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Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa

Monograph Title:

Behavior of 5th year English Students in a National Higher Education Institution in response to the application of new methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020-2023.

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45/19: La Patria, La Revolución!.

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Abstract

The main objective of this research was to analyze the behavior of students in response to the application of new methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during the COVID-19 pandemic, through a qualitative investigation, considering the opinions and experience of the population constituted by 18 students of the regular shift in the 5th year of the English major, and professors of speaking class at the English Department in a national higher education institution. Also, to compile the information observations and interviews to professors and students were used, in addition to focus group to students. The study found out that the shortage of the class schedule provoked many negative effects in students, mainly affecting fluency as they did not have too much interaction during the class sessions. Although professors used the communicative approach to help students reach a high oral expression level, the reduced time prevented professors from developing a complete lesson plan to make the class meaningful, having to shorten some important speaking activities included group discussions and oral presentations which were the most common and the most challenging for professors due to the narrowed time. Participants recommended returning to a full class schedule for giving students the opportunities to improve their English level by having more classroom interaction, also for being provided with structured feedback by professors with the proper time that is required.

Carta Aval

León, 9 de marzo de 2024

Señores
Consejo Técnico
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Asunto: Grado Carta aval **monografía** modalidad de Grado

Cordial Saludo.

Por medio de la presente yo Martha Teresa Chavarría Guido, identificada con documento de identidad número 281-241078-0014V en calidad de tutor del trabajo de grado me permito presentar ante Ustedes, el aval correspondiente a la propuesta titulada **Behavior of 4th year English students at UNAN-León in response to the application of methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020-2022** en la modalidad de Trabajo de Investigación de los estudiantes:

Nombre de los estudiantes	Carnet	Documento de Identidad	Programa
Katherine Geovania Reyes Blandón	18-11045-0	610-101901-1005B	Lengua Inglesa, Regular
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La presente propuesta cumple con la calidad académica e investigativa, la pertinencia social y científica, el alcance esperado para un trabajo de grado que refleja la adquisición de habilidades, destrezas y conocimientos investigativos durante su formación de licenciatura, teniendo en cuenta la normativa establecida en el Reglamento de forma de finalización de estudios. UNAN-León. Gaceta N° 23, del 4 de junio 2019.

Cordialmente,

Firma tutora _____   V.°B.° Director Específico _____

C.C. Grupo de investigación
MTChG

Content

Introduction

This research analyzed the impact of the application of new methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development used as a health prevention measure due to COVID-19, a pandemic that arose in March 2020. It was a respiratory tract infection, being this extremely contagious and in some cases lethal as a consequence of crowded places; due to the seriousness of the situation, the University decided to keep the academic year active and solved the problem by reducing class schedule from four days a week to twice a week. The implementation of the class time reduction in the English major, provoked some dissatisfaction in students of 5th year and even professors also faced the consequences of this issue. The ultimate option was reducing their lessons to have a meaningful teaching in a very short time, using it for applying evaluations instead of giving priority to the language instruction and classroom practice, being this the main factor of low academic performance and difficulties in speaking fluency in students. A research that analyzed the factors that affected the English Speaking Skill development in the students of eleventh Grade, at Augusto César Sandino-Managua, through information compiled from an interview to teacher and class observation, found that the main factor of low speaking skills was that students had the English class only three times per week which was not enough to develop this skill as they did not have chance to deliver a topic, oral presentations, set up debates and they were not enough exposed to the language (Morales, 2020).

This study analyzed the behavior of 5th year English students at a national higher education institution in response to the application of new methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020-2023. It is based on thorough information compiled with observations and interviews with professors from the English department and to 5th year students of the English major of a national higher education institution and focus group. This research may help the institution to take into account the results in this study in case of having to resort to class reduction again, through the opinions and experiences of students and professors from the English major, in this way, the university would continue to develop students who represent the vision and the mission of this Alma Mater.

Objectives

General Objective
- To analyze the 5th year English students in response to the application of methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020-2023.

Specific Objectives

- To identify how students of 5th year in the English major respond to the new teaching methodologies and techniques used for speaking skill development in 2020-2023.
- To examine the professors' response to the new teaching methodologies and techniques used for speaking skill development in 2020-2023.
- To discover the effects of the new methodologies and techniques applied for the speaking skill performance in the teaching-learning process of 5th year in the English major 2020-2023.

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, it will be described the main concepts and authors that contribute to this research.

Class time

According to Word Sense Dictionary (August 2023), class time is the time devoted to or prepared for a lesson at school. Class time is the specific time that students and professors have in a classroom interacting with the teacher and classmates. It could also be considered the main element of the teaching-learning process since it represents an unavoidable and culturally linked factor in learning.

The Importance of Classroom Time in the English Major

An analysis carried out by Munguia (2020) in Nicaragua reports that since the suspension of classes as a consequence of the health emergency, the whole educational community has had to adapt to give continuity to the educational process through distance education in order not to postpone education. This has involved a series of complications, ranging from the necessary conditions that a home must have for a correct learning environment, to the connectivity difficulties that many families have, the lack of tools on the part of parents to guide the teaching process and make it more feasible, to the problems that schools and teachers have had to virtualize the subjects. In short, school time not only has the purpose of providing adequate and specialized teaching for the achievement of learning, but also allows for the socioemotional development of the child. (p. 42).

