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RESEARCH TOPIC

Use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023.



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ABSTRACT

The English language has become an important requirement for the professional development of different careers. For this reason, many countries now include the teaching of English as a second language in the curriculum of high school levels in the public schools and private institutions. However, achieving this goal requires the implementation of a wide variety of strategies in order to improve the students' skills and foster their speaking. In 2017, Huerta Leiva mentioned "one of the greatest challenges that we as teachers deal with beginners, is teaching them how to express their ideas with accuracy and fluency specially when many factors such mother tongue or social context limit the development of English as a second language." (p.11). In other words, speaking skills are essential for communicative factors, even if students have a wide vocabulary or grammar knowledge, if their speaking skill are not foster enough, they will be not able to communicate successfully. For that reason, it is important that teachers implement strategies that encourage students to express themselves orally during class and uncontrolled environments. In simple words, encouraging students to produce their ideas orally is now the most challenging part of teaching the English language. For this reason, our research is focused on the use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills. We had the chance to interact and collect information from ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023 and according to our results we can determine that innovative strategies can help to foster speaking skills if teachers take advantage of them regularly. Finally, this research might pave the way for future studies since offers solid information and highlights the benefits of applying innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills.

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CHAPTER 1
RESEARCH SCOPE

1. Introduction

The acquisition of a foreign language is a very important tool in different scenarios of social life. Nowadays, English learning is helpful because it provides a wide variety of opportunities in education, social and work environments. Nowadays, since English is one of the most spoken languages around the world, there is a variety of documentation of different subjects in this language which may be helpful in many areas such as Medicine and Sciences. And encouraging people to learn a second language from an early age can give them a chance to improve their knowledge by accessing these resources and support their education by getting new knowledge from experts from different countries and innovating their business.

The benefits of learning English extend beyond just employment opportunities. Proficiency in English can significantly enhance people's ability to engage in global conversations and cultural exchanges. For instance, Brown (2018) highlights: "English is often the language of international conferences, academic research, and online forums, allowing individuals to connect with a broader audience and contribute to global discussions. This linguistic skill also opens doors to understanding diverse cultures through media, literature, and entertainment, fostering a greater appreciation and empathy for people from different backgrounds" (p.22). In other words, cultural competence is increasingly valued in today's interconnected world, where collaboration and cross-cultural understanding are crucial for both personal growth and professional success.

Teaching English as a Second Language in high schools around the world represents a unique set of challenges and opportunities. In many countries, English has become a crucial skill for academic and professional advancement, making English learning programs essential for students who are non-native speakers. For example, Banks (2019) describes: "In these programs teachers often use a variety of methods to address different proficiency levels, from immersive language activities to targeted grammar exercises. The goal is not only to improve students' fluency but also to enhance their overall academic performance and confidence in an increasingly globalized world" (p.19). Which means that educators adapt their teaching strategies to create an inclusive environment that respects each student's background while fostering the development of the new language.

On the other hand, Nicaragua has experienced the same situation during the last years since English language has become a recurrent part in different scenarios from our globalized world. Nowadays, social media, TV shows and even education has encouraged many Nicaraguans to learn English as a need to be aware of the latest news or documentation around the world. For that reason, we decided to create this research about the use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High school during the second semester of 2023.

Through this research, we focused on the most common challenges that teachers face with students in their classrooms when they develop speaking skills. Firstly, we discuss the most common strategies used by teachers in the teaching of speaking skills and through the development of this documentation we describe and propose innovative strategies for developing speaking skills. Additionally, we provide information about some approaches, strategies and techniques that most teachers use as an alternative to treat the different situations presented in a scholar environment. The objective of this research is to analyze some innovative strategies that may be useful to improve opportunity areas of students when developing their speaking skill and determine their effectiveness and at the end of our research we suggest some innovative strategies that teachers can take advantage of based on the obtained results collected from our data collection tools.

2. Rationale

Nowadays, the English language is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world and learning it is an important asset on a professional's CV. Teaching English is a crucial complement of the curriculum in various schools and universities due to the wide variety of professional opportunities that it offers. As a result, teaching specialists need to design a curriculum which contains techniques that enhance students' learning.

However, each country faces different challenges which can limit the acquisition of a foreign language. For example, non-English-speaking countries must deal with this barrier (the difference of languages) because English is not their mother tongue and therefore different educational approaches must be employed based on techniques and strategies adapted to the environment.

In this context, Nicaragua is among of these countries. It means that students are not familiar with this foreign language and teachers need to employ different methodologies that foment the acquisition of a new language. For this reason, we decided to carry out this research in which we can describe the usage of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in students. Additionally, according to the obtained results we conclude that this research might inform teacher training programs or influence curriculum development.

One of the objectives to achieve in this research is to document the strategies that are usually employed by teachers in high school education. According to Membreño Blanco (2017): "In traditional learning, the most common strategies that teachers use are the memorization and repetition of words or phrases. However, when evaluating the individual, the learning is limited to repeating what has been memorized." (p.17). To contrast, traditional strategies form a part of daily routine in schools from different learning levels. For this reason, it is important that teachers, in the first place, determine in which level their students are and, with this information, plan different strategies for each level to potentiate their students' abilities and they may advance in their learning process. Through this research teachers can find out potential information related to how to take advantage of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills at high school education.

3. Objectives

3.1 General Objective

Analyze the use of innovative strategies to develop speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023.

3.2 Specific Objectives

- Diagnose the most common strategies used by teachers in the teaching of speaking skills.
- Describe the innovative strategies for developing speaking skills.
- Propose innovative strategies to develop speaking skills in students.

4. Research Questions

- What traditional strategies are used most frequently by teachers for developing speaking skills in high school education?
- What innovative strategies can be employed by teachers for developing speaking skills in high school education? How effective are these strategies in Nicaraguan context?
- How can innovative strategies be adapted for the learning process of ninth grade students at the high school level?

CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. The Acquisition of a New Language.

The acquisition of a new language is a process which needs to be assessed in a very careful manner in order that students to achieve their goals successfully. In other words, teachers need to be objective with all the resources and strategies that they are going to apply when teaching a new language to students. For that reason, it is necessary to be clear what the meaning of strategy is to proceed with a good teaching-learning process.

Having said that, let's think about the process that makes possible the acquisition of new knowledge at schools. Effectively, we are talking about the teaching-learning process, which refers to a systematical and sequential process in which teachers and students achieve the outcomes of teaching and learning. As mentioned by Munna & Kalam (2021) "Teaching and learning process can be defined as a transformation process of knowledge from teachers to students. In addition, it refers to the combination of various elements within the process where an educator identifies and establishes the learning objectives and develops teaching resources and implements the teaching and learning strategies". Moreover, through the teaching-learning process, teachers determine the learning needs and design teaching and learning strategies and implement it into a plan to work and evaluate all the outcomes.

On the other hand, teachers need to be very analytical to create strategies that involve the whole group and don't exclude any student. As mentioned by Benzerrouge (2021) "Teaching is the process in which a person helps other people to learn. It is a set of activities with various aspects and dimensions; it does not only include knowledge only, but reactions and gestures when conveying knowledge, asking questions, explaining concepts, clarifying doubts, listening to opinions, discussing ideas, convincing and being convince" (p.54). In addition, we can consider that through a well-structured teaching process, learners may adapt to new situations to acquire experience. For that reason, designing strategies which are useful in the classroom with students is important, because the most accurate strategies teachers apply, the best results will be obtained.

In the same way, the acquisition of a foreign language demands an interactive process in the classroom creating a learning environment which involves the teacher, the students and the language components that need to be developed. In other words, to develop language skills in students is necessary to provide the learners with an environment in which they will be

able to interact with all the elements that will help them to achieve their goals. For example, to develop speaking skills, teachers need to include language activities in which students are exposed to oral language and gain language proficiency. And in the future, be able to establish conversations with others in a different context from daily life.

For that reason, the interaction process between teachers and students is a key factor for the development of speaking skills because it may help to set the achievement of goals during the teaching-learning process. In similar manner, Benzerrouge (2021) mentions: “The teacher gives a sum of knowledge, a sum of behaviors, attitudes and values, and the learner receives, internalizes, reacts and eventually uses them. It means, an efficient learning and effective teaching presuppose favorable conditions which includes teachers, learners, learning environments and interactions which creates knowledge” (p.55). Equally, to develop speaking skills in students, teachers need to create an active communication with students and make them feel comfortable and self-confident while they learn the new language.

