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**Psychological factors affecting speaking of students.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Speaking is considered as one of the most important skills in learning a language, but many language learners find it difficult and need much effort to produce acceptable utterances in English. The aim of this research work is to analyze the psychological factors that affect seventh grade students in the second semester of the school year. To do this, questionnaire, interviews and direct observation was applied to a sample of 10 students who were divided into 5 girls and 5 boys at Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute. The results of the study showed that the most relevant psychological factors that affect seventh grade students are: nervous and lack of confidence, the students showed nerves at the moment of speaking in English, which does not allow them to speak fluently and confidently when communicating in the classroom. Also the students faced difficulty in pronouncing English words, and they don't find the words when expressing their ideas.

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## I.INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an important asset for students in today's globalized world. Students who are able to speak English fluently are better able to understand and participate in class discussions, complete assignments, and score higher on tests. The function of speaking is to express an idea, someone feeling, thought, and it express spontaneously by orally. At Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute, where the research was taken, the students have presented some problems in learning English speaking. The common problems faced by students are difficulty to pronounce words, they have less confidence and often be shy and just keep silent during the teaching learning process. Another difficulty is that the students are lack of English vocabulary, it is also very often that in the English class they do not use the English as the main language.

Psychology is the study about how humans think and feel toward something. Also, Psychology is the study of the process of thinking human behavior in their interaction with the living environment. Brown (1994), has stated that there are several psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety that are considered as the leading root cause of students' antipathetic to speak. This emphasizes that psychological factors affect students' performance in speaking.

The objective of this study is to analyze psychological factors that affect the development of speaking, of students. To get to the results, a questionnaire about how comfortable the students feel at the moment to express in English is applied for students, followed by an English presentation.

At the same time, a separate questionnaire will be administered to teachers. The aim is to gain valuable insights into the factors that contribute to students' deficits in oral expression in English.

By analyzing the results of the research, should provide answers to the research questions, and researchers can gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by 7th grade students in developing speaking.

A number of studies have been exposing psychological factors faced by students in mastering English speaking. Oflaz (2019) investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety, shyness, language learning strategies, speaking scores and academic achievement of university preparatory students learning German. The results found that shyness increases as speaking anxiety rises. Ainy & Pratama (2020) investigated the correlation between teacher social competence, student learning motivation, and learning outcomes in English subject. The results showed teachers' social competence correlation is higher than students learning motivation. Therefore, the teachers should work on their social skill to improve student learning outcomes. On the other hand, the students need to motivate themselves. Andas (2020) in his research students' speaking problems at the fourth semester of English Study Program in Sembilanbelas November University and factors affecting them. The results showed: inhibition, shyness, lack of ideas and low or uneven participation in speaking.

## **1.1. Problem Statement**

Students at 7<sup>th</sup> grade, at Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute have difficulty to express their ideas and to participate in the English class specially activities related to speaking. The National curriculum of Nicaragua include the English subject since primary school. According to the curriculum and level of students they should be able to speak and produce oral ideas, however 7th grade students struggle with problems in speaking, students have presented deficiency in the development of speaking such as: lack of motivation in learning, lack of self-confidence, shyness, and anxiety, these factors, which can hinder their ability to develop strong speaking.

Psychological factors can make it difficult for them to participate in class discussions, complete their assignments, and succeed in their academic studies, besides it can lead to social isolation and anxiety.

The following research questions can be used to analyze why psychological factors affect students in 7th grade at the moment to develop speaking:

- What is the specific psychological factors that affect students in 7th grade when developing speaking?
- What are the characteristics of the psychological factors that generate deficiency in students, at the express themselves in the English language?
- How the psychological factors influence the ability to speak English effectively and accurately?

By answering these questions, researchers can gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by 7th grade students in developing speaking.



## **1.2 Rationale**

Today is well known the importance of learning English as a foreign language. It is currently the third most spoken language in the world, and the most common second language worldwide. In Nicaragua has increased the demand in speaking English for building a career in teaching English. However, for many students learning English is not an easy task and at the same time they do not feel enough motivation to develop the speaking.

Furthermore, many of them do not feel confident enough to participate in activities related to speaking because they are afraid no to be able to answer questions and mispronounce the words. This is the main reason why we decided to do this research: to investigate the psychological factors that affect negatively the development of oral expression.

In addition, our research will specifically focus on analyzing how these psychological factors affect students in English classes. In doing so, we aim to provide teachers with valuable insights to help them identify and address these factors, with a particular focus on seventh graders at Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute, during the second semester of 2023. Our research employs a qualitative design, the research instruments used in this paper were questionnaires and class observation. We believe that the data and information we collect will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by students in developing their speaking and will underscore the importance of teaching communication strategies as a crucial part of foreign language instruction, as well as its significant impact on skills development.

## **1.3 Objectives**

### ***1.3.1 General Objective.***

To analyze psychological factors that affect the development of speaking, of students at seventh grade, at Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute.

### ***1.3.2 Specific Objectives.***

1. To identify the principal psychological factors that affect students in 7th grade when developing speaking skills.
2. To describe the psychological factors that generate deficiency in students, at the express themselves in the English language.
3. To explain how psychological factors influence the ability to speak English effectively and accurately.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Background

The teaching of English language in Nicaragua has taken an unexpected turn since 2016. When the government promotes the law initiative called. "Law that promotes the teaching of English language in Nicaragua." this initiative sets out reasons and foundations, stating that the system of public education in Nicaragua invests very little in the teaching of the English language. While countries such as Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Honduras have included initiatives to make their students bilingual within their public educational programs, the National Secondary Schools teach the foreign language only three times a week in an attendance modality with a period of 45 minutes of classes (Adolfo, 2016).

Learning English as a foreign language requires a lot of concentration and development of basic skills, since it is a language that has its own structures and rules that requires maintaining a study discipline to acquire this knowledge. And, writing activities that include general and specific information may require students to develop their cognitive and critical thinking skills through the application of useful techniques and strategies that help students gain autonomy and develop naturally (González, 2007).

Furthermore, a lot of students do not feel confident enough to participate in activities related to speaking because they think they are exposed to the teasing from peers when they hear their pronunciation and notice their insecurity at the moment, they are not able to answer questions. This is one of the main reasons that cause students to quit their English classes or fail their study modules.

