

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA UNAN, LEÓN**

**AREA DE CONOCIMIENTO DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES**

**AREA ESPECÍFICA DE LENGUA INGLESA**

**LICENCIATURA EN LENGUA INGLESA**



**Factors that Affect the Development of the Speaking Skills of III Year**

**Students Majoring in English, UNAN-Leon, Years 2022-2024.**

Authors: Dayanna Alexandra Urroz Narvaez

Allison Dayana Tercero Borge

Tutor: Edipcia Chávez Loredo, P.hD.

León, Nicaragua, June 2024

“45/19 la patria de la revolución”

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA UNAN, LEÓN**

**AREA DE CONOCIMIENTO DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES**

**AREA ESPECÍFICA DE LENGUA INGLESA**

**LICENCIATURA EN LENGUA INGLESA**



**Factors that Affect the Development of the Speaking Skills of III Year**

**Students Majoring in English, UNAN-Leon, Years 2022-2024.**

Authors: Dayanna Alexandra Urroz Narvaez

Allison Dayana Tercero Borge

Tutor: Edipcia Chávez Loredo, P.hD.

León, Nicaragua, June 2024

“45/19 la patria de la revolución”

Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_

Authors: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## **DEDICATION**

Firstly, we thank our God for giving us the strength and wisdom to complete our investigative work. Similarly, we thank our mothers for always trusting us and supporting us at every step and our professors of the English Major for teaching us to work with dedication and do our best in every academic task. We are especially indebted to our thesis mentor professor Edipcia Chavez who was constantly guiding us and working hand in hand with us. We sincerely appreciate her support and words of encouragement for us not to give up and complete this investigation in a professional manner.

## INDEX

DEDICATION .....	3
INDEX .....	4
ABSTRACT .....	7
1. INTRODUCTION .....	8
2. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT .....	9
3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES .....	10
4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	11
5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	12
5.1. Fluency in Language Learning .....	12
5.1.1 Defining Fluency .....	12
5.1.2 Importance of Fluency .....	13
5.1.3 Impact of Lack of Fluency on Academic Performance .....	13
5.1.4 Strategies for Acquiring Fluency .....	13
5.2 Factors hindering fluency development .....	14
5.2.1 Internal factors .....	14
a) Lack of self confidence .....	14
b) Lack of motivation .....	15
c) Anxiety .....	15
5.2.2 External factors .....	16
a) Socioeconomic level .....	16
b) Socio Emotional Pressure .....	17
c) Teacher's role .....	18
5.3 Good teaching practice .....	19
5.4 Developing the language skills .....	19
5.5 Vocabulary development .....	19
5.6 Activities for oral fluency .....	20
5.7 Different roles that the teachers can play in the classroom .....	21
5.8 Student independent learning for fluency development .....	21
5.9 Studies in the area .....	22
5.9.1 Role playing Strategies for Fluency Improvement .....	22
5.9.2 Analysis of students' fluency during class performance .....	23
5.9.3 Interaction between students and teacher for speaking development .....	23

5.10 Contribution of this study.....	24
6. METHODOLOGY .....	25
6.1. Data sources .....	25
6.1.1. Data collection process.....	25
6.2 Data collection stages.....	26
6.3 Data collection and findings for Research Question 1 .....	27
6.3.1 Initial Exploration Survey .....	27
6.3.2 First group of target students.....	27
6.3.3 Initial research findings .....	28
6.4 Data collection and findings for Research Question 2.....	30
6.4.1 Redefinition of research.....	30
6.4.2 New data collection and analysis .....	31
6.4.3 Second group of target students .....	31
6.4.4 Target teachers.....	32
6.4.5 Second exploration survey: .....	34
6.4.6 Interview to teachers.....	35
6.4.7 Second research findings: students' perceptions.....	35
6.4.8 Second research findings: teachers' perceptions .....	40
6.5 Limitations of the study .....	48
7. CONCLUSIONS .....	50
8. RECOMMENDATIONS .....	54
8.1 Recommendations for improvement.....	54
8.2 Recommendations for Further Research.....	55
9. REFERENCES .....	57
APPENDIX A: PLAN OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES .....	59
APPENDIX B: PLAN OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 2.....	60
APPENDIX C: PLAN OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 3.....	61
APPENDIX D: INITIAL EXPLORATION SURVEY .....	64
APPENDIX E: GRAPHS FROM THE FIRST SURVEY.....	66
APPENDIX F: ORIGINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SECOND SURVEY APPLIED .....	70
APPENDIX G: SECOND EXPLORATION SURVEY.....	78
APPENDIX H: GRAPHICS FOR THE SECOND SURVEY.....	81

APRENDIX I: TEACHER'S INTERVIEW.....	89
APENDIX J: INTERVIEWS TRANSCRIPTIONS.....	91
APPENDIX K: MATRIX OF ANALYSIS .....	119

## ABSTRACT

Oral fluency is a fundamental component in the process of learning English as a second or foreign language. However, very often, developing optimal fluency tends to be a difficult process for the learners. That is why the present study aims to explore the factors that affect the development of fluency. Our population involved two generations of students enrolled in the third year of the English major at UNAN-León, the largest state university in the western part of Nicaragua. This study is of a qualitative descriptive nature, and the data collection instruments involved surveys and interviews, that were applied in two stages, one carried out in the year 2022, and the other in the year 2024. During the 2 years that the research lasted, a total of 61 students participated. Likewise, four teachers who work in the area of oral expression participated in the interviews. The surveys applied to the students, included questions regarding how they approached the study of the language in their daily lives and what made it difficult for them to develop their fluency. The interview applied to the teachers was based on questions about their experience and perceptions working in the educational area and in the development of oral fluency. When analyzing the data we used open coding for a thorough analysis of the survey and interviews in order to answer the research questions. The result of this research demonstrated that there are both internal and external factors affecting the development of students' optimal fluency. Some of the internal factors involved affective factors such as lack of confidence, lack of motivation and anxiety whereas the external factors were related to students' socioeconomic level, the role of the teacher and socio-emotional pressure. Likewise, ample room for improvement was identified in the coping mechanisms used by students to address their challenges in pursuing fluency development. A set of recommendations aimed to teachers and students emerged from the study as well as recommendations for further research efforts in the area.

Keywords: oral expression, fluency development, affective factors, students' oral challenges, independent learning, teachers' role

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language usually involves a great challenge due to the degree of complexity involved in adapting from scratch to a new way of thinking, writing, and overall speaking. This research project intends to emphasize the importance of the speaking skills and understand the factors that affect the development of oral fluency within students' linguistic ability.

The study is focused on the educational field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), at the university level, specifically, in the English major at UNAN-Leon. Our target population are the third-year students Majoring in English. The methodological design is based on a descriptive qualitative research approach, and the study population of the study is comprised of a sample of 61 students.

The source of motivation to conduct research in this particular field emerges from our personal experience. Throughout our academic preparation as students of this Major we have realized the importance of the English language and the prominence that it acquires day by day. Indeed, English has become the Lingua Franca, the international language that unites people worldwide. Thus, to become proficient in this language, developing strong oral skills holds prominent importance. However, based on our own experience during the development of our studies we are aware that achieving adequate oral fluency is not an easy task. This is the main reason why we want to provide information about what factors affect fluency in oral communication when we are learning the foreign language. We strongly believe that gaining knowledge in this area will contribute to identifying and proposing possible solutions. Our ultimate purpose is to offer hope to future generations of students in the English Major, helping them realize that overcoming barriers to effective communication is not impossible, no matter how challenging they may seem. Certainly, we can all move forward if we face our fears and difficulties. Thus, through the findings of this research, we aim to propose didactic ideas that can assist both students and teachers in facing and overcoming the numerous challenges associated with developing optimal oral proficiency in the target language.

## **2. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Learning a second language poses significant challenges, especially when not immersed in an environment where constant practice is possible. This process can be slow, and students undertaking the journey often face obstacles such as insecurity and the fear of communication failure. Our research aim is to investigate how the lack of fluency affects third-year students in the development of speaking skills in the English major at UNAN León. We seek to understand the various factors affecting students and how they face these challenges. The motivation of this study is based on our experiences as English major students, acknowledging the difficulties we have encountered. Our goal is to provide valuable information and potential solutions for enhancing students' speaking abilities. By utilizing appropriate research tools, we aim to collaborate with students facing these challenges to obtain a specific, clear, and accurate understanding of the phenomenon. This contribution both addresses current student needs and informs future research proposals.

### **3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

General objective:

Investigate the factors that affect the development of fluency in the speaking skills of third year students majoring in English at UNAN-Leon.

Specific objectives:

- Determine the different causes influencing students' acquisition of oral fluency in the English language.
- Identify coping mechanisms utilized by students to overcome challenges related to factors affecting the development of their oral fluency.

#### **4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

General research question:

What factors influence the development of oral fluency in the speaking skills of third-year students majoring in English at UNAN-Leon?

Specific research questions:

- How do different causes influence the acquisition of oral fluency in the English language among fourth-year students majoring in English at UNAN-Leon?
- What coping mechanisms do students use to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?

## 5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The literature review presented below serves as a foundational exploration into essential concepts crucial for comprehending the trajectory of our research. We commence by exploring the fundamental concepts related to fluency, aiming to grasp its significance and impact on individuals learning English as a foreign language. Subsequently, we examine the factors that impede its development. In addition, we will discuss the importance of good teaching practice, the role of the teacher and the significance of students' self-learning strategies. Furthermore, we have a brief discussion of different research efforts that have been made in the field of fluency development which have relevance for our research project. Finally, we outline the contribution of our study to this knowledge area.

### 5.1. Fluency in Language Learning

Fluency holds significant importance in the acquisition of a foreign language; however, its development is often impeded by various factors, some of which are within our control, while others are influenced by external circumstances. Overall, individuals worldwide find the need to use a second language (L2) in education or their professional careers at some point in their lives. Therefore, proficiency in communication is essential not only in one's native language (L1) but also in their L2 (Jong, 2023). This proficiency is effectively achieved through competent fluency management, allowing individuals to express themselves confidently in their L2.

#### 5.1.1 Defining Fluency

Fluency is related to the oral performance that allows individuals the ability to express their ideas and construct discourses and conversations coherently when speaking (González, Diaz & Lopez, 2023). This proficiency ensures the speaker's ability to operate with clarity and efficiency in both their native language and a foreign language. The oral skill involves three key areas: the ability *to generate or reproduce ideas*, the ability *to produce and express words*, and the ability *to comprehend word meanings*. Narration, for example, is considered a demanding oral fluency task that involves various aspects of language form, meaning, and usage, providing comprehensive and reliable insights into language proficiency. Effectively narrating a

story demands diverse linguistic, communicative, and cognitive skills, including coherence and proficient fluency, often defined as 'the ability to convey a rich, coherent, and well-structured narrative" (pag.4).

#### *5.1.2 Importance of Fluency*

Speaking proficiency is paramount in learning a second language, and success is assessed by the ability to engage in fluent and natural conversations. The primary goal of English language instruction is to equip students with the competence to use English effectively and accurately in communication. According to Connor (2021), fluency involves expressing oneself in English confidently and concretely. Effective communication, an essential skill in both first and second languages, requires fluency to convey messages appropriately, clearly, and concisely. In educational settings, a limited emphasis on speaking skills may impede their development, resulting in insufficient practice opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

#### *5.1.3 Impact of Lack of Fluency on Academic Performance*

Deficiencies in fluency skills can negatively impact reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and overall academic performance. Insufficient fluency impedes progression to higher academic levels, as increased communication demands are integral to academic advancement. According to Lestari (2017-2018), students studying English as a foreign language prioritize oral communication skills. The inability to communicate orally can lead to stress, frustration, poor academic performance, and demotivation to continue language learning (p. 2).

#### *5.1.4 Strategies for Acquiring Fluency*

Achieving fluency requires exposure and practice. Exposure involves immersing oneself in an environment conducive to language learning, facilitating vocabulary expansion. Technology-assisted practices, such as utilizing videos, series, podcasts, and language learning apps like Duolingo, enhance vocabulary enrichment. Practical strategies, like engaging in short dialogues with questions and answers (Rahnama, Rad, Bagheri, 2016), make the process dynamic, entertaining, and less monotonous. Developing fluency in English requires consistent practice, a willingness to take risks, and the ability to learn from mistakes. Surrounding oneself with supportive individuals

who offer constructive feedback and encouragement fosters self-confidence and helps overcome the fear of failure (P. 2.)

## **5.2 Factors hindering fluency development**

Numerous factors, both internal and external, can impede the effective development of fluency. Internal factors may include self-doubt and lack of confidence, while external factors could be economic constraints hindering investment in necessary teaching materials. Identifying and addressing these factors are crucial for overcoming barriers to fluency development.

### *5.2.1 Internal factors*

We refer to internal factors as the interests, attitudes and motivations that a person has when developing skills that are acquired with practice. In his Affective Filter Hypothesis, Krashen (1986) identified motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety as key factors influencing second language acquisition. Essentially, heightened emotions like anxiety, fear, or embarrassment hinder the process of language learning (Krashen, 1986, p.31). Such factors have a decisive influence on the achievement of the proposed objectives.

#### *a) Lack of self confidence*

Self-confidence is a vital aspect of good communication, as it is the ability to express yourself authentically and naturally on a daily basis. It is particularly crucial when facing situations where confidence in oneself is of great help. In the context of speaking the English language, a lack of confidence often comes from fear of making mistakes and facing potential laughter. Unfortunately, some environments may not be encouraging of constructive feedback, with individuals more inclined to mock than assist in improvement.

This fear of being exposed by errors can lead to hesitation in posing basic questions, as students may worry about becoming the target of jokes from their peers. The consequence of this lack of self-confidence extends beyond the immediate fear of ridicule, as it can give rise to feelings of inadequacy and a prevalent fear of failure. These emotional barriers, in turn, have the potential to impede a student's capacity to achieve their goals, badly impacting both academic performance and interpersonal skills

within the classroom. Lack of self-confidence can generate feelings of inadequacy, which can limit a person's ability to achieve their goals and, in the same way, lower their academic performance and interaction skills in the classroom

b) *Lack of motivation*

The lack of motivation is a feeling of lack of interest that could be produced by factors of stress, anxiety and monotony which can cause a person's lack of interest in carrying out daily activities and feel a loss of enthusiasm and energy, thus causing poor academic performance. Lack of motivation has led many young people to school failure, mainly reflected in the lack of learning goals achievement, Thus, it is crucial to recognize that motivation increase has significant relevance in the area of learning English as a foreign language

Low motivation is a common issue, especially among students learning a foreign language, many students struggle to engage in learning due to the challenges they face in understanding the lessons. This difficulty often leads to a sense of demotivation (Mauliya, Relianisa, Rokhyati, 2020). Additionally, the family environment plays a crucial role in influencing a student's motivation. If students lack support at home, it can negatively impact their academic performance. The absence of family support may result in low motivation, a deficit in moral values and norms, and a lack of self-control (Mauliya, Relianisa, Rokhyati, 2020). Students experiencing low motivation face a significant barrier between their desire to learn and the inclination to give up. This deters the learning process, making it slower and more challenging for them. Addressing these motivational challenges is essential to facilitate a more conducive learning environment for students (p.4).

c) *Anxiety*

Anxiety is recognized as a significant affective factor that detrimentally impacts both personality development and educational outcomes. Over the years, scholars and theorists in the field of second language acquisition have consistently noted the close association between anxiety and language learning. This sense of distress commonly manifests during speaking activities, where learners experience heightened tension, nervousness, and apprehension. These emotional states act as barriers, impeding

students from achieving meaningful learning outcomes and attaining satisfactory academic performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994, p. 289).

Teachers and students commonly perceive anxiety as a significant obstacle in the process of learning to speak another language. Various recent approaches to foreign language teaching emphasize the impact of anxiety on language acquisition (K. Horwitz, B. Horwitz, Cope, 2019). Learning a foreign language can be tricky for certain students, especially when they struggle with anxiety during the learning process. This anxiety arises when students feel they lack necessary skills to communicate with others (p. 2).

In addition, some research indicates that anxiety is negatively related to the need to communicate in a foreign language, that is, very anxious students tend to have an irrational fear of communicating. A high anxiety level impedes student willingness to communicate and could also deter learning and overall affect the entire learning experience (Nastiti, 2023) Therefore, it is very important for students to be able to manage anxiety so that it does not become a barrier difficult to break down. Patience and determination are key in dealing with these challenges to ensure a successful learning journey (p. 2).

### *5.2.2 External factors*

When we refer to external factors, we are talking about situational factors related to the environment or context in which the learning process takes place. These factors typically emerge from the economic and social environment and based on their influence they can impact the learning of a foreign language. Learners' decisions are often shaped by these factors, and, in many cases, the solutions are not under their control.

#### *a) Socioeconomic level*

Socioeconomic status can encompass attributes of quality of life, as well as the opportunities and privileges offered to people within society. The socioeconomic level can significantly condition the way of learning, due to the accessibility that students can or cannot have to diverse necessary resources. In the field of learning a foreign language, as is the case of the English language, the socioeconomic level directly affects students. Those who have a low social level have less access to education and

educational materials and often tend to have distracting factors that affect their ability to concentrate such as hunger and additional responsibilities at home.

The social status of parents is a factor influencing learning. Those parents with enough resources will ensure their children's needs are met and providing necessary resources for effective learning" (Hamzah, Umrah, Syam, 2023, p. 3). However, students from less privileged families frequently encounter numerous obstacles, such as a lack of finances, limited access to technology, and weak support networks (Adeoye, Akinnubi, Lasisi, 2023, p. 3).

This difference between high and low socioeconomic levels is evident. According to Hamzah, Umrah, and Syam (2023), those with higher socioeconomic status can access services beneficial for language acquisition, such as the internet and quality teaching materials. In contrast, individuals with lower economic status may lack access to these tools, leading to a slower language learning process. Moreover, asking for help or clarification from others may be difficult for these students because of feelings of shame related to their economic conditions (p.3).

#### *b) Socio Emotional Pressure*

The pressure to perform well in oral skills increases stress and anxiety in students, which leads to social and emotional deterioration. In the same way, they can end up feeling pressured by their environment and by themselves wanting to achieve better performance. Learning English as a foreign language involves the acquisition of social and emotional skills in the classroom. Depending on the situation, the student may experience various emotions such as frustration, worry, disappointment and boredom (Gay, Pogranova, Mauroux, Trisconi, Rankin, Shankland, 2022). These emotions are strongly related to the process of acquiring good fluency when learning a foreign language. They appear when they do not have adequate command when it is needed, whether to answer basic questions or create short conversations. Furthermore, negative emotions are a factor that strongly affects the development of fluency since this prevents achieving success and being able to advance in the process.

Therefore, it is believed that the socio-emotional learning strategies should be taught as a part of teacher training programs. (Ülker, İyi, Çoban, 2023). That is to say,

teachers must have the appropriate professional level to be able to treat students with this type of problem, help them to function better in the classroom and overcome their fears of expressing themselves in public spaces, and in this way put into practice the speak confidently and naturally and thus acquire good fluency

c) Teacher's role

Teachers play a critical role in developing student speaking skills in the classroom. It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that extroverts do not dominate introverts. For instance, less confident students need to have the most opportunities in classroom activities, and for shy students the teacher needs to create special situations where they have to talk more. The teacher should adopt an encouraging rather than a corrective attitude to facilitate student achievement, creating a reassuring classroom environment so that all students feel at home. To remove the fear of speaking English from the minds of students, teachers must give them constant positive reinforcement and help them overcome their reluctance.

In addition, teachers should use the foreign language as a medium to improve students' understanding and participation in English. Thus, they are to encourage students to actively engage in English learning. It's crucial for teachers to be clear about their goals and choose effective teaching methods accordingly. They are also able to facilitate the students to interact with their peers as models to get comprehensible input in English. According to Krashen (1982) in his Input hypothesis the learner can only acquire a second or foreign language when he or she is able to understand a linguistic stream that contains linguistic elements or structures slightly higher ( $i+1$ ) than his or her current level of competence (p. 66).

On the other hand, teachers have a significant impact on shaping the personal and behavioral aspects of students in language learning (Amiruddin, Jannah, 2022). When a student feels the teacher has a friendly attitude and everything is favorable, they become more willing to take risks, and as a result, speech accelerates. Having well-trained teachers in public speaking classes can solve many issues. It's crucial to ensure that only trained teachers, especially for speaking classes, go into classrooms. They should be directly trained in how to ensure the speaking skills are developed and how to handle different speaking situations. During training, teachers should learn about various

speaking activities that interest students globally and are helpful in real-life situations. Ongoing training is also essential to make sure teachers effectively carry out different speaking tasks in the classroom.

### **5.3 Good teaching practice**

Teachers should help pupils overcome their fears. The instructors must be able to provide a secure and pleasant classroom atmosphere for students in order to reduce students' anxiety (Faqih,2023, p. 3). This would be an appropriate environment in which the student and teacher work as a team for a better development of fluency in English as a foreign language. It is important for both the teacher and the student to learn from each other making sure that learning is comfortable and not a stressful one.

A good classroom atmosphere (good teachers, good classmates, enjoyable learning activities) leads to positive learning experience (Alberth, Mursalim, Rahim, Gege, Tambunan, 2023), evidently by creating a comfortable and safe environment in the class area, the student will feel free to express their ideas without fear of making mistakes.

