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Analysis of the factors that are affecting the development of the English speaking skill in students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester of 2017.

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Managua, February 21st, 2018.

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## **Dedicatory**

We dedicate this research to our parents and teachers that supported us during this entire beautiful journey, whose passion for teaching is to set a new standard for us involved in English education. Besides, it is with our deepest gratitude and warmest affection that we dedicate this research to our Professor: Dr. Raúl Isabel Carrión, who has been a constant source of knowledge and inspiration.

## **Acknowledgement**

First of all, we would like to thank God, for giving us the strength and wisdom throughout the years in order to achieve this goal and our parents for their patients and support every single day.

The completion of this research would not have been possible without the expertise of Dr. Raúl Isabel Carrión. We would also like to thanks Prof. Geraldine López Prof. Roberto Aleman to take the time to review some parts of the research and tell us what we needed to improve. In addition, thanks to the Jury Qualifier for sitting and take the time to read our research.

A debt of gratitude is also owed to Mr. Wilman Garcia who is part of this; for providing us help and support and the entire English department for devoting their time and knowledge in all this five year.

## **Abstract**

The topic of this research is about the factors that are affecting the development of the English speaking skill in students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester of 2017. The main objective is to analyze factors such as grammatical, or motivational stopping the development of student's communication skills. The main problem that this class is facing is about how students feel in relation of their knowledge so as to develop a good conversation among them. Since most of them feel shy and uncomfortable speaking in front of the class or even they do not participate in the classroom activities at all, it is very disturbing to see disinterested students in class, careless about their growing path because they are not seriously taking their learning process or because the teacher does not use enough resources and motivational activities to keep the attention and discipline from students.

This is a transversal research because it is based on a specific time, and it is also focused on a mixed approach because it was analyzed through the recollection, analysis and relation of qualitative and quantitative data. Besides, the instruments were applied to 18 students. So all students' present were taken for the instrument and there was no opportunity to randomly select them. The formula and calculation was taken from an excel sheet developed by Dr. Manuel Pedroza at UNAN Managua using the simple random sampling method shown below.

## **Abstracto**

El tema desarrollado en esta investigación es trata de los factores que están afectando el desarrollo de la habilidad del habla en los estudiantes de 8vo grado "G" en el Instituto Miguel de Cervantes de Managua durante el segundo semestre 2017. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo analizar el impacto de factores gramaticales, curriculares y motivacionales en el desarrollo de las habilidades del habla. El principal problema es que este grupo de estudiantes están enfrentando es que ellos se sienten inseguros y tímidos en relación a su nivel de conocimiento para ser capaz de desarrollar conversaciones entre ellos, debido a que la mayoría de ellos se sienten avergonzados e incómodos hablando enfrente de los demás e incluso hay estudiantes que no participan del todo al momento de desarrollar una actividad, y es muy perturbador mirar la cantidad de estudiantes desinteresados en clases afectando el desarrollo de su habla inglés porque ellos no se toman en serio su proceso de aprendizaje o porque el maestro no utiliza materiales didácticos o actividades motivacionales necesarios para el desarrollo esta habilidad.

Asimismo, es importante mencionar que esta investigación es transversal porque es basado en un tiempo específico, y tiene un enfoque mixto debido a que los datos son analizados y recolectados de manera cualitativa y cuantitativa. También, los instrumentos fueron aplicados a 18 estudiantes, esta fórmula y cálculo fue tomada de un archivo de Excel creado por el Dr. Manuel Pedroza en la UNAN-Managua utilizando un método aleatorio simple.

## **Introduction**

The topic of this research is to analyze the factors that are affecting the development of the English speaking skill in students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester of 2017. This topic was chosen because it is important to discover the factors behind the public teaching in high school because students are not focused on their learning process such as in the past, but because it is important to analyze factors such as teaching and learning strategies to develop the speaking skill or to analyze if the Nicaraguan Curriculum fits with the Nicaragua context and needs. In addition, it is important to improve the quality of Nicaragua's education because teachers and students need to feel more encourage to design better strategies and activities to develop communication inside and outside the classroom.

In this research, you will find information about how important English is in the teaching field. Likewise, there is information about how to teach English and some of the best activities to implement in every lesson plan to make students speak such as working in pairs, or strategies such as minimal responses, personal descriptions, role plays, and provide feedback in every activity. These strategies are part of a good development of communication skills. Then, there is an explanation about the importance of the didactic resources and their influence in the development of the speaking skill, and finally there is brief information about the influence of the Nicaraguan Curriculum in the learning process of students of 8th grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester of 2017.



## **I- Problem Background**

Nowadays, learning English as a foreign language has become a priority in order to fulfill society's needs. The fact of learning to speak English is crucial in order to become a professional and improve the living average. Many students are taking advantage of learning English as a foreign language on their schools. However, it is evident that there are many areas of improvement on the classrooms. As teachers currently enrolled in the real teaching environment, it cannot be ignored the ugly truth that students and teachers live every day in the classrooms, students are not showing interest on the development of the English speaking skill, therefore, they are not prepared for good job offers and less to excellent positions.

Since the last adjustment on the guidelines in 2014 from evaluation and the new regulations from the government, numbers of students are not taking seriously their education any more. As a result, this creates an ineffective teaching-learning environment where misbehavior and disrespect rules on the classroom are everywhere, and it is sadly to see students standing up from time to time and leaving the classrooms without even asking for permission to the teacher. Also, students yell to each other when everybody is around listening to them. Even though evaluations are performed, they are not attending to their evaluations on time and even worse, they are not handing them back to teachers. The participation is limited from a few students who seem to be aware of the importance of learning English and who do their best to catch the teacher's attention and get more knowledge.

Although it seems to be a reality from a country abroad, it is a sorrow to admit whose truth it is. Teachers from Miguel de Cervantes School face this situation every day with their students. Students from 8<sup>th</sup> grade G afternoon shift, second semester 2017, are not developing the English speaking skill. They are now based on a completion items on every item they develop, where grammar is the main skill being practiced and it has become some sort of a robotic process, where repetition is the main activity developed. On the other hand, the teacher's methodology is based on basic activities where no challenge is set up, moreover students' English interaction time is developed in Spanish and they don't come across with vocabulary concerns or problem language solving activities.

Under all those circumstances the issue does not seem to come to an end and is ongoing on all level, affecting student's performance on school bulletins, and school proficiency. Demotivation is seen everywhere on students' face, helping them not to realize the real benefits of learning a second language, the teacher's performance become grayed out and learning quality became poor and insufficient to fill the need of people and society, taking students to the edge of an abysm, while keeping falling and falling with a non-stop one-way ticket.

It is important to motivate students in their learning process in order to fulfill the main purpose of education and gain more knowledge about the class; consequently, the students will feel more confident at the moment of speaking.

## II- Previous Studies

Lubna Alsagoff, Sandra Lee, Guangwei Hu, Willy Renandya, Rondón, Jesús, Vera & Fernanda are scholars who have examined the teaching-learning process of students in order to identify what factors affect students' communication skills showing a variety of disciplines and perspectives in the explanation of strategies which are involved in making students develop their speaking skills. Below, there are some examples of theses that helped to get better results in the English teaching field.

### 1. Principles and Practices for Teaching English as an International Language

*Principles and Practices for Teaching English as an International Language* is a book that presents insights into the way in which traditional methods of teaching English must be re-examined and transformed to serve the needs of teachers and learners in a dynamic context so as to help students develop their communication skills. The scholars of this book (Lubna Alsagoff, Sandra Lee, Guangwei Hu and Willy Renandya) emphasized in 2012 two different ways of exploring issues in the development of speaking skills. In the first, it is important to examine the problems that students might face at a more theoretical level, while the second section presents new approaches and practices for EIL teaching. By implementing these options in the development process of communication skills, teachers will explore new perspectives on teaching English, especially in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

## 2. Understanding the Role of Teaching Materials in a Beginners' Level English as a Foreign Language Course: A Case Study

According to (Rondón, Jesús, Vera & Fernanda, 2016) learning a foreign language may be a challenge for most students due to differences in the form and structure between one's mother tongue and a new one. However, there are some tools that facilitate the teaching and learning of a foreign language, for instance, new applications for digital devices, video blogs, educational platforms, and teaching materials. Therefore, this case study aims at understanding the role of teaching materials among beginners' level students learning English as a foreign language. After conducting five non-participant classroom observations and nine semi-structured interviews, scholars found that the way the teacher implemented a pedagogical intervention by integrating the four language skills, promoting interactive learning through the use of online resources, and using the course book led to a global English teaching and learning process.

### **III- Justification**

Teaching English as a second language requires strategies and resources, also a strong communication among students inside and outside the center that benefits the teaching-learning process and presents the language as a useful and necessary tool to succeed. That is why this research focuses on improving students' communication in the English class from Miguel de Cervantes high School-Managua, achieving a better result in the level of teaching and learning. This will reflect if the teacher, as a model in this process, implements the necessary tools to teach making students succeed academically and obtain a successful outcome.

This research aims to analyze the factors affecting the development of speaking skill of the students from 8th grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes high School-Managua. Besides understanding and assessing the importance of didactic resources to achieve a significant communicative development in public high school. This means that you must take into account how teachers and students react before different situations of English language because it greatly influences the learning process.

