

THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING TO ENHANCE THE ENGLISH ORAL PROFICIENCY

La enseñanza comunicativa de idiomas para mejorar el dominio oral del inglés

Ensino comunicativo das línguas para melhorar a proficiência oral em inglês

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The study analyzes the implementation of communicative methodologies in English teaching at the Universidad Técnica de Manabí and their impact on students' oral proficiency. Its objective is to identify deficiencies in oral communication in English and propose pedagogical strategies to improve this skill within the Ecuadorian educational context. Materials and methods: Through a mixed-methods approach, structured surveys and semi-structured interviews were conducted to analyze students' perceptions and experiences. The results show that students face significant challenges such as the tendency to think in Spanish, the use of translators, and a lack of confidence, which limit their oral fluency despite the implementation of conversational activities and technological tools. The discussion highlights the importance of creating inclusive environments, reducing reliance on translation, and promoting greater linguistic immersion. In conclusion, it is recommended to increase opportunities for interaction with native speakers and develop pedagogical strategies that foster active participation and overcome emotional and cognitive barriers to optimize students' oral English proficiency.

Keywords: communicative Language Teaching, Oral Proficiency in English, Pedagogical Strategies in English, Oral Practice in Real Contexts.

RESUMEN

Introducción: El estudio analiza la implementación de metodologías comunicativas en la enseñanza del inglés en la Universidad Técnica de Manabí y su impacto en la competencia oral de los estudiantes de segundo semestre de la carrera de pedagogía de idiomas nacionales y extranjeros. Su objetivo es identificar las deficiencias en la comunicación oral en inglés y proponer estrategias pedagógicas que permitan mejorar esta habilidad en el contexto educativo ecuatoriano. Materiales y Métodos: Mediante un enfoque mixto, se realizaron encuestas estructuradas y entrevistas semiestructuradas para analizar las percepciones y experiencias de los estudiantes. Los resultados muestran que los estudiantes enfrentan desafíos significativos como la tendencia a pensar en español, el uso de traductores y la falta de confianza, los cuales limitan su fluidez oral, pese a la implementación de actividades de comunicación y herramientas tecnológicas. La discusión resalta la importancia de crear entornos inclusivos, reducir la dependencia de la traducción y promover una mayor inmersión lingüística. Como conclusión, se recomienda aumentar las oportunidades de interacción con hablantes nativos y desarrollar estrategias pedagógicas que impulsen la participación activa y la superación de barreras emocionales y cognitivas para optimizar la competencia oral en inglés.

Palabras clave: Comunicación oral, Enseñanza del inglés, Competencia lingüística, Métodos pedagógicos, Herramientas tecnológicas.

RESUMO

O estudo analisa a implementação de metodologias comunicativas no ensino de inglês na Universidad Técnica de Manabí e seu impacto na competência oral dos estudantes. Seu objetivo é identificar as deficiências na comunicação oral em inglês e propor estratégias pedagógicas que melhorem essa habilidade no contexto educacional equatoriano. Por meio

de uma abordagem de métodos mistos, foram realizadas pesquisas estruturadas e entrevistas semiestruturadas para analisar as percepções e experiências dos estudantes. Os resultados mostram que os estudantes enfrentam desafios significativos, como a tendência de pensar em espanhol, o uso de tradutores e a falta de confiança, o que limita sua fluência oral, apesar da implementação de atividades de conversação e ferramentas tecnológicas. A discussão destaca a importância de criar ambientes inclusivos, reduzir a dependência da tradução e promover maior imersão linguística. Em conclusão, recomenda-se aumentar as oportunidades de interação com falantes nativos e desenvolver estratégias pedagógicas que promovam a participação ativa e superem barreiras emocionais e cognitivas para otimizar a competência oral em inglês dos estudantes.

Palavras chave: Comunicação oral, Ensino de inglês, Competência linguística, Métodos pedagógicos, Ferramentas tecnológicas.

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INTRODUCTION

The communicative teaching of English has gained crucial importance in the educational field, as it has been consolidated as a key strategy to improve oral skill in the language. According to several studies, this approach stands out for its emphasis on active interaction among students, favoring the development of communicative competence in real contexts. (Mourad et al., 2024) argue that the communicative centered methodology has proven to be significantly more effective the traditional methods in language teaching, as it allows students to practice the language in situations closer to real life.

