UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACION

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Informe final del trabajo de Titulación previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado/a en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés.

Theme: Questioning strategies and speaking skills

Author: Ortiz Mera Randy Israel

Tutor: Lcda. Mg. Infante Paredes Ruth Elizabeth

Ambato – Ecuador

2024

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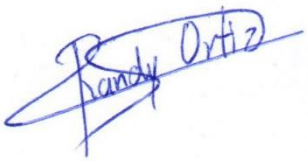

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V. DEDICATION

TO:

My parents Luis Ortiz and Angelita Mera, and my brother Alexander Ortiz for giving me unconditional support and strength to overcome fears and obstacles in daily life. To my relatives, who have always been there for me giving advice when needed. To my friend Paul Vintimilla who is no longer with us. I could not have achieved anything without them. Thank you all.

Randy.

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Topic: Questioning Strategies and Speaking Skills
Author: Randy Israel Ortiz Mera
Tutor: Mg. Lcda. Ruth Elizabeth Infante Paredes

VII. ABSTRACT

The current research aimed at identifying the influence of questioning strategies on the speaking skills of students. The researcher utilized a variation of a quasi-experimental design also known as a one-group pretest-posttest design. Furthermore, the quantitative approach was used since results were gathered and analyzed statistically. Regarding the modality, bibliographic and field research was used since the researcher had to look for reliable information to set the foundation to create meaningful questions using the revised Bloom's taxonomy. In the same way, field research allowed the researcher to conduct their study in the proposed place. Moreover, the study took place at Universidad Técnica de Ambato where the participants involved were a group of 38 students in the second semester of the major of Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros. Regarding the instrument used for data collection, a standardized test of Cambridge was used as a pre and post-test, and to assess speaking skills the researcher used a standardized rubric with four categories: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication. Finally, the results displayed that 1) lower-order questions were answered the most than higher-order questions, 2) the quality of answers in both categories of lower and higher-order thinking skills did increase significantly, 3) students' results of their speaking performance showed a significance increase in the post-test, and finally 4) pronunciation was the strongest skill of participants at the beginning but discourse management and pronunciation ended up being the strongest skills of participants, meaning that one speaking subskill was developed with the experiment.

Keywords: Questioning strategies, Speaking skills, Bloom's taxonomy, discourse management, interactive communication.

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VIII. RESUMEN

La presente investigación tuvo como objetivo identificar la influencia de las estrategias de cuestionamiento en las habilidades orales de los estudiantes. El investigador utilizó una variación de un diseño cuasiexperimental, también conocido como diseño pretest-postest de un grupo. Además, se utilizó el enfoque cuantitativo ya que los resultados se recogieron y analizaron estadísticamente. En cuanto a la modalidad, se utilizó la investigación bibliográfica y de campo, ya que el investigador debía buscar información confiable para sentar las bases para crear preguntas significativas usando la taxonomía revisada de Bloom. De la misma manera, la investigación de campo permitió al investigador realizar su estudio en el lugar propuesto. Además, el estudio se llevó a cabo en la Universidad Técnica de Ambato donde los participantes fueron un grupo de 38 estudiantes del segundo semestre de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros. En cuanto al instrumento utilizado para la recolección de datos, se utilizó como pre y post test una prueba estandarizada de Cambridge, y para evaluar las habilidades orales el investigador utilizó una rúbrica estandarizada con cuatro categorías: gramática y vocabulario, manejo del discurso, pronunciación y comunicación interactiva. Finalmente, los resultados mostraron que 1) las preguntas de orden inferior fueron las más respondidas que las de orden superior, 2) la calidad de las respuestas en ambas categorías de habilidades de pensamiento de orden inferior y superior aumentaron significativamente, 3) los resultados de los estudiantes en su expresión oral el rendimiento mostró un aumento significativo en la prueba posterior y, finalmente, 4) la pronunciación fue la habilidad más fuerte de los participantes al principio, pero el manejo del discurso y la pronunciación terminaron siendo las habilidades más fuertes de los participantes.

Palabras clave: Estrategias de cuestionamiento, Habilidades de expresión oral, taxonomía de Bloom, manejo del discurso, comunicación interactiva.

B. CONTENT

I. CHAPTER I.- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Research background

English as a Foreign Language in Ecuador is a reality that is faced by many teachers of English and researchers around the country. The implementation of the 2016 curriculum which in theory was supposed to improve English as a Foreign Language has not reached its primary goal. Moreover, the importance of EFL and the level of English have declined tremendously in the last years and Ecuador is ranked 19 out of 19 concerning language proficiency in Latin American countries (Sevy-Biloon et al., 2020). For students to become proficient in English, they must master both receptive and productive skills. It is fundamental for English language learners to acquire speaking to communicate effectively as this skill is part of our daily life. According to Wahyuningsih and Afandi (2020), however, multiple problems are encountered such as inadequacies in vocabulary, pronunciation and intonation problems, and incorrect grammar usage.

Undoubtedly, teachers need to overcome the low speaking levels of students by applying teaching strategies as in the case of questioning. Still, educators need to understand why these techniques are useful. The coming study conducted in the city of Cuenca; Ecuador is a clear-cut example. According to Chica (2021), the study aimed to raise teachers' awareness of using questioning strategies in the classroom to increase students' language interaction. Apart from this, the research level was descriptive with field, documentary, and bibliographic modality as the information has been obtained through an orderly Literature Review of reliable sources. Thus, there was not a population selected by the researcher. Finally, the results of the information collected revealed that most of the studies agreed that questioning strategies had positive effects if they were applied correctly in the classroom. Interestingly, questioning techniques have proved to be effective in enhancing communication and interaction as well as in encouraging students to use the target language effectively and meaningfully.

Studies conducted in Eastern countries confirmed that questioning strategies are useful in improving speaking skills. According to Jaya (2017), the use of questioning strategies has been successful when it comes to engaging students in inquiry. In this sense, the following Indonesian study determined the effectiveness of this tool. The type of research was quasi-experimental as there were two groups: one control group, and one experimental one. Therefore, the study aimed to describe if questioning strategies would influence the speaking performance of students of eleventh grade at SMKN 1 Palembang. The research design was experimental as there was a treatment or experiment applied to one group. Moreover, the method used to gather the data was an oral pre-test and post-test applied at the beginning and the end to the eleventh level. After analyzing the data gathered by the tests, there were four findings in which the sample t-test showed that the speaking achievement of the experimental group was slightly better than the control group.

A more current study was conducted by Boneka (2023) on questioning strategies whose purpose was to determine whether there was an effect of open-ended questions strategy on students' speaking performance. The research work used a quantitative approach along with an experimental design. Furthermore, the population for the experiment was students in ninth grade at Advent Junior High School Lubuk Baja Batam. Regarding the instruments, the researcher used two instruments to evaluate and gather data from each variable. Additionally, it was used a holistic rubric to measure students' critical thinking. Likewise, to assess speaking skills, the researcher used an oral proficiency scoring category developed by Brown in the book called 'Language Assessment'. After calculating the two variables with a t-test, it was found that the level of significance matched the t-result. Given the above, open-ended question strategies had a noticeable effect on increasing students' speaking skills level.

It is also important for students to understand why questioning strategies are valuable to developing and increasing speaking skills. The following study aimed to examine students' perceptions concerning questioning strategies in boosting students' speaking skills at the third-level in the education study program. Furthermore, the participants for this study were 24 freshmen students who came from the third level of the English program at Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia. The approach for the study was qualitative as the phenomenon was only examined by students and analyzed and described by the researchers (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022). The questionnaire technique used was a survey whose purpose was to obtain information about students' perceptions as well as to conduct an interview. Lastly, the results showed that students did not doubt that questioning strategies are useful in boosting their speaking skills, especially in fluency, accuracy, language comprehension, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Most importantly, students felt that questioning strategies improve their self-confidence when speaking short and long stretches of language.

Using the right approach for questioning will allow teachers to engage in spoken interaction. The consecutive research study whose purpose was to explore the grilling system or questioning applied by teachers at primary schools to understand students' answers as well as teachers' opinions on fulfilling students' English-speaking competence. The research work used a qualitative approach to describe teacher's approaches to questioning strategies and to report on the results of this investigation. Concerning the population, two English teachers were selected from private and public schools in which the researchers studied the approaches to questioning techniques used by teachers. Furthermore, the techniques used were different going from observations to audio-records, examination sheets, and interviews conducted with the teachers. Finally, Yasid et al. (2021) found that teachers used mostly three questioning methods: prompting, rephrasing, and providing extra information. More importantly, it was found that when teachers ask questions according to the teaching-learning process, students' responses improved gradually.

Questioning strategies have been used at different levels of education and they have proved to be effective to engage students' responses. The next research used a qualitative approach which focused on understanding and describing the phenomenon itself. The study aimed to determine the types of questioning strategies used by teachers in an English class in a junior high school. In the same way, to gather information and data the researchers used the observation technique to see the types of questioning strategies used by teachers as well as interviews to gather extra information. The population selected for this study was an English teacher and two different classes since the purpose was to see the questions used by the teacher in each classroom. In addition, the researchers were able to identify the questioning strategies used by teachers such as structuring, pitching and putting, directing and distributing, pausing, and pacing, prompting and probing, listening to replies, and responding and sequencing. Finally, the findings of the research let the teacher control students' responses as well as the interaction and pace of the class without limiting students' English-spoken interaction (Irawati et al., 2021).

Several past studies have been discussed in the research background, and some of them have proved that questioning highly influences students' oral competence and the following study is not the exception. The research work aimed at determining students' perception of teachers' questioning strategies and how those techniques are related to their academic performance. Similarly, the study proposed more and less likely question types that can be used to favor students' learning. The study used a mixed approach to gather data and analyze it according to primary and secondary information. Regarding the population, three schools in Chakdara City, Pakistan were selected, but only certain levels from five to eight. The instrument techniques were different such as individual tests, types of questioning, group discussion, grading, interviews, and focused groups. According to the results, after a thorough analysis and discussion with authorities and teachers in general, it was found that the effective use of questioning strategies is strongly related to the academic performance of students. Similarly, the researcher discussed the use of high and lower-order questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy to engage students in a step-by-step process (Naz et al., 2019).

1.2 Theoretical foundation of the variables

Independent variable: Questioning strategies

1.2.1 Teaching languages

To begin with, Von et al. (2020) believed that language teaching was considered to take place only in classroom environments where language was usually taught traditionally, however, it also takes place outside the classroom. Regarding English language teaching, Blok et al. (2020) admitted that teachers who recognize language as a tool should take into consideration students' needs to develop language skills. English language teaching has had an enormous impact during history until the modern days. Pen and Chen (2023) asserted that English language teaching has played a vital role in the entire world as it allows universal communication.

Unquestionably, the best way to understand language teaching is by looking back at time. Whong (2019) pointed out that by looking at the past many of the problems that teachers face nowadays have not changed too much, but how those problems are understood has. According to Wheeler (2018), the first records of "language teaching" are traced back to almost six thousand years ago in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Rome. Later on, in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century grammar schools appeared with Desiderius Erasmus who thought language is best taught inductively, and John Locke, who was against grammar as the foundation of language teaching.

Now that there is a clear image of the history behind language teaching it is useful to define the aim of language teaching and the role of teachers. Therefore, according to Niazi (2020), the purpose of language teaching is to support language practice as well as to use meaningful methods to achieve students' learning (Abraham et al., 2022). Finally, English Language Teaching (ELT) focuses not only on training students to attain a proficiency level in language skills, but also requires language teachers to unconsciously use their values and morals in every aspect of teaching (Johnston, 2019).

1.2.2 Teaching methods

There are three major categories in terms of language teaching methods. The first one is Traditional approaches and methods. In the 14th and 15th centuries, Latin was learned employing grammar study leading later to the Grammar-Translation method with its major exponents as Johann Seidenstücker and Karl Plötz (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). From the 1930s to 1960s, the Oral-Structural Situational approach became popular with its major exponents Harold Palmer and A.S Hornby in which language was taught with structures without teaching grammar, vocabulary teaching was from simple to complex. At the same, the Audiolingual method appeared which focused on pronunciation and language drilling (Shastri, 2018).

While the Audiolingual method and Situational approach were developed by applied linguists, the second category called alternative methods was developed outside the mainstream of language in the seventies in which Total Physical Response, Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Multiple intelligences gained major acceptance. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), alternative methods have as a foundation learning theories and sometimes theories of scholars rather than linguistics. Furthermore, there are some exceptions as in the case of the Lexical approach which takes into consideration vocabulary and chunks of language.

Due to the demand for foreign language teaching, in the eighties, new exponents and approaches emerged such as Dell Hymes and Communicative Language Teaching (Renau, 2016). Moreover, it is worthwhile to mention that the Socratic method is the basis of the teaching methodology of this research study. Therefore, Abou-Hann et al. (2021) pointed out that the Socratic method is a systematic questioning process used by teachers to activate students' critical thinking skills. Similarly, the Socratic method has been used at different educational levels from primary to higher education and it can be used in multiple fields as in language education (Dalim et al., 2022).

1.2.3 Teaching strategies

Zubillaga and Zavala (2017) defined teaching strategies as the instruments by which instructors establish their teaching basis to contribute to the implementation and development of students' competencies, as well as the achievement of meaningful goals. In this sense, Renton (2020) highlighted the importance of using questioning purposefully and as an important teaching tool. Therefore, it can be considered that the act of asking questions can become part of the teaching strategies used in the classroom. For this reason, there are different teaching strategies based on questions but only two were selected as the foundation of this research work.

Firstly, one of the oldest strategies is Socratic questioning. The purpose of this strategy is to pursue students' thinking in different ways and for different purposes (Paul & Elder, 2019). Simply put, Socratic questioning helps learners to be aware of what they know from what they do not. Secondly, Bloom's taxonomy has also proved to be effective in the creation of questions to scaffold students' learning. Tufail et al. (2021) pointed out that Bloom's taxonomy suggests that learners should be exposed to close to open-ended questions from lower to higher-order thinking skills. They remarked that by scaffolding with questioning, teachers make sure to encourage students' critical and analytical skills.

In a daily lesson, teachers' work involved asking questions. In fact, according to Johnson (2021), 80 % of what teachers do is ask questions. In a typical course lesson, teachers ask 30 to 120 per hour. Nevertheless, data shows that most of the questioning done during class is ineffective as questions are based on recalling factual information rather than higher-order thinking skills. In regards to EFL teaching, it has been seen not only that questioning strategies can be used to encourage analytical skills but also to improve English speaking skills. According to Candilas (2021), questioning strategies have proved to help in improving students' English-speaking skills.

1.2.4 Questioning strategies

Before delving deeper into questioning strategies, it is valuable to understand the definition of questions in the first place. Satriani et al. (2022) defined questions as statements with question marks that involve anything that is asked. Besides, Satriani et al concluded that it is clear that asking questions has a strong impact on the language teaching-learning process. Furthermore, questioning is one of the six social and psychological needs of the human being allowing meaningful communication. In the same way, questioning induces students to think, analyze, and reflect on their ideas, meaning that this strategy helps to develop students' critical thinking skills (Sayyadi & Rezvani, 2021).

The act of asking and answering questions is without doubt as old as the history of language and it first took place in Western cultures, where questioning was strongly tied to philosophy. According to Ilie (2021), one of the major exponents of questioning is Socrates, who used a type of questioning called 'elenchus' also known as the Socratic method which aimed at developing critical thinking. Moreover, Matthews (2022) emphasized that the Socratic 'elenchus' or method is a type of philosophical analysis whose purpose is to rise to the concept of a problem using refutation and agreement of opposing examples.

The Socratic questioning method has been used in different educational areas and levels ranging from primary to higher education, and it has also covered multiple disciplinary settings such as mathematics and English (Dalim et al., 2022). Apart from this, educators that used this method, have encountered many challenges but also good results on students' critical thinking which have also been reported in many research works. Thus, the Socratic method along with the revised Bloom's taxonomy has been the foundation to create effective questions in this research work. According to Renton (2020), the effectiveness of questioning is the result of a careful process in which one question leads to another until reaching a proposed goal.

It is remarkable to highlight that not only was the original Bloom's taxonomy used in this research, but also the revised Bloom's taxonomy. At first, Bolitho and Rossner (2020), the purpose of the original Bloom's taxonomy created by Benjamin Bloom and their colleagues in the 1950s, was to support the formulation of objectives in teaching. Later, Anderson and Krathwohl changed the notion of the use of nouns for educational objectives of the original Blooms' taxonomy to a more dynamic classification with verbs and gerunds known as "action words" which focused on the learner's cognitive and learning process and objectives (Iowa State University of Science and Technology, 2022)

Correspondingly, Sobral (2021) recognized that Bloom's taxonomy has been used and defined in different ways, and with no doubt any discipline must use it to construct meaningful knowledge. That is why, the original and the revised Bloom's taxonomy were the foundation for the creation of meaningful questioning in the proposed research. According to Baker et al. (2017), one way in which Bloom's taxonomy can be expressed is by procedures, which can also be linked to questioning in each stage from the lower to higher thinking skills. Thus, it is highly recommended to understand the categorization of each stage to create effective and reliable questions.

Similarly, Mcgrath (2022) stated that how questions are constructed depends on each stage of the taxonomy going from: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate to create. Therefore, each level relates to a certain cognitive process that must be followed to achieve the highest level known as 'creation', which is the goal of students' learning according to the revised Bloom's taxonomy. Equally important, Bibi et al. (2020), questioning techniques used by English language teachers are used to engage students' active participation and reasoning critically. Therefore, this gave a tiny hope for the researcher to determine whether educators questioning influences or not students' speaking skills.