### **5.4 Developing the language skills**

Practicing reading and listening constantly will make it easier for students to obtain a broader vocabulary which will help start conversations in a more natural and relaxed way. An easy way to implement it is by finding topics that are of interest to students so that the practice does not become boring nor overwhelming and at the same time developing fluency in speech. Also, it is important for students to surround themselves with people who genuinely support them and provide constructive criticism that is useful for improving their fluency.

### **5.5 Vocabulary development**

Vocabulary acquisition is vital to understanding the process of developing a second language. It is an obvious fact that English learners who have access to a large vocabulary will have fewer problems communicating than students with a small vocabulary range, since they have a greater capacity to interact and create conversations in which they can put oral skills into practice with naturalness and security, by having a large and fluid vocabulary, they lose fear when speaking with

others and gain confidence little by little, thus crossing the language barrier. On the other hand, when students have a reduced vocabulary range there is more insecurity when expressing themselves. This means extra effort to create basic conversations because they struggle to find the right words. As a result, conversations can become repetitive and monotonous.

Some alternatives to have a more varied vocabulary could be watching series or videos, helping themselves with the subtitles and extracting unknown words or words that arouse more interest in the learner. Other techniques include listening to songs of different genres so that it is more entertaining, reading articles, magazines, stories, etc. Putting all this into practice helps students enrich their vocabulary while simultaneously developing their oral skills.

### **5.6 Activities for oral fluency.**

The stimulation of oral expression through carrying out activities is key for the development of students' fluency. Therefore, teachers should prioritize these activities when planning classroom lessons, aiming to foster skills such as public speaking, debate, and defending ideas among students.

Some activities that can be carried out in the classroom to develop fluency, can be riddles and tongue twisters which are commonly used to improve pronunciation, increase understanding of the language and expand vocabulary. On the other hand, activities must stimulate discussion in the classroom by integrating topics of conversation that catch students' attention, so they debate among themselves exchanging opinions. Finally, the integration of oral presentations is very important. The purpose of these activities is for the student to investigate topics of interest and then explain them to their classmates. All the above are just a few examples of activities that can be implemented in the classroom. Indeed, the EFL/ESL literature offers numerous activities that teachers can use to enhance students' oral skills.

## **5.7 Different roles that the teachers can play in the classroom**

The social dynamics within the classroom significantly shape the educational experience, influencing students' motivation, academic performance, and overall well-being. Within this setting, individuals, including both students and teachers, assume various roles and responsibilities, engaging in interactions that encompass leadership, collaboration, commitment, and communication.

For instance, the behavior and attitude of a teacher in the classroom can greatly impact the atmosphere. A strict teacher may create a stressful environment, leading students to feel demotivated and consequently, affecting their academic performance. On the other hand, a teacher who fosters a relaxed or enjoyable atmosphere can cultivate a sense of security and comfort among learners, motivating them to actively engage in the process of learning a foreign language.

Moreover, it is essential for teachers to provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their performance level. By not only focusing on high-achieving students, teachers can empower those facing challenges to build confidence and actively participate in classroom activities. This inclusive approach fosters a supportive learning environment where all students feel valued and encouraged to contribute.

## **5.8 Student independent learning for fluency development**

The ability to communicate accurately and effectively is an art that requires development and a lot of practice. As previously discussed for many students, oral presentations often pose a significant challenge, eliciting feelings of anxiety and nervousness when faced with speaking in public.

As a result, students frequently turn to self-help methods, leveraging modern technologies such as YouTube, podcasts, and streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and HBO. These resources offer access to a wide range of content, including documentaries, interviews, movies, series, and more, allowing students to immerse themselves in the language and gain exposure to authentic communication contexts.

In addition, they can apply self-study strategies such as reading audio books which helps them with the acquisition of vocabulary and pronunciation. They can then

put into practice what they learned by engaging in conversations with themselves or with friends about everyday topics, or by actively participating in language-rich activities such as observing sporting events or systematically researching and incorporating new vocabulary elements into presentations. Self-studying is a learning strategy that students should put into practice systematically if they really want to advance in the process of learning a foreign language.

## **5.9 Studies in the area**

In the process of preparing our research work, various studies were analyzed that provide information to support and give credibility to our research project. In each of these studies we realize to what extent fluency is an important factor in the learning of English as a foreign language. Indeed, adequate fluency levels in speaking optimizes English proficiency as students' speech sounds more skillful, more natural and more understandable.

The following is a discussion of various studies in the field that shed light on the area of students' fluency development.

### *5.9.1 Role playing Strategies for Fluency Improvement*

This research project was carried out by Maftuh et al. in the year 2023. The purpose of the study was to explain how role-playing learning strategy can improve English speaking fluency. The type of research was quantitative and qualitative by using Classroom Action Research (CAR) with the participant action research type in conducting the study. The stages of each cycle are preliminary observation, planning, implementation, observation, reflection and triangulation. The research steps after designing the action plan were to carry out the actions and observe the behavior of each research subject while performing role-playing activities. Role-playing activities were carried out in groups of four to five students. Meanwhile, the steps of learning activities are divided into three activities: pre-activity, while-activity, and post-activity. The researchers concluded that the implementation of role-playing techniques can improve speaking fluency. This research was an innovative effort to learn English speaking fluency skills applied in the Madiun State Polytechnic English Studies Programme. For this reason, it was expected that the research results obtained optimally contributed to

the students and that they could improve their English-speaking fluency skills by using a fun learning strategy of playing roles.

#### *5.9.2 Analysis of students' fluency during class performance.*

This research project was carried out by Permana et al. in the year 2021. The study highlights how speaking fluency makes English proficiency sound more natural, more natural and more impressive to the listeners. The purpose of this study was to analyze the problems that many students in Indonesia often face, especially in the English language, when they try to be good speakers in academic speaking courses. In this study the population involved one student. The instrument that the researcher used to collect the information at this point is a video presentation that occurred in the Academic Speaking class and some reflections done by students. In conclusion the researcher determined accurately that the student seemed to have good basic learning ability in English, especially in speaking, and that the student was improving academically.

#### *5.9.3 Interaction between students and teacher for speaking development.*

This study conducted by Amiruddin and Raudhatu (2022) explained the role of the speaking style between teacher and student in Learning English. The research concludes that the teacher's language input is an important tool to enhance students' input in English and create their understanding in English. The study was a quantitative investigation employed with an ex post facto approach. This research carefully analyzed the possible status of the speaking style between teachers and students in English learning that naturally emerges and cannot be controlled or manipulated. The total population involved 44 students. The questions, both in the questionnaires and in the interview, tests conducted with the respondent, focus on the ways in which teachers conduct the teaching process, interact with students, ask them questions, solicit students' opinions, and use the appropriate style. In conclusion, this research found that the role of speaking style between teachers and students in learning English is positive and significant.

The relationship that exists between these studies and our study becomes evident since what is sought is to address the issue of fluency development in a foreign

language. There were interesting highlights of these projects such as the importance for teachers to understand their objectives and design the best method to carry out their teaching and how teachers can facilitate students' interaction with their peers as models to obtain understandable information in English. Furthermore, it is highlighted how teachers have an impact on students' personality and language behavior and the importance for teachers to use their teaching style to create a meaningful environment for language learning. To conclude, each of the projects described provided us with valuable information that we could relate to and was supportive in being able to put together and articulate our own research actions.

### **5.10 Contribution of this study**

The intention of our research is to provide valid and important information about the processes of fluency development in learning English as a foreign language. Similarly to the studies discussed above, we are focusing on development of fluency, factors affecting it, and aiming to provide recommendations for overcoming the limitations. Unlike these studies, we have a smaller population, and we differ in research methods and instruments for data collection.

Our research aims to shed light from the perspective of the participants, both teachers and students of the UNAN English Studies program, so the specific research questions that we will be answering are focused on the variety of factors that influence the acquisition of fluency, the mechanism students use to overcome the problems they face and how such mechanisms influence the development of fluency in the classroom.

Through the research methodology used, described in the following section, our intention was to be able to answer these research questions comprehensively. As already mentioned, our goal is to provide contextualized recommendations that can be useful for the development of students' fluency and can serve as motivation and support for future research in this area.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

This thesis uses a descriptive/qualitative research approach. We collected data to explore the phenomenon from the participants' viewpoint. As already highlighted in our study, we aimed to investigate the various factors impacting students' oral skill development. The study focused on analyzing events and incidents that impeded fluency development in English speaking. Additionally, we aimed to identify the origins of the phenomenon and explore how these factors were connected to learners' past experiences with the language. Given the qualitative nature of our research the processes of data collection and analysis usually proceeded simultaneously. Moreover, ongoing findings affected what types of data were collected and how they were collected. Therefore, our approach involved designing research instruments in interconnected stages, facilitating the display of information and the presentation of relevant findings.

### 6.1. Data sources

The original data were first collected in the year 2022, when the first 30 target students were in third year of their English Studies (currently they are in their fourth year). A survey was administrated, which led to the stage of an initial diagnosis of the situation. The second part of the research was based on the original data, based on which we decided to move on integrating new research instruments including a new survey for a new population of target students and an interview that involved four teachers of the English major.

#### 6.1.1. *Data collection process*

The data collection process developed in several stages, beginning with conducting an initial exploration survey. This involved administering a survey to students with the purpose of collecting useful data. The data collected from this instrument helped clarify our second research question and provided answers to our first original research questions. The first question aimed to discover the factors that hinder fluency in learning a foreign language. The second aimed at understanding the mechanisms used by the students to address the challenges they face in their fluency development. The next

stages of data collection would include data from both teachers and students, as described below.

## 6.2 Data collection stages

The instruments of this research were originally designed to have specific information about what is affecting student acquisition of optimal oral fluency. Later on, we identified the need of investigating the issue further and we decided to explore the mechanisms students use to overcome their oral limitations. The investigation was carried out in four stages. The following table (table 1) describes each of these stages:

Stage	Instrument	Objective
1	Initial Exploration Research question 1	Answer our initial research question: <i>-How do various factors influence the acquisition of oral fluency in the English language among third-year students majoring in English at UNAN-Leon?</i>
2	Data analysis and interpretation	Obtain baseline information and appropriate responses to our research topic
3	Redefinition of research	Make decisions about the follow up of our research and be able to re-direct our further research actions
4	New data collection and analysis Research question 2	Collect information to be able to answer our second research question: <i>-What coping mechanisms do students use to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?</i>

Table 1. Stages of Research Process

For a more detailed description of the research actions involved in this research please see Plan of Research Activities 1, Plan of Research Activities 2 and Plan of Research Activities 3 in Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C respectively.

## **6.3 Data collection and findings for Research Question 1**

The following is a detailed description of the data collection instruments that were proposed and used in the first part of our research.

### **6.3.1 Initial *Exploration Survey***

This initial exploratory research had the aim of collecting information for our first research question so we could have accurate answers from the part of the participants. Participants were then presented with a semi-structured sample survey form to assess their basic perceptions about our research focus. A sample survey technique has many advantages: low cost, the information is more precise and of better quality than that of the census, due to the smaller number of interviewers that allows for selective sampling. Likewise, objective scientific methods of measurement can be introduced to correct errors.

The survey administrated was a sample survey consisting of 13 targeted questions to assess the students' perceptions of fluency development. The students had to answer YES/NO. The issues addressed by this instrument included how they self-assessed their fluency, and how they felt affected by certain affective factors such as fear, anxiety and nervousness. In addition, the students were asked questions related to the role of the teacher, error correction and motivation (see survey in Appendix D and graphics to analyze the data in appendix E). Each survey was administered individually, explaining what the research consisted of and the results we expected to obtain. Students had between 10-15 minutes to provide their responses.

### **6.3.2 First group of target students**

The survey was applied in 2022 at the Universidad Autonoma de Nicaragua UNAN.Leon, specifically in the third year (III Year A and III-year B) of the English major. The initial target population consisted of 15 students per group (for a total of 30) between the ages of 18 and 24. The students were selected from a population of students who had been recommended by the professor who taught one of the oral expression components in the III year of the English Studies at that moment. Those students, according to the professor in charge, seemed to be ones struggling the most

with oral fluency development. The students were fully informed of the research objectives, and they participated voluntarily.

### 6.3.3 Initial research findings

Our original concern was to find out the factors affecting students' fluency development. The research question we wanted to answer through this exploration was "*What are the different factors that influence the acquisition of oral fluency in the English language among third-year students majoring in English at UNAN-Leon?*". The following are the main findings in this regard:

- Students' background knowledge

Interestingly, student's problems with their fluency development seem to be connected to their prior English knowledge when they started the English studies. 15 out of the 30 students said they didn't have any background knowledge when they entered the English Major. The other 15 students said they had some background knowledge indicating with their responses that even for these students their English knowledge was low when beginning the English Studies.

- Students' self-perception

Regarding how students viewed their proficiency level, 9 out of the 30 students did not consider themselves fluent in the language, 4 of them considered they had complete fluency and the other 17 students considered they had an intermediate level. Through these results we can deduce that students did not have an accurate realistic idea of their language level or perhaps their awareness about what it takes to be fluent in the language was low.

- Internal factors affecting student fluency development

Some of the internal factors affecting students 'fluency development are affective factors such as self-confidence, fear of speaking and making mistakes in public. In this regard, 10 out of the 30 students answered that they were not afraid to express themselves in public but 20 of them claimed they have insecurity when expressing

themselves in public. These results seemed to relate to the issue of motivation as 25 students feel discouraged when they were trying to express themselves in the classroom. The anxiety levels in the group seemed to be high since 25 of them claimed to feel anxiety when speaking in front of their classmates. Only 5 students did not reveal a high level of anxiety when expressing themselves in the classroom.

Regarding their feeling when they make a mistake, 17 of those surveyed said they felt humiliated and did not receive adequate support from their peers when making a mistake and 13 of them said they did receive adequate peer support. There seems to be a contradiction with another piece of information that revealed that 25 of the students claim that they feel peer support from their partners when they make a mistake. These findings seem to reveal that despite the affective factors causing an impact on student fluency development, they still have a good relationship within the classroom. This seems to indicate that, in general, the classroom environment and dynamics at this year of the English Studies might be optimal grounds for students to take risks and work in collaboration to enhance their oral skills development. In other words, there seems to be ample room for improvement in this linguistic area at this level of the language program.

- Independent practice for fluency development

As far as independent practice is concerned, the survey revealed that 5 out of 30 of the students did not practice individually, as opposed to the 25 students who claimed they carried out independent practice. At this point we were clear that more data were necessary to be collected so students could clarify what they consider independent practice and how they put it into practice at that moment. We believe that students might not have had enough clarity of the questions we were asking. On the other hand, the entire population participating in the survey (that is all 30 students) agreed that they would be willing to do their part to overcome their weaknesses in developing fluency. Again, this receptivity from the part of the target population makes us believe that consistent improvement is possible in this area. Clearly, more information was necessary to find out what steps could be taken at the level of student individual

practice. This was an area that we considered to continue to explore in the follow up of our research.

- The role of the teacher

In terms of the role teachers play for student oral skills development, students' awareness was high. All the respondents agreed that it is vitally important for the development of fluency. In addition, most of the participants, that is 23 out 30, agreed that the teacher's attitude exerts influence on helping students overcome their weaknesses in developing fluency. As discussed in the literature review, the teacher plays a significant part in helping students assume a variety of roles and responsibilities that involve collaboration, commitment, and communication. The data collection process in the second part of our research took into consideration the teachers as valuable agents in the process of student oral proficiency development. So, target teachers were integrated as key participants in the follow up of our research.

## **6.4 Data collection and findings for Research Question 2**

### **6.4.1 Redefinition of research**

As already mentioned, the aspects outlined above gave us important insights to continue to explore the issue of students' oral fluency development. In fact, it was clear for us that if we wanted to get consistent data about the issues emerging through the initial exploration, we needed to analyze the phenomenon further to shed light from a different perspective. So, the second research question of this research was focused on the mechanisms students use to overcome the challenges. The role of the teacher in helping students achieve this aim and the impact of classroom instruction on students' oral fluency development was also explored. Specifically, the second part of the research was focused on addressing the following research question:

- *What coping mechanisms do students use to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?*

In this new stage of the research, we used new instruments that involved a new survey to target students and teacher interviews.

#### *6.4.2 New data collection and analysis*

We applied a second focused survey. It was carried out with a new population of 31 third-year students of the English major at UNAN León in the I semester of this Academic Year 2024. The new information included what mechanisms they can use to overcome the language barriers already identified. Similarly, the interviews involved four teachers from the English Department who work in the area of oral expression development. Our intention with these interviews was to obtain consistent data from the teachers to help students overcome their oral fluency problems and effective classroom practice for oral skills development. All these instruments for the new data collection stage were applied successfully and are described below.

#### *6.4.3 Second group of target students*

All students participating in this study belong to the third year of the English degree at UNAN-León. They were informed that a survey would be administered in which each of their responses would be kept anonymous to preserve their identity. Out of the 31 students, 10 were male and 21 were female. The ages of the students ranged between 17 and 30 years, 19 of them belonging to the department of Leon, 4 to the department of Chinandega, 2 from El Viejo/Chinandega, 1 from the municipality of Chichigalpa, 1 from the department of Managua, 2 from RACCN (Region Autónoma de la Costa Caribe Norte), 1 from El Castillo Rio San Juan and 1 from Corn Island. It was explained to them that the purpose of this research was to discover how different factors affect the process of acquiring good fluency in the target language. All students were willing to participate in this research. To protect their identities, an encryption system was conveniently used to ensure the privacy and anonymity of the respondents. The following table (Table 2) provides demographic information about the students.

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	10	32
Female	21	68
Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
17- 20 years	21	68
21- 25 year	8	26
26-30 year	2	6
Origin	Frequency	Percent (%)
Leon	20	65
Chinandega	5	14
El Viejo/ Chinandega	2	6
Chichigalpa	1	3
Managua	1	3
RACCN	2	6
El Castillo/ Rio San Juan	1	3
Corn island	1	3

*Table 2. Demographic information of the second group of students*

#### *6.4.4 Target teachers*

The objectives of our research were explained to each of the teachers participating in our study and we let them know that the interviews would be recorded.

We also explained that being part of the study would provide data that could help strengthen our study. All teachers were willing to participate in the study. Confidentiality was guaranteed as well as ethical considerations. Teachers' identity was protected by referring to them in the order they were interviewed. The table below (table 3) provides information about the teachers:

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Years of experience</b>	<b>Areas of expertise</b>	<b>Professional qualification</b>
First teacher interviewed	M	23 years	Oral Techniques, Laboratory, Oral Communication and Teaching Techniques	Bachelor's Degree in English/ Degree/Master's Degree in Teaching English for Specific Purposes
Second teacher interviewed	F	36 years	Integrated English Skills, Grammar and Linguistic Courses, Advanced Conversation	Bachelor's degree in English/ / Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign language
Third teacher interviewed	F	22 years	Listening and Speaking, Translation, Literature, Linguistics, Academic Writing	Bachelor's Degree in English / Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign language
Fourth		25 years	Teacher Training and Development (Didactic and Methodological Courses),	Bachelor's Degree/ Master's degree in

teacher interviewed	F		Oral Expression Techniques Communication Workshop	Teaching English as a Foreign language / PHD in Modern Languages
---------------------	---	--	---	--

Table 3. Target teachers participating in the study

As shown three of the teachers are female and one is male. The years of experience working at UNAN ranges from 23 to 35. Furthermore, all the teachers participating in this interview have a Bachelor's or Master's degree in the language. They also have in common that their area of specialization includes Oral Communication Courses, for this reason they were selected from the staff of the English Department for our research.

#### 6.4.5 Second exploration survey:

This second exploratory research was applied in the month of April of this year to third-year students of the English major at UNAN-Leon. It had the objective of exploring further our first research question and collecting information necessary for our second research question by obtaining accurate responses from participants. Participants were presented with a basic survey form to assess their perceptions about the focus of our research question.

The survey applied consisted of 23 closed-ended questions and 2 open-ended questions to evaluate the students' perceptions of the factors that affect the development of good fluency. In the survey the students had to respond if they *agreed*, *strongly agreed*, *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* to each of the questions. The open-ended questions were focused on what kinds of strategies they use to overcome their problems with fluency development. The questionnaire was adapted from a study entitled "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale" carried out by Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986), (see original instrument in Appendix F). Questions addressed by this instrument included how students self-assessed their fluency and how they felt affected by certain affective factors such as fear, anxiety, and nervousness. Additionally, students were asked questions related to the teacher's role, error

correction, and motivation. Each survey was administered individually, explaining what the research consisted of and the results we expected to obtain. The students had between 10 to 15 minutes to give their answers. This survey was administered in Spanish so that the students fully understood each of these questions, which was informed to the respondents before its application (see adapted instrument in appendix G and graphics to analyze the data in appendix H)

#### *6.4.6 Interview to teachers*

The interview carried out with the four teachers, was conducted in the English department of the UNAN-Leon, in the month of April of the year 2024. This interview was structured so that the teachers could express their perception about the problems they experience in pursuing optimal oral communication of students enrolled in the III Year of the English Studies. The interview included three general introductory questions with reference to their years of experience, professional qualifications and specialization areas. The other nine questions were focused on important matters related to our research topic such as the teachers' perception about the factors affecting student oral fluency development, main problems experienced, main activities used, solving problems at the classroom level, students' coping mechanisms and oral fluency evaluation among others. The interview lasted between 20 to 30 minutes as the teachers were allowed sufficient time to clearly express their opinions. Before applying this research instrument, they were asked for prior permission to carry it out and record it, and all four agreed to collaborate. The interviews were then transcribed and coded for thorough analysis. (See content of the interview in appendix I transcription in appendix J and matrix for analysis in appendix K)

#### *6.4.7 Second research findings: students' perceptions*

With the application of the second survey, we got relevant information for our second research question which was *"What coping mechanisms do students use to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?"* The findings in this regard are described below.