This research will bring benefits to the teaching field, by analyzing the Nicaraguan curriculum and designing better speaking activities. Likewise, the teacher will feel more motivated and improve their strategies and instruments based on the results and recommendations gotten at the end of this research. In addition, it will improve the learning strategies to enhance student's communication, getting a better level of learning that allows them to be more competitive in the working field.

Finally, this research will set up a background for future teachers, suggesting a right set of speaking activities, approaches and strategies for the English department from Miguel de Cervantes, MINED and all other education's institution suffering the effect of current teaching-learning process.

#### **IV- Research Questions:**

- 1- What are the factors that affect the development of the English students' speaking skills?
- 2- What strategies are being implemented by the teacher to reinforce the speaking skill in the classroom?
- 3- What is the level of English students have on the speaking ability?
- 4- What types of didactic resources are being implemented for the communication skill development?

## V- Research Objectives

### **General Objective:**

1. To analyze the factors that are affecting the development of the English speaking skill in students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester of 2017.

### **Specific Objectives:**

1. To identify the factors that affect the development of English students' speaking skill in English in the students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester of 2017.
2. To describe the teaching strategies used by the teacher to reinforce the speaking skill in English in the students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during second semester of 2017.
3. To analyze the impact of the Nicaraguan Curriculum in the development of students speaking skill.
4. To explain the importance of teaching resources for the development of communication skills.



## **VI- Theoretical Framework**

The following theoretical framework will present information from authors such as Walberg, Guerrero Cárdenas, Celce-Murcia who contributed to elaborate better recommendations about how to teach speaking in English because the real problem in this high school is about factors that are affecting the development of communication skills in students. This information will focus on how teacher can implement effective strategies to motivate and make students develop their learning process. Besides, it will explain the importance of didactic resources and the influence of the Nicaraguan curriculum to develop an excellent speaking fluency on students.

### **8.1- Importance of English in Education Context**

The English language has been considered as one of the most spoken languages in the world. According to one study of importance of English (Padilla, 2013) " the teaching of English is a long and slow process". This means that English should be taught with a period of time necessary for students to develop this language, so they can acquire the basic elements to express and understand their ideas, it is also necessary that there are institutions that take care of the training of professionals committed to education.

### **8.2- Important Definitions to Consider in the Teaching of English**

English teaching as a second language aims to combine the four abilities: listening, reading, speaking and writing because each of the abilities must be linked in every moment. Thereby the true usage of the language will be closed; meaningful, motivated and relevant homework will be found. And this relation will help to develop with a better fluency the

expression and comprehension. Wallace, Stariha, & Walberg, 2004 presented important information about each one of the abilities:

- A. Listening:** the listening ability is extremely important, as any other; the difference is that this ability allows getting a point of view and information, besides it allows acquiring achievements in the communication with others. It can be improved in many ways.
- B. Writing:** writing is a different element. It consists on note taking, identifying main ideas, summarizing, drafting and editing. This ability is the result of the reflection, practice, correction and revision which allow discover and acquire strategies while writing, revising mistakes and learning for them.
- C. Reading:** it allows having access to the information and elements of the language which are necessary for its interaction. Its elements help in the acquisition of vocabulary and cognitive development.
- D. Speaking:** The main objective of this ability is to make student speaking. It can be achieved in classes given in the target language only in order to make student to get used with the language. Most of the time, speaking can be intimidated even in the mother tongue, especially when it is being learned a new language and the best way to achieve “speaking” is by practicing. However, it has to be taken into account that through this practice that mistakes disappear and a conversation can be developed consciously. (Walberg, 1937)

### **8.3- Teaching Speaking**

Teaching speaking is a very challenging task because most of the students are very shy, and they do not feel comfortable speaking among them, especially when they are beginner. It is true that speaking is the measuring unit of a language because it is important to have fluency to speak with others, more than the capacity to read, write, or understand the oral language. Teachers might consider speaking like the most important ability that students can acquire. Therefore, students must know that usage of words means three areas of knowledge. First of all, mechanics (pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary) which means the use of the right words on the right order with the right pronunciation. Secondly, function which is related about knowing when the clarity of the message is so demanded. For example: when students share information among them. Thirdly, knowledge required such as interaction or building rapport. Likewise, cultural and social aspects are important because the students need to take into account who is speaking and to whom. The teachers support students to develop all this knowledge through the authentic practice which prepares them in different communicative situations.

### **8.4- Teaching Strategies to Develop Speaking Skills**

Speaking is an interactive process that implies production, interaction and communicative development according to (Brown H. D., 1994) It is depending on the context where it is produced, also depends on the students, their experiences, environment, and their purpose. Speaking can be spontaneous, opened and constantly evolving. It has language functions that tend to repeat themselves in certain situations and are identifiable. For example, when a salesperson asks "Can I help you?" The expected sequence of

discourse includes a statement of need, as a response to need, offer of appreciation, recognition of appreciation and change of farewell; this makes the student between the process of interaction through the questions and answer. Speaking not only causes students to produce specific language points such as grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, or (language proficiency), but also to understand when, why, and in what way to produce communication. Finally, the speaking has its own abilities, structures and conventions different from the written language (Burns , McCarthy, & Cohen, 2017).

People communicate with others, to express their ideas, and to know the ideas of others. For a good functioning of any skill, students must be able to interact, and develop their communication skills with a purpose. In order for the student to become a very complete communicator, they need to be competent in each of the skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The ability to express opinions or feelings, in the form of words put together in a meaningful way, gives the speaker numerous advantages.

### **8.5- Students Speaking Skills**

Speaking skills and speech habits have an impact on the success of the learning process because the students need to anticipate, and then produce their knowledge. The students should also choose the correct vocabulary to describe a situation or element, rephrase or emphasize words to clarify the description and use appropriate facial expressions to indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Kayi, 2006). Other skill and knowledge that speaking could address are: the production of sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures and intonations of the language; using grammatical structures with

precision; evaluation of the characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared benchmarks, status and power relationships of participants, interest levels, or differences of views; vocabulary of selection that is understandable and appropriate to the audience, the subject is discussed, and the environment in which the speech act occurs, the application of strategies to improve comprehensibility, such as highlighting key words, reformulation, or checking listening comprehension; using gestures or body language and paying attention to the success of interaction and adjustment of speech components such as vocabulary, speech speed, and the complexity of grammatical structures to maximize listening and participation understanding. Teachers should monitor the production of the speaking teaching, and how to determine what skills and knowledge students have and what areas they need to develop, because it is important to identify what types of learning strategies they can use to reach the target language.

### **8.6- Factors Influence in the Teaching Speaking Process**

Some factors that have influenced in the speaking process are the incidence of the mother tongue of the student, in other words the effect of one language (in our case Spanish) in the learning of another (English). For example, when a mother tongue structure or rule is used that leads to an inappropriate form in the language to be learned and the positive is which facilitates the language learning because both can be the same or similar in speaking. Students learn English in a natural language environment where attention must be focused on the goal of speaking for their own development. (Bergflet, 2008)

Other factors are the materials used by the teacher to facilitate the development of speaking. The more materials or resources teachers use for their development, the more

likely the learners will be to develop their speaking skills, as well as the teacher's having to present materials that can be assimilated by the students.

Motivation is another factor that influences the teaching-learning process because it is part of the desire that students have to learn and put all the effort when speaking in the target language. When a student comes into contact with a new language, the first internal problems are the background of the students, as well as their feelings and motivations that lead him to study it. It is said that the degree of motivation of a student is determined by three factors: desire to learn a language and to be able to use it, attitudes toward learning the language and effort that one is willing to take to learn it. If the student presents these elements, the student's learning will be successful.

Other factors would be the student's attitudes and personality. The attitude influences within the scope of learning because it consists in the ability to learn English, and in this factor both the willingness to study and the ability to easily develop the speaking would enter (Sojo, Factores que influyen en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizajes., 2013). The student's personality can also influence the process. Good positive relationships among students with a good level of self-esteem, risky, low level of anxiety, empathic help the progress of learning cognitive style. Within these are two other factors, the techniques or mechanisms that can be used by the learner to acquire knowledge (learning strategies) and secondly, the resources used by the learner in trying to overcome the moments of doubt or Lack in the course of speaking.

## 8.7- How to Teach Speaking?

In the teaching speaking process, it is necessary that the teacher is in constant relation with the students, to solve their restlessness and to help them in its process. Some of the ways for the student to develop their speaking are:

- **Working in pair** because in all exercises there is a time to compare answers between students. This forces students to use language and vocabulary, reinforcing the mechanisms for learning what they specifically are working. On the other hand, if it is a speaking only activity, in the warm-up activities there is always a previous preparation with the students and then a revision, in which the teacher also asks each student to talk about what the partner has told him to encourage real active listening and also to make them use the third person to have to talk about another (so that they never forget, that "s.") With this model, all students are talking at the same time. In addition, based on the difficulties that the student has in speaking in English, this previous work in pairs helps them to lose their fears and feel more prepared when it comes to speaking to the whole class.

-**Speaking for Fluency or Speaking for Accuracy:** When designing and planning a speaking activity, the teacher should first consider what the students are going to practice, whether fluency or accuracy. This determines when and how they will correct errors: whether immediately or later. Correcting immediately is detrimental to the fluidity that students are expected to achieve. If every time they comment on an error, the teacher corrected them, they will not evolve in this sense. Instead, it is better for the teacher to write down the mistakes, for example, make a correction on the blackboard or to take them into account as errors to work in a later class.