Vanner (2022) explains that some factors of school-time education are made more difficult when classes are moved to a virtual environment. First, school-time education is not only about acquiring access to content. It is also a space where there are countless opportunities to permanently develop socioemotional skills and acquire values to learn to live in society. This type of learning, as important as the subjects and contents of the curriculum, is more complex to stimulate in virtual environments. It is not that it can not

be possible, but it requires additional effort and even the dedication of extra time to polish these skills.

In a few words, Vanner explains that class time plays a very important role in the process of teaching and learning English, building confidence in the atmosphere of the student-teacher relationship and obtaining better results that are more noticeable in students. Also, face-to-face classes help to better develop the skills to master English to perfection especially because of the relationship between students. Within the face-to-face classes, students can clarify their doubts instantly since they have a tutor that supports the whole learning process, the activities are carried out during the class thus increasing the possibilities of obtaining better and remarkable results in the established time to master a new language.

Speaking skill

According to Kürüm (2016), speaking is considered the most sought-after skill for a person to be proficiently accepted in a foreign language, as well as being the most complicated to master at an advanced level. Speaking is more than forming grammatically correct sentences; it encompasses broad areas of mechanics, functions, pragmatics, and social interaction. Therefore, any foreign language teaching methodology used in the classroom throughout history has always sought to develop the best ways to improve learners' proficiency in these areas. In contemporary methodologies, the emphasis in speaking is on fluency rather than accuracy. In a typical classification, speaking activities in a foreign language classroom usually fall into one of these categories: Awareness Activities, Controlled Activities, and Autonomous Activities.

Language learning

According to Abels, Director of the University of North Carolina (2023), a language is a complex task that requires a lot of time, dedication, persistence, and hard work on the part of the learner. Learning a new language involves listening, speaking, reading, writing, and sometimes even a new alphabet and writing format. Sometimes the most complicated part of language learning is overcoming fears: fear of making a mistake, of saying the wrong thing, of being embarrassed, of not being able to find the right word,

among others. All of this is perfectly rational: anyone learning a language is going to make mistakes, and sometimes those mistakes will be very public. What it may not know is that there are strategies that can help to students study more effectively, saving time and energy.

Advantages of face-to-face learning sessions

Silagadze and Shahini (2022) define face-to-face learning as a method of instruction in which course content and learning materials must be taught in person to the group of students. This allows for live interaction between a learner and an instructor. It is the most traditional type of teaching, but so far the most effective. Students also benefit from a higher level of peer-to-peer interaction. In face-to-face learning, learners are accountable for their progress at the specific meeting date and time of the class. Face-to-face learning ensures better understanding and recall of lesson content and gives class members the opportunity to bond with each other.

According to Muhlmann (2023), face-to-face training, also known as classroom or in-person training, is a traditional method of education in which learners must physically attend classes in a designated location, such as a classroom or lecture hall. In this method, students interact with their instructors and peers in person, and course material is delivered through discussions and hands-on activities.

Muhlmann also stated that education is essential for life and the foundation for future success. With the rise of technology, online learning has become more accessible and popular. However, the traditional classroom method of learning still holds an important place in the education system. While online learning has its advantages, face-to-face training offers a unique, hands-on educational approach that no virtual platform can replicate. Face-to-face training has been a staple of education for centuries and is a popular choice for learners who prefer a structured, interactive and personalized learning experience with the best results.

According to Muhlmann, some of the classroom-based learning benefits when compared to online learning are:

1. Personalized Attention

First, face-to-face learning allows trainees to interact with their instructors and peers face-to-face and in real time, which provides the opportunity for more effective, personalized attention. Instructors can also provide immediate feedback and guidance to learners during face-to-face training, which can help them better understand the material and identify areas for improvement, avoid hesitation and leverage the process. This allows trainees to receive immediate help from their trainers whenever they need it.

In addition, classroom trainers can observe and interact with trainees, allowing them to identify individual strengths and learning styles. This facilitates a personalized learning experience that caters to the specific needs and preferences of each learner.

2. Structured Learning Environment

Classroom learning follows a structured schedule that helps learners stay organized, focused and motivated. For many people, the structured nature of having a designated place at a specific time can motivate them to avoid procrastination and achieve success in less time.

In addition, unlike online learning, the classroom environment allows for direct communication without the barrier of a screen. This facilitates knowledge sharing among classmates, fostering a non-judgmental environment where questions can be asked and answered in a friendly manner. In addition, the classroom environment fosters mutual learning through interactions, discussions and group activities.

3. Hands-on Learning

Classroom learning often involves hands-on activities, group discussions and team projects, providing a more engaging, immersive and influential learning experience. In hands-on learning, students actively participate in the learning process by doing and experiencing things rather than just reading or looking through a screen. This type of learning helps reinforce concepts and skills by allowing learners to apply them in real-world situations.

Hands-on learning can also improve retention and comprehension, as learners are more likely to remember information, they have actively experienced or practiced than

information they have read or seen on a device. In addition, hands-on learning allows learners to develop their problem-solving and critical thinking skills as they encounter and overcome challenges during the learning process.

4. Social Interaction

Classroom learning allows students to interact with peers and establish social bonds, which enhances the learning experience and leads to lifelong friendships. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, people have noted the importance of social interaction as an essential and fulfilling aspect of life.

In-person interactions through visual and verbal communication are essentials, as they allow for the development of mutually supportive relationships. In addition, learning in class allows one to meet like-minded people who can become lifelong friends. Coming to class is a compelling reason to get out of the house and enjoy interacting with others in a social and educational environment.