## **2.2 Definition of speaking**

There are a lot of definitions of the word “speaking” that have been suggested by the researchers in language learning. In Webster New World Dictionary, speaking is to say words orally, to communicate as by talking, to make a request, and to make a speech (Nunan, 1995). According to Chaney (1998), speaking is the process of making and sharing meaning by using verbal and non-verbal symbols in different contexts. Brown (1994) defined speaking as an interactive process of making meaning that includes producing, receiving, and processing information. Bygate (1987) defined speaking as the production of auditory signals to produce different verbal responses in listeners. It is regarded as combining sounds systematically to form meaningful sentences. Eckard and Kearny (1981), Florez (1999), Howarth (2001), and Abd El Fattah Torky (2006) defined speaking as a two-way process including a true communication of opinions, information, or emotions. This top-down view regards the spoken texts as the collaboration between two or more persons in the shared time and the shared context.

## **2.3 The importance of speaking**

Humans are programmed to speak before they learn to read and write. In any given, human beings spend much more time interacting orally with language rather than using it in its written form. Speaking is the most important skills because it is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. English speaking is not an easy task because speakers should know many significant components like pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Learners should have enough English-speaking ability in order to communicate easily and effectively with other people. According to Brown (1994), listening and speaking are learners’ language tools. Brown studied the use of language

outside the classroom situation and understood that speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing combined.

Efrizal (2012) expressed that speaking is of great significance for the people interaction where they speak everywhere and every day. Speaking is the way of communicating ideas and messages orally. If we want to encourage students to communicate in English, we should use the language in real communication and ask them to do the same process.

According to Ur (2000), of all the four language skills called listening, speaking, reading, and writing, speaking is the most important one that is very necessary for the effective communication. The significance of speaking is indicated with the integration of the other language skills. Speaking helps learners develop their vocabulary and grammar skills and then better their writing skills. Students can express their emotions, ideas; say stories; request; talk, discuss, and show the various functions of language. Speaking is of vital importance outside the classroom. Therefore, language speakers have more opportunities to find jobs in different organizations and companies. These statements have been supported by Baker and Westrup (2003) who said that learners who speak English very well can have greater chance for better education, finding good jobs, and getting promotion.

Previous researches approve that person cannot learn a language without many opportunities for meaningful repetition. Oral language interactions and the opportunity to produce the language in meaningful tasks provide the practice that is very important to internalizing the language. Asher (2003) supports the idea that very soon after teachers model the language, learners like to imitate what have been said. Krashen (1988) examined the relation between listening and speaking skills. He stated that when students speak, their

speaking provides evidence that they have acquired the language. This idea led some teachers to jump quickly from speaking teaching to reading and writing teaching.

When students learn English, speaking is significant to support their ability to apply the language. Speaking skills has been very important to the success of human beings. The significance of speaking skills is observed in the daily activities of persons. Speaking is an interactive activity and it occurs under the real time constraints. That is, persons can use words and phrases fluently without very much conscious thinking. Speaking skill enables individuals to produce sentences for the real communication, in other words they actually like to communicate in language to get specific objectives (McDonough & Shaw, 1993).

#### **2.4 Definition of Psychology**

The learning of the English-Speaking skills is an important asset for students in today's globalized world. Students who are able to speak English fluently are better able to understand and participate in class discussions, complete assignments, and score higher on tests.

Psychology is the study about how humans think and feel toward something. Also, Psychology is the study of the process of thinking human behavior in their interaction with the living environment. Brown (1994), has stated that there are several psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety that are considered as the leading root cause of students' antipathetic to speak. This emphasizes that psychological factors affect students' performance in speaking.

Language, an inherent ability possessed by every human being, is a powerful tool for connection, interaction, and information exchange. By using language, every human also could convey his or her ideas, opinion and feeling.

## **2.5 Concept of Psychological Factors**

Psychology is a study about how humans think and feel toward something. Psychology is the study of the process of thinking and human or animal behavior in their interactions with the living environment. It is a person's behavior and experiences that reveal how they feel, works and behaves. Psychological behaviors such as evaluating performance effectively, setting realistic goals, and strengthening oneself are significant to enable players to develop to overcome the unstable periods they will face. Psychological behavior is a transition mechanism that can guide a person to a more effective and stable level of performance and consequently supports the potential of individuals to be successful and consistent.

The psychological relate to human behavior and experience. Psychological factors refer to problems that often involve emotional or physical health. Based on the statements above, psychological factors are factors in students' minds, perceptions, emotions, and behavior in speaking English.

## **2.6 Psychological Factors that negatively affect students' speaking skills.**

According to Elhadi (2015), some psychological factors affect students when practicing their speaking and they are interrelated to each other. Multiple researches had been done to establish the role of psychological factors in the success and failure of learners speaking English. Brown (2001) has stated that there are several psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety are considered as the main root cause of students' antipathetic to speak.

Furthermore, Schwarz (2015) says that psychological factors such as fear of mistakes, anxiety, shyness, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation are the factors that have been hindrance to students' speaking skills. The exchange of the view above clearly proves that psychology plays a vital role in placing the students' speaking skills in a difficult state. Burns

& Joyce in Nunan (1999) which strongly proves that psychological factors are one of the major factors make the students reluctant in speaking English.

### **Anxiety**

The fear of speaking English is pertinent to some personality constructs like anxiety. Speaking a language sometimes results in anxiety. Sometimes, extreme anxiety may lead to despondence and a sense of failure in learners (Bashir, Azeem, & Dogar 2011). According to Woodrow (2006), anxiety has a negative effect on the oral performance of English speakers. In their opinion, errors show a kind of unawareness which can hinder them to speak English in front of other people. Speaking anxiety may originate from a classroom condition with the different abilities of language learners. Learners are divided into two groups: strong and weak ones. The strong learners often dominate the slow and weak ones. The weak learners do not usually want to talk in front of the strong ones which leads to their silence during the whole class activity.

### **Shyness**

Elia and Irianti (2015) have clearly define the internal meaning of shyness by saying that it is an emotional thing which often become apparent to the feeling of agitation, uneasiness, or awkwardness experienced when a person doing something, engage in conversation, or been approached by other people, especially in new situations or with unfamiliar or unknown people. The above statement clearly stipulates that shyness is also counted as an obstacle to students in speaking English language. In line with this, the above statement was also given further explanation by Baldwin and Caroline, (2011) that the feel



of obsessive fear or detestation that encountered by the students when speaking in public or speaking in front of people and feeling of shyness makes their mind go blank or that they will forget what to say. There are also some discussions on the nature of the students like being too passive and quiet that leads to their shyness to speak in English as stated by Bowen (2005). Their feeling of shyness directly blocks and hinders the students' ability to speak in English.