In a similar way, it is important to highlight that designing a good teaching method will favor the acquisition of new knowledge on students. In other words, the teaching process needs to be planned to make learning take place and students being truly involved in the acquisition of a new language. As mentioned by Hukam & Behlol (2010) “Learning is defined as quantitative increase in knowledge, memorizing of facts, skills and methods that can be retained and used as necessary. It is also viewed as making sense or abstracting meaning, relating parts of the subject matter to each other and to the real world, interpreting and understanding reality and comprehending the world by reinterpreting knowledge” (p.23). In addition, it involves a guiding process which helps to develop cognitive and social aspects for each learner.

By the same token, in educational terms learning leads to change by creating new patterns through the acquisition of new experiences. For example, “educational process is a systematic, sequential, logical, scientifically based, planned course of action consisting of two major interdependent operations: teaching and learning. Also, it is important to highlight that learning is much deeper than memorization and information recall.” (Bastable, Gramet, Jacobs, & Sopczyk, 2011). In the same manner, we believe that the learning process involves

understanding and critical thinking to connect previous experiences with new experiences, because by this way students can consolidate knowledge.

2. What defines a Strategy

A strategy is a plan, or a systematic approach designed to achieve a specific goal or objective. It involves a set of actions, tactics, and decisions made by individuals, organizations, or entities to allocate resources effectively and maximize their chances of success. At the same time, can be added what was said by the politician and lawyer Pete Johnson (2016) “Strategy is a style of thinking, a conscious and deliberate process, an intensive implementation system, the science of ensuring future success”. Also, the strategies can vary widely depending on the context. For example, in the business world it is not going to be the same strategy that military context uses on his function and for sports. However, all of them have strategies but with different processes that involve plans to achieve a specific goal for each one. Overall, a strategy is a systematic and deliberate approach to achieving a goal, and it plays a crucial role in decision making and long-term planning in various aspects of life and work.

2.1. Traditional Strategies

Traditional strategies refer to conventional and well-established methods of teaching and learning that have been used for many years; these strategies are often deeply ingrained in educational systems and have been passed down through generations. Likewise, these strategies have their merits and have been effective. For example, by the words of Smith (2009) “one of the most common and recognized traditional strategies around the world will be the “Teacher-centered instruction” as it is known. This strategy consists of the teacher taking the central role in imparting knowledge, making decisions, and directing class activities and the students are expected to follow the teacher’s lead.” In addition, there are other traditional strategies that worked and still working on the education world, these strategies remain prevalent due to their simplicity and effectiveness in various learning environments, such as:

2.1.1. Lecture-Based Teaching

Is a traditional method where the teacher imparts knowledge through spoken communication, with students primarily acting as passive recipients of information. In this approach, students rely on their ability to absorb content and take notes, often with minimal interaction or

discussion. While it allows for the efficient transmission of large amounts of information, it may not fully engage students with critical thinking and most of the times students are encouraged to memorize facts without truly understanding them. Additionally, it may limit the development of essential skills such as collaboration and problem-solving. For this reason, it is necessary that teachers create more interactive and student-centered learning methods.

2.1.2. Textbook-Centered Learning

This is a basic strategy where students rely primarily on textbooks as the main source of information. In this method, students read textbooks to research the knowledge they need, complete exercises, and take tests based on the material provided in these books. For instance, Kahn (2015) mentioned that: “This approach emphasizes content mastery through reading and practice, often focusing on memorization and understanding of textbook material.” While textbooks provide a structured curriculum, this method can sometimes limit critical thinking and creativity, because students might be focused more on reproducing or collecting information rather than be deeply interested in the subject matter.

2.1.3. Standardized Testing

This traditional strategy involves administering tests that evaluate students’ knowledge and understanding of specific subjects. Typically, these tests are in a multiple-choice or short-answer format, which allows for the efficient assessment of content mastery. Additionally, Facione (2011) exposed that: “While these types of evaluations provide a straightforward way to measure students’ retention of information, they often focus on surface-level understanding rather than promoting critical thinking or deeper analysis. As a result, students may prioritize memorization over developing a more comprehensive grasp of the subject matter.” Which means that this learning strategy can hinder their ability to apply all of their knowledge in real-world situations

2.2. Innovative Teaching Strategies

Innovative teaching strategies are new forms of learning that seek to improve educational quality and encourage students’ reasoning, creativity and self-esteem, basically this consists in trying to prevent the teacher and student from continuing to build learning with traditional

models. The Cuban higher education magazine even says this: “the teacher and the students play non-traditional roles and mutual collaboration. It means that the teaching-learning process must be a reciprocal experience” (Superior, 2014, page 23). Therefore, Innovative strategies are proactive, forward-thinking approaches designed to address challenges, seize opportunities, and drive positive change. For example, there are many innovate strategies that can apply to help the student to get the knowledge easier like:

2.2.1 Flipped Classroom

In a flipped classroom, students review lecture content or educational materials independently outside of class, often through videos or online modules. Class time is then used for discussions, interactive activities, and problem-solving, allowing for deeper engagement with the material. This independent review outside of the classroom allows students to absorb the foundational knowledge at their own pace. Additionally, Bishop & Verleger (2013) highlighted that “this model fosters a more collaborative learning environment, encouraging students to work together and share insights during class. Teachers can provide targeted support and address individual questions, enhancing the overall learning experience.” For this reason, the flipped classroom approach encourages critical thinking skills and a greater sense of ownership over the learning process.

2.2.2. Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Involves students working on projects that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. These projects are often based on real-world issues and encourage students to apply their knowledge in practical ways. By working on these projects, students can apply their theoretical knowledge to tangible problems, enhancing their understanding and retention of the material. PBL encourages a deeper exploration of subjects, fostering skills such as research, teamwork, and communication. This method not only helps students grasp complex concepts but also prepares them for real-life challenges by bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application.

2.2.3. Personalized Learning

Personalized learning adapts instruction to individual students' needs, interests, and abilities. It often utilizes technology to provide adaptive content and assessments, allowing students

to progress at their own pace. By focusing on individual learning preferences and progress, personalized learning aims to maximize student engagement and effectiveness. This method allows for a more customized educational experience, helping each student to achieve their full potential by addressing their specific strengths and areas for improvement.

2.2.4. Gamification

Gamification incorporates game elements, such as points, badges, and leaderboards, into the learning process to make it more engaging and motivating. It can be applied to various subjects and age groups. By incorporating these game-like features, learning becomes more interactive and enjoyable, which can increase students' enthusiasm and participation. Gamification can be applied across a wide range of subjects and age groups, providing a dynamic and motivational approach to learning. This method leverages the principles of game design to foster a more immersive and rewarding educational experience.

2.2.5. Blended Learning

Blended learning combines traditional classroom instruction with online resources. This approach offers flexibility and can accommodate different learning styles. By integrating various learning modalities, blended learning can accommodate diverse learning styles and needs, providing a more personalized and effective learning environment. This combination of in-person and online elements helps to enhance student engagement and support varied educational preferences (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Finally, blended learning also allows students to be autonomous and take charge of their educational journeys, preparing them for a digital world and future success.

2.2.6. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL programs focus on developing students' emotional intelligence, empathy, and social skills, helping them navigate interpersonal relationships and manage emotions effectively. These programs help students understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. By focusing on emotional and social development, SEL equips students with essential life skills that improve their ability to interact effectively with others and handle challenges. For example, at the end of each week, students reflect on their experiences and discuss what they have learned about managing

emotions and building relationships (Hoffman, 2020). Moreover, students may share personal stories or provide feedback on their peers' interactions creating a very joy learning environment which they will feel free to share their thoughts and ideas.

3. Traditional strategies in Nicaragua

The traditional strategies in Nicaragua are one of the strengths that in combination with the innovative ones are those that implement the education system in the country. However, there are some factors that implies continuous use of this type of strategies since it has provided great results that favor the development and student environment, such as: Efficiency (Lecture-based teaching and textbook-centered learning can efficiently disseminate information to a large audience; this is especially valuable when introducing foundational concepts) and Content Retention (memorization and rote learning can be effective for retaining specific information, such as vocabulary or formulas). Otherwise, the most commons strategies that teachers implement in Nicaragua are:

3.1 Lecture-Based Teaching

Lecture-based teaching in Nicaragua represent the most common pedagogical strategy used by teachers, especially in high schools. This method is characterized by the teacher delivering content in a structured format, often relying on traditional lectures to convey information. While this approach allows the efficient transmission of knowledge to groups with a high number of students, it often limits student engagement or active participation. Many educators face challenges in adapting their teaching styles to foster critical thinking and discussion, which can develop students' ability to apply concepts in scenarios from real life.

Despite its limitations, lecture-based teaching in Nicaragua has some advantages. In many rural areas, teachers have limitations to access to educational material, so they adapt to their sceneries to foster knowledge quickly (Antonja & Luna, 2021). Additionally, the popularity of this strategy provides a sense of structure for students who may be not familiarized to more interactive forms of learning. However, it is necessary to highlight that they need to incorporate more diverse teaching strategies that promote active learning and collaboration.