5. Networking Opportunities

Face-to-face training also provides trainees with valuable networking opportunities as they can connect directly with industry experts and peers in their field. Face-to-face learning offers countless advantages for collaborative work and learning from peers facilitates teamwork and group problem solving and provides the opportunity to make new connections. Learners can meet people with similar interests or goals, creating opportunities for mutual assistance and support throughout their learning journey.

6. Reduced Distractions

In the classroom, students can concentrate on learning without the distractions of home or work. Regardless of whether there is mobile network, charged devices, or access to any of these. Attending classroom training provides an environment that encourages better concentration on learning content, improving the quality of the learning process.

7. Access to Resources

Classroom learning provides students with access to resources, such as: Textbooks, study materials and equipment. In addition, classroom learning provides

access to specialized study spaces and facilities, which ensures students an environment conducive to effective learning because students would be in a location that was created specifically for the teaching and learning process.

While online learning offers flexibility and convenience, it may not provide the same level of interaction, structure and engagement as face-to-face learning. Face-to-face training provides a learning experience that can enhance learners' knowledge and skills in a big way.

After 18 months of distance education, the possibility of a return to face-to-face education was considered, after having verified that online education was not as beneficial when it comes to learning, something essential in the context of the need for interaction and strengthening of socioemotional and pedagogical competencies, whose benefits are evident and fundamental for the integral formation of students. (Vargas & López M., 2023).

According to the authors, face-to-face education increases motivation, since the activities and resources offered by teachers are varied, and students are stimulated through interaction. It also increases student participation and responsibility, without ignoring the particularities of individual development.

The adequate amount of time for learning English successfully

There is definitely no easy answer to this question. However, most people agree that it takes at least 1000 hours of practice to become fluent in English. (Kaufmann, 2022).

Furthermore, Wenzel, (2023) mentions that learning a new language can be a challenging and slow process, but with the right focus and dedication, it can also be incredibly rewarding. In order to learn a second language as quickly as possible, the question arises as to how many hours a day should be devoted to study.

According to Hult, (2019), creator of Education First, owner of a language company, the time it takes to learn English depends on several factors:

• The current level of English
• The level of English required

- How much language study

- How much to practice the language

The best way to estimate how long it will take to learn English is to calculate the number of hours it will take to move from the current level to the required level. In other words, many language experts, teachers and experienced speakers agree that, regardless of the language, it all depends on the dedication to study. Even if we talk about the number of hours per day or per week, it is not an exact figure, each student has a different pace and a different way of learning depending on the type of learner. At the end of the day, perseverance and repetition along with face-to-face classes are the key to learning or improving a language.

The Way Class Time Reduction Affects the English-Speaking Skill Development

Sometimes, the problem is because students do not have opportunities to practice English outside of school and lose their knowledge; without practice, it is easier to forget the language. According to Zhang (2009), students studying English as a foreign language often have few opportunities to speak English outside the classroom and limited exposure to English speakers or members of the international community. This could be a reason for teachers to provide more situations and activities for students to reinforce their oral proficiency with more emphasis than the other skills since it is the most difficult to master. It means that teachers have the responsibility to motivate students to concentrate more and practice the different skills whenever possible, because sometimes students do not feel the motivation or do not have anyone to practice and enrich their skills with.

Importance of the Speaking Skill in the English Learning Process

According to Gillis (2013), oral proficiency is important because it has several defining advantages. The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are interconnected. Mastery of each is necessary to become a complete communicator, but the ability to speak proficiently provides the speaker with several distinct advantages and is also the skill that is singled out as the primary skill to declare an English speaker.

The ability to put words together in a meaningful way to reflect thoughts, opinions, and feelings provides the speaker with these important advantages:

• Ability to inform, persuade, and direct. Business managers, educators, military leaders, lawyers, and politicians, among others, seek to develop their speaking skills to such a level that they are transformed into master communicators.

• Ability to stand out from the rest. When one thinks of speaking skills, one tends to think of it as a common skill.

• Ability to benefit derivatively. Well-developed verbal skills can increase one's negotiation skills. Self-confidence is improved.

• Career enhancement. Employers have always valued the ability to speak well. It is, and always will be, an important skill, and well worth the effort in fully developing.

• Personal satisfaction. Speakers who have experienced a connection with an appreciative audience through a well-composed and well-delivered presentation often find a deep level of fulfillment that is seldom achieved in other forms of communication.

Language is a tool for speaking, for communicating with others, to express ideas and know others' ideas as well. Communication takes place where there is a speech. Without speech people cannot communicate with other people. The importance of speaking skill hence is enormous for the learners of any language. Without a speech, a language is reduced to a mere script (Qureshi, pp. 2-3).

All those areas in speaking skills have a huge importance for language learners because they can help people have a successful conversation. People who have excellent speaking skills have the facility to understand and speak very well when they are talking with others. Language input comes from teacher talk, listening activities, reading passages, and the language heard and read outside of class. It gives learners the material they need to begin producing language themselves.

How Speaking Skill can be Developed Efficiently

The speaking skill is one of the most important skills in language learning because when somebody wants to learn a language the most important thing is going to be always

the way people can communicate their message in that language. According to Nazara (2011), the history of foreign language teaching-learning, speaking has always been considered as the most essential skill to be mastered for several reasons. First, approaches and methods for teaching speaking have long been major focuses of language teaching research and conferences. Second, many conversation and other speaking course books, audios, and videos are continuously published. In addition, many languages learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. They define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language.