- Student insecurity level

According to the answers provided by the 31 students surveyed, 19 of them said they do not feel they have the necessary and required security to be able to put into practice their oral skills and in this way develop their fluency, as opposed to 12 of the respondents who said they feel comfortable when practicing this skill. On the other hand, 25 of them said that they fear making mistakes in the classroom and for only 6 of them making mistakes is not so relevant. This problem explains the feeling of nervousness that 29 students said they experience when they must participate in the classroom (only two students acknowledge that they take it calmly when they participate orally). This lack of security in oral tasks affects students' performance when taking oral tests, this is shown by 22 of them when they expressed that they do not feel comfortable taking tests or oral exams that demonstrate their speaking skill performance, unlike the 9 remaining surveyed students who take the process in a calmed and relaxed state.

- Communication with native speakers

Based on the findings discussed above it is clear that most students experience difficulties to express themselves in the classroom. Evidently, the situation worsens when it is the time for them to communicate with a native person. This is revealed in students' responses as 25 of them express that they fear talking to a native person. On the other hand, only 6 of them revealed confidence in their knowledge and skills in case they need to communicate with native speakers. This particular result reflects that most students do not have efficient mechanisms and communication skills to deal with real-life situations with foreigners.

- Teacher role and influence

One of the main places where students must gain proficiency is in the classroom since it is the place where a foreign language is mostly practiced. In this regard, based on the data collected, 17 of the 31 respondents admitted that they are not easily distracted when performing fluency development tasks. However, 14 of them admitted that no matter the oral task, anything can be a distractor. We consider this an important finding as during the learning process of a language a lot of concentration is required particularly in oral tasks. Thus, according to these results almost half of the target group

of students experience problems in focusing their attention. This finding seems to be worthy of attention for further research efforts.

It is widely recognized that the teacher plays a crucial role in the classroom, serving as the primary facilitator of language learning. Understanding the explanations provided by the teacher is vital, yet many students find it challenging to give their full attention to each direction given. In this regard according to the survey, 24 out of the respondents admitted to feeling frustrated when they don't understand the teacher's instructions, while only 7 claimed to understand every instruction entirely. Following language rules precisely can be challenging for many students since 23 students find it difficult to adhere strictly to every rule, while nine students find it easier to follow them.

As mentioned earlier, students often fear making mistakes, which can be aggravated when the teacher is the one providing corrections. Some students may even avoid following the teacher's recommendations out of fear that their responses are inadequate. The fear of being ridiculed for the slightest mistake is a significant concern for 20 respondents. This fear can emerge from past experiences and can hinder their progress. However, 11 students focus more on the teacher's feedback rather than potential ridicule. Despite this, students regard the teacher as a key agent when it comes to error correction as the majority (23 out of 31) view the teacher's corrections as crucial for their language acquisition progress.

On the other hand, lack of confidence, both in the teacher and in themselves, or an inability to accept criticism, can increase nervousness and fear. Simply hearing their name mentioned by the teacher can trigger anxiety for 20 students, whereas only 11 students reported not feeling nervous in that situation.

All these findings highlight the importance of teachers' awareness of the impact their actions have on student oral performance (e.g. giving instructions, providing explanations and error correction) and how students' fluency is directly affected by the affective factors (e.g. anxiety, nervousness and shyness), involved in language learning. According to these findings most students lack optimal mechanisms to cope with these factors at this level of their language learning. Thus, the III year of the English Studies at

UNAN seem to be optimal grounds for helping students develop effective coping strategies to overcome their oral limitations.

- Fear of making mistakes

When we are learning a foreign language, various problems may arise, among them making constant mistakes. 25 of the students said they feel afraid of making mistakes, which can create a barrier between them and their fluency improvement. On the other hand, the remaining 6 are not afraid of making mistakes. For these students making mistakes is a part of the process to be able to move forward.

As we have discussed elsewhere, to progress successfully in the process of language learning, a significant amount of personal confidence is required. This entails knowing one's capabilities and limitations. Thus, it's essential for students to recognize their weaknesses and areas for improvement, as well as their strengths. In this regard, many students commonly experience panic, particularly during oral presentations, especially when they are not adequately prepared. For example, 26 respondents expressed feeling panic due to insufficient preparation. While they are aware of their strengths, such as knowing the language, they also acknowledge their weaknesses, such as not practicing enough. Conversely, 5 students feel more confident as they dedicate time to study and prepare thoroughly. However, investing excessive time in studying can lead to confusion due to the volume of material. 11 out of the 31 surveyed students reported experiencing this, while 20 of them take the time to understand their speaking material patiently to avoid confusion.

Some other very common problem in the process of acquiring a foreign language are nervousness and anxiety which is connected to the issue of self-confidence. When students need to express their ideas, they often feel anxious for not having enough confidence in themselves. As a result, they tend to forget even things that they already know. We know this is the case of 29 respondents. On the other hand, only 2 of them said they feel confident in themselves and do not experience any type of nervousness when they put their oral skills into practice. Similar results were obtained when asking about oral presentations. 25 students stated they feel extreme anxiety in oral

presentations and only 6 said that they are always calm when facing this academic challenge.

As discussed previously being tested on their oral skills is a significant source of stress for most students. Oral presentations and oral evaluations seemed to have the same meaning for students which might be the reason why they panic at the time of their assessment. Most of them regard previous preparation as an important step. In this sense detailed preparation for oral evaluations contributes to a sense of relaxation for 23 students who feel confident when they have complete knowledge of their presentations. However, 8 students still feel pressure regardless of their preparation level.

These findings seem to reveal that students' high level of anxiety and low self-confidence in their oral performance is directly linked to, inclination to memorize material (which tends to be forgotten at the time of speaking) lack of oral practice, excessive amount of material, insufficient preparation for oral tasks and not having strategies for managing stress effectively. Moreover, students' perception of oral activities as an evaluation tool seem to cause a negative impact on their performance.

These responses show us that self-confidence and oral fluency development are correlated and keep being an issue for most students enrolled in the III Year of the English Studies, just as it was for the first group of target students participating in this research.

- Personal motivation

Vey often students may feel that they are not doing enough to improve in learning the language and they have trouble in developing their fluency because of the same reason. This general feeling of not making enough advance in their learning process seems to be affecting students' motivation significantly. In this regard 14 of these students admitted not wanting to attend classes because they don't feel they are making enough advances or, citing a student's words, because of "feeling stuck". On the other hand, 17 said that, abandoning their classes does not cross their mind and that they always try to stay motivated and find a reason to continue. On the other hand, faced with this problem, the 31 respondents strongly agreed on wanting to take extra English

classes to effectively develop their speaking skills. Based on this information we can assume that a) almost half of the students' motivation to continue their studies is affected significantly because of not making significant advances in their oral fluency and b) all students would consider extra classes a good way for reinforcing their oral skills.

- Strategies for fluency improvement

An important part of the second exploratory survey was to include an open-ended question focused on the strategies they use for fluency improvement. Students identified various strategies they find effective, such as listening to English music, watching series or movies with subtitles, practicing speaking in front of a mirror, engaging in self-conversations, rehearsing presentations with family members, finding vocabulary support through videos, and repetitive practice of words or sentences. These strategies are perceived as helpful in enhancing language skills and overcoming insecurity in communication. However, despite acknowledging the importance of practice and effort through these strategies, some students admitted not using them due to time constraints or a lack of perceived need for improvement. This finding makes it evident that students don't have an organized framework of effective mechanisms for autonomous study and that they lack consistent independent practice.

#### *6.4.8 Second research findings: teachers' perceptions*

As already described in section 6.4.7 above, the interviews were conducted with four teachers belonging to the English Department at UNAN-Leon. Their years of experience range from 23 to 36 years, and they have different kinds of specializations including Master's Degrees in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. In addition, they all have vast experience in teaching courses based on oral communication aimed at developing students' oral skills, among other important courses from the Study Plan of the English Studies. We had high expectations about the information provided by the teachers given their level of expertise and the knowledge they have of their students. What follows are the main insights from their interviews in response to our research questions.

- Teacher's role in the classroom

Similarly to the students participating in this study the four target teachers agreed that the teacher's attitude exerted great influence on students' oral skills development. They were all asked if they considered themselves as to play an important role in the classroom and all of them agreed. The first teacher responded that teachers must provide a good environment so that students feel comfortable and can perform effectively. On the other hand, the second teacher spoke about the negative aspects of certain teachers, such as not expressing themselves well or not having the best attitude towards the students. Consequently, according to this teacher, students may feel overwhelmed or discouraged. Likewise, the third teacher agreed that a positive attitude from the teacher is important. However, she also noted that teachers can sometimes be arrogant and negative, which can significantly affect students. As mentioned earlier, such behavior can overwhelm students. The way teachers correct students plays a fundamental role in student motivation as well. Error correction we know is regarded as very important for most students participating in this study. For instance, a response that sounds offensive or humiliating can discourage students or make them want to abandon learning the language. Finally, the fourth teacher emphasized that a teacher's positive attitude in the classroom is essential when learning a foreign language. The more motivated the teacher is, the more motivated the students will feel. As we have already discussed keeping their motivation high is an issue at play for at least half of the target students.

To sum up, both teachers and students acknowledge the teacher's crucial role in the classroom. Teachers' attitudes and methods significantly impact students' motivation and ability to learn. Negative teacher behaviors can lead to student anxiety and discourage language practice, while positive reinforcement and clear instructions help students feel more confident and focused. The findings suggest that both teachers and students would benefit from strategies aimed at improving communication and reducing anxiety, with an emphasis on constructive feedback and supportive classroom environments.

- Organization of speaking classes

|The four teachers regarded classroom management and organization as an important tool to help students develop their oral skills. In relation to this, the teachers have different but related approaches. For instance, the first teacher mentioned using an outline or format to give students an idea of how the class will work and what oral abilities are expected from them for each class. Similarly, the second teacher uses the lesson plan provided by the institution which is helpful to organize the different kinds of activities (including before, during, and after stages). This teacher assures that using such a framework is helpful for keeping students focused and motivated. The third teacher stated her approach included offering various topics of interest for students to study and discuss in class. She provides questions that are answered with the help of videos related to the topic. The last teacher organizes her classes by providing activities to practice communication and incorporates group work to encourage student interaction. Overall, despite the different specific methods used by each teacher, their approaches share a focus on structured planning, student motivation, interactive learning, and fostering student independence.

- Strategies to develop fluency at the classroom level

The two generations of students participating in this research regarded classroom activities as very important for helping them develop optimal oral fluency. Similarly, the four teachers interviewed highlighted the importance of the activities that take place in the classroom for the same purpose. In relation to the most effective activities in the classroom for oral skills development the first teacher responded that success in students' performance when expressing themselves depends largely on their own motivation and desire to learn. This teacher suggested that the activities will not work if students' motivation is not high. The second teacher added that vocabulary exercises are an effective technique for developing pronunciation, along with oral presentations. She also creates groups where students can discuss various topics to practice what they have learned. The third teacher agreed with the first, emphasizing that the success of the learning process depends mainly on the students. Finally, the fourth teacher shared that she uses completion exercises to encourage students to remember

vocabulary, facilitating their fluency. She also mentioned that it is not beneficial to always provide the answers, as this can hinder progress.

Overall, these interpretations emphasize that successful development of speaking abilities involves a combination of motivation, practical exercises, collaborative learning, and encouraging independent thinking. Teachers and students must both engage in these strategies to achieve their language learning goals effectively.

- Factors Affecting Oral Fluency

The students' survey responses revealed a comprehensive view of the factors influencing the development of fluency in third-year English major students. These factors include psychological, educational, and social dimensions. Students' background knowledge was something that many students regarded as an important factor that impacts their fluency development. In this concern, teachers noted that this lack of foundational vocabulary is a major hindrance to fluency, as students often do not prioritize vocabulary acquisition. On the other hand, as students had highlighted several internal and external factors are crucial in shaping students' fluency development. In this regard each teacher provided insights into different aspects, highlighting both psychological and practical challenges.

The first teacher emphasized that students often do not recognize the importance of expanding their vocabulary. This suggests that language teachers need to place a greater emphasis on vocabulary acquisition and demonstrate its direct impact on fluency. On the other hand, both the first and second teachers mentioned that ridicule from peers can lead to insecurities, making students afraid to speak. This phenomenon was a recurrent issue highlighted by students' survey, which seem to indicate a need for creating a supportive and non-judgmental classroom environment where mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process.

Similarly, as students revealed, lack of confidence is another important issue to address. In this regard, the second teacher highlighted that a lack of confidence, fueled by fear of mistakes and comparison with others, is a significant barrier to fluency. She

recommended that teachers should work on building students' confidence through positive reinforcement and encouraging risk-taking in language use.

Another important element emphasized by all teachers was connected to the teacher- student interaction, which had also been highlighted by students. Issues with teacher-student relationships, such as overly strict or demanding teachers, were noted as contributing to students' fear of speaking. This points to the importance of fostering a positive, approachable, and encouraging teaching style.

As many students had admitted insufficient practice was also mentioned by all teachers as an important factor involved in oral fluency development. Despite having access to necessary materials, students often do not practice enough. This suggests that teachers need to find more engaging ways to integrate practice into daily activities and encourage consistent use of English.

Shyness and class size was an interesting insight provided by the third teacher as she pointed out that shyness and large class sizes hinder students' ability to practice speaking. According to this teacher smaller class sizes or breakout groups could provide more opportunities for individual attention and participation.

An interesting element raised by one of the teachers, not mentioned by any of the others, relates to the class schedule and energy levels. This aspect intertwines external factors, such as the timing of classes, with internal factors, like student energy levels. The timing of classes significantly influences students' willingness to participate in classroom activities. For instance, scheduling more interactive and speaking-focused activities earlier in the day could improve this issue by taking advantage of students' higher energy levels and engagement earlier in the day.

Finally, all teachers stated that the constant use of the native language is a factor exerting negative influence on student fluency development. Certainly, the persistent use of Spanish instead of English in the classroom is a significant obstacle. Teachers recommended as necessary to enforce English usage more strictly and create more immersive English-speaking environments.

Overall, these interpretations highlight the multifaceted nature of fluency development. Addressing these factors requires a combination of supportive teaching practices, structured opportunities for practice, and strategies to boost student confidence and motivation.

- Problem solving

In relation to how teachers resolve fluency-related issues that arise in the classroom, the first teacher shared that he first identifies the students who have the most problems with their fluency and offers them personal classes to help them feel more confident in interacting in the classroom. He also creates conversation groups with foreign friends, both in English and Spanish, for mutual support.

The second teacher mentioned that she tries to encourage students to improve by paying attention to the way they speak, reminding them to speak naturally without relying too much on reading their notes. The third teacher added that she gives students different recommendations all the time, such as not using Spanish, practicing a lot, and not being afraid to speak. She also mentioned that discipline is something she always struggles with due to the large number of students she manages. For that reason, she implements games or group activities to capture their attention and keep them focused on learning, such as competitive games.

Finally, the last teacher shared that she works hard to find suitable tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult, so students do not feel frustrated or bored. She noted that times have changed, and it is now more challenging to motivate students. She believes it is essential to find topics that capture their attention, as interests have changed. She focuses on each student's level, looking for appropriate vocabulary. Overall, these findings reflect high teacher awareness of solving problem strategies and reflect a comprehensive approach to enhancing fluency, combining personalized instruction, peer support, encouragement, practical recommendations, and engaging activities.

- Evaluation of student's progress

In relation to evaluation issues, we found from students that oral assessment is a source of considerable stress for students. Their oral performance is perceived as a way of assessment which naturally causes anxiety. This is the reason why we wanted to know the teachers' approach. We sought to understand how the teachers assessed students' progress in acquiring fluency. In this regard the first teacher responded that he evaluated students based on various criteria, such as observing their fluency, body language, eye contact, and the context of their speech. This comprehensive approach aims to assess students in detail, considering all important aspects of oral communication. The second teacher mentioned that progress is evaluated by noting how often students hesitated while speaking, whether they use Spanish, and how frequently they repeat the same words. This method seeks to help students avoid these mistakes and advance in their fluency. The third teacher emphasized the importance of putting dialogues into practice, particularly in the third-year classes, which encompasses more than just speaking. This approach integrates fluency practice within broader language instruction. Finally, similarly to the first teacher, the fourth teacher evaluates students' oral skills by using rubrics to observe their performance. She noted that this method is especially useful when managing a large number of students. Overall, these results reveal a range of methods for evaluating fluency, from detailed observational criteria and practical application to structured rubrics, each tailored to address different aspects of student progress and classroom dynamics. Our interpretation of these findings is that the teachers are knowledgeable of the diverse mechanisms for assessing students' progress in their oral skills considering all necessary elements to do properly. However, many students struggle to meet the necessary criteria. Thus, we consider assessment methods of oral fluency an interesting research area for deeper analysis.

- Keeping students' motivation

In terms of keeping their students motivated for oral tasks, the first teacher implements activities focused on topics familiar to the students, such as their own experiences, aiming to increase their self-confidence and encourage natural speech.

The second teacher incentivizes participation by rewarding each contribution with candy, extra points, and providing treats like juices or cookies, fostering a supportive environment to help students overcome their fear of expressing themselves. The third teacher relies on motivational phrases to promote self-belief in students, urging them to overcome their fear of speaking and avoid time-wasting distractions like social media, emphasizing the importance of utilizing their time for educational purposes. Additionally, she encourages students to refrain from using cell phones for non-language-related activities. Lastly, the fourth teacher creates opportunities for students to interact with native speakers, exposing them to authentic conversations and inspiring them to improve. Undoubtedly the teachers do their best to keep students' motivation high. Through these efforts, they aim to ignite and sustain students' motivation while providing guidance and support to facilitate their progress.

- Towards Fluency Achievement

According to the teachers, there are important elements that play significant roles in the development and improvement of oral fluency. In this sense, the first teacher emphasizes discipline and consistent practice as essential elements for progress. The second teacher stresses the importance of teachers monitoring students' efforts, particularly in challenging languages like English. The third teacher focusses on the necessity of regular practice and avoiding distractions, while the fourth teacher acknowledges the significance of students' independent efforts beyond classroom instruction. Together, according to the teachers, these factors shape students' journey towards fluency. Some other mechanisms that contribute to enhancing oral fluency involve according to the first teacher, visualization techniques during presentations, which aids students' retention. The second teacher emphasizes students' responsibility for maintaining a positive attitude and diligent practice. The third teacher recognizes the need for consistent practice, advising against sporadic efforts. Lastly, the fourth teacher highlights the importance of students engaging in self-study, utilizing resources like educational videos to enrich vocabulary and fluency.

These mechanisms offer diverse avenues for students to enhance their oral proficiency. In summary, a combination of factors such as discipline, practice, teacher

guidance, and independent effort, along with mechanisms like visualization, consistent practice, and self-study, collectively influence and facilitate students' development and improvement of oral fluency. Comparing this information with the students' responses in the surveys the perceptions are quite similar. Nonetheless, it seems that students might need to increase their awareness of self-study and autonomous learning strategies and perhaps a closer follow up, guidance or training from the part of the teachers of the mechanisms available for the consistent improvement of their oral skills. Thus, the enhancement of oral fluency through structured independent conditions seems to be a research focus that could lead to consistent improvement students' oral skills development.

## **6.5 Limitations of the study**

This study provides insights into how well third-year students in the English Program at UNAN-León develop their oral fluency. However, it's important to recognize certain limitations that might affect how widely we can apply and understand these findings.

Firstly, the study only focuses on two groups of students at one institution. This narrow focus might not represent the diverse backgrounds and contexts found in a different place, like cultural differences or educational systems, which could impact speaking skill development differently.

Secondly, the study relies on what students report about their own fluency levels and coping strategies. But self-reporting can be influenced by biases or inaccuracies, potentially affecting the reliability of the results.

Thirdly, the study's qualitative approach and small sample size may limit the range of perspectives captured. While qualitative methods offer rich insights, a larger and more diverse sample could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing speaking skill development.

Additionally, the study mostly considers students' perspectives, with limited exploration of teachers' viewpoints and practices (basically a single interview). Incorporating teacher perspectives and classroom observations could offer valuable insights into effective instructional strategies and the role of educators in fostering

speaking fluency. Despite these limitations, we consider that the study contributes valuable insights into oral fluency development and offers practical implications for teachers and educational authorities. Future research can address these limitations and explore additional factors influencing speaking fluency in diverse educational settings.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The following are the main conclusions of this study in relation to the original research questions. Our main concerns have been to unfold important aspects regarding oral fluency development, focusing on the III-year students of the English Program at UNAN-LEÓN.