3.2 Teacher-Centered Instruction

Teacher-centered instruction in Nicaragua has traditionally dominated the educational landscape, where the teacher often takes the central role in the learning process. In this model, teachers deliver information directly to students, who are expected to repeat and memorize the information. This strategy has an historical context in our country because has been used since early generations, where limited resources and large classroom sizes required a more directive teaching style. For this reason, make that students depend just on the information given by teachers can limit the development of critical thinking and creativity.

Alternatively, during the last years MINED has encouraged teachers to employ more student-centered approaches in their education process. By incorporating interactive methods, such as group work and hands-on activities, teachers can motivate students to take an active role in their learning. This transition is particularly important in our country because the main purpose of MINED is to cultivate skills that align with the needs of a rapidly changing world. (Salazar, 2021). Embracing student-centered instruction can ultimately help prepare Nicaraguan youth to navigate the challenges of the future with greater confidence and creativity.

3.3 Standardized Testing

Standardized testing in Nicaragua represents one of the most common strategies that teachers apply in the country. Moreover, these assessments are often used to measure educational quality across various regions. However, critics argue that there are many inequalities in this process, particularly in rural areas where resources and teacher training may be lacking. The pressure to perform well on these tests can also lead to a narrow focus on rote memorization rather than fostering critical thinking and creativity among students.

Overall, traditional strategies in education have played a vital role in building a foundation of knowledge and skills. They continue to serve as valuable tools, especially for introducing fundamental concepts and maintaining consistency in educational settings. However, it is essential to recognize their limitations and the evolving needs of modern learners. "The current educational system is posed as a pyramid, from top to bottom, with teachers up and students down. Now it is necessary to change this method of the nineteenth century for an

associative model: students and teachers must establish alliances, listen to each other" (Moore, 2010). Which means that teachers need to innovate their teaching method and create alternatives that end up beneficial for both sides.

4. Innovative Strategies in Nicaragua

Education in Nicaragua has shown great progress during the last 11 years, and every day there are more advances with the implementation of new programs that allow development and quality in all fields of teaching. In this case with more opportunities for the implementation of innovative strategies such as the creation of virtual rooms, lesson plans where the student is the author and the teacher is the guide, among others. Likewise, it has been revealed that the teacher faces various situations and obstacles when teaching classes. Therefore, it can be added what was said by Sikandar (2015) " when teachers are in a classroom, they face a problem or many uncontrollable situations before which they must define a series of strategies ". In another side, these will be the innovative strategies that are applying in Nicaragua:

4.1 Flipped Classroom

In a flipped classroom, students review lecture content or educational materials independently outside of class, often through videos or online modules. Class time is then used for discussions, interactive activities, and problem-solving, allowing for deeper engagement with the material. For example, in Nicaragua, the flipped classroom model has been successfully implemented in some schools to address challenges related to limited classroom time and varying student needs. At the "Instituto Nacional de Educación" in Managua, teachers have used locally developed educational videos and online platforms to introduce new concepts. Students review these materials at home, and class time is then dedicated to interactive activities, such as group discussions and hands-on projects related to the topics covered (Rivera, 2022). This method allows teachers to provide personalized support during class, addressing individual students' questions and needs in real-time. Additionally, it fosters a more student-centered learning environment, where students come prepared to apply and expand on what they have learned independently. By integrating multimedia resources and adapting content to local contexts, the flipped classroom approach

helps to enhance student engagement and comprehension, making education more effective and accessible in Nicaragua.

4.2 Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Involves students working on projects that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. These projects are often based on real-world issues and encourage students to apply their knowledge in practical ways. For example, in Nicaragua, a PBL initiative might involve students working on a project to develop sustainable solutions for local environmental challenges, such as waste management or water conservation. One notable implementation of PBL in Nicaragua can be seen in initiatives like the "Green Schools Program" which encourages students to participate in projects aimed at improving their school's sustainability practices (UNESCO, 2017). In other words, by employing these projects that address real local issues, students can connect their academic learning with real-world applications, and as a result they can foster a deeper understanding of the subject matter and a greater sense of community involvement.

4.3 Gamification:

Gamification incorporates game elements, such as points, badges, and leaderboards, into the learning process to make it more engaging and motivating. It can be applied to various subjects and age groups. In Nicaragua, gamification has been increasingly applied in classrooms to stimulate student interest and participation. An example of this in practice is the use of "Kahoot!" a popular game-based learning platform that allows teachers to create quizzes and interactive games related to their subjects. Students can compete individually or in teams, earning points for correct answers and strategic thinking (Jiménez, 2019). This not only makes learning more dynamic but also helps teachers assess students' understanding in real-time. Gamification in Nicaragua has proven effective in increasing student motivation and improving educational outcomes by transforming traditional learning activities into engaging and interactive experiences.

4.4 Blended Learning

Blended learning combines traditional classroom instruction with online resources. This approach offers flexibility and can accommodate different learning styles. In Nicaragua,

blended learning has been adopted to enhance educational experiences and address challenges related to access and resources. For instance, some Nicaraguan schools have implemented blended learning by incorporating online platforms such as Google Classroom or Moodle alongside traditional teaching methods. Students may complete assignments, participate in discussions, and access supplementary resources online, while class time is used for hands-on activities, collaborative projects, and personalized feedback from teachers (Ortega, 2021). An example of blended learning in practice in Nicaragua includes the use of a virtual learning environment where students can access video lectures, digital textbooks, and interactive exercises.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, innovative strategies are the driving force behind progress in the modern world because they empower individuals, organizations and societies to adapt to change, overcome challenges and seize new opportunities. Currently, all traditional strategies are considered effective to be used in classrooms, teachers are constantly using them to strengthen the teaching-learning process in students of different grades of primary and secondary school. In the context of pedagogical practices, it has been shown that speaking strategies are essential for the development of linguistic skills in students. In the words of Díaz Buitrago (2023) “Teaching programs based on English methodologies and strategies are designed to encourage oral practice and thus improve fluency and confidence when speaking in the language”. In addition, speaking is used as an evaluation tool to measure the level of linguistic competence of the students and their progress over time, which the development of speaking is one of the most important elements in the acquisition of a second language since it is a productive skill that is part of the formative elements of the English language.

Regarding the strategies that are considered in the teaching-learning process of a language, they are very important, since all of them are what allow students to correctly use that language in different situations. In other words, this refers to speech, the use of language to communicate orally, keeping in mind pronunciation and fluency, which must be worked in the development of this skill. Therefore, “there are a series of strategies for teaching speaking that can be used with students, for example, the continued use of English in the classroom, always using the language you want to teach; reinforcing the speech with non-verbal

language, images.” (UNIR, 2022). By creating a well-structured teaching learning process, students can develop speaking skills easier and have fun in the process.

Anthropologists are considered the first to dedicate themselves to the study of non-verbal language, although indirectly. As a result, “non-verbal language is made up of a multitude of symbols in which different parts of our body and even elements foreign to the body itself intervene, this depends on their communicative intention; paralinguistics, kinesics, chronemics and proxemics” (Gonzalo Gómez, 2017). Due to this, knowing the elements of non-verbal communication has special relevance in the educational field since it can help us develop strategies to achieve effective communication. So, linking strategies with non-verbal language, plus the continued use of English would help the student develop their speaking skills and their cognitive part when learning and discerning meaning in playful activities in the classroom.

Thus, use motivating material adapted to students to encourage their participation and promote their learning. Teacher Stockholm from University of Ontario (2022) stated: “The teaching of foreign languages has until now focused on verbal elements over non-verbal ones. Learning based solely on verbal will limit communication to certain contexts, in this case the classroom, so students will consider the foreign language to communicate in a “fictional” context and will have difficulties communicating naturally” (p.13). Put it another way, talking with people who know this language outside the classroom is a good alternative to encourage students to improve their speaking skills. This happens because when we communicate, we not only do it with words, but we also use gestures, expressions and postures that convey what we want to express.

Likewise, listen to the language in different contexts; films, articles and audios is of utmost importance within the strategies to improve speaking skills and develop the comprehensive part of the language and the encoding of the message, because students do not decode the message, they will not be able to communicate and develop linguistic skills as such. Regarding this, Yubero (2010) tells us the following: “FL teachers have always been very attentive to awakening the interest of their students through all types of motivating teaching strategies. From the flannel gram and flash cards to the new multimedia resources available on the web, it is, in any case, about taking advantage of the available resources to develop

useful audiovisual teaching applications in our classrooms” (p.12). However, teachers have chosen to mix these strategies with technology, and thus improve student learning.

