

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



**LEARNING STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE STUDENTS OF ADVANCED
INTENSIVE ENGLISH I COURSES FOR IMPROVING ORAL DISCOURSE IN
THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH TEACHING, DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN LANGUAGES, UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, YEAR 2014.**

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INTRODUCTION

The process of learning a second language nowadays requires that students find many ways on how to develop and improve by themselves their oral skill in order to have a good oral discourse inside and outside the class. This research is made in order to provide information about those ways implemented by some students at the Foreign Language Department. The information of this investigation was collected from students of the Advanced Intensive English I courses in the bachelor of arts in English teaching at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, year 2014.

The improvement of English discourse requires a variety of strategies for the development of the oral communication as a second language in a non-native country. Due to Spanish is our mother tongue, there is a lack of opportunities to practice and develop the oral discourse in English, for that reason students might look for a good environment and more strategies that allows them to be in contact with the language and in that way to practice more the second language they are learning in order to improve the oral discourse. Students use some strategies to increase or develop their vocabulary and linguistic skills to avoid facing problems at the time to produce the language.

This investigation include chapters with the objectives, which determine what was going to be investigated and demonstrated, the description of the project and justification that explain the main purpose of the study. The theoretical framework presents to support the topic and the type of research techniques which guided this research, also it contains the methodology apply and the data analysis; after that, it is presented the analysis of results gotten in this research. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations give to students' community and teachers' community about the research project.

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I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

I.I RESEARCH STATEMENT

“Learning strategies implemented by the students of Advanced Intensive English I courses for improving oral discourse in the bachelor of arts in the English Teaching, Department of Foreign Languages, University of El Salvador, year 2014”

I.II OBJECTIVES

General objective

- To identify which learning strategies are implemented by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I courses and how these applied them to improve their oral discourse at the Foreign Languages Department.

Specific objectives

- To present the different learning strategies used by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I used to improve their oral discourse.
- To find out if the learning strategies used by the students in the improvement of their oral discourse are effective.

I.III RESEARCH QUESTIONS

General Research Question

- Which learning strategies are implemented by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I courses?

Subsidiary Research Questions

- What are the main learning strategies used by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I to improve their oral discourse?
- How effective are the learning strategies used by the students are in the improvement of their oral discourse?

I.IV DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, learning a second language has become an important tool to grow up professionally in different areas. For this reason students are looking for different learning strategies in order to improve their skills and excel in the language they are learning. *“Learning strategies are used by students to help themselves understand information and solve problems. A learning strategy is a person's approach to learning and using information. Students who do not know or use good learning strategies often learn passively and ultimately fail in school.”*(University of Kansas, 2013)

There are many learning strategies some, more successful than others when they are applied in a correct way. *“Strategies are most successful when they are implemented in a system that encourages collaboration among staff and students, and in which each is a part of a well-planned whole system”* (Johns Hopkins, 2000). Additionally, Learning strategies have become an effective instrument in the field of education because students can make use of several strategies in order to enhance their English level in terms of communication. To communicate in a meaningful way, it is important to express ideas inside and outside the classroom; it is part of the development and improvement of speaking. An effective use of strategies to develop students speaking can be demonstrated by the skills in the performance. Strategies in this case become a tool, applied to reinforce and complete the skills related with learning a second language.

The main purpose of the research was oriented to identify which strategies are implemented by the students of the Advanced Intensive English I courses in the Bachelor of Arts in English Teaching at the University of El Salvador in order to increase their English level; also, this might help the students to realize about the existence of learning strategies for improving their oral discourse as well as to know the different learning strategies applied by students for improving their oral discourse, showing the most common of them and the most effective for the students.

I.V JUSTIFICATION

Given the challenges to improve language learning, it has been found that students have the ability to teach themselves by using methodological tools or strategies that are capable of producing a better learning and development in an academic environment. For many years, the use of these strategies has been a great contribution for improving their oral discourse. It has been proven that learners develop and enhance their speaking skill by using different means outside the classroom which they have found particularly beneficial. For this reason, this research is carried out to find out the learning strategies implemented by the students of the Advanced Intensive English courses I for improving their oral discourse in the bachelor in English teaching at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

In English, like any other foreign language, there are always a large amount of students with a better oral performance than others. This situation rises up two important questions, what learning strategies are being applied to go ahead of others? And how effective are they. To comply with these two interrogations, it is vital to discover all the details regarding the processes and techniques all of these students are following. Having discovered and detected effectiveness and regularity of the use of the strategies implemented, new tools will be provided to those who have problems in their oral discourse. Therefore, they will guide into the path of obtaining a great and superior skill on communicating with the oral discourse level required by the major they study.

In the final stage, the interest will be focused on selecting the most effective strategies found and provide with these new tools to students, expecting that through each of them, they can develop and implement their own learning in an easily way, reaching a progressively proficiency of their oral discourse which it is essential in the communicative environment at the moment. At the same time, it is expected that these strategies provide not only benefits to the student's community but also to the teacher's community at the Foreign Language Department.

I.VI DELIMITATION

SPATIAL DELIMITATION

Unity of analysis: the students from Advanced Intensive English I of the Bachelor of Arts in English Teaching at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

TIME DELIMITATION

The investigation will be done on the year 2014 of the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

THEORETICAL DELIMITATION

Learning Strategies implemented for improving the students' oral discourse.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

II.I What is a Learning Strategy?

It has been found that students have the ability to teach themselves by using methodological tools or strategies that are capable of producing a better learning and development in an academic environment. For many years, the use of these strategies has been a great contribution for improving their oral discourse. It has been proven that learners develop and enhance their speaking skill by using different means outside the classroom which they have found particularly beneficial.

“A Learning Strategy is a person’s approach to learning and using information. Students use Learning Strategies to help them understand information and solve problems. Students who do not know or use good learning strategies often learn passively and ultimately fail in school. Learning Strategy instruction focuses on making students more active learners by teaching them how to learn and how to use what they have learned to be successful.”
University of Kansas (2009)

Learning strategies come to help students in their learning-teaching process, enhancing their proficiency levels. A learning strategy is an important tool that students can use for improving on the language they are learning. Since students are not in touch with the language. They need to apply some tools or strategies in order to see touchable progress in their target language; however, they have to face up to different situations like non-native environment to practice the target language, non-native speakers to whom students could interact. All of these issues can affect the process of learning the target language.

Learning strategies seem to be "tricks" learners how to help them remember things better or to do tasks more efficiently. Several researchers have studied what learning strategies are and why they are effective in the learning process.

Oxford (1990) makes a definition which breaks the term learning strategies down to its roots the word strategy. It informs that this word comes from the Greek word 'strategia' which means generalship or the art of war. Strategy meant the management of the troops, ships, or aircraft in a war situation. It points out a similar word tactics which are tools to achieve the success of strategies. These two words used; mean planning, competition, conscious manipulation, and movement toward a goal. In a problem solving situation, it would imply "using a plan, step or conscious action toward achievement of an objective. "Oxford continues to expand on this definition by stating that *"learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations."*

Weinstein and Mayer in Witrock (1986) have given one definition of learning strategies as *"behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning and that are intended to influence the learner's encoding process."* They go on to state several learning strategies that could be used with learners.

Moreover, Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986) define learning strategies simply as *"the processes that underlie performance on thinking tasks."* They go on to explain that *"strategies are more than simple sequences or agglomerations of skills; they go beyond the 'strings' or routines advocated in some study annuals. They are almost always purposeful and goal-oriented, but they are perhaps not always carried out at a conscious or deliberate level. They can be lengthy or so rapid in execution that it is impossible to recapture, recall, or even be aware that one has used strategy."*

The definitions mentioned by researchers in the area of learning strategies, it would be appropriated to state that learning strategies, in essence, are actions taken by the learner to assist in learning more effectively. It means that learning strategies are tools or instrument that learners used by themselves for enhancing their own learning process of the target language; oriented to get a high proficiency levels.

II.II The importance of language learning strategies in language learning and teaching

According to Oxford (1990), the importance of Language Learning Strategy is because of the fact that language learning strategies help learners to develop communicative competence while the instruction of LLS by teachers can help individuals apply more effective learning strategies.

Kinoshita (2003) expresses his view that language learning instruction is a teaching approach that aims to raise learner awareness of learning strategies and provide learners with systematic practice, reinforcement and self-monitoring of their strategy use while attending to language learning activities. Moreover, as reported by Lessard-Clouston (1997), teaching LLS to learners plays an important role in teaching and learning a language. The emphasis placed on LLS instruction is to the extent that those instructors who teach learners and train them to be better strategy users are considered more efficient and more highly regarded teachers.

Language teachers, as the instructors of LLS, should be aware of their indispensable role in the learning process. And as Hismangolu (1997) states: The language teacher aiming at training his students in using language learning strategies should learn about the students, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn what language learning strategies students already appear to be using, observing their behavior in class. In other hand, Haung (2006) claims, non-native speakers believe that speaking in the target language is one of the most demanding and crucial tasks in their everyday life. Furthermore, Ferris and Tagg (1996) states that even highly proficient language learners are not satisfied with their speaking skills and are looking for chances to improve their speaking ability. Therefore, because few studies have been done on speaking skills, there is a real need to conduct research in this area.

II.III Classification of Language Learning Strategies by Rubin's (1987)

According to Rubin, there are three types of strategies used by learners that contribute directly or indirectly to language learning. These are:

- ✓ Learning Strategies
- ✓ Communication Strategies
- ✓ Social Strategies

Learning Strategies:

They are of two main types, being the strategies contributing directly to the development of the language system constructed by the learners:

- ✓ Cognitive Learning Strategies
- ✓ Metacognitive Learning Strategies

Cognitive Learning Strategies

They refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that requires direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. Rubin identified 6 main cognitive learning strategies contributing directly to language learning:

- ✓ Clarification / Verification
- ✓ Guessing / Inductive Inference
- ✓ Deductive Reasoning
- ✓ Practice
- ✓ Memorization
- ✓ Monitoring

Metacognitive Learning Strategies

These strategies are used to oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning. They involve various processes as planning, prioritizing, setting goals, and self-management.