**-There must always be a feedback:** the speaking activity must be as designed as listening, reading or writing. And this goes through a final feedback. All this is not easy to explain to the students. The important thing for them, and ultimately for the teacher, is that in each class they learn new vocabulary and structures and practice it through exercises that involve the 4 basic skills of every language. If at the end of each class students have spoken, used new vocabulary, heard, read and written, the teacher would have made a good teaching process.

These are some ways that the teacher can take into account to teach speaking. In this way students can have a good development of the same. That is the main objective and the teacher must always go in search of what is intended to fulfill.

## **8.8- Strategies to Teach Speaking**

### **Using Minimal Responses**

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

Minimal responses are predictable, often idiomatic phrases that conversation participants use to indicate understanding, agreement, doubt, and other responses to what another speaker is saying. (The National Capital Language Resource Center, Washington, DC,



2018) Having a stock of such responses enables a learner to focus on what the other participant is saying, without having to simultaneously plan a response.

### **Recognizing Scripts**

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

Instructors can help students develop speaking ability by making them aware of the scripts for different situations so that they can predict what they will hear and what they will need to say in response. Through interactive activities, instructors can give students practice. (The National Capital Language Resource Center, Washington, DC, 2018)

### **Using Language to Talk about Language**

Students are often too embarrassed or shy to say anything when they do not understand another speaker or when they realize that a conversation partner has not understood them. In that moment teachers can help students overcome this reticence by assuring them that misunderstanding and the need for clarification can occur in any type of interaction, whatever the participants' language skill levels. Besides, teachers can also give students strategies and phrases to use for clarification and comprehension check. By encouraging students to use clarification phrases in class when misunderstanding occurs and by responding positively when they do, they can create an authentic practice

environment within the classroom itself (The National Capital Language Resource Center, Washington, DC, 2018). As they develop control of various clarification strategies, students will gain confidence in their ability to manage the various communication situations that they may encounter outside the classroom.

### **Role Play**

Role-play is any speaking activity when students either put themselves into somebody else's shoes, or when they stay in their own shoes but put themselves into an imaginary situation (Vargas Merina, 2009). Students can also take on the opinions of someone else. 'For and against' debates can be used and the class can be split into those who are expressing views in favor and those who are against the theme.

### **Discussions**

After a content-based lesson, a discussion can be held for various reasons. The students may aim to arrive at a conclusion, share ideas about an event, or find solutions in their discussion groups. (Russell, 2012) Before the discussion, it is essential that the purpose of the activity is set by the teacher. In this way, the discussion points are relevant to this purpose, so that students do not spend their time chatting with each other about irrelevant things. For example, students can become involved in agree/disagree discussions. In this type of discussions, the teacher can form groups of students, preferably 4 or 5 in each group, and provide controversial sentences like "people learn best when they read vs. people learn best when they travel".

This activity fosters critical thinking and quick decision making, and students learn how to express and justify themselves in polite ways while disagreeing with the others.

## **Information Gap**

In this activity, students are supposed to be working in pairs. One student will have the information that other partner does not have and the partners will share their information (Mijangos Robles, 2011). Information gap activities serve many purposes such as solving a problem or collecting information. Also, each partner plays an important role because the task cannot be completed if the partners do not provide the information the others need. These activities are effective because everybody has the opportunity to talk extensively in the target language.

## **Brainstorming**

On a given topic, students can produce ideas in a limited time. Depending on the context, either individual or group brainstorming is effective and learners generate ideas quickly and freely (Kayi, 2006). The good characteristic of brainstorming is that the students are not criticized for their ideas so students will be open to sharing new ideas.

## **Story Telling**

Students can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from somebody beforehand, or they may create their own stories to tell their classmates. Story telling fosters creative thinking. It also helps students to express ideas in the format of beginning, development, and ending, including the characters and setting a story has to have. Students also can tell riddles or jokes (Kayi, 2006). For instance, at the very beginning of each class session, the teacher may call a few students to tell short riddles or jokes as an opening. In

this way, not only will the teacher address students' speaking ability, but also get the attention of the class.

### **Picture Describing**

Another way to make use of pictures in a speaking activity is to give students just one picture and having them describe what it is in the picture. For this activity students can form groups and each group is given a different picture (Kayi, 2006). Students discuss the picture with their groups, and then a spokesperson for each group describes the picture to the whole class. This activity fosters the creativity and imagination of the learners as well as their public speaking skills.

## **8.9- Didactic Resources**

Resources are all material used to support teaching; this is an organized process that facilitates the development of the contents to be taught. The teaching resources should always be considered as a support for the educational process (Kayi, 2006). The correct selection and use of the different resources will condition the effectiveness of the training process. In this way, resources can become real instruments of thought, innovation, and motivation of learning, facilitating procedural or methodological action, the communication among students.

### **8.9.1- Importance of Didactic Resources**

Teaching resources are important because they help the teacher to teach, improve, or support them in their work. These teaching materials can be selected from a large number of them, those invented by other people or those that the teacher with the

experience comes to make. They also serve as support for learning, helping to think, inciting imagination and creation, exercising manipulation and construction, and encouraging the development of operational relationships and knowledge enrichment. The importance they have is that they make the teaching-learning processes more practical, modern and dynamic. Every teacher when faced with the teaching of a class should select the resources and didactic materials that he or she plans to use. Many think that it is not important the material or resources that we choose because the most important is to give the class but it is not, it is fundamental to choose adequately the resources and didactic materials because they are fundamental tools for the development and enrichment of the teaching-learning process of the students. According to (Prats, 1997), the most appropriate didactic resource is the one that "facilitates the learning of skills, mastery of the techniques used in the disciplines and the methodology of the different knowledges". In classroom contexts, the means and didactic resources used by teachers and students for teaching and learning are important because they condition the effectiveness of the learning that students experience. On the other hand, their use is fully justified when they are integrated, in an appropriate way, into the educational process.

### **8.9.2- Types of Didactic Resources**

These are some types of didactic resources that can be used for the development of the teaching-learning process. For instance: materials that teachers as trainers elaborate from their own experiences (Prats, 1997). These materials should help teachers, and should be properly adjusted to the level and educational context that students face. For example, maps made by hand in a wall paper, flash cards, draws, etc. It is evident that the realization

of the teacher's own material makes it necessary more time to prepare the classes, but it is also true that at the time of imparting the formations of the student acquired the knowledge with the mayor facility so that the work of the teacher will be reinforced.

### **8.9.3- Influence of the Didactic Resources on the Development of English**

Didactic resources, which are intended to help the learning process that each student has to build, use an interactive system (texts, sounds, images) in addition to having a material content that is presented in a certain way that acts as a mediation to access the content; Creating a communication environment (Marquez, 2001).

For the teacher, the presence of technologies has produced changes in the means of teaching by incorporating some new ones and changing many of the methods and techniques for the realization of programs and contents. These changes have also influenced how to teach with the media, providing new techniques that facilitate the teaching-learning process. To know the means of teaching and to be able to teach or support his teachings, teachers must start from a triple perspective.

- Firstly, to know the media and be able to interpret and manage them. These are understood as systems of tools, intended to represent and transmit information between the teacher and the student. For example: when the teacher wants to incorporate the media such play a video in a computer, they need to keep in mind the purpose of the activity to achieve the main objective at the end of the class. |

- Secondly, the teacher must know the level of the students that allow interpreting and elaborate the resources. From the possibilities of the written text and its formal organization on certain media (starting with notes, textbooks or the blackboard and ending

with a web page) to the reading and interpreting an image, a printed photograph, a slide, a presentation screen, a video or a multimedia.

-Finally to know how to use them, that is to say, to know their management from the technical point of view when the resource is already elaborated. This means, in some cases, the handling of the materials. For instance: if you use a computer presentation system you must know how the program is handled at the time of presentation and it would be very convenient to know what the process is of elaboration.

Every teaching resource for English language teaching has a purpose when it is designed and used because it fulfills the fundamental function of helping teachers to mediate knowledge and the student the easy construction of meaningful knowledge. Besides being a fundamental element in the development of different language skills.

## **8.10- Curriculum Design**

### **The Role of Curriculum Design in Language Learning**

The curriculum is the processes of deciding on what students learn in a program in terms of “knowledge, skills, and values” as well as how this learning should take place in terms of planning, measuring and evaluating. Successful learning, thus, partially relies on how the curriculum of the instructional program is designed to meet the learning objectives.

The process of curriculum design then goes through a number of steps in order to make learning productive. In addition, the learning is achieved when factors such as environment analysis, needs analysis which involves the investigation of students’ expectations, objectives, needs from the language program, and research findings in the area of language instruction are accounted for in language programs.

Likewise, it is important to find out learners' reasons for learning as well as their future plans and aims of learning in order to create better curriculum design. Curriculum designers should consider both types of needs analysis in order to achieve better outcomes.

