-based", "task based", and "realia."(Richards & Rodgers, 1986: 79-80) Text-based materials There are numerous textbooks designed to direct and support Communicative Language Teaching. Some are in fact written around a largely structural syllabus, with slightly reformatting to justify their claims to be based on a Communicative Approach. Others, however, look very different from previous language teaching texts.

### **Communicative Approach Objectives**

The general aim of the Communicative Approach is to develop the students' communicative competence. It includes: 1. Knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the language; 2. Knowledge of rules of speaking (e.g. knowing how to begin and end conversations, knowing what topics may be talked about in different types of speech events, knowing which address forms should be used with different persons one speak to and in different situations) ; 3. Knowing how to use and respond to different types of speech acts, such as requests, apologies, thanks, and invitations; 4. Knowing how to use language. appropriately, For example when people wish to communicate with others, they must recognize the social setting, their relationship to the other person(s) , and the types of language that can be used for a particular occasion. They must also be able to interpret written or spoken sentences within the total context in which they are used. For example, the English

statement "It's rather cold in here. " could be a request, particularly to someone in a lower role relationship, to close a window or door or to turn on the heating.

The objectives of a course of language instruction cannot be defined until the learners' needs have been identified. In order to identify their needs, it is necessary to carry out a needs analysis. This needs analysis should first consider why the learners are learning the second language, what topics they will need to find themselves using the language on, and what roles they may need to play within those situations. Next, it is necessary to decide what vocabulary, language structures and functions they will need to know, to what level of accuracy, in order to achieve their purposes. The ability to use these structures and perform these functions quickly, accurately and appropriately for their own purposes will become the objective of the course. It is feasible to identify second language needs for those groups of learners who have very specific purposes for their second language learning, such as airline pilots, hotel workers, and people studying for TOFEL. For the great majority of second language learners in the world, they are learning the second language for no obvious reason, therefore, identifying needs is far less straightforward.

Information obtained from needs analysis is used in developing, selecting, or revising programmed objectives. Objectives detail the goals of a language program. They identify the kind and level of language proficiency the learner will attain in the program. Sometimes programmed objectives may be stated in terms of proficiency level in a particular skill area or in the form of behavioral objectives (descriptions of the behaviors or skills of performance the learners will be able to demonstrate on completion of the program, the condition under which each performance will be expected to occur, and the criteria used to assess successful performance). For example, "The students can read novels in the original non-adapted editions", or "The students can call the railway station for information about departure times." Some of the specific objectives can be described as: learners will learn how to ask the way, how to agree and disagree, how to apologize, how to invite, how to refuse politely, and so on. Obviously learners can not recite some structures in order to communicate in the target language, they should also be taught the situations, which include many elements such as social conventions, relationship between speakers' and so on.

What's more, communication takes on more form than simply speaking and listening. Reading and writing are also frequently-used communication skills. For EEL learners, like most English learners in China, there are far more opportunities to use writing/reading than speaking/listening skills. Objectives can vary greatly due to the variety of learners' purposes of learning the language, materials available; and so on.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

This research was carried out with students from Advanced English level XVII from the Saturday's course from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador. It was a descriptive research due to there are no previous researches at the Foreign Language Department regarding how the teacher's methodology promotes effective classroom discussion for students who are learning English as a second language.

This work was developed in the study of different methods and techniques that could be applied in the classroom for the effective classroom discussion. The main aim of this information in was in order to compare what theorists say and what it really happens in CENIUES with this students who are studying English and are involved in different conditions from some researches carried out in other countries. What we specially did was observed the classes and compare the information gotten from the theorists to the real situation that was happening with students from Advanced English level XVII from the Saturday's course from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador from the morning and Saturday shift, who were the sample for the study.

In order to carry out this study, the research group was guided by a series of steps that could help us to have a clear idea about what is really happening in our English classroom and describe this information in this graduation work. All the step were followed in an ordered and organized sequence.

- A. To select the topic
- B. To select the universe
- C. To determine the sample
- D. To design the instruments
- E. To analyze the data

## **A. THE TOPIC**

To select the topic, the research group made a list of possible problems to investigate. After choosing the topic, the problem was stated, the objectives established and the justification described in this work. Also, the corresponding information was studied, analyzed and selected for constructing the theoretical base for this research.

## **B. THE UNIVERSE**

For developing this research, the universe was chosen from over 5, 800 students which is the total amount at CENIUES from the university of El Salvador in 2013. In fact, the research group just worked with two groups, the first group was in the morning schedule and had 9 students, whereas the group 2 had 11 students but in the afternoon shift. It is important to mention that such groups were from Advanced English level XVII due to it was considered they were able to understand and answer the instrument.

## **C. THE SAMPLE**

This work was carried out with students from Advanced English level 17 in total 2 groups one in the morning as well other in the afternoon. 9 students in the morning group and the same number in the afternoon.

The researcher did not used formulas to get the results in the graphics and explain why in the following details:

To start the variables are classified into qualitative and quantitative . If the variables are quantitative , can be either discrete or continuous quantitative. when you have two variables of this type can search for a relationship between them and this relation can be associated with a mathematical model and a formula for making predictions short and long term.

Qualitative variables are classified into nominal and ordinal qualitative, the difference between them is that the former does not have a large hierarchy by while the latter itself. well, to relate two variables of this type the only thing to do is to create a contingency table

or crosstab where one of the variables is considered that is dependent on the other , is to be noted that the crossing is so logical and not random.

We create a contingency table between two variables forming the categories of both variables as both table headings the number of cases that occur are placed on the grid and are the values of intersection , for example , if two dice are rolled , we know that the possible cases are 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 for both dice , dice to identify assign them a color, as it were, to throw should be differentiated and then contingency form table of possible cases. For example which are all cases where falls down the first five and the second five ? As there is only one, and also all other possible cases are taken.

If , for example categories were gender : male and female

a second amount of hours dedicated to practice speaking English language :

A: less than an hour

B: between 1 and two hours

c: between two and three hours

d : more than three hours

to form the crosstab between these two variables SPSS is used because it does so in a second , if it wishes to walk shall we say , as we will the results of the surveys and we where in sex are male and the other variables in their response was the category A.

the result is noted in the table can be created in Excel, then the same procedure for the female and the same category A. and so you have the first row , in the same way for other categories. As you can see this done written but it would take a long time and we do wrong we could count on . Thus tell them to get crosstabs no formula, just choose variables and logical way that we relate to and want to create it and then literally count the cases that arise possible. No other way.

#### **D. THE INSTRUMENTS**

For collecting the data, the research group used two instruments: A questionnaire for students and an interview.

Such questionnaire was in Spanish and administered to Advanced English students from level XVII from CENIUES with the purpose of getting as much information as possible related to aspects of the class discussion. This instrument was chosen because it was the one that best suited to the purpose of our investigation: Moreover, it is important to clarify that it was applied in Spanish because the research group considered that the original meaning of the instrument could be changed somehow if they translated it.

The instrument was divided in three different parts:

- a. Part I: In this section, students were asked some general information which included age, gender, marital status, the place where they studied previously and who they live with.
- b. Part II: This part included five statements in the one they had multiple chooses to select the one that best set their personal information with the aim of what their reason were to study English, the different item each student had to study English and their expectations one they concluded with the course.
- c. Part III: This part had seven questions in the ones they were asked with some questions about their active participation in class and outside the classroom form ranking to "Never " to "Always"

In this way the research group was trying to identify what was their active participation in and out of the classroom, if the topics were suitable for students and the role of the teacher about how he demanded students to speak in English only and the effect in students.

## **E. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENTS**

As soon as the instruments were designed, the research group follow a protocol to have the appropriate permission and pass the questionnaires and surveys. The process was the following.