### **Lack of confidence**

Lack of confidence occurred among the students is when they are aware that their conversation partners failed to perceive the intended meaning of their message or when they wrongly interpret the message delivered by other speakers. In this situation, the students' lack of confidence to communicate can be seen undoubtedly when they prefer to keep themselves passive or silent while others do talk. Chen (2010) said that the main reason of students' lack of confidence is their incapacity in speaking English. In this case, they also stated that the students think their English-speaking skills is poor and they are not capable to speaking in English very well and fluently. On the other hand, Brown (2001) has explained further by saying that the lack of encouragement from the teacher is also one of the main reasons for the students' lack of confidence. From this point of view, we could clearly say that the teacher didn't give enough priority to convince students and make them believe that they are able to speak English well. This situation makes the students to lose hope in their ability and also indirectly demotivated to speak in English. This indicates that support and encouragement play a major role to boost and enhance the students' confidence.

## **Lack of Motivation**

Lack of Motivation is a fundamental element in students' learning to achieve the success point. Nunan (1999) have stated that motivation can easily influence the students' reluctance to speak in English. In this sense, motivation is scrutinized as an essential factor that leads to a successful communication. Many studies have proved that the students with high and strong motivation to succeed able to persevere in learning and achieved good and better results when compared to those who have lack of motivation of success. In response to the issue of motivation, Babu (2010) argues that lack of motivation in learning can hinder the students to speak English in the classroom. Situation like this occurred due to the absence of motivation and support from the teacher towards the communication in English. In his further discussion, teachers with passion, creativity and interest in their students are also fundamental elements for motivating students apart from motivating students to learn well and actively communicate in English.

### **2.7 Causes that generate deficiency in speaking skills**

Speaking is not as easy as it may seem. In fact, it is a complex skill which involves both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. Speaking shows how the speaker uses the vocabulary in the right way bravely. So, according to different type of person, there are some problems in speaking. Brown (2001, P.270-271) suggested some causes that make speaking difficult.

In speaking, the students learn how to organize ideas, arrange sentences, and express language in spoken form with good pronunciation and comprehensible language. They must also learn about how to deliver the meaning of the language according to the context they are speaking. However, speaking a foreign language is not an easy skill to be mastered by

learners. Learners consider speaking as the most difficult skills since it needs great courage as well as preparation to speak well in the new language.

Nowadays, students have a poor speaking skill and has been characterized for the following causes:

### **No participation**

Learners think that they have nothing to say on a particular topic. According to (Parisa, 2012) “in reality, they may be bored or feel that the topic is unrelated to anything they know. If this is the case, they will have no motivation to speak other than the fact that they should be participating in it actively.

### **Listening ability**

Speaking skills cannot be developed unless we develop listening skills (Doff, 1998). Students must understand what is said to them to have a successful conversation. Shumin (1997) shares the ideas of Doff (1998) by stating that when one person speaks, the other responds through attending by means of the listening process. In fact, every speaker plays the role of both a listener and a speaker. Therefore, one is certainly unable to respond if he/she cannot understand what is said. It means speaking is closely related to listening.

### **Topical knowledge**

Topical knowledge is the speakers’ knowledge of relevant topical information. The information that topical knowledge provides enables learners to use language with reference to the world in which they live. Bachman & Palmer (1996) state certain test tasks may be easier for those who possess the relevant topical knowledge and more difficult for those who do not. Bachman & Palmer (1996) believe that topical knowledge has effects on speaking performance.

### **Feedback during speaking activities**

Most students want and expect their teachers to give them feedback on their performance. However, all speaking production should not be dealt with in the same way. Harmer (1991) asserts that the decisions that the teachers make about how to react to students' performance will depend upon the stages of the lesson, the activities, the types of mistakes made and the particular student who is making that mistake. If the teachers correct whenever there is a problem, the conversational flow as well as the purpose of the speaking activity will be destroyed (Harmer, 1991). If the students are corrected all the time, they can find this very demotivating and become afraid to speak. They suggest that the teachers should always correct the students' mistakes positively and with encouragement (Baker & Westrup, 2003).

### **Performance conditions**

In order to help students, overcome problems in learning speaking, it is necessary for the teachers to figure out causes that affect their speaking performance. Students' speaking performance can be affected by the factors that come from performance conditions (time pressure, planning, standard of performance and amount of support), affective factors (such as motivation, confidence and anxiety), listening ability and feedback during speaking activities

### **III. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN**

#### **3.1 Type of research**

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology to explore the complex dynamics that influence the development of oral expression in English. Our research is qualitative in that participants are asked broad, general questions and are left to share their views without being constrained by the researcher's perspective. In addition, multiple types of information are collected and new forms of data can be added during the study to answer questions. In addition, it is dedicated to collecting a lot of data. It seeks to collect detailed information to establish the complexity of the central phenomenon. In our research we made use of two qualitative forms of data.

- ◆ Questionnaires
- ◆ Observations

Using open-ended questions as the primary tool, our research seeks to analyze the psychological factors that not contribute to development of oral expression. Additionally, a questionnaire for the teacher will be conducted in order to gain insight into the factors that lead to deficiencies in students' oral expression in English. The questionnaire was written in English, translated into Spanish and the results translated back into English.

On the other hand, we decided to use the qualitative method and adopt descriptive research, which is used to describe the characteristics of a population, events, behaviors or phenomena.

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

This research will take place in the Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute, specifically in the seventh grade, during the second semester of the year 2023.

The population of this research is 32 students of Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute at seventh grade "A", morning shift, where there are 20 girls and 12 boys, the age range 13 to 15.

The sample of this research was decided by convenience where was obtained sample of 10 students divided into 5 girls and 5 boys. In the research we will use a maximum of variation sampling. A feature of qualitative research is to present multiple perspectives of individuals to represent the complexity of our world. Therefore, one sampling strategy is to incorporate that complexity into the research by sampling participants or locations. Maximum variation sampling is a purposive sampling strategy in which the researcher samples cases or individuals who differ in some characteristic or trait.

### **3.3 Data Collection Tools**

The tools used in this research are direct observation, a student questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire. Direct observation will be a key component of our research methodology, involving the recording and scoring of students' classroom presentations using a detailed rubric. This approach allows for a nuanced assessment of their oral communication skills.

In addition, a comprehensive questionnaire of seven carefully designed questions is administered to the students. The purpose of this questionnaire is to systematically gather information about the main psychological factors influencing the development of speaking in English.