### **Importance of the Curriculum for the Development of Speaking Skills**

According to Foreign Language Study Program (Canelo Castillo & Acevedo Urroz, 2009) the communicative area of the Nicaraguan curriculum promotes the development of communicative, linguistic, sociolinguistic and artistic abilities of the students. Also, contributes to the development of logical, critical and creative thinking; to the search and organization of information. However, this area is not fully developed due to the lack of materials and strategies that help teachers and students develop the communicate skills in a more effective way.

Besides, it seems that the English program of study does not fulfill the requirements to create an effective development process of the students. This program at all levels should be emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as vocabulary development. But the reality is other because the Nicaraguan curriculum does not have enough activities for this speaking development. It has focused on reading and grammatical structures only. To illustrate, there is an achievement indication on the curriculum that says "the student demonstrates comprehension of short descriptions about personal appearance of she/he and the others". However, the learning activities does not match with the objective "The student observes the illustrations and comments in oral form and writes actions that she/ he makes". In this scenario, it is for sure that students will feel shy to describe with a good fluency their appearance because before developing this activity, the teacher needs to



provide a vocabulary and pronunciation part, but the curriculum does not mention what type of strategies or warm up activities should the teacher use. For this reason the MINED needs to provide trainings about how to use a variety of activities useful for both, students and teachers, in order to improve oral skills. Activities such as information gap activities, personal descriptions, conversations among students have been applied by other teachers and have worked, but it is important to explain how to adapt them depending on the context.

## VII- Matrix:

The following matrix helped to organize the information of this research about the factors that affect students speaking skills of 8<sup>th</sup> grade "G" at Miguel de Cervantes High School.

Specific Objectives	Variables	Variables definitions	Indicators	Sources	Techniques
1-To identify the factors that affect the development of speaking skill.	Factors that affect the development of speaking ability.	Factors are the elements that might affect the learning process depending in the students' context.	- Vocabulary -Grammatical accuracy -Pronunciation -Self-confidence -Organization of ideas -Others	Class  Students	-Observation  -Survey
2-To analyze the learning strategies used by the teacher and students to reinforce the speaking skills in English.	Strategies used by the students to develop speaking skill.	Strategies are actions to make students develop their speaking skill to promote students interactions.	-Role plays -Short dialogues -Discussions -Group work -Introduction a new topic -Developing speaking topics. -Others	Teacher  Student	-Interview  -Survey
3- To analyze the impact of the Nicaraguan Curriculum in the development of students speaking skills.	Impact of the Nicaraguan Curriculum in the development of speaking skills.	The curriculum is the processes of deciding on what students learn in a program in terms of "knowledge, skills, and values"	-Design of the curriculum -Objectives -Learning activities -Evaluation form	Teacher  Curriculum	-Interview
4-To determine the importance of teaching resources for the	Importance of teaching resources.	Teaching resources are any tool that helps	-Books -Projector -Dialogues -Images	Teacher	-Interview

development of communication skill.		teachers teach and students learn.	-Videos -Wall paper -Others	Class	Observation
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## **VIII- Methodological Design**

### **VIII.I-Approach**

This research is also focused on a mixed approach because through the data collection, analysis and relation of qualitative and quantitative data the objectives will be achieved and established at the beginning of this research for possible solutions to the problem.

### **VIII.II- Type of research.**

This research is transversal because it is based on a specific moment of the people involved and the result can be analyzed in a higher number of people.

### **VIII.III- Population and sample**

The present investigation was developed with the students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade “G” at Miguel de Cervantes High school afternoon shift, second semester 2017. At the moment of the development of the investigation the attendance list reported only 27 active students plus the teacher, as an active member of the teaching-learning process. The sample was gotten based on the population of 27 students, with a 90% level or reliability. The sample was taken taking all students present at the moment of the application of the instrument. The sample was supposed to be 19 students, but, due to student tardiness and absenteeism, after waiting for three weeks to have the attendance with the right amount. The instruments were applied to 18 students. So all students present were taken for the instrument and there was no opportunity to randomly select them. The formula and calculation was taken from an

excel sheet developed by Dr. Manuel Pedroza at UNAN Managua using the simple random sampling method shown below.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 * p * q * N}{N * e^2 + Z^2 * p * q}$$

#### **VIII.IV- Techniques to obtain data**

The data compiled was obtained through interviews, observations and surveys, to do this will be applied an instrument structured in two parts, these two parts are the teacher and students who are the main characters of the teaching and learning process, and an observation guide for both, the teacher and students.

## **IX- Validation Report**

The instruments were given to two masters from UNAN-Managua to be validated. The main draft of our research was based on teaching strategies to develop communication skills. The instruments that were used are: Observation guide; developed by the researchers, student's survey, given to the students; and teacher's interview, given to the teacher.

Corrections were gotten from the student's survey draft. It was advised by one teacher to switch two variables inside one question since it was considered that the level of the students was not good enough to develop those variables. Besides, it was advised to re-order the questions. In this instrument none of the questions were removed.

The second teacher made suggestions regarding the number of questions. Furthermore, it was told that by evaluating teaching strategies only the results will aim to a teacher fail. A recall to the current reality was done for the context since Nicaraguans education is suffering from the context, the curriculum and the student's behavior, since it was considered that part of the justification. In addition, it was agreed on developing questions for content and motivation.

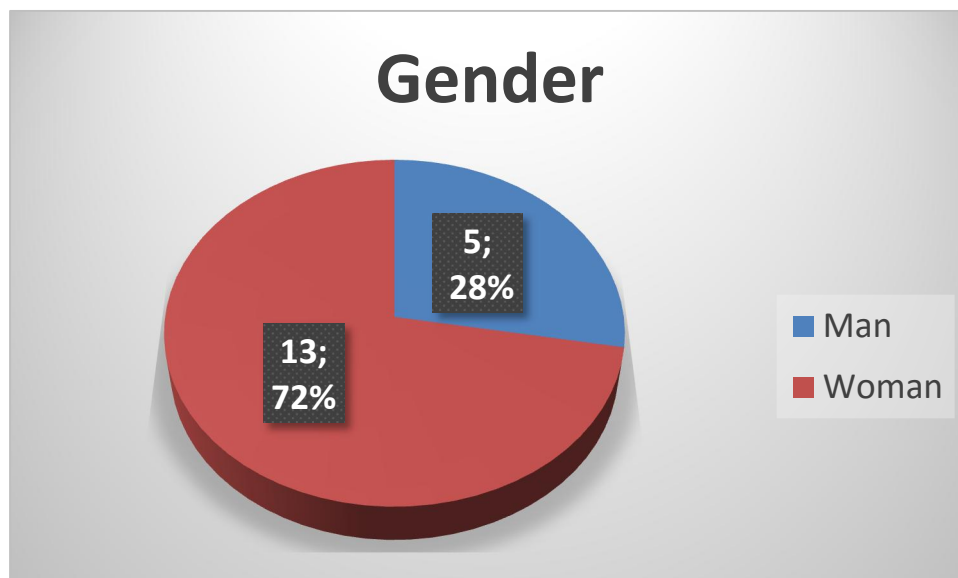
## X- Results and analysis of the data

The analysis of the results obtained with the instruments is based on the objectives stated at the beginning of this investigation. Each one of the questions developed on the instruments covers the aspects and variables for this investigation. The way the data will be displayed is the following. First, there will be a paragraph where the teacher interview will be paraphrased followed by the analysis of the questions regarding the objective and the comparison between what was observed and what was answered by the students and teacher and, finally a graphic for each question will be presented