- 1- To ask for permission to professors for administering the instruments
- 2- To apply the questionnaire to all the students in each group for the study

## **F. ANALYSIS OF DATA**

After administrating the instruments for students, the data was processed. First, the instruments for students were analyzed and set in graphs, and presented by a brief description of the results found. These graphs are presented in bar charts.



## V. DATA ANALYSIS

In the following information, we are presenting some variables that according to the students we were working with influences their performance regarding the classroom discussion.

Some of the important facts are that the majority of students in both groups were more women than men, and most of them were from 18 to 25 years. A couple of students were older than this age. Another important information to mention is that most of students live with their parents and just studied either English or English and a different major. And a few of the interviewed students worked and studied at the same time.

The last students mentioned before, were not living with their parents due to they have their own family (wife or husband and kids).

We paid attention to the previous information mentioned due to the idea that as much responsibility a person has, the less change he has to accomplish them. However, it was interesting for us to realize that students who were working and may have less time to study or do homework, they were in fact, the most responsible students regarding the handing of homework assignments or they had higher scores in evaluations.

This is connected with the fact that students practiced their English skills from 1 to 2 hours per day. It's well known that as much the language is practiced, there is a better performance; in this case, the speaking skill. However, there are some people who believe that nowadays, technology plays an important role in the process of learning a new language. A few years ago, it was more common the use of books and tape recorders for the English learning process. But in this research we found that the majority of students had access to different resources such as computer, tablets and even, internet services. It means that they were able to get in touch with the language in the different ways such as books online, magazines or even videos.

Moreover, it was found that most of students were studying English because it opens more job opportunities. As a result students would like to get a job as a translator or

interpreter. It was interesting this particular result because most of the time, students from other English academies, they want to work in call centers due to economic benefits. However, this was not the case with the studied groups. Moreover, this reflects that there is a personal motivation for them to study English.

On the other hand, students were asked if the topics had to be interesting or relevant for a class discussion. All of them answered with an affirmative answer to this idea. Moreover, they agreed that the teacher should ask questions in order to keep an active classroom discussion. But, an important question come up, did the previous learning gotten from a previous institutions (college or English academy) influence the students speaking performance in the classroom? Well, the results from the survey plus, the observations taken during the course, show that it didn't. Because some of them studied at a college, and nobody studied in an English academy. So, it shows that the knowledge was acquired directly from their classes in the previous courses from CENIUES.

Besides that, The 80% of students stated that the main reason to study English is the job opportunities they will find after they finish studying at CENIUES, this show students are willing to get involved after finishing all the levels they will get part of the labor field. Besides that, the 88% started to study English as a teenagers either in the elementary school or in a private academy as CENIUES, this represent no one was studying in a public school and for that they have similar opportunities to learn English in same classroom conditions. Which was really important for our research is the fact that the 29% of both studied groups belief that group discussions is the most effective methodology used by the teacher during the class in order to learn English and acquire fluency, this encompass the general objective of the research directed to identify how the classroom teacher's methodology and specific speaking techniques influences the students effective classroom discussion in their English learning process with students from Advanced English level, this supported the theory and reinforce the teacher methodology as the main base to get students discuss topic presented in classes.

In other hand, The family was the main topic for discussion in the classroom representing the 22% of the opinions and follow by the health, reality, sports, friendship and work with the 9% all of them from the students opinions. The 29% of students

recommend in order motivating students to discuss during the class to get fluency in a conversation is to debate in the activities done by the teacher and the 22% is to take interesting and actual topics to discuss in the class and follow by the 14% which is to know well the students in order to make them discuss in class.

Moreover, regarding the attendance during the two month we could see that the majority of students almost ever went to class. And the rest assisted to class all the time. It can interpreted that due to their constantly attendance in the class, they had a good improvement in the class and based on the performance of each student at the time of speaking we realized the teacher methodology was inferring in the daily acquire in each session. Trough observing students outside of the classroom during the break we could see that students sometimes talked, a few students almost ever talked English outside of the classroom. It reflects that students try to practice English almost all the time to improve their English skills.

## Methodology

For obtaining the different results of our investigation, we needed to do the following steps:

Analyze the activities that can help to improve the debate in the English class, some of them would be:

- Practice to talk in English with partners or friends outside the classroom
- Disposes of the resources like computers, English/Spanish dictionaries, internet, etc for practicing and learning vocabulary in the English language.

For obtaining the second objective, we can analyze what the students think about methodology, the one applied by the teacher, their way of thinking is reflected in:

- Students' attendance
- Their opinion about the activities developed in class and how to talk in the English class

For this purpose, we decided to develop one research to each student from the two groups of advanced English course on the level 17 that study on Saturday course at CENIUES.

The group one is about nine students for each Saturday morning and the second one is about 11 students that study the same day, but in the afternoon, both of them are composed by people of different genres, and ages above 15 years old.

The survey is about three parts:

First: questions for identifying the structure of the show like age, sex, family status and job activities.

Second: questions for determining the expectations that the students have, time to accuracy and resources that they have for the study and practice of English.

Third: questions about teacher's evaluation and methodology.

The survey has two annexes, it's going to be made to 9 students in group one, and 9 to the group 2..

Each of the selected students will have the same opportunity to be chosen and their election will be selected at random for having the correct results, the ones with statistics requirements, generalized with the rest of population.

Then to pass the survey to the students we will have the results that we want doing the next steps:

With the first and second part of the survey, we will make a descriptive analyze of our survey, for knowing how is conformed, know the proportion with respect of genre, institution or school in that the student learned English before, expectations of job at the moment of finish the course, etc, creating for that frequency tables of double entry, according about where is necessary.

In the third part we'll create frequency tables using data of the two first parts, combining them with the third one for obtaining results which have in that way our objectives for our investigation.

We could make crossings between variables, for example, the number of hours of study, talking and practice the English language outside the classroom and what the teacher wants for talking and participate in class discussions.

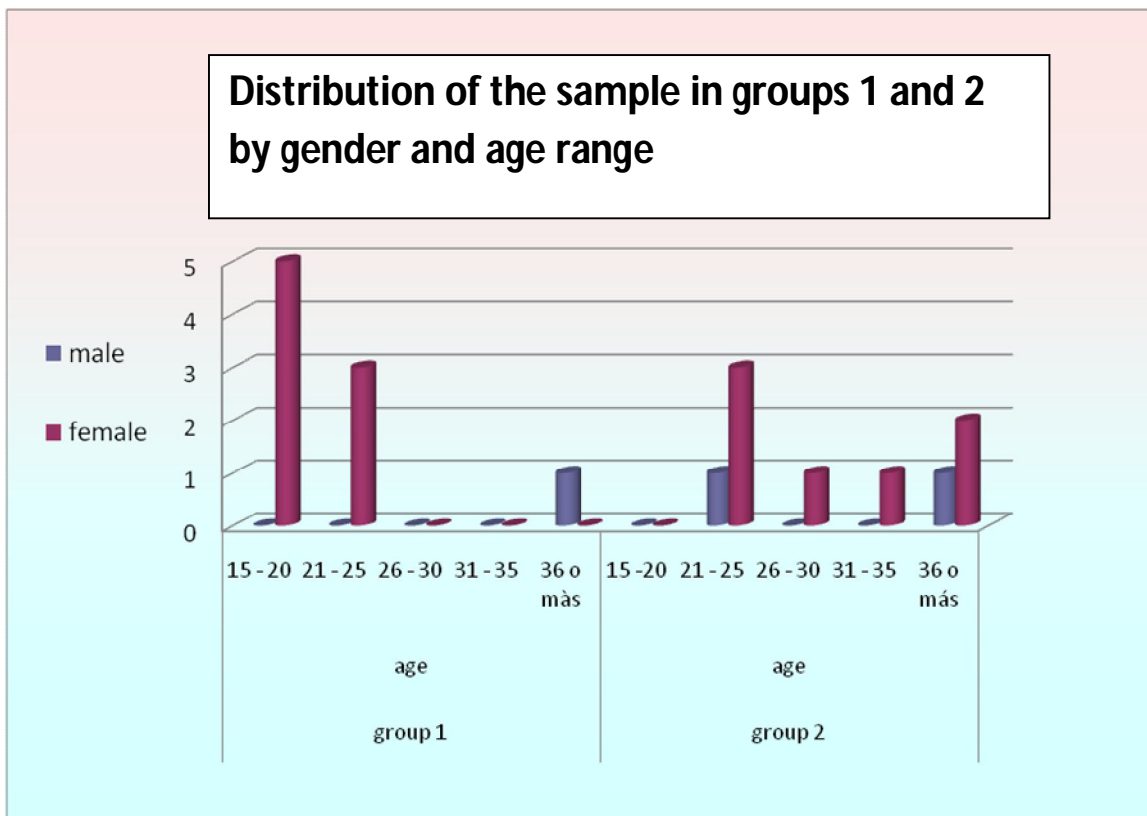
We need to say that the analyze will be doing by the SPSS system, and graphics that we'll obtain by excel program, because they have a better presentation.