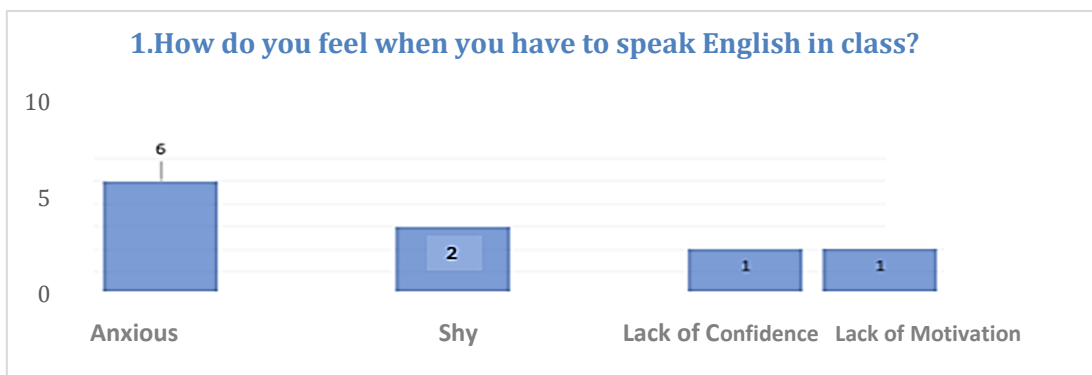
At the same time, a separate questionnaire of seven questions will be administered to teachers. The aim is to gain valuable insights into the factors that contribute to students' deficits in oral expression in English. This dual questionnaire strategy ensures a holistic understanding of the many aspects that influence students' oral expression.

### 3.4 Data Collection Validation

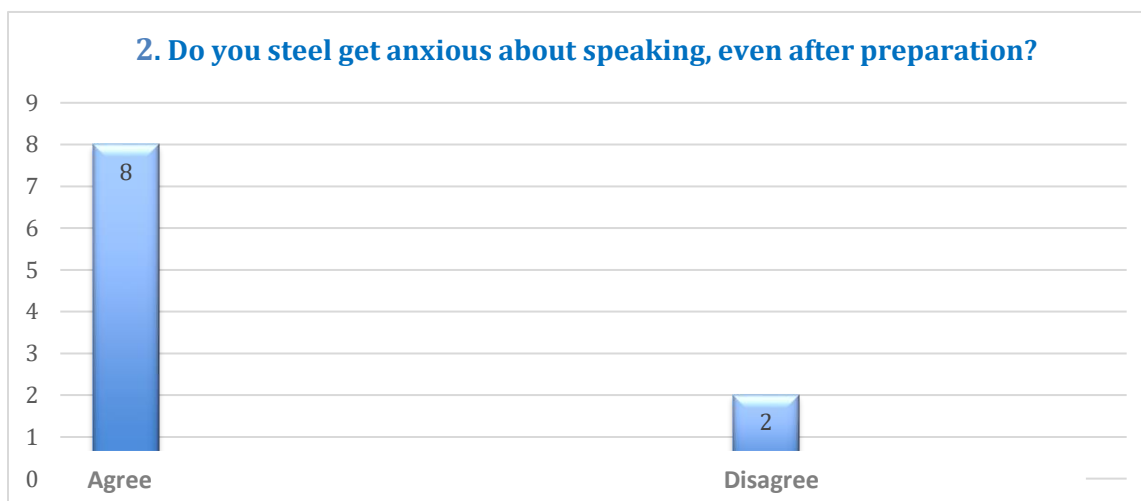
In order to secure the validity of the data collection tools, we used “expert judgement”. In this case, we asked professor Centeno to verify whether or not our tools were ready to be administered. This took place in the context of the course “Applied Research” in 2022. The criteria used included coherence, clarity, sufficiency and relevance as detailed in the table below.

<p><b>COHERENCE</b> The item is logically related to the dimension or indicator you are measuring.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not meet the criteria</li> <li>2. Low level</li> <li>3. Moderate level</li> <li>4. High level</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The item is not logical relationship with the dimension.</li> <li>2. The item has a tangential relationship with the dimension.</li> <li>3. The item has a moderate relationship with the dimension that you are measuring.</li> <li>4. The item is completely related to the dimension that you are measuring.</li> </ol>
<p><b>CLARITY</b> Degree to which the item is written in a clear and precise manner, facilitating its understanding by the subjects surveyed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not meet the criteria</li> <li>2. Low level</li> <li>3. Moderate level</li> <li>4. High level</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The item is not clear.</li> <li>2. The item requires a lot of modification or a very large modification in the use of the words according to their meaning or their order.</li> <li>3. A very specific modification of some of the item's terms is required.</li> <li>4. The item is no clear, it has adequate semantics and syntax.</li> </ol>
<p><b>RELEVANCE</b> Importance that the item has with respect to the contribution it can provide for a better understanding of the characteristic or situation measured.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not meet the criteria</li> <li>2. Low level</li> <li>3. Moderate level</li> <li>4. High level</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not meet the criteria</li> <li>2. The item can be removed without affecting the dimensional measurement.</li> <li>3. The item has some relevance, but another item may be including the measurement of the item.</li> <li>4. The item is essential or important, it must be included.</li> </ol>
<p><b>SUFFICIENCY</b> Items that belong to the same dimension are enough to obtain the measurement of it.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not meet the criteria</li> <li>2. Low level</li> <li>3. Moderate level</li> <li>4. High level</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The items are not enough to measure the dimension.</li> <li>2. Items measure some aspect of the dimension, but do not correspond to the overall dimension.</li> <li>3. You must increase some items to be able to evaluate the dimension completely.</li> <li>4. Items are sufficient.</li> </ol>

## IV. RESULTS

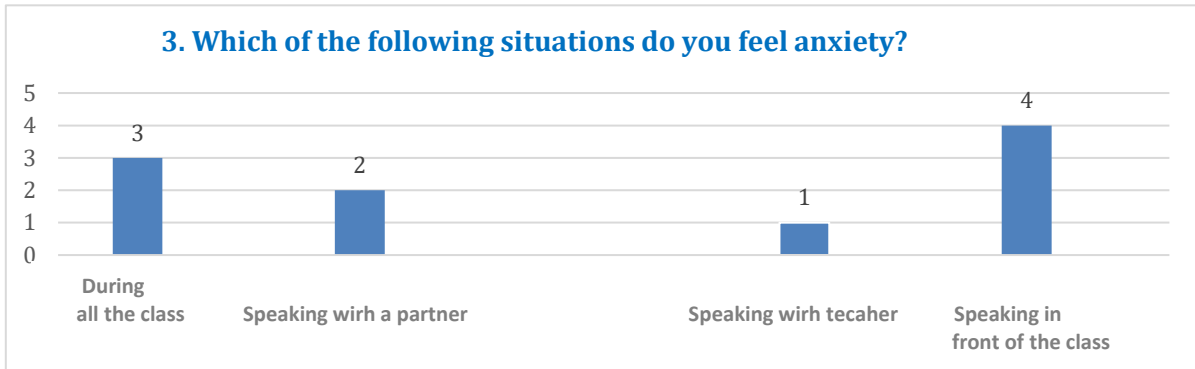


In the first question, the 60% of the students responded that they felt anxious when speaking in English in class, the other 20% respondents, responded that when participating in class they felt shy, only the 10% felt lack of confidence and 10% lack of motivation.