Nowadays, information technologies are increasingly present in education; they allow greater and easier access to information, materials, games and other useful resources in the daily life of a classroom. García Faura, (2002), in his book *Video in the classroom* (p. 34) mentioned: “The official educational institution no longer has a monopoly on education, a series of competitors have emerged in which in most cases they address the student in a much more attractive and pleasant way. This is a real situation that must be assumed by educators and taken into account when considering their teaching strategies”. Therefore, based on what Teacher Stockholm alludes to, students receive information from their entire environment and, for the most part, from audio-visual materials, so it is of utmost importance that teachers take audio material into account within their visual strategies.

In relation to the application of the subject of English as a second language, it has been, since its inception, a challenge for education in Nicaragua, the lack of specialist teachers in the subject, the application of programs out of context, were one of the main weaknesses. Consequently, the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education (MINED) oversees the content to be taught in the classroom but are teachers who decide what other resources they can use to help increase understanding and develop the desired skills in the classroom. These types of resources, such as audiovisual resources, help with student creativity and help teachers teach the content required by the Ministry of Education in an easier and more creative way for students. ICT classrooms (aulas TIC) offer us a variety of resources to support teaching processes such as: teaching materials, interactive software, virtual environments, internet, blogs, wikis, forums, chat, messaging, video conferences and other communication and information management channels. These resources facilitate the development of creativity, innovation, and collaborative work environments, promoting meaningful, active and flexible learning.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Type

Based on the procedures applied during the creation process of this research, we determine that this is a diagnostic research. Diagnostic research in education symbolizes a very important tool for the understanding of specific learning needs and challenges faced by teachers and students during the teaching-learning process. According to Cage (2018): “Diagnostic research helps educators make informed decisions adapted to the unique needs of their students, ensuring that the process applied by teacher is both effective and relevant.” Additionally, the primary purpose of diagnostic research is to identify gaps in knowledge, skills, and attitudes that can cause limitations in the academic success.

In the same way, by employing various data collection tools, such as surveys, assessments, and observational studies, educators can gather data that provides insights into student performance and potential barriers to learning. In fact, one significant benefit of diagnostic research is its ability to inform instructional practices and curricular development. When educators identify their students’ opportunity areas, they can adapt their teaching strategies to better meet those needs. As noted by Tomlinson (2001): “This responsive approach not only enhances student learning outcomes but also fosters a more inclusive classroom environment where diverse learners can thrive.” For example, if research indicates that a particular group of students is having difficulty with a particular area, educators can implement new strategies or adjust their lesson plans according to their student’s needs.

Consistently, diagnostic research represents a crucial role to promote collaboration among educators, administrators, and researchers. By sharing findings and insights from diagnostic research and observations, schools can engage in meaningful discussions about student learning and determine the resources that they need to achieve their goal. As highlighted by Fullan (2018): When schools work together based on diagnostic research, they create a stronger, more equitable educational system that prioritizes the success of all students. In sum, diagnostic research serves as a base for future research since provides valuable information collected by different data collection tools.

Also, the following research has a qualitative approach. We decided to employ this approach because it fits with the purpose of our research. As mentioned by Aspers (2019): “A qualitative research focus on an involving, interpretive and naturalistic approach to its subject

matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” In other words, through qualitative methodology we would have the chance to analyze the responses given by students in real time and generate valuable information about our topic.

In addition, through a qualitative approach we will be able to collect non-numerical information to produce insights. As mentioned by Hyginus (2023): “During the exploratory phases of a study, educators use qualitative research to find patterns or fresh perspectives. Qualitative research is concerned with feelings, ideas, or experiences. Finding insights that can result in testable hypotheses is the main goal of the data collection, which is frequently done in narrative form.” In the same manner, our research has a qualitative approach because all the instruments that we applied allow us to understand the experiences, behaviors and interactions between teacher and students from Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School.

In addition, this research is descriptive because through this documentation we describe the reality of the students from Pablo Antonio Cuadra High school especially in English. In the same way, we describe all the resources, strategies and techniques that the teacher applied for the development of English skills on students and the effectiveness of each one based on the results obtained.

2. Population and Sample

2.1 Population

Population refers to the total group of individuals sharing a common characteristic, often defined by factors such as geography, demographics, or specific attributes. In the context of documentation and education research, understanding population is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it enables researchers to identify and categorize subjects for study, ensuring that findings are relevant and representative. This is essential for drawing accurate conclusions and making informed decisions. Additionally, studying populations helps in recognizing trends, behaviors, and needs within specific groups, which can guide educational policies and practices. It also facilitates the evaluation of educational interventions by allowing comparisons across different populations.

Moreover, a well-defined population serves as the foundation for systematic inquiry, enhancing the reliability and applicability of research outcomes. For example, Pablo Antonio Cuadra School offers high school education to a diverse student body, including teenagers across various school ages, typically ranging from 14 to 18 years old. This diversity reflects the broader demographic trends in the area, which include a mix of socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural identities.

For this research, we interacted with teachers and students from the 9th grade of Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School. This specific classroom is structured with 35 students, representing a cross-section of the school's overall population. By examining this group, we aim to draw insights that are relevant not only to these students but also to similar populations within the school, contributing to a deeper understanding of educational needs and interventions.

2.2 Sample

In the context of documentation research, a sample refers to a representative subset of a larger population selected for study. This practice is crucial since allows researchers to gather insights and data without the impracticality of assessing an entire population. By analyzing a sample, researchers can identify trends, test hypotheses, and make informed conclusions about broader educational practices or documentation methods. The purpose of utilizing a sample is to enhance the reliability and validity of research findings, ensuring that they are generalizable to the wider context. Furthermore, a well-chosen sample can highlight specific demographics or characteristics within the population, leading to more targeted recommendations. Sampling also facilitates efficiency, saving time and resources while still yielding meaningful results. In education research, effective sampling is essential for advancing knowledge and informing practices in both documentation and education. For example, to collect information for our research we selected a sample. In other words, from the 35 students of 9th grade, a sample of 20 students will be taken to provide evidence of their opinions on the implementation and effectiveness of traditional strategies in speaking skills and to help analyze the effectiveness of innovative strategies that can be implemented by the teacher in the classroom.

2.3 Sample Selection Criteria

The type of sample is non-probabilistic, this means that the sample is intentional and had the purpose of giving answers to the research questions as a part of the proposed objectives based on the nature of study chosen by the research team. In the qualitative approach, the samples respond more to the idea of a non-probabilistic sample, the selection procedures respond more to the judgment of the probabilistic. In other words, the selection procedures respond more to the researcher's judgment and convenience, among others. In this case, this sample has been considered because the population is small and what is important is to consider the opinion of the protagonists of this research regarding the use of traditional strategies and how innovative strategies can provide a significant contribution to the development of speaking skills in students. The sample used was 25 students from the 9th grade and an English teacher of the Pablo Antonio Cuadra School during the second semester of the year 2023.

3. Data Collection Tools

3.1 Methods

To collect all the information required by the objectives of this research, we employed the analytical method. According to Aragon (2020): “The analytical method is the ability of studying objects, people or actions in a detailed and intelligent manner in order to reach conclusions. It might imply the use of scientific exploration to examine something.” In a similar manner, the analytical method helps to explain the reasons why and how the trade deficit has moved in a specific direction within the given time. The analytical method in educational research serves as a crucial framework for examining complex phenomena within the learning environment. As mentioned by Creswell (2018) “By systematically breaking down educational processes, this method allows researchers to identify patterns, relationships, and underlying principles that govern student learning and teacher effectiveness.” On the other hand, through quantitative analysis researchers can assess the impact of various factors on educational outcomes, enabling data-driven decisions.

Furthermore, analytical methods facilitate the evaluation of existing theories and the development of new models that can inform educational practice and also contribute to evidence-based policymaking, ensuring that interventions are grounded in solid empirical

foundations (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Likewise, some advantages from this method are the transparency between the results and the input data. In order to gather valuable data for our diagnostic research, we applied a combination of observational techniques, interviews, and surveys. Each of these instruments played a crucial role in providing different types of insights that contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the research subject. Observations allowed us to directly capture behaviors, interactions, and patterns within the natural setting, offering real-time data that revealed how certain phenomena unfold in their authentic context. This method was particularly useful for identifying non-verbal cues and actions that participants might not explicitly mention or recognize themselves.

Interviews, on the other hand, provided a more in-depth and personal perspective. Through some questions and structured conversation, we were able to record the teacher's thoughts, experiences, and motivations. The data gathered through the interview enriched our analysis by offering subjective viewpoints and personal narratives, which were essential for understanding the underlying causes of the observed behaviors or issues. These insights also allowed us to follow up on initial findings from the observations, leading to a deeper exploration of specific concerns that emerged.

