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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ELEVATOR PITCH TECHNIQUE TO SUPPORT
VOCATIONAL ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' FLUENCY**

Tesis para optar al grado de Magíster en Innovación de la Enseñanza, Aprendizaje y
Evaluación del Inglés

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*Dedicated to Luis Alfredo Santibáñez Dimter
a generous, supporting, and loving grandfather
who inspired me to follow my dreams.
Your kind spirit will be in my heart forever.*

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List of Acronyms

EFL: English as a foreign language

ESP: English for specific purposes

EMTP: Educación Media Técnico Profesional Tradicional

VE: Vocational Education

Abstract

This action research explored the contribution of the Elevator Pitch to support Chilean eleventh-grade students' fluency. Their support on speaking fluency was assessed in terms of rate, hesitations, corrections, and repetitions. This study adopted a mixed method approach: quantitative and qualitative. Regarding the sampling of this study, it corresponded to a group of six Chilean eleventh-grade students who had been learning English for two years, all aged between 16 and 17 years old. These students are currently part of a rural context in Hualqui and they belong to a vocational program in a public high school in Hualqui. The Elevator Pitch strategy was implemented during four sessions in the action plan. Data were collected by applying a pre and post intervention test and results were assessed with an analytic rubric; to collect participants' perceptions a focus group and a Likert Scale was conducted. The post intervention test showed an improvement in participants' speaking fluency, as they obtained a higher mean score in the post intervention test. Students' responses from the focus group and the Likert Scale match students' performance results in the post-test, who reported an improvement in their speaking fluency. Moreover, participants expressed that the use of the Elevator Pitch impacted upon their vocabulary bank, pronunciation, and fluency. In conclusion, the Elevator Pitch strategy helped eleventh grade students to speak fluently, and it may help teachers of English from vocational programs in Chile to make their classes more communicative.

Key words: Elevator Pitch, fluency, English as a foreign language, vocational program in Chile, secondary education

Resumen

Esta investigación-acción exploró la contribución del Elevator Pitch para apoyar la fluidez de los estudiantes chilenos de tercero medio. Se evaluó su apoyo en la fluidez del habla en términos de ritmo, vacilaciones, correcciones y repeticiones. Este estudio adoptó un enfoque de método mixto: cuantitativo y cualitativo. Respecto a la muestra intencionada de este estudio, correspondió a un grupo de seis estudiantes chilenos de tercero medio que llevaban dos años aprendiendo inglés, todos ellos con edades entre 16 y 17 años. Estos estudiantes actualmente forman parte de un contexto rural en Hualqui y pertenecen a un programa técnico profesional en un colegio público de Hualqui. La estrategia Elevator Pitch se implementó durante cuatro sesiones en el plan de acción. Los datos se recolectaron mediante la aplicación de un pre y post test cuyos resultados fueron evaluados con una rúbrica analítica; para recoger las percepciones de los participantes se realizó un grupo focal y una escala de Likert. El post test mostró una mejora en la fluidez del habla de los participantes, ya que obtuvieron una puntuación media más alta en el post test. Las respuestas de los estudiantes del grupo focal y la escala Likert coinciden con los resultados de desempeño de los estudiantes en el post test, quienes informaron una mejora en su fluidez al hablar. Además, los participantes expresaron que el uso de Elevator Pitch mejoró su banco de vocabulario, pronunciación y fluidez. En conclusión, la estrategia Elevator Pitch ayudó a los estudiantes de tercero medio a hablar con fluidez y puede ayudar a los profesores de inglés de programas técnico-profesionales en Chile a hacer que sus clases sean más comunicativas.

Palabras claves: Elevator Pitch, fluidez, inglés como lengua extranjera, programa técnico profesional en Chile, educación secundaria.

Chapter I: Introduction

1.1. Background information

In recent years, the significance of learning the English language in Chile has surged across various aspects such as economy, politics, society, and culture. Consequently, there has been a heightened demand among schools to engage and prepare learners to learn this language, which has become one of the main lingua franca in this globalized society. This has led to the integration of English as a foreign language as a fundamental component of the core curriculum in Chile's public high school system.

Unfortunately, outcomes have not been as expected, as Chile remains one of the Latin American countries with a "regular English proficiency rate in its population", according to the 2023 edition of the EF English Proficiency Index (EPI), which assesses the proficiency of English among populations in various regions worldwide. Chile currently ranks 52nd globally and 10th of 20 countries in Latin America in terms of the English skills of its residents.