Speaking is the most important skill when you want to communicate a message and universities are always looking for different methods to teach these skills and simulate a real life conversation in order to practice speaking students to perform better, they try to make students talk to each other and watch videos and listen and learn a lot of vocabulary to enrich their knowledge and have a better fluency and can communicate efficiently.

The ability to speak is one of the most important skills in a language and developing this skill is the most successful achievement that students want to increase in order to communicate with foreigners or peers and this skill needs more dedication as well as consistency and practice.

There is more than one technique to improve speaking skill and to be successful in that specific skill. According to Mohamed (2016), theorical perspective of how to develop speaking skill to improve students' speaking skill, they should be given enough opportunities to speak in class. So, teacher talking time should be less and student talking time should be more. It is important for language teachers not to take all the time in class sessions. According to Nunan (2013) also, "Pair work and group work can be used to increase the amount of time that learners get to speak in the target language during lesson." In this way, the students will get chance to interact and practice the language with other students.

Therefore, it means that the improvement of this skill depends a lot on the interaction that takes place in class with the classmates and the best way to develop this skill is to make the students talk more than the teacher in class, because the most important thing is that the students communicate effectively and have a good fluency and pronunciation of the language. There are different methods to improve this skill and one of them is to make a group of a few students and have them talk to each other. It is effective because they do not feel pressured to speak because it is with their friends, and this is a particularly clever way of getting them to speak. This is why reducing class hours directly affects this skill, because when class hours are reduced, there is less time to practice and students have little opportunity to improve.

Types of learners in language learning

To maximize the full potential in language learning, start by using the right approach. To make the learning venture successful, students must explore the right learning style. After exploring the learning style, they must adopt it according to their learning capability. In this way, they will be able to put all the dedication and effort into learning and will learn the language quickly with less time. (Zaheer, 2021)

There are four predominant learning styles:

Visual learners:

This type of learners prefer to assimilate information through charts, maps, graphs, diagrams and other media. Using images to explain concepts and ideas is the best way to reach a visual learner. However, this type of learning style does not include pictures or videos. Instead, visual learners learn best when information is presented using patterns, shapes and other visual aids rather than written or spoken words. Teachers can differentiate their instruction for visual learners by using graphic organizers to deliver a lesson. For example, a flow chart can be used to explain a scientific process.

(Roell, 2019) explains that the visual learning style means that people need to see information to learn it, and this "seeing" takes many forms from spatial awareness, photographic memory, color/tone, brightness/contrast, and other visual information.

Naturally, a classroom is the adequate place for a visual learner to learn and entice a visual learner into knowledge.

These students have many strengths that can boost their performances in school. Here are just a few of the strengths of this learning type:

- Instinctively follows directions
- Easily visualizes objects
- Has a great sense of balance
- Is an excellent organizer
- Can envision imagery easily
- Career Guide
- Career development

Auditory learners:

This learning style describes students who learn best when information is heard or spoken. They benefit from lectures, group discussion, and other strategies that involve talking things through. To help auditory learners learn, teachers can post audio recordings of lessons on the class website or incorporate group activities that require students to explain concepts to their classmates.

Auditory learning is a learning style in which a person learns most effectively by listening. Auditory learners remember information better when it is conveyed to them through sound or speech rather than in writing.

Many auditory learners may have difficulty when receiving written instructions or information, but can understand them clearly when the information is auditory. These individuals are usually good listeners and easily recall information that has been conveyed to them orally. The most common characteristics of an auditory learner are:

- Increased recollection of spoken information
- Improved speaking skills
- Strong listening skills
- Increased oral exam scores

- Improved storytelling skills
- Talented at explaining ideas verbally

Individuals who are auditory learners typically excel in professional positions that regularly incorporate discussion and require active listening. A few of the most popular jobs best suited for people with an auditory learning style include guidance counselors, customer service professionals, attorneys, judges and sound engineers. (Eads, 2022)

Reading/Writing:

Students who have a reading/writing preference prefer information to be presented using words. They love to read and perform well on written assignments such as stories or book reports. A great way to help these students learn is by having them describe diagrams or charts using written statements. Then, they can study their notes later to better retain the information.

According to Johnson, (2019), the Reading Method, sometimes known as the Reading Approach, is an outdated way of teaching English, mainly as an additional language. The theory behind the method was that students could pick up the basics of English simply by learning to understand words and grammatical patterns from written text.

Literacy, referred to as the second visual style, is a type of learning in which people prefer to read and write in order to learn more effectively. These learners are known as literacy learners and tend to learn best by reading and writing information. They are the people who always add notes to pictures, choose a hardcover book over an audiobook, and prefer to use captions when watching videos. Their learning process consists of a combination of reading and writing: they read to understand and take notes to learn.

Some characteristics of the read and write learners are:

- Learn best by reading and taking notes
- Tend to remember information that they read or write down
- Can become great writers

- Tend to be good at grammar since they read habitually and frequently
- Like researching

Kinesthetic learners:

Students learn best when they can use tactile experiences and carry out a physical activity to practice applying new information. Give these students a working example of an idea or process, or task them with recreating experiments to illustrate concepts. Harrington, Hall, & Wasley, (2023)

Kinesthetic learners use body movement and interact with their environment when learning. To understand something better, they need to touch or feel it; hence, they tend to prefer practical information to theoretical concepts. A kinesthetic learning experience might be learning to skate. A kinesthetic learner prefers to engage in a physical activity to learn something, as an active participant, rather than passively listening to a lecture or watching a demonstration. Therefore, the best way to learn something new is to practice what you are trying to learn.