Surveys complemented both observations and interviews by providing valuable data that could be analyzed statistically. This tool helped us gather responses from our sample (20 students) allowing us to identify trends, patterns, and correlations. By including a mix of closed ended (multiple-choice) and open-ended questions, our surveys ensured that we could measure key variables in a consistent way, facilitating the comparison of responses across different points of view from students and their experiences in the classroom.

These three tools (observation, interview, and survey) worked synergistically in our diagnostic research, each addressing different aspects of the research questions. The observation provided the foundation of data, while the interview helped us to interpret and understand that data from the perspective of the teacher. On the other hand, the Survey allowed us to validate and generalize the findings. Together, these instruments enabled us to apply analytical methods to not only acknowledge any limitations in our analysis but also to discuss their potential impact on the interpretation of our results.

CATEGORY SYSTEM

CATEGORY SYSTEM			
<p>Research Topic: Use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023.</p>			
<p>General Objective: Analyze the use of innovative strategies to develop speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023.</p>			
Specific Objectives	Methods and Design		Comments
- Diagnose the most common strategies used by teachers in the teaching of speaking skills.	Observation Guide	Items 3, 5, 6 & 7	
- Describe the innovative strategies for developing of speaking skills.	Interview	Items 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 & 9	
- Propose innovative strategies to develop speaking skills in students.	Survey	Items from section 3	

3.2 Data Collection Tools

3.2.1 Observation Guide

Observation provides the opportunity to monitor or assess a specific process or situation and document evidence of what is seen and heard. According to Hassan (2023) “Observation is the process of collecting and recording data by observing and noting events, behaviors, or phenomena in a systematic and objective manner”. For that reason, the Observation Guide provides us with some questions to think about the teaching strategies that we observed in the classroom. Furthermore, we reviewed the notes from the class using the observation guide, through 8 parameters we identified the teaching activities that were particularly successful in driving students’ engagement and deeper thinking.

3.2.2 Interview

Interviewing for research is so much more than just a conversation. Actually, through interviews researchers can gather information that allows them to analyze the experiences of the participants starting with their responses. Furthermore Peters & Halcomb (2015) adds: “As the participant responds, the researcher collects powerful data that may provide insights into the participants’ experiences, perceptions or opinions”. In addition, the interview is one the most popular types of instruments used by researchers because it is more adaptable in different scenarios and may be used in qualitative and diagnostic research or even in mixed research. Our interview was structured by 10 questions that allow us to gather information about the teacher’s methodologies and strategies applied during the class.

3.2.3 Survey

A survey is a systematic method of gathering data from a predefined group of respondents, often used to collect information on attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics. Also, they typically involve the use of structured questionnaires, which can be distributed through various means, such as online forms, phone calls, or in-person interactions (Fink, 2017). In diagnostic research, surveys are incredibly useful as they allow researchers to collect large amounts of data quickly and efficiently from a target population. This helps in identifying patterns, understanding issues, and making informed decisions about potential causes or solutions to a problem. Our survey includes a mix of closed ended (multiple-choice) and

open-ended questions to allow for detailed insights. It focuses on students' current experiences, opinions on innovative strategies, and challenges they face when speaking English. Moreover, the questions are designed to be clear and accessible for ninth-grade students, avoiding overly complex language.

4. Instruments Validation

4.1 Credibility

The credibility of the data collection tools in research refers to how reliable and trustworthy the tools or instruments used to gather data are in producing valid and accurate results on source credibility. As mentioned by Lombardi, Seyranian, & Sinatra in the previous passages; reflect the concept being studied, and how effectively they capture the data in a consistent manner. In the present research, we focused on the expertise dimension, which refers to “making sure the questions will be neutral, the process will be standardized, and data collection will be done in a way that do not lead to skewed results.” (Pornpitakpan, 2006). For this reason, we ensured that the tools that we were using to gather information were sound, effective, and trustworthy, in order to contribute to the overall integrity and rigor of our research topic and research objectives.

4.2 Reliability

One of the important measures of quality in diagnostic research is the reliability of the instruments. In the words of Heale (2016) “Reliability is the extent to which a research instrument consistently has the same results if it is used in the same situation on repeated occasions”. This concept is crucial in diagnostic, qualitative and analytic research, as it ensures that the findings are reliable and not partial information of a particular moment or context. We as future educators, are totally aware that if a tool isn't reliable, it cannot be valid either. For this reason, we followed a process of validation of the data collection tools where our tutors from UNAN - Managua read, analyzed and validated the veracity of the data collection tools that were applied during the process.

4.3 Triangulation

In the same way “Triangulation refers to the usage of different resources or data collections methods to develop a comprehensive understanding of the problem statement” (Donovan,

2018). In other words, the concept of triangulation originates from the idea that no single method or tool is perfect, but by combining different approaches, researchers can cross-check and corroborate data, leading to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the research problem. The triangulation method applied in our research strength the credibility and richness of our research findings by confirming results across different tools or methods.

5. Analysis and Results

The analysis of the data collected for this research on the use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in ninth-grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School in the second semester of 2023 revealed significant insights into both current practices and areas for improvement. A combination of an observation guide, teacher interview, and students survey were used to gather a comprehensive understanding of the existing strategies in the classroom, their effectiveness, and potential for innovation. The qualitative and analytical approach applied in our research provided a robust framework for assessing our research objectives and allowed for a detailed examination of the teaching practices and student engagement in speaking activities.

The observation guide was the first tool applied to understand the real-time strategies used by the teacher in the classroom. This research tool was applied two times since we needed to know the dynamic between the teacher and students in the classroom, the first observation was done on October 18th and the second was done on October 25th, 2023. On the other hand, this observation was focused on diagnose the most common strategies used by the teacher in the teaching of speaking skills, on how actively students participate in the development of the class, the level of confidence within their classmates and teacher when they speak in English, and also how often the teacher provides feedback to students. Through this guide, we found that most of the time teacher and students used their mother tongue, and when teacher was speaking in English, students partially assimilate what do teacher was explaining, and this pattern was the same in both observations. Moreover, the activities applied during the class were often limited to listening and repeat activities or reading exercises that provided few chances for creative expression or spontaneous communication. Additionally, the nature of these activities did not encourage student interactions, which may have limited the real development of speaking skills.

The teacher interview provided more detailed information about the strategies used in the classroom and the teacher's perspective on innovative approaches to teaching speaking skills. According to the teacher, a key challenge was the limited resources available to implement more interactive and engaging speaking activities. While the teacher acknowledged the importance of speaking skills, they indicated that traditional methods were often the most feasible due to time constraints and curriculum demands. Interestingly, the teacher expressed an openness to incorporating more innovative strategies if given the proper support, resources, and professional development opportunities. With the obtained responses from teacher's interview, we were able to describe the innovative strategies that can be employed by the teacher for developing speaking skills in high school education.

The students' survey was designed to get more information about their experiences and perceptions related to the speaking activities that the teacher applies in the classroom and the effectiveness of these strategies to develop their speaking skills. While some students enjoy oral presentations, many of them stated felt partially uncomfortable, especially when they need to participate in activities which they need to speak in front of their class. In the same way, a significant portion of students also reported that practice their speaking with their classmates, the implementation of technology and interactive activities during the English class would help them to improve their speaking skills. With the obtained responses from the students' survey, we were able to propose some innovative strategies to develop speaking skills and also describe how these strategies can be adapted for the learning process at the high school level, especially with 9th grade students from Pablo Antonio Cuadra School.

To contrast, the analysis of the collected data from the teacher interview and students survey revealed a clear mismatch between the current teaching strategies and the students' needs and preferences. Students expressed a desire for more varied and interactive speaking tasks that would allow them to improve their speaking skills, rather than just scripted dialogues or presentations. They also mentioned the need for more feedback from the teacher and also the implementation of group activities, as they felt these provided more opportunities for meaningful communication and lessened the pressure of speaking in front of the whole class. In terms of innovative strategies, our research highlighted several methods that could potentially enhance the development of speaking skills. These strategies included flipped

classroom, Project-Based Learning, Gamification (the use of technology such as language-learning apps or online discussion platforms) and Blended Learning which include a mix of them. Students expressed interest in using digital tools to practice speaking in more informal and creative settings, such as recording and sharing videos or participating in online discussions with students from other classrooms. These strategies not only attend to the students' technological interests but also promote autonomous learning and provide more opportunities for practice outside the classroom.

Moreover, the analysis also pointed to the need for greater teacher training on innovative strategies for teaching speaking. While the teacher in this study was open to implementing new methods, there was a clear indication that professional development focused on innovative language teaching techniques could significantly improve the teaching of speaking skills. Teachers may benefit from workshops or training on how to integrate communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and other student-centered methodologies into their lessons to foster a more dynamic and engaging speaking environment.

