

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



**THE USE OF METACOGNITIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND  
THEIR INFLUENCE ON SPEAKING PROFICIENCY OF  
THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS FROM THE ENGLISH TEACHING MAJOR  
AT THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING THE YEAR 2014**

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## ABSTRACT

This research deals with the use of the metacognitive learning strategies and their influence in the development of speaking proficiency of the students learning English as a foreign language. Previous studies about metacognition, suggest that it is possible to reach a higher level of speaking proficiency if the metacognitive strategies are used. The main goal of this study was to measure if the English language students at the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of El Salvador to improve their speaking proficiency when they use the metacognitive strategies. The design of this study is correlational-causal, the researchers just look to see if there is any relationship between the variables under study, besides that the researchers used a questionnaire(strategy inventory for language learning SILL) and an interview guide called spiral development to collect all the data to analyze the results. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software was used, in order to analyze the results and come up with the main findings and conclusions of the study. The findings revealed that the development of the speaking proficiency in the case of the English languages students from the University of El Salvador, not all the time depends on the use of the metacognitive strategies. However, in different education contexts the use of metacognitive strategies has been proved that they have a positive impact in the development of speaking proficiency.

**KEY WORDS:** speaking, proficiency, metacognition, metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive regulation, metacognitive strategies

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Statement of the problem

In recent times speaking English has become one of the main priorities for many people around the world. Nowadays, there is a diversity of reasons why people is trying to learn English in a proficient manner. The reasons can be different, starting from a simple conversation, until getting a scholarship or a Master Degree. However, to become proficient English speaker is not always easy because it requires the knowledge on how native speakers use the language in the context of structures interpersonal exchange (Shumin, 2002). Therefore, becoming a proficient English speaker still continues being a challenge.

The main difficulty of the students in the learning of English language is the development of the oral skill. This is the most essential area in the learning of English language because it is considered that people are proficient in English if they dominate oral skill as Lazaraton (2000) believes. In fact, many learners strive to get a proficient English level or at least to get a competitive level. In the case of students of the University of El Salvador that are trying to obtain the English Teaching major, they are required to have an acceptable level of speaking English or at least to manage the basic. The researchers consider that is fundamental because opens a wide variety of opportunities. This study explores the possibility that being proficient in English is related with the use of metacognitive strategies.

The development of oral English skill as a communication tool is fundamental to interact with others in spoken English. This is relevant now because many people show a great desire and motivation to become orally proficient and knowing metacognitive strategies help to the betterment of English speaking development. In present times and in the past, this topic has been on the discussion table for academic people, writers and researchers; however they differ from each other, over the use of metacognitive strategies and their influence on English speaking proficiency. Speaking proficient is an art that must not be taken for granted. The reason is that being proficient at speaking and getting an optimum level of English is not easy and it requires a lot of effort from any English learner.

### **1.2. Significance of the problem**

The development of oral English language skills is important for the academic development of the English students. Any student who is trying to get a higher English speaking proficiency level needs to know that there are available some learning strategies at his or her disposal that contribute to the betterment of the English speaking proficiency according to Oxford (1990). These are the metacognitive strategies that help to get a better performance when learning at school or any other institution. Students use these strategies to learn almost everything, to solve their task or any assignment. The knowledge and practice of these strategies contribute greatly to improve the development of the four skills of the English language (speaking, reading, listening, writing), but especially speaking which is the center of attention of this study. If the students discover and develop the metacognitive strategies earlier in their studies, their knowledge will increase significantly.



This study looks at how the English language students learn through the use of the metacognitive strategies and how they influence in the English speaking development. English students do not have the knowledge of the application of metacognitive strategies. Therefore, students learn English language, because they have the ability to learn it, have a previous background or only for knowing it as a general knowledge. This process of acquisition of knowledge of English language is made conscious or in an unconscious way (Cohen, 1998) but without the use of essential strategies in the process of learning English, that is why students use different ways that they possess to learn it, without the use of one guide or strategy. In this sense it is important to emphasize that most of the students use these strategies without knowing they are using them.

### **1.3. Statement of the purpose**

The purpose of this study is to determine how the English students' speaking development is significantly improved when they use the metacognitive strategies. In the present investigation, the researchers will seek to measure the relationship between the metacognitive strategies and the English speaking proficiency of the students in their third- year, which are learning English at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador in the semester II of year 2014.

#### 1.4. Research questions

##### General research question:

To what extent does the use of metacognitive strategies influence the development of the students' English speaking proficiency of The English Teaching major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador?

##### Subsidiary questions:

- How does **the knowledge of metacognitive strategies help** or hinder the development of the English speaking proficiency?
- What is the level of conscious **or unconscious used of the metacognitive strategies** when students speak English?
- What are **the key metacognitive strategies used** when students speak English?

#### 1.5. Significance of the study

The importance of this study relies on the students' needs to be able to speak English in a proficient way through the use of the metacognitive strategies. The importance of this study is reflected on what some researchers have said about this topic. Mingyuh (2001) claims that: "when a metacognitive strategy was used as an independent variable, the result indicated that the more the students used this particular strategy, the more progress they made in their overall language proficiency" (p.65).

The study is significant due to the fact that if the students apply the metacognitive strategies to learn in a conscious way, the outcomes of applying these strategies should bring better results to the students. All this information only proves that the use of metacognitive strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to higher learning and better performance, (Anderson 2002 :1). This means that if the students are aware of these strategies they can apply them to learn in an easier way. In previous studies metacognitive strategies according to Cohen (1998) are the steps or actions consciously selected by learners to improve the learning or use of a second language. For these reasons the importance of this study has relevance among the students who want to become proficient at speaking English language.

### **1.6. Delimitations**

This research was carried out with the students' population from the third- year of the English Teaching major, at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador in San Salvador. The sample of the investigation was 330 students that were taking the subjects: Reading and Conversation I, Phonology and Morphology, Literature I, and Didactics of English III. These students were included because at this time of their studies, they are expected to have reached the desire English level or at least an acceptable one. Researchers decided to choose this specific number of students because they can generalize results. This investigation was carried out from May to December of 2014.

### **1.7. Assumptions**

The assumptions in this research are the following:

First of all, it is assumed that English students in their third- year of their English major are supposed to have a proficiency level of English; this means that they already have the necessary tools, as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, to establish a conversation and interact with others in a spoken manner. Secondly, Language learning strategies might be used by almost all language learners consciously or unconsciously when processing new information and performing tasks. Thirdly, some students are aware of these strategies because they apply them when a task is assigned by the teacher but students who are not aware of these strategies use them but without knowing that they are using them.