### Demographic information

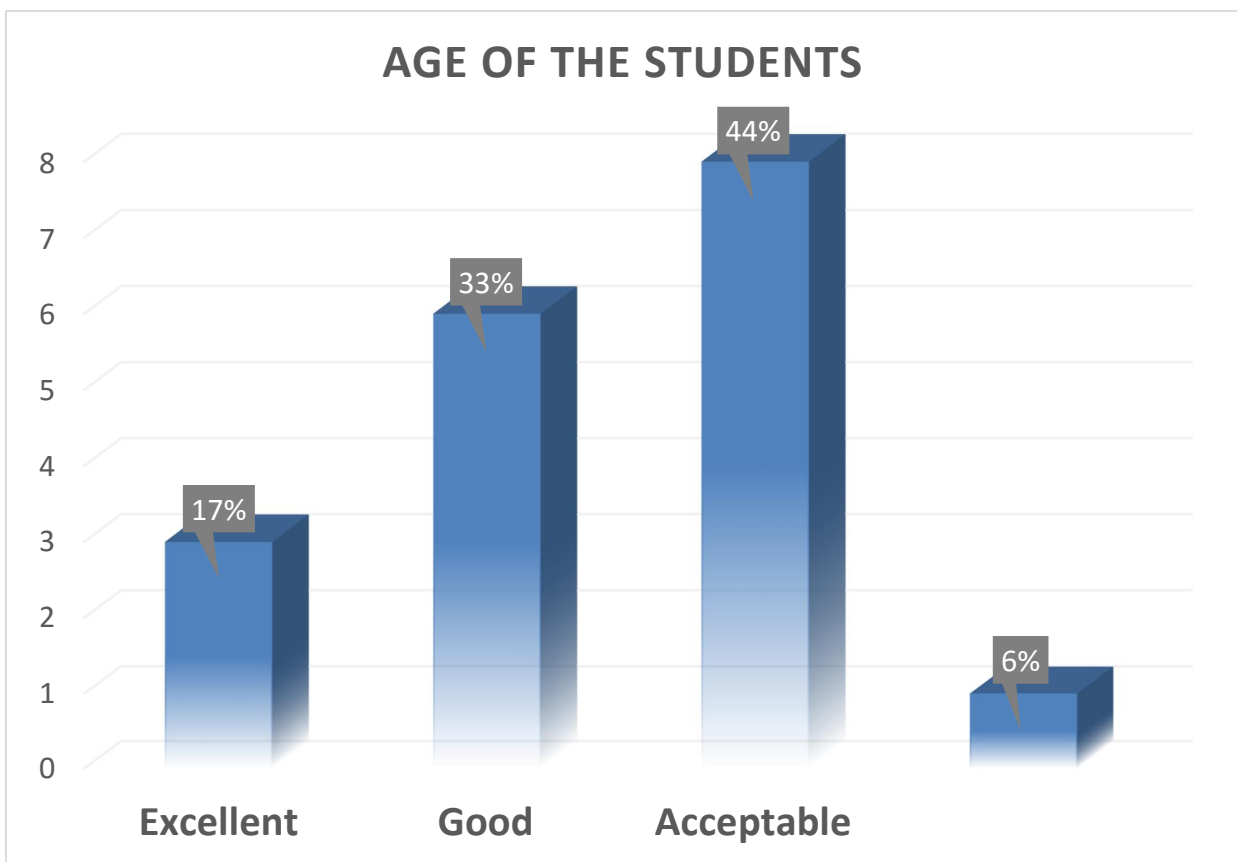
#### Gender

One of the main aspects of the sample is their gender which as it is shown in the diagram, 28 percent were man which is equal to 5 students, and the 72% were woman which was equal to 13 students. That means that this group is mainly composed by women.



## Age

The sample was among the ages 13-16 which is distributed in the following way the majority of the sample were 14 years old with 50%, next the 22% which belongs to students of 15 years old, 17% belongs to students of 16 years old and just 11% belongs to students of 13 years old. As it is viewed this is a group with very young students where most of them are in the age of 14 years old. That is an important factor to take into account. Since the discipline of the group during the observations and the development of the investigation was very challenging, most of the time they were disrespectful towards authorities, unwilling to collaborate and distracted.

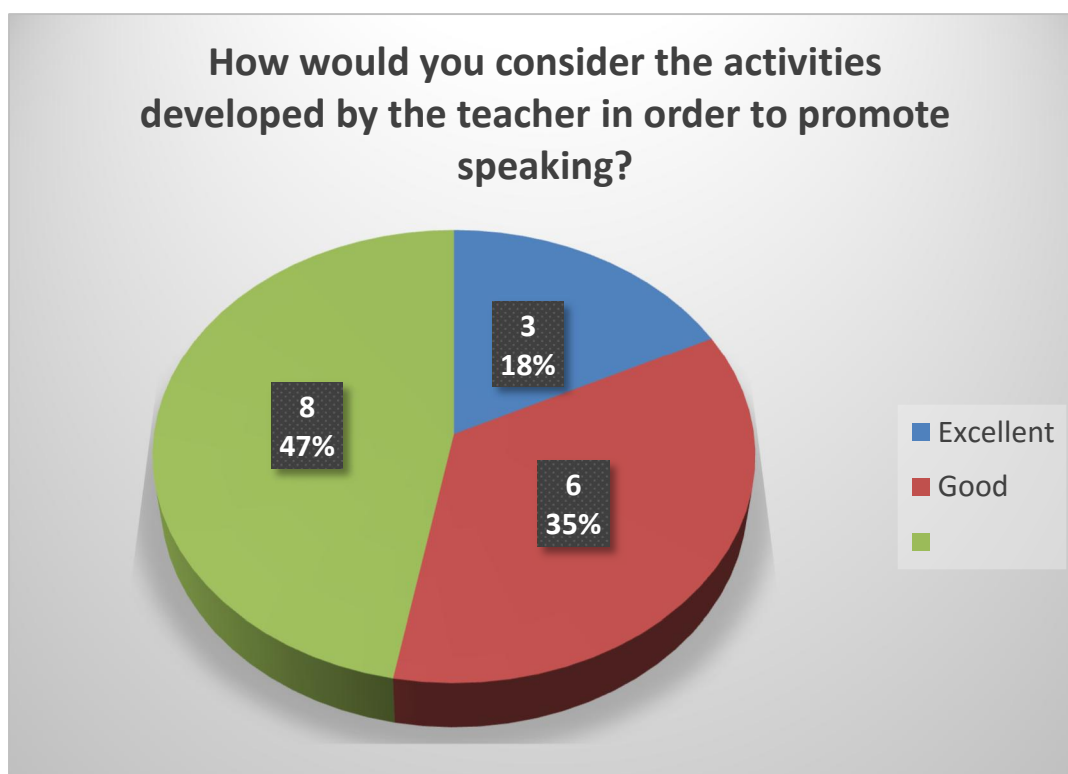




## Teaching strategies used by the teacher to reinforce the speaking skills

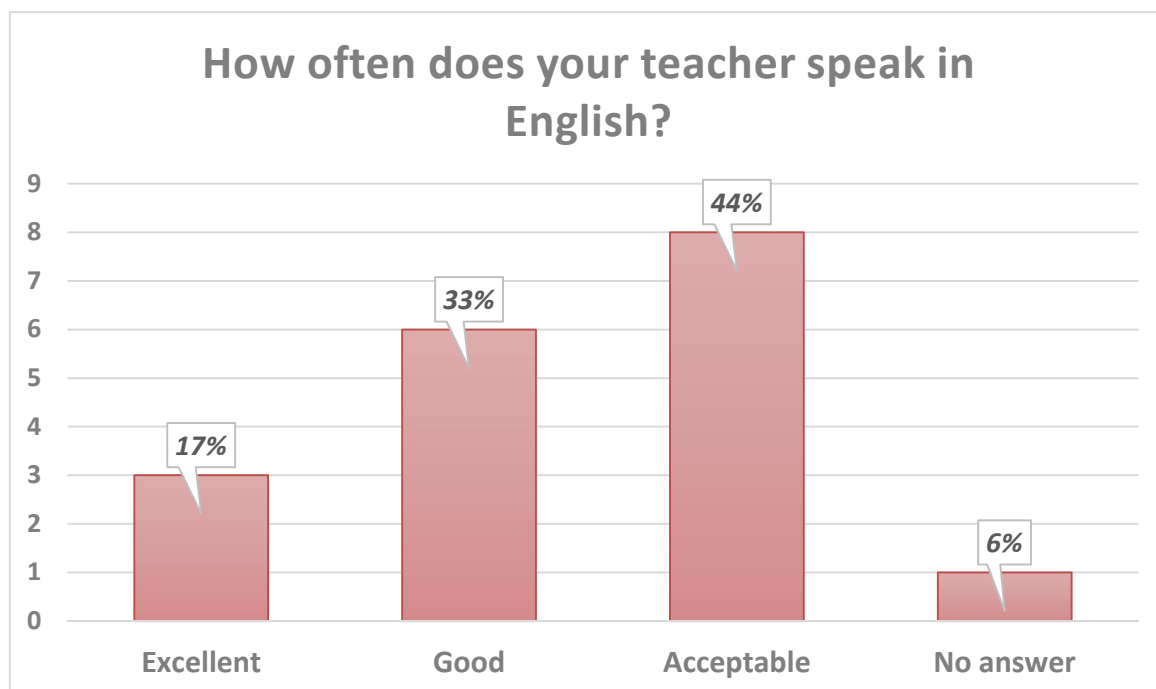
Part of the main concern, expressed on the 5<sup>th</sup> specific objective of this research, was were the effectiveness of the activities developed by the teacher in order to promote speaking, the majority of them, 61%, considered the activities as good. A few of them, 33 %, agreed that the activities were excellent and only 6 % did not answer the question. As it was observed and expressed previously. The teacher used a lot of repetition drills and sometime he used short dialogs, but students were not willing to speak, repeat or even answer.

The teacher was asked about the activities that he develops or not during classes. He expressed that the main ones were listen activities, reading, questions and answers. Consequently, he accepted not to be using speaking activities such as short dialogues, pronunciation and answering open questions.