Furthermore, our research found that a more flexible and student-centered approach to speaking instruction could lead to better engagement and improvement in speaking proficiency. By incorporating activities that allow students to use English in authentic contexts such as problem-solving tasks, peer teaching, and real-world simulations, students would not only develop their speaking skills but also enhance their confidence in using the language in various scenarios. The integration of these strategies could also help address the fear and anxiety that many students expressed regarding public speaking, as smaller group interactions and informal settings are often less intimidating.

In conclusion, the data collected from the observation guide, teacher interview, and students survey highlighted both strengths and areas for improvement in the current teaching practices at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School. While traditional methods were still prevalent, there was a clear desire from both students and the teacher to explore and implement more innovative and interactive strategies that would enhance speaking proficiency. The findings suggest that with the introduction of more student-centered activities, the integration of

technology, and ongoing professional development for teachers, the development of speaking skills in ninth-grade students could be significantly improved in future lessons.

Based on these results, several recommendations can be made. First, teachers should be encouraged to incorporate a wider variety of innovative strategies, such as task-based learning, debates, and interactive digital tools, into their teaching repertoire. Second, professional development opportunities should be provided to teachers to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to implement these strategies effectively. Finally, school administrators should consider allocating more time and resources to support these innovative approaches, allowing for the development of a more dynamic and engaging learning environment that fosters the growth of speaking skills in students.

5.1 Observation Guide

We had the chance to visit and interact with 9th students three times and were expected to apply the observation guide three times as well. However, the observation guide was applied twice since the last day that we visited the school, the students were participating in a sport fair, and that fair affected the class schedule. For that reason, the observation guide was just applied on October 18th and October 25th.

1. The students consider their teacher as a guide who provides knowledge and as a model to follow during development of the class.



By analyzing the results from our observation guide, we observed significant shifts in student behavior across the two observation periods. During the first observation, the majority of students consistently regarded their teacher as a primary source of knowledge and a model for behavior throughout the class. This dynamic was evident as students frequently turned to the teacher for guidance. The teacher was perceived as an authority figure who not only provided information but also modeled behaviors and attitudes that the students seemed to adopt in their own learning process. However, in the second observation, this pattern of

behavior diminished substantially. Students were less inclined to view the teacher as a central figure of guidance or a model to imitate. This shift may suggest a change in the classroom dynamics, possibly influenced by evolving teaching strategies, changes in the teacher's role, or shifts in student autonomy. The results between the two observations indicates a notable transformation in the way students interacted with their teacher, highlighting the fluid nature of the teacher-student relationship and the possible influence of teaching methods or student engagement levels over time.

2. The students can build a positive classroom environment by avoiding distractions allowing for effective topic developed.



In the same way, during the first observation, the students consistently demonstrated the ability to create a positive and focused classroom environment. They effectively avoided distractions, allowing for smooth transitions between activities and enabling the teacher to develop topics with minimal interruption. This positive behavior ensured that the lesson flowed without significant disruptions, and the overall classroom dynamic contributed to an effective teaching-learning process. However, the second observation revealed a noticeable change in student behavior. During this session, the students' behavior was not the same; there were many interruptions in the lesson, the flow of the topic was disrupted, and the teacher faced challenges in regaining the attention of the students. These distractions resulted in a less productive atmosphere, with the classroom environment becoming less conducive to effective topic development. This change in student behavior between the two observations highlights the variability in classroom dynamics and suggests that factors such as classroom management, student engagement, or external influences may have contributed to the contrasting outcomes.

3. The students follow what the teacher is explaining in order to understand the topic being developed.



Moreover, the observation guide revealed significant insights into the students' comprehension and engagement during the lessons. In both observations, it was evident that the students demonstrated a minimal ability to follow the teacher's explanations in English, there were clear challenges in their understanding. To address these difficulties and ensure that the students assimilate the topic being developed, the teacher decided to switch to Spanish, the students' native language. This shift allowed for clearer communication, as the teacher could explain complex concepts and instructions in the students' mother tongue, facilitating better comprehension. Despite the teacher's efforts, the minimal engagement and the need for language switching suggest that the students' proficiency in the instructional language may be insufficient for independent understanding of the material. These findings highlight a potential barrier in language acquisition, where the reliance on the native language for clarity may indicate that the students require additional support or instruction in the development of speaking skills to fully engage with the curriculum.

4. The students employed or associate their previous knowledge to organize and produce ideas.



Additionally, the observation guides also revealed significant insights into the students' cognitive and learning processes. In the first observation, it was evident that the students faced difficulties connecting their prior knowledge when attempting to organize and produce their ideas. This difficulty was particularly noticeable when they were expected to respond

to oral questions related to the previous topic and the new topic. In contrast, during the second observation, although the students showed an attempt to engage with the material, their effort was minimal. It was clear that while they made some effort to understand the content, their engagement seemed to lack, they were able to start their statements in English but when they forgot how to pronounce a word, they finished the statement in Spanish. Ultimately, while there was some improvement in their approach from the first to the second observation, the overall results suggest that the students faced challenges in both activating and applying their prior knowledge to share their ideas orally in English.

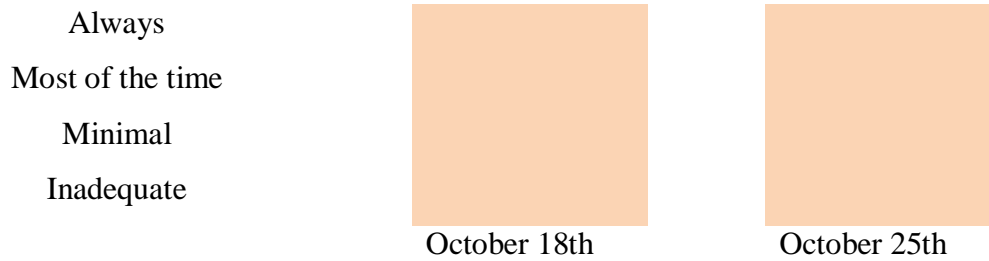
5. The students pay attention and participate in the development of the class by interact with the teacher and their peers.



Continuously, during the first observation, it was evident that the students exhibited minimal attention and engagement throughout the lesson. They showed few interactions with both the teacher and their peers, often appearing disengaged. This lack of participation was especially apparent during moments when the teacher asked questions in English. Additionally, students were more focused on their personal tasks or distractions than collaborative learning.

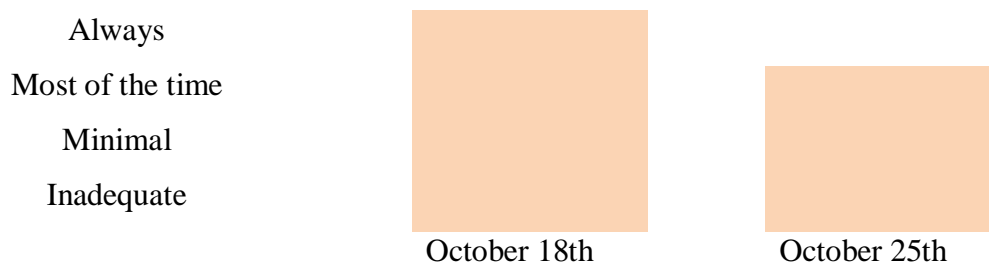
However, during the second observation, students were more consistently attentive, with most of them actively following the lesson and demonstrating a higher level of engagement. The students paid closer attention to the teacher's explanations and participated more frequently in class discussions, also, they have tried to produce full statements in English and were more responsive to the teacher's questions. Furthermore, students were seen collaborating more effectively during group tasks, however the fear to make mistakes when they were speaking in English was evident. Besides that, the second observation showed a clear improvement in student participation and attention, suggesting that either the teaching methods, classroom dynamics, or student familiarity with the content contributed to this positive change.

6. Students fear making mistakes and feel embarrassed or worried about criticism from classmates.



Surprisingly, in both observations we found that students exhibited a constantly fear of making mistakes when speaking in English. This concern about being judged by their peers was evidenced when several students were visibly uncomfortable to speak in English. Throughout both sessions, students were observed looking to their classmates for approval or showing signs of distress when they felt their responses might be incorrect. This apprehension about potential ridicule or correction created a barrier to active participation, limiting the flow of communication in the classroom and impeding their confidence in using English. On the other hand, the students asked for teacher's feedback, however teacher was not willing to offer feedback, most of the times, the students who have better speaking skills were providing feedback to the rest of their peers, teacher just limited themselves to approve or disapprove these suggestions without giving more structured feedback, which we found an unusual practice during the teaching-learning process.