The following are the most important results in relation to our first research question:

- *How do various factors influence the acquisition of oral fluency in the English language among third-year students majoring in English at UNAN-Leon?*
- **Factors Affecting Oral Fluency:** Various internal and external factors impact students' fluency development, including psychological barriers, lack of confidence, insufficient practice, shyness, class size, and language usage in the classroom. Addressing these factors requires a combination of supportive teaching practices, structured opportunities for practice, and strategies to improve student confidence and motivation.
- **Background Knowledge and Self-Perception:** The study reveals a significant link between students' prior English knowledge and their fluency development. Whether lacking or limited, background knowledge impacts fluency acquisition. Moreover, students' self-perception of fluency often differs from reality, indicating a need for realistic self-assessment tools.
- **Internal Factors and Classroom Dynamics:** Internal factors such as self-confidence, fear of speaking, and anxiety significantly affect fluency development. Despite these challenges, students demonstrate a supportive classroom environment conducive to risk-taking and collaboration, suggesting room for improvement through targeted interventions.
- **Independent Practice and Receptivity to Improvement:** While most students engage in independent practice, there's ambiguity regarding what constitutes effective practice. However, the willingness of all students to address their weaknesses indicates a receptivity to improvement, emphasizing the importance of guiding students in defining and implementing effective practice methods.

- **Teacher's Role:** Students recognize the fundamental role of teachers in facilitating fluency development, particularly in creating a supportive learning environment. Teachers' attitudes and feedback significantly influence students' confidence and progress, highlighting the importance of teacher-student dynamics in language acquisition.
- **Motivation and Extra Support:** Many students experience a lack of motivation due to perceived inertia in fluency development. However, there's a strong willingness to pursue additional classes for enhancing speaking skills, indicating a desire for extra support and opportunities for improvement.
- **Effective Strategies for Fluency Improvement:** Various strategies, such as immersion activities, self-practice, and exposure to authentic materials, are perceived as effective for fluency improvement. However, inconsistent implementation suggests a need for structured guidance and encouragement to utilize these strategies effectively.

The following are the most relevant results in relation to the second research question:

*"What coping mechanisms do students use to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?"*

Regarding the coping mechanisms employed by students to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language, several key themes emerge:

- **Coping Mechanisms and Fear of Mistakes:** A significant proportion of students struggle with insecurity, fear of mistakes, and performance anxiety, hindering their oral proficiency development. Effective coping strategies and a supportive learning environment are crucial for mitigating these challenges and fostering confidence in oral communication.
- **Teacher Influence:** Teachers play a crucial role in creating a supportive and conducive learning environment. Positive reinforcement, clear instructions, constructive feedback, and approachable attitudes are essential for building student confidence and motivation.

However, negative teacher behaviors or attitudes can exacerbate student anxiety and discourage language practice.

- *Personal Motivation and Engagement:* Students' motivation and engagement are affected by their perceived progress in language learning. Feeling stuck or not making significant advances can lead to decreased motivation, while opportunities for extra classes or structured support can help reinforce oral skills development.
- *Strategies for Fluency Improvement:* Students use various strategies for improving fluency, such as listening to English music, watching movies with subtitles, practicing speaking in front of a mirror, and engaging in self-conversations. However, some students may not use these strategies consistently due to time constraints or a lack of perceived need.
- *Classroom Activities and Organization:* Structured planning, interactive learning, collaborative activities, and focused topics of interest are emphasized as effective approaches for developing oral skills in the classroom. Engaging activities and a supportive learning environment help motivate students and foster independent thinking.
- *Problem-Solving and Evaluation:* Teachers use personalized instruction, peer support, encouragement, practical recommendations, and engaging activities to address fluency-related issues in the classroom. Evaluation focuses on various aspects of oral communication, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and engagement, to assess student progress effectively.
- *Maintaining Student Motivation:* Teachers implement activities focused on familiar topics, incentivize participation, provide motivation, and create opportunities for interaction to keep students engaged. These efforts aim to promote and sustain students' motivation while facilitating their progress toward fluency achievement.

Overall, the study highlights the complex nature of fluency acquisition, influenced by individual, social, and instructional factors. Addressing students' diverse needs and providing targeted support, both within and outside the classroom, are essential for fostering sustained progress in oral fluency among third-year English students at UNAN-Leon. In summary, the study highlights the complex interplay between student

perceptions, teacher practices, and classroom dynamics in shaping oral fluency development. By addressing students' insecurities, providing structured support, establishing a positive learning environment, and promoting active engagement, teachers can enhance students' oral skills and facilitate their journey toward fluency achievement. Additionally, promoting self-study and autonomous learning strategies could further support consistent improvement in oral proficiency.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the development of oral fluency among students. We strongly believe that these recommendations provide a solid foundation for improving the teaching and learning of oral fluency in the English Studies at UNAN-León, particularly at a crucial stage such as the Third Year of the Program.

### 8.1 Recommendations for improvement

- *Enhancing Teacher Training*: Teachers should be provided with training focused on creating supportive and non-judgmental classroom environments, effective error correction methods, and strategies to improve student confidence.
- *Promoting Autonomous Learning*: Develop and implement programs that encourage autonomous learning and self-study. This includes providing students with resources and training on effective independent study techniques.
- *Increasing Practice Opportunities*: Create more opportunities for students to practice speaking in a low-stress environment. This can include conversation clubs, peer practice groups, and interactions with native speakers.
- *Fostering Positive Classroom Dynamics*: Ensure classroom activities are always engaging and relevant to students' interests. Structured lesson plans that incorporate varied activities can help maintain student motivation and focus.
- *Addressing Insecurity and Anxiety*: Implement strategies to help students manage their anxiety and build self-confidence. This can include mindfulness exercises, peer support systems, and positive reinforcement techniques.
- *Regular Assessment and Feedback*: Use diverse and constructive methods to assess oral fluency. Regular feedback should focus on progress and areas for improvement without inducing undue stress.

By addressing these areas, teachers can create a more conducive learning environment that supports the development of oral fluency in English, helping students overcome challenges and achieve their language learning goals effectively.

## 8.2 Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study highlight several areas where further research could be beneficial. Future studies could explore the following areas to increase our understanding and improve educational practices related to oral fluency development:

- *Longitudinal Studies on Fluency Development:* Conduct longitudinal studies to track students' oral fluency development over time. This would help identify long-term trends, the impact of different teaching methodologies, and the sustained effectiveness of various coping mechanisms and strategies.
- *Comparative Studies on Teaching Methods:* Compare the effectiveness of different teaching methods and classroom activities in improving oral fluency. This could include traditional methods versus modern, technology-enhanced approaches such as using language learning apps, virtual reality environments, and online conversation partners.
- *Impact of Affective Factors:* Investigate the affective factors that exert influence on students' oral fluency, such as anxiety, motivation, and self-esteem. Research could focus on interventions that can mitigate anxiety and increase confidence, examining which strategies are most effective in different contexts.
- *Role of Technology in Language Learning:* Explore the role of technology in enhancing oral fluency. Studies could assess the effectiveness of various technological tools, such as language learning apps, speech recognition software, and virtual reality simulations, in providing practice opportunities and feedback.
- *Teacher Training and Development:* Examine the impact of specialized teacher training programs on the development of students' oral fluency. Research could focus on which aspects of teacher training (e.g., classroom management, error

correction techniques, motivational strategies) have the most significant impact on student outcomes.

- ***Student-Centered Learning Approaches:*** Investigate the benefits of student-centered learning approaches, such as peer teaching, collaborative learning, and student-led discussions, on oral fluency. Studies could compare these approaches with more traditional, teacher-centered methods to determine their relative effectiveness.
- ***Autonomous Learning and Self-Study:*** Study the effectiveness of various autonomous learning strategies and self-study techniques in enhancing oral fluency. Research could identify best practices for encouraging and supporting students in their independent learning efforts.
- ***Assessment Techniques:*** Investigate the effectiveness of different assessment techniques in measuring oral fluency and providing useful feedback. This could include studies on the use of rubrics, self-assessment tools, and peer assessments, examining which methods provide the most accurate and helpful information for students and teachers.
- ***Influence of Peer Interaction:*** Research the impact of peer interaction on oral fluency development. Studies could examine the role of peer feedback, group work, and conversation practice with classmates in enhancing speaking skills.

By pursuing these areas of further research, teachers and researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complex factors influencing oral fluency development and identify more effective strategies for supporting students in their language learning journeys. These insights can lead to more targeted and impactful interventions, ultimately improving educational outcomes in the field of English language learning. These recommendations for further research aim to build on the existing findings and address the gaps identified, providing a roadmap for future investigations that can contribute to more effective practices in teaching and learning oral fluency.

## 9. REFERENCES

Adeoye, M.A ., Akinnubi, O.P ., Lasisi, A.K. (2023). *Addressing Socioeconomic Disparities in Developing*. Nigeria : Indonesian DDR Development Centre.

Amiruddin, M., Jannah, U. R. (2022). *The role of speech style between teacher and student*. 137.

Krashen, S.D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Faqih, N.R. (2023). *Learners' Technique of Speaking Used to Reduce Anxiety in the Classroom*: State University of Surabaya. Indonesia: Ridwan Nafiul Faqih.

Gay, P., Pogranova, S., Mauroux, L., Trisconi, E., Ranking, E., Shankland, R. (2022). *Developing Students' Emotional Competencies in English*.

González, Y., Diaz, C., Lopez, Y., (2023). *Oral Discourse Coherence and Oral Fluency in English*

Angulo 5

Hamzah, R. A., Jumrah, A.M., Syam, N. (2023). *The influence of parents' socioeconomic status on the learning outcomes of 4th grade students at UPT SPF SDN Baddoka*. Indonesia: Rahma Ashari Hamzah, Abrina Maulidnawati Jumrah, Nur Syam.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., Cope, J. (2019). *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*. Wiley on behalf of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations.

Jong, N. H. (2023). *Fluency In Speaking As A Dynamic Construct*. Netherlands: Nivja H. De

Jong Lestari, S. (2018). *The Student Of Department Of English Language Education*. Indonesia: Selvia Lestari.

Mauliya, I., Releaniza, R. Z., Rokhyati, U. (2020). *Lack Of Motivation Factors Creating Poor*

*MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. Language Learning, 44(2), 283-305.*

*Academic Performance in The Context of Graduate English Department Students*. Iain Bengkulu.

Mursalim, A., Rahim, A., Gege, M. Y., Tambunan. (2023). *Sense of Classroom Community, Foreign Language Enjoyment, Foreign Language Anxiety, and Self Confidence as Predictors of Willingness to Communicate in English as a Foreign Language*. Indonesia.

Nastiti, R. (2023). *Foreign language anxiety in and outside the classroom: A case of a non-native speaking student living abroad*. Indonesia : Reni Nastiti.

Rahnama, M., Rad, N.F., Bagheri, H. (2016). *Developing EFL Learners' Speaking Ability, Accuracy, and Fluency*. Iran: ELT Voices- International Journal for Teachers of English.

Ülker, A., Iyi, T., Coban, A. (2023). *The Effect of the Socio-Emotional Learning for Professional Development (SEL-PD) Program on Turkish Preservice Teachers' Knowledge and Practices*.

## APPENDIX A: PLAN OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

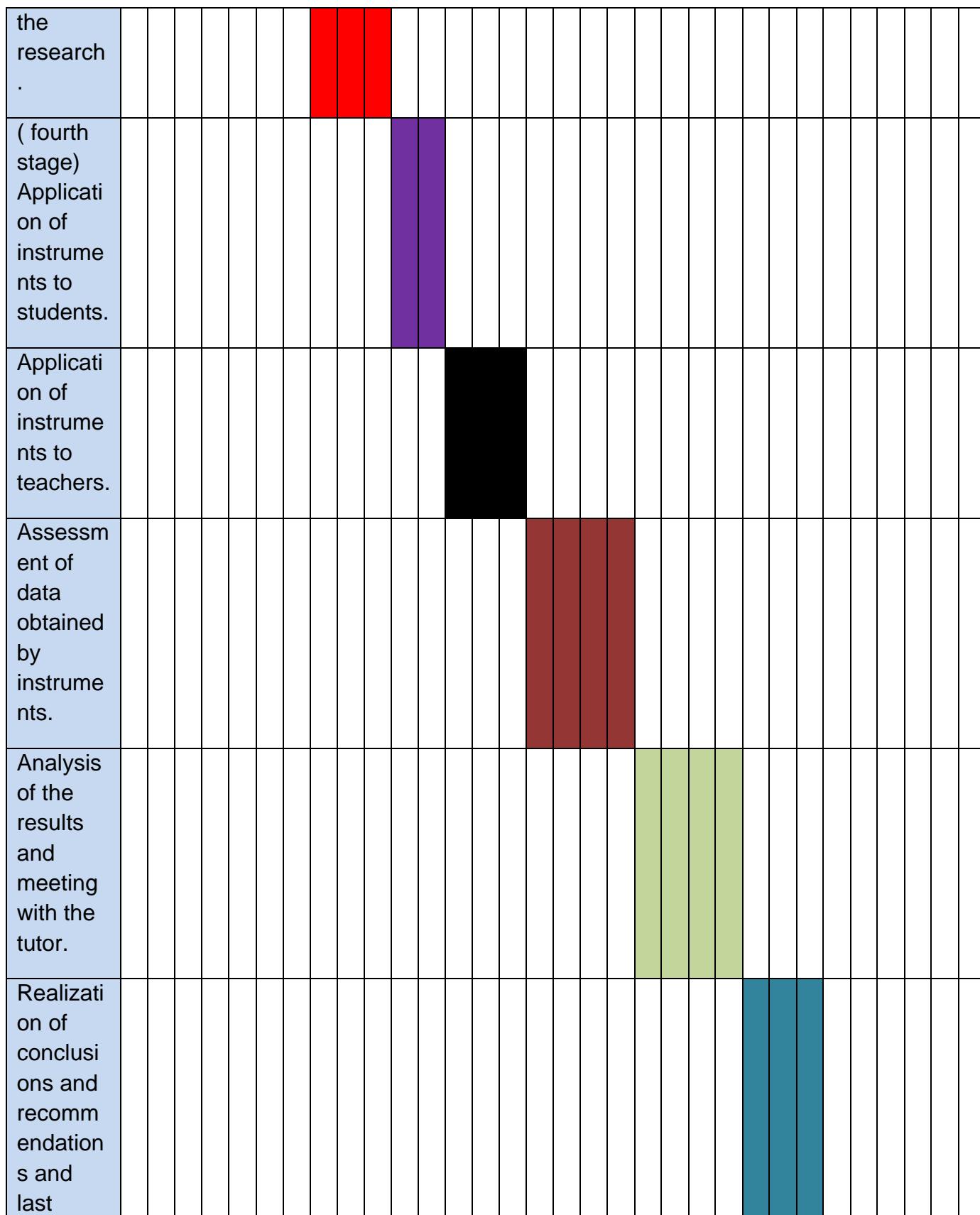
Activities	February	March	April	May	June	July
<b>2022 first stage</b>						
Problem selection						
Delimitation of the topic and elaboration of the objectives						
Search for information about the problem						
Preparation of background						
Preparation of the problem statement and central question						
Preparation of the justification.						
Methodological design						
Preparation of instruments to apply						
Realization of						

## APPENDIX B: PLAN OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 2

Activities 2023 second stage	February	March	April	May	June	July
research in depth about other studies related to the topic						
Searched for useful articles for research						
investigated how to apply an interview correctly						
a new survey was planned						
conducted a draft survey and interview						

### APPENDIX C: PLAN OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 3

Activities 2024 third stage	January				February				March				April				May				June				July				Agust			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
(Second stage) Approval of the topic.																																
Protocol review.																																
Review of suggestions.																																
Protocol correction.																																
Instrument searches to obtain data.																																
Meeting with the tutor to approve instruments and begin the second stage of																																





## APPENDIX D: INITIAL EXPLORATION SURVEY

We are students of the V year of the English Major and we would like to ask for your collaboration for our research work entitled Factors that Affect the Development of Fluency in the Speaking Skills of IV Year Students Majoring in English at UNAN-Leon, in the Year 2024.

Thank you for your help in providing the required information honestly.

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. When you started this major, did you know this language?
  - a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) No \_\_\_\_\_
2. How fluent were you in that language?
  - a) A lot fluent \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) A little fluent \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Nothing \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you consider that you have good fluency in the language?
  - a) Yes, I consider I have a good fluency \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) No, I don't consider I have a good fluency \_\_\_\_\_
4. Have you ever felt afraid to express yourself in the classroom using the language?
  - a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Have you felt discouraged when you try to express yourself fluently and you don't have the desired result?
  - a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) No \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you consider that the economic factor can affect the acquisition of good fluency?
  - a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) No \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you practice with yourself or someone else to improve your fluency?
  - a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

8. When you make mistakes or are afraid, do you feel your classmates support you?

a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

9. When you make mistakes or are afraid, do your classmates make fun of you?

a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you felt anxiety when having to express yourself in the classroom?

a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you think that the role of the teacher influences the development of good fluency?

a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

12. Can the student present weaknesses in the development of fluency thanks to the teacher's attitude?

a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you plan to do something to strengthen your weaknesses in this skill?

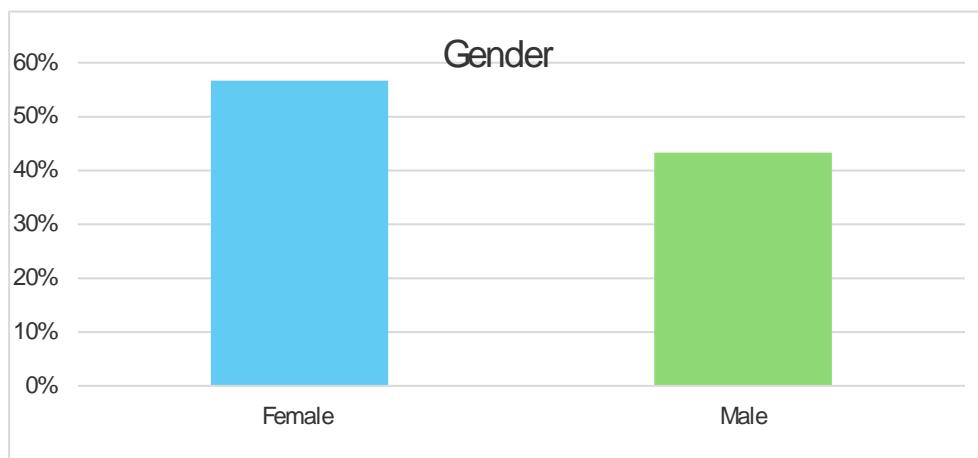
a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_

b) No \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E: GRAPHS FROM THE FIRST SURVEY

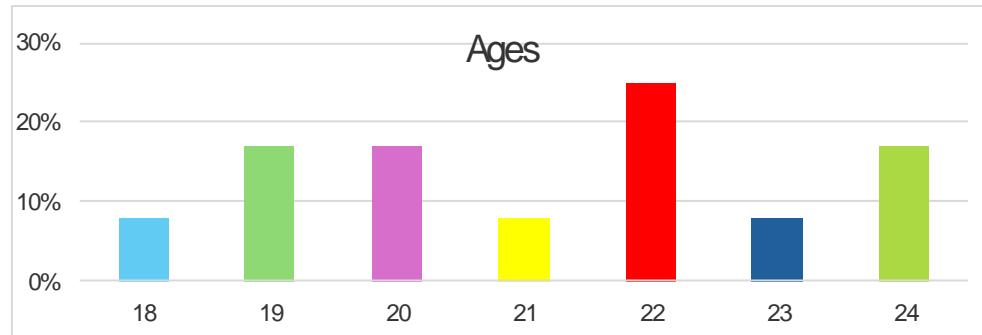
Graphic 1

GENDER	Frequency	%
Female	17	57%
Male	13	43%
Total	30	100%



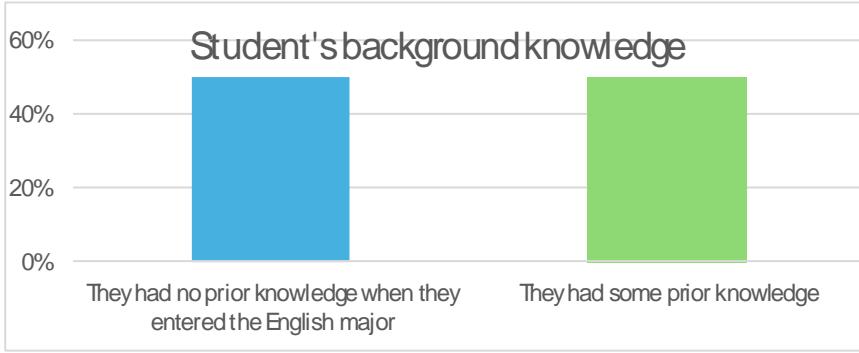
Graphic 2

AGES	Frequency	%
18	2	8%
19	6	17%
20	5	17%
21	2	8%
22	8	25%
23	2	8%
24	5	17%
total	30	100%



