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TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA.

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TEMA

FOSTERING SPEAKING PRACTICES TO BUILD FLUENCY IN A2.1 ESL STUDENTS

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La Universidad para todos



DEDICATION

To my family, my greatest pillar and constant source of strength. Thank you for your endless love, unwavering trust, and unconditional support throughout this journey. In moments of doubt, your words lifted me; in every achievement, your presence gave meaning to success. None of this would have been possible without you. This thesis is lovingly dedicated to you, for believing in me even when I struggled to believe in myself.

With all my love, gratitude, and deepest appreciation.

Megan Jazmín Rodríguez Avilés.



DEDICATION

First of all, I thank God for all the opportunities He has given me. I dedicate this work to my parents: my mother, who has always believed in me and given me valuable advice, and my father, who worked hard to provide everything I needed and encouraged me to achieve my goals.

I also thank my siblings for their constant support, and my tutor for his guidance throughout this process.

This achievement would not have been possible without all your help. From the bottom of my heart, thank you all.

Gustavo Andrés Morales Castro.



RESUMEN

Esta tesis examina la falta de fluidez en la expresión oral en estudiantes de inglés como segunda lengua (ESL) en el nivel A2.1 del sexto grado de la Unidad Bilingüe Nueva Semilla en Guayaquil, Ecuador. El objetivo principal de la investigación es identificar formas de mejorar la fluidez al hablar en inglés de los estudiantes, abordando las barreras que les impiden participar activamente en las discusiones de clase. La investigación se lleva a cabo en un contexto educativo bilingüe, donde los estudiantes están expuestos tanto al español como al inglés. Aunque los estudiantes poseen conocimientos básicos del idioma, enfrentan desafíos al hablarlo debido a la falta de práctica, el miedo a cometer errores y la inseguridad en sus habilidades. La metodología utilizada en el estudio es cualitativa, basándose en observaciones y entrevistas para comprender las dificultades de los estudiantes y los factores que afectan sus habilidades de habla. Los datos recolectados durante la investigación proporcionan información sobre las causas raíz del problema y cómo abordarlas eficazmente en el aula. Los resultados del estudio indican una mejora significativa en la confianza y fluidez de los estudiantes después de implementar intervenciones específicas. La propuesta principal de la investigación es crear un entorno en el que los estudiantes se sientan cómodos practicando inglés, ayudándoles a superar sus miedos y a desarrollar sus habilidades lingüísticas de una manera más natural y de apoyo. En conclusión, esta investigación destaca la importancia de fomentar un entorno de aula positivo y alentador que permita a los estudiantes desarrollar sus habilidades de habla. El estudio resalta el papel de dicho entorno en el fortalecimiento tanto de la confianza como de la fluidez en inglés.

Palabras clave: Fluidez, confianza, expresión oral, habilidades de habla, estudiantes ESL A2.1





ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the problem of insufficient fluency in oral expression among A2.1 English as Second Language (ESL) students in the 6th grade at Unidad Bilingüe Nueva Semilla in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The main objective of the research is to identify ways to improve students' speaking fluency in English, addressing the barriers that prevent them from actively participating in class discussions. The research is conducted in a bilingual educational context where students are exposed to both Spanish and English. Although students have basic knowledge of English, they face challenges when speaking the language due to a lack of practice, fear of making mistakes, and insecurity in their abilities. The methodology used in the study is qualitative, relying on observations and interviews to understand the students' difficulties and the factors affecting their speaking abilities. Data collected during the research provides insights into the root causes of the problem and how to effectively address them in the classroom. The results of the study indicate a significant improvement in students' confidence and fluency after implementing targeted interventions. The main proposal of the research is to create an environment where students feel comfortable practicing English, helping them overcome their fears and build their language skills in a more natural and supportive manner. In conclusion, this research underscores the importance of fostering a positive and encouraging classroom environment that allows students to develop their speaking abilities without fear of judgment. The study highlights the role of such an environment in boosting both confidence and fluency in English.

Keywords: Fluency, confidence, oral expression, speaking skills, A2.1 ESL students



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INTRODUCTION

In the world we live at the present time with the development of societies and technology heterogeneously, effective communication in English has become an essential skill, particularly for young learners or people in formation for progressing through their educational journey to become prepared professionals. Even though we are in Ecuador – a non-English speaking country, the demands of a 6th-grade student functioning at the A2.1 level in English as a Second Language (ESL) are similar to those of students in different parts of the world who want to be successful in the modern world, therefore, the development of oral fluency generally presents a significant challenge to many students. Considering that Ecuador is not a country where English is widely spoken outside the English classroom, some schools consider their programs “bilingual” or “ESL instruction” having as a reference the number of hours English classes contained within their curricula.

ESL education in Ecuador faces multiple challenges, including insufficient teacher training and limited teacher proficiency levels, unequal access to quality instruction between urban and rural areas, overcrowded classrooms, and a persistent lack of updated learning materials and technological resources. These difficulties are further intensified by the gap between the national curriculum—which aims for high levels of student proficiency—and the realities of limited instructional hours and inconsistent implementation across schools. Many students also struggle with low motivation, largely due to minimal exposure to English in their daily lives and a classroom environment that often prioritizes rote learning over meaningful communication. Additionally, frequent shifts in educational policy, limited funding, and heavy teacher workloads reduce opportunities for innovation and long-term program development. An overreliance on written assessments, rather than balanced evaluation of speaking and listening



skills, further complicates efforts to cultivate genuine communicative competence in English throughout the country. It is worth mentioning that these problems are not only visible in public education, some of them are also present in private education. Public English Language programs mostly operate within the scope of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and most prestigious private institutions work with ESL as it is offered as a competitive advantage for students formed in these institutions.

A significant gap exists between students studying (ESL) in private institutions and those learning (EFL) in the public school system. Private institutions generally offer smaller class sizes, better-trained teachers, modern materials, and greater exposure to communicative, immersive methods, giving students more opportunities to develop fluency and confidence. In contrast, public schools often face limited resources, larger class sizes, and inconsistent teacher proficiency, which constrain the depth and quality of instruction. Moreover, students in private institutions typically have access to extracurricular English activities, technology, and environments that reinforce language use, while public-school students may encounter English only during restricted classroom hours with few chances for real-world practice. As a result, private-institution learners tend to progress more quickly and achieve higher proficiency levels. The following study focuses on students at a private institution with 16 hours of English instruction every week from these eleven hours are dedicated for the analysis of Language Arts and 5 for the study of science.

For private educational institutions in Ecuador, offering strong ESL programs is increasingly essential for maintaining competitiveness and meeting global academic and professional standards. A robust ESL curriculum—grounded in modern pedagogical models such



as communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and bilingual or CLIL approaches—positions an institution as forward-thinking and aligned with international trends. These programs not only enhance students’ linguistic competence but also support broader goals of internationalization, enabling schools to build partnerships abroad, participate in exchange programs, and prepare graduates for global opportunities. In a context where public education often struggles with the problems mentioned above, a well-developed ESL program becomes a clear differentiator for private institutions, signaling higher academic quality and greater investment in students’ future. Ultimately, strong ESL offerings can elevate an institution’s reputation, attract more students, and empower learners with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and demanding world.

The purpose of this research is to explore how 6th-grade students in a private institution in Ecuador develop fluency when they participate in everyday classroom speaking activities in an ESL setting. Rather than focusing on accuracy, this study aims to understand how students gain confidence, maintain the flow of their ideas, and use English with just enough pauses or breakdowns. Because many learners at this age have limited contact with English outside school, it is important to look closely at what happens in the classroom and how specific tasks support their speaking development. By examining these interactions, the research seeks to offer practical insights that can help teachers create learning conditions that genuinely encourage the advance of oral fluency.

General Objective:

To analyze how 6th-grade students in a private institution in Ecuador develop oral fluency during everyday classroom speaking activities in an ESL environment, in order to



identify the classroom practices and interaction patterns that most effectively support their confidence, flow of speech, and overall fluency development.

This study is guided by the hypothesis that 6th-grade students who regularly engage in communicative speaking tasks may demonstrate greater fluency, reflected in fewer pauses and a more continuous flow of ideas. It is also hypothesized that students' confidence has a direct positive effect on their fluency, enabling them to speak with less hesitation during classroom interactions. Additionally, the research believes that teacher prompts and supportive feedback contribute to sustained and fluent speech by helping learners manage breakdowns in communication. Finally, it is hypothesized that pair and group-work activities create interaction patterns that promote more natural and fluent language use compared to teacher focused classes or activities.

Variables of the Study

In this mixed-methods research, oral fluency is established as the dependent variable, understood as students' ability to produce connected speech with appropriate pacing, limited hesitation, and a continuous flow of ideas during classroom activities. The independent variable is defined as fluency-oriented instruction, which includes the speaking tasks, interaction patterns, and communicative practices that are specifically designed to promote fluency development in the ESL classroom. These tasks may vary in structure, support, and communicative demand, and their characteristics are examined to understand how they influence the students' oral fluency outcomes. Additional contextual constructs—such as learner confidence, teacher scaffolding, and students' exposure to English outside the classroom—are considered to help interpret variations in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.



Specific objectives

- To identify the types of fluency-oriented speaking activities used in the 6th-grade ESL classroom and describe how they are implemented during regular instruction.
- To analyze the effect of these fluency-oriented activities on students' oral fluency by examining features such as pauses, speech flow, hesitation, and continuity of ideas.
- To explore students' and the teacher's perceptions of how classroom speaking tasks support or hinder the development of oral fluency in an ESL context.

This mixed-methods study will employ complementary qualitative and quantitative procedures to investigate how oral fluency develops in 6th-grade ESL learners. Classroom observations, supported by field notes and structured checklists, will document how fluency-oriented speaking activities are performed. To enrich these performance-based data, a teacher survey will be administered to gather information on instructional practices, perceptions of student fluency, and the challenges teachers face when implementing fluency-focused activities. Together, these methods will provide a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of how classroom practices influence students' oral fluency.

Sixth-grade ESL students in the institution are typically enthusiastic learners who bring a mix of language abilities and personal interests to the classroom. Many have had prior exposure to English through school programs, media, and technology, but they still need support with grammar, vocabulary development, and oral fluency. They respond well to activities that are visual, interactive, and connected to real-life situations. Although they may sometimes feel shy when speaking, they gain confidence through encouragement, pair work, and structured practice. Overall, these students are motivated, curious, and capable of making steady progress when



provided with engaging lessons and a positive learning environment. At the current stage of language acquisition, learners are moving beyond basic vocabulary and simple sentence structures toward participating in more extended and meaningful interactions. However, most students struggle with delivering their ideas at ease, which reduces their willingness to speak in class. This often results in limited participation during communicative activities, negatively impacting their linguistic progress. Such barriers can restrict opportunities for authentic language use and ultimately hinder the fluency development necessary for successful communication (Kuswanto & Novita, 2024).

The population of this study consists of all 60 sixth-grade students enrolled in a private educational institution in Ecuador, ranging in age from 10 to 11 years old (36 girls and 24 boys). From this population, a purposive sample of 9 students—representing 15% of the total group—will be selected for detailed analysis. Because the grade level is divided into three separate courses, the sample will include one high-performance student, one average-performance student, and one low-performance student from each course. This stratified purposive sampling approach ensures that the study captures a balanced representation of learners' fluency development across different proficiency levels and classroom contexts.

This study follows a mixed-methods descriptive design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine how oral fluency develops in 6th-grade ESL students. It is descriptive because it seeks to characterize the features of fluency-oriented instruction and document the ways students produce spoken language during regular classroom activities. At the same time, it integrates qualitative analysis through observations, interviews, and document review, and quantitative analysis through rubrics, recordings, and teacher surveys. This



methodological approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of fluency development by capturing not only measurable performance indicators but also the perceptions, experiences, and instructional practices that shape students' oral production.

