



**EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION
OF AN ENGLISH PROGRAM AT A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTION**

MASTER'S REPORT

LEYDI LIZETH CEBALLOS ORDOÑEZ

ICESI UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

MASTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

SANTIAGO DE CALI

2016



**“EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION
OF AN ENGLISH PROGRAM AT A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTION”**

Leydi Lizeth Ceballos Ordoñez
Master's Report

Director: Diana Margarita Díaz Mejía
Head of the Foreign Language Department, Universidad Icesi

Professor: Sandra Patricia Peña Bernate

Icesi University
School of Education Sciences
Master's in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Santiago de Cali
2016



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the content of this work belongs to the author's research process, except for the sources listed in the bibliography that have been cited and referenced. This paper respects the ethical and academic codes. Therefore, I have not submitted it previously in whole or in part to apply for another academic degree.

Leydi Lizeth Ceballos

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I express my gratitude to my Lord because nothing is possible without him, All glory to God! I have also been blessed with the help of many people who have been my support during this process; I express my deepest gratitude to my master's tutor Diana Margarita Diaz for all her patience and guidance during this long road, her words of encouragement were a source of inspiration for me. I am also grateful for the suggestions to improve I received from the professor Tito Oviedo, and all the teachings I received during this master from different people such as Maria Fernanda Puentes, Cristina Peñafort, Sandra Peña and many others who shared their knowledge and wisdom to make me a better teacher. I also thank Maria del Carmen Ibarra because she opened the doors of the great institution where I did this research, she became my friend and confident. Thanks to the teachers and students who allowed me to be part of the classes and observed them during the academic period.

My huge thanks to my family, to my mom who has always been my hero and along with my dad have supported my life with their prayers. To my sister and friend Maria Fernanda; to my beloved husband because his patience and trust were indeed important in this study, to Carlos Mamian and Mary Luz who were so generous to offer me their help. My special thanks to my lovely cousin Yineth Lorena Mamian, who was always ready to help me, taught me how to move in this big city and offered all her love for the achievement of this goal.

My sincere thanks to my dear friend Aida Luz Franco, who made me part of her family, believed in me as a person and worked along with me many times to accomplish this objective. I think there are many people to give thanks to and this page is just too limited to do it, to all of those I cannot mention now sincere thanks from the bottom of my heart. God bless you!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loved ones:

My parents

*Delmy Milena Ordoñez Ortega
Omar Jose Ceballos Ordoñez*

My husband

William Hernando Piso Sanchez

My coming baby

Camila Piso Ceballos

CONTENT

ABSTRACT	9
INTRODUCTION	10
II. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK	12
1.1 Institution Characterization	12
1.2 Program Characterization	12
III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	15
1. The importance of Speaking.....	15
1.1 Characteristics of the spoken discourse.....	16
2. Communicative Language teaching	17
2.1 Teaching speaking from a communicative approach.....	18
2.2 Communicative Language Teaching pitfalls	19
3. Evaluation.....	20
3.1 Evaluation of educational programs	20
3.2 Effectiveness criteria	21
3.3 Evaluating oral skills	22
IV. RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	24
1. Problem statement	24
2. Research question.....	24
3. Objectives.....	24
3.1 General Objective.....	24
3.2 Specific Objectives.....	24
4. Justification	25
V. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	26
1. Participants.....	26
1.1 Students' Characterization	27
1.2 Teachers' Characterization.....	28
2. Procedure	29
2.1 Speaking test results	30

2.2 Cases description.....	32
VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	43
VII CONCLUSIONS.....	49
VIII. LIMITATIONS	51
IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	52
X. APPENDIXES	56
Appendix 1 – Class observation grill.....	56
Appendix 2 – Written informed consent	62
Appendix 3 – IELTS Speaking band descriptors.....	65
Appendix 5 Questions used to assess the students’ level of proficiency	68

Contents of tables

Table 1: Students' information chart	28
Table 2: IELTS - CEFR Equivalence chart.....	30
Table 3: Level 6 Students' oral proficiency in English	31
Table 4: Conversation students' oral proficiency in English.....	32
Table 5: Level 6 overall speaking results.....	43
Table 6: Conversation level overall speaking results	44

ABSTRACT

This research study aims at finding the effectiveness of an English Program in terms of achieving the set goals in oral proficiency. The Communicative approach that was adopted by the English program is reviewed as well as the literature on how to determine the effectiveness of a foreign language program. The objectives of the research are to measure the level of oral proficiency of the learners in the program and to understand those teaching practices that motivate students to participate and improve their oral skills. Therefore, it attempts to shed light on the level of achievement of the speaking skill in the English program in order to contribute to its improvement in further curricular analysis.

This research is non-experimental and exploratory since it aims at understanding the relationship between two elements: one is the English program practices and the other has to do with its effectiveness in the development of the students' oral proficiency. The sources to collect the information are the direct class observation done in order to identify appropriate or unsuitable teaching strategies and the results obtained from a proficiency-speaking test, both of them applied to the sixth and conversational levels. Besides, the files about students and teachers are examined in order to obtain more information about the sample of this research. The documents regarding the history and process of the English program are also part of the sources of information.

The results showed that the level of proficiency achieved by the learners depends on different uncontrollable variables like age, interests, motivation, and others that can be changed such as the teaching practices. However, based on an analysis of the speaking test the results, it was evident that there was strength in pronunciation and a marked weakness in lexical resource. These results were also coherent with the class observations made during the semester.

INTRODUCTION

Among the different skills developed when learning a foreign language, speaking is nowadays one of the biggest concerns for language teachers and learners. One of the reasons has to do with the current importance of speaking as a productive skill to express ideas in different fields like academic, business and daily interactions. It is also important because of the changes teaching has had throughout time and its increasing focus on communicative methodologies. Consequently, there is a switch from teacher to student-centered methodologies. This boom in language teaching and learning has increased the students' interest in learning a language, as well as the places that offer an infinite number of possibilities to learn and speak a foreign language effectively. As stated in one of the latest reports of the British Council *"English is the dominant international language of the 21st century. It is spoken at a useful level by some 1.75 billion people – a quarter of the world's population. As the language of communications, science, information technology, business, entertainment and diplomacy, it has increasingly become the operating system for the global conversation"*. (p.14)

With an increasing amount of institutes and universities teaching foreign languages, especially English, a question becomes relevant: what is the level of effectiveness of these programs regarding the students' acquisition of speaking? This is precisely the concern of this research, which focuses on program effectiveness evaluation. It adds to this analysis, the communicative approach adopted in Colombia where the opportunities to practice the target language are mostly limited to the classroom interactions rather than a real scenario.

The motivation to investigate about this issue rises from the different speaking levels found within an English program and the desire to know if the students finally achieve the level promised by the language institute. Keeping in mind the mentioned concerns, this research intends to contribute to the identification of the factors that could be enhanced in an English program in order to improve the students' speaking level. This analysis could give the institution the possibility to become more competitive offering the students the opportunities to achieve a better oral proficiency.

The data was collected by means of two different sources: class observations during the second academic term of 2015 and a speaking test, based on the IELTS international examination which was carried out at the end of the semester. To characterize the population, a review of the files with

background information about the students and teachers that showed the students' age, their academic and professional profile was done.

This research paper is organized into ten parts. The first one has to do with the contextual framework that gives a concise description of the place where this research takes place. The second part is the review of the literature, which deals with the theoretical knowledge that supports the findings in this project. It takes into account aspects like the importance of speaking, characteristics of the spoken discourse, teaching speaking from a communicative approach, communicative language teaching, evaluation, evaluation of educational programs and effectiveness criteria. The research problem is the third part; it includes the problem statement, research question, objectives and justification. The fourth chapter explains the methodology, this chapter gives a student, teacher and program's characterization; here it is also included the procedure to collect the data, the speaking test results and the cases description. The sixth chapter deals with the data analysis and discussions of the results from a theoretical and practical view. The seventh chapter presents the conclusions, the eighth chapter shows the limitations faced to carry out this study, the nine chapter corresponds to the bibliography and the ten chapter are the appendixes.

II. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Institution Characterization

This study took place at the Colegio Mayor del Cauca, located in the city of Popayan-Cauca. This is an official Institution that has functioned since the 13th of November, 1967. At that time, the “*Colegios Mayores*” were an alternative to offer technical public education to women who started a path towards university education in Colombia. Nowadays, Colegio Mayor del Cauca has become a University Institution offering not only technical and extension programs but also undergraduate and post-graduate programs in different areas such as arts, engineering, social sciences and administration. The English program is one of the pioneers in the city and it makes part of the research concern of this paper.

1.2 Program Characterization

The English Program called “*Programa de Educación para el Trabajo y el Desarrollo Humano del Idioma Inglés*” has been running for forty seven years. The program has changed and has been adapted to the context needs and new trends in foreign language teaching. It makes part of the non-formal education based on the law 115 of 1994 and ruled in the decree 2888 of July 31st 2007. It is also lined by the Common European Framework as an international standard for language teaching that was adopted by the National Ministry of Education.

Nowadays, the program is divided according to the students’ ages and needs into: Adult and Young learner’s courses. This study will be carried out with the adult courses which have two stages: six levels of communicative general English and two optional and additional conversational courses. The program’s goal is to take the student from A1 to B1 in the six levels and to a B2 in the optional stage, making emphasis on the development of the communicative competence and the promotion of autonomous language learning. The course is developed through 80 face-to-face hours in the semester, supported with 80 additional hours of self-study time for a total of 160 hours per level. The program is also supported by technological and human resources for the teaching of the language like Language laboratories, Language resource center, and qualified professionals.

The program has three teachers' meetings during the semester to evaluate the changes made or receive teachers' academic training in aspects such as methodology, didactic activities to teach speaking or listening, the use of online websites for teaching or any other training the English program offers to update their teachers. The teachers propose the topics for the trainings at the beginning of the semester.

A concern that has risen during the meetings is how to improve the students speaking level. Some of the pedagogical agreements made to improve this concern are the planning of some classes with the help of the native speaker who focuses on communicative activities to improve the students' confidence to speak in English; a group of teachers with C1 English level supports this activity as well. Another activity is to rotate the teachers to different groups at least for one or two classes to offer the students a different teaching style. Another proposal has been to observe the teachers' classes to identify the strengths or weaknesses in the teaching methodology. However, this proposal has been difficult to implement because some of the teachers have shown reluctantly to do it.

The English program manages a textbook material that offers the students' book, workbook and online listening material for the learners. The teachers' material include a book that details each lesson and gives suggestions for the class, an online platform with additional exercises, a video material with a book that provides activities to reinforce the lesson and a cd with quizzes and other activities. The textbook material for learners is described below.

1.2.1. Material

The text Touchstone from the publishing house Cambridge was adopted since 2009 with the re-formulation of the English program proposed by the teacher Clara Quintero. This material is worked during six semesters of general communicative English with the objective of studying eight units per level. The two conversational levels work with free material that is provided by the teacher in charge of the group who chooses the material according to his/her own criteria of the students' needs. The following chart shows the English levels with their corresponding book and the equivalence of the proficiency level planned in the textbook with reference to the Common European Framework.

Table 4: English program material chart

ENGLISH PROGRAM MATERIAL		
LEVEL	BOOK	MCE EQUIVALENCE
1	Touchstone 1	A1
2	Touchstone1-2	A1-A2
3	Touchstone 2	A2
4	Touchstone 3	A2-B1
5	Touchstone 3-4	A2-B1
6	Touchstone 4	B1
Conversation1	Free material	B1-B2
Conversation2	Free material	B2

Touchstone units are divided into four lessons A, B, C and D plus the unit opener *“The unit opener sets the scene for the unit topic, and introduces new vocabulary. Lesson A presents the main grammar and point of the unit with some relevant new vocabulary. Unit B teaches the main vocabulary of the unit and builds on the grammar taught in lesson A. Lessons A and B may include a pronunciation task, group discussion or listening. Lesson C teaches a conversation strategy and common expressions useful in conversation, followed by a listening activity reinforcing this conversational language.. Lesson D focuses on reading and writing skills while providing additional listening and speaking activities.”* McCarthy et al. (2008). Moreover, this textbook offers a *“corpus-informed course”* that refers to spoken or written English focusing on communicative methodologies.

