

The Flipped Classroom in the oral expression development of English language in students at the teacher training college of Atlacomulco

El Flipped Classroom en el desarrollo de la expresión oral del idioma inglés en alumnos de la Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco

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Abstract

The oral competence (speaking) in English language learning for the teacher trainees of the specialty in this language stands out for being one of the bases to be able to develop communication, however, the class sessions are often insufficient to be able to provide the necessary time to practice and develop it, in this sense, innovative methodologies such as the Flipped Classroom, also known as inverted classroom allow the possibility of placing greater emphasis on practice than on theory when trying to advance in the mastery of the language and thereby reduce the lag that may exist in this ability in particular. The main purpose of this research is to implement the Flipped Classroom as a strategy to promote the oral practice of the English language with the use of technological tools and multimedia resources, which as a whole provide the conditions that help to increase the level of mastery of the speaking skill and consequently of the English language through a quantitative study of quasi-experimental design (pretest / posttest) that provides certain guidelines to make the most of class time and thus ground knowledge and materialize it in communicative situations.

Resumen

La competencia oral (speaking) en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés para los estudiantes normalistas de la especialidad en este idioma resalta por ser una de las bases para poder gestar la comunicación, sin embargo, las sesiones de clase resultan a menudo ser insuficientes para poder brindar el tiempo necesario de practicarla y desarrollarla, en este sentido, metodologías innovadoras como el Flipped Classroom también conocida como aula invertida ofrecen la posibilidad de poner mayor énfasis en la práctica que en la teoría a la hora de intentar avanzar en el dominio de la lengua en cuestión y con ello abatir el rezago que pueda existir en esta habilidad en lo particular. La presente investigación tiene como principal propósito implementar el Flipped Classroom como una estrategia para favorecer la práctica oral del idioma inglés con el uso de herramientas tecnológicas y recursos multimedia, que en su conjunto brinden las condiciones que coadyuven a incrementar el nivel de dominio de la habilidad oral y consecuentemente de la lengua inglesa por medio de un estudio de corte cuantitativo de diseño cuasiexperimental (pretest / postest) que brinde ciertas pautas para aprovechar el tiempo de clase al máximo y de esta manera aterrizar el conocimiento y materializarlo en situaciones comunicativas.

Innovative methodologies, Insufficient Communicative,

Metodologías innovadoras, comunicativas, insuficientes

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Introduction

Currently, achieving a competent level of English language proficiency plays a fundamental role in the professional development of teacher training students under the vision of the Strategy for the Strengthening and Transformation of Teacher Training Colleges (SEP, 2017), which implies a shared task between these teacher training institutions and trainee teachers, also known as "normalistas". In the context of the Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco (ENA), in terms of English language teaching, students from the four different programs offered by the institution (Spanish, history, English and primary) are attended. Taking into account that those students in the English program are required to reach level B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which is equivalent to band 12 (B2) in the National Language Level Certification (CENNI). This scenario extends to the other teacher training colleges in the State of Mexico that offer this specialization.

To teach the courses, the bibliographic material proposed by the English area is used, taking into account the recommendations of the General Directorate of Higher Education for Education Professionals (DGESPE), which suggests working with a book called "Interchange" from Cambridge University Press (CUP). This book is accompanied by additional resources such as an online platform called Cambridge Learning Management System (CLMS), which aims to provide additional support for successful language learning. However, in order for teachers in training to achieve the goal of certifying their level of English according to the proposed goal, the teachers in charge of the courses promote the development of productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening, reading,), with speaking being one of the most difficult to develop due to multifactorial causes such as those listed below:

- Little time is devoted to oral production.
- Given the number of students, it is difficult for the teacher to provide feedback on oral performance.
- Lack of confidence or insecurity on the part of the students to speak for fear of making mistakes.
- The student has limited resources such as vocabulary to be able to produce orally.

Therefore, it is relevant to implement certain strategies in order to promote this skill as much as possible, since it is of little use if students can solve grammatical exercises, have a good range of vocabulary, read, listen and write if they do not have the ability to materialize all this in a conversation where the interaction is mainly in listening and speaking.