In general, Stringer et al. (2021), the original and the revised Bloom's taxonomy is divided into two parts: Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). The hierarchy consists of remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. To begin with, remembering has to do with recalling and recognizing previously learned information. This is followed by understanding which deals with getting familiar with a concept, main idea, or material heard or viewed. Nevertheless, remembering and understanding facts do not engage reasoning, or critical thinking (Farmer et al., 2021). Questions at these stages expect students to recall information and understand upcoming ideas.

The last stage of the lower order thinking skills, which also is a prerequisite to continue to the higher levels of thinking is apply. According to Flavian (2019), students have to use the knowledge they have learned at this stage. Additionally, they need to solve problems with previous background information gained. Following the taxonomy, higher-order thinking skills take place, where analysis appears as the fourth stage of the learning process. Deursen (2019) went on to say that analysis is by any means connecting processed ideas or breaking information down into small parts by which showing the relationships between those parts is, therefore, useful for a thorough analysis.

To conclude, the last two stages of the higher level of thinking are evaluating and creating. Kellaghan and Greaney (2019), evaluating deals with making judgments based on established criteria as well as assessing what a person has learned during the learning process. Questions in this stage expect students to assess different pieces of information to make an insightful critique. Finally, the last stage of the cognitive process is creation. It might seem obvious what creation deals with but creating goes beyond that. According to Laman (2021), creation has to do with putting pieces of information together in a way that reveals a logical structure. In the same way, creation supports further analysis and decision-making meaning, so conclusions can be drawn at the end of the learning process.

Dependent variable: Speaking skills

1.2.5 Language

It is likely that human language emerged in Africa with the evolution of Homo sapiens or probably before species of Homo. Therefore, McWhorter (2022), the discovery of the gene 'FOXP2' marked an important milestone as it was found that the gene was connected with the use of language and the ability to use it and traced back a hundred thousand years ago. Simply put, some theorists believe that this marks the discovery of language in history. Nevertheless, Planer et al. (2023) believed that even before the homo sapiens species, hominids use language as a tool to supply their needs for meaning and community.

Once defined where and when language appeared, it is remarkable to define the language itself. Gavidia (2015) described language as the faculty of joining content to expressions to manifest an idea using a series of melodic and visual signals. Besides, Feist (2022) pointed out that language is used for human interaction either orally or written, forming a well-known system among individuals. Feist went on to say that the language we know can be used in different ways and it is not mandatory to use it in a defined way, or a specific context or function. When referring to language, it comes to our brain languages spoken around the world.

According to Mattiola (2019), nowadays, there are more than seven thousand languages recorded around the world and it has been impossible to investigate all of them as some of them are not well described or not described at all. In this sense, one of the most predominant languages has been English which has also been used for the development of this research work. Moreover, Giménez and Liruso (2019), English is the most used language for communication around the world which is also known as the lingua franca of the modern world. Besides, language does not work by itself as it encompasses different skills which will be described in the next section.

1.2.6 Language skills

In general, Gómez et al. (2021) defined language skills as the single abilities of humans that are useful to communicate language effectively. Among language skills, there are receptive—productive, grammar, and thinking skills. However, concerning English language teaching, there are only two established categories divided into receptive and productive skills. Besides, when it comes to teaching English, the training of the four basic language skills is relevant for students to become proficient in the target language (Karademir & Gorgoz, 2019). For this reason, it is fundamental for teachers to balance receptive and productive skills in their lessons.

It should be noted that without receptive skills, productive skills would not be possible. According to Amirzai (2021), learners can achieve information by outside or reading an article from a newspaper, therefore, it would be possible for them to speak or write accurately about what they read or listened to. Indeed, on a typical day, people do more listening than speaking except those people who enjoy talking at the workplace, at school, or at home (Yao, 2021). Similarly, went on to say that reading is the most important if not the most essential skill in different educational contexts as it has remained important for the assessment of language skills.

On the whole, de Oliveira (2019) defined receptive skills are those passive skills that students use to comprehend information, especially in the form of listening and reading. According to Spratt et al. (2011), listening involves making sense and understanding relevant sounds of language. In addition, listening requires making use of situations, language, and people's world background knowledge. The next receptive skill is one of the most common people encounter every day such as in journals, reports, minutes, online newspapers, books, and even social media. Simply put, reading is the ability to drive meaningful information from a written text and to use that knowledge for a specific purpose (Al-Dawoody et al., 2022).

1.2.7 Productive skills

According to Sreena and Ilankumaran (2018), one of the most important modern contributors in the area of language is Jeremy Harmer who mentioned that productive skills involve speaking and writing in which people have to produce the language itself. Therefore, individuals use their productive skills when they want to either communicate an idea or write a text. In the same way, Golkova and Hubackoba (2022) considered that productive skills also known as active skills, mean the transmission of information that a person produces in either spoken or written form. Besides, Golkova and Hubackoba remarked that productive skills would not exist without the support of receptive skills.

To begin with, Shayakhmetova et al. (2020), writing is one of the abilities of language and an extensive form of reasoning because when writing authors elaborate on their thoughts and ideas by portraying them in words. Regarding language learning, Safiyeh and Farrah (2020) pointed out that writing is considered one of the most difficult skills along with speaking. That is why this active skill requires a conscious and long practice until becoming a proficient language writer. Furthermore, regarding English language teaching, achieving students' mastery in writing is easier said than done as teaching writing is one of the big challenges faced by teachers currently at any level (Moses & Mohamad, 2019).

The next productive skill is speaking which has also been the subject study for the research. According to Jack C. Richards, one important exponent in the area of second and foreign language learning highlighted the importance of this skill. Richards (2022) believed that speaking is a paramount skill for humans as it helps us to socialize with each other and different ways of communication are needed in this process. Nonetheless, Bleistein et al. (2020) stated that looking back at the history of language teaching, speaking was not the primary goal, however, the need for communication in today's world has changed this view by developing different approaches to teaching speaking such as Communicative Language Teaching. Given the above, speaking entails different subskills to achieve communication.

1.2.8 Speaking subskills

It is fundamental to understand that language subskills are important for the development of the four basic English language skills. M. Khaizal et al. (2021) pointed out that concerning language teaching and learning, the main purpose of language subskills is to support students' capacity to master the basics in the target language. Most importantly, speaking sub-skills are highly valuable as they help speakers get across their messages effectively. The following speaking sub-skills which are also part of the rubric criteria to assess the B1 preliminary speaking test are: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, 2023)

According to Katawazai et al. (2019), grammar and vocabulary play an exceptional role as they are the building blocks of learning which eventually will help in developing speaking skills. Nhan and Yen (2021) defined grammar as a formula that decides the arrangement of words and sentences to build other sentence structures. Therefore, the appropriate use of grammar will ensure the speaker gets across a clear message. However, the ability to understand grammar rules does not ensure the speaker uses the language itself. Crawford (2020) highlighted the distinction between explicit knowledge of grammar (understanding) and implicit knowledge of grammar (usage).

In the same way, Andrä et al. (2020) defined vocabulary as the words of a language that form lexical items and chunks that express meaning in the same way a single word does. Concerning English language teaching, the importance of teaching vocabulary is essential because without enough vocabulary, learners cannot communicate their ideas, or understand other people. Furthermore, teaching English vocabulary is not as easy as it seems. It requires teachers to look for meaningful activities in which vocabulary can be taught in context (implicitly) and by concepts (explicitly) (Sutrisna, 2021). To conclude, teachers must look for an innovative strategy for teaching vocabulary to make learning enjoyable and meaningful.

The following subskill is discourse management and encompasses several language features such as oral fluency, and using features of connected speech. Regarding oral fluency, Salmón (2019), it is natural for people to hesitate or make pauses since speaking requires processing different tasks. However, Suzuki and Kormos (2023), oral fluency is one of the most reliable factors to indicate language proficiency. Furthermore, using features of connected speech helps the speaker to join words or leave unpronounced letters between words. These phenomena are called in linguistics as elision and liaison of speech elements (Ballard, 2022).

The following subskill that is as important as other subskills mentioned previously is pronunciation. According to Yudar et al. (2020), pronunciation is an essential subfield in Second/Foreign Language Learning as this allows students to understand language input better as well as to improve their communicative skills so they are going to be understood by listeners correctly. In regards to teaching pronunciation, an unrealistic goal is to make learners sound like native speakers, however, a more realistic goal is to make students achieve an average pronunciation level so they can communicate without any obstacle that might affect language interaction (Celce-Murcia, 2010).

Unquestionably, Nguyen et al. (2021) pointed out that in language learning, students who have difficulties with pronunciation are usually not well understood when communicating regardless of their exceptional grammar and vocabulary. There are several issues regarding pronunciation. The first is intelligibility, which is the ability to produce understandable speech for listeners. The next one is comprehensibility, which is the effort to comprehend spoken language. Then, accentedness plays a vital role as students usually come from different cities or countries with a defined accent. The last factor is functional load, which is the effort made by speakers to distinguish and produce phonemes (Derwing, 2020).

The last subskill is interactive communication which not only is used in daily conversations but also in foreign/second language teaching and learning. According

to Saldaria et al. (2019), speaking is a reciprocal need for spoken interaction with our family, neighbors, friends, or unknown people. Similarly, interactive communication involves some verbal elements, for example, voice, use of functions, and appropriate register. However, there are also non-verbal elements such as gestures, facial expressions, body language, and turn-taking strategies to keep the conversation going (Bottomley et al., 2019). That is why, teachers must take into consideration activities that support and encourage spoken interaction.

It is remarkable to expand some verbal and non-verbal elements involved in interactive communication. As for verbal elements, Hussein et al. (2019) mentioned that communication involves more than putting words together, it also requires being aware of when, where, and to whom the message is conveyed. For this reason, when expressing ideas is highly important to understand which function is suitable for a particular situation. Besides using language functions, the degree of linguistic features used in a particular situation is also important. This is known as register and it determines which level of language to use in formal, neutral, or informal contexts (Qin & Uccelli, 2020).

Regarding non-verbal elements, some studies suggest that non-verbal communication can express better meaning than verbal communication. For instance, facial gestures such as nodding and smiling can transmit a better message and show how a person feels about a certain situation (Paranduk & Karisi, 2020). Regarding language teaching, using non-verbal elements such as gestures, head movements, eye contact, and facial expressions complements verbal communication to emphasize, describe, influence, order, and show approval or disapproval. Unquestionably, non-verbal communication plays a primordial role when it comes to speaking, especially in a foreign language (Nuhwan, 2019).

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General objective

- To identify the influence of questioning strategies on the speaking skills of students.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- To identify the types of questioning strategies that help students improve their speaking skills.
- To evaluate the level of answers of students based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy.
- To assess the level of students' speaking skills.
- To state the elements of the speaking skills.

1.4 Fulfillment of objectives

Firstly, to achieve the first specific objective the researcher delved deeper into a thorough research to gain knowledge about the theory and methodologies behind questioning strategies. The researcher, then, found out that Bloom's taxonomy hierarchy can be used to create meaningful questions to scaffold knowledge and critical thinking. Furthermore, pre-post-test questions were identified and labeled according to Bloom's stages and during interventions, a set of questions was created from lower to higher-order thinking skills to engage in speaking interaction.

Secondly, to accomplish the second objective it was necessary to assess students' responses during both pre-post-tests to see significant differences. For this reason, the researcher created a validated rubric with the following criteria lower-order thinking skills and high-order thinking skills. The rubric served to assess the quality of students' answers based on the questions at different stages of Bloom's taxonomy. It should be noted that the quality of answers during interventions was not assessed since the purpose of the lessons was to engage students' spoken interaction rather than to assess their performance across the lessons.

Thirdly, to execute the third objective the researcher worked with the B1 preliminary exam of Cambridge to assess participants' speaking skills. In the same way, a standardized rubric of the same university was used to evaluate students' performance. The methodology used during the interventions was communicative language teaching and the subject study was Linguistics 1 along with questioning strategies. During the interventions, the researcher noticed that students' speaking skills were different and this highly influenced the current research. That is why, questions had to be paraphrased to suit students' English level.

Finally, to attain the last specific objective it was necessary to understand the subskills that were going to be part of the research work. As a Cambridge rubric was used, the elements were already there so the researcher had to explore those features in detail and apply activities during the interventions to improve those subskills. For instance, as one subskill to be developed was interactive communication, the researcher tried to change the interactive patterns across the lessons. In the same way, discussions were used to engage in meaningful interaction during lessons based on some questions asked by the researcher.

II. CHAPTER II.- METHODOLOGY

2.1 Materials

The research work used different resources such as materials, human resources, and economic resources. Regarding the materials: it was used markers, notebooks, pencils, a projector, a laptop, and cellphones during the pre-posttests and interventions. Regarding human resources, the people involved in the research were second-semester students at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Finally, economic resources were required for photocopies, transportation, and counseling.

2.2 Methods

2.2.1 Research approach

The current research work utilized a quantitative approach. According to (Kuada, 2019), if researchers want to test a specific hypothesis or find numerical answers to specific variables in their study, they must use a quantitative approach along with quantitative data collection methods. For this reason, the researcher used this approach as tests were graded numerically based on rubrics, and data information gathering was required for this study. Furthermore, the analysis of data information helped the researcher to understand the influence of the independent variable (questioning strategies) on the dependent one (speaking skills).

2.2.2 Modality

Bibliographic and documentary research

Dash and Kalamdhad (2022) considered that bibliographic research allows researchers to have a comprehensive understanding of the past and different approaches used for a particular research study. For this reason, the researcher delved deeper into a systematic search for reliable sources of information to carry out the literature review through different papers, books, websites, and doctoral dissertations. Therefore, the study used primary and secondary documentary sources to understand the personal views and interpretations of authors based on other researchers (Martin, 2018).

Field research

According to Monroy and Nava (2018), field research takes place where the study is being conducted, which also implies taking the information from primary sources without the manipulation of variables. Data gathering comes from individuals and groups being studied. Monroy and Nava concluded that field research allows researchers to observe a phenomenon in real conditions. For this reason, the current research work was conducted on a group of students in the English major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Furthermore, field research helped the researcher to approach and study the problem itself in depth.

2.2.3 Quasi-experimental design – pre-experimental

The study used a variant of the quasi-experimental design. According to Boyd et al. (2019), a quasi-experimental design is a type of natural experiment to test and verify correlations of variables and casual patterns. In this sense, a pre-experimental design: the one-group pre-test – post-test was used for this study, which is a variation of a quasi-experiment. Nur and Setyo (2022) explained that the process of a one-group pretest-posttest design involves three defined steps: 1) conducting a pre-test to assess the dependent variable; 2) applying the intervention x to participants; and 3) running the post-test once more to measure the dependent variable. In this research, a standardized speaking test of Cambridge was used as a pre-test at the beginning. After that, the researcher applied six interventions (lessons) focused on questioning strategies. Finally, the same speaking Cambridge test was applied as a post-test at the end of the interventions.

2.2.4 Type of research.

Exploratory research

According to Kothari (2018), the purpose of exploratory research is the study and development of hypotheses rather than their testing. Likewise, researchers usually propose this type of research when a topic has been studied little or has not been studied previously. Consequently, researchers come across a problem as there is not enough bibliographic information to support their research, therefore, they have

to come up with definitions or useful concepts for the investigation (Perez et al., 2020). In this research work, the topic has been studied before, but through different perspectives such as descriptive studies, but the topic has not been studied using experimental research. That is why, the researcher concluded that it would be an interesting idea to test questioning strategies using different methodologies to see its reaction to a useful English skill, which is speaking.

Experimental research

This type of research focuses on controlling the research environment and the manipulation of variables to test their effect on other variables (Kothari, 2018). Similarly, there are three necessary conditions to approach internal validity in experimental research: 1) comparison between two or more groups; 2) generating an equivalent between groups about experiments, and 3) not sharing the manipulation of the independent variable (Cruz et al., 2019). Finally, Cruz concluded that experimental research has some benefits as it is applied in a real situation and variables tend to be manipulated depending on the type of research, resources, and conditions. Concerning the research, an experiment on a group of college students at Universidad Técnica de Ambato was applied to determine if questioning strategies influenced students' speaking skills.

2.2.5 Method and Instrument

Regarding the method used to gather data information from students' performance on English skills, the standardized B1 Preliminary English Test (PET) was used to assess students at the beginning and end of the experiment. It is remarkable to mention that only the speaking part was used, which consists of four parts, lasting from ten to twelve minutes per pair. Nevertheless, the researcher agreed to conduct only parts one and four of the speaking paper, which focused on questions. Along with the test, the questionnaire technique was used as this is the most relevant data collection instrument used to gather quantitative data information (Kuada, 2019).

Regarding the test itself, the first part is an interview and the fourth part is a general conversation based on some questions asked by the examiner. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that questions were not randomly selected from the test, but the revised Bloom's taxonomy was used to categorize questions from lower order to higher order questions to also identify which types of questions were answered the most by students. Lastly, to assess students' speaking performance, a B1 rubric of Cambridge was used, which focuses on four aspects: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, 2023).

The first category focuses on the use of grammar and vocabulary. At B1, candidates are expected not to make basic mistakes in present and past tenses, questions, comparatives, and basic prepositions. Moreover, vocabulary must be relevant according to the topic assigned by the examiner. The second category concerns discourse management. Candidates are expected to use proper basic connectors to link ideas and to be able to talk progressively without too many pauses. In other words, candidates are expected to talk fluently for a short period without interruptions (KSE Academy, 2019).

The third category belongs to pronunciation. At the B1 level, candidates' pronunciation does not have to be perfect at all. Instead, it is expected that candidates' pronunciation is intelligible so examiners can understand it without too much effort. Likewise, word and sentence intonation awareness have to be perceived by the examiner. The last category is interactive communication. This section assesses candidates' interaction between examiners and other candidates. For example, how they ask questions, agree or disagree, and give their opinion (KSE Academy, 2019).