### **1.8. Definitions of terms**

This section provides **conceptual and operational definitions** about the key terms used in this research. The main concepts in which the investigation relies on are: English speaking proficiency, and metacognitive strategies. There are many definitions about these terms, but the researchers used those that are more appropriate for the present study in order to avoid misunderstandings, in relation with the dependent variable which is English speaking proficiency.

### **1.8.1. Conceptual definitions**

The first definition according to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) understood communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication as in the case of English speaking proficiency. The second definition metacognitive strategies, according to Cohen (1998), metacognitive strategies are: “The steps or actions consciously selected by learners to improve the learning or use of a second language”

### **1.8.2. Operational definitions**

In this study, English speaking proficiency was measured through the use of the interview guide called “Spiral Development” for English language learners. This consists of 5 questions and each question belongs to a specific level from the lowest A1 to the highest C2. Students are assigned a score for their speaking performance; the scores represent the extent to which the student exhibits certain level of English speaking proficiency. The scores (see annex 2) establish the Speaking English proficiency level reached by the students interviewed B1 (22 students), B2 (24 students) and C1 (4 students).

In relation with the metacognitive strategies were defined by a five-point scale in a questionnaire which consists of 50 close-ended Likert-type questions. Ranging from one to five in six parts based on Oxford’s classification of learning strategies, Oxford (2002) Although researchers will assess the whole strategies they will focus only in the metacognitive strategies to indicate the use of metacognitive strategies by the students

that is: never: 1; seldom: 2; sometimes: 3; usually: 4; and always: 5; for identifying the relationship between variables. Within the metacognitive strategies used by the students were I try to find out how to be a better learner of English and I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English (see table No.5).

### **1.9. Organization of the study**

The present section has been designed to illustrate how this study has been organized to provide a clear order of the chapters and the way how they have followed specific guidelines to be written. The whole thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 briefly introduces the introduction which includes the most important parts such as: the problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitations, assumptions, and the definitions of the main terms. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature that deals with the main theories and empirical researches in the field of English speaking proficiency and the metacognitive strategy also include the components of speaking proficiency and the metacognitive strategy and The Common European Framework.

Chapter 3 illustrates the methodology of the thesis. It states: Population and sample, sampling procedure, instrumentations, field testing, response rate, data collection procedures, data analysis, validating the findings, limitations, and summary. Chapter 4 is the analysis chapter. Here researchers analyze the data collected and the discussion of the findings is presented in detail. This section contains analyzed information gathered from the different instruments and pointed out some observations obtained from the results to measure the impact

on English speaking proficiency development when the metacognitive strategies are applied in the field of education, specifically oral skill. A summary is included together with recommendations and conclusions and finally, you will find a bibliography section. Chapter 5 is the discussion part; here the researchers discuss the major findings that were found on the present study. Besides that chapter 6 deals with the main conclusions and some recommendations that the researcher suggested on the investigation.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The aspects of English speaking proficiency and metacognitive strategies have been discussed by academic people for many years and most authors differ the way they analyze these topics. Old studies on these topics tell us about how important these issues have been throughout the time, in the development of oral learning specifically. The application of both subjects the metacognitive strategies and English speaking proficiency let the students to develop the speaking skill and experience in the learning of second language (L2), in an efficient manner.

In the learning process of speaking English there are specific guidelines to become a proficient speaker. The guidelines are an important tool and make a distinction among speakers in different levels and the socio-cultural situation context of every nation. The common European Framework is the institution in charge of measuring and regulating these levels of proficiency in speaking, as well as the three skills (writing, reading and listening) the CEF plays an important role when it comes to measure the learners' English speaking proficiency.

The research topic: "The use of metacognitive learning strategies and their Influence on English speaking proficiency of third-year students from the English Teaching major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador during the year 2014" makes reference to the importance in the development of English speaking proficiency, the components of metacognitive learning strategies and English speaking proficiency and also a review of some previous studies that deal with this relationship. Likewise, in this research are mentioned the two variables that lead this investigation. The metacognitive strategies which



represent the independent variable and its elements knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition, and the dependent variable English speaking proficiency which is formed by specific components as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, besides that how these are related to improve positive results in the skill of oral communication and how this help the students to perform cognitive tasks to improve English speaking proficiency.

The main goal of this investigation is to measure what is the impact of English speaking proficiency development when the metacognitive strategies are applied in the field of education, specifically oral skill. It hopes that this investigation leads the researchers to discover that the development of the English speaking proficiency is tied to the application of the metacognitive strategies, based on the literature found on this topic; it is the foundation to conduct this investigation in theory and practice for researchers and others that wants to conduct a similar research in a near future.

## **2.1 The components of English speaking proficiency and the components of metacognition**

In the previous chapter the researchers explained the metacognitive strategies and the English speaking proficiency importance. Even though the researchers have mentioned different definitions about metacognition and English speaking proficiency we have noticed that they have not mentioned the different elements that they are composed of. For this reason they are described below. We need to clarify that metacognition involves two primary components: knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition (White & Frederiksen, 2005).

The first component which is knowledge of cognition corresponds to stored knowledge about cognitive processes and knowing what strategies to use, how to use them, and when to use them (Schraw, 1998). According to Flavell (1987), “metacognitive knowledge refers to acquired knowledge about cognitive processes, knowledge that can be used to control cognitive processes” (p.31), Flavell further divides metacognitive knowledge into three categories: knowledge of person variables, task variables and strategy variables.

Stated very briefly, knowledge of person variables refers to general knowledge about how human beings learn and process information, as well as individual knowledge of one's own learning processes (Flavell, 1979). Knowledge of task includes knowledge about the nature of the task as well as the type of processing demands that it will place upon the individual. In addition, knowledge about strategy variables include knowledge about both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, as well as conditional knowledge about when and where it is appropriate to use such strategies. For example in the speaking area in order to practice English, people have to know grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

In previous studies metacognitive strategies, Cohen (1998) expressed that: “The steps or actions consciously selected by learners to improve the learning or use of a second language” (p.44). Metacognitive strategies are defined as the skills to oversee regulate and direct the language learning (Vandergrift, 1999). These strategies which involve thinking about the learning process include planning, evaluating and monitoring. Furthermore, these definitions express a specific sequence of processes in the learning of a language.

Anderson (2000) claims that there are main strategies in metacognition they include: preparing and planning for learning, selecting and using learning strategies, monitoring strategy use, orchestrating various strategies, evaluating strategy use. It is based on the sense that it depends on learners' familiarity with the task, motivation, emotion, and so forth. All this information only proves that the use of metacognitive strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to higher learning and better performance, (Anderson, 2002: 1).

Based on what the authors have said about the main components for metacognition researchers present how metacognitive strategies are applied. In the learning process of a second language according to Anderson (2000) the first metacognitive strategy is to prepare and plan which is used in different tasks. In the case of the delivery of a speech, the learner has to think about the points that he or she has to take into consideration when presenting them. The students have to plan in order to accomplish their goals, in the case of speech they have to choose a topic, look for information, write a draft, and set up the speech time among others. In relation to their learning goal, students think about what their goals are and how they will go about accomplishing them.