In today's global context, English proficiency has become an indispensable skill not only in the workplace, but also academic. Avendaño et al., (2022); Jalleh, et al., (2021), argue that English proficiency is essential for accessing new opportunities in an increasingly interconnected labor market, and for participating in international academic exchanges. Likewise, Angelis (2022), Yapp & van den Bergh (2023), state that educational policies in several countries have prioritized English language instruction from the earliest levels of education. In Ecuador, the Ministry of Education has implemented reforms and programs to improve the teaching of English all levels, with the aim of ensuring that students can communicate in an effectively and in English (Hernández et al., 2024; Tien et al., 2022). At the university level, educational institutions must adapt their programs to international standards, adopting innovative mythologies and employing advanced technologies to facility English language learning. This implies a commitment by universities to offer continuous teacher training, with emphasis on communicative teaching techniques and the use of educational technologies (García et al., 2021; Christopoulos & Sprangers, 2021).

In fact, the incorporation of technological tools such as online learning platforms, mobile applications and multimedia resources has significantly enriched the educational experience, providing students with more opportunities for interactions with the language and with native speakers (Nguyen, 2021).

In this framework, the objective of this study is to identify the shortcomings in oral communication in English faced by university students, in order to propose strategies to improve this skill within the Ecuadorian educational context. Additionally, it seeks to analyze the implementation of communicative English teaching at the Universidad Técnica de Manabí to assess its impact on students, identify the main barriers and facilitators in the learning process, and suggest pedagogical strategies that optimize students' oral performance (Andrin et al., 2024; Gathu, 2022).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was carried out at the Universidad Técnica de Manabí, with the objective of identifying the gaps in oral communication in English faced by university students, with the aim of providing strategies to improve this skill within the Ecuadorian educational context. To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques was used, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the development of students' oral English skills. The population consisted of second-semester students from the Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros. A total of 77 students participated in the structured survey, and 40 students in the semi-structured interviews, purposively selected to ensure the inclusion of students already familiar with basic English teaching principles and who had previously been exposed to communicative methodologies. The students represented a diverse

range of ages and backgrounds in English learning, which allowed for a broad perspective on the impact of communicative methodologies on their language development. Data collection Instruments: two main data collection instruments were used: a structured survey and a semi-structured interview.

Both instruments were taken from the research work for the Master's degree in Higher Education Teaching by Fredy Alejandro Martínez Aguilar and were subsequently edited and improved to specifically focus on oral communication in English. This adaptation process ensured that the instruments were aligned with the study's objectives and with the needs of the research context. Structured Survey: the survey was designed to collect data on students' perceptions of their oral English proficiency, the effectiveness of communicative activities implemented in class, and the challenges they perceive when practicing the language.

The questions covered topics such as confidence in using the language, participation in oral activities within the classroom, perceived barriers to oral communication (e.g., anxiety, lack of vocabulary, grammatical errors), and the influence of communicative methodologies in improving their speaking skills. The survey questions were specifically adapted to assess aspects related to oral communication in English, following the recommendations of experts in language teaching. Additionally, the survey was validated by a panel of experts in foreign language teaching, ensuring its reliability and relevance to the study's objectives. Semi-Structured Interview: the semi-structured interview was conducted with 40 students from the Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, randomly selected from the total sample of 77 participants. The goal of the interviews was to obtain a deeper insight into students' experiences with communicative methodologies in their English classes, their perceptions of oral language development, their motivations, and the challenges they face in practicing English.

The interview questionnaire was adapted to specifically address the pedagogical development of English classes, focusing on how communicative methodologies impact students' oral skills. The questions were improved and focused on oral communication in English, aiming to understand students' perceptions of their progress and the barriers they encounter in their learning. Instrument Application Process, the application of the instruments was carried out sequentially during the academic semester of 2024. Initially, the structured survey was administered to the 77 students to obtain a general view of their perception of oral English development. Later, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 40 selected students to delve deeper into their experiences and perceptions regarding the use of communicative methodologies in their English classes.