On the one hand, the B1 Rubric was used to assess students' speaking skills. On the other hand, a validated rubric by three professors was also used to assess the quality of answers of students based on Bloom's taxonomy and its order thinking

skills. Simply put, the validated rubric assesses two skills: lower-order thinking skills (remember) and higher-order thinking skills (analyze and evaluate) with an assessment scale from 0,5 – 2 points per category which in total gives 6 points. To conclude, it is remarkable to mention that answers from the lower-order questions were assessed in general as well as answers from the higher-order questions.

2.2.6 Data collection procedure

The data collection started with the pre-test applied at the beginning up to the post-test at the end of the experiment. To begin with, the researcher introduced himself along with his research theme. After that, the researcher started straight ahead taking random pairs of students to another empty classroom to conduct the test that lasted 3 hours. Afterward, the researcher applied six interventions for each lesson using the Communicate Language Teaching methodology. The lessons lasted about 30 minutes each focusing on questioning strategies based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy along with the subject studied at that moment, which was linguistics 1. It is worth mentioning that the researcher used a set of 6 primary questions from lower to higher-order thinking skills to engage students in each lesson.

The focus of the first lesson was to introduce students to a comparison made by Ferdinand de Saussure about language and a game of chess. For instance, the first three lower-order questions were 1) How would you define the word 'language' in your own words? 2) How would you clarify the meaning of foundations to modern linguistics; 3) What other way would you choose to explain the comparison made by Saussure? Regarding the higher-order questions, the following were asked: 4) How would you explain your comparison example? 5) What is your opinion of your classmates' comparison? and 6) How would you improve your classmates' comparison?

The focus of the second lesson was to discuss the relationship between language and society in groups and to discuss Saussure's dichotomy of the term's

‘langue’ and ‘parole and how this situation is presented in real life. The researcher asked the following three lower-order questions: 1) How would you define ‘collective consciousness’? 2) What would happen if there wasn’t a society? and 3) How would you demonstrate Saussure’s dichotomy in real life? In regards to the higher-order questions, the following were asked: 4) How is the term ‘langue’ connected to ‘parole’?

The third lesson was based on another important contributor to linguistics, Roman Jakobson. The focus of the lesson was to identify six important factors of language involved in any speech event. Furthermore, by the end of the lesson, students had to create a conversation in pairs and another pair had to evaluate them. The first three lower-order questions were: 1) Who was the person we talked about last class? What did he say about language? 2) How would you identify these aspects in the picture? and 3) What examples can you find that involved all these aspects? Afterward, the following higher-order questions were asked: 4) What is your analysis of the video based on the aspects of language? and 5) How could you portray the aspects in a conversation?

The fourth lesson worked along with the previous one as some functions of language were presented to students. The focus of the lesson was to rank the importance of each factor and function of language in communication. The lower-order questions asked were: 1) What are all the aspects of language according to Roman Jakobson? 2) How can you describe the first three functions in your own words? and 3) What examples can you find for the function ‘Phatic’? Following, the higher-order questions were: 4) Why do you think each aspect has a different function? and 5) Rank the importance of the aspects and functions in communication from the most to the least important.

The fifth lesson was about Noam Chomsky and his language theory. The focus was to understand and discuss some aspects of language acquisition theory. It seemed that students were engaged by this topic as there were mentioned some key factors in language learning. Some lower-order questions were: 1) Who was the person we talked about last class? What were his contributions? 2) How can you describe ‘language acquisition’ in your own words? and 3) How would you demonstrate Chomsky’s theory of language acquisition? Next, some higher-order

questions were: 4) How would you explain language acquisition theory based on Chomsky's views? 5) Rank the importance of these elements in language acquisition and 6) What facts can you gather to support Chomsky's language acquisition theory?

The sixth lesson lasted 30 minutes and focused on Noam Chomsky and his contributions to language acquisition and grammar. The lesson aimed to discuss some questions in groups about the topic of that day. As for the lower-order questions, the researcher asked: 1) What do you remember about language acquisition based on Chomsky's view? 2) Is there any relation between 'Generative Grammar' and 'Language acquisition', why? and 3) How would you demonstrate 'Universal Grammar' by comparing English and Spanish languages? As for the higher order questions, the following were asked 4) Why do you think learning a language is too difficult if they have similar structures? 5) What would you suggest to anyone who wants to learn a language? and 6) What would happen if grammar didn't exist?

At the end of the interventions, the researcher conducted the post-test which was the same as the pre-test. The post-test was in pairs, lasted 3 hours, and took place in an empty classroom to minimize noise and nervousness. It is remarkable to mention that while grading students' speaking performance with the rubric, the researcher identified which questions from the lower and higher-order thinking were answered and then were gathered in a separate Excel spreadsheet. Finally, as the researcher conducted pre-post-tests on the same sample using parametric data in the dependent variable, the use of the t-test was needed to find statistically significant differences between the average of the pre-post-tests (Cohen et al., 2018).

2.2.7 Population

In this research, the population selected where thirty-eight second-level students of the English major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. Furthermore, the course itself was selected because of the larger number of students. Cohen et al. (2018) stated that it is better to choose a large sample as it will be easier for

researchers to achieve statistical differences. On the contrary, this might not be possible with small samples of participants. On top of that, Cohen et al. mentioned that, if possible, use a random, probability sample as this allows to use of a larger range of statistics.

Table 1

Population (pre-experimental research)

Population	Number of students	Percentage
Male	7	18,4%
Female	31	81,6%
Total	38	100%

Note. This table shows the number of second-level students of the PINE major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

2.2.8 Hypothesis

Null hypothesis

Teacher questioning strategies do not influence students' speaking skills in second-level students of the English major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Alternative hypothesis

Teacher questioning strategies do influence students' speaking skills in second-level students of the English major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Variable identification

Questioning strategies (Independent variable)

Speaking skills (Dependent variable)

III. CHAPTER III.- RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analysis and discussion of the results

This chapter focuses mainly on discussing and analyzing the results of the experiment. The process by which the information will be presented is the following. Firstly, tables with the types of questions (lower and higher-order questions) answered by students are displayed to understand which types of questions were answered the most and the least by the participants of the experiment. Additionally, a comparison between the pre-post-test results is shown to see if there is a significant change.

Secondly, tables with the results of the quality of answers assessed with Bloom's taxonomy and the order thinking skills (lower and higher-order thinking skills) are displayed. For this reason, the researcher created a rubric out of 6 points with two criteria: lower and higher-order thinking skills with an assessment scale from 2 points being excellent to 0,5 being a novice. Furthermore, a comparison between the averages of the quality of answers from both the pre and post-test is also presented to notice if there is a significant difference between the averages.

Thirdly, tables with the results of the pre-post-tests of the B1 Preliminary Speaking Test are shown. A standardized rubric was used to assess students' speaking performance. The rubric is made of 4 categories, each worth 5 points with a total of 20 marks per exam. In addition, an analysis and interpretation between the general averages of the pre-post-tests is displayed to see the difference before and after the treatment.

Lastly, the results of the t-test used to verify the hypothesis are displayed in tables. Moreover, an analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from the software (SPSS) is shown as it is necessary to accept or reject the null or alternative hypothesis leading to a reliable conclusion.

Table 2

Number of questions answered by students during the Pre-test

Lower order questions	**Higher order questions**	**Total**
152	152	304
Percentage	**Percentage**	**Total percentage**
50%	50%	100%
Lower-order questions answered	**Higher-order questions answered**	**Total answered**
149	139	288
Percentage	**Percentage**	**Total percentage**
49%	46%	95%

Note. This table shows the number of questions answered in total (38 students x 8 questions 304 questions in total)

Analysis and interpretation

Table 2 displays the results of the total of questions answered by the 38 students who were asked 8 questions, 4 lower and 4 higher order questions. Therefore, the researcher marked with a point if students answered the questions, if not the mark was 0. Regarding the lower-order questions, students answered 149 out of 152 representing 49%. On the other hand, as for the higher-order questions, the population answered 139 out of 152 questions in general representing 46% of the total questions. The number of questions answered by students was 288 out of 304 including both lower and higher-order questions representing 95%.

The type of questions answered the most belong to the lower order dimension. This is evident as students are more likely to remember, and understand previous information learned and apply it to new situations. In contrast, the type of questions students answered the least were higher-order questions. This has to do with, critical thinking, as in these stages students have to analyze content information, and evaluate, which means making judgments and finally creating that is at the peak of the taxonomy and the most essential part to ensure student' learning.

Table 3

Quality of answers based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy during the pre-test

Category	Average	Percentage
Lower-order thinking skills	1,7	55%
Higher-order thinking skills	1,4	45%
General average	3,1	100%

Note. This table shows the quality of answers based on the validated rubric with lower and higher-order thinking skills as categories during the pre-test

Analysis and interpretation

Table 3 displays the results of the quality of students' answers based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy. The rubric was graded out of 6 points. Concerning the lower-order thinking skills, only the 'remembering' stage was assessed resulting in an average of 1,7 out of 2 points representing 55%. Regarding the higher-order thinking skills, the 'analyzing' as well as the 'evaluating' stage were assessed with an average of 1,4 out of 4 points displaying 45%. It is remarkable to mention that the highest average belongs to the students' answers in the lower-order thinking skills and the lowest average corresponds to the highest-order thinking skills. Finally, the overall average for the pre-test is 3,1 out of 6 points.

Table 3 shows the quality of students' answers regarding the order-thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy. It should be noted that most of the students achieved an excellent level with the highest average in the lower-order thinking skills category because students are more likely to remember previous information rather than thinking critically about certain questions, especially in a foreign language. Nonetheless, the lowest averages belong to the higher-order thinking skills category, meaning that students are not proficient when it comes to analyzing and evaluating questions at these stages as it requires students to use their critical thinking skills at their fullest.

Table 4

Pre-test results average per category

Category	Average	Percentage
Grammar and vocabulary	2,7	25%
Discourse management	2,5	23%
Pronunciation	3	27%
Interactive communication	2,8	25%
General average	11	100%

Note. The table shows the average per category of the B1 rubric out of 20 marks of the pre-test.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4 shows the average per category obtained from the pre-test conducted on students. Concerning grammar and vocabulary, the average is 2,7 out of 5, followed by discourse management with an average of 2,5 out of 5, then, the pronunciation category average is 3 out of 5, and the last category is interactive communication with 2,8 out of 5. The overall average of the pre-test is 11 out of 20 according to the B1 assessment scales. The strongest category with the highest average is pronunciation which represents 27%. Finally, the lowest category is discourse management representing 23% of the lowest skills of students.

The highest average category is pronunciation, meaning that most students have an intelligible pronunciation and are aware of basic linguistic features such as word, and sentence stress attempting to sound natural when talking. However, even though this is the strongest skill, some students have a poor pronunciation level. Furthermore, the lowest category is discourse management which might mean that students lack fluency when expressing their ideas, as well as their contributions lack relevance. Finally, students lack cohesion as they use few cohesive devices to link their ideas properly in speech.

Table 5

Number of questions answered by students during the Post-test

Lower order questions	**Higher order questions**	**Total**
152	152	304
Percentage	**Percentage**	**Total percentage**
50%	50%	100%
Lower-order questions answered	**Higher-order questions answered**	**Total answered**
150	143	293
Percentage	**Percentage**	**Total percentage**
49%	47%	96%

Note. This table shows the number of questions answered out of the 304 questions in total.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 4 portrays the total of questions answered by students. It is important to point out that students were asked a set of 8 questions each, 4 lower and 4 higher order questions. Regarding the lower order questions, the total of questions answered is 150 out of 152 representing 49%. In the same way, the overall higher-order questions are 143 out of 152, which represents 47%. The number of questions answered in the post-test by the 38 students is 293 out of 304 in total displaying 96%. On the one hand, the strongest dimension belongs to the lower-order questions with 51%. On the other hand, the weakest dimension is the higher order questions with a 549%.

The strongest dimension during the post-test is still the lower-order thinking skills questions, meaning the stages at this level are the easiest to answer as they only require recalling, comprehending, and putting things into practice based on basic but meaningful questions. In contrast, the weakest dimension is the higher-order question since students have to use at their fullest their critical thinking to analyze given information, make insightful judgments, and finally make decisions as well as come up with solutions for hypothetical questions.

Table 6

Quality of answers based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy during the post-test

Category	Average	Percentage
Lower-order thinking skills	1,9	54%
Higher-order thinking skills	1,6	46%
General average	3,5	100%

Note. This table shows the quality of answers based on the validated rubric with lower and higher-order thinking skills as categories during the post-test.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 6 shows the results of the averages of the quality of students' answers based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy. The highest average still belongs to the lower-order thinking skills with 1,9 out of 2 points which represents 54%. Regarding the higher-order thinking skills category, the average is 1,6 out of 4 points representing 46%. It is essential to mention that the quality of answers in the lower-order thinking skills remains the highest, while the lowest category is the higher-order thinking skills. Finally, the general average of students' quality of answers during the post-test increased with an average of 3,5 out of 6 points.

The strongest category remains the lower-order thinking skills because remembering information is still quite easy for students. In the same way, lower-order questions do not require a lot of expertise for students to recall previous information and express their ideas. However, when it comes to conveying complete ideas, students lack of vocabulary to express themselves. On the other hand, the lowest category remains students' answers in the higher-order thinking skills as it requires students to use their critical thinking, break down information, and make well-supported judgments to convey their ideas meaningfully so that make sense for the speaker and the listener.

Table 7

Post-test results average per category

Category	Average	Percentage
Grammar and vocabulary	2,9	25%
Discourse management	3,1	26%
Pronunciation	3,1	26%
Interactive communication	2,7	23%
General average	11,8	100%

Note. The table shows the average per category of the B1 rubric out of 5 marks of the post-test.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 5 shows the average per category of the Rubric used to assess students during the post-test. Referring to grammar and vocabulary, the average is 2,9 out of 5, followed by discourse management with 3,1 out of 5, then, pronunciation has an average of 3,1 out of 5 as the previous category and finally, the category of interactive communication has an average of 2,7 out of 5. Furthermore, the strongest categories in the post-test share the same average with 3,1 out of 5 which represents 26%. Finally, the weakest sub-skill in the post-test is interactive communication with an average of 2,7 out of 5 representing 23% of this lowest skill.

The strongest categories are discourse management and pronunciation with the same averages. Concerning to pronunciation, there was little improvement which means that students' pronunciation was not engaged at all but students tried to do their best in this area. With respect to the increasing average in discourse management, students might have improved a little their critical thinking skills by realizing that their contributions must be relevant and extended for an average amount of time. Finally, the weakest category is interactive communication, meaning that students' interactive skills were not engaged at all by the interactive strategies used during the interventions as not all students had the same level of English.

Table 8

Number of questions answered by students during the pre-post-tests

Pre-test	**Lower-order questions answered**	**Higher-order questions answered**	**Total answered**
	149	139	288
Pos-test	**Lower-order questions answered**	**Higher-order questions answered**	**Total answered**
	150	143	293

Note. This table shows the number of questions answered by second-semester students during the pre-post-tests out of 304.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 8 displays the results of both the pre-post-tests concerning the number of questions answered from the lower and higher order thinking skills by 38 multiplied by the number of 8 questions. On the one hand, students answered 149 - lower-order questions out of 152 during the pre-test. On the other hand, during the post-test, students answered 150 lower-order questions. Regarding the higher-order questions, during the pre-test, students answered 139 out of 152 questions in this category. Nevertheless, in the post-test, there is a minimum increasing number of questions with 143 out of 152 questions. Finally, the total of questions answered during the pre-test is 288 out of 304 questions, and the total of questions answered in the post-test is 293 out of 304.

It can be noticed that lower-order questions were answered the most by students during the pre-post-tests because it only required students to recall factual information they already knew. Unfortunately, the improvement in this category was not remarkable. In the same way, higher-order questions answered by students did not show a relevant improvement. Nonetheless, results did show a significant improvement concerning the total of students' answers in general because students already knew the answers in the pre-test.

Table 9

Pre-test and post-test averages regarding the quality of students' answers based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy.

Results	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Average	3,1	3,5	0,4

Note. This table shows the average of the pre-post-tests regarding the quality of students' answers based on the criteria: lower and higher-order thinking skills.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 9 displays the results of the averages of both the pre-test and post-test out of 6 points. It can be noticed an increase in the average of the post-test. Regarding the results of the quality of answers in the pre-test, the average is 3,1 out of 6. On the other hand, the pos-test average is 3,5 out of 6 points, meaning that the quality of answers increased by 0,4 points, which is not a large increasing number but it is significant with the pre-test applied at the beginning.

There is an increasing number of the average of the post-test. This might have been caused since students already knew the questions of the pre-test which were the same as the post-test. Moreover, it was noted that the quality of answers in the higher-order thinking skills category during the post-test increased because student tried to extend their answers and use their critical thinking skills to come up with meaningful and accurate answers. To conclude, the quality of the answers was not as good as the researcher expected, but the answers were relevant to the questions. Likewise, English speaking skills played an essential role as not all students had the same English level to express their ideas. For this reason, the quality of the answers remained at the basic and proficient level according to the scale created by the researcher and validated by teachers.

Table 10

Pre-post-test results of B1 preliminary speaking test.

Results	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Average	11	11,8	0,8

Note. The table shows the general average of students' speaking skills out of 20 points.

Analysis and interpretation

Table 10 shows the average in general of students' English-speaking performance based on the B1 preliminary speaking test at the end of the experiment and after the interventions were applied. It is remarkable to mention that the rubric contains 4 categories, each with a different average before and after the treatment. The second category is the pre-test which is 11 out of 20 points. Then, the post-test average indicates 11,8 out of 20 points. Finally, the last category indicates the difference between the pre-post-tests which is 0,8 points.

There is a short but significant increase after the interventions which means that the interventions helped students in some way resulting in better students' speaking performance. During the pre-test, students' results show that their spoken abilities have an intermediate level meaning that they still need to improve their skills. However, the post-test showed that even though interventions lasted a short period, they were highly useful in making students aware of the importance of communication regarding English language learning.