Some typical kinesthetic learner characteristics include:

- Understand more when learning through hands-on experience
- Enjoy working with tools or instruments
- Tend to trust what they can experience or perform

Zagada, (2018) states that determining the learning style will be of great help when learning a language, since using a strategy in accordance with the method that best suits you saves time and a lot of effort. But it is essential to remember that one should not limit oneself to one learning style. It is always good and refreshing to mix things up, as variety can improve the pace of learning.

Teaching Methods

Total Physical Response

According to Widodo (2005), it is one of the English teaching approaches and methods developed by Dr. James J Asher. It has been applied for almost thirty years.

This method attempts to center attention to encouraging learners to listen and respond to the spoken target language commands of their teachers. In other words, TPR is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity.

Asher's Total Physical Response is a "natural method" since Asher views first and second language learning as parallel processes. He argues that second language teaching and learning should reflect the naturalistic processes of first language learning. For this reason, there are such three central processes:

• Before children develop the ability to speak, they develop listening competence. At the early phases of first language acquisition, they are able to comprehend complex utterances, which they can hardly spontaneously produce or imitate. Asher takes into account that a learner may be making a mental blueprint of the language that will make it possible to produce spoken language later during this period of listening;

Children's ability in listening comprehension is acquired because children need to respond physically to spoken language in the form of parental commands;

• When a foundation in listening comprehension has been established, speech evolves naturally and effortlessly out of it.

According to Nigora (2018), these are the characteristics of TPR:

1. Imperative drills are the prominent classroom activity in TPR. They are typically geared to highlight physical actions and activity on the part of the learners. In this sense, learners play main roles: a listener and a performer.

2. They listen attentively and respond physically to commands by the teacher.

3. Learners need to respond both individually and collectively; they have minor influence on the content of learning inasmuch as content is determined by the teacher. At the beginning of learning, learners are also expected to recognize and respond to novel combinations of previously taught items. Such novel utterances are combinations of constituents the teacher has used directly in training. For example, the teacher directs learners with 'Walk to the table!' and 'Sit on the chair!' These are familiar to learners since

they have practiced responding to them. Furthermore, learners are also to produce novel combinations of their own.

4. Learners monitor and evaluate their own progress. They are encouraged to speak when they feel ready to speak (e.g. when a sufficient basis in the language has been internalized.

5. In TPR, a teacher plays an active and direct role: the director of a stage plays in which the learners are the actors". It is the teacher who decides what to teach, who models and presents the new materials, and who selects supporting materials for classroom use. Therefore, the teacher ought to be well prepared and well organized so that the lesson flows smoothly and predictably. It is highly recommended to write down the exact utterances the teacher will be using, especially the novel commands because the action is so fast-moving; there is usually no time to create spontaneously". In this regard, classroom interaction and turn taking is teacher rather than learner directed.

Community Language Learning

According to Elghali (2020), Community Language Learning is a humanistic method that emphasizes the role of human values and the understanding of the learner's feelings and emotions in the teaching/learning process. In such a method, the learner is perceived as a 'whole learner'. That is to say, teachers consider not only students' feelings, but also their physical reactions and desire to learn.

The CLL method was developed by Charles Curran. The latter was a specialist in counseling and a professor of psychology. Curran managed to apply the psychological counseling techniques to learning aspects, which resulted in a 'Counseling-Learning theory' represented by the CLL in teaching languages. Among the problems that impede foreign language learning are anxiety and negative emotions of defense. The learners undergo such emotions when they feel 'threatened' in an unfamiliar situation. In this respect, Curran asserts that learning is a social phenomenon that should take place 'within the supportive environment of a "community" of one's fellow learner'. The teacher is viewed as a counselor who is also responsible for creating a non-defensive environment and overcoming negative feelings towards learning a new language.

According to Rhalmi (2019), this method has some characteristics:

1. Members should interact in an interpersonal relationship.

2. Students and teachers work together to facilitate learning by valuing each other, lowering the defense that prevent interpersonal interaction, reducing anxiety and constituting a supportive community.

3. Teachers´ role is that of a true counselor, they are not perceived as a threat, they don't impose boundaries and limits and they concentrate on the learners' needs.

4. Students determine content, and establish an interpersonal relationship and trust in their native language.

5. Students sit in a circle with the teacher/counselor on the outside of the circle and start a conversation.

6. Learners speak in their native language and the counselor provides translations and explanations.

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. Communicative Language Teaching sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence. With CLT began a movement away from traditional lesson formats where the focus was on mastery of different items of grammar and practice through controlled activities such as memorization of dialogs and drills, and toward the use of pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and project work.

Communicative competence includes the following characteristics:

1. Interaction between the learner and users of the language.

2. Meaningful and purposeful interaction through language.

3. Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding.

4. Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language.

5. Attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence (Richards, 2006).

Audio-Lingual

The Audio-Lingual method was proposed by American linguists in 1950s. The Audio-Lingual method of teaching had its origins during World War II when it became known as the Army Method. It is also called the Aural oral approach. It is based on the structural view of language and the behaviorist theory of language learning. The structural view to language is the view behind the audio-lingual method. This approach focused on examining how the elements of language related to each other in the present, that is, 'synchronically' rather than 'diachronically'. It was also argued that linguistic signs were composed of two parts, a signifier (the sound pattern of a word) and a signified (the concept or meaning of the word). The study of language aims at describing the performance, the" parole" as it is the only observable part of language (Rhalmi, 2009).

The Audio-Lingual method mainly consists of the following features:

1. The teacher reads a dialogue by modeling it. It has always been motivating to put the subject matter in context, and students stand a better chance of retaining what they have learnt. Students learn the target language within a concrete context that will enable them to relate what they learn to real-life learning environments. Teachers as a role model will encourage and inspire the students to strive for learning the target language.

2. Students repeat the dialogue. Through repetition students can use the target language automatically, and fluently as well. In this method it is desirable that students form a habit formation to use the target language with ease, therefore, the more they repeat, the easier they will speak the target language without thinking.

3. Some words or phrases are changed in the dialogue. Drills used in this method will allow the students to have practice. Through drills such as single-slot substitution and transformation students are given the opportunity to produce speech in the target language, furthermore, these patterns will let them see how language functions. Students learn how to respond correctly when they practice the drills (Mart, 2013).

Task Based Language Learning

In Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL), learning is fostered through performing a series of activities as steps towards successful task realization. The focus is away from learning language items in a non-contextualized vacuum to using language as a vehicle for authentic, real-world needs. By working towards task realization, the language is used immediately in the real-world context of the learner, making learning authentic. In a TBLL framework the language needed is not pre-selected and given to the learners who then practice it but rather it is drawn from the learners with help from the facilitator, to meet the demands of the activities and task. In this approach, motivation for communication becomes the primary driving force.

It places the emphasis on communicative fluency rather than the hesitancy borne of the pressure in more didactic approaches to produce unflawed utterances. Exposure to the target language should be in a naturally occurring context. This means that, if materials are used, they are not prepared especially for the language classroom, but are selected and adapted from authentic sources (Weller, 2021).

Nunan (1991) proposes five characteristics of Task Based Language Learning, the characteristics are:

1. It gives an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.

2. It introduces authentic texts into the learning situation.

3. It provides opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself.

4. It enhances the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.

5. It attempts to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

Mobile Assisted Language Learning

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning. Students do not always have to study a second language in a classroom. They may have the opportunity to learn it using mobile devices when they desire and where they are. As learning English is considered a main factor for professional success and a criterion for being educated in many communities, providing more convenient environment for people to learn English is one of the strategic educational goals towards improving the students' achievement and supporting differentiation of learning needs.

The main characteristics of mobile learning (m-learning) are recognized as the potential for the learning process to be personalized, spontaneous, informal, and ubiquitous. Although learning through mobile phones may take longer time compared to computers, the learners feel a greater sense of freedom of time and place, so that they can take advantage of spare time to learn a second language when and where they are.

Also, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning. In contrast to classroom learning, in MALL there is no need for the learners to sit in a classroom or at a computer to get learning materials. In fact, MALL can be considered an ideal solution to language learning barriers in terms of time and place.

Game-based learning is another theme for mobile learning in which learning materials are designed to be integrated with aspects of the physical environment. In such environments, learning activities are facilitated using mobile technology which serves as a link between the real world of knowledge and the visual world of the game.

The second generation of mobile devices enable their users to access multimedia functions including listening and speaking ones. A good m-learning service should consist of speech facilities for transmitting voice (Miangah & Nezarat, 2012).

Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia is a method of teaching a foreign language in which students learn quickly by being made to feel relaxed, interested, and positive. The method is developed because of the argument that students naturally face psychological barriers to learning. The psychological barriers here refer to a variety of internal distractions (worry, anxiety, fatigue, boredom, fear, etc.). Suggestopedia uses four main stages as follows: presentation, active concert, passive concert, and practice. The design of suggestopedic instruction has positive cognitive, motivational, emotional, and social effects on the learners (Rustipia, 2011).

According to Alvior (2015) suggestopedia has some characteristics:

1. It uses the power of suggestion to help students eliminate the feeling that they cannot succeed.

2. There should be a relaxed, comfortable environment with dim lights and soft music to facilitate learning.

3. Students' imagination is used. They can assume new names, and new identities and respond to the teacher accordingly using the target language.

4. Present and explain grammar and vocabulary words, but not discuss at length or thoroughly.

5. Native language translation is used to get the precise meanings of words in the target language.

6. Communication takes place in the conscious and subconscious of the learners. The former is about the linguistic message. The students pay attention to a dialogue that is being read, while the latter is where the music is played as a background. The piece suggests that learning is easy.

7. Teaching is done by integrating music, song, and drama.

8. The emphasis of teaching is more on content. Students' errors are tolerated at the beginning of the lesson, but the teachers use the correct forms later.

9. No formal tests are given, but the evaluation is done during the typical in-class performance.

The Natural Approach

According to Rhalmi (2009), the natural approach developed by Tracy Terrell and supported by Stephen Krashen is a language teaching approach that claims that language learning is a reproduction of the way humans naturally acquire their native language.