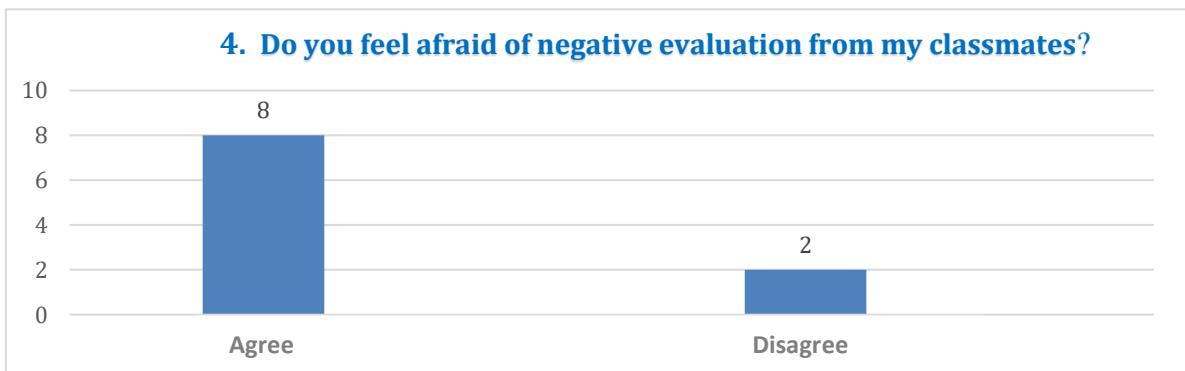


With the second question, we were able to ascertain that 80% of the students surveyed agree that even after preparation they feel anxious, 20% student expressed disagree feeling anxious after preparation.

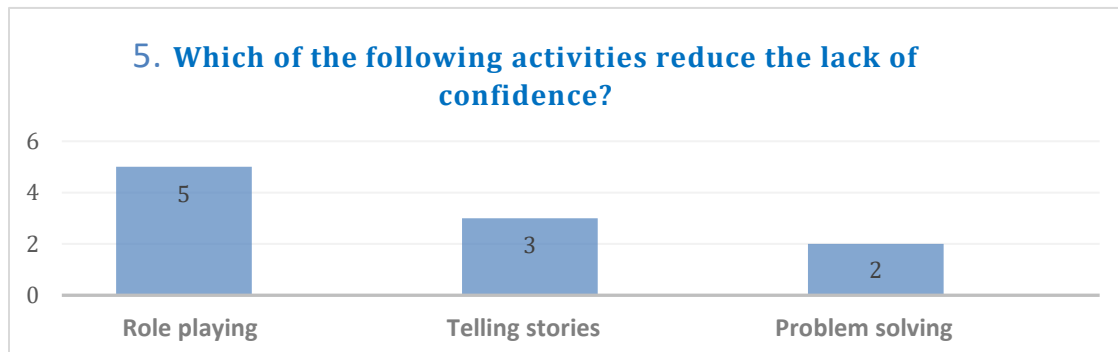




Question number 3 shows, that 30% of the respondents feel anxiety during all the English class, 20% feel anxiety when they are speaking with a partner, 10% feel anxiety when they are speaking with the teacher, on the other hand 40% of the students surveyed feel anxiety speaking in front of the class, which is the most predominant activity in what students feel anxiety.



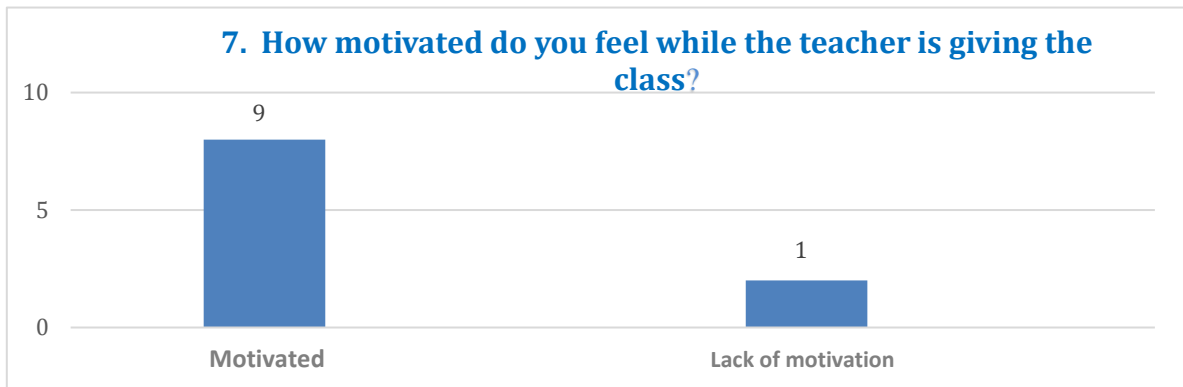
Question number four, we find that 80% of the students surveyed agree that they are afraid of negative classroom evaluations and only 20% disagree that they are not afraid of negative classroom evaluations.



Question number 5 shows, that 50% of the students surveyed believe that practicing Role-Play reduce their lack of self-confidence, although 30% of the respondents express that Telling stories decrease the lack of self-confidence and only 20% of the respondents believe that the activity Problem solving low their lack of confidence.



Question number six, we were able to realize that 70% of the students surveyed agree feeling shy when they speak in English in front of the class and the 30% disagree feeling shy when they speak the English Language in front of the class.



According to question number seven, the 90% of the students surveyed consider that they are motivated when the teacher gives the class, but only 10% say that they feel lack of motivation in the English class.

#### 4.1 Student's questionnaire analysis and result.

##### Analysis

This questionnaire reveals some interesting insights into the challenges and anxieties of seventh-grade students speaking English in class. The main takeaways are:

- **Predominant Psychological factor:** according to the student's questionnaire, the predominant psychological factor affecting speaking skills of students are anxiety and shyness.
- **High levels of anxiety:** 80% of students reported feeling anxious when speaking English in class, highlighting the need for strategies to address anxiety and build confidence.
- **Situations of high levels of anxiety:** 40% of students struggled with speaking in front of the English class, suggesting a need for more emphasis on pronunciation practice.
- **Fear of negative evaluation:** 80% of students identified this as their biggest difficulty, indicating a need to create a supportive environment where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.
- **Positive activities reduce lack of confidence:** 50% of students reported that the Role-Play activity is the one chosen to reduce the psychological factor of lack of confidence, suggesting this activity as the favorite of students.
- **Shy:** 70% of students agree with feeling shy in front of the class, highlighting the link between pronunciation skills and self-esteem in speaking English.