The data obtained from the structured survey were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, such as means and frequencies, to identify patterns and trends in students' responses. On the other hand, the semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis and coding to identify the main challenges and approaches used by students in their English learning and how this impact their oral development. Data Analysis: the data analysis combined both quantitative techniques (descriptive statistics) and qualitative techniques (content analysis and coding) to provide a comprehensive view of the effectiveness of communicative methodologies in the development of oral English proficiency among students. The results obtained allowed for the identification of the most relevant aspects of English language teaching and learning, as well as areas for implement in the application of these methodologies, thus providing specific strategies to enhance students' oral skills in English within the Ecuadorian educational context.

RESULTS

The results of the study on oral communication difficulties among students at Universidad Técnica de Manabí indicate that students face significant challenges in speaking English. This despite the implementation of communicative methods in English teaching, this finding is especially relevant given the increasing emphasis on communicative approaches in higher education in Ecuador.

According to the survey data, 65% of students reported that, although they actively participate in communicative activities, they struggle to communicate fluently due to their tendency to think in Spanish and their frequent use of translators. This behavior interferes with practicing the language in real-life contexts, limiting the improvement of their oral skills. Cognitive and Emotional Barriers: this phenomenon is particularly pronounced among students with lower English proficiency, who tend to rely on their native language to express ideas, thus affecting the fluency of their speech in English. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with 40 students provided qualitative insights into the cognitive and emotional barriers they face.

The majority of interviewees agreed that a lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes are key factors hindering their participation in oral activities. One student stated, "Although I know what I want to say, I'm afraid of making a mistake and being judged. Sometimes, I prefer not to speak." This fear of making mistakes was also reflected in the survey responses, with 73% of participants indicating that language anxiety is one of the biggest obstacles to improving their oral skills. Educational Technologies as a Support Tool: although students report difficulties with verbal fluency, the results also show that educational technologies play a crucial role in the learning process. 80% of interviewees mentioned that using digital platforms and mobile applications has helped improve their pronunciation and listening comprehension, though they have not observed significant progress in verbal fluency. This suggests that while these technologies are valuable, they are not enough to overcome difficulties related to oral production.

Additionally, some students highlighted that the lack of opportunities to interact with native English speakers remains a major to developing fluent communication. Communication Activities and Their Limited Impact: Another relevant finding is that, while conversation activities and task-based communicative methods are positively rated by students, 58% of respondents expressed that they do not feel their oral skills have significantly improved despite participating in these activities. Conversation activities, while useful, do not seem sufficient to overcome the difficulties students experience in oral practice, primarily due to their reliance on translation and the lack of constant exposure to the language outside the classroom.

This finding underscores the need to create a more immersive environment and promote real-life communication situations. Recommendations and the Need for Language Immersion: the results suggest that while communicative approaches and the support of educational technologies are valuable strategies, reliance on translation and fear of making mistakes continue to be significant barriers to progress in students' oral skills. It is crucial to strengthen pedagogical strategies by implementing activities that foster greater language immersion. A possible recommendation is to include exchange programs with native English speakers or create virtual interactive environments where students can practice English in everyday situations.

Furthermore, it is recommended that educators focus on creating an inclusive learning environment where students feel safe to make mistakes and learn from there. Limitations and Areas for Future Research. It is important to note that this study was based on a sample of 40 students, which limits the generalization of the results. Future research could expand the sample and include different educational contexts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the obstacle's students face in oral language learning. Additionally, further exploration is needed to evaluate the impact of educational technologies and their integration in the classroom to foster greater verbal fluency.

Summary of general responses from students in the interview

1. Do you find it easy to apply the correct grammatical structures based on the communicative situation you're facing in English?

Student 4 explained that, in everyday situations, they feel comfortable using the correct grammatical structures. However, when it comes to forming more complex sentences or using tenses they don't practice frequently, they get confused. They mentioned that the transition between Spanish and English structures makes them pause to ensure they're using the correct grammar.

2. Do you consider that you express yourself correctly using grammatical and spelling rules in English during your dialogues?

Student 7 stated that while they try to follow the rules, they often make mistakes, especially with verb conjugation and prepositions, which are very different from Spanish. They also noted issues with spelling, especially when words in English look similar to those in Spanish but are spelled differently.

3. Do you consider that you have a good repertoire of words and expressions in English that you use in your communication?

Student 2 mentioned that their vocabulary is adequate for everyday situations but becomes a challenge when dealing with more technical or specialized topics. They admitted feeling limited, especially when speaking about academic or professional matters, as they lack the necessary vocabulary for precise communication.