The approach adheres to a communicative approach to language teaching and rejects earlier methods such as the audiolingual method and the situational language teaching approach which Krashen and Terrell (1983) believe are not based on "actual theories of language acquisition but theories of the structure of language ". Krashen and Terrell view communication as the primary function of language and adhere to a communicative approach to language teaching, focusing on teaching communicative abilities rather than sterile language structures.

According to Pada (2018) the natural approach characteristics are:

1. The goal of the approach is aimed at the goal of basic personal communication skills.

2. Learners move through three stages: the preproduction stage is the development of listening comprehension skills, the early production stage, marked with errors and the last stage extends the production into longer stretches of discourse.

3. The teacher needs to focus on meaning, not on form.

4. The most noteworthy characteristic is its advocacy of a "silent period", where preproduction can begin.

5. The silent period encourages the delay of oral production until speech "emerges".

6. The Natural Approach encourages the teacher not to insist that learners speak right away.

7. The Natural Approach blends well with things like TPR, which builds the learner's language "ego," and does not force them into risk-taking situations which could embarrass them.

Methodological Design

Design of the Research

It presents the strategy adopted to respond to the problem proposed. A nonexperimental design was used since it relies on interpretation, observation, or interactions to come to a conclusion. It is qualitative, using opinions, motivations, and experience for the analysis of the results and the construction of conclusions.

Type of Investigation

The investigation is descriptive to know the behavior of the 5th year English students in a national higher education institution in response to the application of new methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during de COVID-19.

Population

The population within the research is defined as a finite set of elements with common characteristics. The population was constituted by a total of 18 students of the regular shift in the 5th year of the English major in national higher education institution as well as three professors of speaking skills from the English major.

Sampling

The sample constitutes a representative subset of the population under study to generalize the finding. A non-probabilistic method with convenience sampling was used because the participants were selected on availability and willingness to take part.

Sources of Information
Primary:

Direct participants, firstly, the students of the target group and secondly, professors who taught the component of oral expression classes in national higher education institution.

Secondary:

Bibliography of specialized authors on the importance of interaction for the optimum development of oral skills and the importance of class time for better oral fluency. In addition, websites, and other electronic resources.

Tools and Procedures for Data Collection

The compilation of the information required in the research tools were provided to the students and professors and consisted in visiting the classroom to explain the objective of the investigation so that they agreed to participate in what was going to be about.

To collect the data, observation of speaking lessons was applied in the classroom, considering the teaching methodology and students' reaction. Moreover, an in-depth interview was used to know students and teachers' opinion since, in-depth interviewing allows the research to figure out about the topic being studied and give the interviewer the opportunity to clarify or explain the question/topic for better responses. Eventually, to have a completed result, the last tool applied was the focus group to evaluate students' fluency and advanced grammar and vocabulary usage at the time they answered the question.

Ethical Considerations

Consent and confidentiality: Participants were informed of the objective of the research, clarifying that all the information collected would be handled confidentially and exclusively for the development of the research.

Respect: The whole process was developed in an environment of mutual respect; the ideas and opinions of both teachers and students and the research team were expressed and taken into account.

Responsibility: Each member of the research team complied with the planned activities within the established time, as well as the participants who acted with responsibility when agreed to cooperate with the research.

Anonymity: Data that could be used to affect the integrity of the participants would not be presented in the research.

Results and Discussions

Professors and students agreed that the reduction of classroom time and the limited exposure to the language affected students' speaking skill performance, and there is a great difference in terms of the students' oral performance compared to the results with previous generations that received the full class schedule. Classroom time plays a significant role in the process of learning English, in the environment of the student-teacher relationship, trust is generated, and better results are obtained that are highly noticeable in students since, during face-to-face classes, they have a tutor to support the entire learning process (Vanner, 2022).

The importance of oral skills was also questioned, emphasizing that it is the most essential. According to Gillis (2013), speaking skills are one of the most important skills as it allows students to communicate with others and express thoughts and feelings. Likewise, they considered that the speaking class is essential as students need to have the chance to communicate in the target language and reach the expected level, since it allows for live interaction between a learner and an instructor, students are held accountable for their progress at the class's specific meeting date and time and ensure a better understanding and recollection of lesson content (Silagadze & Shahini, 2022).

Another important point was the limitation of the class schedule, although teachers did their best to adapt teaching techniques and methods, using the communicative approach to have an effective class in the narrowed time that was available, the professor had to speed up the evaluation process in order to finish as fast as she could and complete the lesson plan in a way that was not possible to evaluate adequately or give appropriate feedback, as it was evident in some of the observations applied, where there were an oral presentation which was the most common and challenging activity, and in terms of student talking time, taking into consideration that the professor took two class sessions for finishing those presentations, students only spoke the target language three minutes in two weeks, which meant a negative fact for students´ fluency development. Students also mentioned that classes were mostly focused on evaluations and other short activities such as group discussions, being the favorite one for students where due to the reduced time, they did not have the opportunity to speak and interact that much. The

improvement of the oral skill depends a lot on the interaction occurring in class with classmates because the most important is that students communicate efficiently and have a good fluency and pronunciation of the language (Nunan, 2003).