3.2 Verification of the hypothesis

The current research work utilized a pre-experimental design with a quantitative approach. For this reason, the use of the SPSS software was without doubt needed to verify the hypothesis according to the results obtained from the pre-post-tests assessing speaking skills. Therefore, the Paired t-test is used to gather statistical data which is helpful to accept or reject the alternative hypothesis which describes that teacher questioning strategies do influence students' speaking skills in second-level students of the English major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

Table 11

Statistical Paired Samples

		Mean	**N**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Pair 1	Pre-test	11,0000	38	3,24662	,52667
	Post-test	11,8421	38	4,05720	,65816

Note. This table shows the statistical paired samples of the pre-post-tests.

The above table shows the difference in means, standard deviation, and standard error mean of pre-post-tests for paired samples. On the one hand, the mean of the pre-test is 11,000 and after the interventions were applied, the post-test increased to 11,8421. Consequently, the standard deviation also increased from 3,24662 to 4,05720. Likewise, the standard error mean from the post-test increased from,52667 to,65816. To conclude, the post-test statistical data shows an increase meaning that the experiment did influence positively on students' speaking performance.

Table 12

Correlational Paired Samples

		N	**Correlation**	**P. Value**
Pair 1	*Pre & post*	38	,788	<,001

Note. This table shows the correlational paired samples of the pre-post-tests

Table 12 displays the results of the correlational paired samples test. The subject of the experiment is 38 participants. The correlation for both pre-post-tests is ,788. Finally, the P. Value <,001which is less than 0,05 (p=,001 <0,05) so that the null hypothesis H0 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted meaning questioning strategies did influence students' speaking skills.

Table 13

t-test for paired samples of the pre and post-tests of the B1 preliminary speaking test.

Note. This table shows the paired sample test of the pre-post-tests

		Paired Differences							**Significance**	
					CI 95 %					
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean	Lower	Upper	T statistical value	Degrees of freedom	P of one factor	P of two factors
Pair 1	PRE-POST-TESTS	-,84211	2,49893	,40538	-1,66348	-,02073	-2,077	37	,022	,045

The table shown above displays the statistical data that was gathered from the results of both the pre and post-tests. Consequently, the difference between the means obtained ascertains that the participants improved their grades after the interventions were conducted. Finally, it can be observed in Table 13 that the P value is less than 0,05 (p=0,45 <0,05) so the null hypothesis H0 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis H1 is accepted, meaning that the means between the pre-post-tests are significantly different. In conclusion, teacher questioning strategies do influence students' speaking skills in second-level students of the English major at Universidad Técnica de Ambato

3.3 Discussion

The primary goal of the research study was to determine the influence of questioning strategies on students' speaking skills. The findings confirmed that questioning techniques based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy did influence learners' oral skills. The results coincide with the following study in which the experimental group's speaking achievement, whose methodology was based on questioning strategies, was slightly better than that of the control group, whose methodology was different (Jaya, 2017). Similarly, after a thorough literature review, the coming researcher suggested that questioning strategies had beneficial effects if applied correctly in the classroom. (Chica, 2021).

The first results showed that students are more likely to answer more lower-order questions belonging to the remembering level than higher-order questions concerning analyzing and evaluating during both pre-posttests. Therefore, lower-order questions are more prone to engage students' speaking skills than higher ones. On the one hand, the ensuing study discovered by Naz et. al (2019) found that higher-order questions led to extended forms of meaningful communication, On the other hand, it was found that over fifty percent of classroom discussions are based on lower-order questions. Simply put, students tend to engage in spoken interaction thanks to lower-order questions as these are easier to answer (Black, 2017).

The following results illustrated that students' quality of answers increased after being evaluated with a validated rubric with lower and higher-order thinking skills as criteria. Students obtained a better average in the lower-order thinking skill category since it only requires recalling and comprehending facts. Golkar (2018) asserts that teachers use lower-order questions to predict students' answers before asking them. In other words, the quality of answers to these questions is better because students already have background knowledge. On the contrary, students might have obtained less average in the higher-order thinking skill criteria because it requires more critical thinking usage.

The assessment of students' speaking skills was carried out through a standardized Rubric of Cambridge in which four categories were evaluated. The pre-test speaking results showed that participants were at an intermediate level with an average of 11 out of 20. The post-test findings displayed that the average increased slightly but significantly with 11,8 out of 20 leading to the conclusion that questioning strategies were effective in improving speaking skills. The previous study mentioned earlier agreed with the findings in which the experimental group, who was taught using questioning strategies showed better progress during the speaking post-test than those in the control group (Jaya, 2017)

Lastly, it is remarkable to mention that the averages of three speaking subskills improved: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, and pronunciation. Nevertheless, the interactive communication average slightly decreased. The coming descriptive study showed that questioning strategies are useful in boosting speaking subskills such as fluency, accuracy, language comprehension, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022). It should be noted that interactive communication requires exchanging of ideas, therefore, it might be difficult for students to process ideas by the time they are listening to new thoughts.

IV. CHAPTER IV.- CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

To repeat, the purpose of the current research was to determine the influence of questioning strategies on students' speaking skills. The following conclusions can be drawn based on the research work:

- Based on a quantitative analysis of questioning, it can be concluded that lower-order questions help in engaging students' speaking skills than higher-order questions. The findings indicate that questioning belonging to the lower-order thinking skills encourages oral communication as they only involve recalling information while higher-order questions entail a deeper thinking process, therefore, it takes a while for students to get across a message.
- The quality of answers was assessed through a validated rubric with the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy as criteria. The results show that the answers' quality improved significantly, however, the average belonging to the lower dimension was slightly better since answers at this level do not require students to think critically, but to use their background knowledge leading to more accurate and faster answers.
- The assessment of students' speaking levels was carried out because of a standardized English test and rubric. Consequently, it can be determined that students were at an intermediate level before the treatment. Nevertheless, students' speaking results showed a slight increase, meaning that students reached an upper-intermediate oral level. Undoubtedly, the oral examination was successfully achieved by the researcher before and after the treatment.
- The elements of the speaking skills, also known as subskills were identified through analyzing the standardized speaking rubric of Cambridge. The findings assert that three speaking subskills were developed with the experiment: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, and pronunciation. Nonetheless, interactive communication did not show any kind of improvement as it involves getting across messages and analyzing input information from another person.

4.2 Recommendations

Unquestionably, EFL teachers must implement questioning strategies in their daily lessons. The following recommendation will help teachers understand the importance of applying such strategies and how to apply them correctly:

- Considering that questioning strategies have proved to be useful in encouraging oral communication. It is suggested that questioning is taken more importance within the language teaching field. For this, teachers should scaffold questioning during lessons taking as a foundation the hierarchy of Bloom's taxonomy. Furthermore, there should be a balance between lower and higher-order questions since the former engages in speaking while the latter encourages critical thinking, leading to more thoughtful answers.
- Regarding the assessment of the quality of answers, it is suggested that teachers use a holistic rubric to assess the quality of responses in general. Unfortunately, it was just difficult to work with the validated rubric based on Bloom's taxonomy since each category was meant for a different question, not for all the types in general. In this way, the assessment will be much easier and without limitations, leading to a more accurate and concise evaluation.
- Concerning the assessment of students' speaking skills, it is recommended that teachers pay close attention to the areas in which students struggle the most, especially interactive communication. Moreover, it is suggested that EFL teachers engage students in meaningful discussions, debates, and activities that involve the exchange of ideas, therefore, improving their critical thinking skills along with their oral abilities.
- The researcher suggests giving the same value to each element of speaking as each one works independently but they are also intertwined. Also, activities should be focused on different subskills, but sometimes activities should involve all aspects to engage participants' interaction. There should be paid more attention to subskills that support language communication such as interactive communication and discourse management. On the other hand, some subskills should not be underestimated, but if they do not cause problems, there is no point in focusing totally on them.

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VI. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Supervisor approval

ANEXO 3
FORMATO DE LA CARTA DE COMPROMISO.

CARTA DE COMPROMISO

Ambato, 07 de septiembre 2023

Doctor
Marcelo Nuñez
Presidente
Unidad de titulación
Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación

Yo, Mg. Sarah Iza, en mi calidad de Coordinadora de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, me permito poner en su conocimiento la aceptación y respaldo para el desarrollo del Trabajo de Titulación bajo el Tema: "Questioning strategies and Speaking skills" propuesto por el/la estudiante Ortiz Mera Randy Israel, portador/a de la Cédula de Ciudadanía, 180465966-0 estudiante de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

A nombre de la Institución a la cual represento, me comprometo a apoyar en el desarrollo del proyecto.

Particular que comunico a usted para los fines pertinentes.

Atentamente.

.....
Lcda. Sarah Jacqueline Iza Pazmiño, Mg.
Coordinadora de la Carrera
0501741060
0984060528
sj.iza@uta.edu.ec

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- COORDINACIÓN -

Annex 2: Pre-post-tests

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B1 PRELIMINARY SPEAKING EXAM (PET)

PRE – POST - TESTS

Candidate's name: _____ **Date:** _____

Difficulty: B1 Intermediate Level **Level:** Second Semester
Time: 8 minutes

SPEAKING TEST

Part 1 (2-3 minutes)

Phase 1
Interlocutor:

***To both candidates**:* Good morning/afternoon/evening.
Can I have your mark sheets, please?

Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.

I'm …… and this is …… .

To Candidate A: What's your name? Where do you live/come from?
Thank you.

To Candidate B: And what's your name? Where do you live/come from?
Thank you.

Back-up prompts

B, do you work or are you a student?	Do you have a job? Do you study?
What do you study?	What job do you do? What subject do you study?
Thank you.	

And **A,** do you work or are you student?	Do you have a job? Do you study?
What do you do/study?	What job do you do? What subject do you study?
Thank you.	

Phase 2

Interlocutor:
Select one or more questions from the list to ask each candidate
Ask Candidate A first

	Back-up prompts
How do you get to work/school/university every day?	Do you usually travel by car (Why/Why not?
What did you do yesterday evening/last weekend?	Did you do anything yesterday evening/last weekend? What?
Do you think that English will be useful for you in the future? (Why? /Why not?)	Will you use English in the future? (Why? /Why not?)
Tell us about the people you live with.	Do you live with friends/your family?

Thank you.

Part 4 (5 minutes minutes)

Interlocutor: *Use the following questions, as appropriate:*

- What do you do when you want to relax? (Why?)
- Do you prefer to relax with friends or alone? (Why?)
- Is it important to exercise in your free time? (Why? / Why not?)
- Is it useful to learn new skills in your free time? (Why? /Why not?)
- Do you think people spend too much time working/studying these days? (Why? /Why not?)

Select any of the following prompts, as appropriate:

- **How/what about you?**
- **Do you agree?**
- **What do you think?**

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Annex 3: Standardized rubric

Speaking Rubric (Assessment Scales): B1 level

Candidate's name: _____ Date: _____

B1	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	• Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. • Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics.	• Produces extended of language despite some hesitation. • Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. • Uses a range of cohesive devices.	• Is intelligible. • Intonation is generally appropriate • Sentence and word stress are generally accurately placed. • Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly	• Initiates and responds appropriately. • Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
4	*Performances share features of Bands 3 and 5*			
3	• Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. • Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.	• Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. • Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. • Uses basic cohesive devices	• Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterances and word levels.	• Initiates and responds appropriately. • Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
2	*Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3*			
1	• Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. • Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics.	• Produces responses which are characterized by short phrases and frequent hesitation. • Repeats information or digresses from the topic.	• Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	• Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. • Requires prompting and support.
0	*Performance below Band 1*			

Note: Rubric taken from Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2023

Marks: __/20

Annex 4: Lesson plan sample

Name of the teacher:		**Class-level and strengths:**		
Topic:		**Time:**		
Aim:		**Objective:**		
Questioning strategies:		**Teaching methodology:**		
Class management:		**Speaking subskills:**		
Teacher's activity	**Questions**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1				
Step 2				
Step 3				

Note: Lesson plan template was adapted and taken from the book called "Communicative Approach to the Teaching of English as a Second Language" by the author Pratima Dave Shastry (pp. 118-119).

Annexes:

Annex 5: Validation of rubric to assess the quality of students' answers

Checklist Validation for Rubric

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what is stated in the objectives		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1											
2											

General Aspects	Yes	No	********
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to assess students' answers.			
The criteria allow to accomplish the second objective of the research.			
The criteria are distributed in a logical and sequential Way.			
The number of criteria is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the criteria to be included.			

APPLICABLE		NOT APPLICABLE	

Validated by:	ID:	Date:
Signature:	Email:	
Place of work:	Academic degree;	

Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. *Revista Ciencias de la Educación*. 19. 228 - 247

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FICHA DE VALIDACIÓN DE LOS INSTRUMENTOS DE RECOLECCIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN
UNIDAD DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR

CHECKLIST VALIDATION

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what it stated in the objectives		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		
2	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		

General Aspects	Yes	No	********
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to assess students' answers.	✓		
The criteria allow to accomplish the second objective of the research.	✓		
The criteria are distributed in a logical and sequential Way.	✓		
The number of criteria is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the criteria to be included.	✓		

APPLICABLE		NOT APPLICABLE	

Validated by: Mg. Cristina Jordán Buenaño		ID: 180401050-0	Date: 24/10/2023
Signature:		Email: cristinadjordanb@uta.edu.ec	
Place of work: UTA		Academic degree; Master.	

Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. *Revista Ciencias de la Educación*. 19. 228 - 247

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FICHA DE VALIDACIÓN DE LOS INSTRUMENTOS DE RECOLECCIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN
UNIDAD DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR

CHECKLIST VALIDATION

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what it stated in the objectives		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		
2	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		

General Aspects	Yes	No	********
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to assess students' answers.	✓		
The criteria allow to accomplish the second objective of the research.	✓		
The criteria are distributed in a logical and sequential Way.	✓		
The number of criteria is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the criteria to be included.	✓		

APPLICABLE	✓	NOT APPLICABLE	

Validated by: Mg. Dorys Cumbe	ID: 1803694569	Date: Oct 24th, 2023
Signature:	Email: dm.cumbe@uta.edu.ec	
Place of work: UTA	Academic degree; Master in TEFL	

Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. *Revista Ciencias de la Educación*. 19. 228 - 247

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FICHA DE VALIDACIÓN DE LOS INSTRUMENTOS DE RECOLECCIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN
UNIDAD DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR

CHECKLIST VALIDATION

ITEM	CRITERIA TO EVALUATE										Observations
	Clarity in writing style		Internal Coherence		Induction to the answer (Bias)		Appropriate Language		It measures what it stated in the objectives		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		
2	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		

General Aspects	Yes	No	********
The instrument has clear and precise instructions to assess students' answers.	✓		
The criteria allow to accomplish the second objective of the research.	✓		
The criteria are distributed in a logical and sequential Way.	✓		
The number of criteria is enough to collect data. If not, suggest the criteria to be included.	✓		

APPLICABLE	✓	NOT APPLICABLE	

Validated by: Mg. Edgar Encalada T.	ID: 050182417-1	Date: Oct 23rd/23
Signature:	Email: eg.encalada@uta.edu.ec	
Place of work: UTA - FCHE-PINE	Academic degree; Magister	

Note. Taken and adapted from Corral, Y. (2009). Validez y Confiabilidad de los instrumentos de Investigación para la recolección de datos. *Revista Ciencias de la Educación*. 19. 228 - 247

Annex 6: Validated rubric

UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA DE AMBATO
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FICHA DE VALIDACIÓN DE LOS INSTRUMENTOS DE RECOLECCIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN
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3. Instrumento

Rubric to assess the quality of students' answers based on the order of thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy: lower-order thinking skills, and higher-order thinking skills.

# of category	Criteria	**Excellent** 2 points	**Proficient** 1,5 points	**Basic** 1 point	**Novice** 0,5 points
1	**Lower-order thinking skills**	Correctly identifies and recalls information when answering questions.	Usually identifies and recalls information when answering questions.	Able to identify and recall information to some extent when answering questions.	Struggles to identify and recall information when answering questions.
2	**Higher-order thinking skills**	Properly breaks down information and identifies relationships or patterns.	Usually breaks down information and identifies relationships or patterns in most situations.	Able to break down information and identify relationships or patterns in some situations.	Struggles to break down information and identify relationships or patterns.
		Makes well-supported judgments about the value or quality of information or solutions.	Usually makes well-supported judgments about the value or quality of information or solutions.	Able to make well-supported judgments about the value or quality of information or solutions to some extent.	Have difficulties making well-supported judgments about the value or quality of information or solutions.
Total					___ /6

Annex 7: Experiment design

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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y DE LA EDUCACION

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Informe final del trabajo de Titulación previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado/a en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés.

Theme: Questioning strategies and speaking skills

Author: Ortiz Mera Randy Israel

Tutor: Infante Paredes Ruth Elizabeth

Ambato – Ecuador

2023

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INTRODUCTION

Before delving into questioning strategies, it is valuable to understand the definition of questions in the first place. Satriani et al. (2022) defined questions as statements with question marks that involve anything that is asked. Besides, Satriani et al. concluded that it is clear that asking questions has a strong impact on the language teaching-learning process. Furthermore, questioning is one of the six social and psychological needs of the human being allowing meaningful communication. In the same way, questioning induces students to think, analyze, and reflect on their ideas, meaning that this strategy helps to develop students' critical thinking skills (Sayyadi & Rezvani, 2021).

The act of asking and answering questions is without no doubt as old as the history of language and it first took place in Western cultures, where questioning was strongly tied to philosophy. According to (Ilie, 2021), one of the major exponents of questioning is Socrates, who used a type of questioning called 'elenchus' also known as the Socratic method which aimed at developing critical thinking. Moreover, Matthews, (2022) emphasized that the Socratic 'elenchus' or method is a type of philosophical analysis whose purpose is to rise to the concept of a problem using refutation and agreement of opposing examples.