## **FINDINGS**

In the following information, we are presenting some variables that according to the students we were working with (the experimental and control group) influences their performance regarding the classroom discussion.

Before everything, we should know how is population in research for that we analyze data generated by the survey, obtaining the following results:

For having an idea about how I sour data list, by averages of age and sex, we can do by separate, or we can make a list of contingency crossing both variables, and by separate each belonging group:

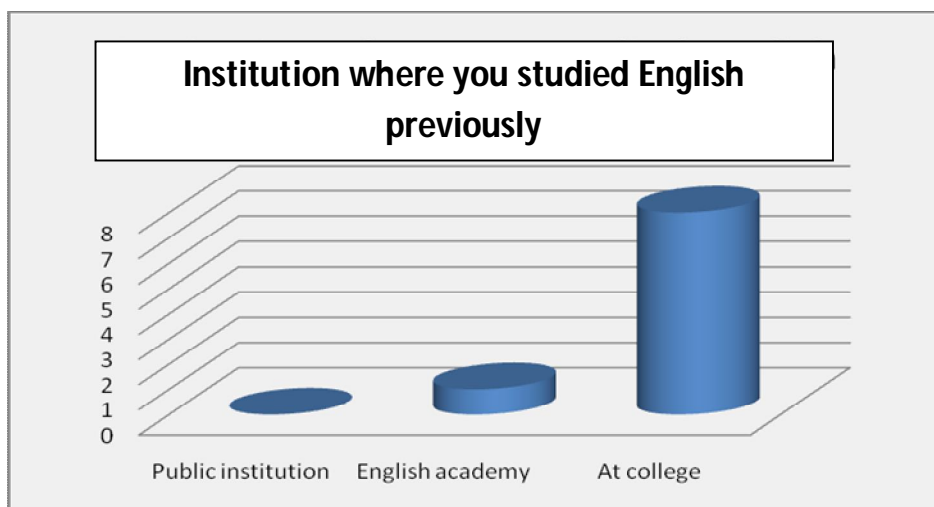


**Graphic xxx:** Distribution of the sample of groups 1 y 2 of the level 17 of advanced English from the course at CENIUES.

We observe that in the data taken from each student, most of them are female sex, this give us an idea that women have the best interest in learning English language.

From this graphic, we can also see that the best number of students have an average age between 15 and 25 years old in group number one and between 21 and 25 years old or older than 36 years old in group number 2, with this we can deduce that young people have more interest than people older than 36 years old in learning English, but there are adult people with more than 36 years old which want to improve themselves learning a new language and also that people belong the female genre.

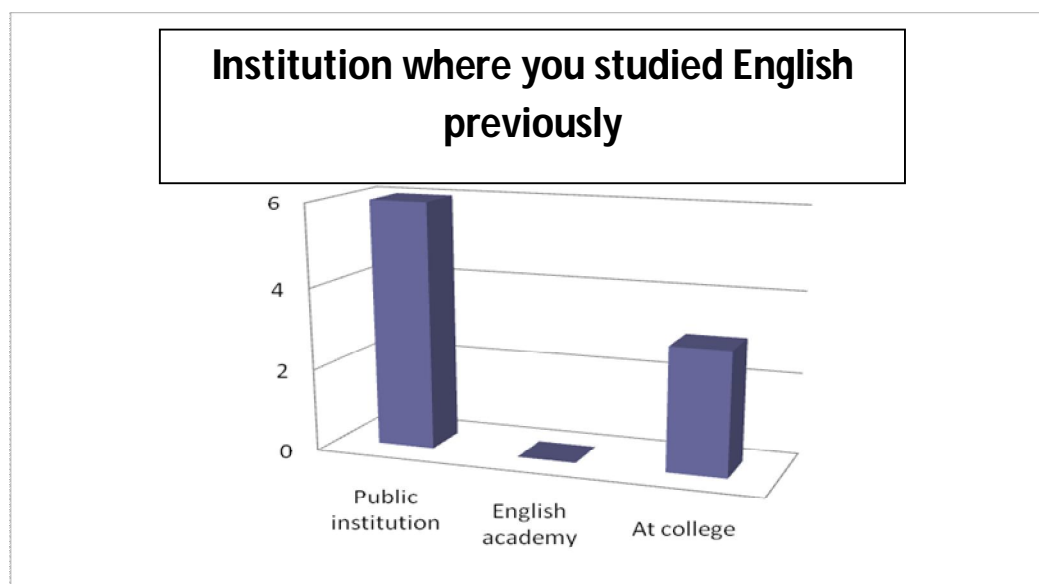
To continue, we considered the school background or institution of precedence of each student before begin learning English in CENIUES:



**Graphic xxx.** Distribution of students in group 2 level 17 according of place where they studied English before CENIUES.

We can see in the graphic that the best number of students from level 17 of group 1 come from high school, where they had English as a subject, also we have a little number of students that studied in an English academy. This little number we can say that they had the motivation to learn English for improving or just because they wanted to learn it.

The same way for group number 2.

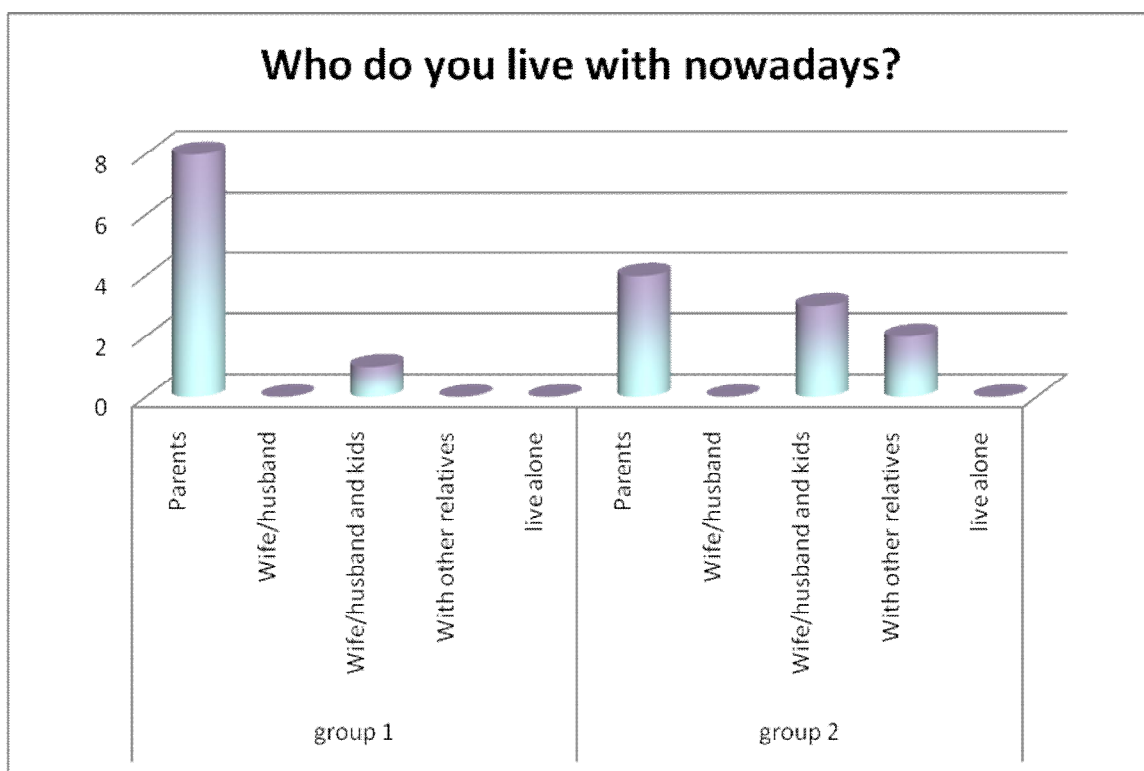


**Graphic xxx.** Distribution of students in group 2 level 17, according of place where they studied English before in CENIUES