Communication Strategies:

They are less directly related to language learning since their focus is on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying what the speaker intended. Communication strategies are used by speakers when faced with some difficulty due to the fact that their communication ends outrun their communication means or when confronted with misunderstanding by a co-speaker.

Social Strategies:

Social strategies are those activities learners engage in which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. Although these strategies provide exposure to the target language, they contribute indirectly to learning since they do not lead directly to the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of language.

II.IV Classification of Language Learning Strategies by Oxford's (1990)

He sees the aim of language learning strategies as being oriented towards the development of communicative competence. Oxford divides language learning strategies into two main classes, direct and indirect, which are further subdivided into 6 groups. In Oxford's system, metacognitive strategies help learners to regulate their learning. Affective strategies are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence, while social strategies lead to increased interaction with the target language. Cognitive strategies are the mental strategies learners use to make sense of their learning, memory strategies are those used for storage of information, and compensation strategies help learners to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication. Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of language learning strategies is shown in the following:

DIRECT STRATEGIES

The direct strategies are beneficial to the students because they help store and recover information. These strategies help learners to produce language even when there is gap in knowledge. They also help to understand and use the new language.

- Memory

Memory strategies are based on simple principles like laying things out in order to making association, and reviewing. These are employed when a learner faces challenge of vocabulary learning. The words and phrases can be associated with visual images that can be stored and retrieved to communication. Many learners make use of visuals aids but some find it easy to connect words and phrases with sound, motion or touch.

The use of memory is most frequently applied in the beginning process of language learning. As the learners advance to higher level proficiency memory strategies are mentioned very little. It is not that use ceases, but the awareness of its use become less.

- Cognitive

These are maybe the most popular strategies with language learners. The target language is manipulated or transformed by repeating, analyzing or summarizing. The four sets in this group are:

1. Practicing
2. Receiving and sending messages
3. Analyzing and Reasoning
4. Creating structure for Input and Output.

Practicing is the most important in this group which can be achieved by repeating, working with sounds and writing, and using patterns. The tools of receiving and sending messages are used when learners try to find the main idea through skimming and scanning. It is not necessary to check every word. The adult learners commonly use analyzing and reasoning strategies. These are used to understand the meaning of expression in the target language. These are used to make new expressions.

- Compensation strategies

Learners use compensation strategies for comprehension of the target language when they have insufficient knowledge of the target language. These strategies make up for the

deficiency in grammar and vocabulary. When learners do not know a new word and expression, they guess the meaning. A learner brings own life experience to interpret data by guessing.

INDIRECT STRATEGIES

Indirect strategies help learners to regulate the learning process. These strategies support and manage language learning without direct engagement and therefore is called indirect strategies.

- Metacognitive Strategies

It gives learners to coordinate their learning. This helps them to plan language learning in an efficient way. When new vocabulary, rules, and writing system confuse the learner, these strategies become vital for successful language.

These sets of strategies belong to this group and they are:

1. Centering your learning.
2. Arranging and planning your learning.
3. Evaluating learning.

The aim of centering learning is to give a focus to the learner so that the attention could be directed toward certain language activities or skills. Arranging and planning learning help learners to organize so they may get more benefits from their energy and effort. Evaluating learning helps learner with problems like monitoring mistakes and evaluation of progress.

- Affective Strategies

The affective factors like emotion, attitude, motivation and values influence learning in an important way. These sets of strategies are included in this group:

1. Lowering your Anxiety
2. Encouraging yourself.

3. Taking your emotional temperatura

Good learners control their attitudes and emotions about learning and understand that negative feelings retard learning. Teachers always help generate positive feelings in class by giving students more responsibility, increase the amount of natural communication, and teaching affective strategies.

It can be seen that much of the recent work in this area has been underpinned by abroad concept of language learning strategies that goes beyond cognitive processes to include social and communicative strategies.

Anxiety could be both helpful and harmful. It is felt that certain amount of anxiety is helpful for learners because it helps them to obtain their optimum level of performance. Too much anxiety has the opposite effect. Anxiety sometimes takes form of worry, frustration, insecurity, fear, and self-doubt. A common high anxiety create situation for learners is to perform before the peers and teacher when they are not prepared.

○ Social Strategies

Social strategies are very important in learning a language because language is used in communication and it occurs between people. Three sets of strategies are included in this group:

1. Asking questions
2. Cooperating with others
3. Empathizing others

Among the three, asking questions is the most useful and comes close to understanding the meaning. It also helps in conversation by generating response from the partner and shows interest and involvement.

Cooperation with others eliminates competition and in its place brings group spirit. Sometimes, competition brings a strong wish to perform better than others, but it often results in anxiety and fear of failure. It is important to helps learners change their attitudes from confrontation and competition to cooperation.

Empathy is very important in communication. Empathy means to put oneself in someone else's situation to understand that person's point of view. Learners can use social strategies to develop cultural understanding and become aware of thoughts and feelings of others.

II.V Classification of Language Learning Strategies by O'Malley's (1985)

O'Malley's divides language learning strategies into three main subcategories:

- Metacognitive Strategies
- Cognitive Strategies
- Socio-affective Strategies

Metacognitive Strategies:

It can be stated that metacognitive is a term to express executive function, strategies which require planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. The main metacognitive strategies, it is possible to include advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning, self-monitoring, delayed production, self-evaluation.

Cognitive Strategies:

Cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and they involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. Repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inferencing are among the most important cognitive strategies.

Socio-affective Strategies:

As to the socio-affective strategies, it can be stated that they are related with social-mediating activity and transacting with others. Cooperation and question for clarification are the main socio-affective strategies.

II.VI Classification of Language Learning Strategies by Stern's (1992)

According to Stern, there are five main language learning strategies. These are as follows:

- Management and Planning Strategies
- Cognitive Strategies
- Communicative-Experiential Strategies
- Interpersonal Strategies
- Affective Strategies

Management and Planning Strategies:

These strategies are related with the learner's intention to direct his own learning. A learner can take charge of the development of his own program when he is helped by a teacher whose role is that of an adviser and resource person. That is to say that the learner must:

1. Decide what commitment to make to language learning
2. Set himself reasonable goals
3. Decide on an appropriate methodology, select appropriate resources, and monitor progress.
4. Evaluate his achievement in the light of previously determined goals and expectations.

Cognitive Strategies:

They are steps or operations used in learning or problem solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. In the following, some of the cognitive strategies are exhibited:

1. Clarification / Verification
2. Guessing
3. Deductive Reasoning
4. Practice

5. Memorization
6. Monitoring
7. Communicative

Experiential Strategies:

Communication strategies, such as circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for repetition and explanation are techniques used by learners so as to keep a conversation going. The purpose of using these techniques is to avoid interrupting the flow of communication.

Interpersonal Strategies:

They should monitor their own development and evaluate their own performance. Learners should contact with native speakers and cooperate with them. Learners must become acquainted with the target culture.

Affective Strategies:

It is evident that good language learners employ distinct affective strategies. Language learning can be frustrating in some cases. In some cases, the feeling of strangeness can be evoked by the foreign language. In some other cases, L2 learners may have negative feelings about native speakers of L2. Good language learners are more or less conscious of these emotional problems. Good language learners try to create associations of positive affect towards the foreign language and its speakers as well as towards the learning activities involved. Learning training can help students to face up to the emotional difficulties and to overcome them by drawing attention to the potential frustrations or pointing them out as they arise.

II.VII Speaking strategies

An important component of language learning strategy training is that of speaking strategies. Oral strategies are referred to in the literature as communicative strategies, communication strategies, conversation skills or oral communication strategies; speaking strategies are those devices used by students to solve any communication problem when speaking in English. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), speaking strategies are crucial because they help foreign language learners **"in negotiating meaning where either linguistic structures or sociolinguistic rules are not shared between a second language learner and a speaker of the target language"**

Strategies for foreign language learning include affective strategies to measure emotional reactions and to reduce anxiety, and social strategies to enhance interaction with native speakers and cooperation among students. The use of learning strategies, have different objectives:

- The first is to enhance learning, solve specific problems related to learning and understanding of the language.
- Finally, they help make learning easier, faster and enjoyable because the use of learning strategies allows students to develop more knowledge about themselves and the target language.

Learning English, or indeed any language, is a painstaking process that takes time and a great deal of effort. ***"Everyone has different strategies for learning a language, depending on their strong points and learning methods"*** (Sun Meilan, 2012). Someone will find speaking easy; others will struggle to get words out, perhaps because of nervousness. Whatever your issue, there are some strategies that you can use to improve your speaking language. Sun Meilan presented some strategies used by some students:

- ***Listen***

If you want to speak a language well, you have to be prepared to listen carefully so that you are able to copy what others are saying. Take as many opportunities as you can to

listen to English being spoken by native speakers, Listening to the television and radio is a great way of practicing your English skills; programmes are readily available online.

- **Practice**

You will not improve your speaking skills if you don't put it into practice on a regular basis, you should have plenty of opportunities to practice outside of class; just get out and about as much as you can and you will find yourself forced to speak English. If you are living in a non-English-speaking country, it is relatively easy to find people who speak English. Try to ensure that they are native speakers so that they can correct you when necessary. However, speaking English with a classmate can also be useful because you can build on each other's confidence.