Educators who have used this method, have encountered many challenges but also good results on students' critical thinking which have also been reported in many research works. Thus, the Socratic method along with the revised Bloom's taxonomy has been the foundation to create effective questions in this research work as well as to identify the types of questions used during the pre-post-tests. According to Baker et al. (2017), one way in which Bloom's taxonomy can be expressed is by procedures, which can also be linked to questioning in each stage from the lower to higher thinking skills. To achieve the objectives proposed, a set of 6 lesson plans was created focused on questioning strategies to improve students' speaking skills.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

- To identify the influence of questioning strategies on the speaking skills of students.

Specific Objectives

- To identify the types of questioning strategies that help students improve their speaking skills.
- To evaluate the level of answers of students based on the order thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy.
- To assess the level of students' speaking skills.
- To state the elements of the speaking skills.

SCOPE OF THE EXPERIMENT

NUMBER OF LESSON PLANS	TOPIC	CONTENT	NUMBER OF HOURS	QUESTIONS STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
N.- 1	What is language?	A comparison of language and a game of chess made by Ferdinand de Saussure	1	From lower to higher-order thinking skills	• Canva presentation • Information about language • Individual and group activities
N.- 2	Language & Society	Information about Saussure's dichotomy (langue & parole).	1	From lower to higher-order thinking skills	• Canva presentation • Information about Saussure's dichotomy
N.- 3	Aspects of Language	Information about the aspects of language involved in any speech event by Roman Jakobson.	1	From lower to higher-order thinking skills	• Canva presentation • Information about the aspects of language by Roman Jakobson • YouTube Video • Handout # 1
N.- 4	Functions of Language	Information about the functions of language involved in any speech event	1	From lower to higher-order thinking skills	• Canva presentation • Information about the

		by Roman Jakobson.			functions of language by Roman Jakobson • Mentimeter
N.- 5	Linguistic theory	Information about language acquisition theory proposed by Noam Chomsky.	1	From lower to higher-order thinking skills	• Canva presentation • Noam Chomsky's biography and language acquisition theory • Mentimeter
N.- 6	Language theory	Information about Chomsky's contributions to 'Generative grammar' and 'Universal language'.	1	From lower to higher-order thinking skills	• Canva presentation • Information about 'Generative grammar' and 'Universal language'.

Note: This table displays the content of the lesson plans per class used during the interventions for the experiment and the methodology used for questioning.

LESSON PLAN 1: WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

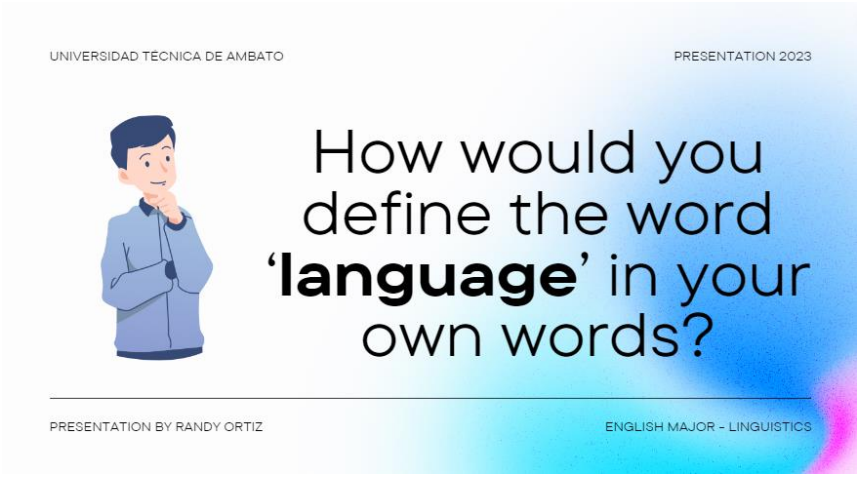
Name of the teacher: Randy Ortiz		**Class-level and strengths:** 40 ss		
Topic: What is language?		**Time:** 30 minutes		
Aim: To develop speaking skills		**Objective:** To make suggestions on how to improve their classmates' language comparison.		
Questioning strategies: From lower-order questions to higher-order questions.		**Teaching Methodology:** Communicative Language Teaching		
Class management: Whole class, T-S, S-S, pair activity.		**Speaking subskills:** Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.		
Teacher's activity	**Questions**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1 1) The teacher starts with a question and asks students to discuss them in pairs **(Annex 1)** **(Question 1).** The teacher asks some pairs to say their definition of language. 2) The teacher introduces students to *Ferdinand de Saussure* and his contribution to linguistics. **(Annex 2).** The teacher asks **(Question 2).** Then, he asks some people to answer the question.	1) How would you define the word 'language in your own words? **(Remember).** 2) How would you clarify the meaning of 'foundations to modern linguistics'? **(Understand).**	1) Learners discuss the question provided and come up with a definition of language. **(Pronunciation, and interactive communication)** 2) Learners think and give their definition of 'foundations of linguistics' **(Individual work)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 2 3) The teacher introduces Saussure's comparison of language with a chess game **(Annex 3).** The teacher asks **(Question 3).** 4) The teacher makes students think about how they would explain their comparison. **(Annex 5)** **(Question 4).**	3) What other way would you choose to explain the comparison made by Saussure? **(Annex 4)** **(Apply)** 4) How would you explain your comparison example? **(Analyze)**	3) Learners work in pairs to find another way to explain the comparison. **(Pronunciation, Interactive communication)** 4) In the same pairs, students try to find a way of explaining their comparison. **(Pronunciation and interactive communication).**	10 minutes	Canva presentation

Step 3 5) The teacher chooses some pairs and asks them to share their comparison with the class. **(Annex 6)** 6) After each pair's contribution, the teacher asks **(Question 5).** 7) Finally, the teacher asks the following question to some students. **(Annex 7)** **(Question 6)**	5) What is your opinion of your classmate's comparison? **(Evaluate)** 6) How would you improve your classmate's comparison? **(Create)**	5) Students share their comparisons. **(Grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactive communication)** 6) Students suggest improvements for their classmates. **(Discourse management)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation

Note: This lesson plan was used during the first intervention. Words in parenthesis guide to questions, describe the level of questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy, and identify which speaking subskill was developed.

Annexes

Annex 1:



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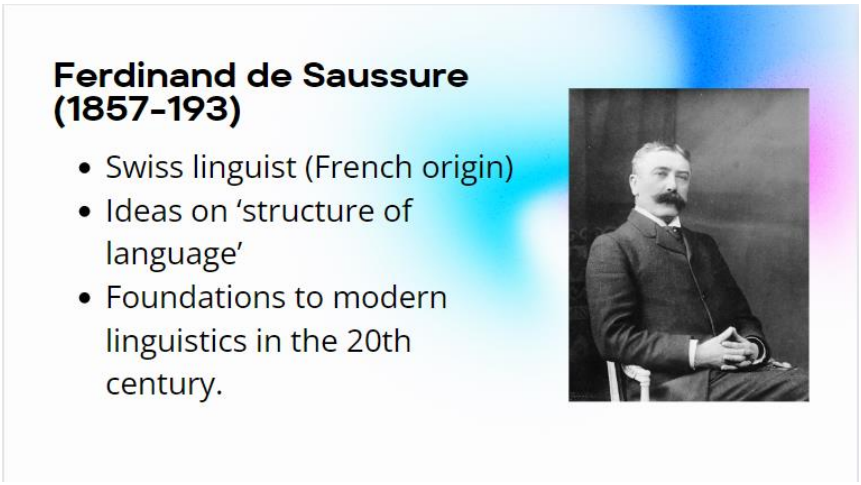
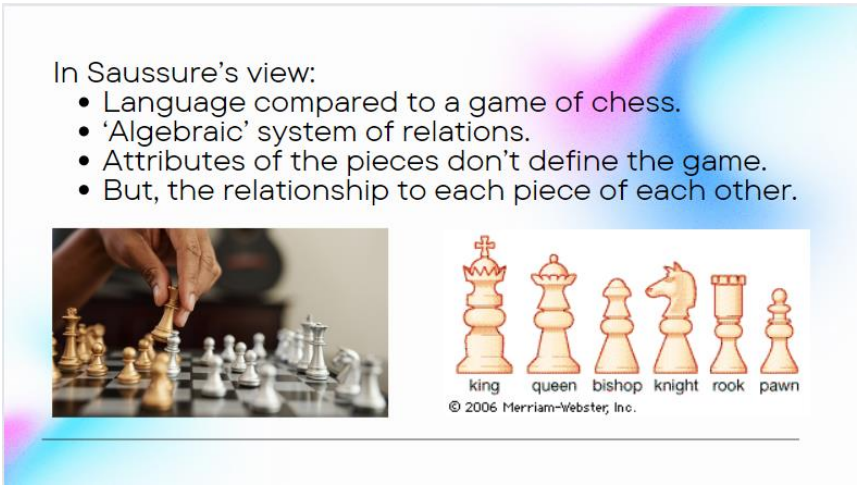


Annex 3



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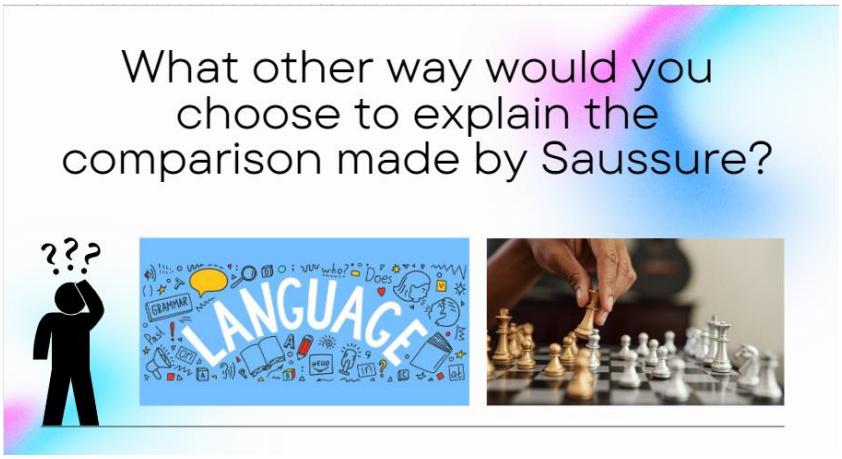

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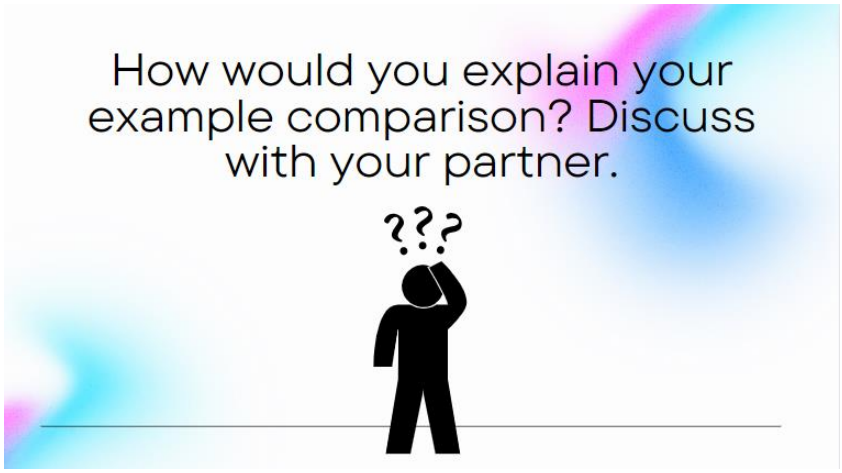
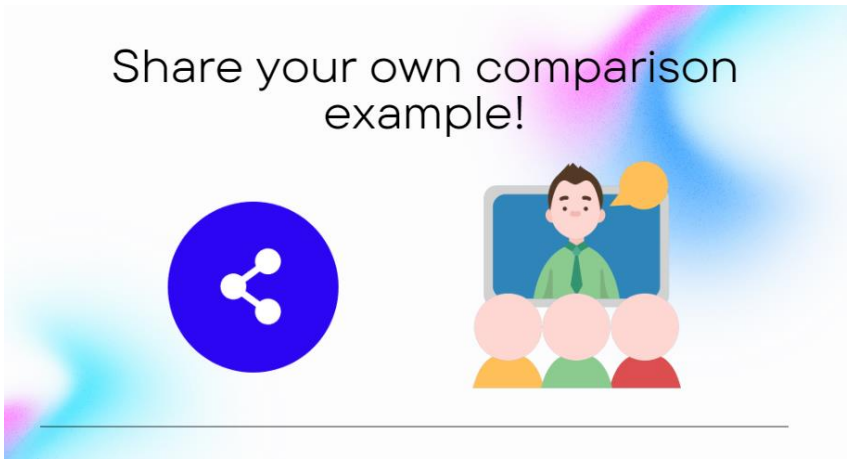
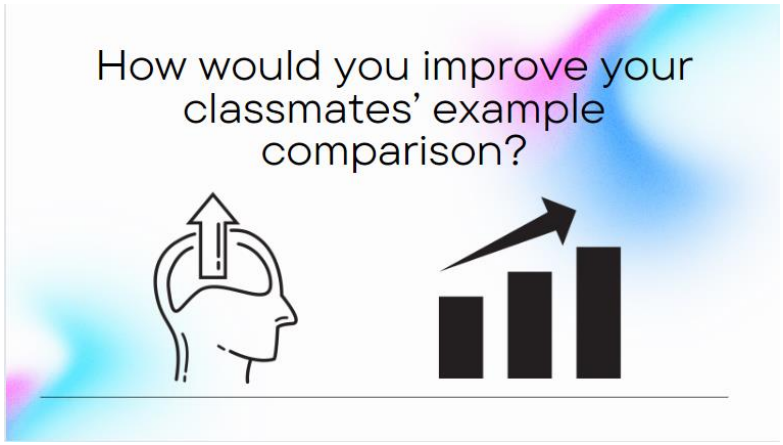


Annex 6



Annex 7



References

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Shastri, P. D. (2009). *Communicative approach to the teaching of english as a second language*. Global Media.

LESSON PLAN 2: LANGUAGE & SOCIETY

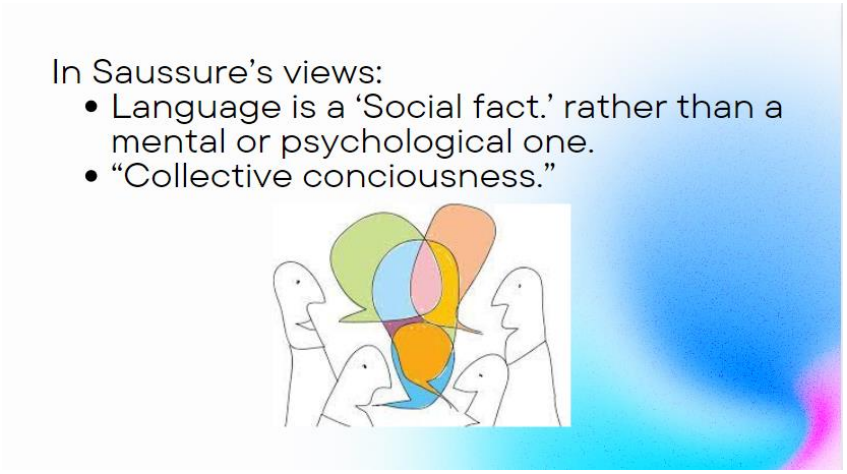
Name of the teacher: Randy Ortiz		**Class-level and strengths:** 40 ss		
Topic: Language & Society		**Time:** 30 minutes		
Aim: To develop speaking skills		**Objective**: To discuss in groups and agree on an answer based on a hypothetical question.		
Questioning strategies: From lower-order questions to higher-order questions.		**Teaching methodology:** Communicative language teaching.		
Class management: Whole class, T-S, S-S, pair activity.		**Speaking subskills:** Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.		
Teacher's activity	**Questioning**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1 1) The teacher explains Saussure's ideas of language as a 'Social fact' rather than a mental or psychological one **(Annex 1).** He asks **(Question 1).** He asks some pairs to share their definition. 2) The teacher asks a hypothetical question **(Annex 2) (Question 2). Then, the teacher**	1) How would you define "collective consciousness"? **(Remember)** 2) What would happen if there wasn't a society? **(Understand)**	1) Students try to find out the meaning of "collective consciousness" **(Discourse management)** 2) Students discuss the question with the person next to them. **(Interactive communication).**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 2 3) The teacher introduces Saussure's dichotomy ('langue & parole) **(Annex 3).** The teacher then asks **(Question 3).** The teacher asks some students to answer. 4) After that, the teacher asks students to discuss the relationship of the terms in pairs. **(Annex 4) (Question 4).** Then, he asks a pair to describe the relationship.	**3)** How would you demonstrate Saussure's dichotomy in real life? **(Apply)** **4)** How is the term 'langue' connected to 'parole? **(Analyze)**	3) Students find examples that support the dichotomy **(Grammar & vocabulary)** 4) Students discuss the relation between the terms in pairs. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation

Step 3 5) The teacher asks **(Question 5) (Annex 5)** 6) The teacher arranges groups of 4 and asks a hypothetical question **(Question 6) (Annex 6).** The teacher asks each group to share their responses with the class.	5) What's your opinion of Saussure's dichotomy? **(Evaluate)** **6)** What would happen if humans were not able to talk? How would they communicate with each other? **(Create)**	5) Student give their opinion about Saussure's dichotomy. **(Individually)** 6) In groups students discuss the hypothetical situation. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation

Note: This lesson plan was used during the second intervention. Words in parenthesis guide to questions, describe the level of questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy, and identify which speaking subskill was developed.