In the case of group 2 we see that the best number comes from public institutions, in those places they learned the language for specific purposes, while the rest of students studied previously English in schools.

In both results we can conclude that students who are learning English at CENIUES learned previously in private high schools or public institutions and that a few number of them learned in English academies.

We decided to take into account the family situation of each student in the survey, this mean know with whom they live in their homes:



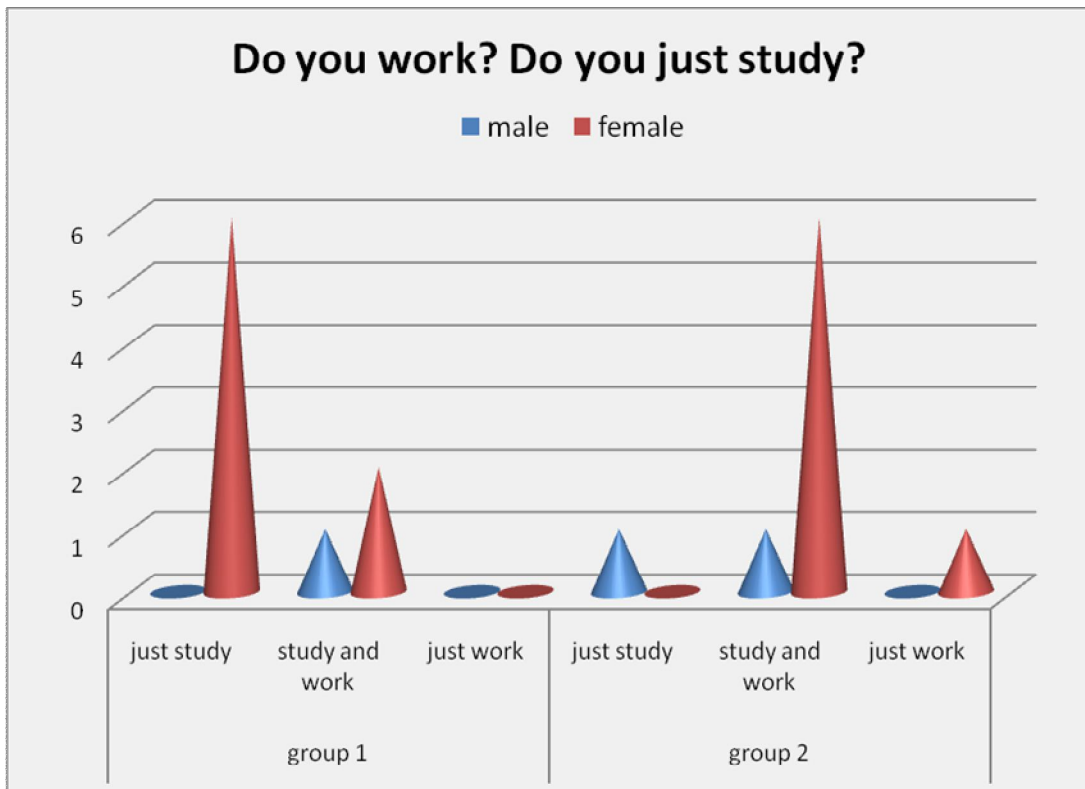
**Graphic xxx** distribution of students from groups 1 and two level 17 according of familiar status.

We can see that in both groups the best number of them live with their parents or other relatives, some of them are married and have children. We should mention that these are transitory status because if people don't live with their parents, they live with other relatives before getting married and have their own family. We saw that in none of the



groups we have people leaving alone and is reasonable because in our country we don't have the independence phenomenon, and people don't live alone for their own decision.

Analysis about if students do by their own (work or just study) in both groups, we're going to analyze the question: do you work or just study?



**Graphic xxx.** Distribution of students from groups 1 and 2 level 17, according of job conditions.

For making the crossing of variables with the answer before and separate by group, the best number of them in group 1 are women and they just study, a few number of students are working and studying at the same time.

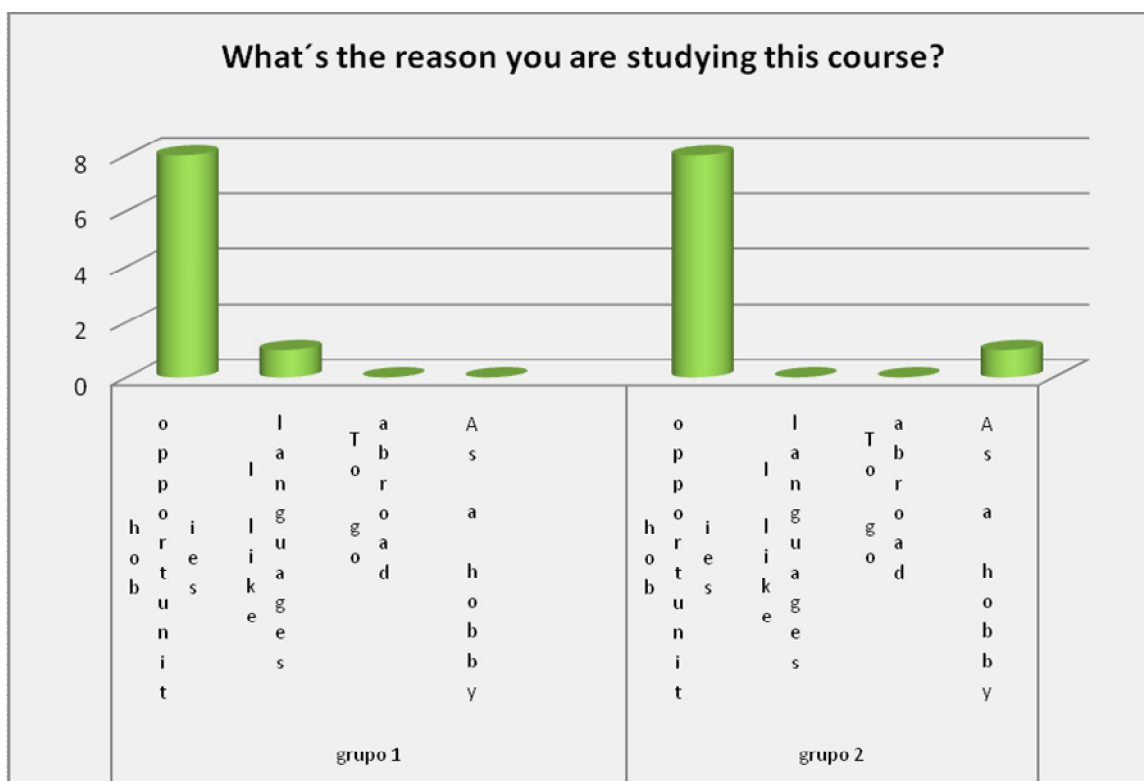
In group 2, the situation is different, because the major number of students are women which work and study, men are a minority in this group, and are divided in two groups, one is just studying and the other is working and studying. Then with group two we can see that a few number of women are just working

Students in group 2 that are just working are making a contradiction because they say that they just work, but at the same time are studying and learning English, this means that they

work and study at the same time, for this we can conclude that women in group 2 are working and studying at the same time.