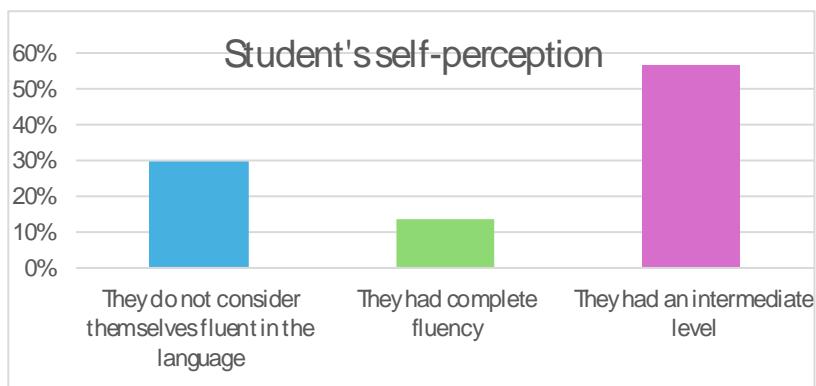
Graphic 3

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They had no prior knowledge when they entered the English major	15	50%
They had some prior knowledge	15	50%
Total	30	100%



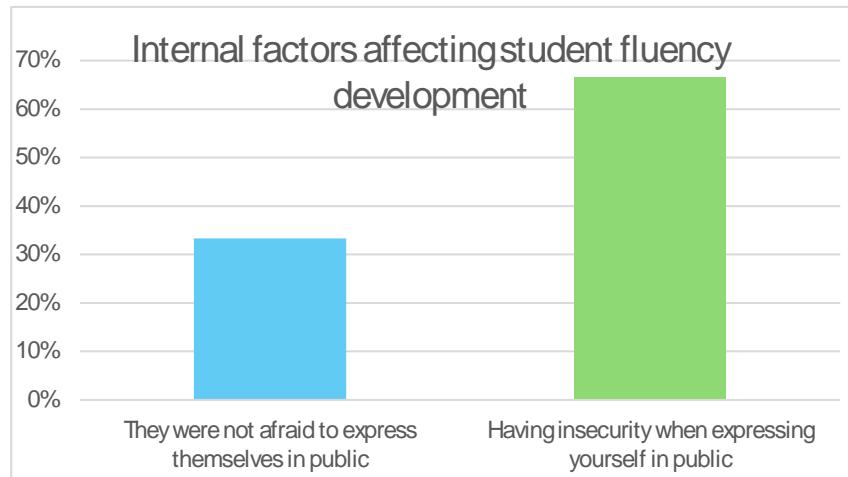
Graphic 4

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They do not consider themselves fluent in the language	9	30%
They had complete fluency	4	13%
They had an intermediate level	17	57%
Total	30	100%



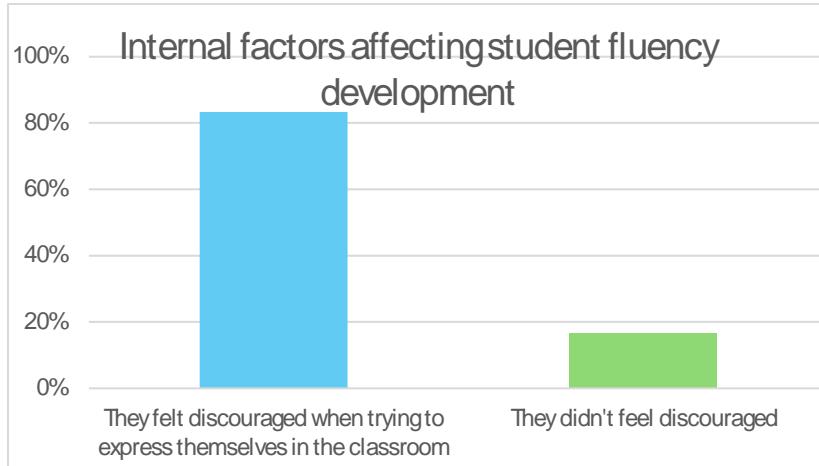
Graphic 5

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They were not afraid to express themselves in public	10	33%
Having insecurity when expressing yourself in public	20	67%
Total	30	100%



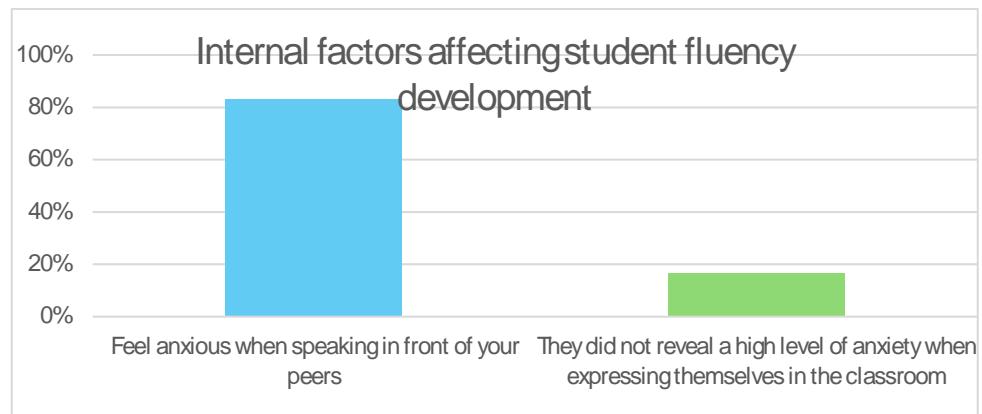
Graphic 6

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They felt discouraged when trying to express themselves in the classroom	25	83%
They didn't feel discouraged	5	17%
Total	30	100%



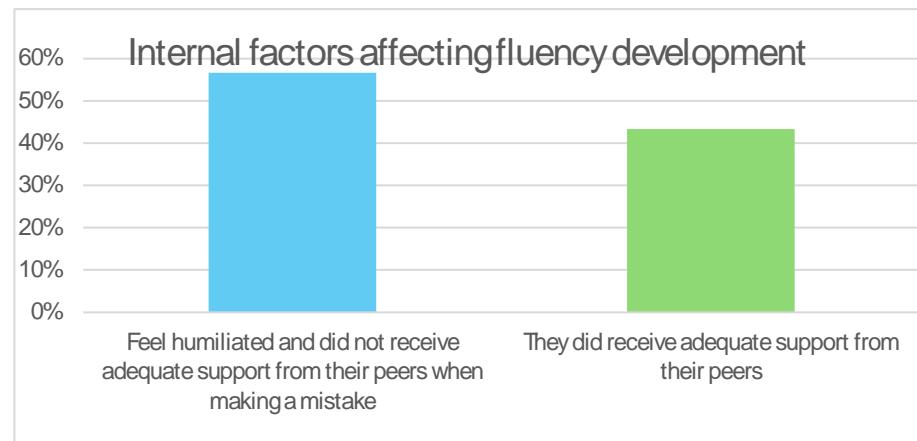
Graphic 7

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Feel anxious when speaking in front of your peers	25	83%
They did not reveal a high level of anxiety when expressing themselves in the classroom	5	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>



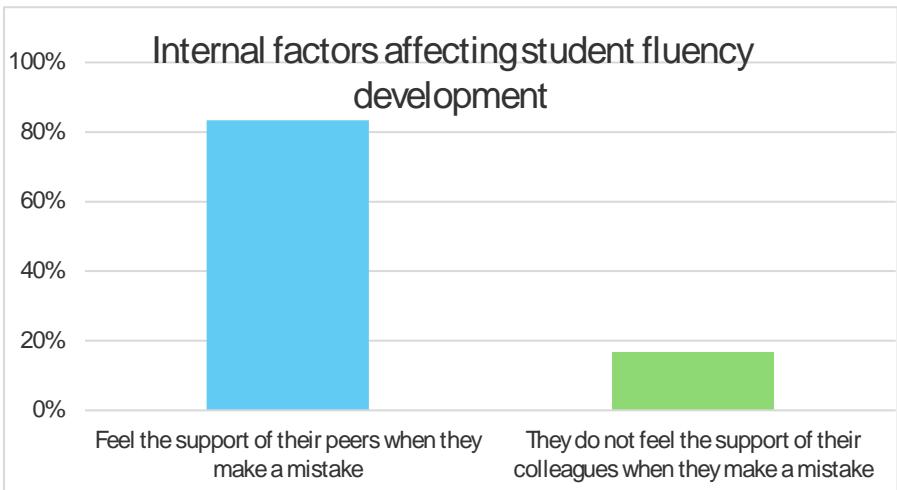
Graphic 8

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Feel humiliated and did not receive adequate support from their peers when making a mistake	17	57%
They did receive adequate support from their peers	13	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

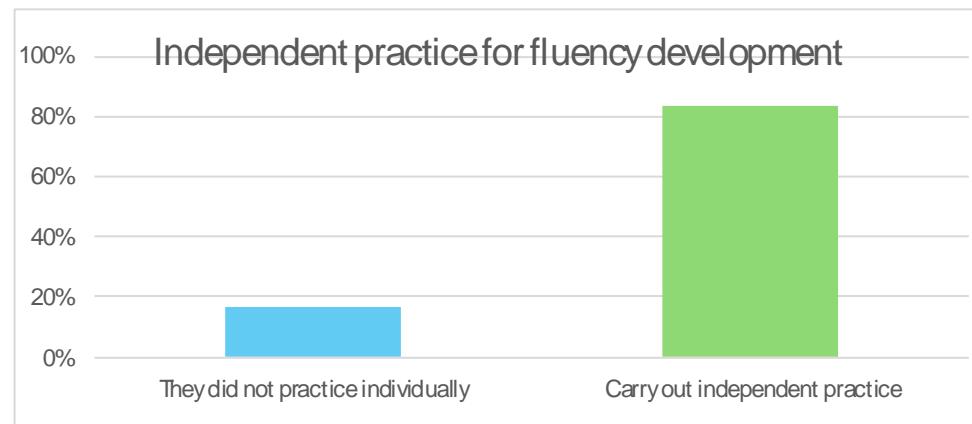


Graphic 9

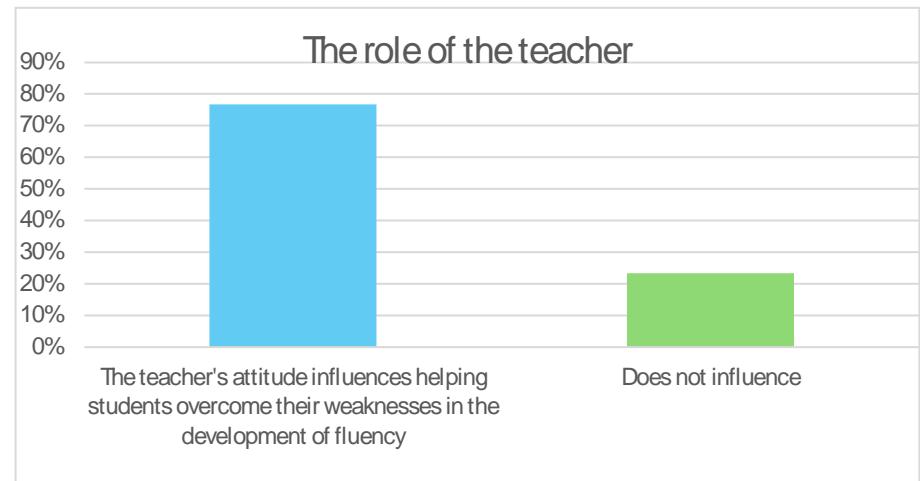
ANSWER	Frequency	%
Feel the support of their peers when they make a mistake	25	83%
They do not feel the support of their colleagues when they make a mistake	5	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>



Graphic 10



Graphic 11



## APPENDIX F: ORIGINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SECOND SURVEY APPLIED

### Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. The

Modern Language Journal, 70(2), 125-132.

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to

do with the

course.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

2

7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

17. I often feel like not going to my language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

Agree

Strongly agree

Neither agree

nor disagree

Disagree Strongly disagree

## APPENDIX G: SECOND EXPLORATION SURVEY

Somos estudiantes del último año de la carrera de inglés y nos gustaría solicitar su colaboración para nuestro trabajo de investigación titulado Factores que afectan el desarrollo de la fluidez en la expresión oral de los estudiantes de III año de la carrera de inglés en la UNAN-León, en la Año 2024.

Gracias por su ayuda al proporcionar la información requerida de manera honesta.

Edad \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ Ciudad de origen \_\_\_\_\_

Lee con atención cada uno de los siguientes enunciados y Para cada uno de ellos marca con una X la columna que corresponda a tu percepción.

Preguntas	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuerdo
Nunca me he sentido cómodo/a cuando hablo en inglés en clases				
No me importa cometer errores en clases				
Me da nervios cuando sé que tengo que participar en clases				
Me siento frustrado/a cuando no entiendo lo que el maestro está explicando				
No me molestaría tomar clases extras de inglés				
Durante las clases suelo distraerme fácilmente				
Suelo pensar que mis compañeros son mejores que yo en el idioma				
Me siento cómodo/a				

durante las pruebas y exámenes orales				
Entro en pánico cuando tengo que hablar sin prepararme anteriormente				
Me preocupan las consecuencias de equivocarme en el aula de clases				
En las clases orales suelo ponerme nervioso/a cuando olvido cosas que ya se				
Me preocupa saber que tengo que hablar con una persona nativa del idioma				
Aunque este bien preparado para las presentaciones orales suelo sentirme ansioso/a al respecto				
A menudo no tengo ganas de asistir a clases				
Me siento cómodo/a cuando hablo en inglés				
Me da miedo de que el maestro/a corrija mis errores				
Mi corazón se acelera cuando el maestro/a me llama en clases				
Entre más estudio para pruebas o exámenes orales más confundido/a me siento				
No siento presión cuando me preparo bien para hablar en				

clases				
Siempre siento que mis compañeros hablan mejor que yo el idioma				
Las clases avanzan muy rápido y siento que me estoy quedando atrás				
Me siento abrumado/a por la cantidad de reglas que hay que seguir para poder expresarse				
Me da miedo que se burlen de mi cuando tengo que expresarme				

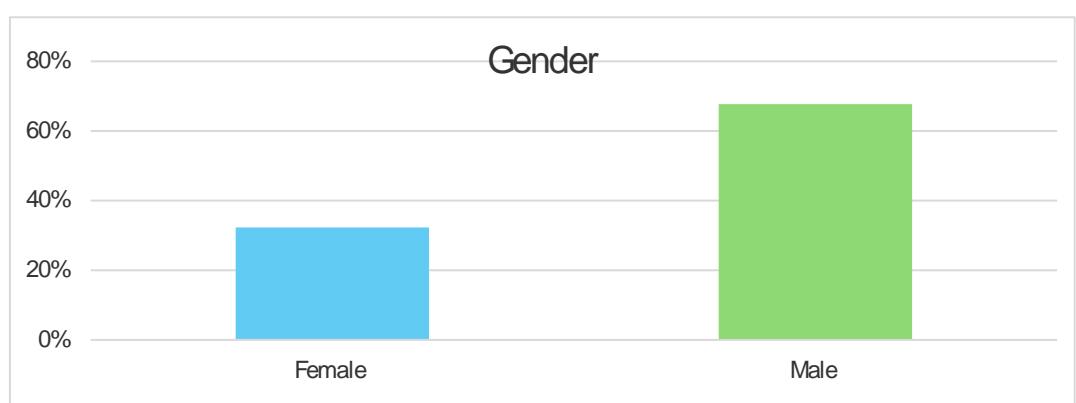
En el siguiente punto conteste con la mayor sinceridad posible.

- Explique que mecanismos, métodos u estrategias utilizas para enfrentar los retos que se te presentan en el desarrollo de tus habilidades orales en el idioma inglés.
- De que manera piensas que estos mecanismos contribuyen a la mejora de tu fluidez.

## APPENDIX H: GRAPHICS FOR THE SECOND SURVEY

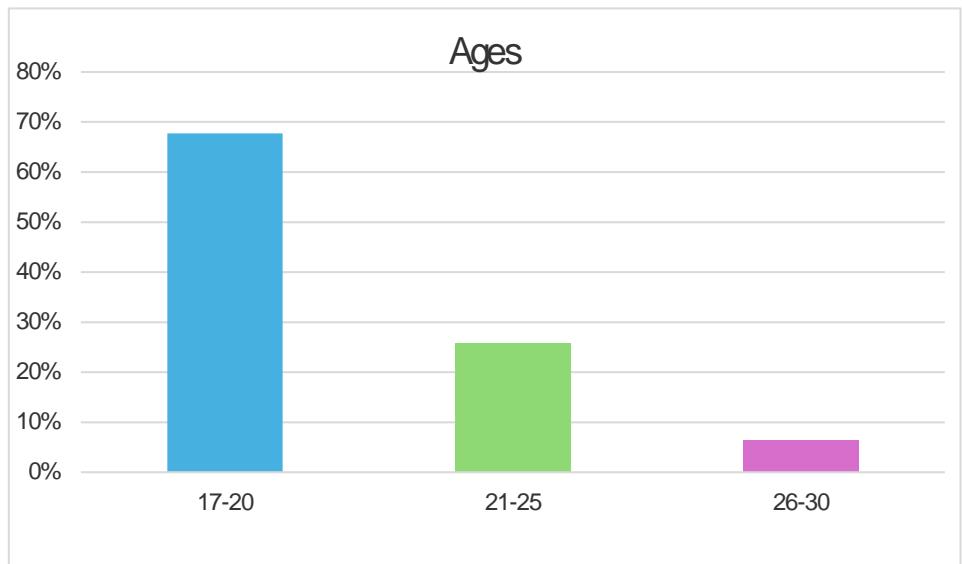
Graphic 1

GENDER	Frequency	%
Female	10	32%
Male	21	68%
Total	31	100%



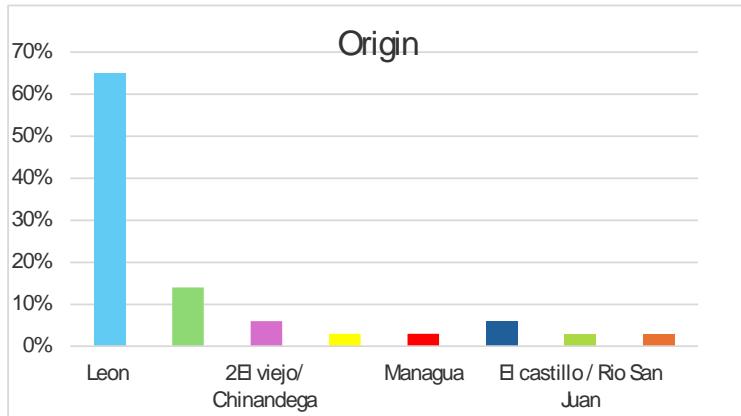
Graphic 2

AGES	Frequency	%
17-20	21	68%
21-25	8	26%
26-30	2	6%
Total	31	100%



Graphic 3

ORIGIN	Frequency	%
Leon	20	65%
Chinandega	4	14%
El viejo/ Chinandega	2	6%
Chichigalpa	1	3%
Managua	1	3%
RACCN	2	6%
El castillo / Rio San Juan	1	3%
Corn Island	1	3%
Total	31	100%



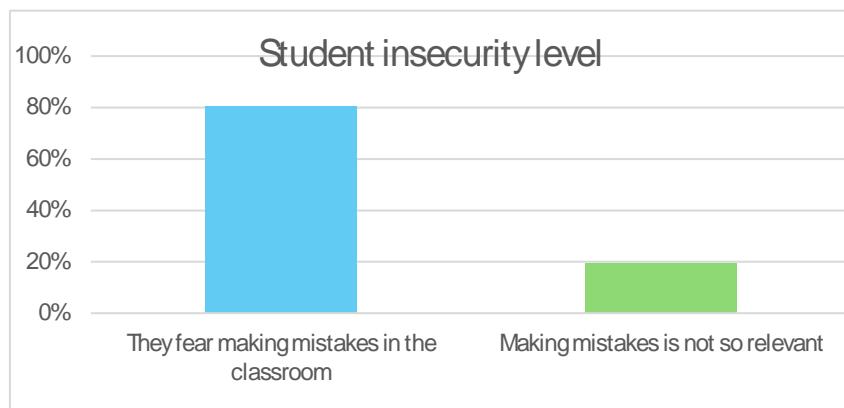
Graphic 4

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Not feel like they have the necessary security	19	61%
Feel comfortable when practicing this skill	12	39%
Total	31	100%



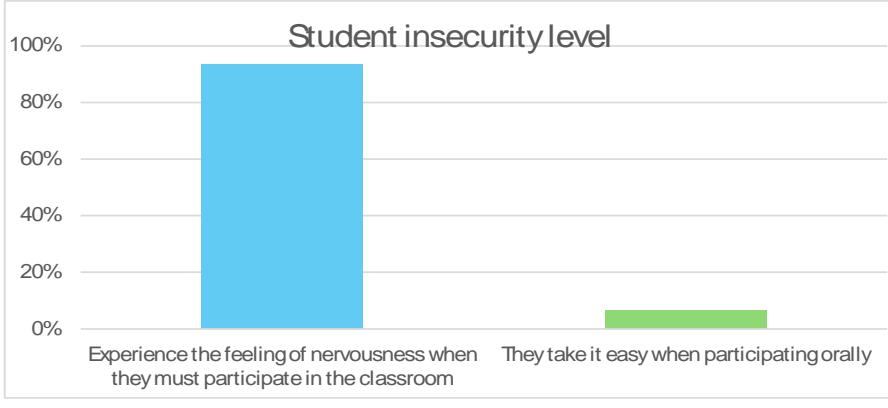
Graphic 5

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They fear making mistakes in the classroom	25	81%
Making mistakes is not so relevant	6	19%
Total	31	100%