- **Motivate with classmates and teacher:** 90% of students felt motivated, indicating the comfortable environment teacher produces for students and positive feedback.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Implement strategies to manage anxiety, such as relaxation techniques and role-playing activities.
- ✓ Provide targeted pronunciation practice and feedback.
- ✓ Create a safe and supportive environment where mistakes are encouraged as part of the learning process.
- ✓ Encourage students to practice speaking with each other, not just with the teacher.
- ✓ Offer support and guidance for preparing presentations, including practice opportunities and feedback on delivery.
- ✓ Celebrate student successes in speaking English to build confidence.

#### **4.2 Teacher`s questionarie analysis and results.**

In order to gather information about the factors that affect the development of speaking, we selected the questionnaire to obtain direct information by the teacher. The main objective for this questionnaire was to investigate the different factors that affect the development of speaking skills in the students.

This questionnaire covered the psychological factors observed by the teacher in students in speaking skills. This questionnaire has 7 development questions where teacher wrote his answers. We needed to investigate whether the teacher is using the correct strategies according to the student`s level, and if the teacher includes the sub-skills in the development of the class: fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and content.

We found that the teacher uses the next strategies to foster fluency and confidence: encourage conversation, model syntactic structure, remind students to speak loudly, and articulate clearly, also students summarize heard information. Furthermore, teacher encourage students regarding to confidence and fluency to listen and repeat, watch movies, television or series in English language.

Besides teacher informed the factors affecting their anxiety when they had individual presentation, are afraid of making mistakes, lack of preparation, limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, lack of self-confidence and embarrassment, to what extend with the question about student`s self-esteem and self-confidence, both play a role in the ability of speaking English fluently, the teacher answered, the point is that if a person has a high self-esteem, their speaking skills will improve, conversely if a person has low self-esteem their speaking ability will be lower. The level of student`s self-esteem is related to their ability to master English skills.

According to the information provided by the teacher, he uses the next methods to measure fluency and confidence: reading fluency is assessed using oral reading fluency measures, assessments measures reading rate and accuracy are expressed in terms of the numbers of words read correctly per minute. Also, teacher uses the following resources: Internet, podcasts, video conferencing, videos and speech recognition software to support the development of student's fluency.

Additionally, teacher recommends to students: to talk when read and write, watch movies with subtitle, imitate natives' speakers, think in their target language, listen music and learn the lyrics and talk to a native speaker.

To sum up the teacher concluded that the English language should be practiced every day in order to create confidence in the students and the habit of studying, to facilitate the learning of the English language using all the necessary teaching materials to get better results.

### **4.3 Analysis of Direct Observation: Seventh-Grade Students.**

#### **Analysis**

The observed class presents a situation where seventh-grade students are experiencing difficulties with speaking due to various psychological factors. These factors manifest in different ways during the activities: Free Play: During free play, students might:

Hesitate to participate, preferring solitary activities or observing others. Engage in non-verbal communication like gestures or facial expressions rather than spoken interactions. Too Exhibit low energy levels and limited movement. Beside they Form smaller groups with familiar peers, avoiding larger social circles. on the other hand, when required to speak directly, students might: Show signs of anxiety, such as fidgeting, stammering, or blushing. Deliver short, fragmented sentences, lacking in fluidity and detail. Speak softly or mumble, making it difficult to understand them. Moreover, they avoid eye contact with the teacher or peers, focusing on objects or the floor. Experience difficulty formulating thoughts into organized speech.

#### **Possible Underlying Causes:**

These observed communication difficulties could stem from various underlying causes, including:

- Social anxiety: Fear of negative evaluation and embarrassment in social situations.
- Performance anxiety: Increased stress and apprehension during speaking activities.
- Low self-esteem: Lack of confidence in their abilities and communication skills.



- Fear of judgment: Worrying about being ridiculed or criticized for their spoken language.
- Language processing difficulties: Challenges with formulating thoughts into fluent speech.
- Unfamiliar or challenging pronunciation: Difficulty mastering specific sounds or words.

### **Implications and Recommendations:**

These observations highlight the need for a supportive and sensitive approach towards these students. Here are some recommendations:

- Create a safe and inclusive learning environment: Emphasize empathy, understanding, and positive reinforcement.
- Offer alternative means of communication: Encourage non-verbal expression, written communication, or small group discussions.
- Focus on fluency and confidence over accuracy: Prioritize building comfort and positive experiences over grammatically perfect speech.
- Provide specific pronunciation support: Break down challenging sounds into manageable steps and offer individualized feedback.
- Involve parents/guardians: Discuss observations and collaborate on strategies to support students at home.
- Seek professional help if needed: Consult a speech-language pathologist or mental health professional for further assessment and intervention.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze psychological factors that affect the development of speaking, of students at seventh grade, at Salinas de Nagualapa Public Institute. The results revealed the following factors that influence students' oral performance, such as: anxiety about speaking English in front of the class, pronunciation problems, fear of making mistakes, which limits verbal expression, and a tendency to resort to Spanish during presentations. Besides, students lacked self-confidence and were apprehensive about possible criticism from peers and teachers.

In addition, it is crucial to note that questionnaire with teacher identified several obstacles in students' oral English development, such as anxiety during individual presentations, inadequate preparation, restricted vocabulary, fear of mistakes, poor pronunciation, and feeling embarrassed. To address these challenges, the teacher advocates specific activities such as listening and replaying music in English, watching movies or series in English, and practicing with peers and with native speakers to improve oral proficiency.

In conclusion, incorporating English language instruction in elementary schools emerges as a pivotal strategy for enhancing students' proficiency in English. This approach is designed not only to foster the development of language skills but also to instill confidence in students through the establishment of a consistent daily routine of study and practice. The utilization of diverse teaching materials is deemed indispensable, as it serves to enrich the overall learning experience, bolster confidence, and maximize outcomes in the acquisition of the English language.

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## VII. ANNEXES

### National Autonomous University of Nicaragua

### UNAN-MANAGUA



UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL  
AUTÓNOMA DE  
NICARAGUA,  
MANAGUA  
UNAN-MANAGUA

**Topic:** Psychological factors affecting speaking of students.

**General Objective:** To analyze psychological factors that affect the development of speaking, of students at seventh grade, at Nagualapa Public Institute.

#### **Student interviews:**

This interview is aimed to gather information about the psychological factors that affect the development of speaking of students.