Annexes

Annex 1:



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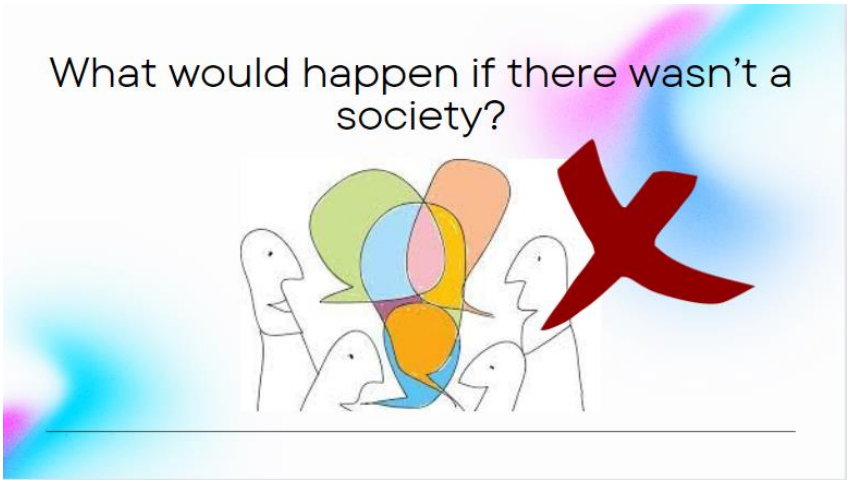

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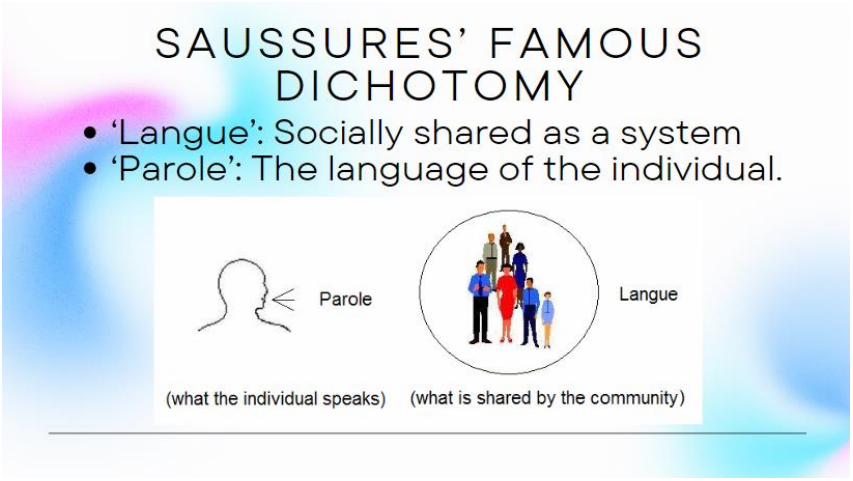

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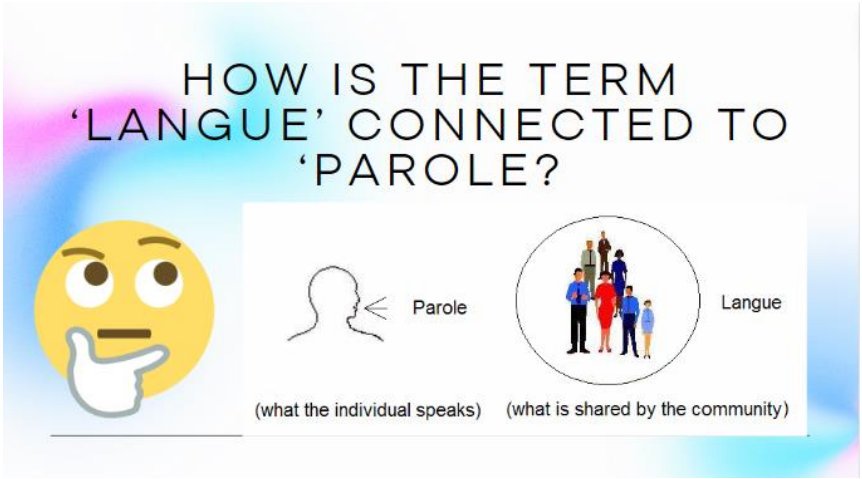

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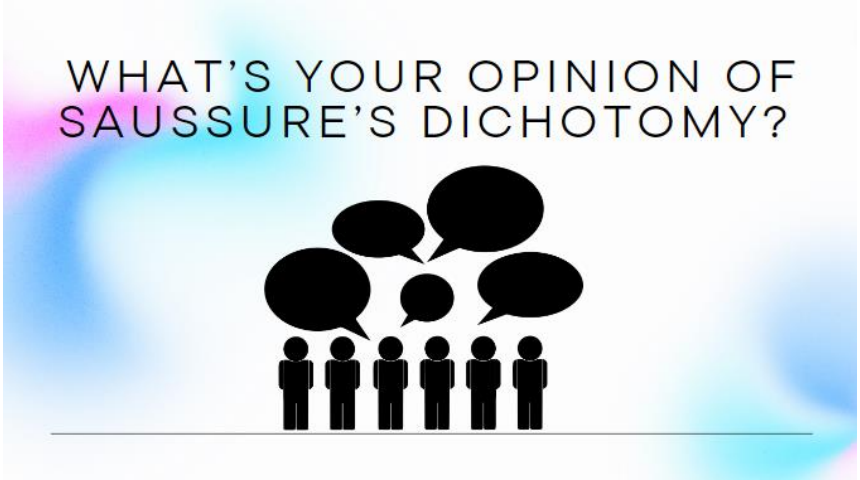

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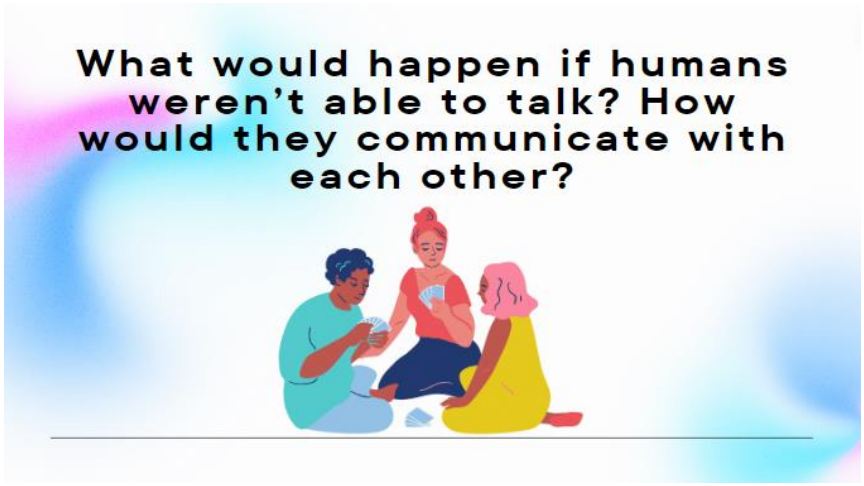


References

Aronoff, M., & Rees-Miller, J. (Eds.). (2000). *The handbook of linguistics*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

Shastri, P. D. (2009). *Communicative approach to the teaching of english as a second language*. Global Media.

LESSON PLAN 3: ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE

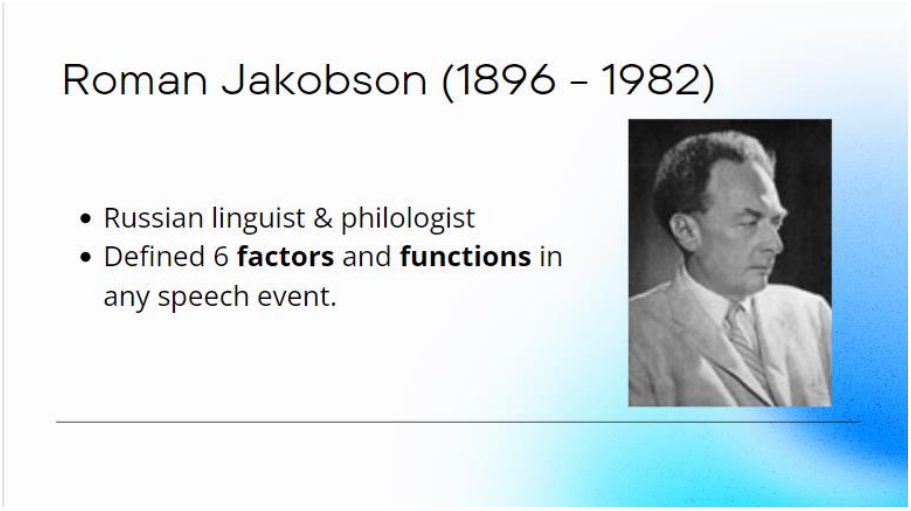
Name of the teacher: Randy Ortiz		**Class-level and strengths:** 40 ss		
Topic: Aspects of Language		**Time:** 30 minutes		
Aim: To develop speaking skills		**Objective**: To create a short conversation in pairs with all the aspects of language involved.		
Questioning strategies: From lower-order questions to higher-order questions.		**Teaching methodology:** Communicative language teaching.		
Class management: Whole class, T-S, S-S, pair activity.		**Speaking subskills:** Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.		
Teacher's activity	**Questioning**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1 1) The teacher starts the class by asking the following question **(Question 1).** 2) After that, the teacher introduces a short biography of Roman Jakobson and explains the aspects involved in any speech event **(Annex 1).** Then, the teacher asks **(Question 2) (Annex 2).**	1) Who was the person we talked about last class? What did he say about language? **(Remember)** 2) How would you identify these aspects in the picture? **(Understand)**	1) Students remember information about the previous class and share their ideas. **(Discourse management)** 2) Students discuss in pairs how they would identify the aspects in the picture. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 2 3) The teacher asks students **(Question 3) (Annex 3).** The teacher asks some ss to share their ideas. 4) The teacher shares a video of a conversation and asks students to think about the aspects while watching the video. After the video, the teacher asks **(Question 4) (Annex 4).** Then, the teacher asks some pairs to share their analysis.	3) What examples can you find that involved all these aspects? **(Apply)** 4) What is your analysis of the video based on the aspects of language? **(Analyze & evaluate)**	3) Students think of examples where all the aspects are involved and share their ideas **(Discourse management)** 4) Students share their analysis of the video with their partner. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 3 5) The teacher asks students to create a short conversation	5) How could you portray the aspects in a	5) Students create a short conversation in pairs about any	10 minutes	Canva presentation

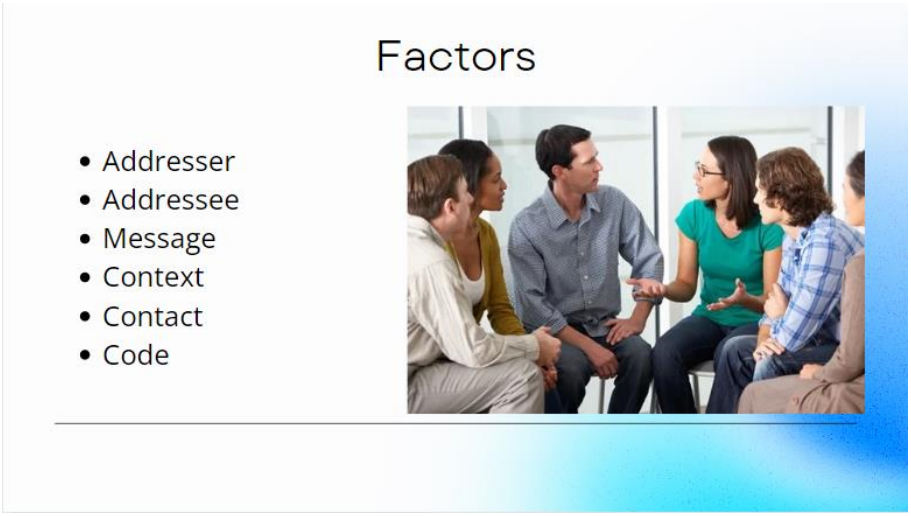
using all the aspects of language in pairs. He asks **(Question 5) (Annex 5).** 6) The teacher gives a worksheet with some questions to each pair and asks them to peer evaluate their classmates' conversations **(Annex 6).**	conversation? **(Create)**	topic. **(Interactive communication)** 6) Students evaluate their classmates' conversations based on some questions provided by the teacher. **(Discourse management)**		

Note: This lesson plan was used during the third intervention. Words in parenthesis guide to questions, describe the level of questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy, and identify which speaking subskill was developed.

Annexes

Annex 1:





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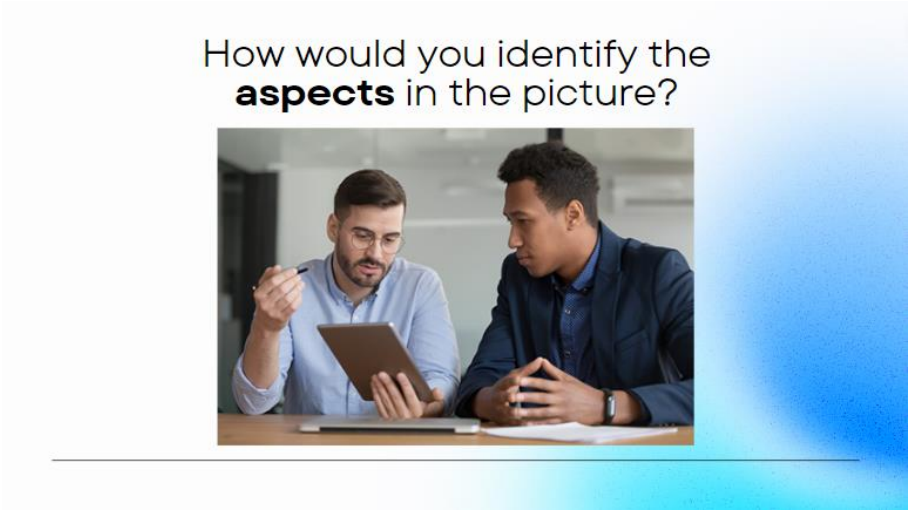

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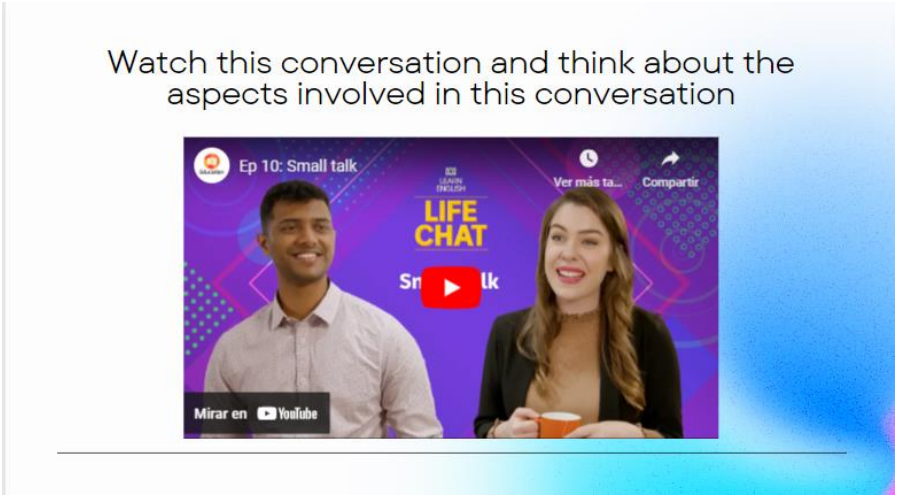

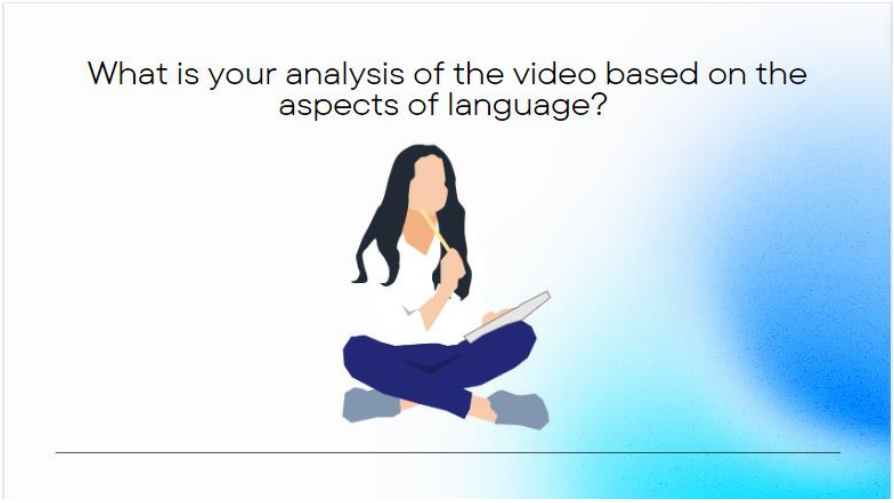

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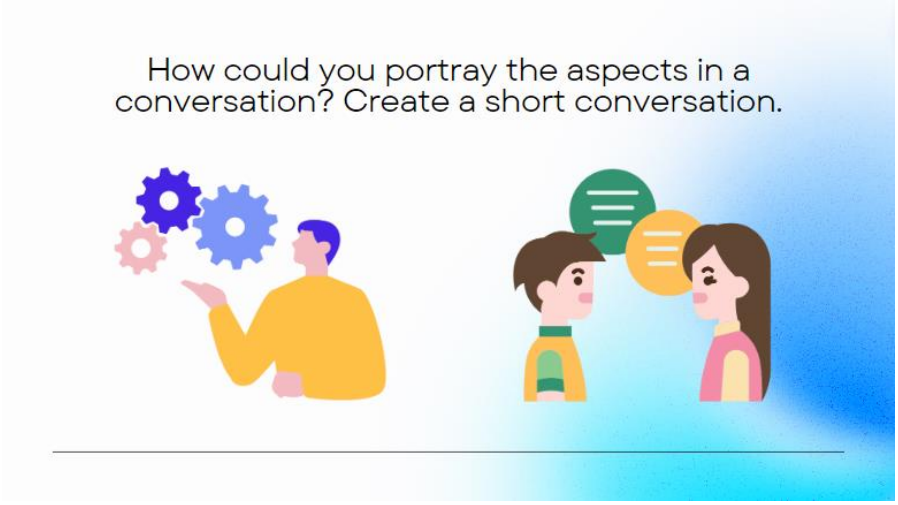


Annex 7

Worksheet # 1

Name: _____

Date: _____

1) What is the most important aspect in the conversation?