The main contribution of this research lies in providing a deeper understanding of how fluency-oriented classroom practices support oral fluency development in young ESL learners in the Ecuadorian context. By examining real classroom interactions and analyzing students' spoken performance across different proficiency levels, the study offers practical insights that teachers can use to design tasks that genuinely foster smoother, more confident speech. Additionally, the voices of teachers gathered through surveys and interviews contribute to identifying effective strategies and common challenges in promoting fluency. Overall, this research enriches local pedagogical knowledge, informs instructional decision-making, and supports the improvement of fluency-focused practices in primary-level English education.

The importance of this research lies in addressing a growing social need in Ecuador, where young learners are expected to develop communicative English skills but often receive limited opportunities to practice speaking fluently. By focusing on 6th-grade students, this study responds to the demand for early and effective oral communication development in an increasingly globalized society. Its novelty stems from examining fluency not only as a linguistic outcome but also as a product of classroom interactions, task design, and learner confidence—an approach rarely explored at the primary level in local educational contexts. Scientifically, the study contributes to the field by offering empirical evidence from real classroom environments, providing insights that bridge theory and practice, and supporting a more accurate understanding of how fluency emerges in young ESL learners.



This research is organized into several chapters that guide the reader through the study's development and findings. The Literature Review presents theoretical foundations related to oral fluency, speaking development in ESL settings, and the role of classroom interactions, offering a framework for interpreting the data. The Methodology chapter explains the mixed-methods design, describes the population and sample, and details the instruments and procedures used to collect and analyze the data. The Data Analysis chapter reports the results obtained from observations, recordings, surveys, and interviews, integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the research objectives. Based on these findings, the Recommendations chapter proposes practical strategies for teachers, schools, and curriculum designers to enhance fluency instruction in similar contexts. Finally, the Conclusions chapter summarizes the study's main insights, reflects on its contributions, and identifies areas for future research to continue advancing understanding of oral fluency development in young ESL learners.



CHAPTER I – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

English in Ecuador

Studying English is essential because it opens opportunities in different academic, professional, and personal grounds. As one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, English allows individuals to access global information, communicate with people from diverse cultures, and participate more fully in international environments. Mastering English also enhances career prospects, as many employers value strong communication skills and the ability to work in multilingual contexts. In addition, learning English broadens perspective by providing access to literature, media, and ideas that shape global conversations. For these reasons, studying English is not only practical but also empowering, offering valuable tools for success in this century (Dyah, 2021).

English language learning or acquisition in Ecuador reflects both significant progress and persistent challenges within the national education system. Although English is generally recognized as an essential skill for academic advancement, employment, and global integration, many if not most learners struggle to reach communicative proficiency due to limited exposure outside the classroom and varying levels of instructional quality. Public and private institutions often differ in resources, teacher preparation, and access to technological support, creating disparities in learning outcomes. Recent educational reforms and initiatives have aimed to strengthen English teaching standards, promote communicative approaches, and incorporate more authentic learning experiences. However, achieving consistent fluency across student populations remains an ongoing effort at all levels. Overall, while Ecuador has demonstrated a growing commitment to improving English education, the process of language acquisition continues to be influenced by structural, pedagogical, and contextual factors that shape students'



opportunities for meaningful language development. One of the most concerning issues perhaps is the lack of proper pedagogical approach for the teaching-learning process (Yunga-Alban, Coca-Naranjo, Barreno-Noriega, Mejía-Ortiz, & Pérez-Bonifáz, 2025).

The vision of the Ecuadorian government regarding foreign language acquisition is grounded in the development of an inclusive, flexible, and internationally aligned English curriculum that responds to the cultural and linguistic diversity within the country. Through the Ministry of Education and the National Directorate of Curriculum, the government promotes English learning as a communicative, student-centered process that goes beyond memorization and fosters meaningful interaction. This vision recognizes varying degrees of bilingualism and respects students' mother tongues (L1), ensuring educational inclusion for all learners. By integrating communicative language teaching, higher order thinking skills, and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), the curriculum positions English as a tool for cognitive, social, and cultural development. Aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the government seeks to prepare students to participate actively in a globalized world, strengthen their understanding of their own and other cultures, and cultivate a lifelong motivation for language learning while achieving the national graduate profile for EGB and BGU (Ministerio de Educación, Deporte y Cultura, n.d.).



Approaches to English Teaching in Ecuador

In Ecuador, the teaching of English as a foreign language is guided by a set of pedagogical approaches established in the national curriculum and promoted by the Ministry of Education to respond to the country's social, cultural, and linguistic diversity. These approaches emphasize the use of English as a means of communication, place students at the center of the learning process, and recognize language learning as a tool for cognitive, social, and cultural development. Aligned with international standards such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the Ecuadorian context prioritizes methodologies that foster meaningful interaction, critical thinking, and inclusion, while integrating language learning with content, real-life contexts, and values that prepare students to participate effectively in global citizenship.

Communicative approach

The English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum in Ecuador in general terms is based on a communicative language approach, in line with the principles established by the Ministry of Education. This approach prioritizes the practical use of language for communication rather than the isolated study of grammatical rules or linguistic theory. The main objective is to develop learners' ability to use English effectively in real oral and written situations, focusing on the four communicative skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The curriculum does not aim to produce students with advanced theoretical knowledge of linguistics, but rather citizens who can communicate meaningfully and appropriately in a second language.

Within this framework, language competence is understood as the capacity to communicate successfully in different contexts. While knowledge of language systems such as



grammar and vocabulary is still important, it is treated as a supporting element rather than the central focus of instruction. Teaching therefore emphasizes the functional and performative use of English, encouraging students to interact, express meaning, and engage in purposeful communication. This is achieved through interactive and dynamic classroom activities that promote active participation, raise learners' awareness of language use, and foster positive attitudes and intrinsic motivation toward learning English (Ministerio de Educación, Deporte y Cultura, 2016).

Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Another core approach the National English curriculum adopts is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), in which subjects from other academic areas are incorporated to create meaningful and purposeful opportunities for using English (Met, 1999). Through this model, language learning does not occur in isolation but instead supports and reinforces the broader school curriculum. By engaging with content from different school subjects or disciplines, students simultaneously develop the cognitive and social skills required for academic success in other areas while strengthening previously learned knowledge.

Within this approach, the development of critical thinking skills—aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy—and the growth of communicative language competencies are closely interconnected. In the CLIL model, critical thinking functions as the key mechanism that enables the implementation of the 4Cs framework: content, communication, cognition, and culture, which together represent the core conceptual foundation of CLIL (Coyle, 2007). As a result, English becomes more than a subject to be studied; it serves as a vehicle for expanding,



deepening, and expressing students' understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them.

Learner-Centered Approach

The learner-centered approach emphasizes teaching methodologies that place students at the core of the learning process by recognizing and responding to their individual strengths, needs, interests, and challenges. Rather than applying uniform instructional practices, teachers adapt strategies, activities, and materials to accommodate diverse learning styles, proficiency levels, and personal backgrounds. This approach acknowledges that learners progress at different rates and require varied forms of support to achieve meaningful learning outcomes.

By focusing on learners' active participation, the learner-centered approach seeks to facilitate learning through increased motivation and sustained engagement. Instruction is designed to encourage autonomy, critical thinking, and reflection, allowing students to take greater responsibility for their own learning. When learners feel their abilities and challenges are understood and valued, they are more likely to participate actively, develop confidence, and maintain a positive attitude toward learning. In this way, the learner-centered approach not only enhances language acquisition but also fosters lifelong learning skills and a sense of ownership over the educational process (Ministerio de Educación, Deporte y Cultura, 2016).

Curriculum Specifications

The curriculum specifications described for our Ecuadorian students serve as a practical framework that outlines the essential minimum content—such as communicative functions, grammar, and vocabulary—necessary to complement the National Curriculum Guidelines and to



operationalize the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) within Ecuadorian English classrooms. Rather than presenting an exhaustive or rigid syllabus, these guidelines aim to clarify how international standards can be realistically applied in the local educational context, providing teachers with clearer expectations for language development across levels. In addition, the guidelines are designed to support the teaching and learning process by offering methodological orientations aligned with Communicative Language Teaching. By using communicative techniques both inside and outside the classroom, learners are expected to progressively develop their communicative competence, with B1 identified as an intermediate benchmark during the implementation stages. Importantly, the document does not prescribe specific content or activities, acknowledging the need for teachers to conduct needs analyses and select materials that respond to students' interests and contextual realities. This flexibility allows educators to adapt instruction while still working within a coherent national framework.

Since 2012, the Ministry of Education has implemented a progressive alignment of English proficiency levels (from A1.1 to B1.2), which reflects a structured pathway toward higher language competence by the end of secondary education. When these staged levels are analyzed as a continuum rather than as final endpoints, it becomes evident that the national curriculum is designed to move students beyond basic and intermediate proficiency. Consequently, although B1 functions as a key developmental benchmark, the overall vision of the national English curriculum points toward the attainment of an upper-intermediate level (B2) upon completion of formal schooling, equipping students with the communicative skills necessary to participate effectively in academic, professional, and global contexts (Ministerio de Educación, Deporte y Cultura, 2014).



Common European Framework of Reference

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) serves as an internationally recognized standard for describing and measuring language proficiency. It provides a clear and structured scale that classifies learners' language abilities into progressive levels, ranging from A1, which represents a basic or beginner level, to C2, which indicates near-native or highly proficient language use. By organizing language competence along this continuum, the CEFR offers a shared reference that allows educators, learners, and institutions to clearly understand what a person can do with the language at each stage (Cambridge, 2025).

Because of its global acceptance, the CEFR facilitates transparency and consistency in language teaching and assessment. English exams aligned with the CEFR are easier to interpret and evaluate, as both teachers and students can readily identify expected skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing at each level. Furthermore, this framework supports comparability across different educational systems and assessment contexts. Educational institutions and employers can reliably compare English qualifications and test results with other examinations used within the country or internationally, ensuring that language certifications are meaningful, comparable, and widely understood.

English levels according to CEFR

The CEFR levels were developed through a research-based and empirical process, combining theory, classroom practice, and assessment data: Researchers focused on what language users can do in real-life situations. This led to a functional and communicative view of language, emphasizing tasks such as understanding texts, participating in conversations, and producing spoken or written language. Thousands of “can-do” descriptors were collected from

teachers, learners, and assessment experts across Europe. These descriptors described observable language performance rather than abstract knowledge. The descriptors were tested and statistically scaled using methods such as Item Response Theory and Rasch analysis. This ensured that the levels represented progressive stages of proficiency from basic to advanced.

The validated descriptors were grouped into six main reference levels:

- A1–A2 (Basic User)
- B1–B2 (Independent User)
- C1–C2 (Proficient User)

Each level reflects increasing complexity in comprehension, interaction, and production.

The CEFR was designed to be flexible, allowing institutions and exam boards to align curricula, textbooks, and tests (e.g., Cambridge, IELTS, TOEFL) with CEFR levels while maintaining comparability.

Table 1

Common Reference Levels: Global Scale (CEFR)

Level	Category	Descriptor
C2	Proficient User	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently, and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Proficient User	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices.
B2	Independent User	Can understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of

		specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
B1	Independent User	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes, and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
A2	Basic User	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment, and matters in areas of immediate need.
A1	Basic User	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows

Note: *Source:* Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment

A2 – Level according to the CEFR.

As previously expressed, the CEFR details what a learner is expected to perform or understand within the different levels of progress from basic to advanced. In terms of understanding, at this level, learners are expected to comprehend commonly used expressions and high-frequency vocabulary related to areas of immediate personal relevance, such as basic personal and family information, shopping, the local environment, and, in this context, school-related situations. They are also able to identify the main idea in short, clear, and simple messages or announcements, provided the language is delivered slowly and articulated clearly. To support comprehension, input must be appropriately graded so that it constitutes comprehensible input. At this stage, students should be able to understand routine classroom



language and, to a limited extent, communicate information about their typical activities and personal experiences.