Many students in Chile finish their studies in public high schools with a low level of English. This situation is also reflected in the context where this study was carried out. Some of the factors that could contribute to students' low level of speaking English in public high schools could be the limited exposure and practice of English students may have. For instance, many public schools only have 3 hours of English a week and have limited exposure to it outside of the classroom. If English is not used extensively in their daily lives, they might struggle to practice speaking it confidently. Moreover, the teaching methods and resources might not effectively prioritize speaking skills. If the curriculum focuses more on grammar and reading comprehension rather than oral communication (Yilorm, 2016), students might not get enough practice speaking English in class.

Consequently, this action research was conducted with a group of eleventh graders from a vocational program located in Hualqui, who have little exposure to the language in and out of the classroom, thus having a low level of English specially when they speak.

1.2 Problem statement

Learning English has become an essential and demanding tool for students who are pursuing a technical-professional degree in public high schools in Chile. According to Unesco (2012, 2017), due to the rapid spread of information and communications technology, the effects of the global financial crisis, and demographic trends, technical and professional training is an urgent matter to be developed in Chile. Speaking skills are required to be developed in the EFL classroom. In this concern, Mineduc (2020) launched some English booklets to encourage the development of the English language, which link the learning of technical vocabulary for each specialty. Particularly, the *100 Top Administration TP Booklet* (Mineduc, 2020b) for third year in secondary education states in every unit that the main goal is to produce oral and explicit texts fluently in communicative situations to present information related to labor. Therefore, it is expected from that students from the Administration program should be able to develop their speaking skills and communicate effectively in English because it opens opportunities for them to grow professionally and access better opportunities in the future.

After a period of observation, it was noticed that eleventh grade students of the Administration program showed low motivation, poor performance, and appropriate and suitable methodological resources when teaching are one of the principal difficulties in the students' development of their skill. Students have a high deficit of communication in the English-speaking skill because of the shortage of updating by teachers who need to use new digital resources technologies and strategies in the classroom. As a result, the communication strategies or techniques used are ineffective for the context, and students' speaking skills remain low. The observed causes of this issue are insufficient speaking practice, the traditional techniques strategies that produce a lack of English language vocabulary, non-observed pronunciation practice, and limited interaction between students. In addition, most of the activities in the classroom are focused on reading comprehension and learning technical vocabulary and the evaluations focus on reading comprehension and translation.

Along the same lines, but with a greater emphasis on finding a solution to help students to develop the English-speaking skill, this study focuses on the contribution

that the Elevator Pitch Strategy may have on students to communicate effectively. Since it is difficult for the students of this program to speak English, this study presents the incorporation of the Elevator pitch as a strategy that may eventually promote the students' speaking fluency. According to the Center for Career Development (n.d) from Princeton University, the elevator pitch strategy is a brief speech: just thirty seconds of introducing yourself, getting across a key point or two, and making a connection with someone. It is called an elevator pitch because it takes roughly the amount of time you spend riding an elevator with someone. What is more, Elevator pitches are handy to have in mind any time you are at an event where you might meet prospective job or networking connections. Considering the participants' characteristics and the possible benefits of Elevator Pitch, its use poses a fitting frame to implement it.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To analyze the contribution of the Elevator Pitch to support eleventh grade students' fluency.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

-To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections.

-To identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch.

Chapter II Theoretical Framework

In today's world, the capacity to communicate effectively has become critical in both the personal and professional domains. Speaking fluently can make all the difference in presenting thoughts simply and concisely. This theoretical framework will examine the concept of Elevator Pitch as a tool for improving speaking fluency and associated theories and approaches.

2.1 Chilean Educational Context

As seen in the curricular bases for English in the national curriculum, learners should accomplish a B1 level of English (according to CEFR) by the end of the secondary education (Mineduc, 2020a). Nevertheless, the country is still far from achieving this goal, despite the programs and revisions the Ministry has adopted to the English teaching (Agencia de Calidad de la Educación, 2012), according to the results from the two national English SIMCE tests conducted in 2017. On a scale of 0 to 100, measuring the English test, the average score was 51 points, whereas the percentage of students who reached basic and intermediate levels was 32%. Results based on socioeconomic groups indicate that within the high socioeconomic group, 85% of students achieve basic and intermediate levels, whereas in the low socioeconomic group, only 9% accomplish the same.