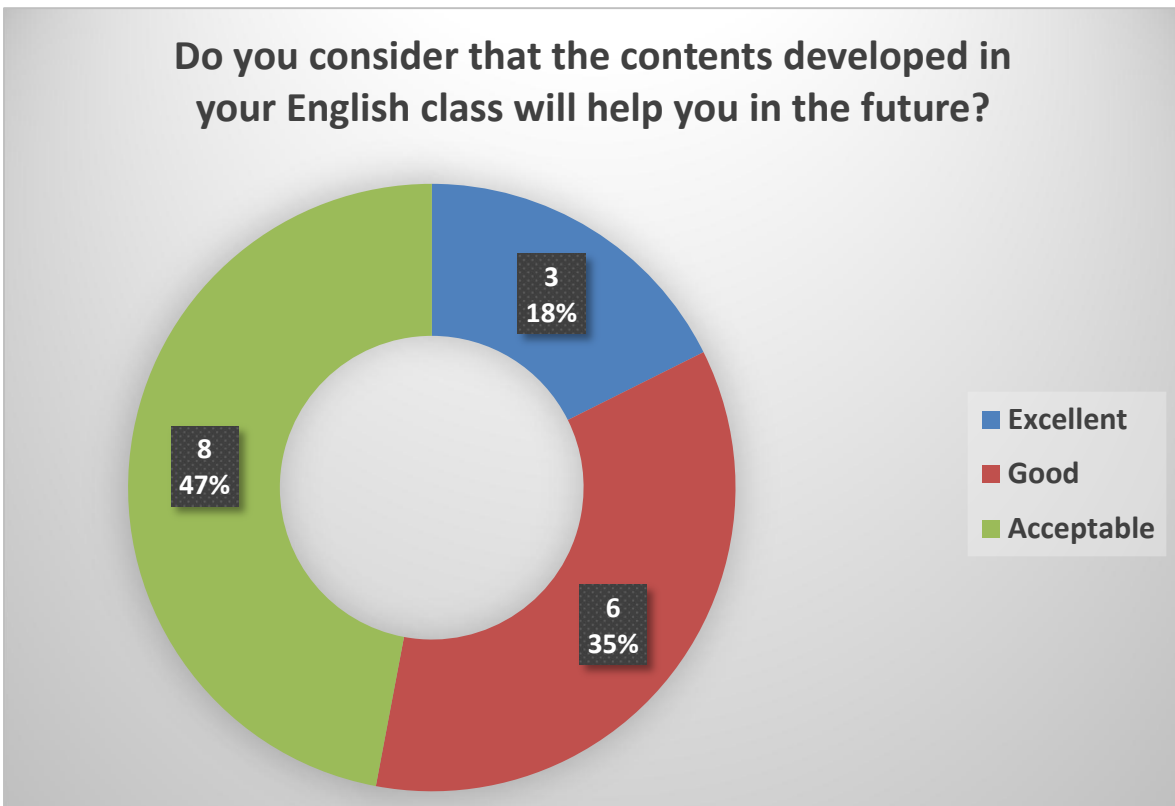
## Student English Exposure

One of the most crucial aspects that were taken into account was if they were exposed to the target language during their classes. So, students were asked how often their teacher speaks in English. The majority of them, 44 %, agreed that the teacher always does it, followed by a 39% who expressed that teacher almost always does it. Then 11% answered that he does it sometimes and only 6% answered that he never does it. It was observed that the teacher does speak in English during classes. It could be considered that the teacher balances a 60% English and a 40% Spanish. He also uses media and photocopies to develop learning quicker and he was observed to use a lot of repetition drills with the students. Therefore, students are exposed to the target language. Based on the previous three questions we can determine that the teaching speaking time is not one of the factors affecting the development of speaking, but students are not practicing speaking on their leisure time and they do not want to be aware of their English speaking level.

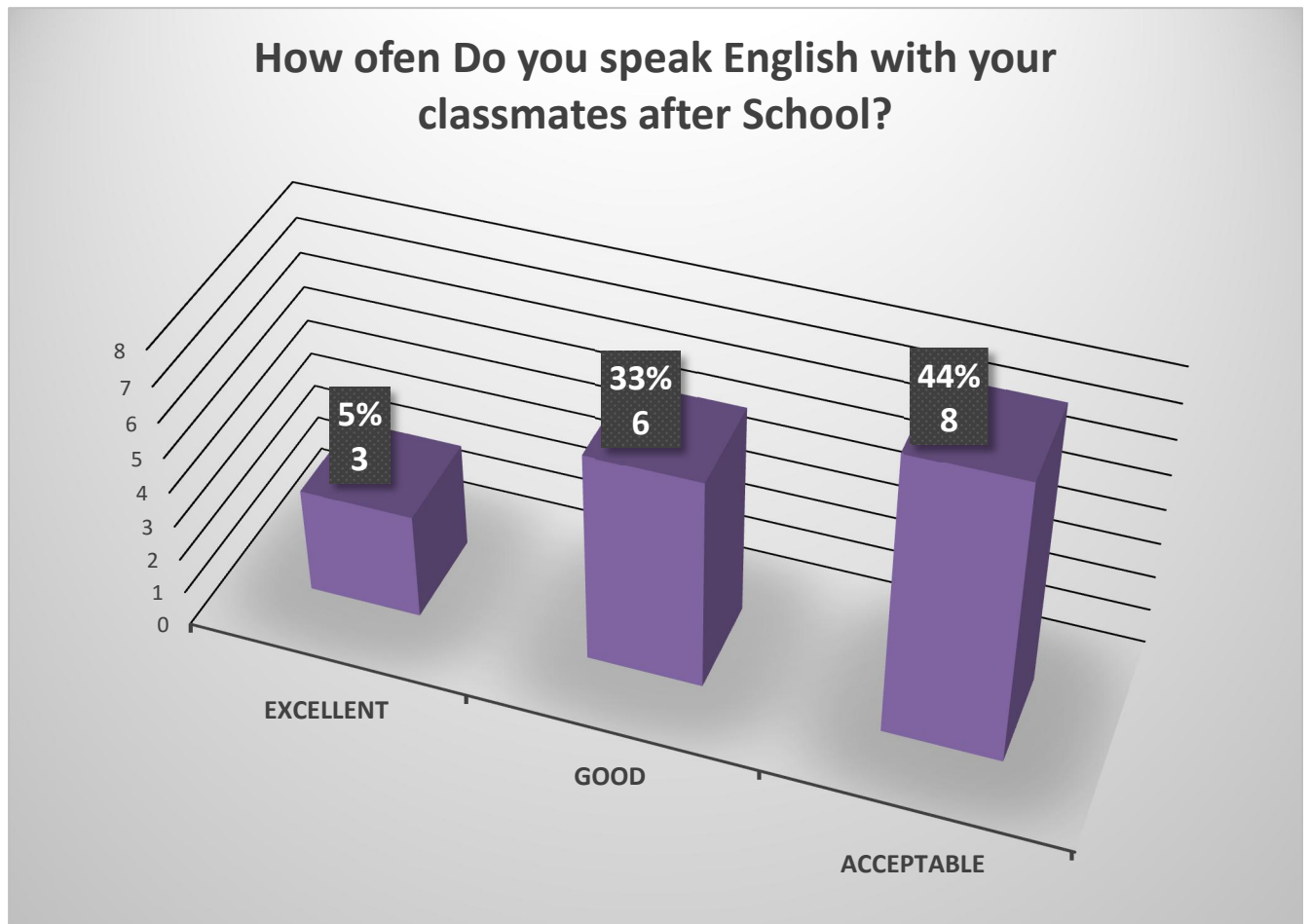


## Students Motivation

In order to better understand the student's awareness regarding their English classes, they were asked about if they considered that the contents developed will help them in the future and why. The biggest majority answered to be absolutely sure that the contents will help them in the future, only 22% agreed to be sure about it and 17% were doubtful about it. At the same time, they were asked to justified their answers, most of them expressed that they knew English was important in order to get a good job. Some others expressed that they were willing to work in a call center and some other only expressed that it was important in our days.

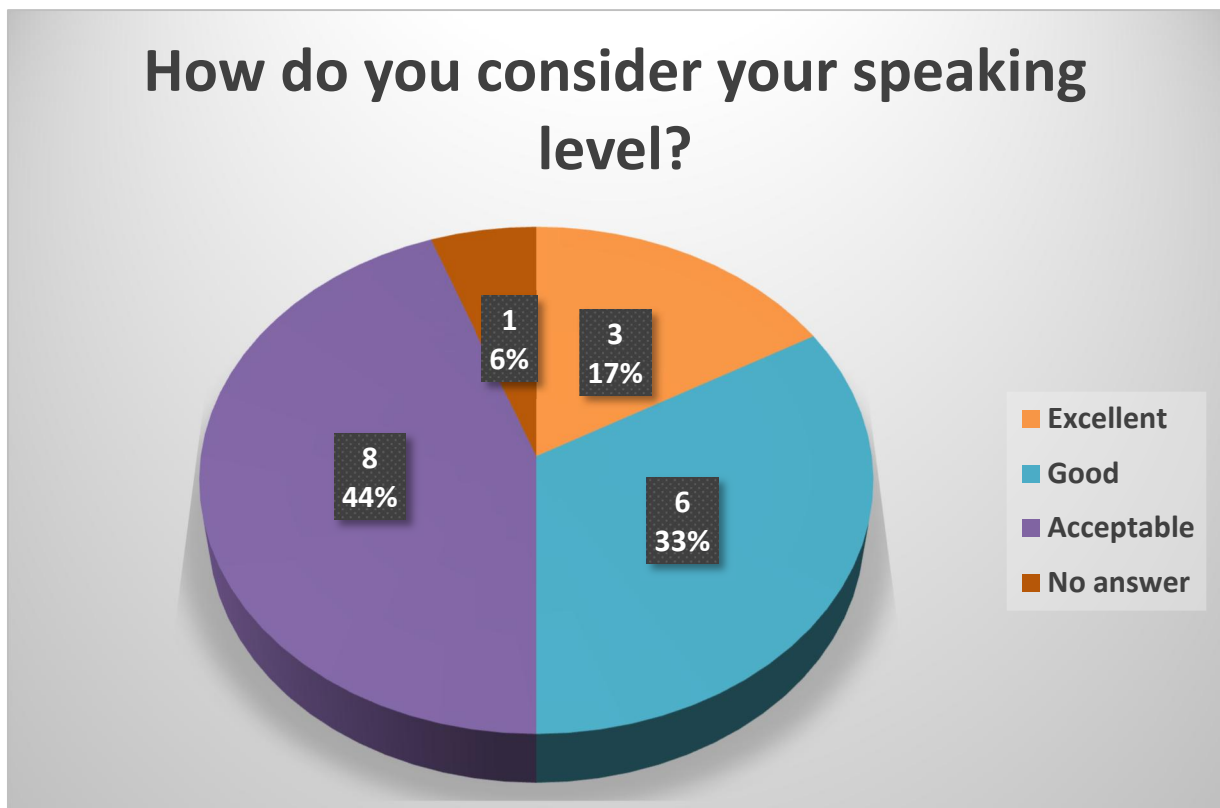


Students were asked about how often they speak English with their classmates after school. 56% expressed that they do it sometimes, 39% answered to rarely do it and only 5% answered to almost always do it. As it was stated on previous question, students are not speaking during class and they lack on vocabulary. Although it was observed that some of them knew some English songs. It is hard to believe and accept that most of them practice speaking after classes since they do not do it during classes.