Regarding reading, learners are expected to read and understand very short and simple texts related to familiar and everyday contexts. They can locate specific and predictable information in common materials such as advertisements, brochures, menus, and timetables, where content is clearly structured and supported by familiar vocabulary. In addition, learners can comprehend short and simple personal letters that deal with routine topics. To facilitate reading comprehension, texts should be linguistically graded and supported by contextual clues, allowing students to develop basic reading strategies while engaging with meaningful and relevant written input.

In oral interaction, learners must be able to communicate in simple and routine tasks that require a direct exchange of information on familiar topics and everyday activities. They can take part in very short social interactions by using basic expressions and formulaic language to convey meaning. Nevertheless, their ability to sustain interaction remains limited, as both comprehension and production often depend on support from the interlocutor. For communication to be effective, interaction should be structured and predictable, with clear prompts and scaffolding that enable learners to engage meaningfully despite their limited linguistic repertoire.

Learners at the A2 level can orally produce a series of simple phrases and short sentences to describe themselves, their family members, and other people in their immediate environment. They can also provide basic information about their living conditions and educational



background by using familiar, high-frequency, and often repetitive language. Given the learners' age, references to employment are appropriately replaced by school-related experiences and everyday activities. With adequate scaffolding and instructional support, students can convey personal information in simple terms, demonstrating emerging control of basic grammatical structures and core vocabulary.

Learners can write short and simple notes and messages related to matters of immediate need, using familiar vocabulary and basic sentence structures. They can also produce very simple personal texts, such as brief messages or letters expressing thanks or conveying basic personal information. Written production at this stage is typically limited in range and complexity; therefore, effective performance relies on clear models, guided practice, and linguistic support, allowing learners to communicate meaning despite their developing control of written language (Council of Europe, 2001).

Language Skills

Speaking a foreign language requires the integrated development of essential skills and a range of supporting subskills that together enable meaningful and effective communication. The core language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—play a fundamental role in this process (Vance, 2021). Listening is important for learners to recognize sounds, stress patterns, and intonation, helping them understand messages and respond appropriately. Reading contributes to the acquisition of vocabulary from contextual situations, as well as the encounter of grammatical structures, and discourse patterns, while also exposing learners to different styles of language use. Writing reinforces accuracy, coherence, and organization of ideas, giving learners opportunities to practice language forms more consciously and reflectively.



Beyond these essential skills, there are several subskills that are equally important for speaking successfully. These skills include pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation, which directly affect clarity and intelligibility. A good command of vocabulary and grammatical structures allows learners to express ideas with precision, while fluency helps them speak smoothly without excessive or unnecessary hesitation. Interaction skills, such as taking turns, asking for clarification, and paraphrasing when a word is unknown, support effective communication in real-life situations. Additionally, confidence, strategic competence, and cultural awareness enable learners to adapt their language to different contexts and social situations. Together, these skills and subskills help learners move beyond basic language knowledge toward confident and effective spoken communication.

Listening

Listening is a fundamental skill in learning spoken English because it helps learners understand how the language sounds and functions in real communication. Through active listening, learners absorb pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, and natural speech patterns used by native speakers. This exposure improves comprehension, builds vocabulary in context, and allows learners to understand meaning, tone, and emotion beyond individual words (Khan, 2025).

Khan (2025) expresses that there is a strong connection between listening and speaking skills. Regular listening practice enhances pronunciation, fluency, and response speed, making speech sound more natural and confident. By imitating what they hear, learners develop better accents, sentence flow, and conversational strategies. Listening also supports grammar



acquisition naturally, as learners pick up structures through repeated exposure rather than memorization.

Unlike passive hearing, listening is an active and complex psychological process that requires the conscious involvement of the listener. It involves a sender who transmits a message, the message itself, and a receiver who interprets and responds to that message. Through listening, individuals receive spoken and non-verbal input, focus their attention, construct meaning, and produce appropriate responses in different communicative situations. This process includes several interconnected components, such as discriminating between different sounds, recognizing words and understanding their meanings, and identifying grammatical groupings that help organize information. Effective listening also requires identifying expressions and sets of utterances that create meaning, linking linguistic cues with non-linguistic and paralinguistic signals such as gestures, facial expressions, tone, and stress. Furthermore, listeners use their background knowledge to predict, interpret, and confirm meaning, while recalling key words and ideas to support comprehension. Together, these elements make listening an essential skill for successful communication and language development (Tyagi, 2013).

Speaking

Speaking is a complex and essential language skill that plays a central role in effective communication. Based on established criteria, speaking performance is commonly evaluated through five key components: comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Comprehension refers to a speaker's ability to understand and appropriately respond during communication, ensuring that meaning is successfully exchanged between speakers. Grammar involves the correct use of language structures to form understandable and accurate sentences,



which is often challenging due to differences between a learner's first language and the target language. Vocabulary relates to the range and appropriateness of words used to express ideas clearly; limited vocabulary can significantly hinder overall speaking performance. Pronunciation focuses on producing sounds, stress, and intonation accurately so that speech is intelligible to listeners, and it is often influenced by exposure and the learner's mother tongue. Fluency refers to the ability to speak smoothly, clearly, and confidently without excessive hesitation. Together, these five components interact to determine the overall quality of speaking performance, highlighting that successful speaking requires not only linguistic knowledge but also confidence, practice, and meaningful exposure to the language (Moh, Andi, & Adimawati, 2024).

Reading

Reading is a fundamental language skill and a cornerstone of academic learning, supported by several essential components that work together to develop strong literacy abilities. Research identifies five key components of effective reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (National Reading Panel (US), 2000). Phonemic awareness involves recognizing and manipulating the individual sounds in spoken language and is a strong predictor of long-term reading success. Phonics builds on this awareness by teaching the relationship between sounds and written letters, enabling learners to decode words accurately. Fluency refers to the ability to read with appropriate speed, accuracy, and expression, allowing readers to focus on meaning rather than word recognition. Vocabulary development supports reading by expanding word knowledge and facilitating understanding of texts, while comprehension represents the goal of reading—the ability to construct meaning, interpret ideas, and connect new information with prior knowledge. Together, these components highlight that reading is a complex cognitive process that requires systematic instruction,



meaningful practice, and skilled teaching to support learners' overall language development (Dakhal, 2022).

Writing

Writing as a language skill involves the integration of several central dimensions, including paragraph development, text types, and core writing components (Ampa & Quraisy, 2018). As a productive skill, writing requires learners to actively generate meaning through language by organizing ideas, selecting appropriate linguistic forms, and applying grammatical and rhetorical conventions (Ruhul, 2023). Unlike receptive skills, writing demands a high level of cognitive processing, as writers must transform abstract thoughts into coherent, structured, and contextually appropriate texts.

In a text-oriented world, where written communication is continuously produced through academic, professional, and digital platforms, the importance of writing has become increasingly evident. Learners are expected not only to convey information accurately but also to do so effectively across various genres and communicative purposes. Consequently, the development of writing skills is essential for academic success, social participation, and professional engagement. This underscores the need for systematic instruction that addresses the multiple dimensions of writing and responds to learners' specific linguistic and rhetorical needs.

Descriptive texts have emerged as the most demanded text type in the contemporary digital era, followed by news items, narration, recounts, discussion texts, and expository writing. Regarding the components of writing, grammatical structure and vocabulary are identified as the most critical areas, reflecting learners' ongoing difficulties in producing accurate, coherent, and



meaningful written texts. Other components, including content development, text organization, and mechanics, are also recognized as essential elements of effective writing.

Teaching Speaking in Ecuador

Teaching English in Ecuador is characterized by a complex interaction of pedagogical, linguistic, affective, and contextual factors that shape classroom practices and learning outcomes. Although national policies and the Foreign Language Curriculum promote communicative language teaching, English instruction at the school level remains largely constrained by large class sizes, limited instructional time, and materials that prioritize grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing over speaking. As a result, students have few meaningful opportunities to engage in oral communication, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers report that methodological challenges—such as insufficient exposure to English, lack of authentic communicative activities, and inadequate coursebook design—limit students’ ability to develop functional language skills. These conditions often lead to teacher-centered practices, where learners become passive recipients of knowledge rather than active language users (Alvarez, Tamayo, & Dos Santos, 2024).

In addition, English teaching in Ecuador is influenced by significant linguistic and affective factors. Students frequently struggle with limited vocabulary, weak listening comprehension, grammatical insecurity, and pronunciation difficulties, many of which are exacerbated by frequent reliance on L1. Affective variables such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, low confidence, and fear of peer ridicule further reduce students’ willingness to participate in speaking tasks. Teachers emphasize that motivation plays a decisive role in overcoming these barriers, highlighting the need for supportive classroom environments,



meaningful and personalized activities, and constructive feedback. Overall, English teaching in Ecuador presents structural constraints and pedagogical limitations coexist with teachers' strong awareness of effective practices, underscoring the need for curriculum reform, reduced class sizes, increased speaking opportunities, and sustained teacher professional development to improve communicative competence.

Some difficulties connected to developing speaking skills must be addressed to improve the teaching of English-speaking skills in Ecuador. First, there is a clear need for improved teacher training, particularly in communicative methodologies and oral language development, so that teachers feel confident modeling spoken English and implementing interactive speaking activities. Second, students require increased exposure to spoken English, as limited class time and an overemphasis on grammar and writing reduce opportunities for meaningful oral practice inside and outside the classroom. Finally, it is needed to emphasize the importance of more equitable access to instructional resources, especially technological tools, since disparities between public and private schools restrict the effective use of digital platforms that support pronunciation, fluency, and learner engagement. Addressing these three areas is essential for creating more inclusive, effective, and communicative EFL classrooms in the Ecuadorian context and support the learners to be more fluent (Guerrero-Rodriguez & Moreira-Baquerizo, 2025).

Fluency

Fluency in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) refers to a learner's ability to speak or write smoothly, naturally, and with ease, focusing more on the flow of communication than on perfect accuracy (Brown P. , 2017). It involves expressing ideas clearly and continuously without



long pauses or frequent hesitation. It has also been associated with characteristics of native speakers at the moment of producing the language.

Definition:

Fluency in a language means being able to use its structures naturally and focus more on what the speaker says rather than on how it is said. It involves using words and grammar smoothly and at a normal speaking speed when needed. Fluency can also be seen as the ability to use pauses, intonation, stress, speed, and even small speech breaks in a way that sounds natural, like a native speaker. In L2 learning, accuracy has been studied in many ways, with approaches from applied linguistics drawing a lot of attention from both researchers and teachers (Wang, Rezaei, & S, 2024).

Core features:

Speed and flow: The speech moves at a natural pace without excessive pauses or self-correction.

Automaticity: Learners retrieve and use language effortlessly because they have internalized common patterns and vocabulary.

Coherence and connectedness: Ideas are linked logically, using discourse markers and transitions naturally.

Intonation and rhythm: Speech sounds natural, not robotic or fragmented.



Fluency-Related Problems Identified

Focus on accuracy over communication

In Ecuador, or probably the community of EFL from Spanish speaking countries there is evidence that traditional or grammar-translation approaches are still used (Yanchatipan-Molina, Miranda-Cruz, Vaca-Alarcón, & Sandoval-Vizuite, 2022). Traditional methods of English teaching continue to limit the development of oral fluency. In these settings, lessons are often centered on grammatical explanations, translation, and written exercises, leaving little space for communicative interaction. This teacher-centered approach, common in public institutions with large class sizes, restricts students' opportunities to speak spontaneously and use the language in real contexts. Moreover, rigid classroom dynamics and excessive correction contribute to students' fear of making mistakes, which further inhibits participation. Consequently, fluency — understood as how well a learner communicates meaning rather than how many mistakes they make in grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary (British Council) — develops slowly when instruction focuses more on accuracy and control than on communication and expression. Traditional practices remain widespread in Ecuadorian schools, where they continue to hinder students' oral development and communicative competence (Verónica-Gabriela & Santillán-Marroqui, 2020). This method usually emphasizes correctness, memorization, and written exercises. This reduces opportunities for spontaneous speaking, which is essential for fluency. There is lots of literature that conclude that in these methods, “students rarely engage in extended discourse,” limiting the development of fluent communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The presence of these practices, especially the focus on accuracy rather than on communication, is widely spread across the country in public and private schools. Apparently, there is an ongoing transition from traditional methods of teaching towards communicative approaches which is especially observed at the higher education level (Torres-Miranda & Asqui-



Luna, 2023), nonetheless, these changes are observed according to the possibility of institutions to adapt, generally, institutions prefer to keep something they have been doing for a long time rather than venturing into new or non-conventional practices.