- **Keep it simple**

You need to build on your skills slowly, so do not rush ahead and expect to be better than you are. Stick to using simple words to explain what you are trying to say, at least until you reach the point that you are good enough to be able to use more complex language. At the same time, try to get out of the habit of translating what you want to say word by word. It rarely works; instead use what you have already learned to explain yourself.

- **Overcome your nervousness**

In order to speak English well, you will need to overcome your nervousness. Find ways to deal with your nervousness. This does not necessarily need to involve speaking English; you could, for example, take an assertiveness or public speaking course and pick up tips on how to be more confident. The more you practice speaking to people, no matter what language, the more socially confident you will become and the more willing you will be to practice speaking English in public.

- **Record your voice**

It may not always be convenient to find someone with whom to practice your English. At times like these, you can still work on your spoken English skills by recording your voice.

You can start out by reading your text books out loud and then, as you become more confident, you can try free speaking. By recording what you say, you can listen back afterwards and pinpoint the different areas on which you need to work. There is also the advantage that you can ask your teacher, or a native speaker, to listen back to you and suggest ways in which you can improve.

Foreign language learners, despite spending years developing their language competences, have all probably, at some point, experience the frustrating feeling of not being able to participate effectively in L2 oral communication. They often struggle with lack of the very resources needed to communicate their intended meaning, so that what they 'want to say' might often be moderated by, or even subordinated to, what they can say (*Ervin, 1979, p.359*).

Although most EFL learners and perhaps some of the teachers believe that oral communication problems can be solved through "more practice" in vocabulary and structure, some successful L2 speakers, in spite of their limited knowledge of the target language, can communicate effectively in a foreign language. How do they do it? They rely entirely on their 'ability to communicate within restrictions' (*Savignon, 1983, p. 43*) by using communication strategies.

Facilitation strategies consist of several features that students use to increase their oral production like:

A) Simplification: Students tend to use this device when they connect new sentences with conjunctions like "and", "or" "but", or no conjunction at all. Besides, they often avoid the use of complex sentences in order to facilitate what they want to say.

B) Ellipsis: This feature consists of the omission of parts of a sentence. Students make use of abbreviation. Example: "Who?"," On Saturday?"," the big one".

In order to understand both, the speaker and the listener must have a clear idea of what they are talking about. These omissions occur because people do not always speak in complete sentences.

C) Formulaic expressions: They consist of all kinds of expressions and phrases that have normal meanings and tend to go together.

Example:

“Who does he think he is?”,

“It’s very nice to meet you”,

“I don’t believe a word of it”.

D) Time-creating devices: These set of strategies tend to give more time to students to formulate what they want to say.

Example:

- **Fillers:** They are phrases like: “erm”, “you see”, “kind of”, “sort of”, and so on.

- **Repetition:** When students repeat or rephrase what they or the person has said.

- **Hesitation:** This is, repeating words while trying to find the needed word.

Students often think that the ability to speak a language is the product of language learning, but speaking is also a crucial part of the language learning process. Effective instructors teach students speaking strategies -- using minimal responses, recognizing scripts, and using language to talk about language, which they can use to help themselves expand their knowledge of the language and their confidence in using it. These instructors’ help students learn to speak so that the students can use speaking to learn. Some other strategies are:

- **Using minimal responses**

Language learners who lack confidence in their ability to participate successfully in oral interaction often listen in silence while others do the talking. One way to encourage such learners to begin to participate is to help them build up a stock of minimal responses that they can use in different types of exchanges. Such responses can be especially useful for beginners.

Minimal responses are predictable, often idiomatic phrases that conversation participants use to indicate understanding, agreement, doubt, and other responses to what another speaker is saying. Having a stock of such responses permits a learner to focus on what the other participant is saying, without having to simultaneously plan a response.

- ***Recognizing scripts***

Some communication situations are associated with a predictable set of spoken exchanges a script. Greetings, apologies, compliments, invitations, and other functions that are influenced by social and cultural norms often follow patterns or scripts. So, the transactional exchanges involved in activities such as obtaining information and making a purchase. In these scripts, the relationship between a speaker's turn and the one that follows it can often be anticipated.

Instructors can help students develop speaking ability by making them aware of the scripts for different situations so that they can predict what they will hear and what they will need to say in response. Through interactive activities, instructors can give students practice in managing and varying the language that different scripts contain.

- ***Using language to talk about language***

Language learners are often too embarrassed or shy to say anything when they do not understand another speaker or when they realize that a conversation partner has not understood them. Instructors can help students overcome this reticence by assuring them

that misunderstanding and the need for clarification can occur in any type of interaction, whatever the participants' language skill levels. Instructors can also give students strategies and phrases to use for clarification and comprehension check.

By encouraging students to use clarification phrases in class when misunderstanding occurs and by responding positively when they do, instructors can create an authentic practice environment within the classroom itself. As they develop control of various clarification strategies, students will gain confidence in their ability to manage the various communication situations that they may encounter outside the classroom.

One goal of a language learner may be to speak the foreign language in different oral exchanges and ultimately to be a competent speaker. For *Hedge (2000)*, a competent speaker knows how to make use of speaking strategies. Hedge comments that: ***“These strategies come into play when learners are unable to express what they want to say because they lack the resources to do so successfully” (p. 52).*** These verbal and non-verbal strategies (e.g. verbal circumlocution, clarification, non-verbal mimicry, gestures, etc.) may be used to compensate for a breakdown in communication or for unknown words or topics, and they may also be used to enhance effective communication.

Speaking strategies are essential, since they provide foreign language learners with valuable tools to communicate in the target language in diverse situations. However, there is disagreement as to whether or not to teach speaking strategies. ***Kellerman (1991)*** advocates against such training and believes that learners can transfer these strategies naturally from their native language to the target language. On the other hand, ***Canale (1983)*** encourages training in speaking strategies because: learners must be shown how such a strategy can be implemented in the second language... Furthermore, learners must be encouraged to use such strategies (rather than remain silent...) and must be given the opportunity to use them.

II.VIII THREE STUDIES ON SPEAKING STRATEGIES

Many studies have been made for finding out the different speaking strategies that students tend to use in the moment of speaking. Strategies which let them get a better performance, interact with native and non-native speakers, communicate feelings and opinions and the most important to be understood by others. The following studies show the use of strategies by students in order to enhance their oral discourse.

The first study was carried out by Issitt (2008) in a UK university during a ten-week pre-semester program of English for academic purposes, which prepared students for the speaking test of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). This preparation consisted of three aspects: 1) developing students' confidence with an emphasis on reducing exam anxiety and on offering exam practice, 2) providing students with the IELTS regulations so as to better inform the students as to what the speaking test was about, and 3) making students aware of the marking of the IELTS exam criteria and helping them to adjust their speaking performance to match these criteria. In these course 35 students participated; however only 13 took the IELTS exam because the other 22 had already entered their respective university departments. The results showed that the training of these students in strategic performance aided them in passing the test with the required scores for university entrance. Although the sample was small, the preparation of students in the use of strategies made them better prepared to tackle tasks in foreign language learning. According to *Issitt (2008), "Encouraging students to use a variety of perspectives may also help motivate them to study independently and to consider different theoretical positions"* (p. 136). This aspect of learner training is important, because one of the desired goals of education is to help learners to think critically so that they are in charge of their learning process. Learner training allows students to transfer these strategies to other aspects of the learning process. The second study was carried out by Mugford (2007), who interviewed 84 EFL (English as a Foreign Language) users in Mexico in order to identify impolite interactional situations experienced by Mexican students and teachers. Mugford (2007) argues that rudeness is a part of everyday language usage and

should be included in language classes in order to prepare learners to interact in impolite situations. Due to the results of the study, Mugford argues for the inclusion of activities to prepare students to deal with this type of communicative exchange. Although he does not specifically refer to these practices as speaking strategies, he does advocate strategy training as a tool to better prepare learners for real life speaking exchanges.

The third study was conducted by Gallagher-Brett (2007), who applied a questionnaire to elicit information concerning learners' beliefs about speaking a foreign language. The students surveyed were in their final year at a secondary school in South East England, and were learning German. The questionnaire consisted of statements with a rating scale from one to five (one is 'strongly disagree' and five is 'strongly agree'). Students had to identify to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Students were also asked to answer open-ended questions in order to find out the strategies used while speaking in the foreign language. According to Gallagher-Brett (2007), the three strategies used most by students were practicing, revising, and repetition at home after revision. Although the results were from a very small number of participants, they reveal that the participants used strategies when speaking a foreign language. An interesting feature of the findings was the acknowledgement by students of failure due to individual factors related to their actions, efforts and feelings. This refers to the participants' awareness of themselves as learners and of their responsibility for their own learning actions and outcomes. The two main themes emerging from this study are: awareness of strategy use by students, and the role of affective factors such as confidence, mood and anxiety when speaking a foreign language.

The students stated that practice and revision are the most important activities conducive to successful speaking of a foreign language. These two strategies are metacognitive and although they are important. At the end of these three studies is important to state the need to train students in the use of speaking strategies to help them better their performance when interacting in English.

III. METHODOLOGY

III.I TYPE OF RESEARCH

1) Exploratory

This research is exploratory since it consists on identifying which strategies are implemented by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I courses for improving oral discourse. It will provide useful insights about communicative learning strategies which will help students' community to improve their speaking skills. To teachers will provide reliable information about language learning strategies that students applied at the moment of speaking in ESL. Basically, there are many books and resources containing information about learning strategies but it has never been defined which strategies the students of Advanced I implement.

2) Descriptive

This research will describe the learning strategies used by students of the Advanced Intensive English I in order to enhance oral discourse skills. To describe every single learning strategy implemented even the resources and the guidelines that students have to follow in order to reach their goals. Additionally, this research will describe which strategies are better for students who look for enhancing their oral discourse.