In many learning experiences it seems preferable, at one time or another, to focus on the development of strategies that enable the performance of one or another type of task with a given linguistic dimension. Consequently, the aim is to improve the strategies traditionally used by the learner by making them more sophisticated, broader and more conscious, trying to adapt them to tasks for which they were not originally used. (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2002, p.135).

Using the words of Domínguez et al. (2022) "in the current socio-cultural era, educational practices aim at the development of an autonomous student, responsible and constructor of his learning, so it is necessary to raise innovative proposals that position him at the center of the educational process" (p.2). Based on the above, teachers who teach English as a foreign language must be equipped with a set of methods and strategies that allow them to overcome passivity and low oral production in the classroom.

- The time in which students are exposed to the language is relatively short (6 hours a week).
- Class sessions focus on grammatical exercises and receptive language skills.

It is precisely here where the implementation of methodologies such as the Flipped Classroom or also known as "inverted classroom" play a transcendental role since they allow students to take a more active and leading role in their learning, focusing mainly on the practice and mobilization of the previously acquired knowledge through the use of some media or resources such as videos, audios, PowerPoint presentations, among others.

The Flipped Classroom methodology means that the work that used to be done at home is now done in class and vice versa. The student receives the information to be learned by reading documents, listening and watching a video explanation and taking notes of what the teacher transmits through virtual media. The transmission of concepts by the teacher and the reception of these by the students are taken out of class time and, the face-to-face time in class is used for the consolidation of knowledge, interaction between students and teacher and for carrying out activities or projects (Fornons and Palau, 2016, p. 2).

Basically, the Flipped Classroom provides the guideline for students to be exposed to the contents to be addressed in class from the comfort of their homes through the use of mainly multimedia resources that have to be previously and carefully selected for a particular purpose. Listed below are some of the reasons given by Bergmann and Sams (2012) for implementing the Inverted Classroom:

- It uses the language of today's students, who grew up with access to the internet, YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp and many other digital resources. The sad thing is that most of them carry in their pockets a mobile device more powerful than the vast majority of computers in schools and are not allowed to use them.
- It helps busy students. Today's students have a lot of activities, so they appreciate the flexibility of the Reverse Classroom, as they can work ahead with online videos.
- Helps struggling students. When teaching in the traditional way, those who have most of the teacher's attention are the best and the brightest, those who raise their hands first and ask questions; the rest passively listen to the conversation. In contrast, with the Inverted Classroom, more time is devoted to students who are struggling with the topics.
- It allows students to pause and revisit their teacher's explanation. As educators, you generally have a specific curriculum. Students are expected to learn the subject topics, and most of the time they are intended to understand the presentations. With the Reverse Classroom, students are given control. They have the opportunity to process at the speed appropriate for them.
- It increases student-teacher interaction. The flipped classroom creates an ideal fusion of online and face-to-face education.
- The flipped classroom allows for building better relationships with students. Teachers not only teach content, but also inspire, encourage, listen and provide personalized attention to students. This is due to the increased teacher-student interaction. Students are asked to interact through the communication tools available to them.
- It increases student-student interaction. The role of the teacher is no longer a distributor of content and becomes a tutor who leads students to develop their own collaborative groups.
- It can move the Reverse Classroom toward mastery of learning, in which students move through the material at their own pace. Students observe and learn in an asynchronous system where they work toward mastery of the content.

Thus, Acosta (2022) makes sense when he emphasizes that "the inverted classroom offers the opportunity to make better use of classroom time, while students have already worked at home with digitized materials" (p.337).

Today it is absolutely complex to conceive the teaching and learning process without the implementation of technological resources that, although they have not been created for educational purposes, have great benefits to contribute to the construction of knowledge and, in the specific case of English, it goes without saying that they provide the necessary conditions to increase communication and oral production that takes place inside the classroom, maximizing the possibility that students increase the chances of obtaining good results in this skill in the examination tests to certify their proficiency in the target language. This is how the present project becomes relevant when trying to give an answer on how the implementation of the Flipped Classroom pedagogical model promotes and facilitates the development of oral expression of the English language in normal students of the Normal School of Atlacomulco.