Rigid classroom structures

Teacher-centered classes—where the teacher speaks most of the time—offer few chances for learners to negotiate meaning, self-correct, or build confidence in speaking. It is known that communicative competence (which includes fluency) grows when students interact and make meaning, not when they passively receive input (Brown H. , 2007). Teaching Talking Time (TTT) in rigid structure is generally the main approach. With few opportunities to interact, students under these settings take a passive role. Literature suggests that ideal settings should reach at least 50% TTT and 50% STT, more optimal is a 70/30 (Donoso-Noboa & Lopez-Lopez, 2020), however, in most schools around specially dealing with children and behavioral issues it looks unreal . Having a flipped classroom is a complicated task for schools that are used to having students as receptors of knowledge. This generally represents a major issue, given that the common settings of school policies include offering the English Language in bilingual institutions as a competitive advantage, but when it is required to have deep changes, the conditions are not commonly agreed by authorities that place the teacher at the center and as the only responsible for learning to happen.

Affective barriers

Strict classroom environments can cause anxiety and fear of making mistakes, which directly suppress fluency. Affective barriers—such as anxiety, low confidence, fear of making mistakes, or lack of motivation—play a major role in complicating fluency development in EFL



(English as a Foreign Language) learners (Maulida & Faida, 2022). Among the major complications, these barriers were found:

Type of task. - Emotional engagement drives persistence. When students do not feel emotionally connected to English or see its personal value, they practice less and progress slowly toward automaticity in speech.

Fear of making mistakes. - When students feel nervous about speaking English, their mental focus shifts from expressing ideas to avoiding errors. This self-consciousness causes hesitation, long pauses, and slow speech—all of which reduce fluency.

Role of Language teachers . - If the learning environment feels tense or overly corrective, learners may associate speaking English with stress rather than enjoyment, further blocking fluency development.

Self-perception. - Fluency requires taking linguistic risks, trying new vocabulary, experimenting with sentence structures, or using real-time interaction. Students with low confidence often avoid speaking unless they are sure of every word, preventing the natural flow of conversation.

Limited Exposure to English. - Learners who worry about being judged by teachers or peers tend to speak less. Limited speaking practice means fewer opportunities to internalize patterns of natural speech, which are essential for fluency.



Affective barriers make learners focus on form over meaning, reduce the quantity and quality of speaking practice, and interrupt the mental processes needed for smooth, automatic language use. Teachers must be skilled in creating the right atmosphere, train students to have practices they feel sure to carry out and motivate students to engage in tasks until they feel expressing their thoughts is a natural practice within and outside the classroom.

Traditional lessons often isolate vocabulary and grammar from real-life use, while fluency depends on contextualized, meaningful communication. Students do not feel engaged in doing activities they barely understand. Teachers find it difficult to catch up or be involved in what is interesting for students, but it is worth trying. Teachers do understand there is a gap between the range of experiences lived by their students, and certainly there are conventions that never change or do not need to be changed, but updating and crafting activities to the level it is comprehensible for students is necessary so students have a clear idea of why they are doing an activity and how this is connected to their learning experience. Material and lessons that adapt or consider the cognitive structure of learners is important to develop speaking skills including fluency (Lunkman, 2024).



CHAPTER 2 - RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY AND DIAGNOSTIC STUDY

Research Paradigm

This study has been carried out following a pragmatic research paradigm, which allows the integration of both quantitative and qualitative methods to address complex educational phenomena. Pragmatism focuses on selecting the research procedures that best help answer the research questions rather than strictly adhering to a single philosophical perspective. In short, pragmatism refers to being practical and complying with objectives, focusing and using resources optimally. For this reason, it is particularly appropriate for studies that seek to understand classroom practices from multiple angles as the present research dissertation.

Within this framework, the development of students' oral fluency was examined through both observable indicators of speech performance and contextual information related to instructional practices and classroom interaction. The pragmatic perspective therefore made it possible to combine numerical data with descriptive insights about how fluency-oriented activities function in real classroom settings. Pragmatism is widely used in educational research because it emphasizes practical solutions and the study of phenomena in authentic learning environments such as the case of fluency in sixth basic year English instruction and fluency development.

Research Approach

This study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative research procedures to analyze how 6th-grade students in a private institution in Ecuador develop oral fluency through everyday classroom speaking activities in an ESL



environment. The mixed-methods approach was selected because it allows for a comprehensive examination of oral fluency development by combining measurable indicators of speech performance with contextual and perceptual data related to classroom practices and interaction patterns (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2017)

The quantitative component of the study focused on identifying observable features of oral fluency, such as pauses, hesitation, speech flow, and continuity of ideas. The qualitative component aimed to explore how fluency-oriented instructional practices, teacher scaffolding, and learner confidence influenced students' oral performance. The integration of both approaches facilitated a deeper understanding of how classroom practices support or hinder oral fluency development in an ESL context.

Research Design

The study followed a descriptive and explanatory research design. It was descriptive in nature because it documented and characterized the types of fluency-oriented speaking activities implemented in the classroom and the observable features of students' oral fluency during these activities. Additionally, the study was explanatory as it sought to analyze relationships between instructional practices, interaction patterns, learner confidence, and students' oral fluency outcomes.

Classroom observations and a teacher survey were selected as the primary data collection methods. These instruments allowed for the systematic examination of real classroom practices while also capturing the teacher's perceptions and reflections regarding fluency development.



Research Context

The research was conducted in a private educational institution in Ecuador where English is taught as a foreign language as part of the regular curriculum. English instruction at the institution emphasizes communicative competence; however, students continue to experience challenges related to oral fluency, particularly in spontaneous speaking situations.

There were 2 observed ESL classroom consisting of 6th-grade learners who regularly participated in speaking activities such as pair work, group discussions, short presentations, and teacher-guided interactions. Instruction took place during regular class hours to ensure authentic learning conditions and minimize disruptions to the teaching process.

It is worth mentioning that the identities of the institution, as well as the teachers and students were requested to kept reserved.

Population

The population of this study consisted of sixth-grade students enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program – as determined by the institution’s number of hours of class - at a private educational institution in Ecuador, as well as the English teachers responsible for teaching these classes. At this educational level, students participate in regular English lessons as part of the school curriculum and are exposed to communicative activities intended to develop their language skills.

Students at this stage of learning are typically moving from the use of simple sentence structures toward more extended forms of oral communication. As a result, the development of oral fluency becomes an important objective within the ESL classroom.



Sample

From this population, a sample of two sixth-grade ESL classrooms and their respective English teachers was selected for the study. These groups were chosen because they regularly participated in communicative speaking activities, including pair work, group discussions, short presentations, and teacher-guided interactions as well as their availability and permission to observe the interactions with the purpose of the present study.

The students in these classes demonstrated varying levels of English proficiency and different degrees of confidence when speaking in English. While many learners showed motivation to participate in communicative activities, some still experienced hesitation and frequent pauses when speaking, which made these groups particularly relevant for examining the development of oral fluency.

The English teachers responsible for these classes also participated in the research by completing a survey focused on instructional practices and perceptions related to students' speaking fluency.

Sampling Technique

The study employed a non-probabilistic purposive sampling technique. This type of sampling was selected because the research required participants who were directly involved in communicative ESL instruction and who could provide relevant information about the development of oral fluency in the classroom.

The two classes were intentionally chosen based on their accessibility and their regular engagement in speaking activities that promote student interaction. Purposive sampling therefore

allowed the researchers to focus on a context where fluency-oriented instruction was actively taking place and where meaningful observations could be conducted.

Participants

The participants in this study included 6th-grade ESL students enrolled in the selected institution and their English teachers. The students presented diverse levels of English proficiency, with varying degrees of confidence and fluency when speaking, as well as particularities that make each one of them unique. All of them have had prior exposure to English through formal schooling, digital media, and technology; however, most still required support in grammar accuracy, vocabulary expansion, and oral fluency development.

At this stage of language acquisition, students were transitioning from the use of simple sentence structures toward more extended and meaningful oral interactions. Despite their motivation and enthusiasm, many learners experienced hesitation, frequent pauses, and limited speech flow, which reduced their participation in communicative classroom activities. These challenges often restricted opportunities for authentic language use and hindered fluency development, as reported in previous studies (Kuswantoro & Novita, 2024).

The ESL teachers participated by completing a survey regarding instructional practices, perceptions of student fluency, and challenges encountered when implementing fluency-oriented activities.

Variables of the Study

In this mixed-methods research, oral fluency was identified as the dependent variable. Oral fluency was defined as students' ability to produce connected speech with appropriate



pacing, limited hesitation, and a continuous flow of ideas during classroom speaking activities. Indicators of oral fluency included the frequency and length of pauses, speech continuity, hesitation markers, and overall flow of ideas.

The independent variable was fluency-oriented instruction, which referred to instructional practices designed to promote oral fluency in the ESL classroom. These practices included communicative speaking tasks, interaction patterns (pair work, group work, and teacher-led activities), teacher prompts, feedback strategies, and scaffolding techniques. Additional contextual constructs—such as learner confidence, teacher support, and exposure to English outside the classroom—were considered to support the interpretation of the relationship between instructional practices and oral fluency outcomes.

Data Collection Instruments

Two primary instruments were employed to collect data: classroom observations and a teacher survey.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations were conducted to document how fluency-oriented speaking activities were implemented during regular ESL instruction and to analyze students' oral fluency during these activities. Observations were non-participant in nature to minimize researcher interference. A structured observation checklist was used to systematically record fluency-related features, including pauses, hesitation, speech flow, continuity of ideas, and interaction patterns.

In addition to the checklist, field notes were taken to capture contextual information related to student engagement, confidence, peer interaction, and teacher scaffolding strategies.



These qualitative data provided deeper insights into classroom dynamics and supported the interpretation of quantitative observations.

Teacher Survey

A survey administered to the ESL teachers was used to collect data on instructional practices, perceptions of students' oral fluency, and challenges associated with implementing fluency-oriented activities. The survey consisted of both closed-ended questions, which generated quantitative data, and open-ended questions, which allowed the teacher to elaborate on classroom experiences, instructional decisions, and perceived factors influencing fluency development.

The survey was designed to complement classroom observations and contribute to data triangulation.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was carried out during regular ESL class sessions to ensure naturalistic conditions. Classroom observations were conducted over multiple sessions to capture recurring interaction patterns and variations in student performance. During each session, students engaged in routine speaking activities, such as pair discussions and group tasks, without interruption from the researcher.

The teacher survey was administered after the observation period, allowing the teacher to reflect on observed classroom practices and students' oral fluency development. All data were collected following institutional guidelines and ethical standards.

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data obtained from observation checklists and closed-ended survey items were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to identify patterns related to oral fluency indicators and instructional practices.

Qualitative data from field notes and open-ended survey responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. Data were coded and categorized to identify recurring themes related to learner confidence, teacher scaffolding, interaction patterns, and communicative task design. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled data triangulation, increasing the credibility and validity of the results.