4. Do you think your discourse skills in English allow you to express yourself adequately in different contexts during classes?

Student 5 shared that they feel confident in simple situations, like introducing themselves or talking about their interests. However, when the conversation becomes more complicated or shifts topics, they feel lost. They also expressed insecurity in more formal situations, like presentations or debates, as their inability to quickly organize their thoughts makes them uncomfortable.

5. Do you think your vocabulary in English allows you to communicate adequately and coherently in different situations?

Student 6 stated that although their vocabulary is enough for daily conversations, they lack technical vocabulary when it comes to academic or professional discussions. This limits their ability to express themselves coherently in these contexts, and they feel insecure because they can't speak with the precision they wish.

6. Can you maintain clear and relevant communication in English according to the communicative situation?

Student 8 mentioned that while they can communicate clearly in familiar situations like talking about hobbies or daily activities, they struggle to maintain fluency in more complex conversations. They pointed out that the lack of fluency and difficulty in structuring their ideas affect the clarity of their communication, particularly in deeper or professional conversations.

7. Do you find it easy to understand your classmates when they speak in English?

Student 3 mentioned that understanding their classmates is often difficult due to varying accents and the fast pace at which some speak. Although they try to pay attention, they often feel lost, especially when unfamiliar words or expressions are used.

8. Do you find it easy to maintain a conversation in English about topics you're not very familiar with?

Student 1 expressed that when talking about unfamiliar topics, such as technical or academic matters, they feel blocked. They admitted struggling to structure their responses and getting frustrated when they can't find the right words, which leads them to either abandon the conversation or give short answers to avoid making mistakes.

Result of the survey based on oral communication in English

In this part of the study, the researchers seek the way to show the most relevant data obtained from the survey applied to the participants. Each question has the figure to allow the reader see the data in a better and understanding way. Moreover, an analysis is provided to comprehend the data of the research more accurately.

Do you feel that you express yourself correctly using grammatical rules and correct spelling when speaking in English?

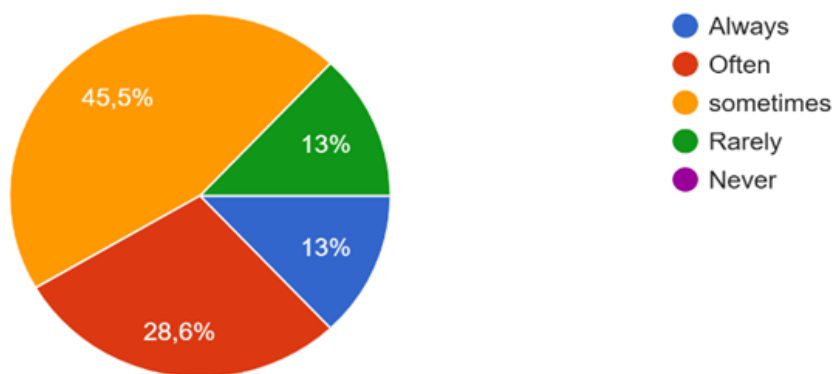


Figure 1: Express yourself correctly using grammatical rule

Source: Own elaboration

From the results, it's evident that 44.6% of students feel that they express themselves sometimes with correct grammar and spelling, indicating some inconsistency in their language production. A smaller percentage, 13.5%, reports always being able to express themselves correctly, while another 13.5% often manages to do so. A significant portion, 28.4%, admits to rarely expressing themselves with accuracy. This suggests that, for many students, grammar and spelling remain a challenge in oral communication, likely due to factors such as language anxiety, lack of practice, or limited exposure to the language outside of the classroom.

Do you find the methods used in class effective for improving your pronunciation and vocabulary in different contexts?