Objective

The main objective of this article is to implement the Flipped Classroom as a strategy to promote the oral practice of the English language with the use of technological tools and multimedia resources that together provide the conditions for the construction of meaningful learning that contribute to increase the level of mastery of the English language and facilitate communication in this language, and that all this is reflected in the results generated from the certification of their mastery of the language in question.

Methodology

The type of research to which the present work corresponds is quantitative with a correlational scope since two concepts or variables are associated and quantified. Hernández et al. (2014) argue that "the purpose of this type of study is to determine the relationship or degree of association between two or more concepts, categories or variables in a particular sample or context. Sometimes only the relationship between two variables is analyzed, but frequently links between three, four or more variables are located in the study" (p. 93).

The quantitative approach uses data collection and data analysis to answer research questions and test previously formulated hypotheses, it also relies on the measurement of variables and research instruments, with the use of descriptive and inferential statistics, in statistical treatment and hypothesis testing; the formulation of statistical hypotheses, the formalized design of the types of research; sampling, etc. (Ñaupás, et al., 2018, p.140).

Regarding the design, the quasi-experimental design was selected, which Hernández et al. (2006, cited by Ñaupás, et al. 2018), defines as "designs that work with already formed groups, not randomized, therefore, their internal validity is small because there is no control over extraneous variables. These designs are applied to real situations in which groups cannot be randomly formed, but can manipulate the experimental variable" (p. 362).

In quasi-experimental research, the researcher cannot modify the values of the independent variable at will or create the experimental groups by randomization; however, he can introduce something similar to the experimental design in his data collection.

Thus, quasi-experimental research would be that in which there is an exposure of the experiment with the same groups and the same variables of the phenomenon under study, since they cannot be modified or manipulated, however, the experimental design allows formulating a hypothesis and specifying the way to obtain the data that produce the responses obtained from the behavior of the phenomenon, which allows corroborating or refuting the hypothesis (Muñoz, 2011, p.97).

Data collection instruments

In the words of Sabino (1992), a data collection instrument is in principle "any resource that the researcher can use to approach the phenomena and extract information from them. In this way, the instrument synthesizes in itself all the research work summarizes the contributions of the theoretical framework by selecting data that correspond to the indicators and, therefore, to the variables or concepts used" (p.88).

In this sense, the "speaking" rubric proposed by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate UCLES 2019, which is used in the application of the Preliminary English Test (PET), which is an intermediate level certificate that belongs to the Cambridge English Examination family, was used to collect the information. It corresponds to level B1 of the CEFR and assesses the candidate's knowledge of English in typical day-to-day situations and in particular evaluates four aspects of the student's performance:

- Grammar and vocabulary.
- Speech management.
- Pronunciation.
- Interactive communication.

Assessing speaking performance – Level B1

B1	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. • Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. • Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. • Uses a range of cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is intelligible. • Intonation is generally appropriate. • Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. • Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates and responds appropriately. • Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. • Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. • Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. • Uses basic cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates and responds appropriately. • Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. • Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces responses which are characterised by short phrases and frequent hesitation. • Repeats information or digresses from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. • Requires prompting and support.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>			

TOTAL: _____

Figure 1 Rubric to evaluate performance in oral skills
Source: University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) 2019

The preliminary B1 assessment scales are divided into six bands from 0 to 5, with 0 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. Descriptors are provided for each criterion for bands 1, 3 and 5 and indicate what the candidate is expected to demonstrate in each band.

The rubric was applied to the experimental group to measure the performance of each of the students in the oral ability in the English language at the end of the first and third midterm of semester 2021 - 2022 (At the beginning: Pretest and at the end: Posttest).