Validity and Reliability

To enhance the validity of the study, data were collected using multiple instruments and sources. The use of classroom observations, field notes, and a teacher survey allowed for methodological triangulation. Reliability was supported through the use of a structured observation checklist and consistent data collection procedures across observation sessions.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles guided all stages of the research process. Authorization was obtained from the institution prior to data collection. Informed consent was secured from the ESL teacher. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. All collected data were used solely for academic purposes and stored securely. Electronic records from the survey are also secured in the personal drive of the authors.

CHAPTER 3 - PROPOSAL PRESENTATION AND VALIDATION

Descriptive Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions of Oral Fluency Development

This section presents the descriptive results of the survey administered to the teachers of the institution to identify the current conditions affecting the development of oral fluency among the target students in an ESL context. The instrument included Likert-scale items ranging from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*, as well as open-ended questions that allowed respondents to provide qualitative insights into their classroom practices and perceived challenges.

For quantitative analysis, Likert-scale responses were numerically coded from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 4 (*Strongly agree*). Descriptive statistics and frequency distributions were calculated and visually represented through bar charts to facilitate interpretation of the data.

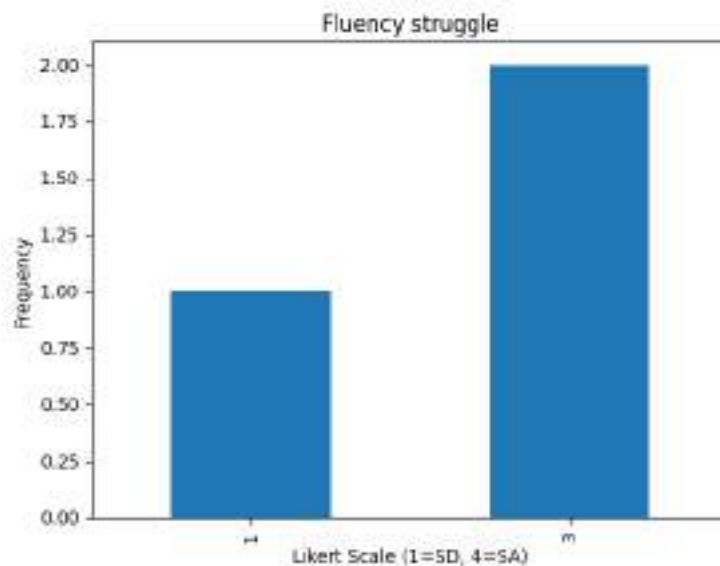
Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Oral Fluency Difficulties

Teachers' perceptions regarding students' oral fluency difficulties are illustrated in Figure 1. The item "*A2.1 students often struggle to speak fluently in English during class activities*" obtained a mean score of 2.33, indicating moderate agreement.

As shown in Figure 1, most respondents agreed that students experience difficulties with fluency during classroom speaking activities. However, one teacher expressed strong disagreement, suggesting variability in classroom contexts or student performance levels within the institution.

Figure 1

Teachers' perceptions of A2.1 students' oral fluency difficulties



Note. Image created by the researchers based on survey data collected from ESL teachers regarding students' oral fluency challenges.

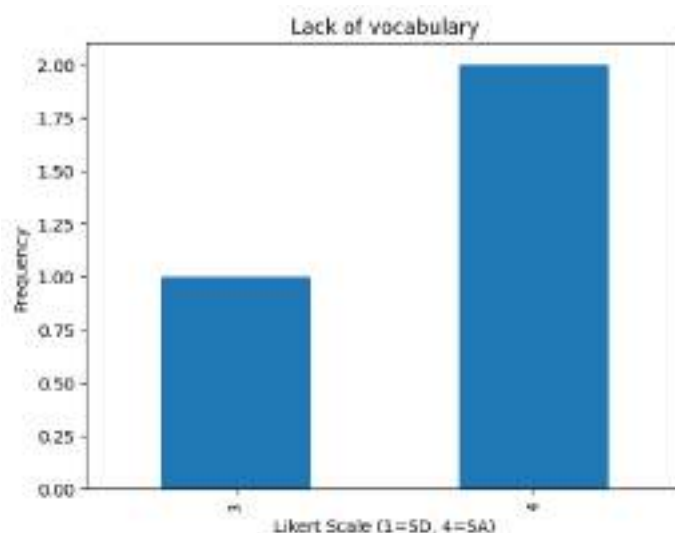
Vocabulary Limitations and Their Impact on Fluency

A high level of agreement was observed regarding the role of vocabulary in students' oral fluency. The statement "*Lack of vocabulary limits my students' speaking fluency*" obtained a mean score of 3.67.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the majority of teachers selected *Agree* or *Strongly agree*, indicating strong consensus on vocabulary limitations as a primary obstacle to fluent speech. This result highlights lexical knowledge as a key area requiring pedagogical attention

Figure 2

Perceived impact of vocabulary limitations on speaking fluency



Note. Image created by the researchers based on survey data collected from ESL teachers regarding students' Lack of Vocabulary.

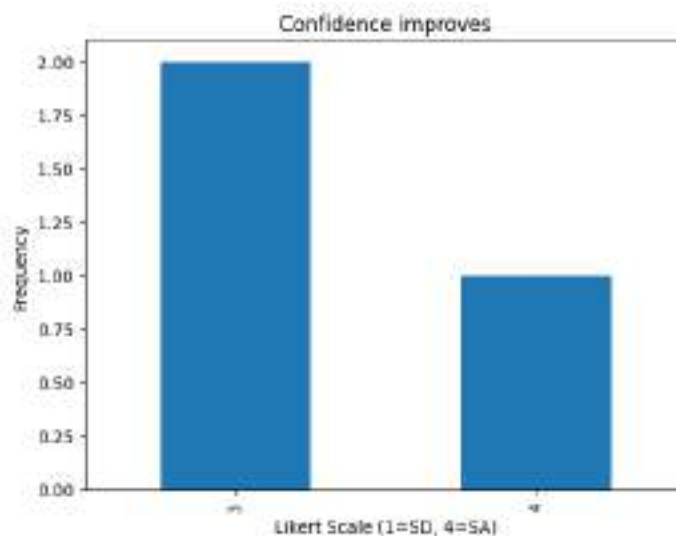
Confidence, Participation, and Oral Fluency Development

Teachers' responses concerning the relationship between confidence and participation in speaking activities are presented in Figure 3. The item "*Students' confidence improves when they regularly participate in speaking activities*" achieved a mean score of 3.33.

As shown in the figure, all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, and no negative responses were recorded. This finding suggests that regular participation in communicative tasks positively influences students' confidence and supports the development of oral fluency.

Figure 3

Teachers' perceptions of confidence improvement through speaking participation



Note. Image created by the researchers based on survey data collected from ESL teachers regarding students' Confidence.

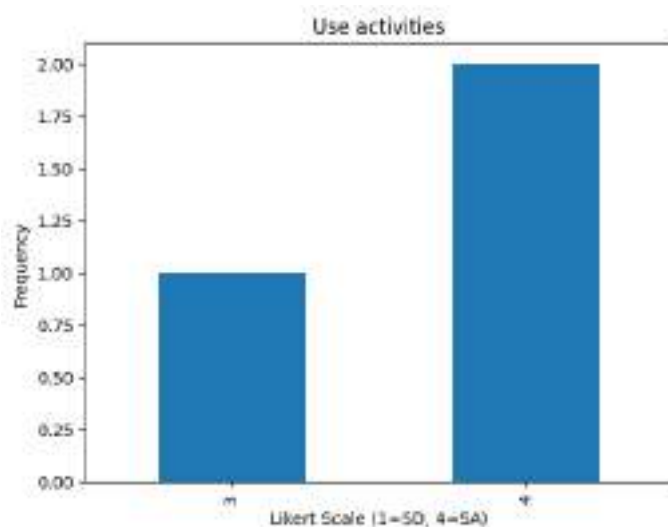
Classroom Practices to Promote Speaking Fluency

Regarding instructional practices, teachers reported frequent use of communicative classroom activities. The statement “*I use specific classroom activities (role plays, discussions, games) to improve speaking fluency*” obtained a mean score of 3.67.

As illustrated in Figure 4, responses clustered around *Agree* and *Strongly agree*, indicating that communicative strategies are widely implemented within the institution. This suggests alignment with communicative language teaching principles in classroom practice.

Figure 4

Use of communicative activities to improve speaking fluency



Note. Image created by the researchers based on survey data collected from ESL teachers regarding teachers' use of communicative activities.

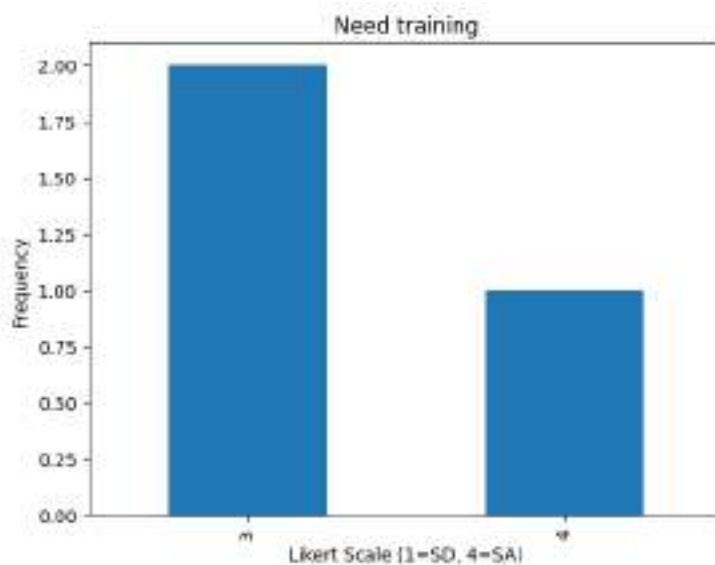
Professional Development Needs

Despite the frequent use of communicative activities, teachers expressed a clear need for additional training and resources. The item *"I would like to receive training or resources to improve students' speaking fluency"* obtained a mean score of 3.33.

As shown in Figure 5, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, indicating that teachers recognize the importance of continued professional development to enhance their instructional effectiveness.

Figure 5

Teachers' perceived need for training and resources



Note. Image created by the researchers based on survey data collected from ESL teachers regarding teachers' use of communicative activities.

Summary of Open-Ended Responses

The qualitative responses further support the quantitative findings. Teachers consistently identified limited vocabulary, low confidence, fear of making mistakes, pronunciation difficulties, and insufficient exposure to English as major challenges affecting students' oral fluency. Additionally, respondents emphasized the importance of supportive feedback and meaningful communicative contexts to encourage student participation.

Overall, the integration of quantitative results and qualitative insights provides a comprehensive overview of the institutional conditions influencing oral fluency development among A2.1 students.

Results of Classroom Observations on Speaking Fluency and Interaction

Classroom observations were conducted to examine students' speaking fluency and interaction patterns during regular English lessons in sixth grade. Four lessons were observed, each lasting approximately 40 minutes and focusing on different grammatical structures: present perfect, simple past, irregular verbs, and past progressive. A structured observation form was used to ensure consistency across observations, with specific criteria related to speaking fluency, interaction patterns, and speaking activities.

Speaking Fluency

Across all observed lessons, students demonstrated **limited oral fluency**, characterized by frequent pauses, hesitation, and interrupted speech. In all four classrooms, students required extended time to respond orally and often relied on fillers, repetition, or silence when attempting to express ideas. Responses were frequently restricted to **single words or incomplete utterances**, particularly when tasks required the use of complex verb forms such as irregular verbs or perfect tenses.

Maintaining a continuous flow of speech was identified as a major challenge. In multiple observations, students stopped speaking when they lacked vocabulary or grammatical certainty, and teacher prompts were frequently necessary to sustain oral production. Self-correction without loss of fluency was rare; when errors occurred, students typically paused, abandoned their utterances, or relied on teacher intervention, which further disrupted speech flow.