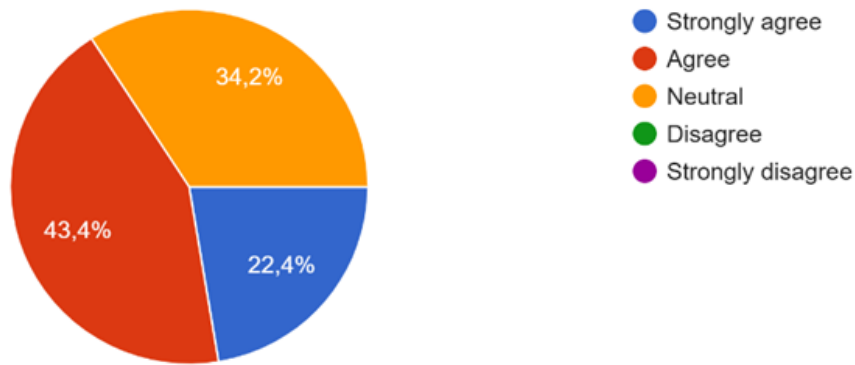


Figure 2: Methods used in class effective for improving

Source: Own elaboration

While 56.6% of students agree (22.4% strongly agree and 34.2% agree) that the methods used in class are effective for improving pronunciation and vocabulary, a significant 43.4% remained neutral. This indicates that almost half of the students do not feel strongly about the effectiveness of the current methods or may not perceive a clear impact on their improvement. The absence of negative feedback (disagree or strongly disagree) suggests that the methods are generally not seen as ineffective, but the neutral responses highlight an area for potential improvement, where more engaging or tailored approaches might better meet student needs.

Do you feel you receive the necessary support to improve sentence construction and fluency during oral communication activities?

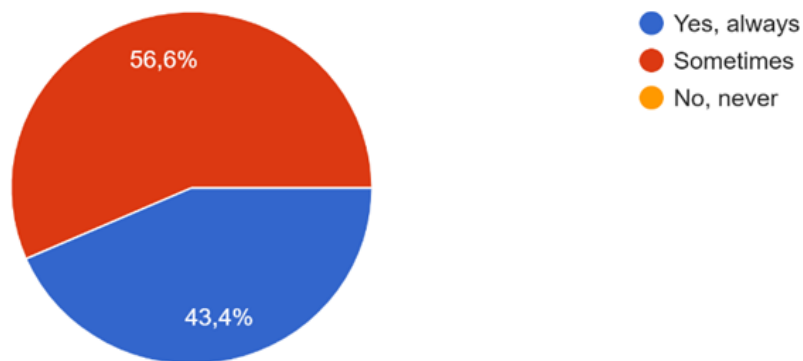


Figure 3: Fluency during oral communication activities

Source: Own elaboration

Likewise, 56.6% of students reported that they always receive the necessary support to improve sentence construction and fluency, indicating a positive experience for more than half of the group. However, 43.4% of students mentioned that they only receive support occasionally, suggesting that a significant portion of students may not be getting consistent assistance in these areas. This could reflect the need to provide more personalized attention or adjust classroom activities to ensure that all students have the opportunity to improve their fluency and sentence construction more regularly.

How would you rate the variety of words and expressions you can use during communication in English?

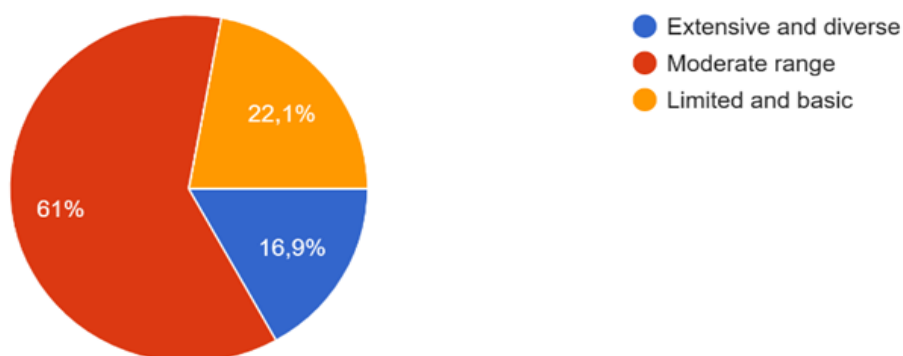


Figure 4: Variety of words and expression and communication en English.

Source: Own elaboration

The majority of students (61%) reported having a limited and basic range of vocabulary and expressions they can use during communication in English. This suggests that a significant number of students may struggle with vocabulary expansion or may not feel confident in using a wide variety of words in various contexts. A smaller percentage, 22.1%, felt they had a moderate range, indicating that some students have a more balanced vocabulary, but there is still room for growth in fluency and variety. Only 16.9% of students rated their vocabulary as extensive and diverse, highlighting that only a few students feel highly confident in their ability to use a broad range of expressions and words. This pattern might reflect challenges in vocabulary acquisition, a common issue among language learners who may focus more on basic communication and less on expanding their word bank, especially in more complex contexts.