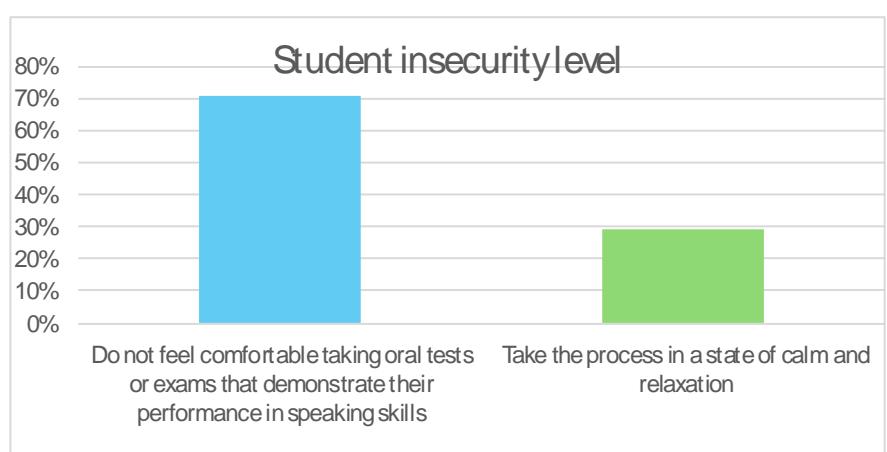
Graphic 6

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Experience the feeling of nervousness when they must participate in the classroom	29	94%
They take it easy when participating orally	2	6%
Total	31	100%



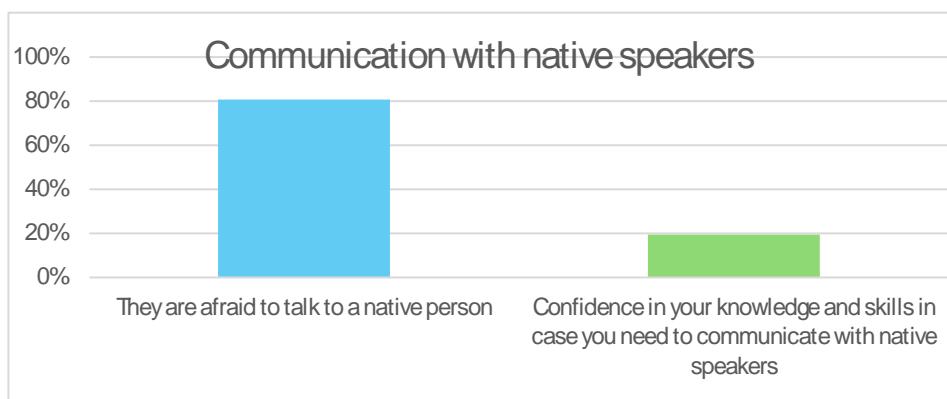
Graphic 7

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Do not feel comfortable taking oral tests or exams that demonstrate their performance in speaking skills	22	71%
Take the process in a state of calm and relaxation	9	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>



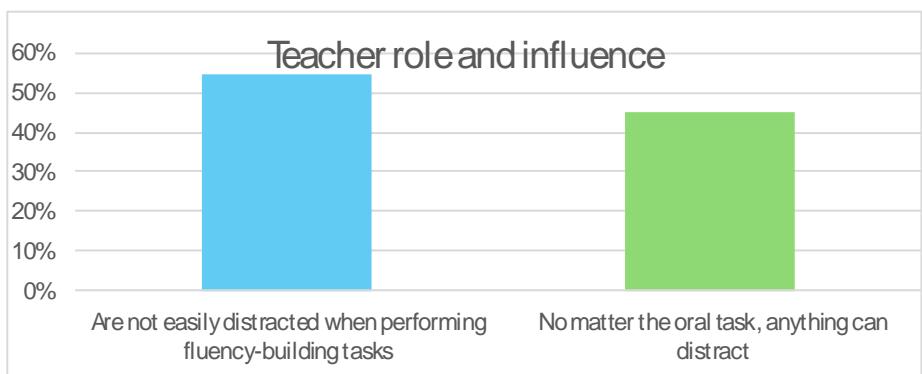
Graphic 8

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They are afraid to talk to a native person	25	81%
Confidence in your knowledge and skills in case you need to communicate with native speakers	6	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>



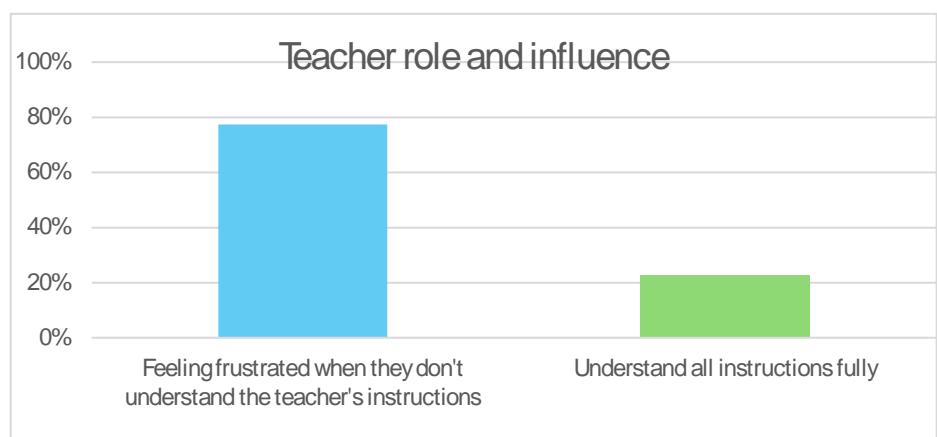
Graphic 9

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Are not easily distracted when performing fluency-building tasks	17	55%
No matter the oral task, anything can distract	14	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>



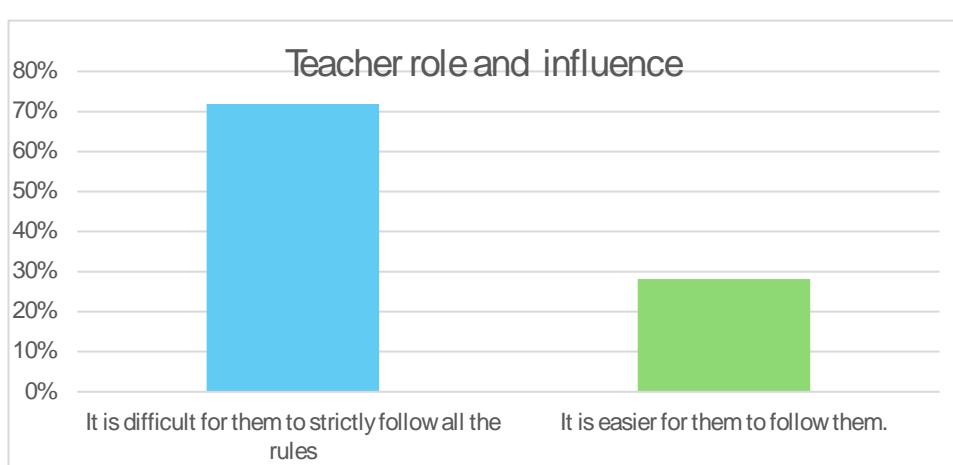
Graphic 10

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Feeling frustrated when they don't understand the teacher's instructions	24	77%
Understand all instructions fully	7	23%
Total	31	100%



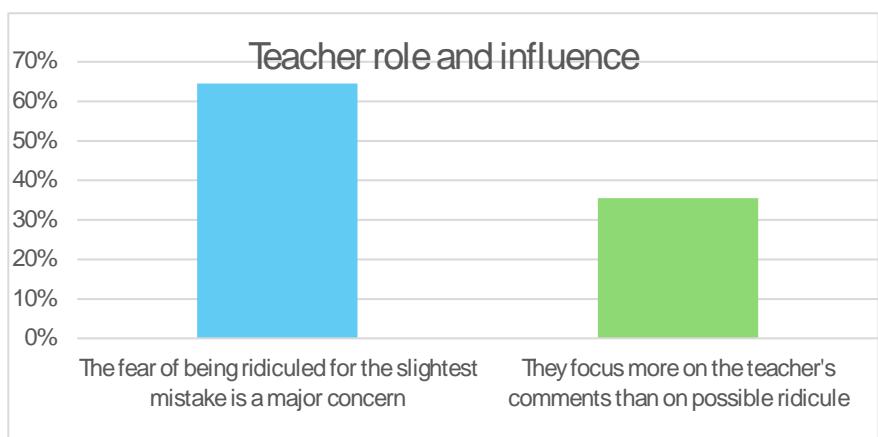
Graphic 11

ANSWER	Frequency	%
It is difficult for them to strictly follow all the rules	23	72%
It is easier for them to follow them.	9	28%
Total	32	100%



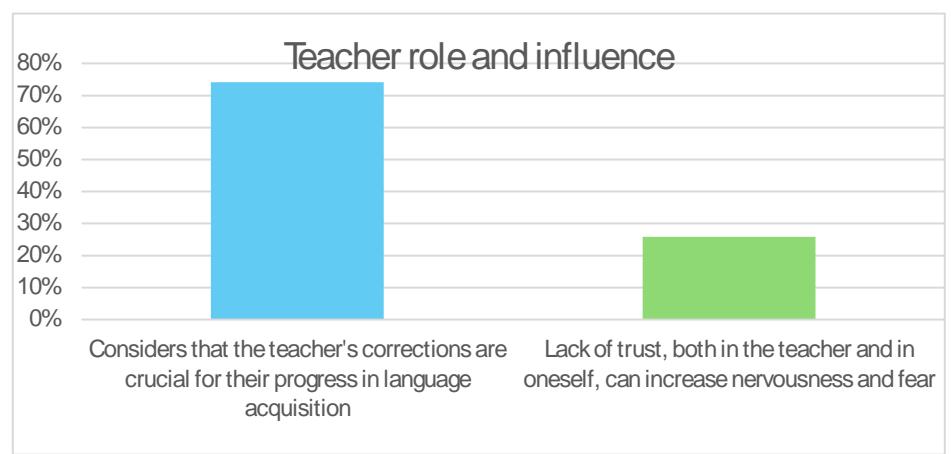
Graphic 12

ANSWER	Frequency	%
The fear of being ridiculed for the slightest mistake is a major concern	20	65%
They focus more on the teacher's comments than on possible ridicule	11	35%
Total	31	100%



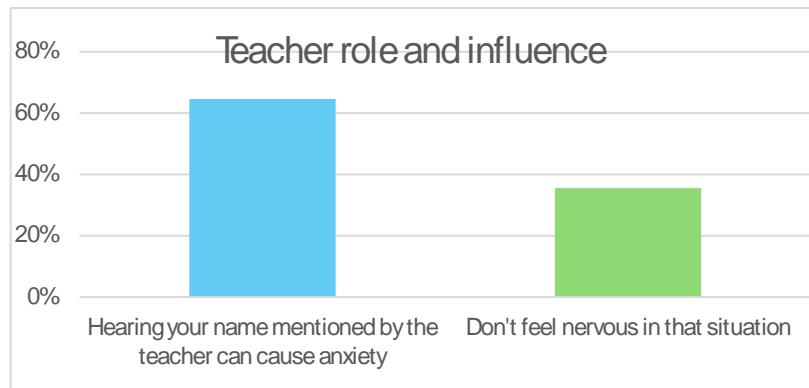
Graphic 13

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Considers that the teacher's corrections are crucial for their progress in language acquisition	23	74%
Lack of trust, both in the teacher and in oneself, can increase nervousness and fear	8	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>



Graphic 14

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Hearing your name mentioned by the teacher can cause anxiety	20	65%
Don't feel nervous in that situation	11	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>



Graphic 15

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Fear of being wrong	25	81%
Making mistakes is not so relevant	6	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>



Graphic 16

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They express feeling panic when they are not sufficiently prepared	26	84%
They feel confident when they have prior preparation	5	16%
Total	31	100%



Graphic 17

ANSWER	Frequency	%
They patiently study the amount of material	20	65%
they feel confused by the amount of material	11	35%
Total	31	100%



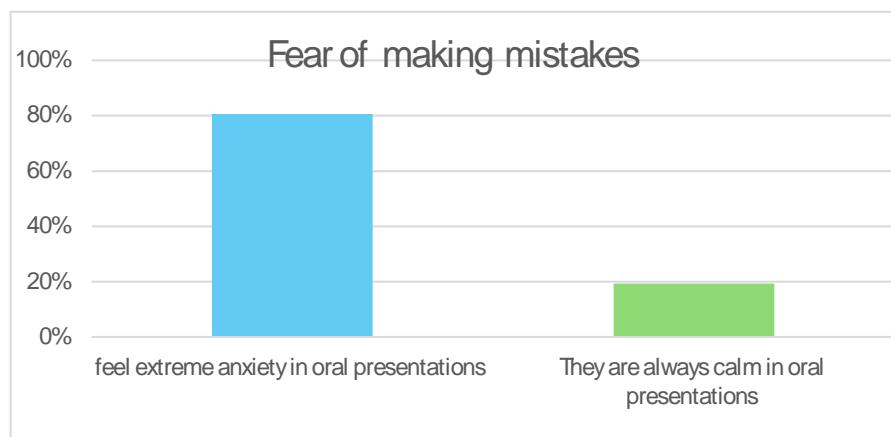
Graphic 18

ANSWER	Frequency	%
they forget things they had already studied	29	94%
they feel confident in what they have already studied	2	6%
Total	31	100%



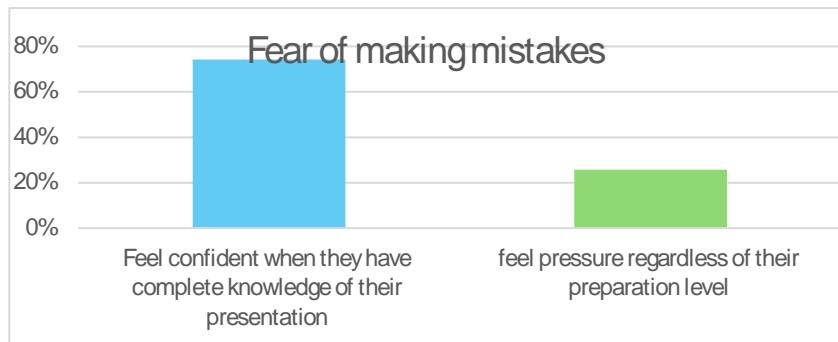
Graphic 19

ANSWER	Frequency	%
feel extreme anxiety in oral presentations	25	81%
They are always calm in oral presentations	6	19%
Total	31	100%



Graphic 20

ANSWER	Frequency	%
Feel confident when they have complete knowledge of their presentation	23	74%
feel pressure regardless of their preparation level	8	26%
Total	31	100%



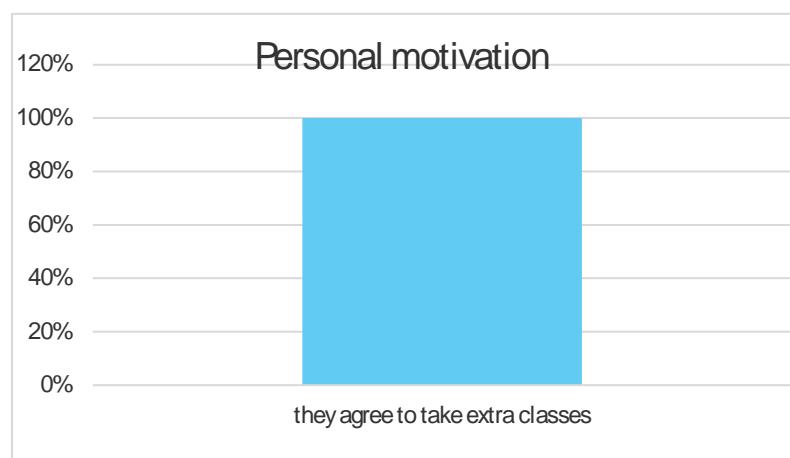
Graphic 21

ANSWER	Frequency	%
dropping out of class has never crossed your mind	17	55%
They don't want to go to class because they feel like they aren't making enough progress.	14	45%
Total	31	100%



Graphic 22

ANSWER	Frequency	%
they agree to take extra classes	31	100%
Total	31	100%



## APRENDIX I: TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

### Interview to professors

#### Dear professor:

As you know we are students of the last year of the English Major and we would like to ask for your collaboration for our research work entitled *Factors that Affect the Development of Fluency in the Speaking Skills of III Year Students Majoring in English at UNAN-Leon, in the years 2023-2024*. Thanks for accepting to participate in this interview.

#### General questions

- a) How long have you been teaching at UNAN-León?
- b) What is your professional qualification as a teacher of the English area at UNAN-León
- c) What is your area of expertise?

#### Specific questions

1. What kinds of courses do you teach or have you taught that focus on oral skills development in the target language?
2. Do you consider that a teacher's attitude affects students in the process of acquiring good fluency? Please explain.
3. How do you organize your speaking classes?
4. What activities do you consider to be the best for the proper development of this skill?
5. Based on your years of experience as a teacher, what do you think are the factors that most affect III year students in the development of their oral fluency?
6. How do you resolve conflicts that arise in the teaching process in the oral skills area?
7. How do you evaluate students' progress in acquiring good fluency?
8. How do you help students stay motivated in the development of fluency in the foreign language?
9. Have you noticed improvements in students in their process of acquiring good fluency comparing last year and this year?
10. What factors do you think are involved in that improvement or lack of improvement?

11. In your opinion what coping mechanisms do students employ to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?

12. What special recommendations could you give us that could help us with our research on III Year students' fluency development?

This was the last question of our interview. Thank you, professor. Your collaboration will be of great value for the success of our research.

## APENDIX J: INTERVIEWS TRANSCRIPTIONS

### FIRST INTERVIEW

(X: Anonymous, age: unknown, male; D, A: interviewers)

(//=overlap)

D: First of all, thank you for your collaboration so, how long have you been teaching at UNAN-León?

X: well, I've been teaching for twenty (thinking) twenty-three years.

D: What is your professional qualification as a teacher of the English area at UNAN-León

X: umm ... what do you mean with that question?

D: (long pause)

X: I have a licenciatura and a Master's degree, do you mean that?

D: //yes //

X: I have a Master's degree

D: What is your area of expertise?

X: Ok, so, I'm focused more on classes in listening and speaking

D: What kinds of courses do you teach or have you taught that focus on oral skills development in the target language?

X: Most of them are oral techniques, laboratory a long time ago, umm oral communication and teaching techniques as well.

D: In all of these classes do students practice oral skill? (background laughter)

X: Yes, in teaching techniques because they have to know how to teach students and they have to present the different skills (umm) we use in the classroom but, one of the weaknesses that they present is how to develop speaking activities, so most of my classes are focused on oral communication.

D: Do you consider that a teacher's attitude affects students in the process of acquiring good fluency? Please explain.

X: Sure, because if you don't create a good environment and self-confidence, you as a teacher with your students then they won't be able to express themselves, (pause) that

is something I think very relevant to keep in mind how I can (umm) provoke my students to speak with more confidence.

D: How do you organize your speaking classes?

X: (Deep breath) Normally I use to give them an outline, a format they have to follow so student can have an idea how to organize the pre, while and post activities (umm) using as much vocabulary as possible.

D: What activities do you consider to be the best for the proper development of this skill?

X: I'm sorry, can you repeat that again?

D: What activities do you consider to be the best for the proper development of this skill?

X: Umm...I don't have a (long pause) ... the best activity because the activity depends on the attitude of your students, I have faced students, group of students who were able to learn, I have faced those who are facing hard situations to participate so, the best activity you have to find according to the kind of student you have in the classroom.

D: Based on your years of experience as a teacher, what do you think are the factors that most affect III year students in the development of their oral fluency?

X: Umm... I think the lack of vocabulary, because some of them perhaps they didn't take seriously I mean to learn vocabulary sometimes they are afraid of their classmate they can laugh because of their pronunciation, because they don't know how to say something specifically, and I think that is a main problem.

(Next interviewer)

A: How do you resolve conflicts that arise in the teaching process in the oral skills area?

A: // how do you resolve conflicts//

X: How I resolve conflicts that arise in the teaching process oral area? Well, when I first of all I identify the students who are facing this problem so, I ask them to come to have a tutorial with me and also look for some students who can have a peer conversation. The idea of this is to make them feel more confident. Sometimes I have some friends who are not from Nicaragua and I ask them to work like having a group for conversation (ok) so they can have 30 minutes, speaking in English and 30 minutes in Spanish. So, both of them have benefits.

A: How do you evaluate students' progress in acquiring good fluency?

X: Well, there are different criteria for example, I take into account the fluency, the punctuation. I take into account the body language, how they speak (pause) to give an idea, in the delivery I have the attention and getting opener, the eyes contact, the volume of voice, rate of speech, posture, adherence to limit time and I also take into account the context. In the context we talk about evidence of preparation, introduction, choice of topic, sufficient use of details, the kind of organization they have and also if they have a good conclusion of the topic.

A: How do you help students stay motivated in the development of fluency in the foreign language?