III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, a few relevant concepts will be presented in order to establish a common knowledge as to how some issues are understood in this study. The importance of the speaking practice will be presented first, followed by its characteristics. Later a review on Communicative language teaching, teaching speaking from a Communicative approach and Communicative Language teaching pitfalls is presented. Afterwards, a revision related to evaluation and effectiveness of language programs is described. Finally, a description of the speaking test used to measure the students' proficiency level is made.

1. The importance of Speaking

Learning a language implies learning how to use a new linguistic repertory in order to make sense and generate meaning in different interactional contexts. This learning process entails the development of four skills: reading, speaking, listening and writing. At the language institute of the University in which this study was carried out, the language program has been designed based on the communicative approach. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the main features of this approach and the importance of speaking in that approach.

According to Rahman, (2010), communication is an interactive process, it *"(communication) is not passive and does not just happen; we actively and consciously engage in communication in order to develop information and understanding required for effective group functioning"* (Rahman, 2010, p.2). To achieve the objective of this research paper, however, this review of the literature focuses on speaking as a crucial element in language teaching and learning without leaving aside the importance of the other language skills and specially *"the natural link between speaking and listening"* (Brown, 2000,p. 275).

The Common European Framework recognizes the importance of productive activities like speaking and writing because they facilitate the interaction between social agents: *"Productive activities have an important function in many academic and professional fields (oral presentations, written studies and reports) a particular social value is attached to them"*(p.23). This is one of the reasons why many language programs aim at developing competent language speakers able to express fluently in English as a foreign language.

To promote communication, many educational institutions teach using a communicative approach. As stated by Rivera (2010), *“the development of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has brought with it a great variety of activities for promoting oral communication in the EFL classroom. I am sure that many of us are acquainted with an array of terms like tasks, role-plays and simulations, project work, conversation strategies, dialogues, presentations, and many other activities that we call communicative”* (p.1).

The use of these kinds of activities is a first step to build-up a language repertoire for communication and to develop speaking specifically. Richards (2008) proposes oral interaction as a further step for language acquisition. He explains that *“for language development to take place, more is required than simply noticing features of the input. The learner has to try to incorporate new linguistic items into his or her language repertoire, that is, to use them in oral production”* (p.3). Therefore, the importance of speaking skill in language learning lies on its interactive social process that requires students' awareness as an initial element and practicing by means of oral interaction as a further step.

1.1 Characteristics of the spoken discourse

Many authors have reflected on speaking from a communicative perspective, they have described the components of speaking in order to have a better understanding of its features and the best way to teach it. Richards (2008) identifies two different characteristics of the spoken discourse; they are *“**conversational routines and styles of speaking***. While the first refers to the *use of fixed expressions*, the second has to do with *a more pragmatic use of language according to the age, sex, roles, etc.*” (p.19). Sacks et al. (1978) (as cited in Nóbrega, 2008) declare two types of speech *“**local management system and interactionally managed system**”* (p.2). The first one refers to the natural turn-taking in conversation between two people. The interactionally managed system implies more than two people participating in the exchange of information.

Brown and Yule (1983) (as cited in Richards, 2008) classified the functions of speaking into three categories: **talk as interaction, talk as transaction, talk as performance**. *“Talk as interaction refers to what we normally mean by “conversation” and describes interaction that serves a primarily social function. Talk as transaction refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done. The message and making oneself understood clearly and accurately is the central focus, rather than the*

participants and how they interact socially with each other. Talk as performance refers to public talk, that is, talk that transmits information before an audience. (p.21). To know the characteristics of speaking is important because their understanding helps the planning of activities that facilitate language acquisition and provide the confidence to face different language situations effectively.

2. Communicative Language teaching

A key aspect in the development of Communicative Language teaching has been the understanding of competence and performance. As expressed by Chomsky (1965)(as cited in Canale, 1980) *“competence is the knowledge of grammar and of other aspects of language, while performance refers to actual use”*(p.3). Hymes (1972), Campbell and Wales(as cited in Canale, 1980) proposed the term communicative competence as the sum of *“grammatical, contextual or sociolinguistic competence”*(p.4). Later, Canale (1983) (as cited in Murcia, et al., 1993) expanded the components to four *“grammatical competence: the knowledge of language code, Socio linguistic competence: the mastery of sociocultural code, Discourse competence: the ability to combine language structures into cohesive texts and strategic competence: the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies”*(p.15)

The understanding of communicative competence as the basis to communicative language teaching is a fundamental aspect for this master’s report because the communicative approach was adopted by The English Program at Colegio Mayor in the re-formulation of the teaching methodology (Quintero, 2009). At that time, it was also changed the teaching materials of Victor Quintanilla¹ based on grammar language patterns and drilling for the textbook Touchstone, which offered a focus on *“communicative methodologies, interaction-based, active and inductive learning and flexibility to meet the needs of specific classes”*. McCarthy et al. (2008).

Communicative Language Teaching embraces different aspects such as *“learner autonomy, the social nature of learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment, and teachers as co-learners”* (Jacobs & Farrell, 2003, p. 10). To this respect, Richards (2006) added factors that affect learning such as *“the teaching context, age, level, learning*

¹Teacher in education, specialist in languages from the University Santiago de Cali, master in linguistics from the University of Valle and specialist in methodology and linguistics in the United States.

goals, and so on" (p. 12). Canale, 1980 also established "*learner's communication needs in terms of grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. Opportunity to take part in meaningful communicative interaction, acquisition and use of the native language*". Therefore, communicative language teaching underlines the importance of using language in real-life situations (Brown,2001; Richards, 2006; Sauvignon, 2001)

2.1 Teaching speaking from a communicative approach

Speaking has been a research concern for different authors who have classified its features in order to facilitate its learning and teaching process. Brown (2000) recognizes speaking as a difficult skill because it has certain characteristics that are different from the ones the English learner has in his/her native language. They are: "*clustering or phrasal organization of the language, redundancy, reduced forms, performance variables like hesitations, pauses, backtracking and corrections, colloquial language, rate or speed of delivery, stress, rhythm and intonation; and finally interaction*" (p.270). These difficulties and the fact that, many times, EFL learners do not have the chance to practice the language in a real context, makes teaching from a communicative perspective a huge challenge. Therefore, the teacher plays an important role in providing a nice-warming atmosphere for language learning and oral interaction.

To this respect, Consolo and Vani's study (2006) (as cited in Nóbrega, 2008) underlined the students' reaction when they feel comfortable in class: *the amount of speech acts by the students increases in the classroom context, for example, as a result of a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere provided by the teacher. It is not only what the teacher does but how he/she mixes up their linguistic choice in accordance with the informal way of teaching that oral interaction takes place, and the learning of the content studied in the class, consequently, tends to improve*" (p.2). In the same line, Petkutė (2010) contextualizes the connection between qualified Lithuanian foreign language education and the communicative skills of the teacher. He also gathers different authors' points of view to define the communicative competence of the teacher as the sum of "*knowledge, motivation, style, social networking and class relationships*" (p 77). Hence, the author sheds light on the importance of the teacher's role when developing communicative competence by identifying the aspects that should characterize a good teacher's communicative practice.

A good teaching practice goes along with effective conversational activities that give the learners the opportunity to improve and practice the language. Some authors give an overview of effective conversational activities as a source to be adapted to the students' needs in the designing of communicative syllabus, some of them are role-plays, dialogues, debates among others (see, e.g., Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994; Shrouf, 2015; Brandl, 2008). To this concern, Brown (2000) adds the importance of having *"message oriented (teaching language use) opposed to language oriented (teaching language usage) activities"* (p.269). He also mentions some principles for designing speaking techniques *"focus on learners' needs, provide motivating techniques, encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts, provide appropriate feedback and correction, give students the opportunity to initiate oral communication, encourage the development of speaking strategies"* (p.275).

To sum up, a communicative teaching implies being aware of the language differences, a warming learning atmosphere and a good teaching practice that provide learners with enough communicative task to acquire the required proficiency level. As quoted by Hatch (1978) in Richards (2008), *"second language learners need a wide range of topics at their disposal in order to manage talk as interaction. Initially, learners may depend on familiar topics to get by. However, they also need practice introducing new topics into conversation to move beyond this stage"* (p. 24). That is to say, learners need lots of practice to achieve oral proficiency in the foreign language.

2.2 Communicative Language Teaching pitfalls

Due to the huge range of Communicative Language teaching ideas, there are of course some pitfalls to overcome. For instance, in Nunan's (2003) study of some countries in the Asia-pacific region, he raises the issue that global educational policies overlook local educational practices such as economic conditions to learn the language, teachers' language proficiency and education, as well as the effect of a foreign language on the home language. Colombia's national bilingualism plan intends to follow standards developed in Europe for their multiple language context. Although attempts to adapt the standards to the Colombian context have been made there are still challenges to be faced. In Colombia local realities include violence and lack of economic and physical resources that do not fit exactly with the ideal of learning environment the government has. To this respect, Bax (2003) proposes a *"context approach"* (p. 281) to replace adopted policies. He underlines the importance of the context as a determiner of language success or failure.

Another weakness in the Communicative Language Teaching is the misunderstanding of the aspects that it covers. Harmer (2003) underlines how Communicative Language Teaching could be interpreted in different ways depending on who intends to understand it. Murcia et al. (1993) emphasize the difficulty of Communicative Teaching to make specific the linguistic contents to be taught, that is to say the assumption that grammar does not need to be taught directly, they also stress the fact that testing learning outcomes is not clear enough in the communicative methodologies.

3. Evaluation

Evaluation has emerged and developed throughout the human history since the 17th century with the study of education and public health. It had its boom period after the World War II with the foundation of social programs that aimed at strengthening education, housing, technology and health.

“Evaluation research is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data about the quality, effectiveness, merit or value of programs, products or practices that are mainly focused on making decisions about them” (Gay et al., 2009 in Yulian, Y 2014.p.63)

That is to say, evaluation is a key factor in the planning of present policies and future strategies. More recently, O’leary (2010) stated that evaluation is a necessary step to make decisions. In fact, there are many approaches to the term evaluation as processes to evaluate. As stated by Correa (2002) *“Evaluation is part of a process and it is a process itself which is led consciously to determine the achievement of certain fixed purposes”*(p. 28). To sum up, evaluation traces the path towards the analysis of goals in order to make the necessary adjustments or continue strengthening those well-based management practices.

3.1 Evaluation of educational programs

The evaluation of educational programs has to do with the identification of specific needs in a given program and the planning of alternative strategies to improve them. Wang, 2009 understands program evaluation as the measure of results. Fitz-Gibbon et al. (1996) established the bases of

theory-based evaluation, as it is also known, as the analysis of certain aspects that help to determine how well a program operates regarding its learning goals.

“Program evaluation is the use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs in ways that are adapted to their political and organizational environments and are designed to inform social action to improve social conditions”.(Book chapter: *An overview of program evaluation*.p.16. Retrieved from:www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/3988_Chapter_1_overview.pdf)

Therefore, evaluation of educational programs is more than gathering data, it is an integral part of education and provides feedback to improve educational systems, it aims at making students and teachers’ sensitive about the needs of a program and the way they could contribute to improve them.

3.2 Effectiveness criteria

Depending on the goal of the evaluation, it provides data for further analysis regarding the efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness of any program. In general terms efficiency refers to the achievement of the goals keeping in mind low-cost and less time strategies. That is to say, getting the most with the least economic incomes. Efficacy refers to the realization of the goals under the circumstances that fit them the best. The last term: effectiveness, which is the concern of this research paper, has to do with the level of achievement of the desired results. It is measured by comparing the real and the desired outcomes.(*Natural Resources Information Management Strategy* NSW Government 2002. Retrieved from: www.nrims.nsw.gov.au).