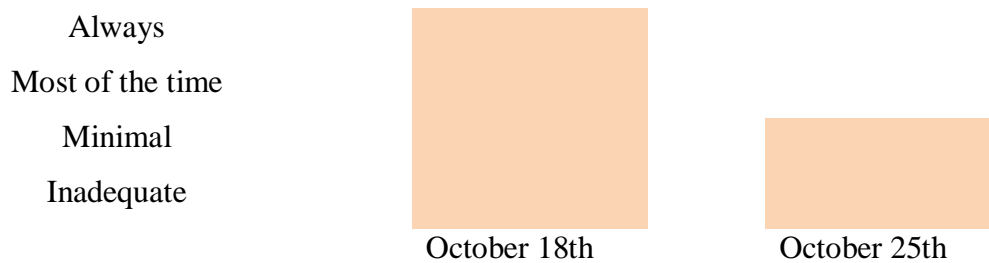
7. The students are open to the teacher's feedback to improve their pronunciation and grammar mistakes.



Moreover, during the first observation, students demonstrated a clear openness to receiving teacher feedback, actively seeking guidance to improve their English pronunciation and grammar when speaking. They appeared receptive to corrections and seemed motivated to incorporate suggestions into their speech, highlighting a strong teacher-student interaction and a willingness to refine their language skills. However, during the second observation, the

dynamic was totally different. The students who had opportunity areas with their pronunciation and grammar had become less reliant on the teacher for feedback. Instead, students with stronger speaking abilities took on a more prominent role, offering corrective feedback to their peers on pronunciation and word usage. In this context, the teacher's role appeared to be more passive, as they only intervened occasionally, responding with brief affirmations of "yes" or "no" rather than offering detailed corrections or guidance. This shift suggests a growing level of peer collaboration and a more autonomous approach to language learning, where students with higher proficiency are taking on leadership roles in facilitating their peers' language development. We assimilate this approach with the collective learning, however, considering that most of students had difficulties and teacher was not providing detailed corrections, we consider that this procedure is not the best practice to develop speaking skills in students.

8. The students frequently use their mother tongue in the activities.



In the same manner, during the first observation, it became clear that the students heavily relied on their mother tongue, Spanish, throughout the lesson activities. While teacher was providing instructions in English, most students were not comprehending the material, prompting the teacher to switch to Spanish in order to ensure basic understanding. As a result, the classroom environment was largely dominated by Spanish, both in peer interactions and teacher-student communication.

In contrast, during the second observation, there was a noticeable improvement in the students' use of English. Although Spanish was still used minimally, the students appeared more motivated to use English. It became evident that students with stronger speaking abilities in English were actively supporting their classmates, offering feedback and assisting in the formation of more structured sentences. This peer-led support created a more collaborative atmosphere where students were more willing to take risks and produce English

sentences, even if imperfect. However, the teacher's role in providing feedback was less interactive. Instead of offering structured guidance or corrective feedback, the teacher primarily responded with simple affirmations like "yes" or "no" when students attempted to provide feedback to their peers. This lack of detailed, formative feedback left much of the responsibility for language development on the students themselves, particularly those with stronger English skills. Despite this, the overall improvement in student engagement and language use in English was notable, indicating that peer interaction and encouragement played a significant role in facilitating language development in this context.

5.2 Interview

From the interview, it is evident that one of the key motivating factors mentioned is the connection between speaking English and students' overall evaluation. However, the effectiveness of this motivation strategy depends on students' individual attitudes toward English and their perceived relevance of the language to their lives. One major issue identified is that students often feel shy or embarrassed to speak in English, which is a common problem in language acquisition. This is a significant barrier to improving speaking skills, as students are hesitant to engage in conversation for fear of making mistakes. This finding aligns with common language learning challenges where learners lack confidence in their speaking abilities, often due to fear of judgment or not being able to pronounce words correctly. The challenge of overcoming shyness and pronunciation issues requires a more supportive and encouraging learning environment.

In addition, the teacher utilizes strategies to address students' pronunciation and speaking difficulties, such as role plays, conversations, and readings. These traditional methods are aimed at increasing students' exposure to spoken language and providing a more interactive platform for practice. Role plays, in particular, are a significant tool for engaging students in real-life scenarios, allowing them to practice their speaking in context. The inclusion of tongue twisters is another method to target pronunciation, helping students with specific sounds and improving their fluency. While these methods are effective, the teacher's responses suggest that there may be a need for more innovative or varied strategies to further enhance student engagement and address the barriers of pronunciation more effectively.

Nonetheless, the teacher mentions incorporating games such as "El lápiz hablante" into their lessons as a way to engage students and make speaking activities more entertaining. The implementation of games (Gamification) is one of the best innovative strategies that aims to make speaking practice enjoyable, helping to reduce students' anxiety around speaking. Games provide a dynamic and interactive learning experience, which can break the monotony of traditional classroom activities. By incorporating elements of play, the teacher is able to create a more relaxed environment where students feel more comfortable practicing their speaking skills. However, the response lacks further details on how frequently these games are used and how effective they are in overcoming the challenges of students' needs.

In the same manner, a recurring theme mentioned by teacher in the interview is the lack of student interest in English. This disinterest creates a major barrier to improving speaking skills, as motivation plays a crucial role in language acquisition. This finding suggests that there is a need for strategies that make English more relatable and engaging, such as incorporating students' interests into lesson plans, connecting language learning to real-world applications, or using more technology-driven approaches. While the teacher expresses an interest in using ICT (Information and Communication Technology) tools to enhance speaking activities, they report that the lack of availability of these resources limits their ability to implement them effectively. The potential of technology to create innovative language learning environments cannot be overstated, as digital tools can offer interactive and engaging methods for practicing speaking. For instance, platforms like language learning apps, virtual exchange programs, or video-based lessons can provide students with opportunities for authentic communication, by this manner teacher can create a Blended Learning approach which may be end more effective.

Moreover, the teacher's response also underscores the importance of professional development and collaboration with other educators and facilitators. They mention participating in workshops provided during the EPI, which focus on strategies for encouraging student speaking. Although the teacher claims that some strategies have been effective, others have not yielded the desired results. This reflects a dynamic approach to professional growth, where the teacher is actively seeking out new ideas but is also confronted with the challenges of adapting these ideas to their specific classroom context.

Collaboration with other educators and regular professional development opportunities are crucial for staying up to date with innovative teaching practices. Continued support from educational facilitators is essential for improving the overall effectiveness of teaching strategies aimed at developing speaking skills.

In conclusion, the teacher's responses provide valuable insights into the efforts made to improve 9th-grade students' speaking skills. While traditional methods such as role plays, conversations, and games are being employed, there is a clear need for more innovative strategies to address challenges like student disinterest and shyness. The teacher's recognition of the importance of technology in fostering student engagement highlights an area for growth, especially considering the limitations in available resources. Additionally, the importance of professional development and collaboration with colleagues is evident, as these efforts can help the teacher stay informed about new strategies to enhance speaking instruction. Ultimately, while the teacher is employing various methods to encourage speaking, there is a need for a more comprehensive and innovative approach to address the multiple challenges faced by students in the 9th grade.

CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS

1. Conclusions and Suggestions

The research conducted on the use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in ninth-grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023 provides valuable insights into current teaching practices and identifies areas for improvement. The main objective of this study was to analyze the use of innovative strategies to develop speaking skills in the classroom. Through a combination of qualitative data collection methods, including an observation guide, teacher interview, and student surveys, we were able to diagnose existing teaching practices, describe innovative strategies, and propose new approaches for enhancing speaking proficiency. This research has proven to be both diagnostically and analytically valuable, shedding light on how innovative strategies could potentially transform the teaching and learning of speaking skills.

One of the primary findings of this research was the identification of the most common strategies used by teachers to develop speaking skills. The observation of classroom practices revealed that traditional methods, such as oral presentations and dialogues, were predominantly used. However, these methods were often limited to scripted activities that provided minimal opportunity for creative expression or spontaneous communication. As a result, students' speaking skills were not fully developed, and their opportunities for authentic, real-world language use were restricted. This diagnosis of current practices underscores the need for a shift toward more innovative, student-centered strategies that can offer a greater range of speaking opportunities and more meaningful engagement.

The research also highlighted the importance of moving beyond traditional teaching methods to incorporate more innovative strategies, such as the flipped classroom, Project-Based Learning (PBL), gamification, and blended learning. These strategies are designed to increase student engagement, promote autonomous learning, and create more opportunities for communication in real-world contexts. For example, the flipped classroom model allows students to engage with learning materials outside the classroom, freeing up valuable class time for collaborative activities that encourage speaking. Project-Based Learning, on the other hand, fosters teamwork and problem-solving through real-world projects, where students must use language in authentic, purposeful ways. Gamification, through language-

learning apps and online platforms, can provide students with interactive, game-like environments that motivate them to practice speaking in low-stakes, enjoyable ways.