X: I think (pause) one of the very good activities is to ask them to speak about themselves I mean a good or bad experience as a childhood, an experience as a teenager or the best gift, they have received because they already know the very details so they can feel more confident talking of something that they just remember because that happened to them.

A: Have you noticed improvements in students in their process of acquiring good fluency comparing last year and this year?

X: (sighs) umm I can't tell you that because we just have one partial if I have the second one then I can say they have improved this is the first time I'm working with this group. So, I don't have an idea on how they were before.

(interviewer's intervention D)

D: But how do you see them in the process of fluency? How can you notice their improvement in the area?

X: (Sighs) Again the problem is that this is the first time I'm working with them and this is the first evaluation. So, until this coming one, I will know that because in this first partial I know who were afraid, I know who got some problems during the presentation. But in this evaluation, I gave them feedback. You have to improve in this, this, this and they have a peer observation from their classmate. So, they have bunch of information to take into account. Now in the next evaluation I will know if they are putting into practice those recommendations, but now, no, I can't tell you that.

(Second interviewer intervenes)

A: What factors do you think are involved in that improvement or lack of improvement?

X: Well, I think if the students don't have discipline, if they don't have discipline to practice, they just practice when they are in the university, that is the biggest problem I think they face. If you speak just here you are doing nothing.

A: In your opinion what coping mechanisms do students employ to overcome challenges associated with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?

A: Strategy or method that students employ to overcome this problematic.

X: Coping mechanism that students employ to overcome challenges associate with factors affecting oral skills? //

X: umm..., What can I say?

A: Maybe something that you see in the classroom the way that they resolve this problem when having a problem with a presentation, for example.

X: Some of them (speaks slowly) have that touch that they forgot some information they were following but they use the visual aids to help themselves. That is one of the most common ways they help themselves. But overcoming obstacles (pause) still to early (laugh) for me to tell you.

A: What special recommendations could you give us that could help us with our research on III Year students' fluency development?

X: What do you mean with kind of recommendation?

D: Something that you can say to us about our research. Maybe something that is missing in the questions, something that we need to know about this problem.

X: The topic is factors that affect the development of fluency in the speaking skill of third year, (pause) is this the first survey you have apply to them?

D: Yes//

X: I think something that could be great for you if you have the chance to observe them because with this survey, they can give you some feedback, I'm giving you some feedback from you, but how you can see them working during the performance. If you can see, they are improving or not I think that it's going to be much better for you. Well, I tell you. If you want to come to my class one day to see them. Feel free to do it

D: ok//

A: That's all. Thank you so much

D: Thank you so much for sharing your time with us. You're welcome.

## SECOND INTERVIEW

(X: Anonymous, age: unknown, female; D, A: interviewers)

(//=overlap)

D: So, as you know we are students of the last year of the English career. First of all, thank you for your cooperation for our research., How long have you been teaching at UNAN Leon?

X: I've been teaching for 36 years. I actually started in August 1988. It has been a long time. A long way to go. So, 36 years.

D: What is your professional qualification as a teacher of the English area at UNAN-León?

X: Well, first I have a bachelor's degree which is licenciatura in English, but just the language.

But then I specialized in teaching English as a foreign language, so I have a Master's. I hold a Master's degree in teaching English as a foreign language. This is for English. I also have some other titles. I teach English in other languages, but we are interested in English right now.

D: What is your area of expertise?

X: My area of expertise is first the teaching of integrated English skills. So, we are talking about integrated English, how to teach the skills in an integrated way. So, we are talking about the different levels of the language from 1 to 7, how our students actually learn the language. from beginning to end. From beginners to advanced. This is a class of integrated English which you know. (pause) Particularly I am interested in the teaching of grammar, linguistics, explaining how the language works. And finally, I teach advanced conversation. So, this is also one of my areas of expertise.

D: What kind of courses do you teach or have you thought that focus on oral skill development?

X: Well, I just answered, right? Just advanced. Listening and speaking. But in the case of the third year, which is the focus of your research, I teach integrated English. So we

have to make this clear because the focus is not on fluency. It's not on speaking.

Nevertheless, as part of integrated English, speaking is involved.

D: yes//

X: Speaking is also included. But in a different way. It's not the main focus of the course.

D: But they speak.

X: Well, they have to, But it's in a different way. Right?

D: Do you consider that a teacher's attitude affects students in the process of acquiring good fluency?

X: Yes, of course. Of course.

D: In what way?

X: Well, a professor, number one, needs to be very positive all the time. And (long pause) this is very, very important. One of your goals is actually to motivate your students. To encourage your students. To keep moving. And to keep developing fluency and if the professor is a little bit arrogant or negative, the students will never, never be able to develop fluency. And then I consider that the role of the professor is fundamental in the development of the skills. So, professors need to be very careful how they correct students. How they address students' problems. Very, very carefully. It's one of the main issues of the classroom interaction.

D: How do you organize your speaking class?

X: Well, remember my class? The class, the third year is not a speaking class. So, are you asking about a speaking class? Yeah. Not the third year.

D: Maybe if you can give us some information about speaking classes because our...

X: Speaking class. Yeah. All right. So, I'll try (pause) Remember that the speaking class is focused on fluency. And I have my approach, which is topic-based. So, we actually study topics. The students need to get ready. It's very important. So, they have vocabulary, particular vocabulary that they research first. They have some research questions about a particular topic. They watch videos. And then they come to the class. When they come to the class, they are ready. They already have the vocabulary background, some information through videos. And then we organize discussion groups. I believe in working in small groups. This is important because all the students need to be able to speak. So not only that they have to participate, all of them, I encourage

participation. But I try to have them work in small groups. Second, I try to (long pause) as I told you, to encourage each person's participation with a big group, it's very difficult , (but) with a small group is possible. I just ask questions to each one of my students.

Each of them has to participate in each class

D: Everyone//

X: Everyone has to participate. Exactly. They need to speak somehow. They need to overcome the difficulty, the fear of speaking. And they have to express their ideas. For some of them, it's very challenging. It's still very challenging. In third year, there are many, many differences in the (hesitation) fluency of the students. We have gaps. Some students are still (pause). ...trying to speak.

And others are already speaking. So, there are some gaps in the level of fluency within the classroom.

D: But they try to

X: Not all of them. Not all of them. Not all of them. Even in fifth year. Not all of them. I still have some students in fifth year who don't feel confident enough and who feel like memorizing. They still need to memorize because of the lack of self-confidence. The impression, the idea that they cannot express their ideas without memorizing. So, one of my functions is to help them understand that they can express their ideas without having to memorize a script. And this is my fight.

D: Yeah//.

X: Trying to have them not memorize their introduction, their presentations, and just speak naturally. And it's difficult. Believe me. Some of them, some of them just are so used to... The problem is that they're used to writing down everything. They feel more confident when they write. And when we talk about fluency, writing interferes with fluency. Being fluent is being able to express their ideas, your ideas, without hesitation, with self-confidence, being assertive when expressing your ideas. And many students cannot.

D: Based on your years of experience as a teacher, what do you think are the factors that most affect third-year students in the development of fluency?

X: All right. So, observing my third-year students, I can see, as I told you, there are gaps. So, some students are really fluent, and others are not. So, one of the factors is

the inhibition. They feel shy because other classmates speak very well. So, they feel shy, inhibited. So, one of the difficulties is the group is too numerous and they're all mixed. And they can, in front of the ones who speak very well, they don't want to try. So, it's one of the factors. (pause) Another one is the number of students. I think they're too numerous. 40 students are too many for a speaking class. 40 students are too many students.

D: So, this year they are together.

X: Exactly. They were separated.

D: Maybe they don't know each other.

X: Oh, yeah. Right now, they do. And they get along very well, and I think this is good because this is a kind of motivation for them. But the group is too numerous. Too many students. So, the second factor is the number of students. It's much better to work with 20 students than with 40 students is just too numerous. So, some of them don't pay attention. Another factor for my particular class is the hour. I have the third session. So, they have been here since 7 o'clock in the morning. 7 o'clock, it's okay. They're quiet and they have a good attention (span). The second class is at 8:45. So it's okay. They're trying to get they're already getting a little tired but the third class at 10:30, they're tired, they're hungry and they're not paying too much attention they're desperate to go home and this is the hour of my class. My three classes are always at that hour, Yesterday some of them were eating maruchan soup in my class (laughs) I didn't know what to do. I mean, I was tired. Okay.

D: Was it their lunch?

X: Well, no. I think it was like a break. But they were eating Maruchan. So, can you imagine? I mean, you have two students. I always tell them they have to eat something before getting into my class.

D: Yeah

X: Because they need energy. Right? So, if you eat something, you get a little bit of sugar and up you rise your level of energy but I mean, eating Maruchan soup, I didn't know what to tell them (laughs) but I understand. They're hungry, they're tired, they've been here since 7 o'clock. It's four hours of classes already. So, the last one, they are not too attentive. They don't pay attention, so that's my third difficulty Right? and also, I

have some difficulties having them work in group and not using Spanish in class. They are still using Spanish in class. Many of them. I forbid the use of Spanish, but they still do it a lot. So, I've noticed that in third year, they speak a lot of Spanish the interaction among them is in Spanish I always tell them you should interact with your classmates in English they don't do it.

A: Even in activities, using Spanish?

X: Even in the middle of the activities, they use Spanish. Exactly. I have noticed that in the third year. So, this is another difficulty. In fourth year and fifth year, I've noticed that the use of English is bigger. It's better.

D: Probably they feel more confident.

X: Exactly. They develop their fluency between third year and fourth year. Some of them before and others later it depends on each learner. Yeah, but exactly. So that's another problem, the use of Spanish.

D: Probably they still don't lose the fear of making mistakes.

X: They are very much afraid of making mistakes. Exactly. So, if they focus on their mistakes, if they focus on their pronunciation, then they don't develop fluency. The problem with my class, remember, is that we work on structures, on grammar, and then our speaking activities are based on the use of the structures because it's integrated English skills so, it's more based on accuracy and not that much on fluency remember, it's integrated English. Yeah. So, it's not a speaking class. My speaking class is in fifth year.

A: How do you resolve conflicts that arise in the teaching process or fluency?

X: Well, I give them recommendations all the time I keep repeating the same and the same. Don't use Spanish, practice a lot, don't be afraid of speaking, come on. So, this is a way of solving conflicts, Conflicts, you're talking about problems, right? Problems, yeah, that students are facing.

A: For example, when a student is speaking all the time in Spanish.

X: I keep telling them, don't speak Spanish, stop speaking but this particular year and this particular group of students, the third year, discipline is difficult to establish. I've had problem with discipline because there are too many. So, they tend to speak they speak to the classmates, they get distracted. I'm having a problem. I try to solve the problems

by focusing their attention on a particular task, I've noticed that if I organize games, they get more involved they're like children they need to be distracted, entertained. So yesterday I organized a bingo game. They loved it, they enjoyed it, they wanted to keep playing. So, this is a way of coping with difficulties and having them focus on a particular task and particularly a game, a competition game they know, but we cannot spend the whole class playing games.

A,D : yes//

X: So there needs to be a balance between the activities and the class. It's grammar, I'm teaching grammar.

D: It is a very important class.

X: It is because you're...

D: We learned how to build a good conversation.

X: Exactly, you learn the language. It's the levels of the language from beginner to advanced. I think that is the main class.

X: It's the core, the skeleton. And then you have the speaking class, the writing class, I mean the skeleton is to be able to acquire all the linguistic parts. So, it's a class focused on the linguistic part, integrating all the skills. But there are many difficulties with this here, many difficulties and I tell you, discipline has been difficult to establish. I've had problems, and you know I'm very authoritarian. Normally students pay attention, but in this particular class I'm having problems, but I think that the hour, the time of my class has a lot to do with that. It's too late. Yes. I prefer to have the first or the second class, but not the third. They are too tired, they want to go home, they are tired.

A: How do you evaluate a student's progress?

X: Oh, well remember I don't evaluate fluency directly. Yes, so it's difficult but I can assess my student's progress. My part of the group in the third year, the group A, that used to be A last year, were already my students in second year. So, I can see the difference. And they have improved. They have improved, most of them. They have improved a lot, and I can see they have developed a certain type of confidence. It's not 100%, but I can see the progress between second year and third year. I don't evaluate that quantitatively, I mean with numbers, no but I can see, I can assess my students little by little. I think they are building confidence at the moment of speaking I can see that in

group A, Group B was not with me last year, so I cannot compare. But I establish a kind of contrast and comparison mechanism between what they were last year and what they are right now in my class, and I can see the progress and I keep encouraging them to use the language and to participate all the time. Right, but that is not a direct evaluation. I do evaluate speaking with numbers because I don't evaluate speaking in the class. I do evaluate speaking, remember, in dialogues, but they have to use the structure. So, it's more based on using a particular grammatical structure in a dialogue that you build. This is a way I evaluate them. I can see progress. Yeah, they're in a good way. The students are in a good way.

A: How do you help students stay motivated in the development of Fluency in all the class?

X: Helping them stay motivated always encouraging them to believe in themselves. To believe in their own skills and trying to motivate them not to lose their time in useless activities, particularly social media because I see this is a big enemy for our students the use of social media in their free time. In the time that they could actually use social media for educational purposes they use that for entertainment. So, I try to motivate them, I try to convince them of all kind of you know me. I always talk to them not to use cell phones for useless activities but they keep doing it. So, I talk to them a lot and I try to interest them with the topics of the class I consider the topics are very nice. The topics of the book are very nice I mean designed by professionals. The books are designed by professionals and the books are really well structured...interesting for them. So, I try to get them interested in the topics of the lesson and talk a lot with them.

A: What factors do you think are involved in the improvement or lack of improvement?

X: Of the students, well number one, I think apart from the professor the most important is the student himself or herself they have to start with themselves at home practicing in the free time. So how can you practice? They have to practice by themselves every day... for me constant practice is the key to fluency. Constantly. They have to practice at home, they have to speak to their classmates. So, they have to establish this interaction with the other classmates in the language. Which is a factor that will help them improve. They don't do it. Not often, not always but this is important starting from home, practicing by yourself, you can talk to the people around you at home, you can show them that you

speak English, you can talk to your mum, to your sister to your brother even if they don't understand you speak English, talk to your mirror and then to your classmate's establishing interaction in the classroom. Those are very important keys and then with the professor of course but remember the professor is an authority, sometimes they feel inhibited in front of the professor, they don't want to talk with the professor they feel they are afraid of me sometimes I don't know why they are afraid of me; they think I am very strict. I am not strict. I am flexible but they have the impression that I am strict. Sorry, Demanding teacher. So, it's better for them to start establishing contact and interaction with their classmates. In their own bubble and little by little they will manage to open the bubble and establish their fluency outside. Their comfort zone but right now they are in their comfort zone. It's difficult to open the doors, very difficult.

A: And do you consider that economic level affects this class? Classmate? In class?

X: Economic levels? What do you mean?

A: For example, when they don't have money to buy a pamphlet.

X: That is something I've noticed...the best students we have ever had in the mayor are students who come from poor, rural areas and don't have many economic means they have been the best students because their level of motivation and their level of involvement is far superior far stronger than any other kind of student. So, no. No, I don't think that this is a limitation at all, they always manage to get their pamphlet, I don't know how, but they always manage sometimes they get help from the student's association. They stay at the dorm when they are very poor and come from rural areas, they stay at the dorm but right now the best student in third year is a student who comes from Rio San Juan, "Por Adentro". From a village and he is very, very poor. He is the best student we have had in third year. No Allison, It doesn't have anything to do anything even if you are very poor provided you have access to internet and you have a cell phone you can learn. In the past, maybe that was a factor because in the past you needed money to buy photocopies and to buy books. And books are very expensive but right now you have access to books and if you don't have money. If you don't have money to buy a cell phone you go to the library, they have computers and free internet they have access to information. It's just the will the motivation that they have

themselves if they want to learn and if they want to and this is it the best students really, really are students from rural areas because they want to, they want to succeed.

D: They appreciate the father's effort.

X: Well. But students from the city as well. But I consider that they are like more they are slower. Maybe. (pause)

D: Probably they have everything in their hands.

X: Well, you are talking about you. No. Are you?

D: No.

X: No?

D: No because my mother passed sometimes by hard situations.

X: In a hard difficult situation.

D: So, I need to appreciate her efforts.

X: Uh huh//.

D: So, I always put my 100 percent. In my classes.

X: Yes. You have been a very good student all the time. Yeah.

What I want to say here from those kinds of students is that they appreciate maybe the opportunity that is given to them, Yes and maybe they have this drive, intrinsic motivation, to get away from the situation in which their family is and to achieve something different in their lives like becoming professional, graduate becoming professor or translator connect with tourism. It's their motivation is so high it's much of the time. It's much higher than the motivation of students who come from the city and which have had easier conditions I would say. Yeah. I really love the students who are the ones who really have this drive to succeed in their lives. Yeah.

A: And the last question, what special recommendations could you give us that help us with our research?

X: Research? Well, I think the topic is very interesting. You have tackled something very, very important which is the level of developmental fluency. I would say do you make comparison with the group in which you were when you were studying? Start from your experience I know you're studying a particular group.

D: We chose this topic based on our experience.

X: On your experience, start with your experience of how you developed your fluency. Because I remember when I started as well teaching you in third year, I remember (your level) and when you were in fifth year with me in speaking I was very impressed with the level of your presentation, I remember. Remember your outlines they were very good and you surprised me and I could see the difference, yeah, between when you started in third year with me and when you actually finished with the last speaking class you had made a long, long, long way of progress and improvement. So, I could see that. So, I think you should start with yourselves, but comparing with what happened to you and the factors that have helped you as students to develop your fluency because you are fluent right now.

A: Thank you//

X: You can express your ideas, you can understand very well, there are no problems with your fluency. So how did you achieve that? And then make a comparison with the students. Do you think that the situation is the same?

D: In some cases. In some cases, it was the same.

X: Yeah. Exactly. They are facing the same difficulties.

D: Because when we were in third year.

X: Uh huh//

D: Well, I had lack of vocabulary so I can't express myself in the way that I want.

X: Uh huh.//

D: So, I wanted to transmit my ideas but I can't.

X: Uh huh.//

D: In that time. But now...

X: And you think they are facing the same problem, right?

D: Yeah.//

X: Lack of vocabulary. Mm-hmm...

D: Lack of self-confidence.

X: Oh yeah. That's important.

D: Fear to make mistakes.

X: Yeah. That's true. About the lack of vocabulary, I've been working with them a lot but they don't know how to keep vocabulary record, they don't know how to use the

vocabulary they still don't organize their vocabulary. So, as they are learning, they are learning, they're learning to write glossary of words. I've told them if you bring me a glossary of the new vocabulary, you will have extra points that one of the ways I encourage them to keep record of new words because I have noticed that we study the vocabulary of cinema. We study the vocabulary of sports, and then a week later, they have forgotten everything you say they don't have words lack vocabulary, but they keep forgetting all the words we study. So, one of the things we have of changes. I ask them to do a glossary of words and they have extra points if they do the glossary, maybe to encourage them to learn the vocabulary better or to be more effective, efficient in the way they learn the vocabulary, the vocabulary is important. So, I would say keep going with your interviews, it's very interesting, you have finished your observations already?

A: Yes.

X: Yes? All right. And always think about the way you have improved, making connections with your own reality. And I'm sure you will have a great research paper. I'm sure.

A: Thank you.

X: You're welcome. I hope I've been useful.

D: Very useful.

A: Thank you for sharing your time with us

X: And good luck.

(X: Anonymous, age: unknown, female; D, A: interviewers)

(//=overlap)

### **THIRD INTERVIEW**

D: How long have you been teaching at Unan León?

X: At Unan León? 22 years so far.

D: What is your professional qualification as a teacher of the English area at Unan León?

X : In general, I'm teaching courses that have to do with listening and speaking, but also translation, sometimes literature, and also lately I've been teaching linguistics, applied

linguistics. Sometimes academic writing, that would depend, but in general those are the areas I'm teaching. I'm getting actually a master's on teaching English as a foreign language,

so the idea is to apply all this knowledge into those different types of courses.

D: Well, you actually answered what is your qualification. Is it a very specific area?

X: What do you mean by qualifications? Like a degree?

D: Yes. You are...

X: Well, the degree was a Master's on teaching English as a Foreign Language.

And actually my degree, my bachelor's degree is also teaching English as a foreign language on TEFL

So that's basically the same, but the only difference is one was a bachelor's degree at the university and the other one is a Master's.

D: Okay.

D: What kind of courses do you teach or have you thought that focus on oral skill development? You actually answered that. Do you consider that a teacher's attitude affects students in the process of acquiring good fluency?

X: Yes.

D: Why?

X: Yes. Especially when we remark more the negative aspects, Students can get into some type of fear to speak or they may be stuck or some of the times it's possible they just get disappointed; they just want to give up and that may be something that may limit students' performance in class but let's say that students are speaking about something and they have so many problems because they didn't come prepared. Depending on the way the teacher expresses, their limitations, students may be offended, or they may be encouraged to do better. So, in general, I would suggest talking about the positive things, but also then getting to what the student needs to perform by trying to give them some advice, some suggestion.

D: How do you organize your speaking classes?

X: Well, we use a format, which is a format everyone uses at the university. There's a format that we have to follow there's a structure we need to follow. So, but if I had to explain to you how I organize a lesson plan in two days for a week, I would tell you that I

would prepare activities to encourage students speaking, oral performance, and listening practice, if it's listening and speaking.