Do you feel that the activities you do on your own help improve your pronunciation and vocabulary in different contexts?

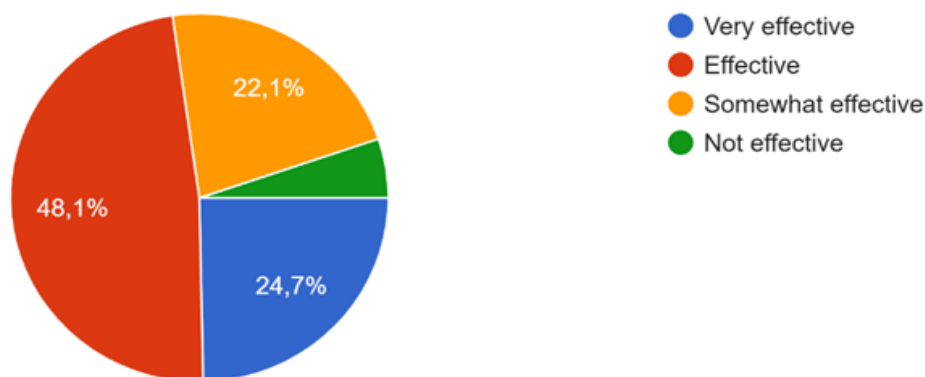


Figure 5: Improve your pronunciation and vocabulary

Source: Own elaboration

The majority of students (48.1%) believe that their independent activities are somewhat effective in improving their pronunciation and vocabulary. A significant percentage (24.7%) consider them very effective, which shows that some students feel confident in their self-study efforts. However, a considerable portion (22.1%) rates these activities as effective but not highly impactful. There are no students who feel that their independent work is completely ineffective, which suggests that self-study is still seen as a valuable tool, although there may be room for improvement in terms of the activities' quality or focus. This could indicate that students might benefit from more structured or guided self-study materials to enhance their independent learning experience, such as more targeted exercises for specific contexts or challenges.

To what extent do you feel your speaking skill enable you to express yourself clearly in various contexts during class?

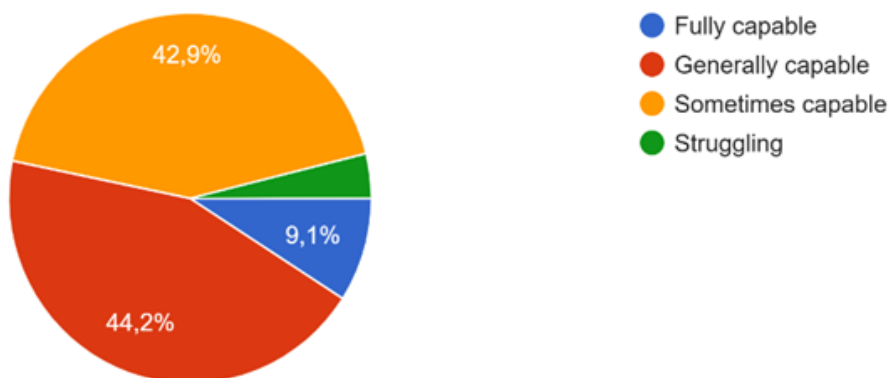


Figure 6: express yourself clearly in various contexts

Source: Own elaboration

Most students (44.2%) feel they are only "sometimes capable" of expressing themselves clearly during class activities. Additionally, 42.9% feel "generally capable," which indicates that many students can communicate reasonably effectively but still face challenges. Only a small percentage (9.1%) feels "fully capable" of expressing themselves clearly in all contexts. This suggests that the majority of students experience insecurity or difficulties when trying to express themselves orally, likely due to limitations in vocabulary, pronunciation, or grammatical structures. This can prevent them from feeling entirely confident in their ability to communicate fluently and accurately in English.

Do you believe your current vocabulary helps you communicate clearly and coherently in most situations?