Following the example of delivering a speech, another metacognitive strategy is to select and use a particular strategy. The students have to think about how the speech is going to be delivered, what tone of voice and other elements of the speech that are going to be used and how to select vocabulary in a given context for a specific purpose which, means that the learner thinks and makes conscious decisions about the learning process.

The next metacognitive strategy is monitoring strategy use. By examining and monitoring the use of learning strategies, students have more chances of success in meeting their learning goals (Anderson, 2002). Once they have selected and begun to use the specific strategies, they need to check periodically as in the speech example the students have to think about the rate of speed, use of good pronunciation, intonation, time of speech and whether or not those strategies are effective and being used as intended.

Another strategy is to know how to use a mix of strategies in an orchestrated fashion as an important metacognitive skill. The research has shown that successful language learners tend to select strategies that work well together in a highly orchestrated way, tailored to the requirements of the language task successfully (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Wenden, 1998). English learners students can easily explain the strategies they use and why they employ them (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Subsequently, with the same example of the speech, in order to be successful the students have to make a combination of all the strategies to achieve better results during the process of a particular task, also with the mixture of all the strategies the students get familiar with them and they can select the best one for them, and use the most appropriate while developing a new task.

The last strategy is evaluating, which means that the learners of a second language are able to evaluate their performance during the development of a specific assignment for example the speech delivery. It should be noticed that different metacognitive strategies interact together when learning English. The strategies referred above are not used in a linear fashion. More than one metacognitive process along with cognitive ones may be working together during a learning task (Anderson, 2002). Therefore the orchestration of various strategies is a vital component of second language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular. Allowing learners opportunities to think about and talk about how they combine various strategies facilitates strategy use.

The other component of metacognition that controls or monitors the knowledge of cognition is called regulation. Anderson (2002) believes that metacognitive regulation allows students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning, have the most central role to play in the improvement of learning and he also believes that developing metacognitive awareness may also lead to the development of stronger cognitive skills. Similarly, regulation of cognition refers to active monitoring of cognitive processes and the actual use of strategies employed by learners (Nietfeld&Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2011). While knowledge about cognition facilitates the reflective aspect of metacognition, regulation of cognition encompasses the controlling aspect of learning (Schraw& Dennison, 1994).

Metacognitive regulation has different definitions depending on the author's opinion. In accordance with Lai (2011) expressed that: "metacognitive regulation is the monitoring of one's cognition and includes planning activities, awareness of comprehension, task performance and evaluation of the efficacy of monitoring processes and strategies" (p.19). Another opinion, metacognitive regulation or metacognitive experiences involve the use of metacognitive strategies or metacognitive regulation (Brown, 1987). Metacognitive strategies are sequential processes that people use to control cognitive strategies, and to ensure that a cognitive goal (e.g., understanding a text) has been met. These processes help to regulate and oversee learning, and consist of planning, and monitoring cognitive activities, as well as checking the outcomes of those activities.

Based in the definition of regulation of cognition that was proposed by Nietfeld&Linnenbrink Garcia (2011), is important to emphasize this process of regulation, the components of English speaking proficiency that are monitored and evaluated for developing and improving an effective way to speaking. To get a clear idea about what is speaking proficiency, Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) defined it as understood communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication. Furthermore, Bygate (1987) declared that: "to become a proficient English as a foreign language speaker, studying the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, etc. is not adequate but the ability to use this knowledge in order to communicate successfully is indispensable"(p. 37).

Besides that, Brown (2006) argued that: “speakers should first anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of any given discourse situation” (p.29). They should also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, refreshing, providing feedback, or repaying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement (Ellis, 2003; Hedge, 2000).

Consistent with these authors, English speaking proficiency is formed by several components that are essential for an effective communication. As cited by Fulcher, (2003) “speaking a language is especially difficult for foreign language learners because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions” (p.27). According to the components of English speaking proficiency and the strategies used by regulation of cognition is necessary to know the English speaking proficiency level that we possess through the Common European Framework (CEF) used for Council Europe.

An essential guideline in the area of English speaking proficiency is the Common European Framework (CEF), consistent with Language Policy Unit, Strasbourg, Council of Europe (2001). It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. The framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners’ progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis.

This system adds a variety of items to measure both language skills and to develop specific programs of teaching in a specific language. Likewise, this guideline is formed for three specific levels which are Basic User as the lowest level, (A), Independent User as the intermediate level(B), and Proficient User as the highest level of proficiency (C); each of these are divided into two levels from 1 to 2.

## **2.2 The importance of metacognition in the development of English speaking proficiency**

The first application of the term metacognition was made by Flavell in 1979, who attempted to elaborate on the notion of metacognition within a theoretical framework, but it was until 1990 that the framework was then proposed and utilized by Wenden (1991) as well as Yang (1992) who investigated second language learners' metacognitive knowledge.

In this study, regarding to metacognition's definition Hacker (2009) points out, that metacognition allows people to take charge of their own learning. It involves awareness of how they learn, an evaluation of their learning needs, generating strategies to meet these needs and then implementing the strategies. Metacognition helps people to perform cognitive tasks more effectively and also the use of metacognition is closely related to language's domain.

In the learning of a second language one of the most important domains is speaking which in this study is the most important variable and also is the focus of this research. To measure what is the influence of metacognitive strategies in the English speaking proficiency of the students at the Department of Foreign Languages is important to find the link between these



variables, this is essential to support this investigation. Some authors have written about what is English speaking proficiency however, they differ from one another in their opinions. Lazaraton (2001) believes that: “for most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication”. Other author to support this is Folse (2006) he claims that for most people, being able to speak a language means knowing that language since speech is the most fundamental means of communication among human beings. Nevertheless, speaking in a second or foreign language learning context has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four language skills.

Speaking a language is especially difficult for foreign language learners because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions (Fulcher, 2003). Another author cited, Shumin (2002) declared that: “Learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing grammatical and semantic roles” Learners should also, Shumin continues, “acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange in which many factors interact (p. 204).

The Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2009) defines speaking: “as the action of conveying information or expressing ones thoughts and feelings in spoken languages” (p.414). In language teaching and learning, speaking is considered a skill to be mastered. Nunan (2003) included that: “speaking is the productive oral skill; it consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning” (p.48) as is cited in (Hong, 2010). The other important element is proficiency, which is defined by The American Heritage Dictionary of the English

Language, Fourth Edition 2000: “ As having or marked by an advanced degree of competence, in art, vocation, profession, or branch of learning” (p. 310). Consequently it is important to mention the relationship of these terms referred before which are part of the dependent variable.