III.II DESIGN RESEARCH

Non-experimental

This research will be based in non-experimental research design. Since it is based on the observation of phenomena as it occurs in the real environment. Otherwise, in non-experimental research, the research team collects the data without making changes or introducing treatments. At the end, all the data it will be analyzed. According to Kerling and Lee (2002) read in Metodología de La Investigación (Sampieri et al, 1996) *"In non-experimental research it is not possible to manipulate variables or to randomly assign to the participants or treatments."*

Non-Experimental→ Cross-Sectional

This research will be guided with cross-sectional design because will collect data just in a specific moment just once. This let the research team gets the language learning strategies that students from Advanced Intensive English I course apply at the moment of speaking.

III.III SAMPLE

Primary field research (Quantitative)

Advanced Intensive English I students' information about their learning language strategies that they applied in the moment of speaking.

Primary Source

Students 'from the Bachelor of Arts in the Teaching Option

Method for gathering the primary data

Questionnaires

Probabilistic sampling

This type of sample was applied because the population (sample) has been already established and with this method gave them the same opportunity to be selected.

Population Sample

Using the following formula, it was determined how many students were going to be required to answer the questionnaire.

$\begin{aligned} N &= 140 \\ Z &= 95 \text{ (95\% reliability)} = 1.96 \\ P &= 0.5 \\ q &= 0.5 \\ E &= 0.10 \\ n &=? \end{aligned}$

Corrected Sample

$$\frac{n = Z^2 (p) (q) N}{(E)^2 (N-1) + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5) (140)}{(0.10)^2 (140-1) + (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)}$$

$$n = \frac{(3.84) (0.5) (0.5) (140)}{(0.01) (139) + (3.84) (0.5) (0.5)}$$

$$n = \frac{(3.84) (0.25) (140)}{1.39 + 0.96}$$

$$n = \frac{134.4}{2.35}$$

$$n = 57.19 \gg 57$$

Secondary field for research (Qualitative)

Information about the learning language learning strategies implemented by the students of advanced intensive English I.

Secondary source

Advanced Intensive English I students from the Bachelor of Arts in the teaching option.

Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy of the secondary source was developed in different steps:

1. To look for the English teachers 'names who were working in semester II-2014 in the Advanced Intensive English I in the teaching option.
2. To inform to the teachers about the observation that would be carried out in their classroom and at the same time, ask for permission for administrating the observation instrument.

3. To elaborate the instrument that would be administrated in each classroom to the Advanced Intensive English I students.
4. To observe the students 'oral participation in order to see the strategies that they applied at the moment of speaking.

III.IV RESEARCH STRATEGY

In the education field, it is hard to guarantee that something is totally true since the main actors in this area are the students and everyone knows that people change their attitudes and behavior constantly. Since the main goal of this research is to find out the language learning strategies that Advanced Intensive English I students apply, it is necessary to have the most accurate information and results of this investigation. The research group will achieve this main goal by putting in practice both types of research (Quantitative and Qualitative), so the findings can be more reliable.

Mixed method approach

This method will be applied because it is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study. The purpose of using mixed method approach is that both quantitative and qualitative researches, in combination, provide a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone.

III.V TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUMENT

Technique

- ***Survey***

In this research will be applied the survey as a technique since it's a method of gathering information from individuals through a printed questionnaire. This information is collected through use of standardized procedures, so that every participant is asked the same questions in the same way.

Instrument

- **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire consists of a set of questions. It is administered to the sample of population to learn about the distribution of characteristics, attitudes, or beliefs.

It typically entails several questions that will be structured response categories and may include some that are open-ended and close questions.

- **Closed questions**

The closed questions contain categories or options of answer that have been previously delimited. They give to participants some possible answer even they can be dichotomized or include in several answer options.

- **Opened-questions**

They will be included in the questionnaire because they are unstructured question in which (unlike in a multiple choice question) possible answers are not suggested, and the respondent answers it in his or her own words. Moreover, it will provide qualitative instead of quantitative information. Essential information that will allow reaches the goals that have been established in this research project.

Technique

- **Non-Participant Observation**

This technique includes human or mechanical observation of what people do or what events take place in a natural situation, in other words; it is the action of observing situation in its natural setting, without forcing anything to happen. In this study the non-participant observation has been selected because the research group needs to perceive by first-hand the real environment of class.

Instrument

- **Checklist**

This instrument is made for gathering reliable data from Advanced Intensive English I Students, through the non-participation observation. This observation checklist has the different strategies that students apply in their oral discourse. It let research group gathering the essential data that will be useful to the research project.

III.VII DATA ANALYSIS

The main goal of the data analysis in this research is to provide valuable and real information from statistical and qualitative information from a sample of students; information that has been gathered by the instruments.

The data contain a quantitative and qualitative analysis that will permit to know the different opinions of students from the Advanced Intensive English I courses at the Foreign Language Department about speaking strategies implemented by them for enhancing their oral discourse.

Considering the use of questionnaires to obtain important data from students, the analysis required the usage of a computer statistics data editor SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) which was useful to tabulate the information and made the respective graphics and evaluation of each of them.

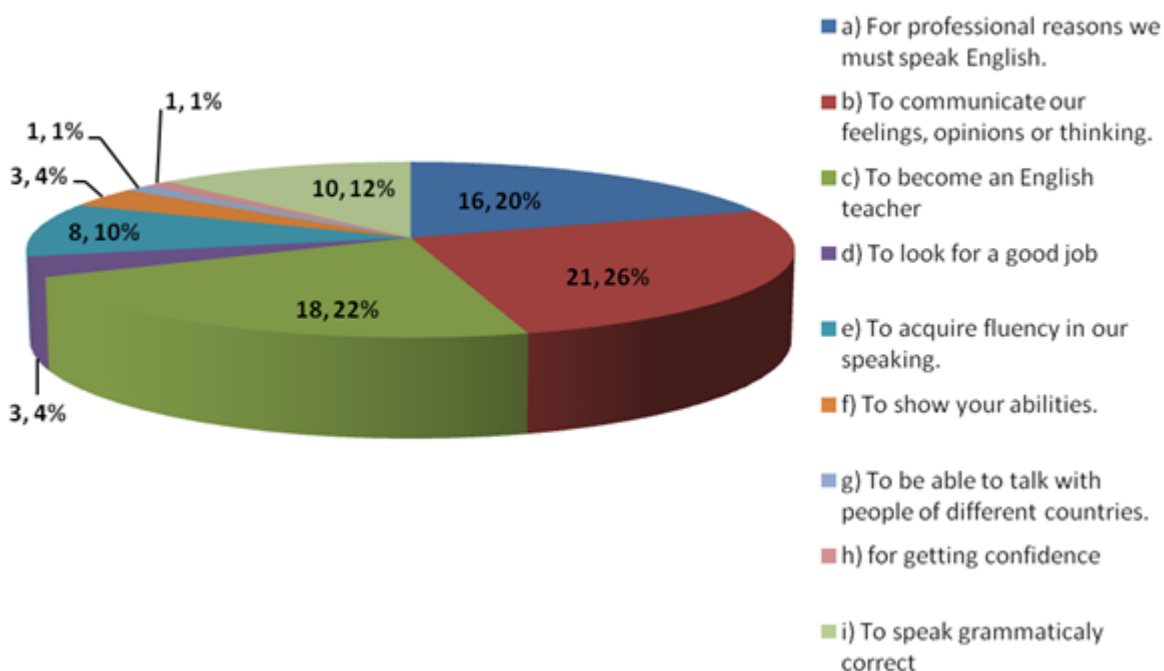
Once the quantitative analysis was done, each instrument such quantitative and qualitative were analyzed separately in order to organize all the information collected. This individual process was useful to present a suitable analysis of the complete research.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

IV.I Questionnaires analysis

Graphic 1

1. Why is it important to improve your oral discourse in English?

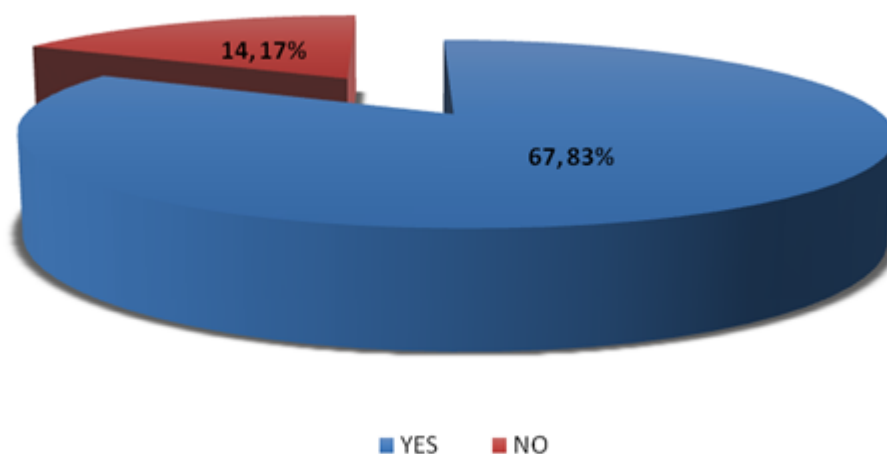


Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 20% of the respondents said that improve their oral discourse is important for professional reasons, student were thinking about their future when they become a professional person. A 26% of respondents answered that is important to communicate their feelings, opinions or thinking with other persons as is the language one of the most important thing in the world. A 22% said to become a good English teacher. A 4% said to get a good job. A 10% answered to acquire fluency in their speaking. A 3% said that is important to show their abilities. A 2% said to be able to talk with people of different countries, someone of them said because travel to other countries is in their plans, and also for getting confidence and a 12% said to speak grammatically correct.