Let's see now expectations about the students that they have when they finish their English course taught in CENIUES, for this we'll analyze the answers of the questions in the second part of the survey.

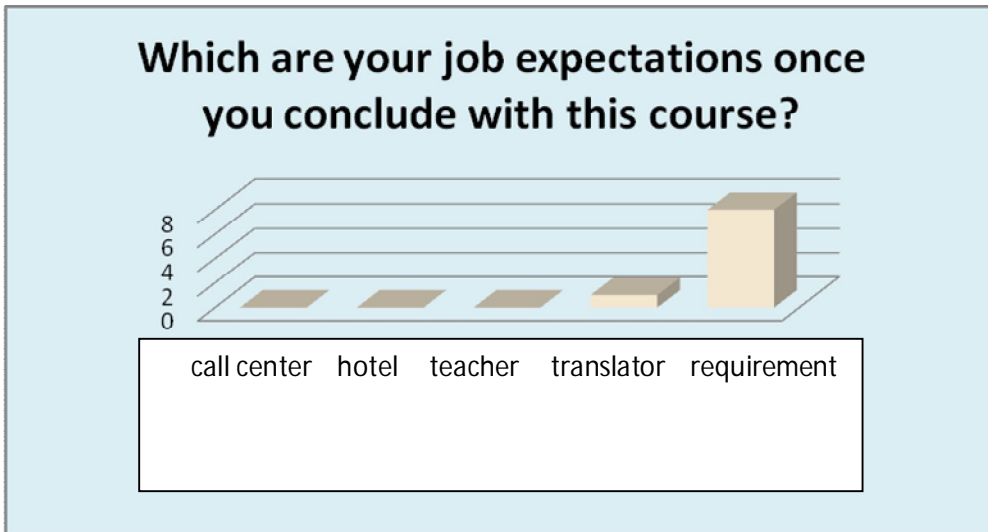
We considered now motivation for learning English and expectations; in both groups in research to ending the course, for this we're going to analyze the answers of the questions: what is the reason because you decided to study English? what are your job expectations at the end of the course?.



**Graphic xxx** distribution of the students of groups 1 and 2 level 17 about reasons to learn in the English course.

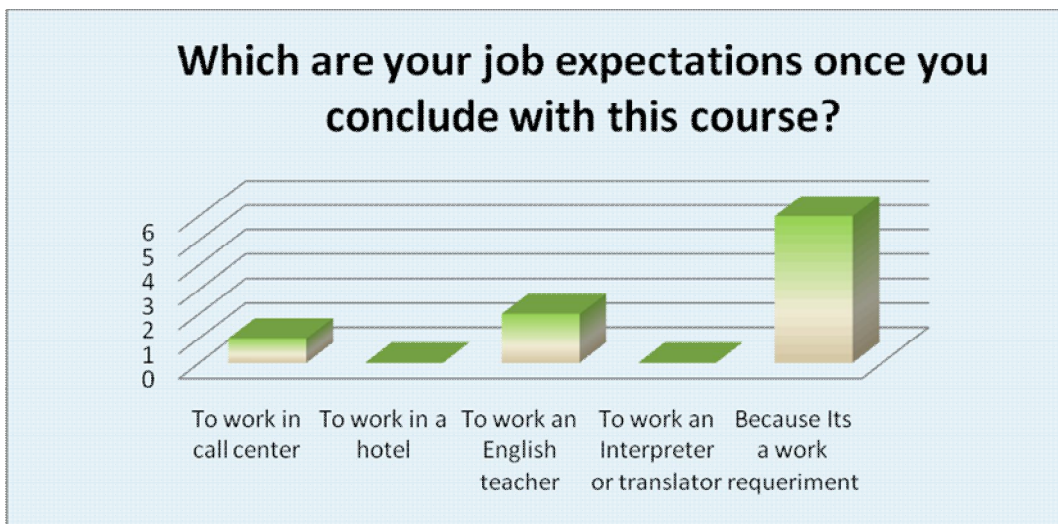
We can appreciate that in both groups, the best part of them are motivated in study and learn English, for obtaining better job conditions, a few number say that they consider English as a hobby or is because they just like the language.

Let's consider now job expectations, for group number 1 we have the following results:



**Graphic xxx** distribution of students of group 1 according of job expectations at the end of the course.

We can see that the majority in group one is in the course for learning English because is a requirement for many employees, just a few number expect to have a job like a translator, we can appreciate that nobody want to work neither in call center, nor in a hotel, and none of them want to be an English course.



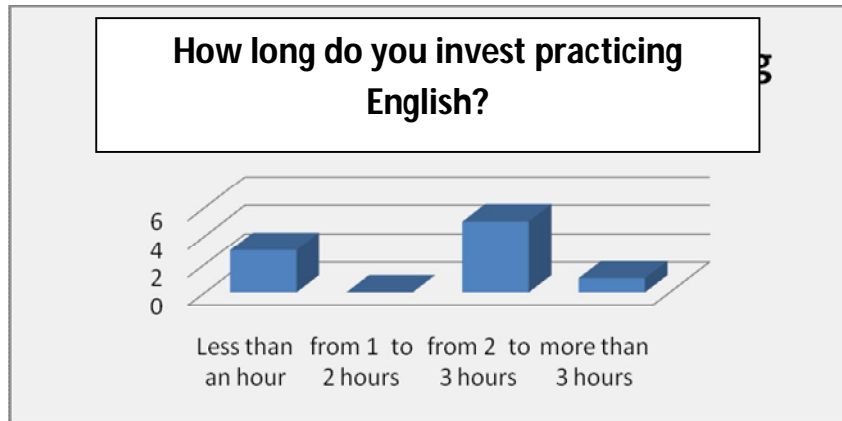
**Graphic xxx.** Distribution of the students results from group 2 according to their job expectations at the end of the course.

We can conclude from this graphic that in this group the job expectations are a little bit different because the most of them are studying because English is an important job requirement, a few people are expecting to work in a call center or as a English teacher.

As in group 1, the most of people in this group don't have the expectation to work in a hotel due to nobody selected this option as a job expectation. In the same way, nobody selected the option to work as an interpreter or translator.

Now, we show the main purpose of the research which is to achieve the objectives addressed. Let's first check the activities that can help us to improve the debate in the English classroom:

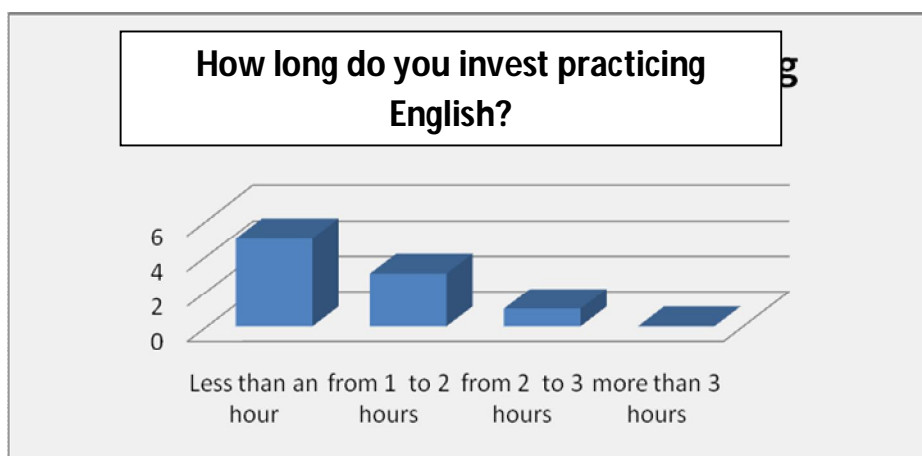
Activity 1. How long do you invest practicing English?