According to Halliday (1993) English speaking proficiency is not a domain of human knowledge; it is the essential condition of knowing the process by which experience becomes knowledge. In addition, Ellis (2003) as well as Hedge (2000) expressed that English speaking proficiency is a part of language proficiency which can be developed through using learning strategies. Since, proficiency in a second language is measured through different methods in order to know the exact level of speaking that people manage, fluency and accuracy are two essential factors in speaking, and the choice of teaching strategy helps language learners to become competent speakers.

Analyzing what authors have said about English speaking proficiency, the researchers agreed on their opinions. For Lazaraton (2001) “speech is the most basic means of human communication” (p.65), as oral communication is the most basic form of language in order to communicate our ideas, thoughts and opinion in an oral context. In addition about what has been mentioned before, the metacognitive strategies are derived from metacognition which plays an important role during the process of learning a second language by Hacker (2009). For him, “metacognition allows people to take charge of their own learning, it involves awareness of how they learn an evaluation of their learning needs, generating strategies to meet these needs and then implementing the strategies” (p.69).

There is much research (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001; Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002; Bolitho et al., 2003) that point out that learners' metacognition can directly affect the process and the outcome of their learning. This research studies this relationship and its relative importance to the English speaking proficiency, since often teachers and students think about metacognition one specific genre that never changes but this does not have to be the case, metacognition is not a static form since it works in many dynamic ways. Hedge (2000) agrees that the application of a metacognitive strategy contributes to be more competent for the students or learners and English speaking proficiency is a part of language proficiency thus applying any of the metacognitive strategies available helps to the development of English speaking proficiency in a better way.

Taking a look on Brown (2006), he argues that: "speakers should first anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of any given discourse situation" (p.35). He pointed out that components such as vocabulary, rate of speech and grammar as well as turn-taking, refreshing and providing feedback are essential parts in the success of interaction when speaking English. Researchers are certain that these factors play a key role when a learner is developing his or her English speaking proficiency.

### **2.3 Applied studies that discuss the role of metacognitive strategies use and the development of speaking proficiency.**

In Bangladesh an investigation was carried out in 2012. This was about the use of metacognitive Language learning strategies. This study revealed that there was a strong correlation between metacognitive strategies and English speaking proficiency.

Mingyuan (2001) claimed that: “when a metacognitive strategy was used as an independent variable, the result indicated that the more the students used this particular strategy, the more progress they made in their overall language proficiency” (p.65). This study explored the use patterns of metacognitive strategies by different proficiency level of students and the relationship between learners’ proficiency level and metacognitive strategy use. The subjects of this study were 100 students from BRAC University’s Centre for Languages (CFL). It was used a writing and speaking admission test, CFL that placed its students into different modules beginning, intermediate and advanced level. Beside that in this study was used the metacognitive section of Oxford’s (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), a questionnaire to determine the use of language learning strategy (LLS) where participants of this study had to respond to each statement on a Likert scale.

The results obtained from the data suggested that the mean in the use of metacognitive strategies among the low proficient students was 3.72, which according to the intensity analysis of SILL of this study meant that they were high users of the metacognitive strategies. The mean of individual response score of these students fluctuated from 4.1 to 3.0. On the other hand, high proficiency students’ data suggested that their mean in the use of metacognitive strategy was 3.5, and they were also high users of the metacognitive strategy. The mean of individual students’ responses in this category fluctuated from 4.8 to 2.1. As a result, it is clearly evident from the data, that students even with low proficiency in BRAC University were aware of the use of metacognitive strategies and this awareness transformed them into either high or moderate users of the metacognitive strategies.

On the contrary, high proficiency students' data revealed that 6% of them were very high users of metacognitive strategies, 38% were high users, 54% were moderate users and 2% were low users of metacognitive strategies. In this study was discovered that students with low proficiency English language skills used metacognitive strategies more frequently than students with high proficiency skills, and students of both low and high proficiency were frequent users of them.

Another study which supports the relationship between metacognitive strategies and English speaking proficiency is the study about "the Impact of Metacognitive Instruction on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension and Oral Language Proficiency" that was conducted at the University of Tehran during summer 2013. This study examined the effect of metacognitive instruction, in comparison to the effect of conventional teaching of listening (pre-listening, listening, post-listening), on English as foreign language (EFL) learners' metacognitive awareness of listening strategies, listening comprehension, and oral language proficiency. The total sample consisted of fifty students of two upper-intermediate English courses.

The control group included 17 female and 8 male students and the experimental group included 18 female and 7 male students both undergraduate students. For sixteen weeks the experimental group participated in metacognitive instruction of listening with the aim of promoting their metacognitive awareness of listening strategies while they listen. Moreover in that study was used listening and speaking sections of Teaching of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) to assess students' listening comprehension and oral proficiency before and after the

study. The instructor trained students of the experimental group to apply listening strategies during a 16-sessions semester by emphasizing the use of strategies in different listening activities. Sixteen listening tasks of Open Forum (Duncan & Parker, 2007) were used to teach listening. Meanwhile the control group received instruction based on a three phase pre-listening, listening, post listening procedure using the same teaching material; however, they did not receive instruction on strategy use while doing listening tasks.

The findings of this study mentioned above revealed that metacognitive awareness of listening strategies can have a significant positive effect on students' oral proficiency (Pallant, 2010). The results showed that there was a statistically significance difference between control and experimental groups' performance on the combined dependent variables (listening and speaking posttests). The mean scores of the experimental group's listening and speaking posttests (22.44 and 14.08 respectively) were higher than those of the control group (20.64 and 12.40 respectively).

The findings that metacognitive instruction had increased the awareness of listening strategies and impacted English speaking proficiency with no significant change of listening proficiency seems odd at first glance. It suggested that oral proficiency improved as a result of a significant change in the level of strategy awareness and perceived use after metacognitive instruction. In other words, metacognitive listening strategies awareness had affected speaking, both indirectly (through listening) and directly (through the strategy use).

This justifies the indirect effect of metacognitive awareness of listening strategies on English speaking proficiency because “listening is an intention to complete a communication” (Rost, 2002:40). Therefore, it concludes that metacognitive instruction caused improvement in the experimental groups’ oral proficiency but did not improve their listening comprehension significantly. The researchers have made reference to the issues of metacognitive strategies and their influence on English speaking proficiency. They described the importance of metacognitive strategies in the development of English speaking proficiency.