2) What would you suggest to improve the conversation?

3) How would you grade the conversation based on the aspects of language?

4) Rank the importance of each aspect in the conversation? Tell why? (E.g. 1st Addressee, 2nd message…,etc.)

References

Aronoff, M., & Rees-Miller, J. (Eds.). (2000). *The handbook of linguistics*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

Shastri, P. D. (2009). *Communicative approach to the teaching of english as a second language*. Global Media.

LESSON PLAN 4: FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE

Name of the teacher: Randy Ortiz		**Class-level and strengths:** 40 ss		
Topic: Functions of Language		**Time:** 30 minutes		
Aim: To develop speaking skills		**Objective**: To rank the importance of each aspect and function of language in communication.		
Questioning strategies: From lower-order questions to higher-order questions.		**Teaching methodology:** Communicative language teaching.		
Class management: Whole class, T-S, S-S, pair activity.		**Speaking subskills:** Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.		
Teacher's activity	**Questioning**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1 1) The teacher starts the class with **(Question 1) (Annex 1).** He asks 6 students to say one aspect of each one. 2) The teacher explains the first three functions of language and asks students to come up with some definitions in pairs **(Question 2) (Annex 2).** Then, the teacher chooses three pairs per function.	1) What are all the aspects of language according to Roman Jakobson? **(Remember)** 2) How can you describe the first three functions in your own words? **(Understand)**	1) Students recall information learned previously and say it out loud. **(Pronunciation)** 2) Students work in pairs to come up with their definitions of the first three functions. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 2 3) The teacher explains the three next functions and asks students **(Question 3) (Annex 3).** He asks some students to share their examples. 4) The teacher asks **(Question 4) (Annex 4).** He asks ss to share their ideas with other pairs and agree on the most reliable answer.	3) What examples can you find for the function "Phatic? **(Apply)** 4) Why do you think each aspect has a different function? **(Analyze)**	3) Students think of examples for the function and share them with the class. **(Pronunciation)** 4) Students discuss in pairs why aspects have different functions. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 3 **5)** The teacher arranges students into groups of four and asks them to	5) Rank the importance of the aspects and functions in communication.	5) In pairs, students agree on the importance of each aspect and function in	10 minutes	Canva presentation

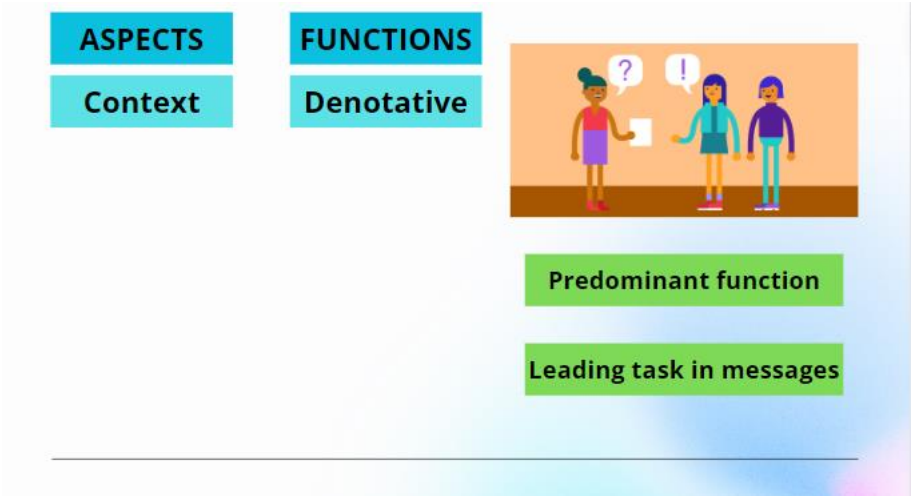
rank the importance of each aspect and its functions in communication. He asks **(Question 5) (Annex 5).** Then, he asked some groups to share why they agreed on the ranking**.**	(From the most to the least important) **(Evaluate)**	communication and say why. **(Interactive communication)**		

Note: This lesson plan was used during the fourth intervention. Words in parenthesis guide to questions, describe the level of questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy, and identify which speaking subskill was developed.

Annexes

Annex 1:

Annex 2



ASPECTS	FUNCTIONS
Addresser	Emotive

Speaker's attitude

What he's talking

"yes"

ASPECTS	FUNCTIONS
Addressee	Conative

Engages the addressee

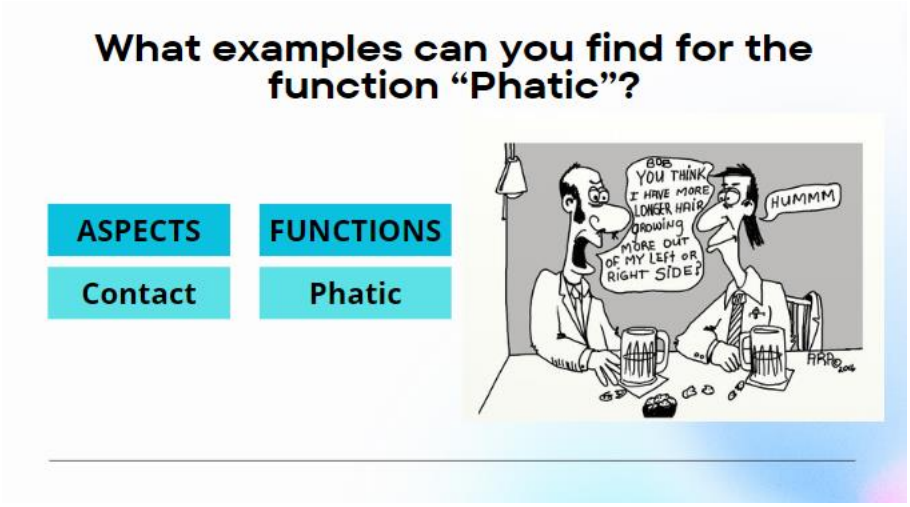
Vocative or imperative

"Sit down gentlemen, please"

How can you describe the first three functions in your own words? (Talk with your partner)

ASPECTS	FUNCTIONS
Context	Denotative
Addresser	Emotive
Addressee	Conative

Annex 3



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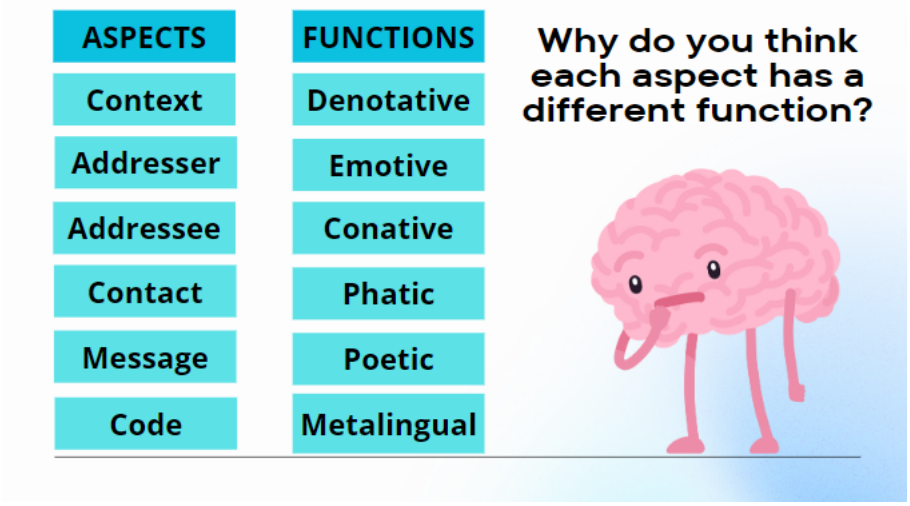

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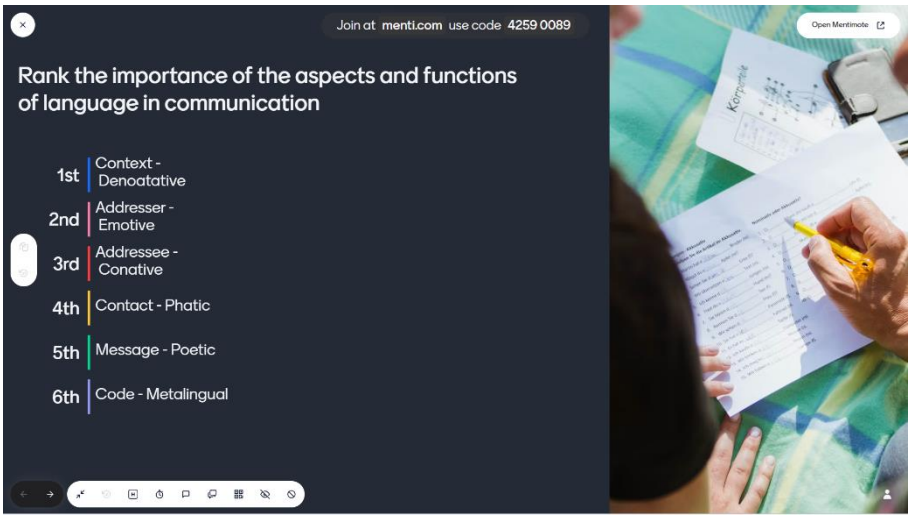

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References

Aronoff, M., & Rees-Miller, J. (Eds.). (2000). *The handbook of linguistics*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

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LESSON PLAN 5: LINGUISTIC THEORY

Name of the teacher: Randy Ortiz		**Class-level and strengths:** 40 ss		
Topic: Linguistic theory		**Time:** 30 minutes		
Aim: To develop speaking skills		**Objective**: To discuss facts that support Chomsky's language acquisition theory.		
Questioning strategies: From lower-order questions to higher-order questions.		**Teaching methodology:** Communicative language teaching.		
Class management: Whole class, T-S, S-S, pair activity.		**Speaking subskills:** Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.		
Teacher's activity	**Questioning**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1 1) The teacher starts the class by asking **(Question 1) (Annex 1).** 2) The teacher introduces Noam Chomsky's short biography and contributions to linguistics and asks the following question **(Question 2) (Annex 2).** Then, he asks some couples to share their definition.	1) Who was the person we talked about last class? What were his contributions? **(Remember)** 2) How can you describe 'language acquisition in your own words'? **(Understand)**	1) Students recall information previously learned. **(Discourse management)** 2) In pairs, students discuss and come up with a definition of 'language acquisition'. **(Interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 2 3) The teacher explains Chomsky's view of language acquisition **(Annex 3).** Then, the teacher asks students to answer 2 questions. **(Questions 3 & 4) (Annex 4).** One per student. Then, they must share their ideas.	3) How would you demonstrate Chomsky's theory about 'language acquisition'? **(Apply)** 4) How would explain language acquisition theory based on Chomsky's views? **(Analyze)**	3) Students answer the questions individually, and then, they share their answers with their partners. **(Discourse management & interactive communication)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 3 4) The teacher shares students a link. He asks them to rank the importance of the elements in language acquisition **(Question 5) (Annex 5).**	5) Rank the importance of these elements in language acquisition. **(Evaluate)** 6) What facts can you gather to support	4) Students rank each element individually depending on their point of view. **(Discourse management)** 5) In groups, students discuss	10 minutes	Canva presentation

5) Finally, the teacher makes groups of 4 people and asks them to discuss the question in groups **(Question 6) (Annex 6).** Then, he chooses a group to share their answer.	Chomsky's language acquisition theory? **(Create)**	the question and share their ideas with the class. **(Interactive communication)**		

Note: This lesson plan was used during the fifth intervention. Words in parenthesis guide to questions, describe the level of questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy, and identify which speaking subskill was developed.

Annexes

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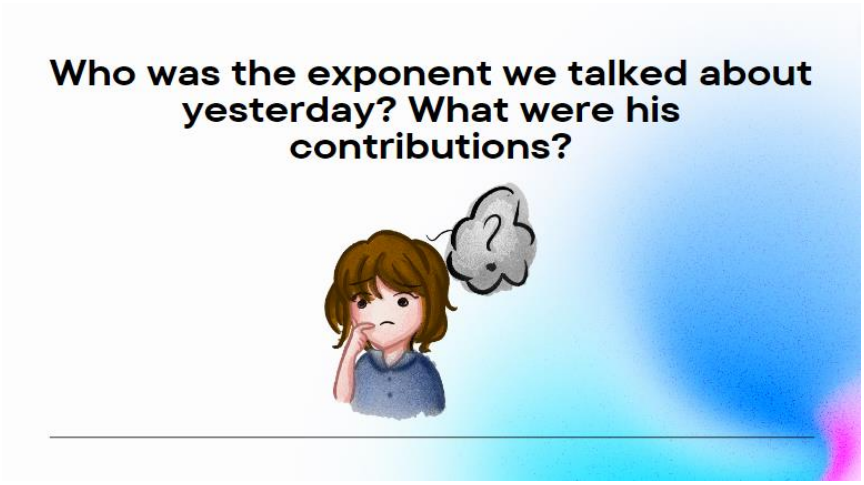

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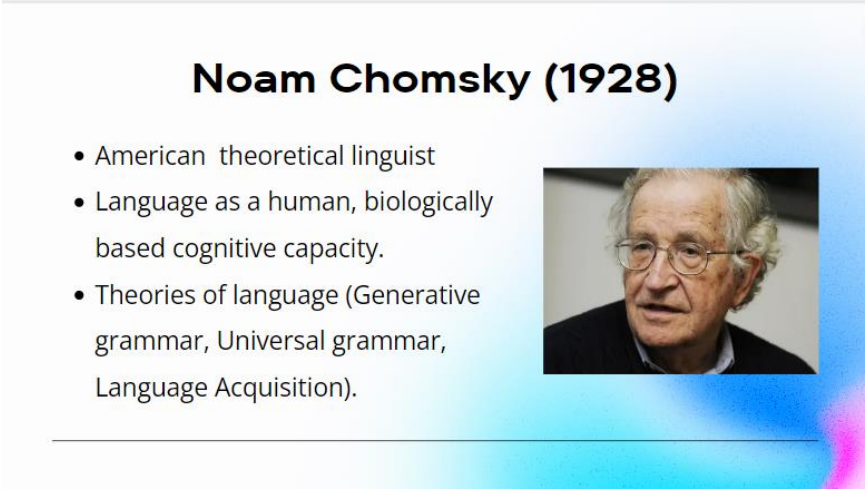

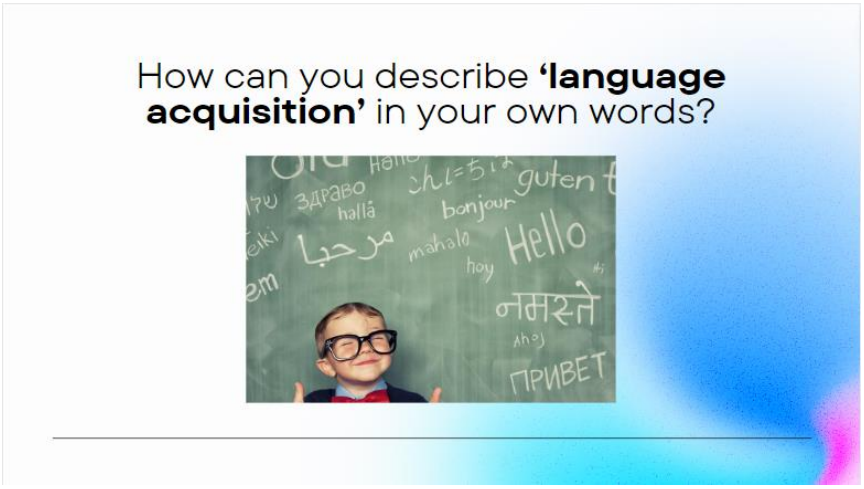

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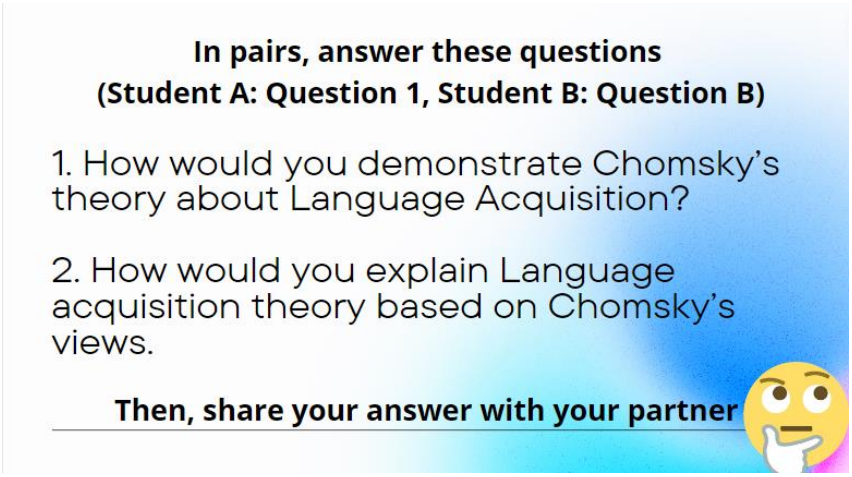