Schalock (2001) in Wang (2009) listed the following steps of an effective evaluation: *“Compare the program’s goals with its achieved outcomes, report the program’s performance and value outcomes and finally provide formative feedback information for program change and improvement”*(p.145)

Evaluation implies the measurement of abstract and concrete ideas, which is why it needs to fulfill some aspects like: validity and reliability. Validity has to do with the accurateness of a testing instrument while reliability refers to the degree of consistency of a research instrument. In this

sense, Wholey et al. (2010) stated “reliability denotes the extent to which a measure can be expected to produce similar results on repeated observations of the same condition or event”, while “validity is concerned with the ability to determine whether a program or intervention has produced an outcome and to determine the magnitude of that effect” (p. 13). Considering these two issues help to assure the consistency of any evaluation process and provide a framework that supports observable facts.

3.3Evaluating oral skills

There are many ways to evaluate oral skills, and there are many international exams which assess oral proficiency. One of the most important tests in the world, which is widely accepted, is the IELTS (International English Language Testing System). This test is a worldwide-recognized examination valid in application processes in academic, governmental and professional fields. The British Council, the official test-taker, describes how the test gives results on how well the learner is able to “communicate opinions and information on everyday topics and common experiences; speak at length on a given topic using appropriate language, organize the ideas coherently, express and justify the opinions, analyze, discuss and speculate about issues” (Retrieved from: www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/prepare-test/understand-test-format/speaking-test).

The IELTS provides criteria to measure oral proficiency. This speaking test has a public version band descriptor which ranges from 0 points awarded for those students who do not attend the exam to 9 for the students who speak English fluently, coherently, with accurate use of grammar and vocabulary as well as pronunciation.

The test takes from eleven to fourteen minutes and it is composed of three sections ““*the first part is an introduction and interview, it takes form four to five minutes; the second part is a long turn in which the candidate receives a card with a topic. He/ she has one minute to prepare and make notes before speaking about the topic for one or two minutes, this session last for three to four minutes. The third part is a discussion about more abstract aspects of the topic in part two. It lasts for four to five minutes.*(IELTS train the trainer. p. 52).

Assessing students' speaking performance in this study

According to the British Council booklet "IELTS train the trainer" (2009), the IELTS test has four categories to assess the students' speaking performance: "*fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy and pronunciation*". These factors are also based on the Common European Framework. In this light, fluency and coherence reflects the students' skill to express and organize an idea naturally, that is to say, within a logical frame of communication, accepted use of hesitations and linking words, as well as, sequence and details. Lexical repertoire looked for a wide and proper use of vocabulary according to the situation. Grammatical range and accuracy was not only the learner's ability to produce error-free sentences but also the correct knowledge of different grammar structures to develop ideas properly. Finally, pronunciation focused on being understood without paying much attention to mastery of a specific accent but rather conveying a clear message for which the student needs to pay attention to word and sentence stress, plus intonation.

IV. RESEARCH PROBLEM

1. Problem statement

The English course has been one of the distinctive programs the University Institution Colegio Mayor del Cauca has had, almost since its origins in 1967. It has been modified twice in its academic organization and it has followed a continuous process that keeps in mind the students' degree of satisfaction towards the service offered. Due to the importance of the English program at Colegio Mayor del Cauca as a public educational resource for the people in the region, the research concern of this paper has to do with an effectiveness evaluation of the program. Specifically, to analyze one of the program objectives that aims at developing communicative competence at a B1 and B2 level according to the CEFR. Within this objective, the research focuses on *oral production*. Therefore, the concern of this research aims at finding to which extent the English Program for adults at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca is effective in the development of oral proficiency from a communicative perspective.

2. Research question

To which extent is the English Program for adults at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca effective in the development of oral proficiency at a B1 and B2 levels, from a communicative perspective?

3. Objectives

3.1 General Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of the English Program for adults at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca ,in reaching the set goals of B1 and B2 level (according to the CEFR) in oral production, through the use of the communicative approach.

3.2 Specific Objectives

- To determine if the level of oral proficiency reached by students in level 6 and conversation course, meet the CEFR standards for B1 and B2 accordingly.

- To identify if the teacher's teaching strategies promote the development of oral production at the University.

4. Justification

The motor of this research paper is to provide information in order to improve the quality of the English teaching regarding didactic strategies, teachers' training and curricular design at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca. The results must provide qualitative and quantitative information to determine the extent of achievement of speaking skill in order to plan changes to improve learning outcomes.

It is pertinent to analyze the students' oral proficiency in the foreign language and the role of the teaching practices. Firstly, because in my teaching practice, I have noticed that the levels of achievement in oral production are lower than the set objective. Secondly, speaking is one of the skills that allows active engagement with society, which is why learners aim at acquiring good speaking skills. Thirdly, the program has not done before an effectiveness evaluation within this frame of reference. A fourth reason is to see how the teachers' practices facilitate or hinder this process.

V. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Procedure

I collected the information during the second semester of 2015. The participants were the students and the teachers; I also gathered data from different sources like: class observations that were recorded, students' files and a speaking exam based on the IELTS descriptors.

First, I observed and recorded the classes for four groups out of eight the institution had for the second period of 2015. The research focused on 50% of the total amount of groups. While doing so, I kept a journal with notes and ideas of what I observed. For the analysis, I watched the class observations videos focusing on three different aspects: students' oral production, teaching strategies and the institution's physical conditions to develop communicative activities. In the students' production, the use of language, participation, student oriented activities and motivation were the analyzed factors.

As for the teachers, I took a look at their resumes and files to learn about their training, academic background and experience to teach English. During the classes, I focused on the teaching strategies, the class execution, teaching materials, student-teacher interaction, teaching style and the kinds of activities oriented. All these issues considered for analysis. Regarding the physical conditions, factors such as size of the classroom, occupancy, chairs, lighting, noise factors and technological resources available were looked at.

Table 1: Class observation Schedule

GROUPS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER GROUP	CLASS FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS
1. Sixth level	8	5 hours: Monday and Wednesday from 3:15 to 5:45 pm	7
2. Sixth level	9	5 hours: Monday and Wednesday from 6 to 8:30 pm	6
3. Conversation 1	6	5 hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 6 to 8:30 pm	10
4. Conversation 2	8	5 hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 6 to 8:30 pm	9

Another source of information was the revision of the students' files that rested on the coordinator's office. This information was used to help me identify those students that started from the first level and the teachers' level of education and working experience.

Finally, I did a speaking examination based on the IELTS speaking band descriptors to analyze the students' performance at the end of the program. The questions used to assess the students level of proficiency in oral production and the IELTS band descriptors can be consulted in the annexes six and three. The items evaluated were fluency, coherence, lexical repertoire, grammatical range, accuracy and pronunciation.

2. Subjects of study

The subjects of study in this research were the students from the two sixth-level groups and the two conversational levels of the English course for adults, as well as the teachers in charge of these levels.

The groups observed were two groups of sixth-level and two groups of the conversational level in different schedules. Each one of these groups had five hours of class per week and a total of eighty hours in the semester; I made thirty-two observations during the semester, which are explained in the following chart.

2.1 Students' Characterization

Twenty-three students accepted to participate in this study, but only information from seventeen of them was used. The subjects considered had taken at least 4 levels at the Colegio Mayor. Performance of students who started in level three or higher, were not taken into consideration, because it is difficult to determine whether their performance is due to the program or to other factors.

The groups were made up of mix ages, that is to say, teenagers, adolescents and adults; the age range was from fourteen to thirty-six years old, they belong to different social levels, mainly to social strata two and three. Due to this variety, the program counts with school and university students, as well as formal and informal employees.

Table 2: ***"Students' Information chart"*** contains the data of the seventeen students who presented the test whose age-range goes from fourteen to thirty-six years old. The group they belong to and finally their occupation.

Table 1: Students' information chart

STUDENT	GROUP	AGE	OCUPATION
Student 1	6A	36	Industrial engineer
Student 2	6A	22	University student
Student 3	6C	25	Clerk
Student 4	6C	19	Accountancy assistant
Student 5	6C	18	University student
Student 6	6A	21	University student
Student 7	6C	27	University student
Student 8	6C	29	Taxi driver
Student 9	6A	16	School student
Student 10	6A	14	School student
Student 11	Conversation	19	University student
Student 12	Conversation	14	School student
Student 13	Conversation	15	He just graduated from high school
Student 14	Conversation	17	University student
Student 15	Conversation	19	Clerk
Student 16	Conversation	19	University student
Student 17	Conversation	22	University student

2.2 Teachers' Characterization

The teaching practices made part of this research paper analysis and gave light on the degree of effectiveness of the program goals. Colegio Mayor del Cauca for the second period of 2015 had thirty two English teachers. Twenty-seven were English and French teachers, five had post-graduate studies in the field of education and one was a language expert, that is to say, this teacher had a certified-high-proficient English level but did not have any university study. It is a program's policy not to hire any student teacher.

Out of the mentioned staff, just four teachers were part of the observation because they were directly in charge of the groups. One of them had a bachelor's degree in teaching, one had post-graduate studies and the other was a language expert, as explained in the following chart:

Table 3: Teachers' information chart

TEACHER	STUDIES	DEGREE	WORK EXPERIENCE	GROUPS
TEACHER 1	LANGUAGE EXPERT	COMPUTER TECHNICIAN 2002 TEFL-TESOL COURSE 120 HOURS 2010 FIRST SEMESTER OF ENGLISH CAREER 2015	ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR:15 YEARS TEFL-TESOL INSTRUCTOR: 4 YEARS TOTAL 19 YEARS	LEVEL SIX, LEVEL CONVERSATION 2
TEACHER 2	SPECIALIST	EDUCATION TEACHER 1986 SPECIALIST IN PEDAGOGICAL EVALUATION 1999 ESPECIALIST IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION	ENGLISH TEACHER 29 YEARS	LEVEL SIX
TEACHER 3	ENGLISH AND FRENCH TEACHER	ENGLISH AND FRENCH TEACHER 2013	ENGLISH TEACHER 2 YEARS	LEVEL CONVERSATION 1

V. RESULTS

The results are organized in two sections. The first sections analyses the results of the speaking test. It presents the score the students obtained in the different subskills compared to the expected result in each subskill. It also presents an overall result with its corresponding analysis. The second section presents four case studies, one for each of the classes observed. The analysis includes references to the teaching strategies, the classroom environment and the students' oral participation.

2.1 Speaking test results

The chart 1: *"Students' oral proficiency in English"* shows the results of the speaking test based on the IELTS examination for the sixth and the two conversational semesters. The results of the students' score for the following individual criteria represented. The subskills analyzed according to the IELTS speaking test are: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, pronunciation. Later, this score is compared with the expected level according to the IELTS band descriptor that goes from 4.0 to 5.0 for B1 and from 5.5 to 6.5 for B2. Therefore, the difference between the achieved and the expected score is presented in the next column. The results closer to zero or negative represent a good oral proficiency because they show the students achieved or exceeded the program's goal of B1 and B2 respectively, while the higher the number the greater the gap between what is expected and where they are. These results are also interpreted according to the Common European Framework band that is presented below.

Common European Framework equivalence chart: Retrieved from:

<https://www.britishcouncil.es/examenes/ielts>

Table 2: IELTS - CEFR Equivalence chart

Nivel CEFR	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Resultado IELTS	1-3.4	3.5-3.9	4.0-5.0	5.5-6.5	7.0-8.0	8.5-9.0

The following charts present the results of the speaking test. It includes the information about each subskill and the expected result. Figures in zero (0) or below (negative numbers) mean that the student has reached or is above the expected level.