### Factor that are affecting the development of English students speaking skills.

Students were asked about how they consider their English speaking level. 72% answered that their level was acceptable, 11 % considered their level as good. Another 11% answered that their level was bad and only 7 % answered that its level was excellent. During the observations, their teacher tried to developed some repetition drills and there was a short dialog where students were not able to develop it. During the interview with the teacher, it was expressed that they are careless about their education and they lack on vocabulary. Comparing those answers and what was observed. Student lies themselves by considering their speaking level as acceptable, since no speaking skill was shown during this reseach.



## Student's constraints

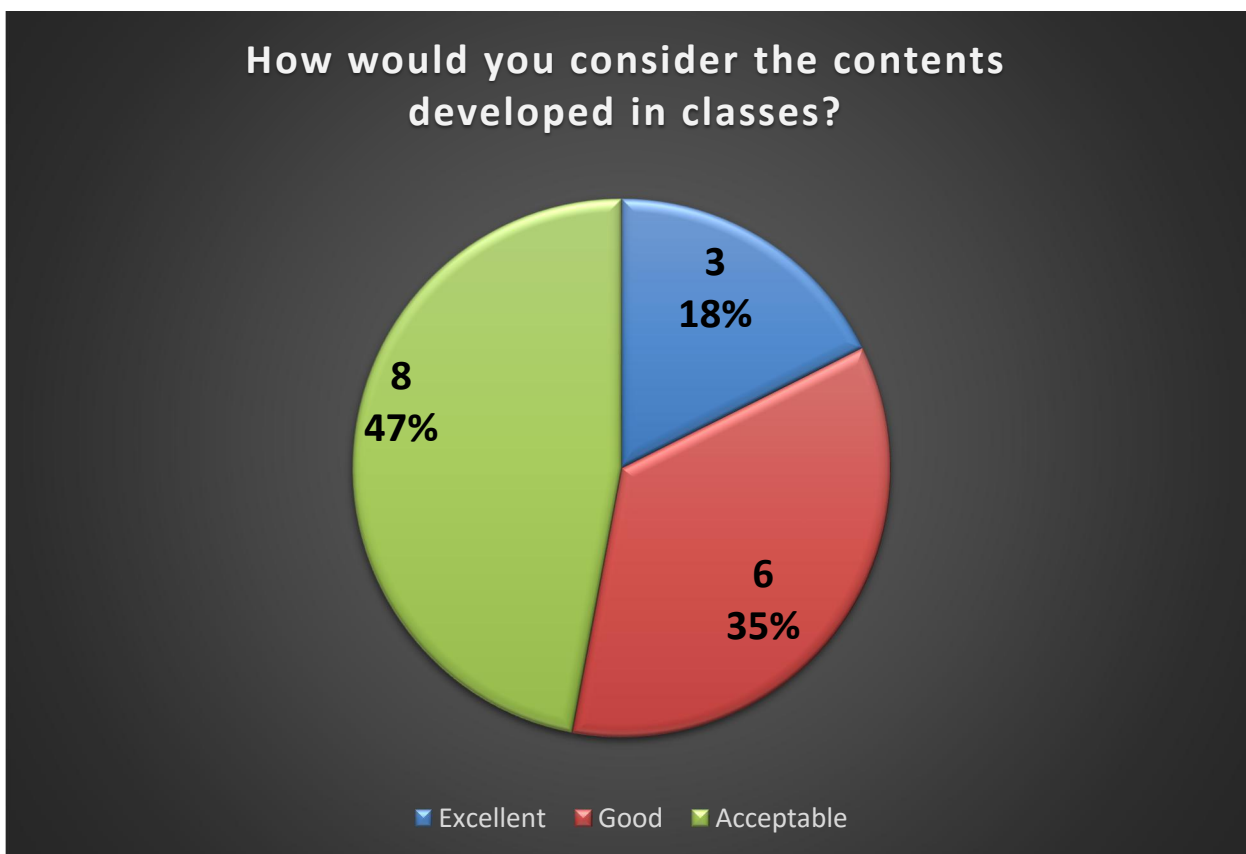
Finally, students were asked about the reason that they consider are stopping them to develop speaking. Most of the agreed that the noise and interruptions are the main factor, in the other hand, they expressed that they have issues with vocabulary, a minor part expressed that they do not have the right resources to work on it and just one expressed that the dynamics are not developed during classes. This last questions shows that students are aware that interruptions and noise are the main factors affecting them. One thing regarding that question that must be mentioned is that most of the noise and distractions are not outside of the classroom. it could be said that 85% of the noise and interruptions were done inside of the classroom by the students and their indiscipline.



During an interview with the English teacher assigned to the group. He was asked a set of questions regarding the factors that he considers are stopping the development of the speaking skill. The first two questions set were: what were the factors that affect the development of oral communication, and what factors were interviewing the development of English speaking skill. The teacher answered that students do not have enough vocabulary; neither do parents support them. Besides, students have financial problems, but mainly he expressed that they do not show any interest about learning and they easily get distracted by any other thing. He was also Asked if it was considered that the speaking is no developed for personal reasons or issues with the curriculum. Teacher answered the question explaining three points. He stated that he had excessive amount of students, school is not following rules and student's attendance is not supervised.

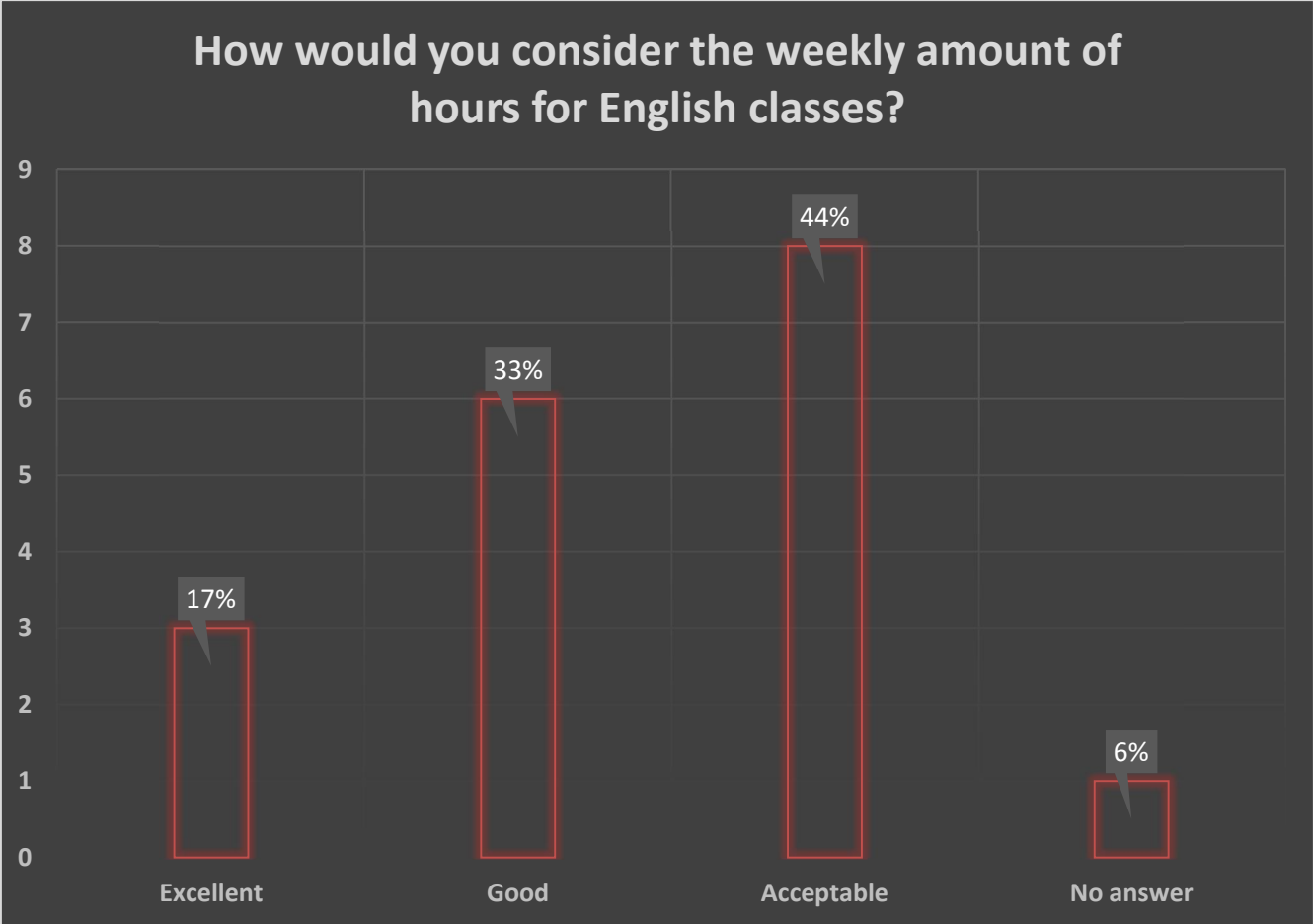
## Impact of the Nicaraguan curriculum

The students were also asked about the contents developed during their English classes. 72% answered that the contents were good, 17% considered that they were excellent and 11% answered that they were acceptable. As one of the objectives for this research we have the curriculum developed by MINED. It was expressed by the teacher that the contents are not developed following speaking or conversational models. They are more focused on grammar; therefore, it is considered that the contents lack context in order to fulfill languages needs.