**Please select gender:** Female  Male   
Please select age range: 11 -12  13-14  15-16   
Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Questions**

- 1- How do you feel when you have to speak English in class?
  - Anxious
  - Shy
  - Lack of confidence
  - Lack of motivation
- 2- Do you still get anxious about speaking, even after preparation?
  - Agree
  - Disagree

3- In which of the next situations do you feel anxiety, check your answer?

When is required to speak in English in front of the class

When is required to speak in English with a partner

When is required to speak in English with the teacher

In the classroom, during all the English class

4- Do you feel afraid of negative evaluation from my classmates?

-Agree

-Disagree

5- Which of the following activities reduce the lack of self-confidence?

-Role-playing

-Telling stories (vacation memories, imagination)

-Problem solving

6- Do you feel shy to speak in front of the class?

-Agree

-Disagree

7- How motivated do you feel while the teacher is giving the class?

-Motivated

Lack of motivation

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give my consent to participate in this research and authorize my information to be used for the appropriate purposes, as well as authorize the use of the film material I provide in the total or partial recording of my image and voice.



## English Presentation - Checklist for Evaluating Fluency and Confidence

Student's Name

Grade

Presentation Date

Evaluation Criteria

### 1. Pronunciation (0-5):

- (0) Pronunciation is incomprehensible.
- (1-2) Pronunciation is difficult to understand at several points.
- (3) Pronunciation is clear but with some noticeable errors.
- (4) Pronunciation is good with only minor errors.
- (5) Pronunciation is excellent and clear throughout.

### 2. Fluency (0-5):

- (0) Speech is choppy and lacks flow.
- (1-2) Presentation lacks fluency and is frequently interrupted.
- (3) Presentation is mostly fluent but with some noticeable pauses.
- (4) Presentation is fluent with only minor interruptions.
- (5) Presentation is highly fluent and proceeds without notable interruptions.

### 3. Confidence (0-5):

- (0) The student displays a complete lack of confidence and evident nervousness.
- (1-2) Confidence is low, and the student appears uncomfortable on stage.
- (3) The student shows some confidence but still seems nervous at key moments.
- (4) Confidence is solid, and the student feels comfortable overall.
- (5) The student exhibits great confidence and presents with authority and assurance.

### 4. Content (0-5):

- (0) Content is incoherent and unrelated to the topic.
- (1-2) Content is weak and loosely related to the main topic.
- (3) Content is relevant but lacks significant details.
- (4) Content is relevant and comprehensive but could be more enriching.
- (5) Content is highly relevant, complete, and enriching, demonstrating a deep understanding of the topic.

### **5. Audience Interaction (0-5):**

- (0) The student does not interact with the audience at all.
- (1-2) Audience interaction is minimal and forced.
- (3) The student makes some attempts to interact but could be more effective.
- (4) The student interacts effectively with the audience in most cases.
- (5) The student demonstrates excellent audience interaction, engaging them and responding to questions effectively.

### **6. Attire and Personal Presentation (0-5):**

- (0) Attire and personal presentation are inappropriate and distract from the presentation.
- (1-2) Attire and personal presentation could be improved.
- (3) Attire and personal presentation are suitable but not outstanding.
- (4) Attire and personal presentation are appropriate and positively contribute to the presentation.
- (5) Attire and personal presentation are excellent and add professionalism to the presentation.

**Total Score (maximum 30 points):** \_\_\_\_\_

❖ **Observations and Additional Comments:**

Dear teacher:

You have been selected to answer the questionnaire to carry out the research: Psychological factors affecting students at seventh grade, at Nagualapa Public School, during the second semester of 2023.

We appreciate your valuable collaboration:

**Name**

---

**Background**

---

**Professional experience area**

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**Institution**

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**Research's objective:** To analyze why psychological factors affect the development of speaking, presented by students at seventh grade, at Nagualapa Public School.

**The objective of the expert judgment:** validate the content of this instrument.

The objective of the questionnaire:

1. Gather information to Identify the psychological factors that generate deficiency in students, at the express themselves in the English language.
2. To examine the reasons that affect the lack of confidence and fluency to develop speaking in the students.

## Questions

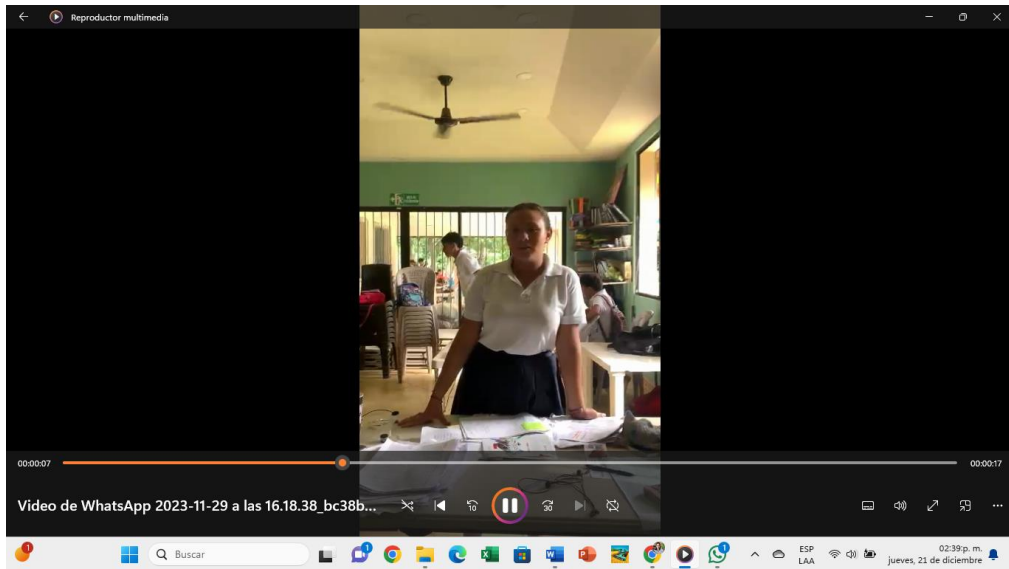
1. What strategies do you use in the classroom to foster fluency and confidence in speaking English among your students?
2. What observations have you made regarding students' fluency and confidence in speaking English in your class?
3. Have you noticed that some psycholinguistic factors, such as anxiety, pronunciation, or vocabulary acquisition, affect students' fluency and confidence when speaking English? How do you address these factors in your teaching?
4. To what extent do you think students' self-esteem and self-confidence play a role in their ability to speak English fluently and confidently?
5. How do you assess students' progress in terms of fluency and confidence in speaking English? Do you use any specific tools or methods to measure these aspects?