Table 3: Level 6 Students' oral proficiency in English

GROUP OF STUDENTS EVALUATED	STUDENT	FLUENCY AND COHERENCE		LEXICAL RESOURCE		GRAMMATICAL RANGE AND ACCURACY		PRONUNCIATION		LEVEL ACHIEVED	CEF EQUIVALENCE	EXPECTED LEVEL CEF ^R	IELTS EXPECTED BAND	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACHIEVED THE LOWEST SCORE IN EXPECTED BAND
		LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL					
6 ^a	Student 1	4	0	3	1	3	1	4,5	-0,5	3,6	A2	B1	4.0-5.0 Lowest score in expected band: 4.0	0,4
6 ^a	Student 2	3	1	3,3	0,7	3	1	3,4	0,6	3,2	A1			0,8
6A	Student 3	4,5	-0,5	4	0	4	0	5	-1	4,4	B1			-0,4
6A	Student 4	4	0	4	0	5	-1	4,5	-0,5	4,4	B1			-0,4
6C	Student 5	3	1	3	1	4	0	4	0	3,5	A2			0,5
6C	Student 6	3	1	3	1	4	0	4	0	3,5	A2			0,5
6C	Student 7	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	A1			1
6C	Student 8	3	1	3	1	3	1	4	0	3,3	A1			0,7
6C	Student 9	2	2	2	2	3	1	3	1	2,5	A1			1,5
6C	Student 10	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	A1			1
Average		3,3	0,8	3,1	0,9	3,5	0,5	3,8	0,2	3,4				0.8

For the level 6 groups the expected level is a B1 that corresponds with a 4.0 band in the IELTS speaking test. Only 2 students (20%) achieved the expected level. Their scores in all the subskills were equal or above the expected results. The rest of the group didn't reach the goal of achieving a B1, 5 students ended up in A1 (50%) and 3 students had an A2 level (30%). When comparing the expected results in the different subskills, it is clear that the subskill with results closer to the objective is pronunciation, having a 0.2 difference. The subskill of grammatical range and accuracy is 0.5 points apart from the goal; lexical resource is 0.9 points apart from the expected result and fluency and coherence is 0.8 points apart.⁵

Table 4: Conversation students' oral proficiency in English

GROUP OF STUDENTS EVALUATED	STUDENT		FLUENCY AND COHERENCE		LEXICAL RESOURCE		GRAMMATICAL RANGE AND ACCURACY		PRONUNCIATION		LEVEL ACHIEVED	CEF EQUIVALENCE	EXPECTED LEVEL CEF	IELTS EXPECTED BAND	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACHIEVED THE LOWEST SCORE IN EXPECTED BAND
			LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL					
Conversation 2	Student	11	3	2,5	3	2,5	4	1,5	5	0,5	3,8	A2	B2	5.5-6.5 Lowest score in expected band: 5.5	1,7
Conversation 2	Student	12	4	1,5	4	1,5	4	1,5	5	0,5	4,3	B1			1,2
Conversation 2	Student	13	5	0,5	5	0,5	6	-0,5	5	0,5	5,3	B1			0,2
Conversation 2	Student	14	5	0,5	4	1,5	5	0,5	4	1,5	4,5	B1			1
Conversation 1	Student	15	5	0,5	4	1,5	6	-0,5	7	-1,5	5,5	B2			0
Conversation 1	Student	16	7	-1,5	6	-0,5	7	-1,5	6	-0,5	6,5	B2			-1
Conversation 1	Student	17	3	2,5	3	2,5	3	2,5	3	2,5	3	A1			2,5
Average			4,6	0,9	4,1	1,4	5	0,5	5	0,5	4,7				

For the conversation classes the expected level is B2, which has a score of entrance to the level of 5.5. Only 2 students achieved the expected goal (29%). Just as with the level six groups, the subskill that is closer to reaching the goal is pronunciation, with a band 5 as an average result. This means that the students are 0.5 points apart from reaching the expected result. In the subskill of grammatical range and accuracy, the results are the same as pronunciation. They are 0.5 apart from the expected result. The other two subskills, fluency and coherence and lexical resource are 0.9 and 1.4 points far from the expected result.

2.2 Cases description

As explained in the methodology section, several class observations to the different groups were done. During this process, notes were taken in a journal and the sessions were recorded as well. To present the analysis, four cases were written. Case number one corresponds to sixth level students who received their classes in the afternoon, Case number two corresponds to sixth level students who received their classes at night, case number three and four correspond to conversational level one and two, both groups received their classes at night.

CASE 1 SIXTH LEVEL

I observed this small group of eight students seven times during the semester, in a class session of two hours and a half each one. The teacher, who was a specialist in pedagogical evaluation with twenty-nine years of experience, oriented the classes with different activities. In general, I identified three moments in the class: the teacher used to start with a wrap up of the previous lesson; afterwards the teachers and students checked together the book activities and finished with some communicative activities.



Regarding the class execution and management, the activities were done with a defined objective but in most of the classes this was not expressed either written or verbally and the skills worked the most were reading and speaking, while grammar and writing were assigned as homework. As for the timing of the class, most of the times they had long activities which put them behind the lessons to be covered during the semester. The teacher switched from one activity to the other smoothly and one of the biggest concerns was to make the students pronounce correctly. Therefore, the teacher made emphasis on the phonetic alphabet and on repetition. There was not any specific class arrangement or board usage but there was an active interaction between the students and the



teacher, they used English either to talk to the teacher or to do it among themselves. There was a respectful environment and motivation to participate. There were good classroom conditions like lighting, comfortable chairs, absence of disturbing noise, movable chairs and different resources available like computer, tv, cd player, board, teacher table.

Going back to the three moments in the class, the first part, which lasted about thirty minutes, was interesting because the students remembered the previous class activities, after that, the teacher asked an open question to start the lesson and make them participate. For instance, they talked about students' nightmares, interests or trying to define a word. In this light, B1 and B2 students' participation was more organized: ***"I do not agree with this opinion because I consider introvert people are intelligent people, they have a lot of skills to support any activity"***. While A1 and A2 students lacked structure and had more hesitations. For example, ***"to be extrovert is good, healthy, the... the mood eh is more, more happy, laugh"***.

The second part of the class lasted forty-five minutes. The students' participation focused on reading the book activities previously assigned as homework or doing the listening activities. Sometimes the teacher asked them to give the book's answer with their own words. They had a break of ten minutes and returned for the last part of the class that lasted sixty-five minutes.

The last part of the class, referred to the communicative practice, had two moments. The first one was either a think-pair-share activity or a role-play to practice any aspect of the lesson. One more time, the production was limited for those A1 and A2 students who had lots of hesitations and pauses; they also misunderstood the questions or expressed their ideas with isolated words. For example, ***"watch tv (referring to a situation in a party)"***, ***"self-true referring to self-confident"***, ***"only speak necessary"***. On the other hand, B1-B2 students' participation referred to complete ideas, for example: ***"I tried to keep quiet and do not dance"***, ***"make people's comments"***, ***"I chat on the cellphone"***, ***"they speak and laugh all the time, cheer up, offer drinks, take pictures with friends"***. The second part of the communicative practice was prepared in advanced by the students and presented in the class for example, news, books and personal opinions about specific topics. They all did interesting presentations.

In general, the classes were organized and the teacher encouraged student participation. However, the activities were just based on the book suggestions and no additional material or technological resource were used; except for the students' oral presentations. Regarding pronunciation, there was immediate correction but there were no related post-activities to overcome the students' weaknesses. There was also evidence of lack of vocabulary, even though the students had already studied the words in the lesson. Despite this, the students participated actively.

CASE 2 SIXTH LEVEL

This group had nine students and I observed them six times during the semester, in a class session of two hours and a half each one. The teacher was a language expert with nineteen years of experience. The institution classifies as language expert the professional who does not have an English teaching degree but supports his/her knowledge with language certifications like TEFL-TESOL and others.



I could identify three moments in the class: warm-up, class development based on the book activities and students' particular needs and finally feedback. Talking about the execution and management, there was systematized use of the board in which the teacher registered ten minutes before the beginning of the class, the activities, the objective, the date, topic and new vocabulary. He also arranged the chairs in different ways depending on the activity to be developed like semi-circle, pair-work and individual

practice. The timing of the activities was also planned. Regarding the language skills, the focus was on speaking, especially on working on the students' weaknesses. For instance, if the students were confused with the use of prepositions, the class had an extraactivity different from the ones proposed in the syllabus to overcome that specific difficulty. In this light, the students practiced with games, videos or any activity assigned as homework and later shared with everybody.

The transition from one activity to the other was done smoothly and the class interaction was in English, making emphasis on conveying a clear



message rather than having a standardized British or American accent. Therefore, there was an

active participation using the target language. The institution also provided appropriate classroom conditions like good lighting, comfortable chairs, absence of disturbing noise , and different resources like computer, TV-set, CD player, board and teacher's table.

Going back to the warm-up that lasted about fifteen minutes, there were different activities like talking about news, their weekend, socio-cultural issues or open questions in which the students shared their personal views about something. For instance, ***“Are you a home person?”, “Do you have a... In Popayan?”, “What do you do if you're pregnant?”, “What problems don't you comment with your parents, why?”, “Do you have skills to resolve your problems?, give me one example”***. This opening introduced the topic and contextualized the new vocabulary. Due to this, the students' interventions had mistakes but they were also critical. For instance, ***“my grandpa used alternative medicine and it is very important because at that moment it is not possible to go to the doctor”; “so the culture force that the people use their mind to make effective alternative solutions because the ways that they have were less”; “it's very important to get a solution, to make a solution you need a little analysis, you can get skills if you study every day”***.

The second part of the class corresponded to the class development and lasted an hour and a half, fifteen to twenty minutes to present the grammar and the rest to practice. During the first twenty minutes, the class worked the structures by means of inference, analysis or direct teaching. Some of the teaching strategies promoted in this class were lecture combined with active methods like cooperative learning, role-play, debates, discussions and use of technology. In this light, this class had summative and formative evaluation of the students' progress. Hence, depending on the class, the learners deduced the rules in some given examples and analyzed them; other times the teacher explained those directly using different colors.

The other hour and ten minutes were spent practicing with communicative activities like round tables, debates, face-to-face interviews, videos, oral and written exercises, role-plays, being a teacher for one day. These activities integrated different language skills like listening, writing, reading and speaking. Sometimes the teacher had to repeat the questions because low-level students did not understand. Other times these students did not give a coherent answer or gave monosyllabic yes/ no answers that did not express complete ideas. For example, ***“There is a few cameras. It was great because the presentation different the topic form...”***, ***“It is an option that help the police to capture vandals”***.

The feedback was done most of the time at the end of each class as a reflection in which the students were aware of their mistakes so they corrected themselves; there was also peer correction and further activities to emphasize and practice, other times the teacher retold what the students had said incorrectly. During this time, the learners also expressed their opinion about their classmates' presentations.

Despite the variety of activities to practice, the students had difficulties in lexicon when they expressed something spontaneously. For instance, *"How do you say aire?"*, *"what is the word for glorieta?"*, they also had many pauses and hesitations when expressing their ideas: *"it was good...."*, *"It was great because.. eh...the presentation different the topic form"*, . On the other hand, these difficulties were handled very well when the students prepared in advanced their interventions. Besides, I observed that all the students, in spite of the level, had errors mostly related to subject verb agreement and verb tenses. Some of these errors can be observed in expressions such as *"Strategies is"*, *"I write (speaking in past)"*, *"those cities don't have instead of didn't have"*, *"I didn't came that class"*.

To sum up, the classes were organized and the students' participation was active from A1 to B1 learners; the activities included the syllabus lessons and extra activities in which the learners expressed their ideas spontaneously; they used different technologies in the classes and had a lot of practice. However, it was evident that this group needed to work more on lexicon and grammar structures. I think the fact of having a deeper feedback focused on the students' difficulties is important but at the same time, it is demanding and the class stays behind in the lessons to be covered in the semester.

CASE 3 CONVERSATION 1

I observed this group of six students ten times during the semester. The teacher had an English and French degree and two years of experience in the field. The class was structured in three moments: first, there was a warm-up activity, second the students discussed mostly in pairs some questions and worked some written activities, and third they shared together the answers and expressed their opinions about the topic. Sometimes the class closed with a reflection about the things learned in class.

Talking about the class execution and management, I observed, on the one hand, that the teacher seldom used the board to explain anything or to clarify the meaning of words, the teacher followed the students' rhythm when doing something. On the other hand, the objective was presented verbally, the class activities showed different teaching strategies like videos, debates, and cooperative work. All these things engaged students' critical thinking and active



participation. This class was really focused on developing speaking skills and sometimes it was supported with written activities. The class planning followed a clear line and there was a smooth switch between one activity and the other.

Unfortunately, the classroom conditions for this group were not appropriate; they received their class in the English resource center, which was comfortable but noisy. For instance, the people who came to the library and the students who played outside in some nearby ping-pong tables interrupted the classes, and so did some activities programmed in the auditorium that was very close. There was, however, good lighting, comfortable chairs, board and technological resources like video-beam, laptop and a CD player.