Graphic 2

2. Do you practice English outside the classroom?

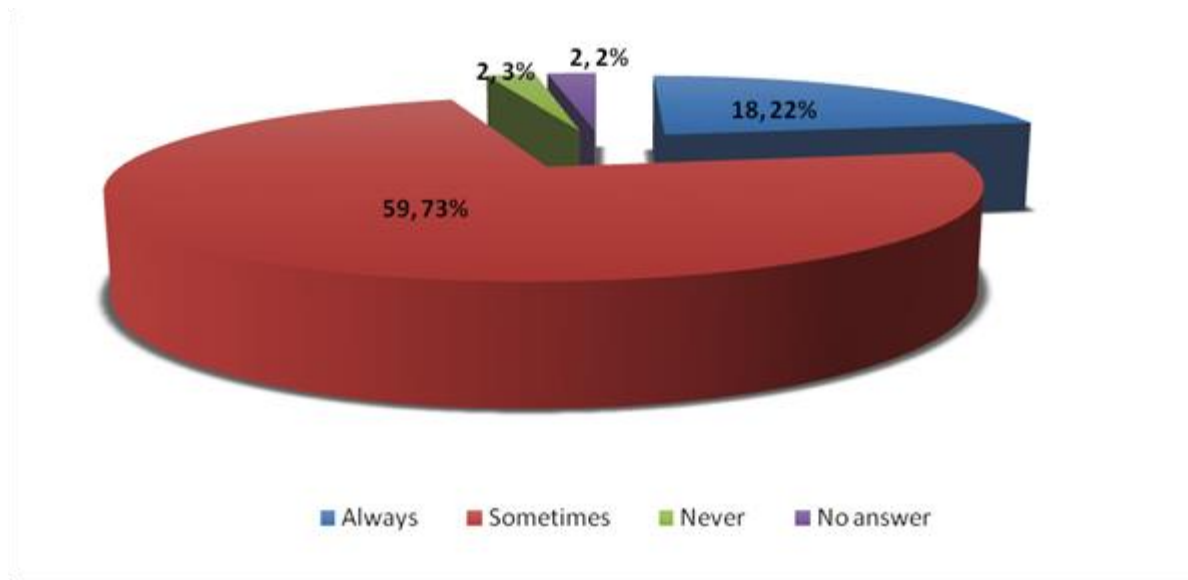


Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 83% of the respondents answered that they practice outside the classroom, places like their job or their home. However, A 17% of respondents answered that they do not practice outside the classroom just in their class.

Graphic 3

3. How often do you practice English outside the class?

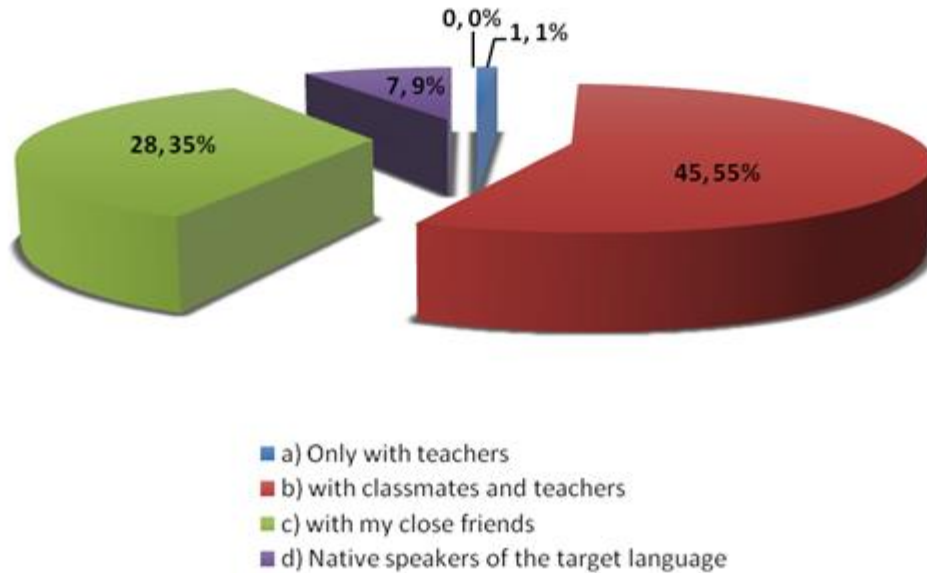


Source: Survey administered to students from Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 22% of the respondents answered that they always practice English outside the class (at home, at their job, etc) which is the correct. However, a 73% said that they practice sometimes not all the time. And a 3% answered that they never practice English outside the class, and the 2% did not answer.

Graphic 4

4. Who do you practice English with?

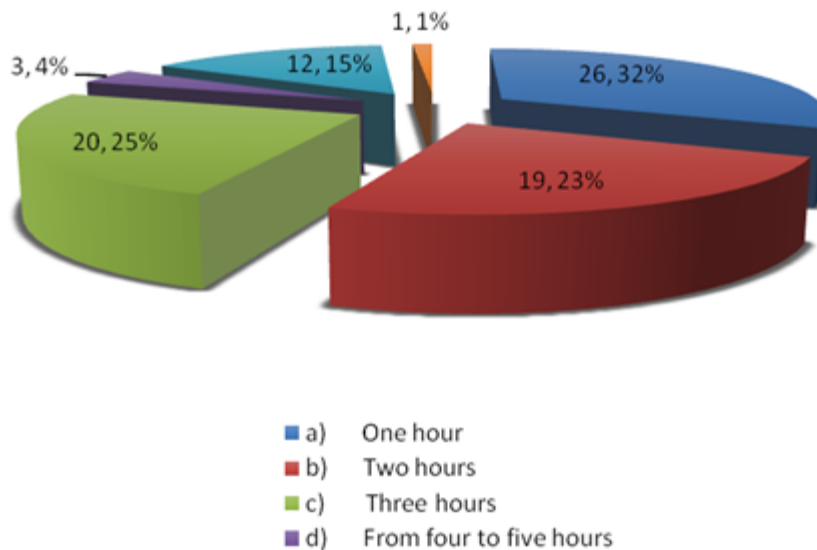


Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 1% of the respondents answered that they practice with Teachers, that result explain that those students practice only in class. A 55% said that they practice English with Classmates and teachers at the University. A 35% answered that they practice with their close friends at the university or outside the university. A 9% answered that they practice with native speakers of the target language, and can be inside or outside the University.

Graphic 5

5. How much time during the day do you practice English?

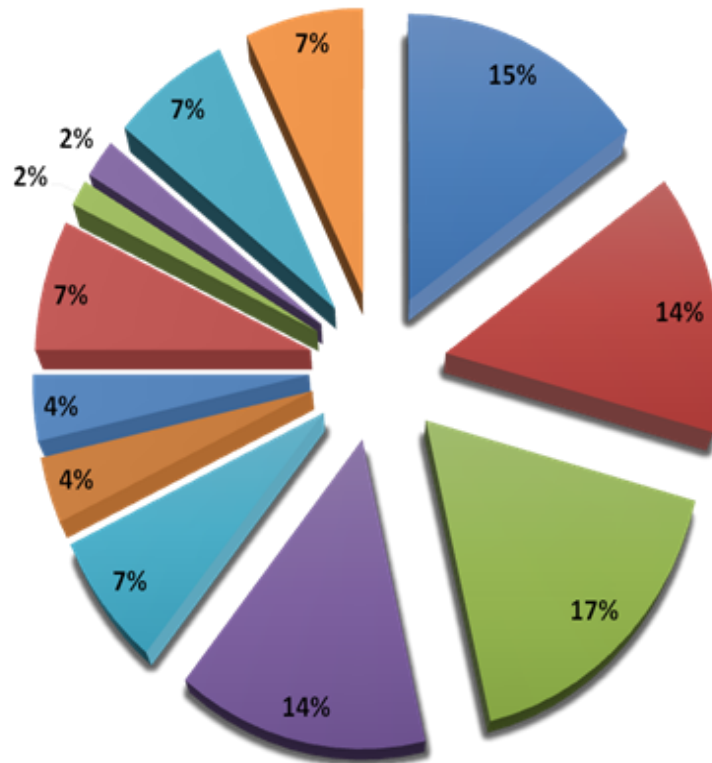


Source: Survey administered to students from Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 32% of the respondents answered that they practice English 1 hour during the day. A 23% said that they practice 2 hours. A 25% answered that they practice English 3 hours during the day. Only 4% of the students said that they practice English from 4 to 5 hours and a 15% said that they practice just 30 minutes. And the 1% did not answer.