In addition they affirm that when learning a second language one of the most important skills to master is speaking. Researchers highlighted how the components of metacognition knowledge and regulations of cognition affect this process and the outcome of learning. They agreed that the application of metacognitive strategies contributed to be more competent for the students, as English speaking proficiency is part of language proficiency thus applying any of the metacognitive strategies help to the development of English speaking proficiency.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

This section of the research has been designed to show the processes to be followed in the research. The methodology chapter consists of the following sections: research design, population and sample, sample procedure, instrumentation, data collection procedure, data analysis, and limitations. The research design of the study is structured as a non-experimental design and also transversal - correlational study. Besides, in the population and sample are described the individuals which are the subjects of this research.

Moreover, the specific type of sampling used is the stratified sample, because it lets the researchers to obtain the sub-samples. In addition, in the instrumentation section the two instruments implemented for each of the variables are described, these are going to be used to collect the information and establish the relation between both. In the data collection procedure, it is presented the schedule time to collect the data and the place where it was collected. In the data analysis, the researchers made some interpretations with the purpose to establish a relationship between the variables under study. The last part of the methodology is the limitations. These are constrains of this study that the researchers cannot control either external factors or internal factors that arose during the investigation.

### **3.1. Research design**

In this study the non-experimental design was used. This design which is the label given to the study when researchers do not control, manipulate or alter the predictor variable or subjects, as in the case of English speaking proficiency, but instead, relies on interpretation or



interactions to come to a conclusion. Isaac and Michael (1995) provide an excellent resource to understand the research design. This means that the non-experimental research must rely on correlations that can demonstrate a cause-effect relationship. The non-experimental research tends to have a high level of external validity, meaning that it can be generalized to a larger population, Sampierie (2006). As well, this investigation was transactional or transversal because the data was collected at one time. Furthermore, the type of study was correlational – causal, because the researchers sought to determine the relationship between the two variables that are being studied: Metacognitive strategies and English speaking proficiency.

### **3.2. Population and sample**

The students from the Department of Foreign Languages located at the University of El Salvador were the population where the researchers were selected the sample of the present investigation. This group of learners, who has been chosen for the sample, that were male and female, but the large majority to be considered, was the female group, which represented the 60%; the male group represented the 40% which was the total sample. The range of their ages was from 18 years to 30 years of age, and their study schedule was in the morning and in the afternoon. These English students were taking their third- year of studies at the University of El Salvador.

The population of the investigation was 330 English students in their third- year from the English Teaching major, second semester in the current year 2014. These students were taking the following subjects: Reading and Conversation I, Phonology and Morphology, Literature I,

and Didactics of English III. This population was taken into account, because they are in the learning process of developing their speaking skills and it was considered that at this point of their studies, they have reached a certain level of English speaking proficiency, therefore they may have acquired the necessary tools to understand and interact with others people in spoken English. This should be a requirement for students coursing this level, because they have approved subjects such as English advanced I and II, it is assumed that by the time they have reached this level, they should be able to communicate in spoken English language.

### **3.3. Sample procedure**

The type of sample and procedure used was stratified random sampling. This one is a sampling method in which the population is divided into strata. Within each stratum, there are elements located in a homogenous way with respect to the other features of the study. For each stratum a subsample is taking through the procedure of a simple random and the global sample is obtained combining the subsamples from all the strata, Bonilla Gilberto (1992). Due to the type of research and the sample, the researchers used the population of each subsample that was of 14 students from the subject of Reading and Conversation I, 12 students of Phonology and Morphology, 14 students of Literature I and 10 students of Didactics of English III. The stratum already detailed according to some of its features was homogenous. The researchers have chosen the students from the same major and the same year, but they belong to different groups, and they were taking different subjects. However, they had something in common, they have already passed all the English courses, and it is expected that they have reached the required level in their oral skill. For this reason, the stratified random sample was applied.

The sample of this investigation was 50 students. This sample was divided into four strata and each of these strata had its own subsample. Each stratum was represented by the subjects of reading and conversation I, phonology and morphology, Literature I, and didactics of English III. The procedure that was used to select the subsample was the following: In the subject Reading and conversation I, the subsample was 14 students. The formula used to select this subsample was 90 which was the total of students from this subject; this was divided by 330, this was the total population of the four strata, this result 0.27 was multiplied by 50 students. The product 13.63 which was rounded off gives 14 the total sample of Reading and conversation.

The same procedure was applied to the other three strata which were: Phonology and Morphology with 80 students, Literature I with 90 students, and didactics of English III with 70 students. In the process of working with this formula, it is necessary to be aware of the numbers that were rounded off, because it helped to obtain the precise number of subsamples. The addition of whole subsamples was the total sample 50 students and it was considered a probabilistic method for the use of statistical formula.

#### **3.4. Data collection instruments**

The researchers described in detail the type of instruments that they implemented to the population being involved. These instruments were: a questionnaire and an interview guide with its respective rubric. Similarly, for the exploration of the students' metacognitive strategy, researchers used the Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) for speakers of other languages learning English which is a language learning strategy instrument

that has been extensively field-tested for its reliability and validated in multiple ways (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). It has been used in studies that correlated strategy use with variables such as learning style, gender, and proficiency level (Oxford, 1998).

### **SILL questionnaire**

The first instrument that researchers used was a questionnaire which consists of 50 close-ended Likert-type questions. Ranging from one to five in six parts based on Oxford's classification of learning strategies, Oxford (2002), that is, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. In this study, the students only answered the questions which were related to metacognitive strategies and asked to indicate their use of metacognitive strategies on a five-point scale, that is: never: 1; seldom: 2; sometimes: 3; usually: 4; and always: 5; since an interval scale was necessary for identifying the relationship between variables, numerical values were given to each option.

### **Oral interview**

The second instrument was an interview guide to assess students' English speaking proficiency level. This guide is called Spiral Development and it is used to interview students and consists of 5 questions. Each question belongs to a specific level from the lowest A1 to the highest C2. Its reliability has been established in the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR - Council of Europe). The interview guide is decoded and rated by the rubric Common Reference Levels global scale to assess spoken performance whose

reliability has been established in the Common European Framework (CEF). This rubric describes a continuum of performances from Level C2 (most proficient) to Level A1 (least proficient) there are six criteria (called dimensions or descriptors) in the speaking rubric: Range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, and coherence.

The descriptors are articulated in the left column of the rubric (see annex No.1) here it is described the characteristics of the performance at each level. The scorers are in the top of the rubric in numerical way from 1 to 6. Scores are determined by matching evidence from exchanges with students to the language of the rubric. Students are assigned a score for their performance in speaking on each of the six dimensions. The raw scores for each dimension represent the extent to which the student exhibits proficiency on that dimension; that is to say, the individual scores recognize a student's strength in the areas of range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, and coherence. The scores for each dimension are then added to determine a total raw score. The raw score is converted to a score ranging from 0 to 30 points which establishes the Speaking English proficiency level reached by the students interviewed.