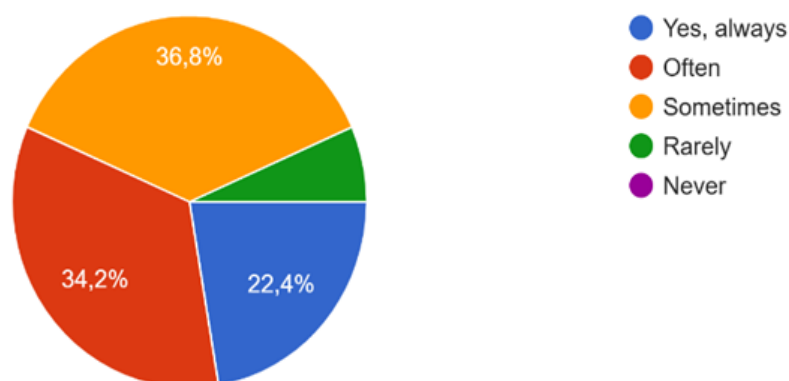


Figure 7: Vocabulary and communicative clearly and coherently

Source: Own elaboration

The majority of students (36.8%) believe that their vocabulary helps them communicate clearly and coherently "often," while a significant portion (34.2%) states that this is the case "sometimes." Only 22.4% of students feel that their vocabulary always supports clear communication, indicating that even though many students have a decent vocabulary, they do not feel fully confident in expressing themselves in all situations. The fact that 6.6% of students say "rarely" suggests that for some, their vocabulary may limit their ability to communicate effectively, especially in more complex or unfamiliar contexts. This indicates that while their vocabulary is functional for everyday situations, students may need to expand it to communicate more effectively in professional or academic.

Can you maintain clear and relevant communication in English, adjusting according to the situation?

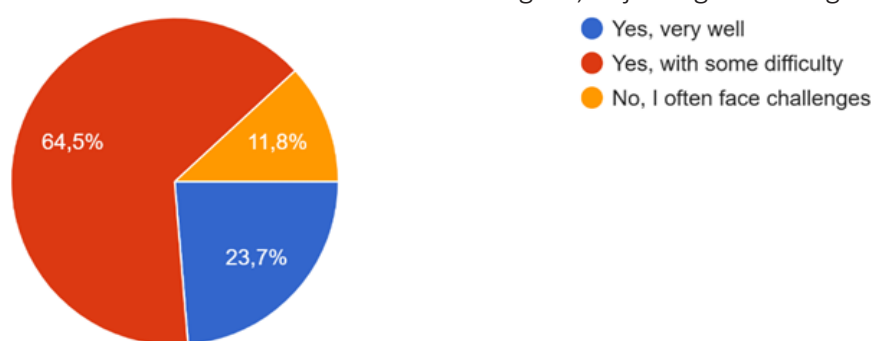


Figure 8: Relevant communication in English.

Source: Own elaboration

The majority of students (64.5%) report that they face challenges when trying to maintain clear and relevant communication in English, especially when adjusting to different situations. This suggests that many students struggle with flexibility in communication, possibly due to limited vocabulary or difficulty in adapting to various contexts. A smaller percentage (23.7%) feels confident in their ability to communicate effectively and adapt to different situations. Only 11.8% experience minor difficulties, which indicates that for some students, communication is relatively smooth but still poses occasional challenges. Overall, these results highlight the need for further practice in adaptable communication strategies and the development of language skills to handle diverse conversational.

DISCUSSION

The result of this study highlights persistent challenges in the development of oral competence in English among student at the Universidad Técnica de Manabí, despite the implementation of communicative approaches. The ongoing reliance on translation and the tendency to think in Spanish during communication in English indicate that current methods, while effective in some aspects, do not fully address the underlying difficulties faced by the students.

These finding align with recent research suggesting that full immersion in the language and constant practice in authentic contexts are essential for improving oral fluency (Chate, 2023; Ismailov et al., 2021). the

resistance to abandoning the use of translator and difficulty of thinking directly in English limit students' ability to develop effective and natural communication.

Furthermore, the lack of confidence and the fear of making mistakes, reported by students both in surveys and interview, are significant barriers to active participation in oral activities. This phenomenon coincides with recent studies emphasizing the role of anxiety in language learning, particularly in oral expression, where the fear of negative evaluation can prevent students from engaging in communicative practices (Jorge et al., 2021; Ferrer et al., 2022).