Regarding the class structure, the warm-up lasted about 10 to 15 minutes. It consisted on a question about the weekend activities or a game such as letter chain, guessing words and building up sentences. The students' participation showed clearly their variety in their English level, that is to say, A1 students interventions were not consistent and clear. For example: ***"Last Friday I go to Cali, I go to the Halloween, The Saturday I go to..... How do you say: Pedir dulces?"***, ***"the Saturday go out to the party, ehhhh, the Sunday is...How do you saytrasnochada?, The next (last) week is study, study, study. in the Monday is study, study", "I have sentence with beach?... rich?"***,. While those who got B2 level made interesting participations. For instance, ***"I was very busy, actually I am busy, because in my school ehkh we are going to do a science day and I am in the project and it's really exhausting... extra-classes"***, ***"I have been studying and in the last week I went to the "festival gastronómico", I ate some pieces of cake"***



The next moment of the class was devoted to discussing some questions or to developing some written activities like filling the blanks with some given expressions, matching some vocabulary words with their definitions, discussing the meaning of some given words, classifying words according to the stress. These activities were programmed mostly in pairs and a few times individually. The time for this part of the class was not previously set, it depended

on the students' rhythm, sometimes it was long, others short. The students talked to the teacher in English but they used either English or Spanish among them; B2 students participated more frequently while A1 students were very insecure. Nevertheless, the teacher promoted the participation among all of them; he addressed them by their names and asked them personally.

In the next part, the students shared their answers or reported what the partners had told them during the previous moment of the class. One more time, this was a tough time for A1 students because they lacked vocabulary, had many doubts in pronunciation and made structure mistakes that made it difficult to understand what they were trying to say. For example: ***"The shocking advertis de Jhon was about... ehhh How do you say prisioneros?"*** , then the student could not continue explaining, ***"the prisoners that are "condenados a pena de muerte", "It was about a "implementos de aseos" because it can be dangerous for us, I think "Limpido", "for Mariana ehhh... yes ehhh... ah no sorry, she buy the products when she needed something, she doesn't influence for the TV".*** During this time, the teacher made emphasis on the message conveyed and the pronunciation mistakes and when the students had doubts about any word, the teacher used examples to exemplify the meaning. So he said correctly those words or structures that were mispronounced but, A1 students specially, did not seem to be aware of the things they did wrong because they just repeated exactly what the teacher said even if this did not fit well in the things they were trying to express. B2 students sometimes corrected themselves; they had coherent participations with a few vocabulary inconsistencies but a clear message could be understood. For example ***"I think you are not alone, you can count with (on) people that can help you in the bad moments", "well I think that it means that when you are in problems or when you feel bad is best (better) if you are alone***

and is best (better) to. To take distance from the other people”, “I think she felt better because she was alone and maybe because she didn’t want to see her bad”.

To sum up, the classes had a clear speaking goal, with defined activities to develop students’ critical thinking and participation. However, there was a reduced feedback for those students who had a lower speaking level; the institution has a teacher to reinforce these students and a lot of material to promote their self-study process but neither the teacher nor the students took advantage of it. I think low-level students should have failed the course and needed to repeat this level, but they all were promoted in spite of their difficulties when communicating in English. The timing of the activities needs also to be worked on because most of the time they did not have time to do the final reflection in which the students expressed the things learned in class which showed interesting things like that the students felt motivated because they understood some grammar structures after the practice they had in the speaking class.

CASE 4 CONVERSATION 2

I observed this group of eight students, ten times during the semester. The teacher was a computer technician and a language expert with fifteen years of experience teaching TEFL-TESOL and four years as a language instructor. Additionally, he was in the first semester of the English teaching bachelor’s program. This class was structured in three general moments; first a warming-up activity, second the class development that was most of the time organized in cooperative groups and finally a wrap-up of the things done and feedback.



Concerning the execution and management, it was methodic and organized. That is to say, everything was set before the students arrived at the classroom, the objective, topic, class activities and date were visible on the upper part of the board and on one side there was a space for the vocabulary; the chairs most of the time were organized in round table. The focus of this class was

to develop communicative skills, so the class was oriented ninety-nine percent in English, the teacher switched to Spanish just to make jokes. The class was supported with different teaching strategies that contextualized the topic. For example, videos, open questions, case studies, pair-work, pre- and post-reading activities like matching vocabulary, inferring, analyzing questions and discussion. The transition from one activity to the other was connected efficiently. Therefore, the students followed the thread smoothly. The institution also provided appropriate classroom conditions like good lighting, comfortable chairs, absence of disturbing noise, and different resources like computer, TV-set, CD player, board and teacher's table.

Going back to the warm-up that lasted 10 to 15 minutes, they did different activities such as talking about a piece of news, answering open-questions like: ***“ What’s good from Mexico?, What is an explorer?, Do you know any important explorer in our history?, or talking about dreams like being able to fly”***. The students usually seemed to be interested; they laughed and participated. For instance, ***“Venezuela and Colombia, in the frontera.., a lot of Colombian people deported and the comments for Maduro and Santos”, “courses with the international federation red cross, eh represent where you can do any course that you want in a page, you can be volunteer”***. When the message was not clear the teacher used immediate correction such as: ***borderline, a lot of Colombian people have been deported.***



The second part of the class was most of the time worked in pairs or small groups and it was based on a video, song or reading. During this stage, the students analyzed a given situation; they were also in charge of specific task. To exemplify some of them, watching a video and observing the kind of feeling people were experimenting, reading a part of a text and being responsible for giving a summary of one paragraph to the rest of the group, preparing a promotion in a travel agency. Meanwhile the students were working; the

teacher monitored the activity and prepared the board with some specific questions or vocabulary activity related to the video or reading like matching synonyms and antonyms, relating words and so on.

The next part of the class was devoted to sharing with the rest of the group the things previously worked, sometimes they expressed their ideas, and other times they represented them in role-plays or gave examples of any specific situation. For instance, ***“we feel lazy after lunch”, “I have violin lessons but in the afternoon”, “I think when you do something wrong you feel insecure but I am not talking about something that is bad but something that you did not do well”, “maybe when I have to make decisions”***. The participations were clear, coherent and according to the intermediate level they had. This group also did interesting videos expressing their opinions about technology. Some of their ideas were: ***“technology let us to be comfort doing our daily activities”, “We have the possibility to learn new things and in the case of languages we can increase our vocabulary”, “technology makes our life easier because when our parents were students the information only was in books but now we can find a lot of information and bring it with us in our electronic gadgets any place any time”***.

The last activity was done individually and consisted on a written activity like some multiple-choice comprehension questions, writing a letter to complain for a false promotion, or a video where the students expressed their personal opinion. The feedback was provided by the teacher individually.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data was done taking all the sources. The first part of this chapter presents the quantitative information using the results of the speaking test and the second part presents a qualitative analysis of the observed classes and their relation with the theoretical part.

The analysis of the data was based on the IELTS speaking examination that generates results for the following criteria: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, pronunciation. This score is associated with the expected level according to the IELTS band descriptor that goes from 4.0 to 5.0 for B1 and from 5.5 to 6.5 for B2. (*retrieved July 9 2016 from: <http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/find-out-about-results/understand-your-ielts-scores/common-european-framework-equivalencies>*).

For the level six groups, the analysis done according to the IELTS descriptor shows that in general terms the group doesn't reach the expected goal. Nonetheless, there performance in the different subskills was not even, students did better in some subskills than in others, as could be expected.

Table 5: Level 6 overall speaking results

	FLUENCY AND COHERENCE		LEXICAL RESOURCE		GRAMMATICAL RANGE AND ACCURACY		PRONUNCIATION		LEVEL ACHIEVED	CEF EQUIVALENCE	EXPECTED LEVEL CEF	IELTS EXPECTED BAND	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACHIEVED THE LOWEST SCORE IN EXPECTED BAND
	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL					
Average	3,3	0,8	3,1	0,9	3,5	0,5	3,8	0,2	3.4	A1	B1	4.0-5.0	0.6

The strongest subskill is pronunciation with a result of 3.8, that is to say, there is just a 0,2 difference between the result and the expected level of 4.0, equivalent to a B1 level.

Grammatical range and accuracy followed with 3.5 and just 0.5 of difference between the result and the expected band. Fluency and coherence got a result of 3.3 with 0.8 of difference respect to four. Lexical resource was the weakest speaking criteria with 3.1 and 0.9 points of difference to achieve the lowest limit in the expected band that goes from 4.0 and 5.0. In this analysis the results closer

to zero or negative represent good oral proficiency because they show the students were about to achieve the program's goal of B1 and B2 respectively while the higher the number the greater the gap between what is expected and where they are.

The results for the conversation levels showed that the strongest speaking subskills were pronunciation and grammatical range and accuracy with a result of 5 points each; the difference between the results achieved and the lowest score in the expected band was 0.5 points. Fluency and coherence achieved a result of 4.6; the difference with the lowest band goal was 0.9. The weakest skill was lexical resource with 4.1 points and a difference of 1.4 to achieve the lowest score in the expected band that goes from 5.5 and 6.5.

Table 6: Conversation level overall speaking results

GROUP OF STUDENTS EVALUATED STUDENT	FLUENCY AND COHERENCE		LEXICAL RESOURCE		GRAMMATICAL RANGE AND ACCURACY		PRONUNCIATION		LEVEL ACHIEVED	CEF EQUIVALENCE	EXPECTED LEVEL CEF	IELTS EXPECTED BAND	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACHIEVED THE LOWEST SCORE IN EXPECTED BAND
	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DIFFERENCE WITH EXPECTED LEVEL					
Average	4,6	0,9	4,1	1,4	5	0,5	5	0,5	4,7	A2	B2	5.5-6.5	0.8

Analyzing the relation between the results obtained in the speaking test and other aspects found during the classroom observations, I could see that aspects such as motivation, pronunciation, feedback, promotion of autonomous learning and building up of confidence play a very important role in the development of oral production. In other words, a knowledgeable teacher is relevant in the development of the students' oral proficiency. The teachers' staff were well-prepared in terms of education and experience. The class observations also revealed that they promoted students' participation and focused on speaking without leaving aside the rest of the language skills, the classes had a respectful environment and motivation to participate.

Additionally, the teaching strategies were not lined by a single technique, that is to say, the classes clearly followed a communicative approach in the sense that Communicative Language Teaching is not ruled by a single technique but it looks to foster communication according to the student needs (Rodgers, 2001; Sauvignon, 2001; Brown, 2001). In the light of this, I found different moments in the class when the students had communicative practice, participated in drills, roles plays, collaborative tasks and used technology. However, the development of other aspects like fluency, coherence and

appropriate use of vocabulary was done less frequently. In fact, pronunciation was the strongest criteria for both groups. Grammatical range and accuracy were the second strongest criterion for the sixth and conversational levels.

The class observations showed how the teachers spent an amount of forty-five to ninety minutes of a two-hour classes in the grammar activities, that is to say thirty-three to sixty-six percent of the class was devoted in explaining and practicing grammar activities. They also assigned grammar activities as a homework with the help of the workbook; the answers were checked in the following class.

Oral interaction has been characterized from diverse perspectives that take into account the elements that allow different communicative situations. For instance, Richards (2008) underlines *“conversational routines and styles of speaking while the first refers to the use of fixed expressions, the second has to do with a more pragmatic use of language according to the age, sex, roles, etc.”* (p.19). Regarding conversational routines, the textbook has a complete unit devoted to practice strategies like common expressions, hesitations, fillers useful in conversation. The observations also showed how role-plays to reproduce these kinds of fixed conversational expressions were common and all the students no matter their level did well because they have the chance to practice previously. However, there was a common warm-up activity the teachers used as suggested as unit opener in the teachers' book. It consisted on starting the unit with an open question about students' interests and personal experiences. The results for this conversational activity didn't promote the same level of practice and learning in all the students, because B1 and B2 students were able to express their ideas effectively while A1 and A2 students lacked structure and had more hesitations that interfered with the message. In other words, some learners were failing in expressing their opinions in a formal context.