Results

Group English B1.D (n2=22) Experimental group	Sex		Total
	Male	Male	
Total	6	26	32
Group	6	26	n=32

Table 1 The sample according to sex
Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

From the table it is stated that the sample of subjects participating in the research are 32 students of the Normal School of Atlacomulco those who belong to the first, third and fifth semester of the Bachelor's Degree in Teaching and Learning English in Secondary Education that belong to the Experimental Group.

In the same way, it is observed that most of the students evaluated are female (26) which constitute 81% and the male students are 6 and represent 19% of the study sample.

Results of the pretest oral proficiency scores

	Frequency	Percentage	
Scores	11	4	12.5%
	12	9	28%
	13	5	16%
	14	7	22%
	15	4	12.5%
	16	2	6%
	17	1	3%
Total	32	100%	

Table 2 Pretest oral ability scores

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 2 shows that the Mode (Mo) is 12, while the median (Me) of the scores obtained by the students in the pretest is 14, likewise, it is observed that the lowest score obtained is 11 points and the maximum score obtained is 17 points.

Results of the levels of the pretest indicators

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	1	3%
4 (Outstanding)	7	22%
3 (Good)	23	72%
2 (Fair)	1	3%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

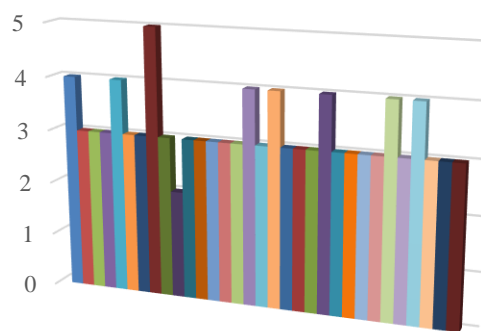
Table 3 Grammar and vocabulary levels of the pretest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 3 shows that 72% (23) of the students reached a Good level in terms of mastering English grammar and vocabulary, while 22% (7) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, representing 6% (2), are at the Excellent and Fair levels respectively.

Grammar and Vocabulary



Graphic 1 Indicator 1 Grammar and Vocabulary

Source: Own elaboration

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	3	10%
4 (Outstanding)	5	16%
3 (Good)	22	68%
2 (Fair)	2	6%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

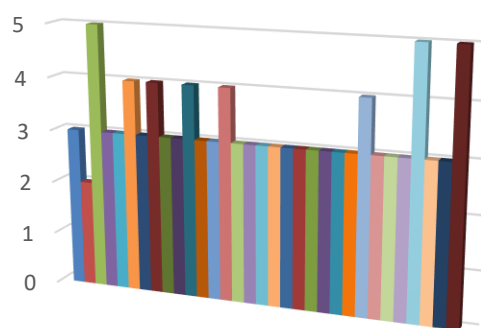
Table 4 Levels of discourse management in the pretest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 4 shows that 68% (22) of the students reached a Good level in terms of command of English grammar and vocabulary, while 16% (5) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, representing 16% (5), are at the Excellent (3) and Fair (2) levels respectively.

Discourse Management



Graphic 2 Indicator 2 Discourse management

Source: Own elaboration

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	4	13%
4 (Outstanding)	9	28%
3 (Good)	15	46%
2 (Fair)	4	13%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

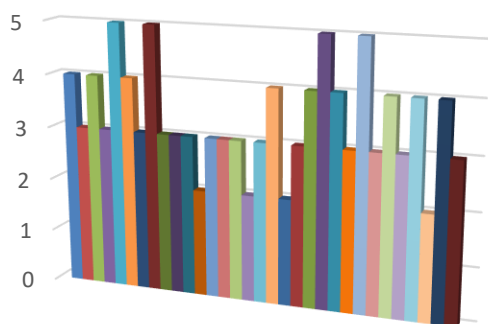
Table 5 Pronunciation levels in the pretest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation:

Table 4 shows that 46% (15) of the students reached a Good level in terms of mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, while 28% (9) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, who together represent 26% (8), are at the Excellent (4) and Fair (4) levels respectively.