**Images of the questionnaire with the 7th grade students of Nagualapa school.**



**Videos of the 7th grade students of Nagualapa school  
presenting their daily routine in English.**




Link to watch all the full videos:<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13RyWLX-pjmxECRrnFj5i20FmjmsO3-d?usp=sharing>



**Images of questionnaires made by 7th grade students of the Nagualapa Public School.**

**National Autonomous University of Nicaragua**  
**UNAN-MANAGUA**



UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL  
AUTÓNOMA DE  
NICARAGUA,  
MANAGUA  
UNAN-MANAGUA

**Topic//Tema:** Psychological factors affecting speaking of students.// Factores psicológicos que afectan a la expresión oral de los estudiantes.

**General Objective//Objetivo General:** To analyze psychological factors that affect the development of speaking, of students at seventh grade, at Nagualapa Public Institute.// Analizar los factores psicológicos que inciden en el desarrollo de la expresión oral, de los estudiantes de séptimo grado, del Instituto Público Nagualapa

**Student interviews// Entrevistas a estudiantes:**  
This interview is aimed to gather information about the psychological factors that affect the development of speaking of students.// Con esta entrevista se pretende recabar información sobre los factores psicológicos que afectan al desarrollo de la expresión oral de los alumnos  
**Please select gender// Porfavor seleccione el genero:**

Female//Femenina  Male// Masculino

**Please select age range//Porfavor seleccione el rango de edad:** 11 -12  13-14  15-16   
Other//Otros \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions// Preguntas**

1- **How do you feel when you have to speak English in class?// ¿Cómo te sientes cuando tienes que hablar inglés en clase?**

- Anxious// Ansioso
- Shy// Timido
- Lack of confidence// Falta de Confianza
- Lack of motivation// Falta de Motivation

2- **Do you still get anxious about speaking, even after preparation?// ¿Sigues sintiendo ansiedad al hablar, incluso después de prepararte?**

- Agree// Deacuerdo
- Disagree// Desacuerdo



3- In which of the next situations do you feel anxiety, check your answer?//En cuál de las siguientes situaciones sientes ansiedad, marca tu respuesta?

**When is required to speak in English in front of the class**

Cuándo debe hablar en inglés delante de la clase

**When is required to speak in English with a partner**

Cuándo es necesario hablar en inglés con un compañero

**When is required to speak in English with the teacher**

Cuándo se requiere hablar en inglés con el professor

**In the classroom, during all the English class**

En el aula, durante toda la clase de inglés

4- Do you feel afraid of negative evaluation from my classmates?// ¿Sientes miedo a la evaluación negativa de mis compañeros?

-Agree// Deacuerdo

-Disagree// Desacuerdo

5- Which of the following activities reduce the lack of self-confidence? // ¿Cuál de las siguientes actividades reduce la falta de confianza en uno mismo?

-Role-playing// Juegos de rol

-Telling stories (vacation memories, imagination) // Contar historias (recuerdos de vacaciones, imaginación)

-Problem solving // Resolución de problemas

6- Do you feel shy to speak inf front of the class?// ¿Te da vergüenza hablar delante de la clase?

-Agree// Deacuerdo

-Disagree// Desacuerdo

7- How motivated do you feel while the teacher is giving the class?// Cómo de motivado te sientes mientras el profesor está dando la clase?

-Motivated //Motivado

Lack of motivation// Falta de Motivacion

I, Osmany Amador Ruiz, give my consent to participate in this research and authorize my information to be used for the appropriate purposes, as well as authorize the use of the film material I provide in the total or partial recording of my image and voice.// Yo, doy mi consentimiento para participar en esta investigación y aautorizo que mis datos sean utilizados para los fines oportunos, asi como aautorizo l autilizacion del material filmico que facilito en la grabacion total o parcial de mi imagen y voz.

Link to view all questionnaires: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13RyWLX-pjmxECRrnFj5i20FmjmsO3-d?usp=sharing>

## Images of the questionnaire made by the English teacher of the Nagualapa school.

Dear teacher:

You have been selected to evaluate the instrument questions-oral production to carry out the research: Psycho-linguistics factors that affect the development of speaking skills of students at seventh grade, at Nagualapa Public School, during the second semester of 2023.

The evaluation of this instrument is of great importance to ensure that they are valid and that the results obtained from them are used efficiently;

We appreciate your valuable collaboration:

**Name of judge:**

María José Plazaola Grijalva

**Background**

---

**Professional experience area**

Foreign language

**Institution**

MINED

**Research's objective:** To analyze what are psycho-linguistics factors that affect the development of speaking skills, of students at seventh grade, at Nagualapa Public School.

**The objective of the expert judgment:** validate the content of this instrument.

The objective of the questionnaire:

1. Gather information to identify the two principal psycho-linguistics factors that generate deficiency in students, at the express themselves in the English language.
2. To examine the reasons that affect the lack of confidence and fluency to develop speaking skills in the students.

### Questions

1. What strategies do you use in the classroom to foster fluency and confidence in speaking English among your students? *Encourage conversation model syntactic structure, Remind students to speak loudly and articulate clearly, have students summarize heard information.*
2. What observations have you made regarding students' fluency and confidence in speaking English in your class? *Listen and repeat. we all have a favorite movie, television show or even youtube channel find a friend. it's always difficult to practice by yourself, espec when it comes to improving your speaking skills.*
3. Have you noticed that some psycholinguistic factors, such as anxiety, pronunciation, or vocabulary acquisition, affect students' fluency and confidence when speaking English? How do you address these factors in your teaching? *The factors affecting their anxiety when they had individual presentation were afraid of making mistakes, lack of preparation, limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, lack of confidence, friends and embarrassment.*
4. To what extent do you think students' self-esteem and self-confidence play a role in their ability to speak English fluently and confidently? *the point is that if person has high self-esteem, their speaking skills will improve, conversely if a person has low self-esteem, their speaking ability will be lower. the level of students' self-esteem is related to their ability to master english skills.*
5. How do you assess students' progress in terms of fluency and confidence in speaking English? Do you use any specific tools or methods to measure these aspects? *Reading fluency is assessed using oral reading fluency measures. assessments measure reading rate and accuracy and are expressed in terms of the number of words read correctly per minute.*

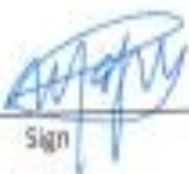


6. What resources, such as teaching materials or technology, do you use to support the development of students' fluency and confidence in speaking English?

Internet, podcasts, video conferencing / Videos and speech recognition software are considered the best tools for teaching speaking skills.

7. What advice or recommendations do you have for other teachers who want to improve fluency and confidence in speaking English in their classrooms?

my recommendations are: talk when you read or write, watch movies with subtitles, imitate native speakers, think in your target language, listen to local music and learn the lyrics, talk to a native speaker.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sign