One of the reasons for this could be that the classes had enough activities to practice a *“local management system”* and few opportunities to go deeper in an *“interactionally managed system”* (Sacks et al. (1978) as cited in Nóbrega, 2008). Let's remember that the first one refers to the natural turn-taking in conversation between two people which was practiced by means of the drilling of conversations. The interactional managed system implies more than two people participating in the exchange of information. This has to do with expressing the opinion and being able to agree or disagree on the same. Actually, just one of the three observed teachers used these

kinds of communicative class activities such as debates, videos to practice giving their opinions, round tables.

To this respect, Brown and Yule (1983) (as cited in Richards, 2008) made reference to the functions of speaking into three categories: *“talk as interaction, talk as transaction, talk as performance”* (p.21). On one hand, as it has been expressed in the previous paragraph, the classes have enough practice in aspects of conversational English like talks, turn-talking between two people, conversational strategies that Brown and Yule called *“talk as interaction”*. Additionally, the communicative activities observed in the classes also offer practice in talk as performance that refers to talk in front of an audience. For instance, oral presentations, telling stories in which there is previous preparation.

On the other hand, the class communicative activities need to focus more on talk as transaction in which *“The message and making oneself understood clearly and accurately is the central focus, rather than the participants”* Brown and Yule (1983) (as cited in Richards, 2008. p. 21). In other words, talk as transaction implies *“real-world transactions”*. To achieve this end, it is necessary to work on activities that expand the lexicon to express and discuss ideas critically. Regarding this, the observed classes spent just from fifteen to twenty minutes to this kind of interaction and it was used as a lesson opener. Therefore, there was not much focus on this kind of activity compared with pronunciation or grammar in which the classes spent from forty-five to ninety minutes.

Another weakness of the English program according to the test results is the students' low lexical repertoire. The class observations showed the teachers seldom used different materials to reinforce the acquisition of vocabulary. The classes strongly depend on the textbook to provide this lexical repertoire. Although the textbook focuses on communicative activities, as it is described in the material's section of this report, the text also has the background of *“ Cambridge international corpus that is the collection of spoken and written vocabulary from different real sources”* McCarthy et al. (2008). Language learners need lots of practice to achieve oral proficiency in the foreign language. It is a general tendency that the classes give priority to check the book activities and the communicative activities were placed at the end of the class. These communicative activities did not involve extra-material that provide realia like newspapers, articles, videos, TV-series but they

focused on the book suggestions with the exception of the conversational classes that did not use any textbook. As quoted by Hatch (1978) in Richards (2008), "*second language learners need a wide range of topics at their disposal in order to manage talk as interaction. Initially, learners may depend on familiar topics to get by. However, they also need practice introducing new topics into conversation to move beyond this stage*" (p. 24). Indeed, the speaking test performance was an evidence of this lack of vocabulary. The learners frequently asked how to say words in English, they got lost in the natural flow of the conversation. Sometimes they did not understand the questions and asked the examiner to repeat them.

Another factor that influenced this shortage of vocabulary was the feedback. Although the classes had immediate feedback, two of the three observed classes did not have further activities to overcome the students' weaknesses. Therefore, the teaching practices should move to a more student-centered approach in which they could think on the students' weaknesses in order to permeate the students' self-study practices. There is not really a change in the conception of teacher-centered methodology, which entails a switch in aspects like evaluation, material, language proficiency, technology (Chow & Mok-Cheung, 2004; Wang, 2007 in Littlewood, 2013; Ansarey, 2012).

The mentioned speaking features underlined the importance of the teaching practices. Nevertheless, the learner also plays an important role in this process (Richards, 2008). The class observation revealed that learners seldom use the extra-class activities provided by the language program. For example, the conversational classes, the speaking materials in the resource center, the free tutorials offered in the library or the online websites that many times the teachers suggest in the laboratory sessions. Actually, some pedagogical agreements have been made during the teachers' meetings to motivate and improve the students' oral proficiency like planning special classes with the native speaker, teachers' rotation to offer different teaching strategies. These kind of activities planned during the class time have been well accepted by the learners but they seldom participate in extra-class activities.

In general, for both six and conversational groups the students who achieve B1 and B2 is low. It was found that the teachers prepared engaging communicative activities that motivate the classes. However, the focus of the activities was mainly in pronunciation and they need to work on additional material that helps the learners to increase their lexical repertoire. Hence, pronunciation was the strongest skill and lexical resource was the weakest one. An overview of the sixth level provided that twenty percent of the group achieved the goal of B1 level in the speaking skill while the thirty percent achieve A2 level and the fifty percent are in A1 level. The results for the conversation levels showed that the twenty nine percent achieved the expected level of B2, forty three percent achieved B1, fourteen percent obtained A2 and fourteen percent obtained A1. In terms of effectiveness that implies a comparison between the real and utopic results in order to make changes and improvements (Fitz-Gibbon et al, 1996; Shalock, 2001 in Wang, 2009; Murphy, 2000; The University of Washington, Seattle, 2005). The program is effective in the teaching of pronunciation and grammatical range and accuracy but it needs to improve in the teaching of lexical repertoire.

VII CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the English Program for adults at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca, in reaching the set goals of B1 and B2 level (according to the CEFR) in oral production, through the use of the communicative approach.

In order to do this, it was necessary to determine if the level of oral proficiency reached by students in level 6 and conversation course meet the CEFR standards for B1 and B2 accordingly and identify if the teacher's teaching strategies promote the development of oral production at the University.

In conclusion, results of this study show that the English program for adults at the Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca is not effective in reaching the set goals of B1 and B2 in most of the students, because:

- **Teaching strategies are limited to the use of the textbook and classes lack of more meaningful and conversational activities:** teaching strategies has a remarkable effect in the development of the speaking skill, because the classroom interactions promoted by the activities constitute a crucial scenario to recreate the use of language. Hence, good teaching strategies provide confidence, motivation, while inappropriate teaching methods such as textbook centered classes, lacking of interactions and conversational activities limit the students' learning of the language. Among the things observed, I want to underline that teachers need to apply more interactive and meaningful conversational activities. Based on the results, it can be noticed that students' low performance in the test has as a one possible cause the way classes have been implemented in the institution.

At the University, there are not some common agreements about the principles relying the communicative approach applied in the language program.

In language teaching, teachers must apply the teaching strategies depending on their students' profiles, meaning they can use different techniques, material, etc, to promote oral production; this assures creativity. However, it is necessary to have some common principles that establish the way the communicative approach is implemented in the institution in order to promote oral production in a more effective way.

- **There is limited useful didactic material to promote oral production during classes and extra class:** Despite this, there are some factors that make part of the teaching strategies that need to be improved such as the use of the material and the improvement of the feedback process. In this sense, the teaching practices are limited to the text-book activities which are good but do not provide enough communicative tasks to acquire the goal of B1 and B2 levels. In the light of the foregoing, teaching the classes with the textbook provided by the institution without using extra material may be a program weakness, because learners are not exposed to a variety of daily-life situations that provide the language background and confidence when speaking. Besides, the teachers may have a more effective use of the resources the institution counts on like tutorials, extra-material and conversation classes in order to improve in the acquisition of vocabulary.
- **There is low effectiveness to promote vocabulary usage among students:** The language program fails in making students use the vocabulary in meaningful way, which has a negative impact on students' fluency, coherence and accurateness when expressing an idea. They are not able to express meaning due to the lack of linguistic repertoire developed during the course.

Among the factors taken into consideration in this research for oral proficiency, the English program is effective in teaching pronunciation. However, it has failed to be effective in teaching vocabulary which may have an incidence in the low results in aspects like fluency, coherence and accurateness when expressing an idea.

VIII. LIMITATIONS

This chapter presents the limitations to carry out the research and the possible suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the program regarding the students' oral proficiency.

- A significant limitation for this research study was the students' fear to present an oral examination since they were not used to this kind of tests. The oral examination was carried out with a sample of seventeen students in the four groups observed. Unfortunately, eight students decided not to present the oral examination because they felt insecure or just because they did not show up the day of the test.
- The lack of an entrance test to measure the students' previous knowledge was a limitation as well because there was not a real measure of the student's level of achievement at the end of the program. Therefore, I think the institution should have as policy to have an entrance and final test in each semester in order to have a more valid measure of the results achieved.
- Another limitation was the students' lack of knowledge about international examinations. This was the first time they faced a test like this so they were not familiar with the structure and the management of time. A way to deal with this could be starting the implementation of simulations in order to make learners familiar with this kind of examinations.

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ansarey, D. (2012). Communicative language teaching in EFL contexts: Teachers attitude and perception in Bangladesh. *ASA university review*. V6. N 1.

Bax, Stephen. 2003. 'The End of CLT: A Context Approach to Language Teaching.' *ELT Journal*, 57(3), pp. 278-87.

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (second edition). New York: Longman.

Canale, Michael. (1980). *Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing*, *Applied Linguistics*. Oxford University press.

Celce Murcia, M., Zoltan, D., & Thurrell, S. (1993). A pedagogical Framework for Communicative Competence: Content Specifications and Guideliness for Communicative Language Teaching. En D. Oaks, & A. Bay, *Proceedings of the Deseret Language and Linguistics Society 1993 Symposium* (p. 13-29). United States of America: the Deseret Language and Linguistics Society.

Chapter one: an overview of program evaluation.p.1-30. Retrieved October 7, 2015 from: www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/3988_Chapter_1_overview.pdf.

Chomsky, Noam. 1965. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of References for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Correa Uribe, S. (2002). Los conceptos de institución-evaluación e investigación evaluativa y aproximación a una tipología de evaluación. In S. Correa Uribe, A. Puerta Zapata, & B. Restrepo

Gómez, *Especialización en teoría, métodos y técnicas de investigación social: Módulo seis Investigación Evaluativa*. Bogotá, Colombia: Arfo editores e impresores Ltda.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The psychology of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1994). Teaching conversational skills intensively: Course content and rational. *ELT Journal*. Vol 48, 40-49.

Fitz-Gibbon, C., Taylor, M., & Lyons, L. (1996). Theory-based evaluation. *Evaluation Practice*, 2.

Harmer, Jeremy. (2003). *The practice of English language teaching*. Pearson/Longman.

Herazo, Jose. (2010). Authentic oral interaction in the efl class: what it means, what it does not. Retrieved July 1, 2016 from www.bdigital.unal.edu.co

Hymes, Dell. 1972. 'On Communicative Competence,' in J B Pride & J Holmes (eds), *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Hosseini , B. A., & Riasati , M. J. (2014). Communicative Language teaching: Characteristics and principles. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*. Volume 6 (4), 436-445.

IELTS train the trainer. (2009). The British Council, Colombia.

Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca. (2013). *Plan de estudios. Renovación de las resoluciones 00580 y00581*. Popayán-Cauca.

Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca. (n.d.). *Documento de historia institucional 1967-2011*. Popayan.

Jacobs, G., & Farrell, T.S.C. (2003). Understanding and Implementing the CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) Paradigm. *RELC Journal*, 34/1, 5-30.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching from method to postmethod*. Lawrence Erlbaum associates, publishers.

Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Littlewood, W. (2013). *Developing a context sensitive pedagogy for communication oriented language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1-22.

Mojibur, Rahman. (2010). *Teaching oral communication skills: A task based approach*. Retrieved July 1, 2016 from: www.esp-world.info.

Natural Resources Information Management Strategy (NSW Government 2002). Retrieved October 7, 2015 from: www.nrimns.nsw.gov.au.

Nóbrega, Daniela. (2008). Oral interaction and its implication in the learning and teaching process in EFL. *Revista Eletrônica de Divulgação Científica em Língua Portuguesa, Lingüística e Literatura*. 1-7.

Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35, 589-613.

O'leary, Z. (2010). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications Inc.

Petkutė, R. (2010). The Communicative Competence of the Language Teacher? *Santalka. Filologija. Edukologija* n. 2. ISSN 1822-430X print/1822-4318 online, 77-84.

Quintero, C. (2009). Reingeniería del programa de educación para el trabajo y el desarrollo humano de idioma inglés.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University press.