Students' confidence when speaking English was consistently reported as low. Many learners avoided participation, spoke softly, or switched to their first language when faced with

difficulty. Lessons involving higher cognitive and linguistic demands, such as the use of irregular verbs, appeared to increase hesitation and reluctance to speak, suggesting a strong connection between language control and willingness to communicate.

Interaction Patterns

Observation results revealed **limited student–student interaction** across lessons. Although pair and group work was implemented, interactions were generally brief, task-focused, and lacked sustained dialogue. Many students depended on peers to initiate interaction or limited their responses to confirmation or repetition rather than meaningful exchanges.

Student–teacher interaction predominated in all observed lessons. Learners relied heavily on the teacher for clarification, feedback, and confirmation of correctness, which reduced opportunities for peer interaction. Participation was uneven, with a small number of more confident students dominating oral tasks, while others remained passive or participated only when directly prompted.

Students also demonstrated difficulty responding appropriately to peers' contributions. Responses were often delayed, minimal, or unrelated, reflecting limited language proficiency and reduced interactive competence. Additionally, the use of English during interaction was inconsistent. In all observations, students frequently reverted to their first language during peer communication, particularly when encountering lexical or grammatical difficulties.

Speaking Activities and Teacher Support

Speaking activities across lessons were generally aligned with lesson objectives and connected to real-life contexts. However, observations indicated that these activities **did not**



consistently promote extended or spontaneous speaking. Most tasks resulted in short, controlled responses rather than sustained oral production or elaboration of ideas.

Instructions for speaking tasks were generally clear, and students demonstrated understanding through on-task behavior. Nevertheless, many learners required repeated explanations or modeling to complete oral tasks successfully. Teachers provided prompts, examples, and sentence starters as scaffolding strategies, which supported participation but also led to increased reliance on modeled structures.

Feedback during speaking activities varied across lessons. In some cases, feedback focused primarily on grammatical accuracy, which appeared to increase hesitation and interrupt fluency. In other lessons, teachers prioritized fluency over accuracy, creating a more supportive environment that reduced anxiety; however, students did not always incorporate feedback into subsequent oral production.

Summary of Observation Findings

Overall, the classroom observations indicate that while teachers actively promote speaking through structured activities and scaffolding, students continue to experience significant challenges in developing oral fluency and interaction skills. Limited vocabulary, low confidence, fear of making mistakes, and restricted opportunities for extended speaking were consistently observed across lessons.

These findings align with the survey results, reinforcing the conclusion that oral fluency development in A2.1 students is constrained by both linguistic and affective factors. The observation data provide contextualized evidence of how these challenges manifest in real



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classroom settings, highlighting the need for instructional practices that promote sustained interaction, lexical development, and confidence-building speaking opportunities.



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PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL

1. Presentation

This proposal has been designed as a pedagogical response to the difficulties observed in the development of oral fluency among sixth-grade students in an ESL classroom context within a private institution in Guayaquil-Ecuador. Based on the diagnostic study carried out during the research phase, it was identified that although students are frequently exposed to English, their opportunities to engage in meaningful and sustained speaking interactions in everyday classes are limited. Consequently, learners often hesitate or keep thinking for a long time without clear indicators of having what is needed to answer – some even remain silent, or rely on isolated words rather than producing continuous speech.

The proposal introduces a structured set of communicative speaking activities integrated into regular classroom practice. These activities are collected from resources online or generated with AI or simply adapted from textbooks. These activities aim to promote students' confidence, interaction, and fluency through self-preparation or reflection, pair and group work, guided by the teacher, and realistic communicative situations aligned with students' age, interests, and adequate level A2.1.

2. General and Specific Objectives

General Objective

To enhance sixth-grade students' oral fluency in English through the systematic use of communicative speaking activities that promote interaction, confidence, and elaborated speech responses in everyday classroom contexts.



Specific Objectives

- To increase students' participation in oral tasks through pair and group interaction.
- To reduce hesitation and excessive pauses during speaking activities.
- To foster students' confidence when expressing ideas orally in English.
- To provide teachers with practical strategies to support and scaffold oral fluency.
- To encourage meaningful communication rather than isolated language production.

3. Rationale

The development of oral fluency is a central goal in ESL learning, especially at the elementary level, where students are forming their communicative habits. The diagnostic results of this study revealed that students' limited fluency is influenced by factors such as lack of confidence, restricted vocabulary use, and insufficient opportunities for spontaneous interaction. Problems in expressing themselves through oral communication may restrict students from maximizing their use of the language, even if they can listen and understand what they have been told. This may result in frustration and low self-esteem to use the language and even neglect any appreciation for it; many students have even indicated they do not like English after such frustration.

This proposal is grounded in some of the most acknowledged communicative language teaching principles, which emphasize interaction as both the means and the goal of language learning. By incorporating speaking tasks that reflect real-life communication, students and also teachers should be encouraged to focus on meaning rather than accuracy alone. Additionally, the proposal recognizes the teacher's role as a facilitator who provides prompts, feedback, and a

supportive environment (extremely necessary to avoid embarrassment) that allows learners to manage communication breakdowns without fear of making mistakes.

4. Characteristics of the Proposal

This proposal is characterized by the following features:

- Student-centered

As its name indicates, the student-centered approach places learners at the core of the educational process, emphasizing active participation, autonomy, and meaningful interaction as essential components of learning. Traditionally, it has been thought that teachers are transmitters of knowledge and students are receivers of such knowledge, but learning is more than teacher-led transmission of knowledge. This approach encourages students to construct understanding through collaboration, problem-solving, and reflective practice – they learn by doing. In language learning contexts, student-centered instruction promotes greater engagement and increases opportunities for authentic communication, which are crucial for the development of oral skills including fluency. By allowing learners to take an active role in speaking tasks, students are more likely to express ideas freely, negotiate meaning, and build confidence in their communicative abilities. Furthermore, the teacher's role shifts to that of a facilitator who guides learning, provides feedback, and creates supportive conditions that reduce anxiety and encourage risk-taking in oral production (Vygotsky, 1978).

- Contextualized activities

Contextualized activities are grounded in the principle that learning occurs most effectively when knowledge is connected to meaningful social and situational contexts. For example, instead of making students talk about historical figures from whom they may not have a clear



idea, require them to refer to someone in their families and what they did so everyone remembers them. From a sociocultural perspective, language is acquired through interaction and purposeful use within real or simulated communicative situations. Some books are meant for international cultures, for instance, many would not know about Korean Kimchi, but they can discuss the most delicious Ecuadorian breakfast. When learners engage in tasks that reflect familiar contexts, they are better able to interpret meaning, negotiate understanding, and apply language in a functional way. This approach supports deeper cognitive processing, as students are not merely practicing linguistic forms but using language as a tool for communication within their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978).

In addition, experiential learning theory emphasizes that education should be connected to the experiences they have lived in order to be meaningful and effective. Dewey argued that learning becomes more significant when students actively engage in tasks that resemble real-life situations, allowing them to reflect on and apply knowledge in practical ways. Take for example a computers class in which everything is explained before you even touch the mouse or keyboard – it may not be as effective as when you start doing it by yourself. In language classrooms, contextualized activities such as role plays, discussions, and problem-solving tasks enable learners to see the relevance of language use beyond the classroom objectives or content they see in their textbooks, thereby increasing motivation and engagement (Dewey, 1938).

From a communicative language teaching perspective, contextualized tasks promote authentic language use by focusing on meaning rather than isolated grammatical practice. Language does not work as if we were to talk in just one grammatical structure for a day. Nunan asserts that learners develop communicative competence more effectively when classroom

activities mirror real-world language use. By situating activities within familiar and meaningful contexts, students are encouraged to produce extended oral discourse, interact with peers, and develop fluency through sustained communication (Nunan, 1995).

- Progressive difficulty, allowing students to gradually increase speaking time and complexity.
- Collaborative interaction, emphasizing pair and group work.
- Formative focus, prioritizing fluency development over immediate grammatical accuracy.

5. Guiding Principles or Key Ideas

The proposal is guided by the following key ideas:

- Oral fluency develops through frequent and meaningful practice. It should not be considered something that occurs accidentally, it is reinforced with the willingness of teachers to give their best so students feel they are progressing little by little with activities they know about.
- Confidence plays a crucial role in students' willingness to speak. Many students have problems to socialize these days or are inhibited by the fear of making mistakes. It is hard work, but necessary to build rapport with them.
- Errors are a natural part of language learning and should not interrupt communication. Students and teachers have to welcome errors as an indicator of progress; feedback has to be optimal and at the precise moments.

- Interaction supports language development by providing negotiation of meaning. Examples and speaking situations should be at the level of students, this means that sometimes what is in textbooks has to be adapted.
- Teacher feedback should encourage continuity of speech rather than constant correction. The goal is to encourage students to express their ideas and participate actively in classroom interaction. When learners feel that their contributions are valued, they are more likely to develop confidence in speaking. For this reason, feedback should be delivered in a supportive manner that motivates students to continue using the language instead of discouraging them after participating. In this way, students perceive their participation as a meaningful contribution to their learning process.

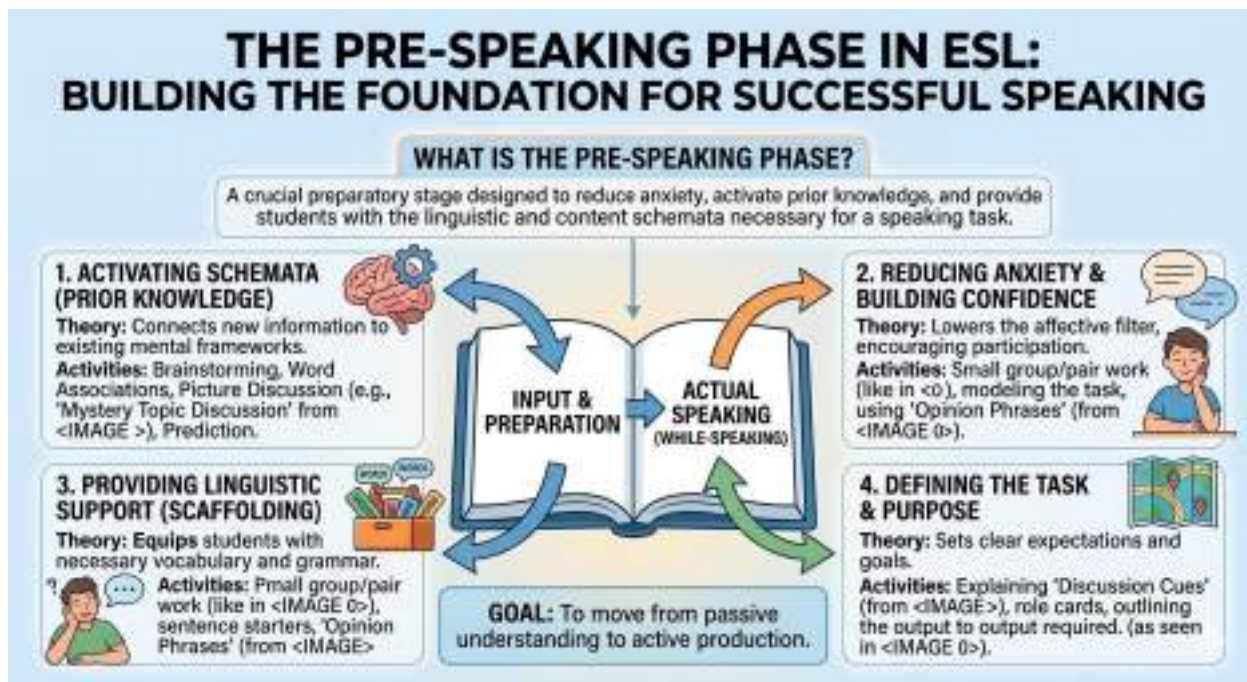
6. Structure and Dynamics of the Proposal

This proposal corresponds to a didactic-pedagogical intervention integrated into regular English lessons. It consists of three main components:

- Pre-speaking phase: Activation of background knowledge, vocabulary review, and modeling.