**Graphic xxx.** Study habits and English practice from group 1.

As we show in this graphic, the most of the students from this group practice English from 2 to 3 hours everyday. Then, there is another group that practice English outside the classroom less than an hour. Finally, the remaining students practice English more than 3 hours everyday. Unfortunately it wasn't possible to get the student's grades to measure whether this was useful or not for students.

Let's check the results from group 2:



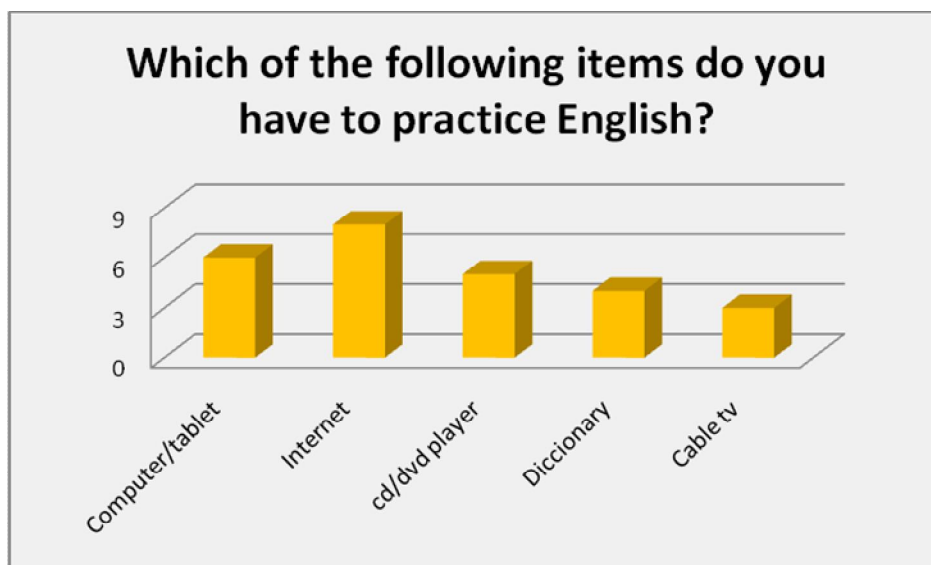
**Graphic xxx.** Study habits and English practice from group 2.

As we can see, the study habits are clearly different comparing with group 1 due to the majority practice English less than one hour. Then, there were some students who practiced English from 1 to 2 hours everyday.

It is important to mention that a few students from this group made an effort to practice English from 2 to 3 hours everyday.

Activity 2. Item available such as computer, English dictionary, internet service etc. To be able to practice or learn English vocabulary.

Once again we separated the results by group. First we have the results from group 1:



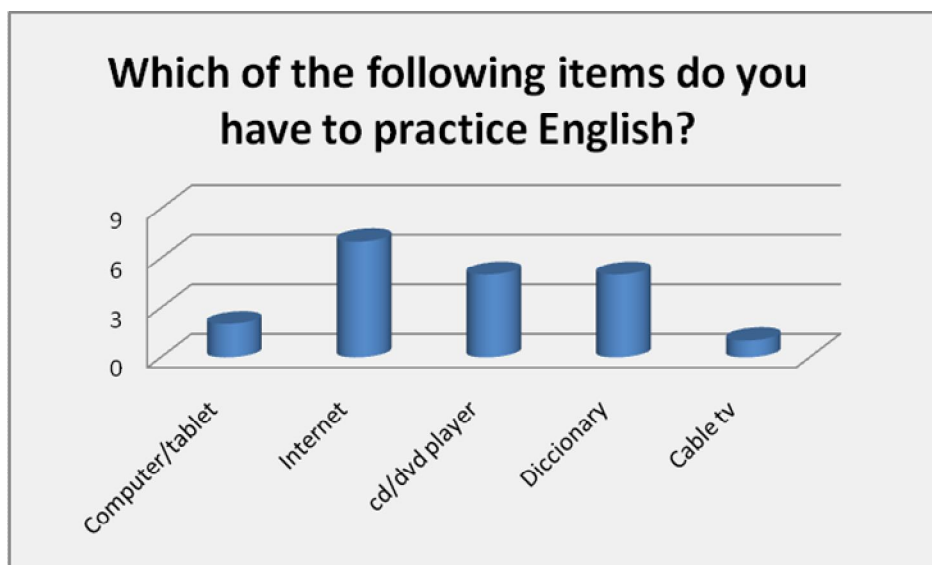
**Graphic xxx.** Items available to practice English, from group 1.

At the first sight is seen that everybody had at least one device as a resource from the mentioned above for practicing English outside the classroom.

It reflects that most of them had available at least one of the resources mentioned above, but it is interesting to mention that a high percentage of students have internet service and a computer or even better, a tablet.

A small percentage of students have available other resources such as CD or DVD player and a TV with cable service, without living out English- Spanish dictionaries which are very useful for learning vocabulary.

Let's check out group 2

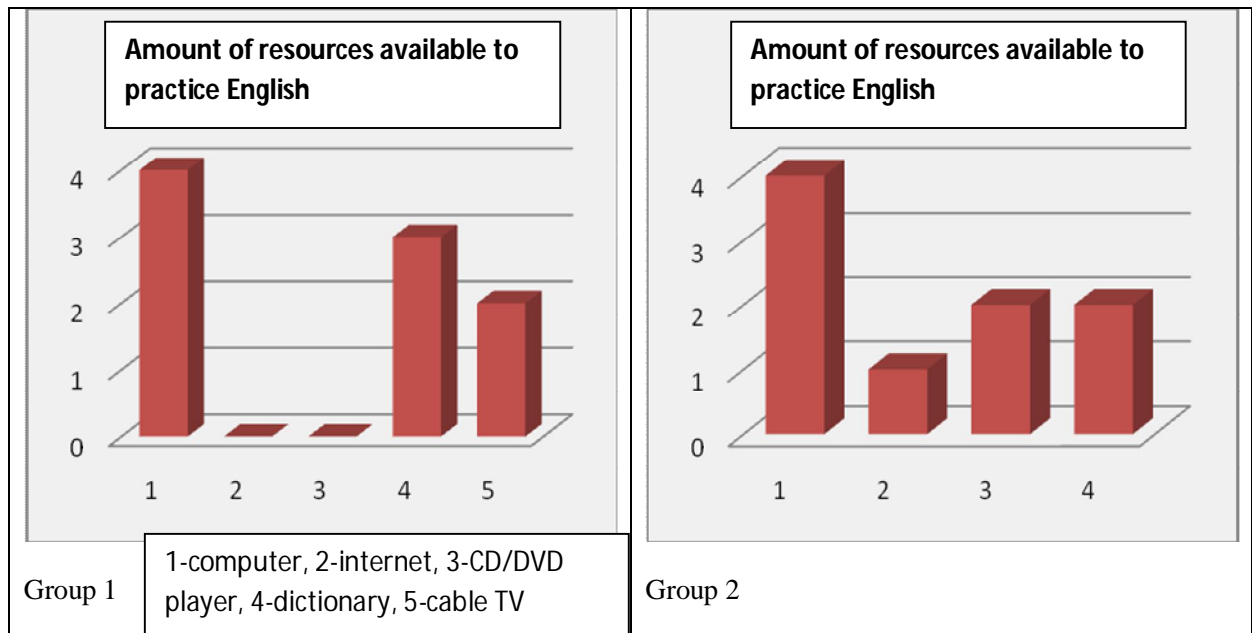


**Graphic xxx.** Items available to practice English, from group 2.

In the same way from the previous group, all students have access to at least one of the resources mentioned in the survey, but in contrast with group 1, this group has less resource available.