Pronunciation



Graphic 3 Indicator 3 pronunciation

Source: Own elaboration

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	2	6%
4 (Outstanding)	7	22%
3 (Good)	21	66%
2 (Fair)	2	6%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

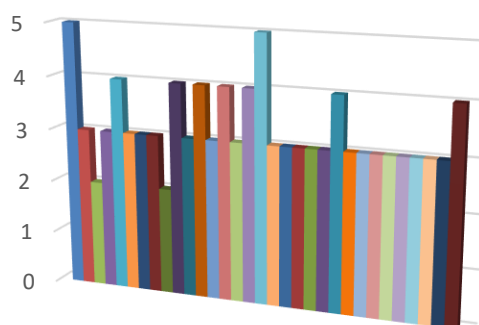
Table 6 Levels of interactive communication in the pretest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 4 shows that 66% (21) of the students reached a Good level in terms of mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, while 22% (7) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, who together represent 12% (4), are at the Excellent (2) and Fair (2) levels respectively.

Interactive Communication



Graphic 4 Indicator 4 Interactive communication

Source: Own elaboration

Results of the post-test oral proficiency scores

	Frequency	Percentage
Scores	11	3%
	12	12.5%
	13	16%
	14	13%
	15	22%
	16	12.5%
	17	9%
	18	9%
Total	32	100%

Table 7 Posttest oral ability scores

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 7 shows that the Mode (Mo) is 15, while the median (Me) of the scores obtained by the students in the pretest is 14.5, likewise, it is observed that the lowest score obtained is 11 points and the maximum score obtained is 18 points.

Results of the levels of the post-test indicators

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	5	16%
4 (Outstanding)	14	44%
3 (Good)	12	37%
2 (Fair)	1	3%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

Table 8 Grammar and vocabulary levels of the posttest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 3 shows that 44% (14) of the students reached an Outstanding level in terms of mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, while 37% (12) of the students reached a Good level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, representing 19% (6), are at the Excellent (5) and Fair (1) levels respectively.

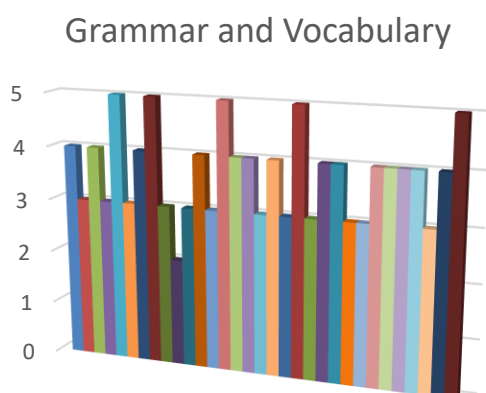


Figure 5 Indicator 1 Grammar and Vocabulary

Source: Own elaboration

Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	3	9.5%
4 (Outstanding)	10	31%
3 (Good)	16	50%
2 (Fair)	3	9.5%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

Table 9 Levels of discourse management in the posttest task.

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 4 shows that 50% (16) of the students reached a Good level in terms of command of English grammar and vocabulary, while 31% (10) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, representing 19% (6), are at the Excellent (3) and Fair (3) levels respectively.



Figure 6 Indicator 2 Discourse management

Source: Own elaboration

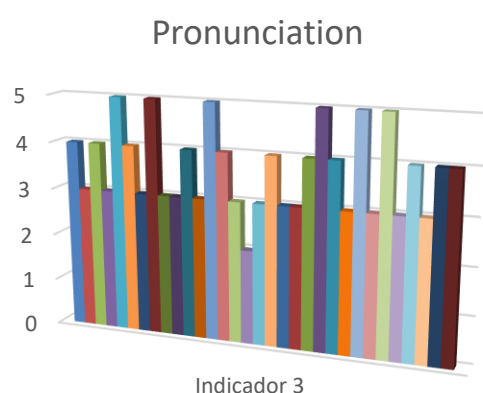
Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	6	19%
4 (Outstanding)	11	34%
3 (Good)	14	44%
2 (Fair)	1	3%
1 (Acceptable)	0	0%
0 (Insufficient)	0	0%
Total	32	100%

Table 10 Pronunciation levels in the posttest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 4 shows that 44% (14) of the students reached a Good level in terms of mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, while 34% (11) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question. The rest of the students, who together represent 22% (7), are at the Excellent (6) and Fair (1) levels respectively.