The need for a more supportive and motivating learning environment is evident, as students are more likely to improve their oral skill when they feel confident to experiment with the language without the fear of making mistakes (Šifrar, & Pavlič, 2024). It is important to note that anxiety may be exacerbated by limited exposure to the language outside the classroom, creating a gap between students' passive knowledge of English and their ability to effectively produce it in real life situations (Mori De la Cruz, 2024; Ibna et al., 2021).

Although communicative methods are valued for their ability to engage students, the current study suggests that they are insufficient to bridge the gap between English comprehension and fluent production. As Zambrano et al. (2024) point out, granting student's greater autonomy in their learning process can lead to improvements in their oral skill. Homework, autonomy alone is not enough, students must also have ample opportunities to practice in meaningful and real contexts, such as language exchange programs or interactions with native speaker.

The findings of this study support the conclusions of (Uquillas, & Córdova, 2021) who argue that task-based learning and immersive experiences are necessary for achieving competence in oral expression. In fact, recent research suggests that learning in authentic social contexts accelerates the acquisition of oral skill (Falcon, 2023). The integration of educational technologies has shown some positive effects on students' pre-mutation and listening comprehension, but the lack of opportunities for interactive and authentic communication with native speakers remains a significant obstacle. This limitation further reinforces the argument that technology, although a valuable tool, cannot replace the need for direct interactions with speakers of the language.

As Brenes (2023) and Bouschery et al. (2023) note, innovative methods in language teaching, such as the use of blogs and online platforms, have shown promise in improving students' skill, but these tools must be part of a more comprehensive strategy that includes interaction with native speakers and real language use. In line with these findings, recent studies, such as Abud (2024) and Nazaretsky, et al. (2022), emphasize that educational technologies are effective when combined with authentic communication practices. In light of these findings, it is clear that while communicative methods and technological tools are important components of language teaching, current pedagogical approaches need to be adapted to address the specific difficulties identified.

Likewise, Wang et al. (2021) and Palamar et al., (2024), argue that the integration of immersive experiences is key to enhancing language acquisition, as it allows students to practice language in authentic contexts. The result suggests that fostering greater language immersion, reducing reliance on translation, and creating a learning environment that encourages risk-taking and active participation will be essential for improving oral competence in English. Additionally, Maros et al. (2023) and Tai (2024), state that the interaction and communication within the classroom significantly contributes to learners' confidence and fluency in speaking. Future research should focus on exploring additional strategies, such as increasing interaction with native speakers and increasing exposure to English in authentic contexts, to better support students in overcoming barriers to effective communication (Cubas, 2022; Harsch et al., 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

This study has successfully identified key challenges and areas of improvement in the oral communication skills of university students at Universidad Técnica de Manabí. Despite the various efforts made in teaching English, many students continue to face difficulties with pronunciation, fluency; and vocabulary usage in real-life communicative contexts. The findings highlight that student often struggle to express themselves clearly and coherently, which limits their ability to effectively participate in academic and professional environments.

Furthermore, the analysis has revealed that while some students benefit from current teaching methods, there remains a need for more diverse and targeted strategies to enhance oral communication. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating more practical, communicative-focused activities into the curriculum,

such as real-life simulations, role-playing, and peer interactions, to better prepare students for the complexities of speaking in English.

The proposed strategies, including increased practice opportunities outside the classroom, more individualized feedback, and a greater focus on vocabulary and pronunciation, aim to address these challenges and contribute to the development of stronger oral communication skills in English. Ultimately, improving students' ability to communicate effectively will not only enhance their academic performance but also equip them with the skills needed for future professional success in an increasingly globalized world.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Authorship Disclaimer

We, Jerry Said Calderón Fernández and Miguel Ángel Macías Loor, authors of the indicated manuscript, DECLARE that we have contributed directly to its intellectual content, as well as to the genesis and analysis

of its data; therefore, we are in a position to be made publicly responsible for it and accept that our name appears in the list of authors in the indicated order. And that the ethical requirements of the aforementioned publication have been met, having consulted the Declaration of Ethics and Malpractice in the publication.

Jerry Said Calderón Fernández: Research and initial idea, collection, interpretation and analysis of data, drafting of the manuscript, preparation of the abstract and preparation of the conclusions.

Miguel Ángel Macías Loo: Methodological guidelines, final approval, review of the references, adaptation to the journal's standards and submission and approval for the review process of the article in the journal.