Most students have internet service to practice English outside the classroom. A second group of students have a CD or DVD player or even, a dictionary. A small percentage of students have available a computer, tablet or a TV with cable service to increase their English vocabulary from the one studied in their English course.

To observe clearly this fact, let's identify the resources that every group has:



**Graphic xxx.** Amount of resources available from the studied groups

As we can observe the previous fact that it was just an assumption, we can conclude that in fact, there is a bigger amount of 4 or 5 resources in group 1 comparing with group 2, while the amount of people who have at least one resource available are similar in both groups.

With the information previously mentioned, we can conclude that in both groups there are possibilities to practice to talk in English outside the classroom making use of the resources each person has. Except from those students who work and have less free time available.

So, a doubt arise regarding if the students from this English course use this resources, as a result the following question comes out: Do you take time to read books or materials that you consider are useful for you to learn more English vocabulary?

The students' answers are showed with the following results:

---

Do you take time to read books or materials that you consider are useful for you to learn more English vocabulary?			
	group 1	group 2	Total
Never	1	0	1
Sometimes	7	4	11
Almost ever	1	3	4
Always	0	2	2
Total	9	9	18

---

**Table xxx.** Analysis about how long students invest to study materials to learn more English vocabulary.

As we notice, most of students, sometimes employ the resources , a small group said that always or almost ever they employ the resources to learn new vocabulary, and a few of students said that they never have time to read book or any other useful material to learn new English vocabulary.

Now, let's take into account the speaking English practice with classmates or friends outside the classroom.

---

Do you talk in English with friends or classmates outside the classroom?			
	group 1	group 2	Total
Never	0	1	1
Sometimes	8	6	14
Almost ever	1	1	2
Always	0	1	1
Total	9	9	18

---

**Table xxx.** Time invested in the speaking English practice outside the classroom.

From the table showed above, we can notice that a big percentage of students from both groups sometimes take the necessary time to make an English conversation either with classmates or friends outside the classroom. It is remarkable the formation of two small groups, one of them never practice their speaking English skills outside the classroom, and



the other one, always or almost ever practice their speaking skills with classmates or friends outside the classroom.

With these last results we can say that the majority of the students take some free time in improving and mastering their English skills, but with more special attention to their speaking skills outside the classroom.

However, let's continue with the fulfillment of our second objective, which is to analyze what students think regarding the teacher methodology. The students' opinions are reflected in the following information:

- The attendance to every class
- The opinion regarding the activities developed in the class
- The opinion regarding the teacher demands and the class participation. As well as how the teacher demands students to practice English in class.
- Let's first check the class attendance according to every student from each group.

How long do you go to class?			
	group 1	group 2	Total
Always	1	2	3
Almost ever	8	7	15
Sometimes	0	0	0
Never	0	0	0
Total	9	9	18

**Graphic xxx.** Class attendance for students from group 1 and 2 from level 17 of Advanced English from CENIUES.

From the previous information, we can conclude that students' majority go to class every single class, and a small quantity sometimes don't go to class. And just a few students sometimes go to class, It is important to mention that nobody said they don't miss classes or they don't go very often. With this information is possible to conclude that there is big interest in both groups regarding speaking in English.

Let's check what the students' opinions are about the activities developed in class:

---

**Do you make questions to contribute to class discussion?**

	<b>group 1</b>	<b>group 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Never	0	0	0
Sometimes	0	4	4
Almost ever	6	5	11
Always	3	0	3
Total	9	9	18

---

**Graphic xxx.** Level of participation in class from group 1 and 2 from level 17 for advanced English in CENIUES.

We can appreciate that in the majority of opportunities, the students in both groups were participating in the class discussion and making questions in class, a small group from group 1 were all the time participating. But in a different way, a few students from group 2 were participating a few times in class discussions and making questions during the class.

With these results, we can conclude that the majority from both groups have an active participation in the class discussion and asking questions. Even though, there is a number of students from group 2 who don't feel motivated to ask questions. A possible reason for this situation it could be that they don't have any question to ask, but for knowing this information with certainty it would be the best option to ask them directly.

To finish up, let's check the opinion from students of level 17 about the active practice of English in the class and if the teacher has to demand it with more frequency. For that reason, we present the following results from the survey:

---

Do you consider that the teacher should ask students to participate or talk in the class?

	group 1	group 2	Total
Never	0	0	0
Sometimes	0	0	0
Almost ever	1	0	1
Always	8	9	17
Total	9	9	18

---

**Graphic xxx.** Students' opinions from group 1 and 2 from level 17 of advanced English in CENIUES regarding the active speaking participation in class.

As we can see in the previous table, the students considerate a good idea that the teacher should demand a more active participation in the discussions, as well as, to speak English during the class, just a few students had the opinion that the teacher sometimes should demand the participation in the class discussion.

With this students' opinion, it is possible to conclude that teachers are not strict, or they are demanding about the class discussion. Even, it reflects that students don't considerate a good idea to allow some people in the class to answer in Spanish some questions, instead of answering in English as they are suppose to do it.

## V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study was carried out with two groups of students with the advance English level 17 from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador, the major findings concerning to what extent classroom teacher's methodology promotes effective classroom discussion and the data collected from the interview and questionnaires are the following:

First, since the methodology used by the teacher creates the environment to acquire the English language and not only the topic are enough to learn a foreign language this research took into account the average of age and sex from students in both groups to explained the ways teachers can use this important data to promote classroom discussions and it was observed that most of them students are female sex this give us an idea that women have the best interest in learning English language. Besides that, we found that young people are more influence to learn other language. Moreover, getting a background from each student most of them studied English in academies in the group 1, however in the group 2 most of the students studied English in public institutions, these results can let us know the students have their own motivation to study English.

Second, the researchers decided to take into account the family situation of each student in the survey, this means to know with whom the live in their homes. We found that in none of the groups we have people living alone, they live with their parents and some of them live with their relatives. Besides that, there are important aspects from students like knowing if they only study or if they work and study; this is meaningful in order to benefit student's discussion in the classroom. We found that in the group 1, they just study and a few number of students are working and studying English the same day. However in the group 2 most of the students are women that work and study and men are divided in the ones that only study and some of them are working and studying. Those results in both groups show that students are motivated to learn English.

Third, it was found that the intrinsic motivation they have was a key factor that pushed them to get their goal towards acquiring a second language as English. One of the questions

of the survey is the following: what is the reason you are studying this course? We appreciated that in both groups most of them are motivated to study and learn English. Some of the main reasons why they are motivated are to get better job conditions and few of them just because a hobby. Besides that, we underline that some job expectations in both groups are because English is a requirement for many employees. However, just a few numbers of students expect to have a job like a translator as well we show that nobody wants to work neither in a call center nor in a hotel and few of them want to become an English teacher, in both groups. As professors and psychologists agreed; highly motivated students work harder, perform better and learn easier than those who are not motivated.

Fourth, since the teacher methodology is fundamental to let in higher proficiency perform a group discussion in the classroom and let knowledge of those students serve as a reference to find the positives ways of applying a good methodology to acquire English language, we discovered what is the time students invest practicing English, in the group 1 most of the students practice English from 2 to 3 hours every day, different from group 2, they practice English less than an hour. Besides that, regarding with the resources mentioned in the survey like computer, internet, DVD player, dictionary and cable TV; most of the students have internet service to practice English and they use a lot the dictionary as well.