Graphic 6

6. Check from the following List of learning strategies the ones you apply in your speaking.



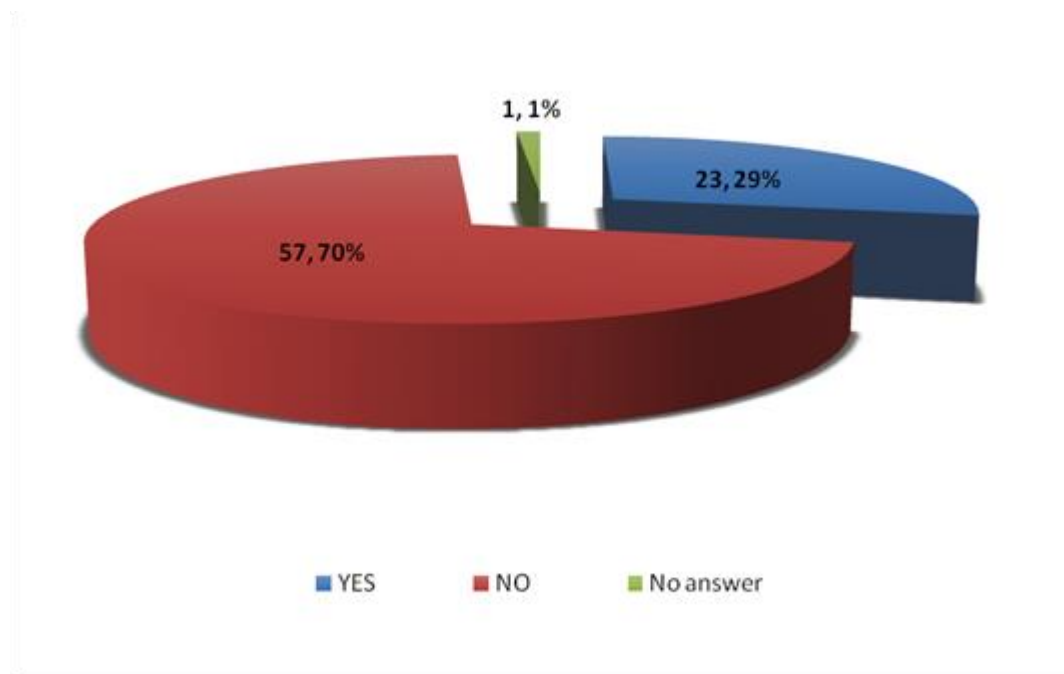
- a) Looking up the dictionary for the words people say and I don't know
- b) Trying to memorize idiomatic expressions and its meanings
- c) Talking with relatives or friends who speak English
- d) Trying to understand without looking up the words I don't know
- e) Looking for native speakers to practice English with.
- f) If I do not know how to say a word, I use a synonym or describe what I want to say.
- g) I do not think too much before speaking so that ideas can flow in English.
- h) I ask my speaking partner to repeat or explain in different words what I did not understand.
- i) I think first in Spanish and then I translate into English.
- j) I structure some ideas in my mind before speaking.
- k) I repeat the last word or phrase I said to gain time.
- l) To gain time, I use fillers such as: and, well, etc.

Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 15% of the respondents used the strategy to look up the dictionary all the words that other people use or say at the time of speaking and words that they do not know in order to acquire more vocabulary and improve their oral discourse. A 14% of students answered, try to memorize idiomatic expressions and its meaning in order to get a good oral discourse. A 17% of the students selected that talking with relatives or friends that speak English as well, is useful to improve their oral discourse. A 14% try to understand what people said without looking up the words that they do know. A 7% answered that looking for native's speaker help them to practice the English. A 4% of students said that if they do not know a word, they used a synonym. A 4% said that they do not think too much before speaking in order that the ideas can flow in English. A 7% said that they ask their speaking partner to repeat or explain in different words what they did not understand, at the time of having a conversation. A 2% answered that they think first in Spanish and then they translate the word into English. A 2% answered that they structure all the ideas before speaking, in order to be clear. A 7% of students answered that they repeat the last word or phrase in order to gain time and order the ideas in the conversation and a 7% said that they Used fillers such as: and, well, so in order to gain time in the conversation.

Graphic 7

8. Do you have another learning strategy which is not included in the list?

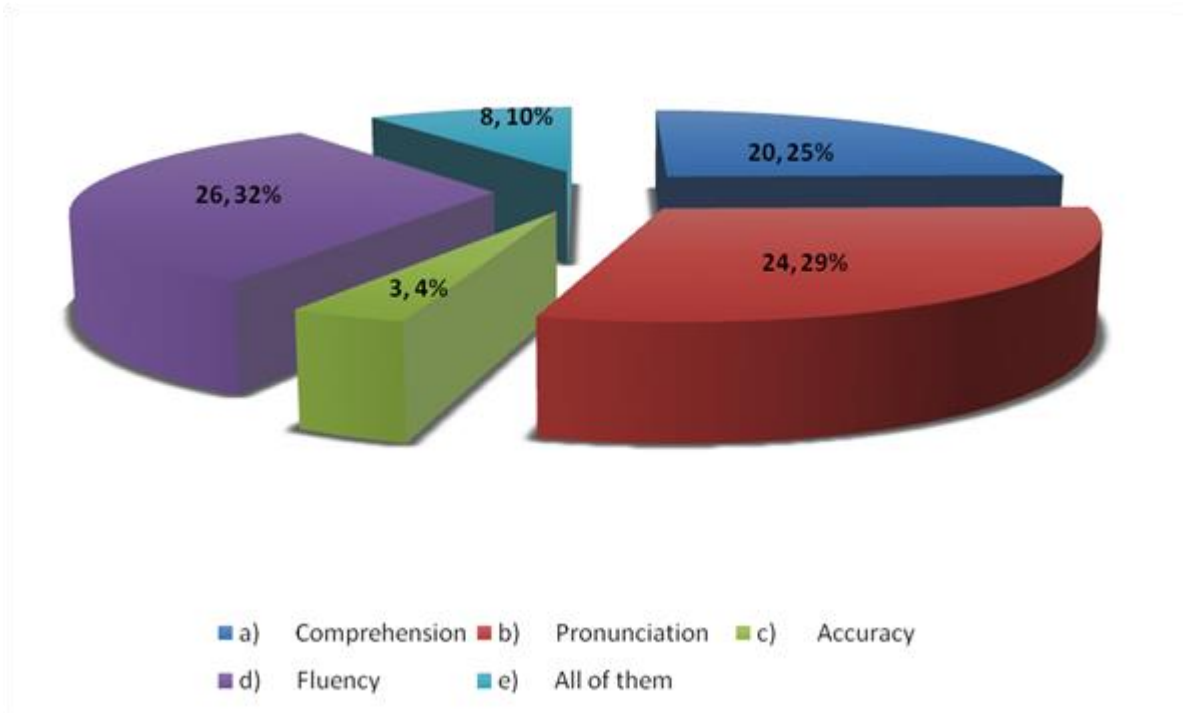


Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 29% of the respondents answered that they used other strategies to improve their oral discourse, strategies like: Watch videos and listen music, look for words and listen their pronunciation, listen music and repeat the song, practice along in front the mirror, to read articles or news in English, etc. and a 70% answered that they do not used more strategies out of the ones in the list. And the 1% did not answer.

Graphic 8

8. Which aspects do you consider are more likely to be improved by implemented these learning strategies?

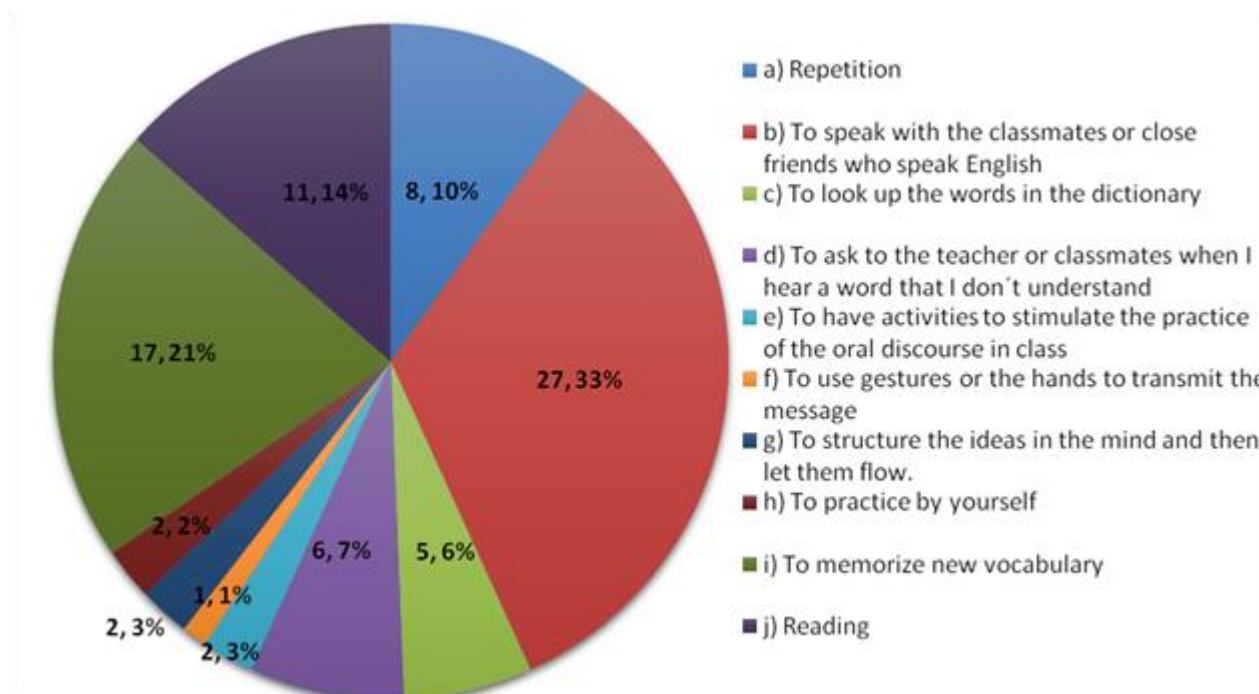


Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 25% of the respondents answered that the aspect that they improved implementing these strategies is the comprehension. A 29% said that Pronunciation can be improved using these type of strategies. A 4% said that is accuracy. A 32% answered that is Fluency the aspect they can improve using these strategies and a 10% said that they can improve all of them implementing the strategies.