D: Okay.

X: And that goes together. Well, in general, there's like an introduction to the course. So, there should be a pre-, while, and post activity for any of those things, either for speaking, for listening, or maybe you want to encourage students to use vocabulary. So, there should be some type of pre-, while, and post activities for each of those cases.

D: What activities do you consider to be the best for the proper development of this skill?

X: For the skill of what?

D: Speaking. Everything is about speaking.

X: Activities to encourage speaking. There should be more vocabulary exercises, like maybe asking questions, having students make oral presentations, which is the formal thing but also, you can do other types of activities using grouping techniques, you can have students interact in different types of groups. So, you can use different types of exercises. Last Saturday, I was using an exercise in which students had to get into groups, and one of them had to go to (Hesitation) the wall and see some information on a piece of paper, read it, and then they had to go and dictate that sentence to the students maybe you have heard about this activity and then the idea is that students try to interact in different ways, not necessarily the same things, but that will depend on the course and the amount of time that we have left. If we have plenty of time, then there will be more chances for getting more activities to implement and if it's on Saturday, unfortunately time is so short. So sometimes we only have to do a listening exercise, a pre-activity, a listening exercise, and then they have some type of interaction, discussing and getting prepared for another presentation or for a discussion next class. So, it will depend on the type of course you have, how many hours you have.

D: Based on your years of experience as a teacher, what do you think are the factors that most affect students in the development of their oral fluency?

X: So, fluency. The factors that affect sometimes it's self-confidence to speak, sometimes it's fear to speak, sometimes students compare themselves to others. So, they think the other students will be laughing at them and they think they don't want to make a mistake and mistakes are part of everyday life. It's part of learning. So other

factors would be, well, self-confidence could be one sometimes a professor can have an issue with students because sometimes there are certain types of professors that maybe like demanding so student don't speak that much when they are so strict, students don't feel like they need...

D: They feel afraid.

X: Yes. And actually, that's something that, talking about linguistics, that's something that's proven. So, when there's too much punishment, students will feel fear, or they may feel aggressive, or reluctant to do certain types of activities. So, the professor may have some type of influence sometimes but in general, it comes also from student self-confidence, some other times it's a lack of practice, some other times it's because students don't get prepared. They don't rehearse. So, it's necessary that they rehearse some other times it's because students don't have learning strategies they can apply like recording their voices on a cell phone nowadays ...they have a cellphone and maybe they try to talk with a foreigner who is in another part to the world, nowadays you can use WhatsApp or Facebook to interact, so it will be easier but students don't use those type of strategies they just don't apply them, in the past it was more difficult. I remember when I was student I have to go to Roberto Huembes and look for foreigner to ask them question about something that related to culture, for example because I wanted to know something about them and the assessment was to look for foreigner to interview them. Nowadays there are so many ways you can actually interact with foreigners, not necessarily with foreigners sometimes with friends, classmates but students don't have that practice, I said you are having your breaktime, if they have a time to talk in English students don't do it , even if the professor tell them please talk to each other in English this is your chance you are with your classmates all of you study English and students don't try, I don't understand why because they have everything in their hands everything even the dictionaries on their cell phones everything is in their hands. In the past we had to use only paper, we had diskettes, we had cassettes. We didn't have everything that you know they have. So, you have all the resources, but students don't use them. It's just like that sometimes it may be part of your attitude. "So relax. It's easy and I will just do what I can do just to survive". So, there may be different things, but I would say those are the ones I have seen in students.

A: How do you resolve conflicts in the teaching process in the oral skill area?

X: Related to fluency.

A: Fluency //

X: Well, I encourage them to improve their fluency by paying attention to how they speak. So, what I use is something that's called TALLIES. So, hesitation TALLIES and I start counting how many times students hesitate for an amount of time if it's one minute and students hesitate like 20 times it's too much you hesitate more than what you produce. What you talk. So, they can use even those TALLIES by recording their voices and monitor how many times they hesitate and there's a technique I always tell them to apply. Which is that instead of hesitating, they can just make a silent pause and continue talking. So that's a technique silent pause instead of saying "eh, ah, Este" and making repetitions of words. They can just make a silent pause short silent pause. And they keep talking. It's something that works very well

A: How do you evaluate a student's progress in acquiring good fluency?

X: Using that technique. So, what I do is I count how many times students hesitate or if they make repetitions of words or if they have stops or if they use Spanish or something else and I count how many times students make that type of repetition. And how often and I see if they are improving from one presentation to the other. I have a record of students' way of speaking and I give them a slip of paper with the information as well so next time they are supposed to improve get better sometimes I see changes some other times I don't see any change so what I do is I ask them questions and I keep telling them please you have to practice your oral skills there are other techniques as well that students can practice by themselves at home which is sometimes you read a whole sentence very complex and they repeat it starting from the last word till the first word so they read it with a flow. The idea is that they practice fluency. So, they do it from the back to the very beginning word and they read a whole sentence.

The idea is that they don't make any pause. So, to encourage them to avoid pausing or stops, or not to read slowly, so that's another way.

A: How do you help students stay motivated in the development of fluency?

X: Motivated? Well. By saying very good. Very good fluency, Some type of positive reinforcement. Some praising. Like "you're very fluent." "Keep doing that" Or if it's a case

that student is not doing so well, please make sure you monitor you control the hesitations you have; you can do it better. So, I use praising some other times for oral activities. Well, I use candies, I use extra points. So, they keep participating or what else I can use.

Sometimes I bring some extra presents occasionally like maybe a cookie or I say I brought a short breakfast, maybe some juice and a cookie. So, there may be so many different ways but those are the ones I generally use.

A: Have you noticed improvement in students in their process of acquiring good fluency comparing last year and this year?

X: The students who are now in third year, how they were speaking in second year?

A: For example... Yes.

X: Well, this year I haven't seen them but I'm sure they have improved if they passed listening and speaking three. It's because they got some improvement they got the skills. Maybe not everything because all of them will not do equally get or achieve the goal but in different ways there should be some improvement at least students will be talking a little bit more and they will try not to do the hesitation that in the past it was too much maybe it got reduced or there should be some reduction or if somebody was not so much hesitant maybe the person now doesn't hesitate that much.

A: What factors do you think are involved. In that improvement or lack of improvement?

X: Factors in the improvement?

A: Yes.

X: We monitor as professors we monitor; we constantly have presentations.

Have them talk and present or participate in class all the time as much as possible, should be students who should speak instead of the teacher speaking all the time so that could be a way of following up. The students' progress. So, there should be some follow up in order to make sure or to guarantee that something that was too much in the past. Maybe that's reduced nowadays and that reduction is a positive thing if there may be some cases in which students don't improve that much and in that case. Well, it's in the students' hands because fluency is something that's gotten through life some people never get fluent. In English or even in Spanish so maybe that in Spanish they are not fluent and that there's an interference in their way of speaking sometimes not everyone

can be so fluent even we professors. We have certain types of degrees of fluency. So, some of us may be more fluent some others may not be that fluent and it will depend on all of us (we) can have different types of Intelligences as well so maybe we are very good at pronunciation and necessarily with fluency. So, there may be different types of situations.

A: In your opinion, what mechanisms, method, or strategies do students employ to overcome challenges associated with factors that are affecting the development of the oral fluency?

X: What strategies can...?

A: Can students employ to overcome challenges?

X: To overcome those problems? With fluency.

A: That's right.

X: Well, What I said the idea it depends on you. It's in your hands as much as you practice and if you have a good attitude, you will do it, because you know the benefit is just for you. So, it's your responsibility the benefit is not for the professor but it's for you obviously the university gets and advantage because it's part of the identity of the students. Right, It's the students from UNAN Leon speak so well. So, but the benefit the greatest benefit is for the students so as much as you practice and I can see that when some students speak English without necessarily having the teacher telling them you have to speak English and maybe they are outside and they are talking in English there may be so many students who are just like that and them what's necessary is that students are aware of the importance of practicing keep practicing their oral skills and if they don't practice...well, they just get fossilized they need to understand that that's something that will affect their performance. So, they should be practicing a little bit more but if they don't because of attitude. Sometimes it may happen then you can see the differences. In the way people speak either in English or in Spanish whenever students are going to make a presentation you will see the variation of their speaking outcomes. So, it will depend. On students but after all. If I had to use something to motivate them, I would tell them please talk to me in English that would be the first thing. So, I talk to them in English they have to reply in English and if they don't Speak in English. Well, you try to ignore them. (laughs) to make sure that they speaking English It

would depend on the type of professor that's something I will do just to talk to them. In English. So, they keep. Interacting. In English. That type of interaction. And the immersion. In their way. Of speaking. That's something, that will be of benefit for them. A: Okay. Teacher. And the last question is what special recommendation could you give us that can help us with our research?

X: With your research. Well. I haven't read the question. If the last question is a recommendation for you, I would say If you're going, to focus on fluency in some of the questions you shouldn't generalize, like oral skills because at the beginning. I was confused i didn't know if it was oral skills. It could be different types of things but If your focus is on fluency then you should encourage more questions addressed to fluency some of the questions are not.

A little bit marginal and that's when I was thinking about it, question number three how do you organize your speaking classes maybe that question should have been directed, how do you plan to work something. Like that I would do something like that. So, I was thinking about one way how introduce fluency in my lesson planning how I include it not necessarily like a criterion of evaluation. Which long sentences from the back to the front and then how I encourage students to do some types of activities and I include that in my lesson planning for example, and then the Follow-up of fluency in every class how we do it so I would suggest to that and then when you had question number four Oh Yes, this skill but I also understood it like speaking but then I knew it was about fluency so what types of activities would work best in terms of fluency so there may be so many different types of activities but timing activities are something good especially when they are monitoring and they are in pairs and somebody else is taking notes of the hesitation they are making so the person can tell them in one minute you hesitated this amount of time and they can repeat it but they don't necessarily need a professor there they can do it by themselves at home so they can be listening even if they don't have Somebody to practice they can record themselves on an audio and listen to themselves and start monitoring because that's part of you critical thinking skills as well so that maybe something they will do and they would be my suggestion Certain types of questions would need to be addressed to fluency because they are rather a little bit more general

and Oral skills is so many things not necessarily fluency or not only fluency... so many other things

D: Thank you so much for helping us.

#### **FOURTH INTERVIEW**

(X: Anonymous, age: unknown, female; D, A: interviewers)

(//=overlap)

D: As you know, we are a student of the last year of the mayor, and we would like to ask you for your collaboration for our research work entitled Factors that Affect the Development of Fluency in the Speaking Skills of Third-Year Student Majoring in English, Hernán León, in the third year, 2023 and 2024. So, how long have you been teaching at UNAN León?

X: I've been teaching for 25 years. This year, I turned 25.

D: What is your professional qualification as a teacher of the English area at UNAN León?

X: Well, I have several degrees. My basic degree is I have a bachelor's degree in English. That's in education with special focus in teaching English. Then I have a postgraduate course in didactics. I have a master's degree in teaching English as a foreign language, and that's from UNAN. And I have a PhD in modern languages from the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares in Spain.

D: What is your area of expertise?

X: Well, my area is teacher training and development I work more specifically on the courses that are aimed at preparing teachers, English teachers, English professors. So, I teach courses. Well, maybe you will ask a question later, but that's my area of expertise.

D: What kind of courses do you teach, or have you thought that focus on oral skills development in the target language?

X: I've been teaching the courses on oral expressions. There are two particular courses. In the English major, one that is called Oral Expression Techniques I and Oral

Expression Techniques II. And right now, I've been working on one course that is called Taller de la Comunicación for the second year. The others are for third and fourth year.

D: Do you consider that a teacher's attitude affects students in the process of acquiring fluency?

X: Absolutely. A teacher has the task of being like a role model for the students. So, if you believe that the students will learn, you can transmit that to them and everything that you do in the classroom will aim at helping students develop that fluency. So, I mainly think that teacher's attitude can affect the motivation of the students. If you as a teacher are motivated, these students will be motivated as well.

D: How do you organize your speaking class?

X: Well, I try to bring things to the classroom that are not only focused on the form of the language, but more on how the language is for communication all right? Because that's what a language is for. So, I prepare different kinds of activities where I have the students interact. I prepare them like I give them the vocabulary that they're going to use for a particular task, and I make sure that the task is motivating enough so the students feel that they want to do it. I try to make them interact among themselves. Like I make them work in groups or in pairs, I prepare things for them to discuss as a class so different kinds of activities, different kinds of tasks and all of them have the aim of making students feel like they want to talk. And give them the desire to speak.

D: What activities do you consider to be the best for the proper development of this skill?

X: Well, you know, within the communicative approach, there are these activities that are called information gap. Information gap activities. I think those activities are very good because if you give the students a purpose to speak, a reason why to speak, then they will naturally try to speak. If you give them everything cooked, and I'm not saying that it's not good but it's better that they have a gap that they need to complete through the task. If you give them a dialogue, that's okay, they can practice the dialogue. But it's a little bit boring. But if you tell them, okay, you have a map. You're going to be working in pairs. There is a map. And the purpose of this task is that you give directions to each other to arrive to a particular place, they need to talk in order to complete a task. That is much

more effective. So, I would say I prioritize those activities within the communicative approach.

D: Based on your years of experience as a teacher, what do you think are the factors that most affect third year students in the development of their oral fluency?

X: Well, I think there are several, several factors. There are those related to the student's emotions. You know, like self-confidence. If the students don't have enough self-confidence to speak, they won't do it. Or motivation. There are also others that are related to the relationship with their classmates like for example, there are other students who speak good English, and the students are particularly affected by lack of self-confidence then they won't speak. So, another factor is what the teacher does in the classroom if the teacher doesn't bring things for the students to develop their oral fluency, then the students will not do it so as a teacher, you need to try to help them develop their fluency and many of the activities that we were discussing in the previous questions are aimed at helping them so I would say it's a combination of factors. The students, their own factors, internal factors, let's say and also, those factors that are external to them both from the teacher, from the classmates, from the activities, from the materials all of those things affect the development of fluency in students.

A: How do you resolve conflicts that arise in the teaching process in the oral skills area?

X: That's a difficult one. ( laugh ) I try, I try hard to, like I said, to make sure that the students, the students have adequate tasks that are not so easy and not so complicated because if the tasks are too easy, the students get bored and if the tasks are too complicated, the students get frustrated so it's not as easy as it was in the past students have changed and I think that part of that is the social media because in the past it was, from my view, easier to motivate the students. Sometimes you think that a particular topic will be like, oh, they would be very happy to talk about, you know, talking about this or doing this task. But that's not the case and I think the reason is that the students' interests have changed and part of it might be the social media that they are watching you know, it's just like they are more distracted now than they were doing before so I try as much as possible, I try to bring them things that are the closest I can think of to their areas of interest and I take into consideration the level they have I mean, what they know so for example, if I know that they're going to need certain vocabulary, so I write

the vocabulary on the board and I do activities for them to practice the vocabulary beforehand or expressions, particular expressions that they use so that is, in English, it's a process that is called scaffolding you might find it interesting to look up the term; scaffolding is a process in which you, as the mentor or the teacher, you give the students some help so they can move from one step to the next and that's basically what I try to do provide them as much help as much as possible so that they can develop their fluency and the tasks, they are different tasks. Some of them are more focused on the coherence or the organization of what they are saying, like accuracy and there are some other tasks that are more focused on fluency so if I want to develop fluency, I try to do more things aimed at developing fluency.

A: How do you evaluate a student's progress in acquiring good fluency?

X: That's a difficult one as well not only because it's not as easy as it seems, but because there are many students if you have 40 students, give them a personalized follow-up to each student is difficult but that's the reason why rubrics can help you. When they make an oral presentation, if you have different rubrics, you can assess two or three students at the same time and then I see how much they have progressed but like I said, it's not as easy as it seems I have to tell you something very nice so the students in the third year, these students here, I was their teacher in Oral Expression I last year and those students have improved so much, I can tell you because I was their teacher in the first class so I think that somehow, in one way or another, things work out. It's not the effort of one teacher, but the effort of all the teachers and it's what the English major offers.

A: How do you help students stay motivated in the development of fluency in the foreign language?

X: I think that I have mentioned this before. Recently, I was talking to a foreigner. I was planning on bringing him because he said he volunteered to come.

D:Really?//

X: So, I'm going to try to invite him. I'm going to try to implement that if I continue to work right now and if my health allows it, then I'm planning on bringing foreigners so, they see how their fluency works in real communication. And the other thing that I do for helping them be motivated is I try to speak English as much as possible and I try to give them

comprehensible input. Like that they understand what I'm saying. And that the English I'm speaking is as natural and as authentic as possible because if I speak to them in an unnatural way, then when they go outside, they're going to say, they didn't teach me this, so I try to speak as naturally as possible.

A: What factors do you think are involved in that improvement or lack of improvement?

X: In that improvement or lack of improvement..., I think that a lot has to do with what the students do outside the classroom. I mean, yes, we can do many things for them to improve at the classroom level, Absolutely I mean, as teachers, this is our task, but the students have to do things independently like if they don't do it, it doesn't matter what we do in the classroom they need to practice outside. So, I would say the factors that are involved in students' improvement or lack of improvement have to do a lot with their own independent effort as teachers tell them, this is what you have to do you have to watch videos, you have to see movies, you have to listen to music, you have to talk to foreigners, you have to write, you have to read but if they don't do it, it depends on their independent practice.

A: In your opinion, what coping mechanism do students employ to overcome challenges, as you say, with factors affecting the development of their oral fluency in the English language?

X: This is very interesting because I was precisely thinking about the case of one student in the third year who has dramatically improved and I asked her directly, I said, like, hey, I remember she was about to fail my course in Oral Expression Techniques I she just passed "de panza" and she said, Professor, every single day at 5 o'clock in the morning, I wake up every day and have my breakfast and I think at 7 o'clock, I am free to work from 7 to 10 every day and I do things in reading. I do things in writing, I watch videos. So, I have like an entire routine I think that definitely those mechanisms should involve the students' independent work outside and how the teacher, what the teacher does in the classroom and how what you do in the classroom motivates the students to continue to work on their own. You see my point? You need to make that connection.

A: And the last question is, what special recommendations could you give us that could help us with our research?

X: Okay. Well, this is interesting I think that your topic is absolutely very interesting and what you identified as an area that was a good research topic, it's an area that we professors from the English major have already (identified) because the third year is like a filter, you know, some students in the second year are brilliant and the third year, somehow they change completely as if they lost motivation or they found it difficult or something and what I would recommend, if it were possible for you, is to kind of see things in practice. It would be very interesting for us teachers of the oral skills courses to know what is happening at the classroom level. So, if you could, or somebody could, like, establish a set of observations to see what is happening in the classroom, like with the techniques that we are applying, and maybe get a little bit deeper into what the students think or what their main problems are that kind of thing. So I would say investigating things at the classroom level could possibly give you a lot of illumination in the area.

A: Thank you for your collaboration.

D,A : Thank you. Thank you so much.

X: Good luck.

## APPENDIX K: MATRIX OF ANALYSIS

The reason why this interview was applied was to find responses to our research problem which is based on how different factors impact the development of good fluency when learning a foreign language. The objective of the application of this interview was to further obtain information from the perspective of the teachers and not only that of the students, that is, to know their point of view regarding this problem and what their possible solutions could be. For this purpose, 4 teachers who specialize in the area of oral expression were carefully selected. The following matrix shows in a summarized way our analysis of the teachers' interview for further interpretation around our research questions.

Questions	1 <sup>st</sup> interviewed	2 <sup>nd</sup> interviewed	3 <sup>rd</sup> interviewed	4 <sup>th</sup> interviewed
Teacher's role in the classroom	Create a good environment, students need to feel comfortable	No remark negative aspect. -Student become aggressive	Be Positive, no arrogant, think the way that correct students	Positive attitude is the way that students express themselves
Organization of speaking classes	Outline, format, with this have a good idea	Format, lesson plan that bring the university	Topic base, also lesson plan that bring the university	Bring thing for communication, working in group or pairs
Strategies to develop fluency at the	Attitude of the student, need to make thing	Exercises of vocabulary, oral presentation,	Attitude of the student, bring activities that catch their	Information gabs, work in groups and correct each

classroom level	for their benefits	grouping techniques	attention	other
Factors to affecting oral fluency	Lack of vocabulary, joke of the students.	Self-confidence, teachers' attitude, lack of practice	Shyness, number of students, class schedule, use of Spanish in classes	Self-confidence, comparation, teacher attitude
Problem solving	Identify students who are facing this problem, make them feel confident	Encourage them, give gift for example extra points	Give recommendation, play game to catch their attention	Adequate task, looking for interesting topics and catch their attention
Evaluation of student's progress	Fluency, body language, eye contact, context	See how many times hesitate and use Spanish	Dialogue	Rubrics
Keeping students' motivation	Speak about them self or topics that they know	Positive frasses, candy, extra points, bring breakfast	Motivate them with positive words	Interaction with foreigners, advise them.
. Towards Fluency Achievement	Emphasizes discipline and consistent	Teacher needs to monitor	Need for consistent practice and advising against	The importance of students engaging in self-study

	practice	students	sporadic efforts	watching videos
--	----------	----------	------------------	--------------------