Finally, with our second objective which is to analyze what students think regarding the teacher methodology, the student's opinions are the followings: in both groups almost ever they go to classes and the group 2 shows more class attendance. Which is really important to underline is that nobody in both groups said they do not miss classes, with this information the researchers stated that the motivation they have towards acquiring English as a second language. To conclude the discussion of results, most of the students from both groups have an active participation in the class discussions and asking questions, these results fulfill the general objective of this research.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

As per our research question estates: To what extent classroom teacher's methodology, promotes effective classroom discussion for students on the Advanced English level XVII from CENIUES at the University of El Salvador. After being observing two different English groups the research group was able to identify that teacher methodology has a big influence as positive as negative to the students regarding the practice of their English skills and how they communicate ideas and discuss about them. One of the major findings was that students recommended that in order to motivate students to discuss during the class to get fluency in a conversation is to debate in the activities done by the teacher. Also, students believe that interesting and current topics to discuss in the class play an important role in the effective classroom discussion as well as knowing very well students in order to make them discuss in class.

It is important to mention that in both groups, students shows that the teacher must request students to participate in the class because just in that way, the may feel pressure to provide their opinions about the topic develop in class. So, it reflects that students need a demanding attitude from the teacher regarding their participation in class because just in that way, they can have an active role in the classroom.

Such results demonstrate that the perception of students in their knowledge acquisition is based in the way the teacher presents and apply the everyday topic to make students develop discussion in English. Thus, the similarity in age for both groups made the research have perceptions from people from same age level, besides that, the students' attitude towards the research and researchers was open due to an advance explanation before the research was conducted due to thinking in obtain the most clear idea of how the teacher methodology was influencing at that time both English advance levels.

This data is only a part of an extensive information found during the two moths this research was conducted and the three members of the researchers were collecting data each

Saturday through getting involved in the discussion activities to get a clear idea of the students performance and teacher development towards students. In addition, out of 100% of surveys processed, the 48% students were just studying, 28% were just working and the 24% were studying and working at the same time, this reflects that we as a researchers tried to take into account the reality the students were living at the time of this research took place and to analyze as well the performance oriented to the teacher methodology and factors that could be detractors at the time of developing discussion during classes.

Finally, both teachers in each classroom were really accessible to provide accurate information to let our research have the necessary information about the techniques and materials use during each class, thus, all the time during the two months students participated in class this showed as well the advance level they had. It reflects that the teacher provided the appropriate activities during the class and as a result, students always participated in the class discussions.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ The teacher may look for some other topics like: how to get involved in the society through the first job, friends, deciding what to study as a career, and many other topics not found in the student's book that they probably know. This is regarding the fact that some students they don't know what to say when they are asked to speak about topics they are not familiar with. Some of the topics that most of students recommended were about health, reality, sports, friendship, family and work.
- ✓ The teacher could incorporate in the lesson plans with more frequency some activities such as debates or role plays or interviews among them, in order that students can have an active role in the classroom and may feel they are practicing what they have been studying in the course.
- ✓ The teacher might build rapport with students in order that they may feel confidence to participate in the class. This is based on what was found in the surveys and interviews with students. Most of them agreed that since the teacher didn't know even their names, they didn't feel confidence to have an active participation in some activities in the ones, discussion was the main objective.



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## **IX. ANNEXES**

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**OBJECTIVE.** To identify which factors are the ones that promote effective classroom discussion in students of advance English I, semester 2 year 2012

## EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM DISCUSSION CHECKLIST 2012

**TEACHER'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM:	GROUP:	SUBJECT:	SCHEDULE:
IF	0	ADVANCE ENGLISH 1	1-3 PM
IF	0	ADVANCE ENGLISH 1	5-7 PM

DATE OF EVALUATION					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

AREA	DESCRIPTION	MARK		
		1- low	2- moder ate	3- high
Classroom Arrangement	1. Room is disorganized, centers are undefined, or room seems dirty.			
	2. Some areas of room are well defined and organized. Some centers are apparent and there is space set aside for small and large group work.			
	3. Room is well defined, organized, and clean.			
	4. Furniture is arranged to allow for easy student movement			
	5. All students are seated in areas that allow for them to see instruction			
	6. Students have personal space to place belongings			
	7. Distractions (visual, tangible, and auditory) are minimized			
	8. The temperature is adequate to have a class			
	9. There is enough ventilation in the classroom,			
	10. There are appropriate desks for students			
	11. There is a whiteboard in proper conditions			

<b>Methodology</b>				
	1. Directions given are clear and understood by all students			
	2. Transitions are structured and described clearly. The majority of time is spent engaged in active learning activities			
	3. Unstructured downtime is minimized			
	4. The pace of instruction is brisk and appropriate for all students			
	5. Student understanding is checked frequently (individually or for the whole class)			
	6. Cooperative learning strategies are utilized			
	7. Adaptations and modifications are made for individual student needs			
	8. Multiple opportunities are provided throughout the day for choice making			
	9. Each student has a positive interaction with the teacher on a daily basis			
	10. Ask general (divergent) questions to students for clarification, or to support his or her comment or opinion.			
	11. Ask to hear from someone who hasn't said anything yet.			
	12. The teacher keep on eye contact with students when they are sharing their opinion or idea			
	13. The teacher allows for pauses and silence. He gives the students time to think.			
	14. the teacher use meaningful materials			
<b>Attitude</b>				
	1. Positive and corrective feedback are provided immediately to students			
	2. The teacher, extends a cordial invitation to student to enter into a dialog			
	3. The teacher is knowledgeable about its subject as well as kind and respectful toward his students.			
	4. The teacher empowers students and gets them to do things of which they did not think they were capable.			
	5. Teacher makes each student feel special by verbally sharing individual compliments in front of the class.			
	6. The teacher encourage to students positive self-confidence and self- esteem.			
	7. The teachers is open to students' ways of being imaginative			



SEX    F                    M  
 AGE \_\_\_\_\_

**OBJECTIVE.** To explore the key factors that promotes effective classroom discussion to students of English advance I- 2012.

**DIRECTIONS:** Please, read carefully each of the following questions. Choose the best option according to your own experience.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. What proficiency level in oral production of the English language do you consider you have reached up to now?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Novice                    \_\_\_\_\_ Intermediate-low.                    \_\_\_\_\_ Intermediate-mid.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Intermediate-high.                    \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced.                    \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced plus.
2. How well do you consider you speak English?  
 \_\_\_Very well                    \_\_\_ Well                    \_\_\_ Average                    \_\_\_Poor
3. How satisfied do you feel with the level that you have reached in the speaking skill?  
 \_\_\_Highly                    \_\_\_Some satisfied                    \_\_\_Little satisfied                    \_\_\_Nothing satisfied
4. Discussions in my class challenge me to do my best work?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Always                    \_\_\_ Sometimes                    \_\_\_ Often                    \_\_\_Hardly never                    \_\_\_Never

**ENVIRONMENT**

Choose one option according how you consider the environment in classroom	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. This classroom is an appropriate space in which to hold this particular course.				
6. Is it easy Follow what is going on during class?				
7. Is it easy Identify who is speaking during class when discussing a topic?				
8. The classroom facilitates multiple types of learning activities				
9. The in-class exercises for this course are enhanced by the features of this classroom.				



## METHODOLOGY

How often have you done each of the following activities in your class?	Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 5 times	More than 5 times
10. Asked questions during your class				
11. Contributed to a class discussion that occurred during your class				
12. Came to your class without having completed readings or assignments				
13. Worked with other students on projects during your class				
14. Worked with classmates outside of your class to prepare class assignments				

Choose one option according how you consider the performance of your teacher in classroom	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. Increases my excitement to learn.				
16. Helps me develop professional skills that can be transferred to the real world				
17. Enriches my learning experience.				
18. Helps me develop confidence in working in small groups.				
19. Promotes discussion and helps me develop confidence in presenting.				
20. Encourages my active participation.				
21. Makes me want to attend class regularly.				
22. . Helps me develop connections with my classmates				

## ATTITUDE

How frequency teacher encourage you to develop the following activities.	About once per class	About once to three week	About once a Month	Two or three times a semester	About once a semester	never
23. Ask questions during the class.						
24. Make a presentation in classes						
25. Contribute to class discussions that occurred during your class.						
26. Share ideas from your readings or course with other students during class						
27. Make a presentation in class						