Graphic 9

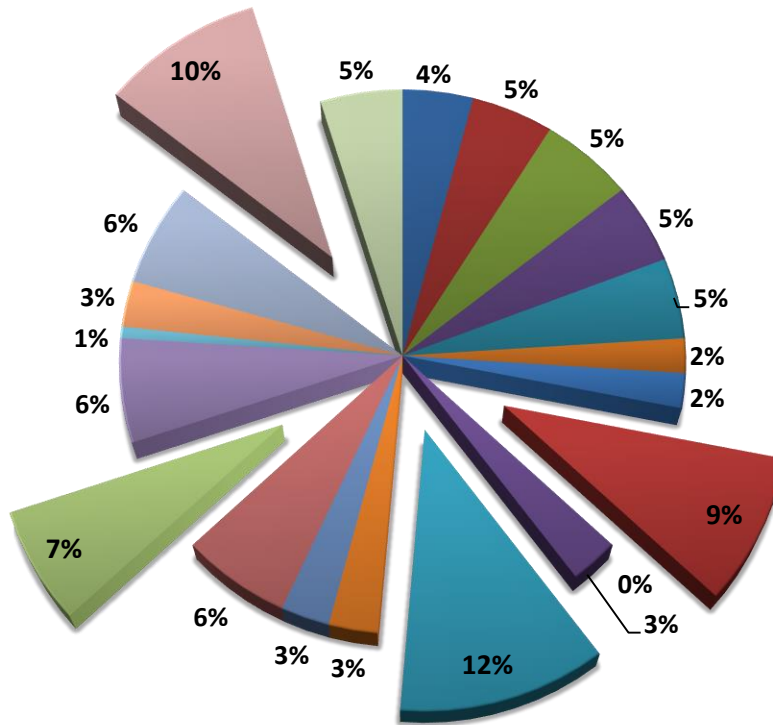
9. What learning strategies do you consider more effective for improving the oral discourse?



Source: Survey administered to students from Intensive Intermediate English I courses at the Foreign Languages Department, University of El Salvador, Semester II-2014

According to the results of this question, 10% of the respondents answered that repetition is the strategy more effective to improve the oral discourse. A 33% said that to speak with classmates or close friends who speak English is more helpful for them to improve their speaking. A 6% answered that looking up the words in the dictionary can improve the oral discourse. A 7% that to ask to the teacher or classmates when they hear a word that do not understand, is useful for them. A 21 % said that to memorize new vocabulary is the strategy that works for them to improve the oral discourse. A 14% answered that reading is the strategy that help to improve their speaking. The 2% said that they can improve their oral discourse practicing by themselves. The 1% said to use gestures to transmit the message, the 3% selected to have activities to stimulate their oral discourse can help them to improve it. And the 3% selected to structure Ideas in their mind and let them flow can help to improve their oral discourse.

IV.II Data Analysis- non-participant Observation



- Looking up the dictionary for the word people say and i don't understand.
- Talking with classmates or friends wich speak English.
- Trying to understan without repatition.
- Asking for repetition.
- Just asking questions.
- Practice with co-workers
- Trying to understand without looking up for the words I don't know.
- If I don't know how to say a word or phrase, I ask a classmate or teacher.
- I use the dictionary to prepare a role play or communicative activity in class.
- If I don't know how to say a word, I use a synonym or describe what I want to say.
- I do nnot think too much before speaking so that ideas can flow in English.
- I ask my speaking partner to repeat or explain in different words what I did not understand.
- I tell my speaing partner when I do not understan something.
- I think first in Spanish and then I translate into English.
- If I do not know how to say a word in English, I say it in Spanish.
- If I do not know how to say a word or phrase, I use gestures and my hands.
- I ask my speaking partners to repeat a word or phrase if I do not hear it clearly.
- I use known words and phrases when I do not know how to say something.
- I structure some ideas in my mind before speaking.
- To gain time, I use fillers such as: and, well, so, etc...
- I repeat the last word or phrase I said to gain time.

Source: non-participant observation administered to students from Advanced Intensive English I courses at the Foreign Language Department, University of El Salvador, semester II-2014

After administrating the non-participant observation in the four different Advanced Intensive English I classrooms the results show that at least, one student made use of one learning strategies that were observed in the classrooms in order to enhance his/her oral discourse.

According the results presented above, the most common strategy that the students applied in the moment of speaking with a 12% is: not to think much before speaking since the ideas can naturally flow in English. In a second place with a 10% of the students used fillers such as: so, well, ok, and, etc... in order to gain time in the conversation, which let them structure their ideas in their minds and then say it. In a third place, a 9% of students implemented the strategy to ask a classmate or teacher how to say a word or phrase in the target language.

Moreover, a 7% of students tended to use their mother tongue, in this case Spanish, when not knowing how to say a word or phrase in English. It shows that students made use of the mother tongue in the moment of speaking because of the lack of vocabulary or others factor cannot let have a fluent conversation, that why the students from Advanced Intensive English I used this language learning strategy in order to hold a long conversation in English.

It is necessary to highlight that many of the strategies which were included in the checklist, were observed in a same frequency that means they had the same percentage. According the graphic 6% of students, think first in Spanish and then they translate into English. Also with the same percentage the students used gestures and hands when not knowing how to say a word or phrase as well as they applied the strategy where they structured the ideas in their minds and then say it.

On the other hand, a 5% of students repeated the last word or phrase that they said to gain time. At the same time with 5% of students talked with classmates or friends which

speak English. With this same percentage was observed that students tried to understand without repetition that allowed them to reinforce the comprehension of all the conversation. Otherwise, some students from Advanced Intensive English I asked for repetition to teacher and classmate when they did not understand something in the conversation and they just asked questions.

A 4% of pupils looked up the dictionary for the words people say and they did not understand. This was an important fact because the dictionary book has been replaced by other electronic ways to search the meaning of the words. With a 3% of students used synonyms or described what they wanted to say. They asked to their speaking partner to repeat or explain in different words what they did not understand in the conversation. With the same 3% they told to their speaking partner when they did not understand something and used known words and phrases when they did not know how to say something.

Also, it was observed that 2% practiced with co-workers and tried to understand what the others said without looking up the words that they did not know. Finally, with 1% of students that were observed, asked their speaking partner to repeat some words or phrases that they did not understand clearly.

IV.III GENERAL ANALYSIS

In order to recollect the needed data concerned to the topic of the thesis "LEARNING STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE STUDENTS OF ADVANCE INTENSIVE ENGLISH I COURSES FOR IMPROVING ORAL DISCOURSE IN THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH TEACHING, DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES, UNIVERISTY OF EL SALVADOR, YEAR 2014" , it was indispensable to apply different techniques such as: Observations and Questionnaires.

The first instrument applied was the questionnaire which contained 9 questions, the questionnaire was administered to students of Advance Intensive English I Courses with the intention to find out if the students use learning strategies in order to improve their oral discourse and make their learning easier, faster, and more effective, and if so, identify which strategies student are using and if they are really effective.

In the data analysis, one of the results obtained was that the students used many strategies to improve their oral discourse such as: to speak with classmates or close friends who speak English, to memorize new vocabulary daily , Repetition, Learn idiomatic expressions, to listen music, to watch TV Shows in English, to practice 2 or 3 hours outside the classroom, many of them inside of the Cognitive and communicative learning strategies category, according with the students some of those strategies help them to improve their oral discourse, to communicate easier and faster than other students who do not use strategies. Through the questionnaire it was find out that Students have the ability to teach themselves by using methodological tools or strategies in order to be capable of producing a better learning and development in an academic environment.

The questionnaire showed that students from Advanced Intensive English I used strategies or tools to direct their own learning, and it was find out many oral strategies or in other words communicative strategies that help students to solve any communication problem at the time of speaking English and to be better than other students, those oral strategies are crucial for students at the time of being successful at their major.

The second technique was observation, such a technique was used in order to verify if students used those strategies that were mentioned in the questionnaire and to find out if the strategies used by the students in the improvement of their oral discourse are really effective, After administrating the non-participant observation in the four different Advanced Intensive English I courses the result showed that at least 6 students made use of one learning strategies in order to enhance his/her oral discourse.

According to the results, the most common strategy that the students applied in the moment of speaking is, not to think much before speaking since the ideas can naturally flow in English Also some students used fillers such as: so, well, ok, and, etc... in order to gain time in the conversation, which let them structure their ideas in their minds and then say it and other students implemented the strategy to ask a classmate or teacher how to say a word or phrase in the target language.

The use of these strategies was confirmed when the observation was being carried out because when students speak, they have more fluency ,good pronunciation and all they said was clear, all those were aspects that in the questionnaire students said that can be improved by using learning strategies, anyway it was observed that not all of them used strategies even when exist the possibility that they said that they used strategies, because at the time of speaking they spoke with short phrases, they forgot what they will say and like a 7% of students tended to use their mother tongue, in this case Spanish, when they do not know how to say a word or phrase in English and for the lack of vocabulary and this cannot let them to have a fluent conversation.

It is necessary to highlight that even in the observation it was obtained a little difference from the questionnaire; it is needed to say that there are many factors that can influence at the time of speaking and at the time of using the strategies, which does not mean that there is no use of strategies or tools, everyone has different strategies for learning and improve their oral discourse, depending on their strong points and learning methods, some of them will find the speaking easy; others will struggle to get words out, perhaps

because of nervousness or because is not the same speak with friends than speak under pressure, with the teacher in front of 30 classmates, Anyway there is a huge difference between a student who used strategies to improve their oral discourse and to make easier the use of a second language than a student who do not use any strategies and that only practice the language in class, In this investigation it was possible observed that many of students used strategies to get a good oral discourse.

Most of the learners and perhaps some of the teachers believe that the oral discourse problems can be solved through "more practice", and that was observed and proven with these techniques, students can communicate effectively in a foreign language. How do they do it? Using learning strategies in order to improve their oral discourse and make their speaking better.