Blended learning, which combines face-to-face instruction with online learning, offers the flexibility needed to cater to diverse student needs and interests. This approach allows students to engage with digital tools and resources outside of class, while also participating in more interactive activities during face-to-face sessions. The integration of these innovative strategies not only increases student engagement but also ensures that students can practice speaking in a variety of contexts, improving both their language proficiency and confidence. The effectiveness of these strategies lies in their ability to provide students with more diverse and dynamic opportunities for practice, and they address the limitations of traditional methods by offering more flexibility and interaction.

If teachers are to successfully implement these innovative strategies, several key changes need to be made. First, they must adopt a more student-centered approach to teaching. This includes moving away from the teacher-centered model, where students are passive recipients of knowledge, to one where students take more ownership of their learning. Teachers will need to create more opportunities for group work, peer feedback, and collaborative problem-solving, allowing students to practice speaking in less formal, more relaxed environments. Additionally, teachers must be open to integrating technology into their teaching practice, using tools such as language-learning apps, online platforms, and digital recording tools to enhance speaking practice and facilitate interaction both inside and outside of the classroom.

A major aspect of the success of these innovative strategies is the professional development of teachers. While the teacher in this study expressed openness to incorporating innovative approaches, they also highlighted the challenges posed by limited resources and a lack of training. To fully realize the potential of these strategies, teachers must receive adequate training and support. Professional development opportunities focused on innovative pedagogical techniques such as communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and the use of technology in the classroom are essential. These programs can equip teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the proposed strategies effectively and ensure they are able to foster a more engaging and dynamic learning environment.

This research is significant in that it provides both a diagnosis of current practices and a clear roadmap for future improvements in teaching speaking skills. It highlights the gap between students' needs and the existing teaching methods and offers concrete recommendations for bridging that gap. The findings from this study are particularly important for future research, as they demonstrate the potential impact of innovative strategies on students' speaking proficiency. Future studies could build upon these findings to explore how specific strategies (such as PBL or gamification) affect different aspects of speaking skills, such as fluency, accuracy, and confidence. Moreover, longitudinal studies could investigate the long-term impact of these strategies on student outcomes.

The importance of this research extends beyond the specific context of Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School. By proposing innovative strategies that integrate technology, student-centered learning, and real-world tasks, this study contributes to the broader field of language education. It provides a framework for other schools and educators to consider when seeking to improve their students' speaking skills. Additionally, the emphasis on teacher training and resource allocation highlights the importance of supporting educators in their efforts to adopt new methods and approaches to teaching. Without adequate training and resources, even the most promising strategies may not be effectively implemented, limiting their potential impact.

The research objectives were successfully met through this study. By diagnosing the current strategies used by teachers, describing innovative approaches, and proposing specific methods for improvement, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities in developing speaking skills at the ninth-grade level. The data collected from the teacher interview, student surveys, and classroom observations helped to clarify the gaps in the current teaching practices and identify the areas where innovation could make a significant difference in students' language development.

In conclusion, the findings of this research suggest that the integration of innovative strategies such as flipped classroom, Project-Based Learning, gamification, and blended learning has the potential to transform the way speaking skills are developed in ninth-grade students. These strategies not only provide more opportunities for authentic language use but also engage students in ways that traditional methods cannot. However, their successful

implementation depends on proper teacher training, access to resources, and institutional support. This study has provided valuable insights into how these strategies can be used to improve speaking proficiency, and it serves as an important contribution to the ongoing conversation about innovation in language education. As schools continue to evolve, the findings from this research can serve as a guide for future efforts to enhance language teaching and learning.

CHAPTER V
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2. Annexes

Observation Guide:

Observation Guide 9 th Grade	Parameters	Inadequate	Minimal	Most of T.T.	Always
	1. The students consider their teacher as a guide who provides knowledge and as a model to follow during development of the class.				
	2. The students can build a positive classroom environment by avoiding distractions allowing for effective topic developed.				
	3. The students follow what the teacher is explaining in order to understand the topic being developed.				
	4. The students employed or associate their previous knowledge to organize and produce ideas.				
	5. The students pay attention and participate in the development of the class by interact with the teacher and their peers.				
	6. Students fear making mistakes and feel embarrassed or worried about criticism from classmates.				
	7. The students are open to the teacher's feedback to improve their pronunciation and grammar mistakes.				
	8. The students frequently use their mother tongue in the activities.				

Teacher's Interview:

- 1). How often do you motivate your students to participate in speaking activities?
- 2). What are the challenges that you face with your students to encourage them to speak in English?
- 3). Which strategies do you implement to amend your student's pronunciation and improve their performance?
- 4). Have you ever tried to link the topic with games or another methodology to make the class more entertaining or make it easy to understand?
- 5). Which factors do you think may affect or represent a limitation for the students during the development of their speaking skills?
- 6). What kind of methodologies would you use in order to catch the interest of your students to continue practicing English and improve their speaking performance?
- 7). What methodologies do you always apply to your students in order to develop your class?
- 8). Have you tried to apply new or innovative strategies in the development of your classes in order to encourage students to share their ideas in English?
- 9). How often you do research information about new strategies that may be helpful to develop speaking skills in students associated to our country contexts?
- 10) Are you in collaborative and constant communication with your principal and facilitators in order to know the latest approaches to develop students' speaking skills?

Students Survey:

Topic: Use of innovative strategies for the development of speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023.

Objective: Analyze the use of innovative strategies to develop speaking skills in ninth grade students at Pablo Antonio Cuadra High School during the second semester of 2023.

Instructions:

Please read each question carefully and answer honestly. Your responses will help improve teaching strategies for speaking skills at our school. This survey is anonymous, and your answers will be kept confidential.

General Information:

Date: _____

Gender: Male Female

Section 1: Current Speaking Skills Development

(Questions focused on the students' experience with speaking skills and the teaching strategies currently used in class.)

1. **How often do you practice speaking in English during class?**
 - () Never
 - () Sometimes
 - () Always

2. **What activities does your teacher use most to help you practice speaking English?**
(You can mark all the options that may apply)
 - () Group discussions or pair work (talking with a classmate)
 - () Oral presentations or speeches
 - () Role-playing or simulations
 - () Watching videos and discussing them
 - () Listening and repeating exercises
 - () Other (please specify): _____

3. **How comfortable do you feel speaking in front of your class?**
- () Very uncomfortable
 - () Neutral
 - () Very comfortable
4. **Do you think your teacher helps you improve your speaking skills?**
- () Not at all
 - () A little
 - () A lot
 - () Very much
5. **How often does your teacher correct your speaking mistakes such as pronunciation, grammar or vocabulary during class?**
- () Never
 - () Sometimes
 - () Always
6. **How helpful do you find the strategies your teacher uses to improve speaking skills?**
- () Not helpful at all
 - () Slightly helpful
 - () Neutral
 - () Very helpful

Section 2: Perception of Innovative Strategies

(Questions aimed at exploring the students' attitudes towards new or creative methods for developing speaking skills, including strategies that teachers may or may not use.)

7. **Have you ever used technology such as apps, online platforms or language exchange websites to practice speaking in English as part of your class activities?**
- () Yes
 - () No

8. **How useful do you think using apps or online platforms such as language exchanges or speech recognition could be for improving your speaking skills?**
- () Not useful at all
 - () Neutral
 - () Very useful
9. **Would you be interested in using online language exchanges or video chats with students from other countries to practice speaking English?**
- () Not interested at all
 - () Maybe
 - () Yes
10. **How would you feel if your teacher used role-playing activities (for example pretending to be a character in a situation) to help you practice speaking?**
- () I would not like it
 - () I'm okay with that
 - () I would like it
11. **Would you enjoy participating in speaking activities that involve games or competitions in your English class?**
- () Not interested at all
 - () Maybe
 - () Interested
12. **How often do you feel motivated to speak in English outside of class (for example in your free time, with friends, in social environments)?**
- () Never
 - () Sometimes
 - () Often
 - () Always
13. **Do you think your teacher should give more opportunities for you to speak in English in class?**
- () Not at all
 - () Yes, sometimes
 - () Yes, definitely

Section 3: Student Motivation and Challenges

(Questions to understand how students feel about their own progress and what challenges they face in speaking.)

14. Do you feel confident in your English-speaking ability?

- () Not at all
- () Neutral
- () Somewhat confident
- () Very confident

15. What do you find the most challenging part when speaking in English?

- () Pronunciation
- () Finding the right words
- () Grammar mistakes
- () Understanding others
- () Feeling nervous
- () Other (please specify): _____

16. What do you think would help you improve your speaking skills in class?

(You can mark all the options that may apply)

- () More speaking practice with classmates
- () More feedback and corrections from the teacher
- () Using technology or apps for speaking practice
- () More interactive activities during the class
- () Other (please specify): _____

17. Would you be willing to try new and innovative ways to improve your speaking skills?

- () Not at all
- () Maybe
- () Yes

Pictures