Richards, J. C. (2006). What is Communicative language Teaching? En *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. p.2.,5. United States of America: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (2008). The teaching of speaking. En *Teaching listening and speaking from theory to practice* (págs. 19-40). United States of America: Cambridge University Press.

Savignon, S. (2001). Communicative language teaching. *Theory into practice*. V26, N 4, 235-242.

Shrouf, F. (s.f.). *Teaching and improving speaking skills*. Recuperado el 7 de 10 de 2015, de www.philadelphia.edu.jo/academics/speaking.pdf

Wang, V. C. (2009). *Assessing and evaluating adult learning in career and technical education*. Long Beach, California: Zhejiang University Press.

Wholey, J. S., Hatry, H. P., & Newcomer, K. E. (2010). *Handbook of practical program evaluation. Third edition*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass a Wiley Imprint.

Wilkins, David. 1974. 'Notional Syllabuses and the Concept of a Minimum Adequate Grammar.' In *Linguistic Insights in Applied Linguistics.*, ed. S. P. Corder and E. Roulet, pp. 119-28. Brussels: AIMAV.

Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching Language as Communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

www.britishcouncil.es/examenes/ielts.

www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/prepare-test/understand-test-format/speaking-test).

www.takeielts.britishcouncil.org/find-out-about-results/understand-your-ielts-scores/common-european-framework-equivalencies.

Yulia, Yuyun. 2014. An evaluation of english language teaching programs in indonesian junior high schools In the yogyakarta province. P.63. School of Global, Urban and Social Studies College of Design and Social Context, RMIT University.

X. APPENDIXES

FECHA: Desde Agosto a Noviembre 2015

MASTER'S REPORT: Effectiveness of the English Program for adults at Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca regarding the development of oral production from a communicative approach.

INTEGRANTE: Leydi Lizeth Ceballos

Appendix 1 – Class observation grill

PLAN DE OBSERVACIÓN

(Basado en la rejilla de observación de: Alexander Abril, Diana Margarita Díaz, Diana Lucero Hernández, Ana María Herrán, Shamir Shah)

GROUPS	NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS
Sixth A level	7
Sixth C level	6
Conversation 1	10
Conversation 2	9

Objetivo de las observaciones:

- Observar la producción oral de los estudiantes desde un enfoque comunicativo.
- Observar si el docente propicia actividades adecuadas para la producción oral desde un enfoque comunicativo.
- Observar si la institución brinda las condiciones de infra-estructura necesarias para el desarrollo de actividades de producción oral.

Plan de trabajo:

Etapa 1: Diseñar la matriz de observación.

Etapa 2: observar y grabar los cursos.

Etapa 3: Diligenciar el formato de observación.

Etapa 4: Analizar las observaciones y redactar el informe final.

Etapa 5: analizar las observaciones y escribir el informe final



CLASS OBSERVATION FORM

(Basado en la rejilla de observación de: Alexander Abril, Diana Margarita Díaz, Diana Lucero Hernández, Ana María Herrán, Shamir Shah)

GENERAL INFORMATION			
Date:			
Observer			
Teacher observed			
Level			
Start time			
End Time			
Number of students	Male		Female
Range of Age			
Frequency of the class	5 hours per week		
Textbook or material used:			

CLASSROOM CONDITIONS

To observe if the Institution provides de necessary conditions to develop communicative activities

Size	<input type="checkbox"/> Large	<input type="checkbox"/> Small	# of students	
Occupancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Crowded	<input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable		
Chairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed	<input type="checkbox"/> Moveable	<input type="checkbox"/> Broken	
Windows	<input type="checkbox"/> Large	<input type="checkbox"/> Small	<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Broken
Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	
Air Cond.	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	
Room Conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	
Noise factor	<input type="checkbox"/> silent	<input type="checkbox"/> Noisy	<input type="checkbox"/> Manageable	
Resources available	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer	<input type="checkbox"/> video beam	<input type="checkbox"/> audio	<input type="checkbox"/> board
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bulletin boards	<input type="checkbox"/> teacher table		

Observations:

TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE

To observe if the teacher provides the necessary activities to help the students develop speaking performance, keeping in mind a communicative approach.

II. CLASS EXECUTION			
Presentation of objectives	<input type="checkbox"/> presented verbally	<input type="checkbox"/> presented visually	<input type="checkbox"/> not presented
Structure of the class	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	
Warm up	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	
Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	
Practice	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	
Wrap up	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	
Transitions	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	
Skills worked on	<input type="checkbox"/> listening	<input type="checkbox"/> speaking	<input type="checkbox"/> reading <input type="checkbox"/> writing
Language specifics	<input type="checkbox"/> grammar	<input type="checkbox"/> vocabulary	
Number of activities done			
Learning strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> evident	<input type="checkbox"/> not evident	

Observations:

III. CLASS MANAGEMENT			
Seating arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/> Rows	<input type="checkbox"/> semicircle	<input type="checkbox"/> other
Time management	Activity # ____ min. ____	Activity # ____ min. ____	Activity # ____ min. ____

	Activity # ____ min. ____	Activity # ____ min. ____	Activity # ____ min. ____	
Grouping format	<input type="checkbox"/> whole group	<input type="checkbox"/> small group	<input type="checkbox"/> paired	<input type="checkbox"/> individual
Student engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> highly engaged	<input type="checkbox"/> well managed	<input type="checkbox"/> partially engaged <input type="checkbox"/> not engaged	
Board usage	<input type="checkbox"/> Legible	<input type="checkbox"/> not legible	<input type="checkbox"/> information well distributed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> visible	<input type="checkbox"/> not visible	<input type="checkbox"/> information poorly distributed	
Teacher's use of classroom space	<input type="checkbox"/> sitting at the desk	<input type="checkbox"/> in front of the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> uses all of the space in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> other

Observations:

IV. TEACHING MATERIALS

Teacher's book	<input type="checkbox"/> present <input type="checkbox"/> not present	<input type="checkbox"/> used <input type="checkbox"/> not used	Student's textbook	<input type="checkbox"/> present <input type="checkbox"/> not present	<input type="checkbox"/> used <input type="checkbox"/> not used
Use of technology	<input type="checkbox"/> present <input type="checkbox"/> not present				
Additional material					

Observations:

V. INTERACTION

Respectful environment	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed		
Teacher – Student				
Use of English	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
Use of Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
Teacher talk	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
Kind of interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> scolding	<input type="checkbox"/> explanation

EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE

Encouraged student questions	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Encouraged discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Knows students' names	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	

VI. TEACHING STYLE

Spoke clearly and audibly	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
---------------------------	-----------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---

Showed enthusiasm for the subject matter and teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Treated all students in an equitable manner	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Encouraged questions and student participation	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Gave students an adequate amount of time to respond to questions	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Provided feedback that gave students direction for improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Interacted with individual students during the class session	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Interacted with students working in small groups during the class session	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Elicited feedback validation of student understanding of the material	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Used techniques that reflect an awareness of different learning styles	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable

Observations:

VI. TEACHING METHODOLOGY OR APPROACH			
Communicative approach	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Direct teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
PPP approach	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Audiolingual	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Used techniques that reflect an awareness of different learning styles	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable

Observations:

VII. KIND OF ACTIVITIES ORIENTED IN THE CLASS			
Think-pair-share	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
KWL Chart	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Debates	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Oral presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Cooperative learning activities	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Self-evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Pair correction	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Dialogues	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable

Other? Which one	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Used techniques that reflect an awareness of different learning styles	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable

Observations:

VII. KIND OF ACTIVITIES ASSIGNED AS HOMEWORK			
Oral presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Book presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Learner log	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Check and correct homeworks	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Student produced tests	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Flash cards or students produced material	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Diaries	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Educational platform	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable
Other? Which one			
Used techniques that reflect an awareness of different learning styles	<input type="checkbox"/> observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not observed	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable

Observations:

VI STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE				
To observe the students speaking performance from a communicative approach				
STUDENT – STUDENT				
Use of English	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
Use of Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
Student talk	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
STUDENT – TEACHER				

Use of English	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely
Use of Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> all the time	<input type="checkbox"/> most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely

Observations:

Appendix 2 – Written informed consent

Universidad Icesi – Maestría en Enseñanza de Inglés

Investigación: “Evaluación de efectividad del Programa Inglés Adultos de la Institución

Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca”

Investigador Principal: Leydi Lizeth Ceballos

Título de la investigación: “Evaluación de efectividad del Programa Inglés Adultos de la Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca”

Tutor: Diana Margarita Diaz

Sitio de investigación:

La investigación se llevará a cabo con estudiantes del Programa Inglés Adultos de la Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca. Se tendrá en cuenta una muestra representativa de todos los seis niveles, incluyendo los estudiantes de conversación. La investigación se llevará a cabo con estudiantes de sexto nivel de inglés y los dos cursos de conversación.

Introducción: Usted ha sido invitado a participar en un estudio para identificar el nivel de efectividad del Programa de Inglés para Adultos de la Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor del Cauca . Este es un documento de consentimiento informado que le indicará lo que puede esperar de la investigación.

¿Por qué razón se está haciendo este estudio? Esta investigación se está realizando como proyecto de investigación requisito para grado de la Maestría en Enseñanza de Inglés en la Universidad Icesi.

¿Cuáles son los procedimientos de este estudio? ¿Qué me van a pedir que haga? En este estudio se le pedirá que participe de algunas de las siguientes actividades:

Observación de clases las cuales serán analizadas para uso exclusivo de la presente investigación mediante lista de chequeo para medir si la actividad planteada es objetiva para el desarrollo del objetivo y competencia comunicativa.

Test de nivel de autonomía, el cual será analizado para medir el grado de autonomía de los estudiantes del curso.

Test de ingreso y salida (estudiantes), el cuál será analizado para medir el nivel de competencia comunicativa en todas las habilidades del idioma.

Encuesta de actividades que promueven el desarrollo autónomo en los estudiantes, en el cual se hará seguimiento para medir su efectividad.

También se hará revisión de los siguientes documentos institucionales para la recolección precisa de datos sobre el nivel de efectividad del programa: Syllabus del programa, formatos asistencia centro recursos, club de conversación, informe de indicadores (autoevaluación de la gestión), Matriz de identificación, calificación e identificación riesgos, encuesta de satisfacción, examen de nivel Inglés y uso de metodologías de los profesores.

¿Cuáles son los riesgos o inconvenientes del estudio? Se considera que no hay riesgos ni inconvenientes por participar en esta investigación debido a que implica solamente la reflexión sobre El nivel de efectividad del programa. Sin embargo, un posible inconveniente para usted puede ser el tiempo que debe dedicarle a este estudio.

¿Cuáles son los beneficios de este estudio? Su participación es muy importante en este estudio. Una vez se hayan terminado de recolectar los datos, Se le invitará a un reporte del nivel de efectividad del programa de Inglés Adultos.

¿Recibiré algún pago por mi participación? No recibirá pago alguno por su participación.

¿Existen costos por participar en este estudio? No hay costos para usted por participar en esta investigación.

¿Puedo dejar de participar en el estudio y cuáles son mis derechos? Usted no tiene que hacer parte de este estudio si no quiere. Si está de acuerdo con participar en este estudio, pero luego cambia de opinión, se podrá retirar en cualquier momento. No hay ninguna penalidad o consecuencia si usted decide que no quiere participar o no quiere continuar participando.

Usted no tiene que contestar las preguntas que no quiera contestar.

¿A quién puedo contactar en caso de tener preguntas? Puede contactar a Leydi Lizeth Ceballos si tiene preguntas adicionales sobre su participación en este estudio: lceballos@unimayor.edu.co; celular 3136328998.

¿Qué uso harán de la información que yo brinde? La información recolectada en la presente investigación será usada con fin exclusivo de identificar El nivel de efectividad del Programa Inglés Adultos. No se publicarán nombres ni datos propios en los informes que se produzcan en el proceso de investigación. El uso de la información será confidencial y con propósitos académicos únicamente. No se comentará con ninguno de sus profesores lo que se discuta en este espacio, ni tendrá repercusiones en sus respectivos cursos.

Le agradezco mucho su participación en esta investigación. Le pido firme si desea participar.