### **3.5. Data collection procedure**

The data collection procedure was done with students at Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, located in San Salvador. This process began in September of 2014 and was completed by December of the same year. The period of time in which this procedure was done, it was in the semester II when the students of the third- year were taking their English subjects. In the same way to collect all the information needed,

students were chosen at a random way outside of the Department of Foreign Languages.

Students were asked to fill out a questionnaire about the use of metacognitive strategies. Before collecting the data, researchers mentioned the purpose of the questionnaire and made it clear that their responses were not going to have good or right answer. They were requested to give their responses sincerely to avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation.

The students' level of English speaking proficiency was assessed by the use of the interview guide. A spiral development interview was designed to elicit greater depth of information regarding the students' English speaking proficiency level. The interviews were conducted for no longer than 5 minutes. Each researcher of the study team conducted each interview. The interviews were recorded on a recorder and later reviewed. These recordings served as the basis to produce data with observations, and establish their relationship with metacognitive strategies. In order to avoid any error to the reliability of the scores, the interview guide was scored by the researchers. The mean of the scores for each participant was calculated and reported as the students' interview score. It was expected that the data obtained throughout the study to confirm what the literature review states.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

The data analysis is the last part that is going to provide the final outcome in the investigation. All data collected was analyzed with the use of statistics formula, making use of the Excel and its applications, and the SPSS program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). As well, the researchers used Excel as fundamental base, after that, these data was

passed to SPSS program for its respective analysis with the help of specific tools as Anova and Chi square that this program has because these programs provide a reliable results for any investigation. These are used to empty, to tabulate, to analyze figures and to process the collected data; it is also used to make crosstabs to obtain accurate results of the fields` information. This investigation followed a quantitative method to investigate the research questions. In other words, for the data analysis researchers used descriptive statistics; means, frequencies, standard deviation and percentages, Pearson chi-square and ANOVA (analysis of variance).

### **3.7. Limitations**

The limitations of the research were:

The first limitation was related to the instruments specifically the questionnaire, because each of the questions were not explained before collecting the responses. This is due to the length of the instrument that was too long and as a result, it was time consuming for the students. The second limitation was related to the environment outside the Department of Foreign Languages which was not the appropriated due to background noise that did not allow to get better answers from the students during the interview.

## **CHAPTER IV: ANALYZING AND PRESENTING THE RESULTS**

The steps followed to get the results concerning to the three subsidiary questions: previous knowledge, key metacognitive strategies and where the strategies were more used, were obtained using the statistical SPSS (statistical package for social science) program to interpret the quantitative data within this study which is “ The use of metacognitive learning strategies and their influence on English speaking proficiency of third-year students from the English Teaching major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador during year 2014”

To answer the research questions, the researchers used two statistical tools the ANOVA and the chi square. These tools help to provide an accurate result among the variables. The significance standard level of these tools is 0.05 which let the researchers to get either a positive or negative results. If the significance level is higher than 0.05 there is no dependency or relation between the variables under study. On the contrary, if the significance level is lower than 0.05 there is dependency or relation between the variables; this was the parameter used in the present results.

### **4.1. Analysis of research questions**

#### **General research question:**

To what extent does the use of metacognitive strategies influence the development of the students' English speaking proficiency?



Based on the results of the ANOVA which significant level was 0.184, there is no influence of the metacognitive strategies on the development of the students' English speaking proficiency. The result did not show any relation of dependency between the variables under study and showed that the English speaking proficiency does not depend on the use of these strategies. Students did not apply the metacognitive strategies and their previous knowledge allowed them only to use some key strategies but only in class.

**Table 1.** The results of the ANOVA between the use of metacognitive strategies and the students' English speaking proficiency.

**ANOVA**

GRAL_AVERAGE_SILL					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.940	2	.470	155	<b>.184</b>
Within Groups	12.586	47	.268		
Total	13.526	49			

Source: SILL questionnaire and English speaking proficiency test administered to students from the third- year of the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of El Salvador, semester II-2014.

### Subsidiary question 1

How does **the knowledge of metacognitive strategies help** or hinder the development of the English speaking proficiency?

Based on the results of the Chi square which significant level was of 0.950 in the general average score of the SILL. The results of the Chi square revealed that there was not a significant dependency between the students' knowledge of the metacognitive strategies and the students'

English speaking proficiency. This means that the previous knowledge of the metacognitive strategies do not influence in the development of the English speaking proficiency.

**Table 2.** The results of the Chi square between the students' knowledge about metacognitive strategies and students' English speaking proficiency.

**CHI- SQUARE**

	Value	gl	Sig
Pearson Chi Square	.102 <sup>a</sup>	2	<b>.950</b>
Reason of similarities	.102	2	.950
Linear by linear association	.082	1	.774
N of valid cases	50		

a. 2 Boxes (33.3%) have a expected frequency inferior to 5. The minimum frequency expected is 1.92.

Source: SILL questionnaire and English speaking proficiency test administered to students from the third- year of the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of El Salvador, semester II-2014.

## Subsidiary question 2

What is the level of conscious **or unconscious used of the metacognitive strategies** when students speak English?

According to the results of the Chi square which the significance level was 0.815 between the metacognitive strategies used in class conscious or unconscious and students' English speaking proficiency showed that there was not a significant association between the two variables the metacognitive strategies used in class and students' English speaking proficiency.

**Table 3.** Presents the results of Chi square between the metacognitive strategies used in class conscious or unconscious and students' English speaking proficiency.

**CHI- SQUARE**

	Value	gl	Sig
Pearson Chi Square	.410 <sup>a</sup>	2	<b>.815</b>
Reason of similarities	.434	2	.805
Linear by linear association	.134	1	.714
N of valid cases	50		

a. 2 Boxes (33.3%) have a expected frequency inferior to 5. The minimum frequency expected is 1.60.

Source: SILL questionnaire and English speaking proficiency test administered to students from the third -year of the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, semester II-2014

The results of the Chi Square which significance level was 0.537 between the metacognitive strategies used conscious or unconscious at home and students' English speaking proficiency. According to the results of the Chi square, there was not a significant association between the two variables the metacognitive strategies used at home and students' English speaking proficiency.

**Table 4.** Presents the results of Chi Square between the metacognitive strategies used conscious or unconscious at home and students' English speaking proficiency.

**CHI- SQUARE**

	Value	gl	Sig
Pearson Chi Square	1.245 <sup>a</sup>	2	<b>.537</b>
Reason of similarities	1.250	2	.535
Linear by linear association	.469	1	.494

N of valid cases

50

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a. 2 Boxes (33.3%) have a expected frequency inferior to 5. The minimum frequency expected is 1.20.

Source: SILL questionnaire and English speaking proficiency test administered to students from the third- year of the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, semester II-2014

### Subsidiary question 3

What are **the key metacognitive strategies used** when students speak English?