V. MAIN FINDINGS

After analyzing all the data collected through the different instruments, there is certain information that can be considered to be part of the main findings of the research. Among them it can be mentioned:

1. Students from Advanced Intensive English I, applied many language learning strategies to make the learning process easy, fast, enjoyable and to improve the quality of their oral discourse in order to avoid communication problems and to communicate successfully in real situations, even if not all the students use learning strategies, there is an 80% that improve their oral discourse using learning strategies or techniques.
2. The most common strategy students applied at the moment of speaking is: Not to think much before speak, Students try to be natural and to use their own vocabulary in order that the ideas can naturally flow in English in order to speak clearly and hold a good conversation.
3. The most effective learning strategy used by students in order to improve the oral discourse is to practice the language daily with classmates or close friends who speak English, students believe that practicing the language all the time is more helpful and effective so as to achieve a good oral discourse.
4. Aspects such as: communicate feelings, opinions and thoughts, are related to the necessity of improving the oral discourse since the idea that learning a second language is all related to communication, which means, being capable of expressing, ideas, thoughts, desires in a natural environment. Students believe that communication is the most important factor in learning a second language and if students want to communicate with other people and become professionals, students have to improve the oral discourse in order to achieve what it was said before.

VI. RESEARCH QUESTIONS' ANSWERS

Which learning strategies are implemented by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I courses?

The using of learning strategies depends on individual differences such as their beliefs, affective mood and previous learning experiences, in the learning process the students choose the most appropriate strategies to solve a particular problem; They are also capable to adapt the strategy according one specific situation and determine its success level, students with higher level of language use a greater variety and number of learning strategies, students applied some strategies to solve problems, other strategies are applied to organize the learning process or avoid nervousness, but those strategies are applied depending on each students 'situation.

What are the main learning strategies used by the students in the Advanced Intensive English I to improve their oral discourse?

According to the results obtained, there are some strategies that are more helpful to improve the oral discourse, those main strategies used by the students are: To talk with relatives or friends who speaks English, because in that way they can practice more the language outside the classroom, to structures ideas in their mind and let them flow in order to hold a natural conversation, to memorize new vocabulary daily helps them to avoid using the mother tongue, in this case the Spanish, to use gestures or their hands to transmit the message clearly and the most mentioned was to practice all the time in order to get used to the language and speaks naturally. Students concluded that all the strategies mentioned above are the main strategies they use to improve their oral discourse and make their learning easier and faster.

How effective the learning strategies used by the students are in the improvement of their oral discourse?

The effectiveness of the learning strategies was demonstrated by the students at the time of speaking. Using those learning strategies, students develop a acceptable oral discourse, now they are able to solve any communication problem at the moment of having a conversation, they gain more vocabulary and also the strategies allow them to reduce the anxiety at the time of speaking, which benefits them to have a more natural and understandable *speaking*. By using the learning strategies, students improve aspects such as the pronunciation and the fluency, they are capable of speaking with native speakers and some of them, get job opportunities due the great oral discourse they perform, the effectiveness can be verified seeing those aspects or goals that students from advanced intensive English I have reached.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

- VII.I After analyzing the data that has been gathered through the application of the different instruments, it has been concluded. All the students from Advanced Intensive English I have a single way to improve their communicative skills. It means that they make use of the variety of language learning strategies in order to enhance their oral discourse in ESL since all of them stated that improve oral discourse make the communication easier, faster and enjoyable.
- VII.II Besides, it was concluded that depending on the environment in which students are surrounded, they will be forced to make use of different language learning strategies. Strategies that have not been improved by the students because the nervousness, anxiety and the frustration can keep them from getting to a better oral performance at the moment of speaking. It has been observed that the students who interact with their friends or classmates get a better oral performance; however, if they interact with the teacher or unknown people they tend to make mistakes and not have a good oral performance. These troubles avoid expressing in a better way the students 'feelings, ideas, opinions, etc...
- VII.III It has been concluded that learners who have a better oral performance have improved one or some strategies that they apply to reach a high level of proficiency in speaking. It was observed that the learners with a high level of oral proficiency apply different strategies to those who have a low level because learning training allows them to deal with external situations.
- VII.IV It has been evident that good language learners employ distinct affective strategies due to the feeling of strangeness, negative feelings, shyness and nervousness that can affect the students 'oral performance. These emotional problems that most of the students from Advanced Intensive English I have to deal

due to the lack of practice perhaps, the student has not found out the appropriate language learning strategy according his/her oral proficiency.

VII.V Finally, It has been concluded that: to practice with English native speaker is the best manner to get a better oral performance as well as the learning training will help to improve the strategies already implemented by the students. However, the first option is in some cases, difficult to reach because students are not involved in an English environment, so, They have to face up to this difficulty and to overcome it by drawing attention to the language learning strategies which will help to enhance the student's oral discourse.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are addressed to students and teachers 'community to put it in practice in outside and inside classroom.

VIII.I RECOMMENDATION FOR TEACHERS

1. It is recommended to stimulate students to make use of the language learning strategies in order to improve all the problems that they can have in the moment of speaking.
2. It is suggested showing the students the variety of language learning strategies that they can use for enhancing their fluency, accuracy, comprehension, etc... Because it was observed that most of the students do not use a strategy or they do not know what they are using one.
3. It is recommended to teachers maintain a good rapport with students but also show empathy, responsibility and respect that enhances a better relationship that lead to a relaxed but respectful environment in the classroom.
4. It is suggested not restricting the class material by using only text books because it could be helpful to use diverse materials and updated information with aim of improving student's oral performance in second language learning.

VIII.II RECOMMENDATION FOR STUDENTS

1. It is advised to students to make use of language learning strategies in order to improve the oral discourse. Since, the best way to reach a high level in the oral performance is the application of the several strategies.
2. It is suggested to students to make the effort to improve their oral performance using a considerable amount of language strategies that they can apply in the

outside or inside the classroom in order to put in practice their communicative skills.

3. It is proposed to ask to their classmates or relatives who have a better oral performance for those language learning strategies that they apply in order to choose the ones the student can apply in his/her own oral discourse.
4. In order to speak English well, it is exhorted to overcome nervousness. Finding the ways to deal with the nervousness. The students can take an assertiveness or public speaking courses and pick up tips on how to be more confident.
5. It is suggested to make contact with English native speaker as much as possible because that will quite help students in all their skills and will permit to be more confident at the moment of speaking.
6. It is proposed to build on students' skills slowly, so do not rush ahead and expect to be better than you are. Stick to use simple words to explain what you are trying to say, until to reach the point that you are good enough to be able to use more complex language. It is important to keep in mind that everything is a process which requires time and persistence to reach the goals that you have established.

X. RESOURCES

X.I HUMAN RESOURCE

In order to collect the data it was necessary to have the field to work with, so the following human resources helped the researchers to carry out this investigation.

- **M.A. José Ricardo Gamero**, chief of the Foreign Language Department.
- **MSE. Cesar Augusto Guzman**, advisor of the thesis.
- **Researchers**, (Br. Karen Cecilia Gomez Vasquez and Br. Kevin Ernesto Pineda Delgado) Students of the career of Modern Languages.
- **Teachers that allowed the researchers to manage the on-participant observation**, teachers from Advanced Intensive English I from the Foreign Language Department.
- **Students** who answered the questionnaire from the Advanced Intensive English I of the Bachelor of Arts in English Teaching, year 2014.

X.II GEOGRAPHICAL RESOURCES

- **Foreign Language Department**. Where all the information was gathered.
- **Library of the University of El Salvador**, Many resources were taken from this place like Internet and books.
- **Library of the University Francisco Gavidia**.

X.III FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Assessments	Amount
Copies	\$ 20
Printings	\$ 25
Internet	\$ 50
Transportation	\$ 100
Folders	\$ 10
Ink	\$ 50
Total:	\$ 260

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APPENDICES



Objective: To collect essential data about learning strategies implemented by the students of Advanced Intensive English I courses for improving their oral discourse in the Bachelor of Arts in English Teaching, Department of foreign language, University of El Salvador, year 2014.

- ✓ Your participation in this questionnaire is really important since it will allow us to gather valuable information for our graduation research project.

Instruction: Answer or mark the best choice for you.

1. Why is important to improve your oral discourse in English?

2. Do you practice outside the classroom?

Yes

No

3. How often do you practice English outside the class?

Always

metimes

Never

4. Who do you practice English with? Choose one option.

a) Only with teachers	
b) With classmates and teachers	
c) With my close friends	
d) Native speakers of the target language	
e) Nobody	

5. How much time during the day do you practice English?

One hour

Two hours

Three hours other _____

6. Check from the following list of strategies the ones you apply in your speaking. **Choose only 4 the most useful strategies that you always apply.**

a) Looking up the dictionary for the words people say and I don't know.	
b) Trying to memorize idiomatic expressions and its meanings	
c) Talking with relatives or friends which speak English.	
d) Trying to understand without repetitions	
e) Asking for repetition.	

f) Just asking questions.	
g) Looking for native speakers to practice English with.	
h) Practice with coworkers.	
i) Trying to understand without looking up for the words I don't know.	
j) If I do not know how to say a word or phrase, I ask a classmate or my teacher.	
k) I use the dictionary to prepare a role play or communicative activity in class.	
l) If I do not know how to say a word, I use a synonym or describe what I want to say.	
m) I do not think too much before speaking so that ideas can flow in English.	
n) I ask my speaking partner to repeat or explain in different words what I did not understand.	
o) I tell my speaking partner when I do not understand something.	
p) I think first in Spanish and then I translate into English.	
q) If I do not know how to say a word in English, I say it in Spanish.	
r) If I do not know how to say a word or phrase, I use gestures and my hands.	
s) I ask my speaking partner to repeat a word or phrase if I do not hear it clearly.	
t) If I do not hear a word or phrase clearly, I relate it to the part of the conversation that I understood.	
u) I use known words and phrases when I do not know how to say something.	
v) I structure some ideas in my mind before speaking.	
w) To gain time, I use fillers such as: and, well, etc.	
x) I repeat the last word or phrase I said to gain time.	

7. Do you have another strategy which is not included in the list?

Yes

No

Which one?

8. Which aspects (fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, etc) do you consider are more likely to be improved by implemented these strategies?

9. What language learning strategies do you consider more effective for improving oral discourse? Why?