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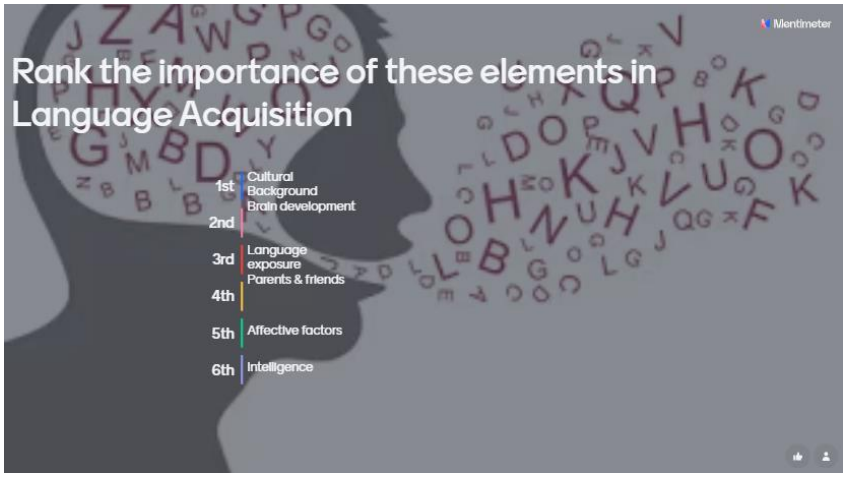

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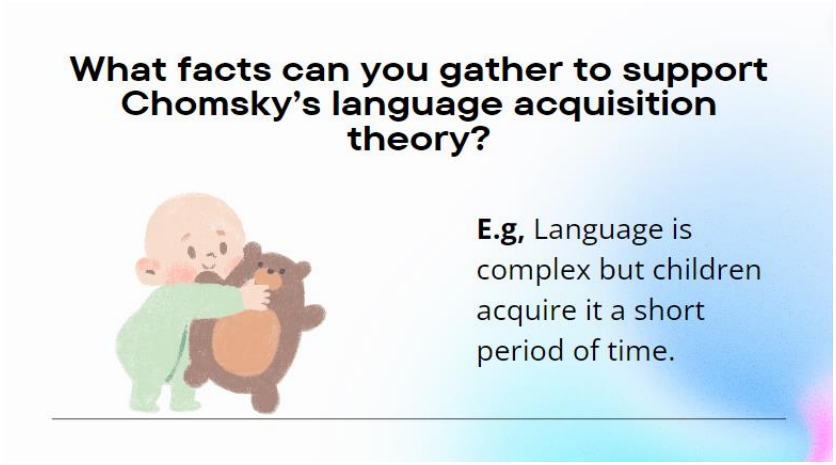

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LESSON PLAN 6: LANGUAGE THEORY

Name of the teacher: Randy Ortiz		**Class-level and strengths:** 40 ss		
Topic: Language Theory		**Time:** 20 minutes		
Aim: To develop speaking skills		**Objective**: To answer two questions about language acquisition and grammar in groups.		
Questioning strategies: From lower-order questions to higher-order questions.		**Teaching methodology:** Communicative language teaching.		
Class management: Whole class, T-S, S-S, pair activity.		**Speaking subskills:** Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.		
Teacher's activity	**Questioning**	**Learners' activity**	**Time**	**Aids**
Step 1 1) The teacher starts the class by asking students what they learned in the previous class **(Question 1) (Annex 1).** Then, the teacher asks a couple to share their ideas. 2) The teacher starts explaining about "Generative grammar" **(Annex 2).** Then, he asks **(Question 2)** to the whole class **(Annex 3).**	1) What do you remember about language acquisition based on Chomsky's view? **(Remember)** 2) Is there any relation between "Generative Grammar" and "Language Acquisition"? Why? **(Understand)**	1) Students tell their partner what they remember about language acquisition. **(Interactive communication)** 2) Students answer the question as a whole class. **(Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 2 3) The teacher starts explaining about "Universal Language" and the aim of Linguistics **(Annex 4).** Then, he asks **(Question 3) (Annex 5).** He asks some pairs to share their example. 4) After that, the teacher asks **(Question 4) (Annex 6)** and asks some students to share their answers.	3) How would you demonstrate "Universal Grammar" by comparing English and Spanish languages? **(Apply)** 4) Why do you think learning a language is too difficult if they have similar structures? **(Analyze)**	3) In pairs, students think about examples to demonstrate "Universal Grammar". **(Interactive communication).** 4) Students think about why learning a language is too difficult for people and share their ideas. **(Discourse management)**	10 minutes	Canva presentation
Step 3 5) The teacher arranges students	**5)** What would you suggest to anyone who wants	5) Students discuss two questions in groups and then,	10 minutes	Canva presentation

into groups of 4 people and asks them to discuss two questions **(Questions 5 & 6) (Annex 7).** Then, the teacher asks students to share their ideas with the whole class.	to learn a language? **(Evaluate)** 6) What would happen if grammar didn't exist? **(Create)**	share their ideas with the whole class **(Discourse management, Interactive communication)**		

Note: This lesson plan was used during the sixth intervention. Words in parenthesis guide to questions, describe the level of questions based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy, and identify which speaking subskill was developed.

Annexes

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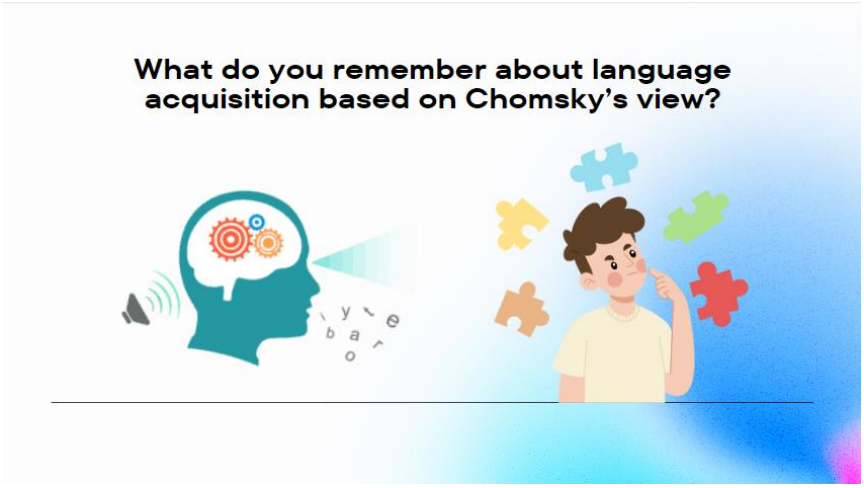

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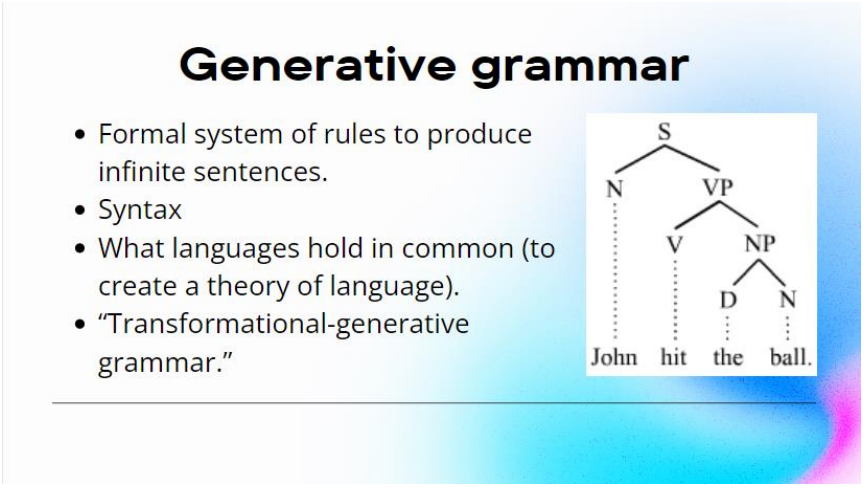

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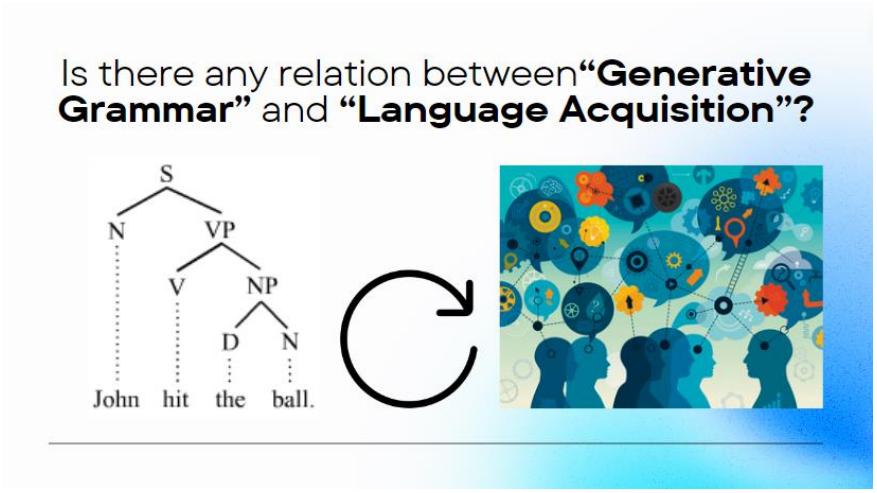

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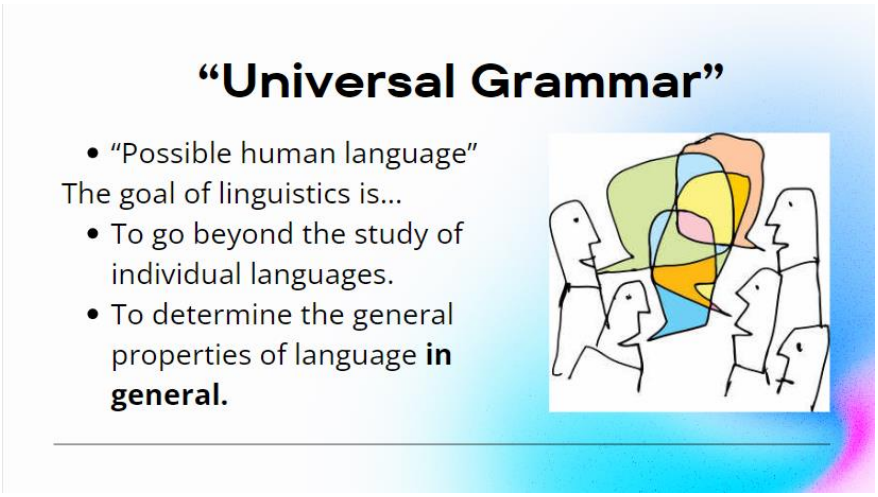

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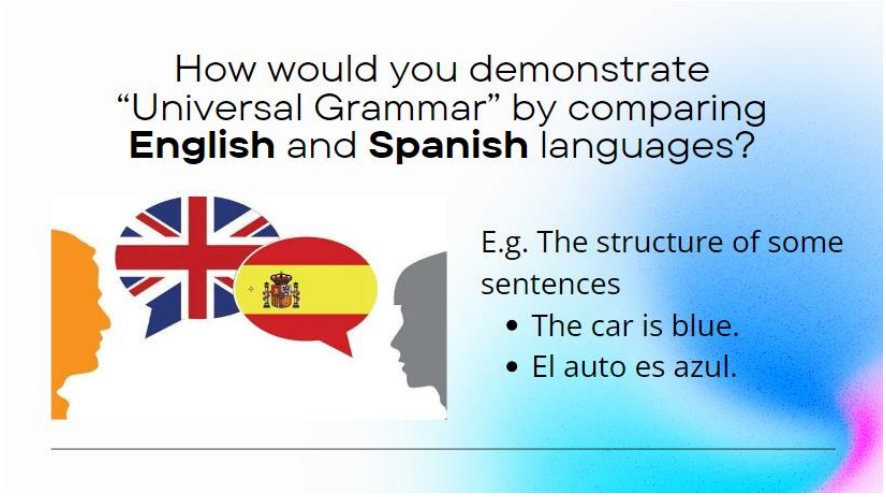

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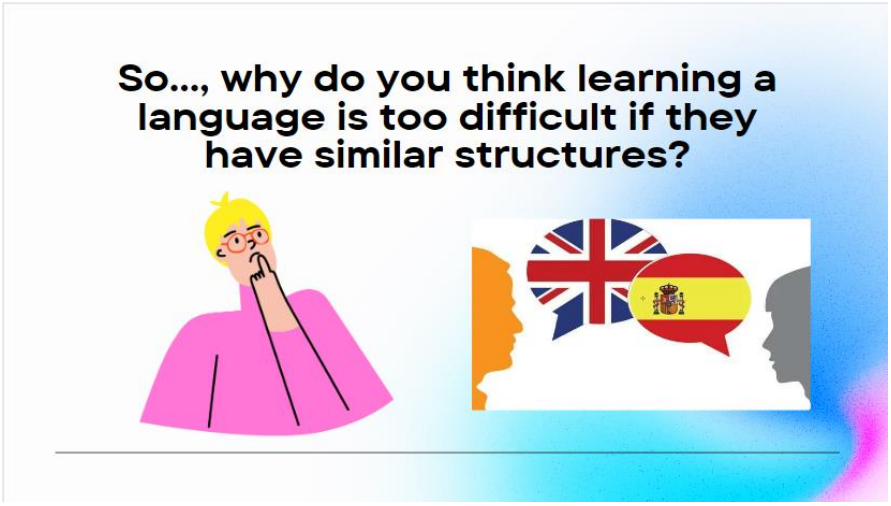

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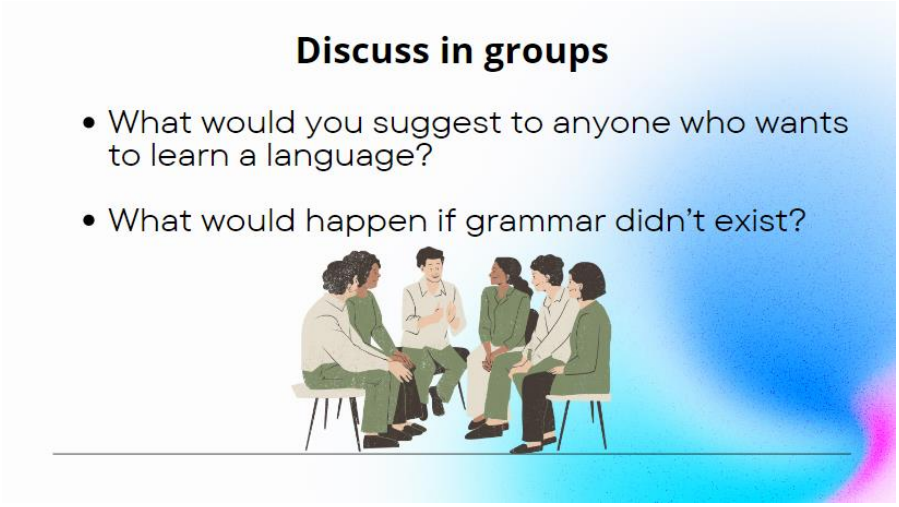

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Shastri, P. D. (2009). *Communicative approach to the teaching of english as a second language*. Global Media.

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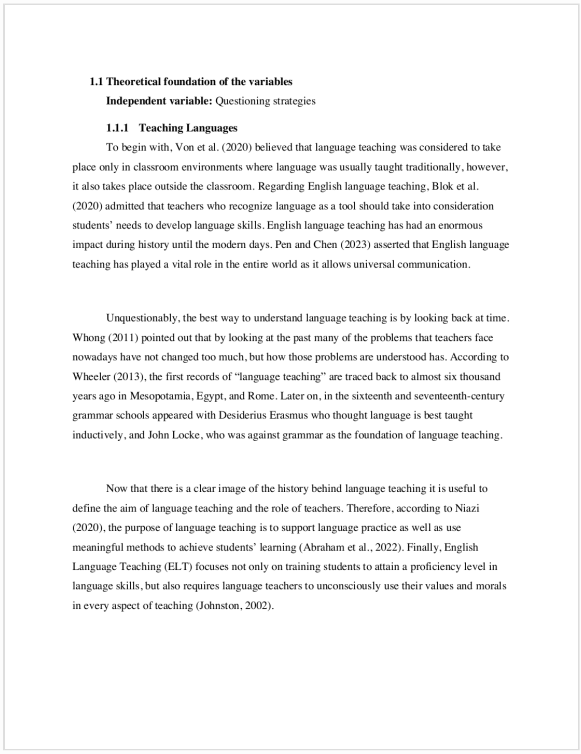

1.1 Theoretical foundation of the variables

Independent variable: Questioning strategies

1.1.1 Teaching Languages

To begin with, Von et al. (2020) believed that language teaching was considered to take place only in classroom environments where language was usually taught traditionally, however, it also takes place outside the classroom. Regarding English language teaching, Blok et al. (2020) admitted that teachers who recognize language as a tool should take into consideration students' needs to develop language skills. English language teaching has had an enormous impact during history until the modern days. Pen and Chen (2023) asserted that English language teaching has played a vital role in the entire world as it allows universal communication.

Unquestionably, the best way to understand language teaching is by looking back at time. Whong (2011) pointed out that by looking at the past many of the problems that teachers face nowadays have not changed too much, but how those problems are understood has. According to Wheeler (2013), the first records of "language teaching" are traced back to almost six thousand years ago in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Rome. Later on, in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century grammar schools appeared with Desiderius Erasmus who thought language is best taught inductively, and John Locke, who was against grammar as the foundation of language teaching.

Now that there is a clear image of the history behind language teaching it is useful to define the aim of language teaching and the role of teachers. Therefore, according to Niazi (2020), the purpose of language teaching is to support language practice as well as use meaningful methods to achieve students' learning (Abraham et al., 2022). Finally, English Language Teaching (ELT) focuses not only on training students to attain a proficiency level in language skills, but also requires language teachers to unconsciously use their values and morals in every aspect of teaching (Johnston, 2002).

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