Figure 6

Diagram of the Pre-Speaking Phase in ESL



Note. Image generated using Gemini AI based on the prompt “Make an image about the Pre-Speaking phase in ESL learners,” March 2026.

- While-speaking phase: Pair or group communicative tasks such as role plays, discussions, information-gap activities, and guided conversations.

Figure 7

Diagram of the While-Speaking Phase in ESL



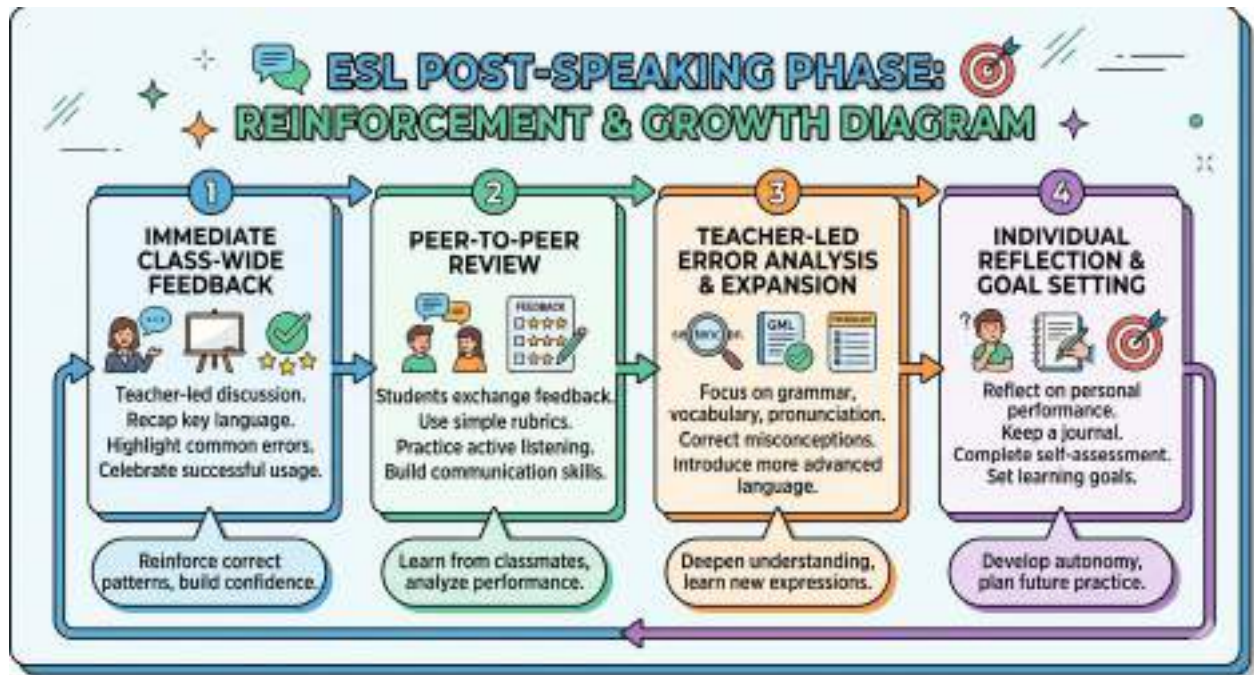
Note. Image generated using Gemini AI based on the prompt “Make an image about the While-Speaking phase in ESL learners,” March 2026.

- Post-speaking phase: Reflection, feedback, and brief accuracy-focused activities.

The dynamics of the proposal encourage continuous interaction, peer support, and teacher monitoring rather than teacher-centered instruction.

Figure 8

Diagram of the Post-Speaking Phase in ESL



Note. Image generated using Gemini AI based on the prompt “Make an image about the Post-Speaking phase in ESL learners,” March 2026.

7. Requirements and Conditions for Implementation

To ensure effective implementation, the following conditions should be met:

- A supportive classroom environment that values participation.
- Sufficient time allocated to speaking activities in each lesson.
- Teacher willingness to prioritize fluency over error correction.
- Clear instructions and models provided before speaking tasks.
- Ongoing observation and reflection by the teacher.



8. Demonstrations and Examples

Examples of activities included in the proposal are:

- Role plays based on everyday situations such as school routines or hobbies. (See appendix 2)
- Pair discussions using guiding questions to encourage extended responses. (See appendix 3)
- Information-gap activities requiring students to ask and answer questions. (See appendix 4)
- Group storytelling, where students build a story collaboratively. (See appendix 5)

These activities allow students to practice speaking in a natural and engaging way. Some examples are added in the Appendixes section to illustrate the ideas.

9. Forms of Application, Implementation, and Evaluation

The proposal is applied during regular English classes over a sustained period.

Implementation involves gradual integration of communicative tasks into lesson plans.

Evaluation is conducted through:

- Classroom observation of speaking performance.
- Student self-reflection on confidence and participation.
- Teacher assessment using fluency-focused rubrics. (See appendix 6)

Evaluation is formative and continuous, emphasizing progress rather than perfection.

10. Resources

The resources required for this proposal include:

- Visual aids and prompts – (see appendix 7)
- Worksheets and speaking cards – (see appendix 8)
- Audio or video materials when available
- Observation checklists and rubrics – (see appendixes 6 and 9)

Most resources are easily adaptable to the classroom context and prompts or instructions are generated with free AI tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini and Meta.

11. Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of this proposal are sixth-grade ESL students, who gain improved oral fluency and confidence. Secondary beneficiaries include teachers, who receive practical strategies for promoting speaking skills, and the institution, which benefits from improved communicative competence among learners.

12. Closing

In conclusion, this proposal offers a practical and context-sensitive approach to improving oral fluency in ESL classrooms. By emphasizing interaction, confidence, and meaningful communication, it responds directly to the needs identified in the diagnostic study. Its flexible design allows for adaptation to different classroom realities, making it a viable and sustainable contribution to English language teaching practice.



Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of communicative activities should contribute positively to the development of students' speaking fluency. Activities such as role plays, pair discussions, information-gap tasks, and collaborative storytelling would create opportunities for students to use the target language in meaningful contexts. These activities encourage learners to express their ideas, maintain interaction with peers, and produce longer spoken responses.

Furthermore, the use of visual prompts, worksheets, and speaking cards provide students with linguistic support that facilitates participation in oral tasks. The results obtained through classroom observations and fluency assessment instruments suggest that students will gradually show greater confidence when speaking and demonstrate improvements in maintaining communication with fewer pauses and hesitations making the English class more interesting and a comfortable place to be with peers.

Another important outcome expected to be achieved is that fluency-oriented activities should reduce students' fear of making mistakes and promote a more interactive classroom environment. When the focus is placed on communication rather than strict grammatical accuracy, students appear more willing to participate in speaking activities and engage with their classmates.

Overall, the study supports the idea that integrating communicative and student-centered activities in the classroom can effectively foster speaking fluency among learners, especially ESL learners at this age and with these specific characteristics, that may be shared in many



settings. Providing structured opportunities for interaction and meaningful language use allows students to develop their ability to communicate more naturally and confidently in English.

All efforts made to improve the performance of our students should reflect insights obtained as teachers and probably provide more enjoyment for both teachers and students. Learning and teaching should only be improved by the suggested activities made by the authors of these research dissertation in Guayaquil 2025 - 2026.



Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be proposed for English language teachers and educational institutions. Indeed, the proposed activities are expected to be part of the everyday environment that should be lived in classes. However, Some important recommendations can still be made:

First, teachers should incorporate a variety of communicative speaking activities in their lessons to promote fluency development. Activities such as role plays, pair discussions, information-gap tasks, and group storytelling can provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice speaking in authentic situations. As the popular saying goes, “Variety is the spice of life.” The more activities to go through the better the learning process and teachers can also have some fun.

Second, teachers should create a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable expressing their ideas without fear of constant correction. Feedback should focus primarily on encouraging communication and maintaining the flow of speech rather than interrupting students to correct every grammatical error. It is important to treat students as people in their formation years. They may be noisy, sometimes they may lack discipline, but still, they need a model and examples. Be empathetic and think they will overcome this years and remember the teaching experience with appreciation.

Third, it is recommended that teachers use visual aids, prompts, worksheets, and speaking cards to guide students during speaking tasks. These materials can help students organize their ideas and reduce anxiety when participating in oral activities. Students’ talents and skills are



varied, they need to enhance their senses and make as many useful neurolinguistic connections as possible.

Additionally, teachers may benefit from using fluency-focused assessment tools such as observation checklists and rubrics to monitor students' speaking development. These instruments allow teachers to evaluate students' progress while emphasizing communication and interaction. Instruments bring objectivity to our classes, and this helps being fair. Kids at these ages are always following examples and it may be disappointing to have an unfair grade when compared to others' performance.

Finally, future research could explore the long-term impact of communicative activities on speaking fluency or investigate how different instructional strategies influence students' confidence and participation in oral communication tasks. Progress is progress even when it explores what should not be done.



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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Classroom Observation Form

Class Observation Form – Focus on Speaking Fluency and Interaction

General Information

Teacher:	Elvis Guevara	Observer:	Megan Rodriguez
Subject:	Language arts	Grade / Level:	6th
Date:	August 5 th , 2025	Duration:	40 min
Number of Students:	24	Lesson Topic:	Present perfect tense

1. Speaking Fluency

Criteria	Observed (✓)	Comments / Evidence
Students speak with limited pauses or hesitation		Most students hesitated frequently and used long pauses before responding. Some relied on fillers such as 'uh' or remained silent when asked to speak.
Students express ideas in complete utterances		Students understood the task instructions; however, many responses were limited to single words or incomplete sentences. Only a few students were able to produce complete utterances.
Students maintain flow of speech during tasks		The flow of speech was often interrupted. Students stopped speaking when they lacked vocabulary and required teacher support or prompts to continue.
Students self-correct without losing fluency		Few students attempted self-correction. When errors occurred, most students stopped speaking instead of reformulating their ideas.
Confidence when speaking in English		Several students showed low confidence when speaking in English. Some avoided participation, while others switched to their L1 when unable to express their opinions.

2. Interaction Patterns

Criteria	Observed (✓)	Comments / Evidence
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Student–student interaction (pair/group work)		Pair and group interaction was limited. Some students attempted to communicate, but interaction was minimal due to lack of vocabulary and confidence
Student–teacher interaction		Students relied heavily on the teacher for clarification and support. Most interaction occurred between the teacher and individual students rather than among peers
Balanced participation among students		Participation was uneven. A small number of students dominated the interaction, while others remained silent or avoided speaking
Students respond appropriately to peers		Students showed difficulty responding to peers' ideas. Responses were often limited, delayed, or unrelated due to limited language proficiency
Use of English during interaction		English use during interaction was inconsistent. Several students switched to their L1 when unable to express ideas or understand peers.

3. Speaking Activities

Criteria	Observed (✓)	Comments / Evidence
Activities promote meaningful communication		The activities were related to real topics; however, meaningful communication was limited because students struggled to express ideas and opinions orally.
Tasks encourage extended speaking		Tasks did not fully encourage extended speaking. Most students produced very short responses and were unable to elaborate without teacher support.
Clear instructions for speaking tasks		Instructions were generally clear, and most students understood what to do, as evidenced by their on-task behavior.
Teacher provides prompts or scaffolding		The teacher provided prompts and examples to support students' speaking; however, many students still required additional modeling and guided practice.
Feedback supports fluency (not only accuracy)		Feedback focused mainly on correctness. Limited feedback was provided to encourage fluency or continued speaking despite errors.

4. Overall Comments and Recommendations

Strengths observed:	Most students understood the task instructions and remained on task during speaking activities.
Areas for improvement:	The teacher provided clear explanations and basic scaffolding to support students' participation.
Suggestions for improving speaking fluency and interaction:	Some students showed willingness to participate despite limited language proficiency.