Another main concern observed with the curriculum, was the weekly amount of hours designated for English classes. Only 17 percent answered that it was excellent, the biggest majority agreed with a 44% that it was acceptable, followed by a 33% which considered it as good and finally a 6 percent who preferred not to answer the question. It must be mentioned that the students only receive 110 minutes of English class each week and even when they are in English classes, they are only exposed to a 60% English speaking time with a poor interaction. Despite the fact students consider that the amount is acceptable, they must be exposed to more English time in order to develop their speaking.



## **Importance of teaching resources for the development of communication skills**

Students were asked to give an opinion regarding the activities developed in their books given by MINED. 50% agreed that they were good, 22% agreed that they were acceptable. Another 22% expressed that they were excellent and only 6% answered they were bad. As it was mentioned by the teacher, students in the afternoon shift do not have the book for English classes, the access is on the library, so whenever an activity is required to be developed from the book, they make copies. After reviewing the activities on the book, it is easily observed that they are not challenging and some of them contain grammar and spelling mistakes. There are some others that were made using transliteration. Therefore, it is said that the activities are bad. What the teacher expressed about this point was that students do not have MINED's book, so activities are not developed; likewise, the book needs a lot of improvement and has several areas of opportunities. For example: most of the speaking activities are not designed based on real context not letting students to fully develop real speaking.

## **XI- Conclusion**

Once analyzed the survey, the observation guide and the interview, it was found that the factors that mainly affect the development of the speaking skill in the students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade “G” at Miguel de Cervantes High School-Managua during the second semester 2017 are the followings:

Students are not motivated or engaged with their learnings. They denied accepting that they are lacking vocabulary and knowledge and they prefer to discard the fact that their English speaking level is poor; they do not really practice English on their leisure time and/or classes.

Secondly, the methodology oriented to the teacher, by MINED, to be used is focused on grammar. That makes the student’s interaction time shorter. Despite of the fact that the teacher uses some techniques to promote speaking, they are not enough. Besides, parents and authorities should support teachers and follow up on student’s performance since students are careless about their scores and proficiency. For this reason, the students cannot interact too much in the classroom. The students' speaking level presented a great difference between the answers given by the students in the survey and what it was observed. Moreover, students do not practice English between them.

Nicaraguan curriculum has been affecting the learning process. Although students consider as acceptable the time the schedule devote to English, students are not enough

exposed to interacting time and speaking time lies on teachers instead of students. Besides, as expressed by the teacher, the communication models followed by the books are not covering students' need.

Finally, the book provided by MINED for the development of speaking is exposing students to nonrealistic English. For that reason, teachers use other resources and complete the program with a limit presence of MINED book.

## **XII- Recommendations**

Based on the results obtained the recommendations are:

1. MINEDS program should not only focus on grammar, also in speaking. Therefore, they should try to divide the time to develop both skills.
2. Teacher has to find out other strategies and techniques that promote the students' interaction in the English class development such as role plays, singing activities, picture describing, etc.
3. The students should be exposed to more realistic English and be self-evaluated, so they can get an idea about how communication works and how they need to improve. This can be done by taking students to the media room and showing them information gap activities.
4. School should promote the active participation of student's family and community through meetings and seminars. In that way students will be more responsible about their scores and proficiency.
5. The teacher should use different kind of strategies and techniques to motivate the students and use interesting activities for each content, such as:
  - A. To learn poems, riddles and tongue-twisters.
  - B. Oral presentations - Short readings - English songs.
  - C. To use warm-up activities at the beginning of the class to introduce a content.
  - D. Use flash cards, pictures or other type of materials made by the teacher to make students speak.

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# **XIV- Annexes**



**Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua**

**Facultad de educación e idiomas**

**Departamento de inglés**

**Encuesta a estudiantes**

Topic: Factores que afectan el desarrollo de la habilidad de habla en inglés en los estudiantes del Octavo grado "G" del colegio público Miguel Cervantes en el segundo semestre 2017.

**Hoja #:** \_\_\_\_\_

El objetivo de la presente encuesta es la recolección de información que ayudará al análisis de los diferentes factores que afectan el desarrollo del habla inglés a los estudiantes.

Lea y escriba una "X" en las siguientes instrucciones utilizando lapicero. En la sección (1.2) escriba su edad en números.

**I. Información general**

**1.1 Género**

a) **Hombre** \_\_\_\_\_ **Mujer** \_\_\_\_\_

**1.2 Edad** \_\_\_\_\_

**1.3**

**II. Lea las siguientes preguntas y marque con una "X" en el cuadro que considere más adecuado.**

a. ¿Con que frecuencia su profesor habla inglés en clase?

Siempre	Casi siempre	Algunas veces	Casi nunca	Nunca

b. ¿Cómo considera su nivel de habla en inglés?

Excelente	Bueno	Aceptable	Malo	Muy malo

c. ¿Cómo evalúas las siguientes estrategias para el desarrollo de tu habla en inglés?

Estrategias	Frecuencia				
	Excelente	Bueno	Aceptable	Malo	Muy malo
Juego de roles.					
Descripción de acontecimientos.					
Explicación de vocabulario o estructuras gramaticales.					

Actividades de escucha, canto o videos.					
Presentaciones orales.					
Repetición de palabras o frases.					

**d. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes razones crees que eviten que desarrolles tu habla en el inglés? Escribe una "X" en las razones que afectan tu desarrollo del habla inglés.**

<b>Razones</b>	<b>"X"</b>
Falta de recursos didácticos como libros, imágenes, diccionarios o audios.	
No se desarrollan dinámicas para desarrollo de la clase como debates, dramatizaciones, cantos, conversaciones, competencia de grupos, entre otros.	
Hay mucho ruido o interrupciones durante el periodo de clase.	

No tienes mucho vocabulario para poder expresar tus ideas espontáneamente.	
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**e. ¿Con que frecuencia hablas en inglés con tus compañeros de clases después de terminar tu periodo de clase?**

- 1- Pocas veces \_\_\_\_
- 2- Algunas veces \_\_\_\_
- 3- En ocasiones \_\_\_\_
- 4- Muchas veces \_\_\_\_
- 5- Casi siempre. \_\_\_\_



3- Why isn't speaking develop in your class? Is it for personal reason or because the program doesn't ask for it?

4- Do you use the speaking activities suggested by the MINED program? Why or why not?

5- Do you think the activities suggested by the MINED program are adapted to the student's English level in order to produce the target language? Why or why not?



6- What speaking activities do your students practice during your lessons?

7- What types of speaking activities are more practiced in your class? Give them a list of options.



**National Autonomous Nicaraguan University  
UNAN-MANAGUA  
Education and Language Faculty  
English department**

**Observation Guide**

Topic: Factors that are affecting the development of oral communication in English in students of 8th grade "G" at Miguel Cervantes High School-Managua.

The objective of the current observation is to gather information that will help analyze the different factors that affect the development of speaking in the students.

**1- How often does the teacher speak English in class?**

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never

**2- How often does the teacher use the following strategies to make students speak?**

Strategies	Usually	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Role plays				
Describing things or situations				
Explaining				

things				
Cellphones				
Oral presentations				

3- How are the activities made by the teacher to develop speaking in the students?

<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Very bad</b>

4- What are the students speaking level?

Pre-production	Production	Short speech	Intermediate fluency	Advance fluency

5- -How often students participate?

<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Hardly ever</b>	<b>Never</b>

**6- Students demonstrate to be disciplined and create a facilitating learning environment**

<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Hardly ever</b>	<b>Never</b>

**7- Is the teacher using the activities suggested by the MINED program during his lesson plan? Make a list of the activities**

**8- Mark with an X what teaching materials your teacher has used during a class session.**

<b>Didactics Resources</b>	<b>X</b>
Books	
Retroproyector	
Audio materials (songs, speeches, dialogues, etc.)	
Videos	
Flashcards or images	
Material prepared by his own	
Worksheets with practice excercises	