Documentación de consentimiento

Yo he leído este documento y decidí participar en el proyecto de investigación descrito arriba. El objetivo general, el tipo de participación que tendré, y los posibles riesgos e inconvenientes han sido explicados de manera satisfactoria. Declaro entender que puedo retirarme en cualquier momento. Al escribir mi nombre yo certifico que he leído este documento de consentimiento y que estoy de acuerdo con participar en esta investigación.

_____	_____
Nombre del Participante	Fecha

_____	_____
Nombre de la persona que obtiene el consentimiento	Fecha

Appendix 3 – IELTS Speaking band descriptors

Retrieved from: http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/Speaking%20Band%20descriptors_0.pdf

	Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; •any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar •speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features •develops topics fully and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics •uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately •produces consistently accurate structures apart from ‘slips’ characteristic of native speaker speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety •sustains flexible use of features throughout •is effortless to understand
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language •develops topics coherently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning •uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies •uses paraphrase effectively as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a wide range of structures flexibly •produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a wide range of pronunciation features •sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses •is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence •may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction •uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics •uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices •uses paraphrase effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility •frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation •uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies •generally paraphrases successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility •may make frequent mistakes with complex structures though 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control •shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained

			these rarely cause comprehension problems	•can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going •may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers •produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility •attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy •uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems 	•shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction •links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice •rarely attempts paraphrase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare •errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses a limited range of pronunciation features •attempts to control features but lapses are frequent •mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •speaks with long pauses •has limited ability to link simple sentences •gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information •has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances •makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions 	•shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •pauses lengthily before most words •little communication possible 	•only produces isolated words or memorised utterances	•cannot produce basic sentence forms	•Speech is often unintelligible
1				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •no communication possible •no rateable language
0				•does not attend

Appendix 5 Questions used to assess the students' level of proficiency

The IELTS speaking test has three parts. In documents published by the British Council and by Cambridge Examinations it is possible to find the types of questions asked during an exam. The five different versions used in this research are presented below. Retrieved from: www.ieltsbuddy.com/ielts-speaking-test.html

THE IELTS SPEAKING TEST

Part 1	4-5 minutes	Introduction and questions on familiar topic areas such as work, study, hobbies, holidays
Part 2	3-4 minutes	2 minute talk on a familiar topic
Part 3	4-5 minutes	Two-way discussion on issues related to the topic in part 2

Example IELTS Speaking Test 1

An Important Event

Retrieved from: www.ieltsbuddy.com/ielts-speaking-test.html

PART 1 - Time: 4-5 minutes

Now, in this first part of the test I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself.

Are you a student or do you work now?

1. *Why did you choose this course/job?*
2. *Talk about your daily routine.*
3. *Is there anything about your course/job you would like to change?*

I'd like to move on and ask you some questions about shopping.

1. *Who does most of the shopping in your household?*
2. *What type of shopping do you like? (Why?)*
3. *Is shopping a popular activity in your country? (Why/why not?)*
4. *What type of shops do teenagers like best in your country?*

Let's talk about films.

1. *How often do you go to the cinema?*
2. *What type of films do you like best? (Why?)*
3. *What type of films don't you like? (Why not?)*

PART 2 - Time: 3-4 minutes

Now, I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes.

Before you talk you'll have one minute to think about what you are going to say and you can make notes if you wish. Do you understand?

Ok, here's some paper and a pencil to make notes, and here is your topic. I'd like you to describe an important event in your life.

Describe an important event in your life.
You should say:
When it happened
What happened
Whether this event affected other people
And explain why you feel it was important.

Follow up questions:

1. *Do you still think about this event often?*
2. *Can the other people involved remember this event?*

PART 3 - Time: 4-5 minutes

We've been talking about an important event in your life, and I'd now like to ask you some questions related to this.

1. *What days are important in your country?*
2. *Why it is important to have national celebrations?*
3. *How is the way your national celebrations are celebrated now different from the way they were celebrated in the past?*
4. *Do you think any new national celebrations will come into being in the future?*
5. *Are there any celebrations from other countries that you celebrate in your country?*
6. *What are the benefits of having events that many people around the world are celebrating on the same day?*

Thank you. That's the end of the IELTS speaking test.

Speaking Test for IELTS - Example 2

PART 1 - Time: 4-5 minutes

Now, in this first part of the test I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. Let's talk about your hometown.

1. *What kind of place is your hometown?*
2. *What do young people do for entertainment in your hometown?*
3. *What is the worst thing about living in your hometown? (Why?)*

I'd like to move on and ask you some questions about tourism in your country.

1. *What should a visitor see and do in your country?*
2. *Are there any traditional art or music that you would recommend? (Why?)*
3. *Tell me about the kind of visitor who come to your country.*

Let's move on and talk about being on time for appointments.

1. *Is being late acceptable in your culture? (Why/why not?)*
2. *Are you ever late for appointments? (Why/why not?)*
3. *What type of excuses do you think are alright for lateness?*
4. *How do you feel when someone is late for an appointment with you?*

PART 2 - Time: 3-4 minutes

Now, I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes.

Before you talk you'll have one minute to think about what you are going to say and you can make notes if you wish. Do you understand?

Ok, here's some paper and a pencil to make notes, and here is your topic. I'd like you to describe something you own which is very important to you.

Describe something you own which is very important to you.

You should say:

What you use it for

How long you have had it

Where you got it from

And explain why it is so important to you.

Follow up questions:

1. *Is it valuable in terms of money?*
2. *Would it be easy to replace?*

PART 3 - Time: 4-5 minutes

We've been talking about an important event in your life, and I'd now like to ask you some questions related to this.

First, let's consider values and the way they change.

1. *What kinds of possessions give status to people in your country?*
2. *Has it always been the same or were different possessions thought of as valuable in the past?*
3. *Why do you think people need to show their status in society?*

Now we'll discuss the role of advertising.

1. *Do you think advertising influences what people buy?*
2. *Do advertisements give correct information, or do they encourage people to buy things that they may not need?*
3. *Is advertising really necessary in modern society?*

Now we'll move on to the influence of the internet.

1. *Do you think people take notice of advertisements on the internet?*
2. *How do you think it will change people's buying habits in the future?*
3. *Are there any disadvantages to shopping on the internet?*

Thank you. That is the end of the speaking test for IELTS.

Speaking Test for IELTS - Example 3

PART 1 - Time: 4-5 minutes

Now, in this first part of the test I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself.

Let's talk about shopping.

1. *Do you enjoy shopping?*
2. *How often do you go shopping and what do you buy?*
3. *So you prefer to go shopping alone or with other people? (Why?)*

I'd like to move on and ask you some questions about food.

1. *What is your favourite food? (Why?)*
2. *What kind of restaurants do you like to eat out at?*
3. *What would your perfect meal be?*

I'd like to talk now about your hobbies.

1. *Tell me about any hobbies you have.*
2. *Are there any hobbies you would like to have in the future?*
3. *Do you think hobbies should be relaxing or should they be exciting? (Why?)*

PART 2 - Time: 3-4 minutes

Now, I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes. Before you talk you'll have one minute to think about what you are going to say and you can make notes if you wish. Do you understand?

Ok, here's some paper and a pencil to make notes, and here is your topic. I'd like you to describe a course that you've done and you found useful.

Describe a course you have done that you found useful:

You should say:

What you learnt

What you enjoyed about the course

What you didn't enjoy

And explain why it was useful to you.

Follow up questions:

1. *Are you in touch with anyone from the course now?*
2. *Would you like to go on a course like this again?*

PART 3 - Time: 4-5 minutes

We've been talking about an important event in your life, and I'd now like to ask you some questions related to this. First, let's consider homework..

1. *Do you think it is important that children are given homework?*
2. *How much homework should they be given?*
3. *Do you think parents should help their children with their homework or should it be done alone?*

Now we'll discuss the relationship between education and work.

1. *How important is it to have a university education to get a job in your country?*
2. *Does having a degree from another country enhance employment opportunities in your country?*
3. *What impacts do students who have studies abroad have on their country of origin when they come home?*

Now we'll move on to talk about education and the future.

1. *Do you think it will be more or less important to have a good education in the future?*
2. *How do you think the nature of education will change in the future?*
3. *What impact will technology have on classrooms in the future?*

Thank you. That is the end of the IELTS speaking test.

Sample IELTS Speaking Test - Example 4

PART 1 - Time: 4-5 minutes

Now, in this first part of the test I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. First I'd like to ask some questions about your family.

1. *Do you have a large or small family?*
2. *How much time do you spend with members of your family?*
3. *What sort of things do you like to do together?*

Now let's move on to talk about food.

1. *What kind of food do you like?*
2. *What are some of the typical foods in your country?*
3. *In your country, do men or women have the main responsibility for cooking?*

Let's talk about where you live.

1. *Tell me about the house or apartment you live in.*
2. *What are some of the bad things about living there?*
3. *What kind of place would you like to have in the future?*

PART 2 - Time: 3-4 minutes

Now, I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes.

Before you talk you'll have one minute to think about what you are going to say and you can make notes if you wish. Do you understand?

Ok, here's some paper and a pencil to make notes, and here is your topic. I'd like you to describe a teacher who has influenced you in your education.

Describe a teacher who has influenced you in your education.

You should say:

Where you met them

What subject they taught

What was special about them

And explain why this person influenced you so much.

Follow up questions:

1. *Do other people you know remember this teacher?*
2. *Do you still see this teacher?*

PART 3

Time: 4-5 minutes

We've been talking about an a teacher that has influenced you, and I'd now like to ask you some questions related to this.

First, lets consider different styles of teaching and learning.

1. *What method of learning works best for you?*
2. *How beneficial do you think it is to group students according to their ability?*
3. *What qualities does a good teacher require?*

Now we'll look at developments in education.

1. *Has education in your country changed in the last 10 years?*
2. *What changes do you think will happen in the future?*
3. *What changes would you recommend to improve the education system?*

Now let's look at the national education system.

1. *How do the ambitions of current school leavers compare with those of the previous generation?*
2. *What role do you think extracurricular activities play in education?*
3. *What is the role of the school in modern society?*

Thank you. That is the end of the IELTS speaking test.

IELTS Speaking The Environment - Test 5

PART 1 - Time: 4-5 minutes

Now, in this first part of the test I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. First I'd like to ask about your hometown.

1. *What kind of place is your hometown?*
2. *Tell me about the most interesting place in your hometown.*
3. *What changes would you like to make to your hometown?*

Now let's move on to talk about animals.

1. *What kinds of animals are popular pets in your country? Why?*
2. *How are animals in your country used for work?*
3. *Are there any animals in your country that have special significance?*

Let's talk about travel.

1. *How easy is it to travel in your country?*
2. *What form of transport is the most popular? Why?*
3. *Are there any parts of your country that are difficult to travel to? Why / Why not?*

PART 2 - Time: 3-4 minutes

Now, I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1-2 minutes.

Before you talk you'll have one minute to think about what you are going to say and you can make notes if you wish. Do you understand?

Ok, here's some paper and a pencil to make notes, and here is your topic. I'd like you to describe an environmental problem that has occurred in your country.

Describe an environmental problem that has occurred in your country.

You should say:

The cause of the problem

What effect it has had on your country

The steps, if any, that have been taken to solve this

Explain why you think this problem is so important to solve.

Follow up questions:

1. Are other people concerned about this problem?
2. Do you talk about it with your friends?

PART 3 - Time: 4-5 minutes

We've been talking about an environmental problem in your country, and I'd now like to ask you some questions related to this.

First, let's consider global environmental problems.

1. *Tell me about some of the environmental problems that are affecting countries these days?*
2. *Do you think that governments around the world are doing enough to tackle the problems?*
3. *Why do some people not consider environmental problems to be serious?*

Now we'll look at environmental problems and disasters caused by humans.

1. *What do you consider to be the world's worst environmental disaster caused by humans?*
2. *Why do you think environmental disasters caused by humans happen?*
3. *Do you think there will be more environmental disasters caused by humans in the future?*

Thank you. That is the end of the IELTS speaking test.