Graphic 7 Indicator 3 pronunciation

Source: Own elaboration

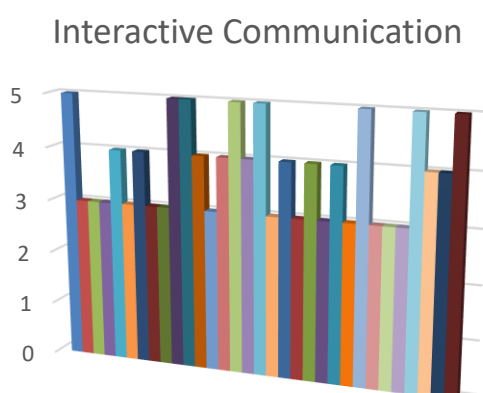
Levels	Frequency	Percentage
5 (Excellent)	8	25%
4 (Outstanding)	10	31%
3 (Good)	14	44%
2 (Fair)	0	0
1 (Acceptable)	0	0
0 (Insufficient)	0	0
Total	32	100%

Table 11 Levels of interactive communication in the posttest task

Source: Own elaboration

Interpretation

Table 4 shows that 44% (14) of the students reached a Good level in terms of mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, 31% (10) of the students reached an Outstanding level in the indicator in question, while the rest of the students 25% (8) are at the Excellent level.



Graphic 8 Indicator 4 Interactive communication

Source: Own elaboration

Conclusions

There is no doubt that the implementation of the Flipped Classroom model leads to modify in a certain way the way of working in traditional education, since by applying the principles of this model, learning is managed in such a way that the student adopts a more participatory and active role. As the New Mexican School NEM rightly points out, "Pedagogical work makes sense when designing, constructing, selecting diverse methodological strategies that contribute to student learning" (SEP, 2019, p.21).

The oral competence of the students can be notably favored with the implementation of the Flipped Classroom since the material used, in addition to preparing the necessary conditions for practice, gives the added value of exposing students to different ways of explaining and understanding the contents, and in the case of videos, one can even accustom the ear to different accents.

The teacher in charge of the English course adopts the role of learning facilitator by carefully selecting the material to be used to develop communicative competence and improve aspects such as grammar, pronunciation and listening comprehension. Thus, learning breaks the walls of the classroom and becomes a flexible and dynamic process.

With the implementation of the methodology in question, teachers gain experience on the type of materials that have the best effect on English language learners and at the same time find new ways to explain or facilitate the contents in case there are doubts.

The planning of the teaching-learning process promotes autonomy and develops in students the ability to take responsibility for the construction of their knowledge in which not only oral competence is strengthened, but also the receptive part of the language, which prepares students to be able to interact with other people.

The Flipped Classroom methodology used in an effective way offers a large number of solutions for English language teachers when activating and building knowledge in students, it also becomes a great ally when it comes to advancing in the mastery of oral skills, which helps students to communicate effectively in everyday situations and transcend beyond accrediting a proficiency test.

Contributions

This study means an option for the English major students on how to approach the contents once they are in charge of a group, since in some way they will identify activities and strategies that can be implemented in the context in which they will be working. Basically, they will have more resources to draw on when carrying out their teaching work.

This can be taken as a reference for the teachers of the institution on the innovative methodologies that they can implement in order to facilitate the acquisition of the English language or any other type of content marked in the study plans and/or programs; in this way, the learning styles of the students will be favored for the construction of knowledge.

Finally, similar studies could be carried out in other contexts based on the results of the present work with a similar or different approach in order to gain more experience on how to make the most of the Flipped Classroom methodology and the technological tools that can be used with it.

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