They also considered one hour and forty minutes per week not enough to make the class effective, since the exposure for the focus on the language in general is way too brief for students to upgrade this important skill which helps to communicate. According to Zahang (2009), students who study English as a Foreign Language usually have limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom and limited exposure to English speakers, that is one of the reasons why professors and students recommended to have classes three or four times per week as minimum. The structured nature of having a designated location at a specific time can motivate them to stay organized, focused and avoid procrastination to attain success (Muhlmann, 2023). They thought that a full class schedule allowed students to interact more using the target language to become more fluent and make the speaking class more effective, since during classroom time, they can be supervised by professors in case they make mistakes and be provided with proper feedback acquiring knowledge from interaction in face-to-face classes. Muhlmann also expresses that, learners interact with their instructors and peers in real time, providing an opportunity for personalized attention. Instructors can also provide immediate feedback and guidance to learners, which can help learners understand the material better and identify areas for improvement.

Conclusions

Throughout this investigation, it can be concluded that the effects of the new methodologies and techniques in the teaching-learning process in relation to the speaking skill, the shortage of the class schedule at the university due to the pandemic Covid-19 provoked many negative effects in students´ speaking skill development, mainly affecting fluency as they did not have too much interaction during the class sessions. Also, in professors´ response to the adaptation to the new teaching methodologies and techniques used for speaking class, it can be deduced that although teachers used communicative approach to help students reach a high oral expression level, the reduced time was a negative factor against this objective, preventing professors from developing a complete lesson plan to make the class meaningful, having to shorten some important speaking activities included group discussions and oral presentations which were the most common and the most challenging for professors due to the narrowed time. In students´ response to the new methodologies and teaching techniques used for speaking skill development, they acknowledged the enormous professors' effort for guaranteeing a successful lesson dealing with the time, in spite of that, they considered one hour and forty minutes per week not enough to make the class effective, since the exposure for the focus on the language in general is way too brief for students to upgrade this important skill which helps to communicate. One of the recommendations from the participants, was returning to a full class schedule for giving students the opportunities to upgrade their English level by having more classroom interaction and practice in real time among classmates, also for being provided with structured feedback by professors with the proper time that is required.

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Annex

Students´ Interview

Objective: To identify the student´s opinion about their speaking skill performance during the short face to face class time.

Directions: In this interview you will see the questions that will be asked to students from 5th year of the English major.

1. How do you consider your English level in speaking skill?

2. How do you feel about your English fluency? Explain.

3. Do you consider English speaking skill to be important? Why?

4. Do you consider speaking class to be essential Why?

5. What is your opinion about the time for speaking practice during the class? Support your answers.

6. What is your opinion about the quality of teaching of the speaking skill with the short classroom time?

7. How often and how long do you practice your oral skill in the classroom?

8. What is the most common activity applied by professors in your speaking class? What is your favorite and the most challenging for you?

9. Do you consider it is enough?

10. Can you express your ideas, make long oral presentations and be deeply evaluated by professors and receive a proper feedback from them during that short time? Explain

11. Do you think the reduction of classroom time has affected your speaking skill performance? In what way?

Professors´ Interview

Dear professor, this interview seeks to understand the opinion of professors of oral skill courses about the teaching methodologies and techniques used to develop students' speaking skill during the face-to-face class time in this institution in the pandemic and post-pandemic periods.

Directions: Please, answer each question based on your pandemic and post-pandemic teaching experiences in the English major. Explain every time is needed so that we can get the best picture of such experiences. That will be of great support during the data analysis. Thank you very much in advance.

1. Do you consider English speaking skill to be important? Why?

2. Do you think that speaking class is essential? Why?

3. What is your opinion about the time for oral practice during the class?

4. Can students express their ideas, make complete oral presentations, be consciously evaluated, and receive proper feedback during face-to-face class time? Explain.

5. Do you think the reduction of classroom time has affected students' speaking skill performance? Explain.

6. How do you feel about the quality of teaching of the speaking skill during classroom time?

7. Do you consider one hour and forty minutes enough to make the class effective?

8. What are your methodologies and techniques for teaching speaking skills with the new time framework?

9. What is the most common activity applied by you in your speaking class? What is your favorite and the most challenging for you?

10. How often and how long do you recommend the practice of the oral skill in the classroom?

Observation

Objectives: To determine the students' response to the application of new methodologies and teaching techniques for speaking skill development during the COVID-19 pandemic, 2023.

Evaluation criteria:	Measurements					Comment
	vident	ostly	artially	carcely	ot evident	
On the teaching side						
Professor's methodology and techniques are focused on developing speaking skills.						
Professor's methodology and techniques show to be effective in developing teaching skills.						
Sufficient time is dedicated to each speaking technique.						
On the learning side						
Students seem comfortable with the methodology and techniques applied.						
Students show no inconvenience with the time dedicated to the speaking practice.						
Students get enough speaking practice.						
Students seem motivated to participate in the speaking activities.						
Students use the target language to communicate.						

Students are able to use the target language properly.						
Students communicate fluently in the target language.						

Other elements:

Element	Comments				
Teacher talking-time vs Students talking-time (moments / minutes)					
Classroom organization (drawing)	Moment 1	Moment 2	Moment 3	Moment 4	Moment 5
Classroom atmosphere (feelings / attitudes)					
Material used (variety / quality / targeted)					

Focus Group

Objective: To discover the effects of the new methodologies and techniques applied for the speaking skill performance.

1. How do you think that your speaking skill fluency has been affected in your English learning development considering the class time reduction because of the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. Do you feel comfortable with the new class schedule and methodologies and techniques adjusted by professors of the English Department?

3. Do you consider that changing the class schedule into a full class week is going to help you improve your speaking fluency?