Observer Signature: Megan Jazmín Rodríguez Avilés Date: August 5th, 2025



Appendix 2: Examples of Role Plays

Example 1: Talking About School Routines

Instructions

Students work in pairs. Student A and Student B ask and answer questions about their daily school routines. Each student should ask at least three questions and respond with complete sentences. The objective is to maintain the conversation for two to three minutes without long pauses.

Useful Language

Questions

- What time do you start school?
- What subjects do you have today?
- What do you usually do during recess?
- What is your favorite subject?

Responses

- I usually start school at...
- My favorite subject is... because...
- During recess I usually...
- After school I normally...

Sample Dialogue

Student A: What time do you start school?

Student B: I start school at 7:30 in the morning. What about you?

Student A: I start at 8:00. What is your favorite subject?

Student B: My favorite subject is English because I like learning new words.

Student A: That's interesting. During recess I usually play soccer with my friends. What do you do?

Student B: I usually talk with my classmates and eat a snack.



Example 2: Talking About Hobbies

Instructions

Students work in pairs and role-play a conversation between two classmates who are getting to know each other. They ask about hobbies and free-time activities. Students should ask follow-up questions to keep the conversation going for at least three minutes.

Useful Language

Questions

- What do you like to do in your free time?
- Do you have any hobbies?
- How often do you practice your hobby?
- Why do you like it?

Responses

- I really enjoy...
- I usually practice my hobby on...
- I like it because...
- It helps me relax / learn new things.

Sample Dialogue

Student A: What do you like to do in your free time?

Student B: I like playing video games and listening to music. What about you?

Student A: I enjoy drawing. I usually draw on weekends.

Student B: That sounds interesting. Why do you like drawing?

Student A: Because it helps me relax and be creative.

Student B: That's great! I would like to learn how to draw.



Example 3: Planning an Activity After School

Instructions

Students work in pairs. They role-play a conversation between two friends who are planning what to do after school. They must make suggestions, agree or disagree, and decide on one activity together.

Useful Language

Making Suggestions

- Let's...
- How about...?
- We could...

Agreeing

- That sounds good.
- Great idea!
- I'd like that.

Disagreeing

- I'm not sure about that.
- Maybe we can try something else.
- I prefer...

Sample Dialogue

Student A: What should we do after school today?

Student B: How about going to the park?

Student A: That sounds good, but I have homework.

Student B: Maybe we could study together first.

Student A: Good idea! Then we can go to the park later.

Student B: Perfect! Let's do that.



Appendix 3: Examples of Discussion Activities

Pair Discussion Activity: Talking About Healthy Habits

Objective:

To encourage students to produce extended spoken responses by discussing personal habits and giving explanations.

Instructions:

1. Work with a partner.
2. Take turns asking and answering the questions below.
3. Try to give complete answers and explain your ideas.
4. Ask follow-up questions to continue the conversation.
5. Speak for at least **three minutes**.

Guiding Questions

1. What do you usually do to stay healthy?
2. How often do you exercise?
3. What healthy food do you usually eat?
4. Do you think teenagers today have healthy habits? Why or why not?
5. What is one habit you would like to improve?

Useful Language





Giving Opinions

- I think that...
- In my opinion...
- I believe that...

Explaining Ideas

- Because...
- For example...
- One reason is that...

Asking Follow-up Questions

- Why do you think that?
- Can you give an example?
- What about you?

Sample Interaction

Student A: What do you usually do to stay healthy?

Student B: I usually try to eat vegetables and exercise three times a week. I also drink a lot of water. What about you?

Student A: I don't exercise very often, but I try to walk to school every day because it helps me stay active.



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Student B: That's good. Do you think teenagers today have healthy habits?

Student A: Not always. Many teenagers eat fast food and spend a lot of time on their phones.

Student B: I agree. One habit I want to improve is sleeping earlier.



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Appendix 4: Examples of Information Gap Activities

Information-Gap Activity: After-School Club Schedule

Objective:

To develop students' speaking fluency by encouraging them to ask and answer questions in order to complete missing information.

Instructions:

1. Work with a partner.
2. Student A and Student B have different schedules with missing information.
3. Ask your partner questions to complete the missing information in your chart.
4. Do not show your paper to your partner.
5. Use complete questions and answers.

Student A Schedule

Table 2

Design of gap Activity – Student A

Club	Day	Time
Art Club	Monday	3:30 p.m.
Soccer Club	_____	4:00 p.m.

Club	Day	Time
Music Club	Wednesday	_____
Science Club	Friday	3:00 p.m.

Note: Activity prepared by students, March 2026.

Student B Schedule

Table 3

Design of gap Activity – Student A

Club	Day	Time
Art Club	_____	3:30 p.m.
Soccer Club	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.
Music Club	Wednesday	3:30 p.m.
Science Club	_____	3:00 p.m.

Note: Activity prepared by students, March 2026.



Useful Language

Asking for Information

- When is the ____ club?
- What day is the ____ club?
- What time does the ____ club start?

Giving Information

- It is on ____.
- It starts at ____.
- The ____ club is on ____ at ____.

Sample Interaction

Student A: When is the Soccer Club?

Student B: It is on Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.

Student B: What day is the Art Club?

Student A: It is on Monday at 3:30 p.m.

Student A: What time is the Music Club?

Student B: It starts at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday.



Appendix 5: Example of a Group Storytelling Activity

Group Storytelling Activity: Creating a Story Together

Objective:

To promote speaking fluency by encouraging students to collaboratively build a story using their imagination and responding to their classmates' ideas.

Instructions:

1. Work in groups of four students.
2. One student starts the story by saying the first sentence.
3. Each student adds one or two sentences to continue the story.
4. Listen carefully to your classmates so the story makes sense.
5. Continue until everyone has spoken at least three times.

Story Prompt

“Yesterday after school, something very unusual happened...”

Students should continue the story by describing events, characters, and actions.

Useful Language

Starting a Story

- One day...
- Yesterday...





- It all started when...

Adding Information

- Then...
- After that...
- Suddenly...
- Later...

Ending the Story

- In the end...
- Finally...
- At the end of the day...

Sample Interaction

Student 1: Yesterday after school, something very unusual happened. I found a small box near the school gate.

Student 2: When I opened the box, I saw a strange map inside.

Student 3: Then we decided to follow the map because it looked like a treasure map.

Student 4: Suddenly, we heard a noise behind the trees, and we got a little scared.

Student 1: After that, we discovered the noise was only a dog, and we continued walking.





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Student 2: In the end, we found a small treasure chest full of old coins.



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Appendix 6: Fluency-Focused Speaking Rubric

Fluency-Focused Speaking Rubric (Score out of 10)

Objective:

To assess students' speaking performance with emphasis on fluency, interaction, and the ability to maintain communication during communicative activities.

Instructions for the Teacher:

Observe students during speaking activities such as role plays, pair discussions, information-gap tasks, or group storytelling. Use the rubric below to evaluate students' speaking fluency. The focus should be on continuity of speech and effective communication rather than grammatical accuracy.

Fluency Assessment Rubric

Table 4

Fluency Assessment Rubric Sample

Criteria	2.5 points	2 points	1 point	0.5 points
Speech Flow	Speaks smoothly with very few pauses and maintains a natural rhythm.	Some pauses occur but communication continues.	Frequent pauses interrupt speech.	Speech is very slow with many pauses that prevent communication.

Criteria	2.5 points	2 points	1 point	0.5 points
Length of Responses	Gives extended responses with explanations and details.	Gives complete responses with some detail.	Responses are short and limited.	Responses consist of isolated words or very short phrases.
Interaction	Actively interacts, asks questions, and responds to others' ideas.	Participates in interaction but with limited initiative.	Limited participation in interaction.	Rarely participates in the activity.
Confidence in Speaking	Speaks confidently and willingly throughout the activity.	Shows some confidence but occasionally hesitates.	Appears hesitant and needs encouragement.	Shows little willingness to speak.

Note. Table created by ChatGPT (Open AI) after the prompt: Make a rubric for Assessing Fluency in ESL learners, March 2026.

Final Score

Add the points from the four criteria.

Total possible score: 10 points

Score Range	Interpretation
8–10	High speaking fluency
5–7.5	Moderate fluency
3–4.5	Developing fluency
0–2.5	Limited fluency



Appendix 7: Activity Using Visual Prompts Example

Speaking Activity Using Visual Prompts

Objective:

To promote speaking fluency by encouraging students to describe and discuss visual prompts related to everyday situations.

Instructions:

1. Look at the picture provided by the teacher.
2. Work with a partner and discuss what you see in the picture.
3. Answer the guiding questions and give as many details as possible.
4. Try to speak for at least two minutes.
5. Ask your partner follow-up questions to continue the conversation.



1. Where are the people in the picture?
2. What are they doing?
3. How do you think they feel?
4. Have you ever done a similar activity?
5. What do you usually do in your free time with friends?

Useful Language

Describing Actions

- They are playing...
- She is talking to...
- They seem to be...

Expressing Opinions

- I think that...
- In my opinion...
- It looks like...

Giving Personal Examples

- I usually...
- Sometimes I...



- When I am with my friends, I...

Sample Interaction

Student A: I think the people in the picture are in a park. Some students are playing soccer.

Student B: Yes, and two students are sitting on the grass and talking.

Student A: They look happy. Maybe they are relaxing after school.

Student B: I sometimes do the same thing. I usually go to the park with my friends on weekends.



Appendix 8: Example activity of Worksheet and Speaking Cards

Worksheet and Speaking Cards Activity: Talking About Free-Time Activities

Objective:

To develop students' speaking fluency by encouraging them to ask and answer questions using speaking cards as prompts.

Instructions

1. Each student receives a speaking card with a question about free-time activities.
2. Students walk around the classroom and ask their classmates the questions on their cards.
3. Students record their classmates' answers on the worksheet.
4. After completing the worksheet, students report one or two interesting answers to the class.

Speaking Cards (Examples)

Card 1

What do you usually do in your free time?

Card 2

What is your favorite hobby?

Card 3

How often do you play sports?

Card 4

Do you prefer spending time indoors or outdoors? Why?

Card 5

What activity helps you relax after school?



Student Worksheet

Table 5

Example of grid for Worksheets and Speaking Card Activities

Classmate's Name	Question Asked	Answer

Note. Table created by researchers to illustrate the example of recording answers for interactions provided with a worksheet or cards for speaking activities, March 2026.

Useful Language

Asking Questions

- What do you usually do...?
- How often do you...?
- Do you like...?



Answering Questions

- I usually...
- My favorite activity is...
- I like it because...

Sample Interaction

Student A: What do you usually do in your free time?

Student B: I usually watch movies and listen to music.

Student A: How often do you play sports?

Student B: I play soccer twice a week with my friends.

Appendix 9: Example of Fluency Observation Checklist

Speaking Fluency Observation Checklist

Objective:

To observe and record students' speaking performance during communicative activities with emphasis on fluency and interaction.

Instructions for the Observer:

Observe students during speaking activities such as role plays, discussions, information-gap tasks, or storytelling. Mark (✓) the behaviors that are observed during the activity and add comments if necessary.

Observation Checklist

Table 6

Observation Checklist Example

Criteria	Observed (✓)	Comments / Evidence
The student speaks with minimal hesitation.		
The student maintains speech for several sentences.		
The student responds to questions with complete answers.		
The student asks questions to continue the interaction.		

Criteria	Observed (✓)	Comments / Evidence
The student uses connectors or linking words (e.g., <i>and</i> , <i>then</i> , <i>because</i>).		
The student participates actively in the conversation.		
The student attempts to explain ideas or give examples.		
The student maintains communication even when searching for words.		
The student shows willingness to speak without excessive prompting.		
The student interacts naturally with peers.		

Note. Table created by ChatGPT (Open AI) after the prompt: Make a checklist for Assessing Fluency in ESL learners, March 2026.

Observation Notes



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Observation Information

Teacher / Observer: _____

Date: _____

Class / Level: _____

Activity Observed: _____



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