The key metacognitive strategies in which there was a positive relation of dependency were the following: In memory strategy A4 “I remember a new English word by making a mental picture” meanwhile in the cognitive strategies B6 “I watch English language TV shows” and B8 “I write note, messages or reports in English”.

In the affective strategy, only the strategy E2 “I encourage myself to speak English even when I make mistakes”. In the case of affective strategy F5 “I ask question in English” and F6 “I try to learn about the culture of English speakers” showed a relation regarding the English speaking proficiency.

However, there were strategies which did not show any relation of dependency with the English speaking proficiency, but they were more used by the students. These were the following: the memory strategy A9 “I remember new English phrases by remembering the location on the page” is used but without relation with the proficiency. The compensation strategy C1 “To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses”. The metacognitive

strategies D3 “I pay attention when someone is speaking English” and D9 “I think about my progress in learning English”. The affective strategy E4 “I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am using English”. In the social strategy (were used 4 out six) F1 “If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or to say it again” and F4 “I ask for help from English speakers” did not show any relation.

**Table 5.** Presents the results of Chi Square and frequency between the key metacognitive strategies used and students' English speaking proficiency.

#### CHI- SQUARE

Learning Strategies	English speaking proficiency level			Descriptive statistic Frequency	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) Chi-Square
	B1	B2	C1		
Memory strategy					
A4	4	10	4	18	<b><u>0.04</u></b>
A9	3	9	1	13	<b><u>0.072</u></b>
Cognitive strategy					
B6	5	16	2	23	<b><u>0.02</u></b>
B8	4	12	2	18	<b><u>0.03</u></b>
Compensation strategy					
C1	7	9	2	18	<b><u>0.82</u></b>
Metacognitive strategy					
D3	10	11	3	24	<b><u>0.71</u></b>
D9	6	12	3	21	<b><u>0.61</u></b>
Affective strategy					
E2	7	13	3	23	<b><u>0.02</u></b>
E4	7	9	1	17	<b><u>0.80</u></b>
Social strategy					
F1	9	13	2	24	<b><u>0.58</u></b>
F4	4	8	2	14	<b><u>0.54</u></b>
F5	4	15	3	22	<b><u>.013</u></b>
F6	2	13	1	16	<b><u>.013</u></b>

#### Mode : 5

Source: SILL questionnaire and English speaking proficiency test administered to students from the third- year of the Department of Foreign

Languages of the University of El Salvador, semester II-2014

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Discussion (major findings)

During the investigation it was expected that there was correlation between the variables: English speaking proficiency and the use of the different metacognitive strategies. However, the findings obtained in this study proved to be different. The relation between the variables metacognitive strategies and English speaking proficiency did not correlate; this means that there is not dependency from one to another in this investigation.

These results were obtained because the students did not receive previous teaching about the strategy that helps them to become competent speakers (Ellis, 2003; Hedge, 2000) whereby there was not a significant association between the students' knowledge of the metacognitive strategies and the students' English speaking proficiency. Besides that, the students were not trained previously about the use of the metacognitive strategies; according to Oxford (1990) integrating instructions into the classrooms helps learners to become more efficient in their efforts to learn a foreign language. For instance, in previous researches "the metacognitive strategies have made an important influence on students' English speaking proficiency" (Rahimi & Katal, 2013).

Another factor that should be considered is the effect of planning time (Ellis, 2008) on speech production that may account for the direct impact of metacognitive strategies on English speaking proficiency. Planning time can impact fluency, complexity, and accuracy of speech production. Regular students do not take advantage of the strategies available as an effective

language learners does, they are aware of the strategies they use and why they use them.

Likewise, skilled language learners level C1 select those strategies that work well for specific tasks. Less effective learners B1 are also aware of their learning strategies, but employ them randomly, without a careful selection or focus of a particular strategy for any assigned task. It is true that learning involves a relaxing environment without worrying about detailed aspects of the language, but it is also true that there are moments in which the learners need to examine the language they are using and apply strategies to improve their speaking output.

The findings of the study revealed that there was a positive pattern between the key metacognitive strategies that students know and use and English speaking proficiency. In the case of the memory strategy (I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used) was the key strategy that made students store new information in the learning of speaking. Besides that, the cognitive strategy (I watch English language TV shows or go to movies spoken in English) and (I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English) were the most outstanding strategies used by the students.

The possible reason to explain this is that involve direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of the target language, and at the same time the use of these strategies help students to get the needed vocabulary therefore, the students are rewarded to improve their learning to speak. Intermediate students B1 and B2 focused their attention more on affective strategy E2 “I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake” and social strategy F5 “I ask questions in English” F6I “try to learn about the culture of English speakers”

They preferred these affective strategies for anxiety reduction, self-reward, and self-encouragement in their effort to improve their English speaking proficiency. Therefore, the combinations of these strategies encourage them and show that English speaking proficiency improvement can be achieved.

Considering the place where the metacognitive strategies are more used by the students, the results showed that the students used different metacognitive strategies only in class and not at home. The reason to explain this fact relies on the students' schedule because the majority of them attended class in the afternoon. This means that they work and study at the same time that is why these students just limit to attend to their classroom lessons and use regular language learning materials. As result, they did not use out-of-class English language related activities in order to development English speaking proficiency in the English language. Therefore, it could not be established a link between the place where the metacognitive strategies are more used by the students and the English speaking proficiency level.

In the analyzed questions by the researchers, the results followed unfavorable pattern that led them to conclude that the research hypothesis was null. The research hypothesis did not receive any evidence in favor about the metacognitive strategies influence on students' English speaking proficiency. For this reason, the null hypothesis is accepted due to the findings did not give any evidence that support the stated hypothesis. Finally, this does not mean that this investigation lacks of importance.



## CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

### 6.1. Conclusion.

From the data analysis results and the discussion the following conclusions can be drawn from this investigation:

The researchers conclude that the development of the English speaking proficiency of the students not always depend over the use of the metacognitive strategies, this investigation has concluded that even if the students have some knowledge about the learning strategies, it is not enough to learn to develop their speaking skills. The findings of this study show a little or any influence of the metacognitive strategies on English speaking proficiency, at the same time, the findings do not provide evidence that the metacognitive strategies have influence in oral language proficiency.

This result can be attributed to factors such as: the speaker characteristics, the context of teaching, learners' preferences for strategy use and level of English language proficiency. Furthermore, it was found that there is not always dependency among variables, as in the case of this investigation where no dependency was found between the uses of the metacognitive strategies and the English speaking proficiency of the students. It is important to mention that in this investigation the null hypothesis is accepted based on the results of the SPSS's calculations, ANOVAs and Chi Square, due to the fact that the values were above the 0.05.

The study also showed that there are some key strategies (shown in the table 5) that are more important than others and the students use them more in the development of their speaking skills. The findings also highlight the relation of English speaking proficiency and some key strategies in the process of improving the oral communication. Besides that this study underlines the need to heighten students' metacognitive strategy awareness and use especially in speaking classes.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

According with the obtained results in this investigation, the researchers recommend the following:

- The use of the metacognitive strategies should be included in a syllabus of English subjects basic courses in universities and schools. In order to provide the students with an early knowledge of these strategies so in this way, by the time students reach a higher level in their studies they will be aware of these metacognitive strategies in order to develop a better learning, but specifically the development of their oral skills.

- Teachers must encourage students to speak in a proficient manner promoting some strategies that helps the students focusing on the development of English speaking proficiency and also the proper use of the language. To find a strategy of this type, it is necessary to take into account that people learn in different ways depending on their personality, motivation to learn the language and a strong desire to become in a proficient speaker.

•The researchers encouraged the teachers to suggest the students to use the metacognitive strategies not only during the class but also at home when they are learning to develop their oral skill, Students should ask teachers about new ways to learn some learning strategies specifically those students with a lack of knowledge about them or ask their peers for information about what they have done to become better students and improve in their learning.

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## APPENDIX

### ANNEX 1

#### RUBRIC TO ASSESS SPOKEN PERFORMANCE - COMMON REFERENCE LEVELS: GLOBAL SCALE

DESCRIPTORS	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>RANGE</b>	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details.	Uses basic sentences patterns with memorized phrases, in order to communicate limited information.	Has enough language to get by with sufficient vocabulary to express himself or herself with some hesitation.	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear description, express view points on must general topics.	Has a good command of a range of the language allow him or her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range on general topics.	Shows a great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely.
<b>ACCURACY</b>	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns.	Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently use patterns associated with more predictable situations.	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control and can correct most of his/her mistakes.	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare.	Maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged.
<b>FLUENCY</b>	Can manage very short, isolated, mainly prepackage utterances with much pausing to search for expressions.	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances even though pauses false starts and reformulation are very evident.	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident.	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo. There are few noticeably long pauses.	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly.	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously at length with a natural flow.

<b>INTERACTION</b>	Can ask and answer questions about personal details: can interact in a simple way but communication is totally depending on repetition.	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going.	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face to face conversation on topic that are familiar or of personal interest.	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end a conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly.	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to get or to keep the floor.	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly.
<b>COHERENCE</b>	Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connector.	Can link group of word with simple connectors.	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherence discourse.	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, and well-structured speech. Showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.	Can create a coherent and cohesive discourse making full and appropriate use of variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of connectors.
<b>Total score</b>						

## ANNEX 2

<b>SCORING CHART</b>			
<b>Language ability</b>	<b>Common Reference level</b>	<b>English level</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>PROFICIENT USER</b>	C2	Native speaker	26 to 30
	C1	Advanced speaker	21 to 25
<b>INDEPENDENT USER</b>	B2	Upper Intermediate speaker	16 to 20
	B1	Intermediate speaker	11 to 15
<b>BASIC USER</b>	A2	Elementary speaker	6 to 10
	A1	Starter speaker	0 to 5

## ANNEX 3

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ART AND SCIENCE  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT  
GRADUATION PROJECT



OBJECTIVE: To measure the speaking proficiency level of third-year students semester II- 2014 at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>SPIRAL DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>PROFICIENCY LEVEL</b>	<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>LANGUAGE NEEDED</b>
<b>A1.</b>	Where do you go on vacation?	Descriptive language
<b>A2.</b>	What do you like to do on vacation?	Descriptive language, like and dislike, list
<b>B1.</b>	What kind of vacation do you prefer and why?	More extended description; preferences

<b>B2.</b>	How traveling would help you career options?	Presenting points of views
<b>C1.</b>	How might travel change the way you look at the world?	Presenting an argument, organized points of support, exploring alternative outcomes.
<b>C2.</b>	“The real voyage of discovery consist not in seeking new landscape but in having new eyes”(M Proust) Do you agree/disagree? Why?	Presenting an argument a counter argument, persuading.



## ANNEX 4

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
GRADUATION PROJECT



**OBJECTIVE.** To measure the use metacognitive strategies and their influence on speaking proficiency of third-year students semester II- 2014 at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador.

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

### GENERAL INFORMATION

1. AGE	2. SEX	3. SCHEDULE	
	F                  M	Morning	Afternoon
4. How long have you been learning English language?			
a) From 1 to 3 years          b) From 4 to 7 years          c) 7 years or more.			
5. How do you rate your proficiency in the language compared with other students in your class?			
a) Excellent                  b) Good                  c) Fair                  d) Poor			
6. How do you rate your proficiency in English language compared with native speakers?			
a) Excellent                  b) Good                  c) Fair                  d) Poor			
7. How important is it for you to become proficient in English language?			

a) Very important	b) important	c) Not important	
8. Do you know about the learning metacognitive strategies?	Yes	No	
9. Do you implement metacognitive strategies while you are in class?	Yes	No	
10. Do you implement metacognitive strategies while you are at home?	Yes	No	

Please read each statement and fill in the bubble of the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells HOW TRUE THE STATEMENT IS.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. **There is no right or wrong answer** to these statements.

<b>Part A</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.					
2.	I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.					
3.	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.					
4.	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.					
5.	I use rhymes to remember new English words.					
6.	I use flashcards to remember new English words.					
7.	I physically act out new English words.					

8.	I review English lessons often.						
9.	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.						
<b>Part B</b>							
10.	I say or write new English words several times.						
11.	I try to talk like native English speakers.						
12.	I practice the sounds of English.						
13.	I use the English words I know in different ways.						
14.	I start conversations in English.						
15.	I watch English language TV shows or go to movies spoken in English.						
16.	I read for pleasure in English.						
17.	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.						
18.	I first skim an English passage (read it quickly) then go back and read carefully.						
19.	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.						
20.	I try to find patterns in English.						
21.	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.						
22.	I try not to translate word-for-word.						
23.	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.						
<b>Part C</b>							
24.	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.						
25.	When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.						
26.	I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in						

	English.						
27.	I read English without looking up every new word.						
28.	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.						
29.	If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.						
30.	I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.						
<b>Part D</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
31.	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.						
32.	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.						
33.	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.						
34.	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.						
35.	I look for people I can talk to in English.						
36.	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.						
37.	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.						
38.	I think about my progress in learning English.						
<b>Part E</b>							
39.	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.						
40.	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.						
41.	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.						
42.	I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.						
43.	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.						
44.	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.						
<b>Part F</b>							

45.	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or to say it again.					
46.	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.					
47.	I practice English with other students.					
48.	I ask for help from English speakers.					
49.	I ask questions in English.					
50.	I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.					