A set of documents that arrange the contents, goals, and purposes for every level of education are used to structure how English is taught in Chile. These are the Curriculum Foundations, English Programs, and Fundamental Objectives publications.

To contextualize this research, considering that it focuses on secondary education, a description of the system of English in Chilean high schools will be presented before all the sections mentioned above.

2.1.1 Secondary Education in Chile

In Chile the final four years of compulsory education are dedicated to secondary education, divided into two types: ordinary and vocational. Primary and secondary education is mandatory in Chile, with relatively high coverage (Ministry of Education, 2017). Around one-third of Chile's adult population has completed secondary or higher

education (Donoso & Donoso, 2018). In Chile, education is primarily formal, with the government, through the Ministry of Education, in charge of regulating and monitoring academic and technical education curricula. The Ministry of Education (2019) remarks that the vast number of schools sponsored by the state is a distinguishing feature of the Chilean system. In secondary technical education, 46.6% of schools are public, and 53.3% are private, but both get government funding.

Peralta et al (2020) define the traditional Professional-Technical Secondary Education (Educación Media Técnico Profesional Tradicional (EMTP onwards) as a formal program within the technical-professional education path in Chile. This program is properly planned because it has a standardized curriculum and entrance requirements defined by the General Law of Education (*Ley General de Educación No.20.370*, Mineduc, 2009). The EMTP program is offered in schools and has structured learning objectives, learning time, and learning support from a trainer, instructor, or teacher. Students receive formal recognition (a bachelor's degree in secondary education).

According to UNESCO, the number of Vocational Technical High Schools in Chile grew throughout the military mandate. The military dictatorship at the time invited businesses to engage in this form of education. Gallart (2003) argues that many types of vocational Technical High Schools were established in response to the production demands of the institutions. As a result of sharing the educational load with the industry, the government assumed less responsibility for these concerns. Simultaneously, it dispersed public school management, promoted privatization, and altered resource collection (Gallart, 2003).

What is more, Vocational Education (VE onwards) is a two-year specialty developed to maintain the country's productive development and support social fairness and mobility for those in the lowest social strata. Therefore, the objective was for students to get the abilities needed to begin working after graduating (Renold et al., 2016). The job market demand and the regions of the nation's economic development are two aspects directly related to economics that affect vocational education. Seventeen majors are offered to students in their final two years of high school, and VE offers thirty-four specializations to address those issues.

Furthermore, 60% of vocational students are from the poorest families in the nation, and 46% of high school students choose this type of academic instruction, according to the Mineduc (2017a). Even so, nearly 50% of students continue to pursue further education (Mineduc, 2010, as cited in Carrasco & Farias, 2012), despite the VE program's primary goal of preparing students for immediate employment. As a result, vocational program students currently base their decisions regarding their future jobs on how they are taught and the quality of their education. Low-income middle-class students prefer to study under the technical professional training system because it ensures that they will find employment quickly and earn money from it.

2.2 Learning English in a context of English for Specific Purposes

English for Specific Purposes (ESP onwards) refers to teaching and learning English as a second or foreign language where the learners aim to use English in a particular academic, professional, or occupational domain. ESP focuses on learners' unique needs (Benesch, 2001).

In their attempt to describe ESP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasized what ESP is no more than what it is, as they believe that ESP is one of the many different conceivable approaches to teaching languages. They go on to say that ESP should not be viewed as teaching "specialized varieties" of English, nor as teaching scientific words and grammar to scientists, hotel words and grammar to hotel workers, etc. It should be based first and foremost on the principles of effective and efficient learning, making it no different from any other method of language education. It is more of a method of teaching languages that is centered on the needs of the student and guided by straightforward objectives.

Charles (2013) defines ESP as one of the most established teaching approaches in English Language Teaching. ESP has more than 50 years of research and practice, and it is the most influential of all language teaching approaches in academic settings. Richard and Rodgers (2014) state that ESP is an eclectic approach that incorporates Communicative Language Teaching Task-based Language teaching and Project-based learning.

2.3. Speaking Skill

One of the most distinctive characteristics of human beings is their ability to speak. Since all humans are born with the ability to talk, verbal communication is the natural condition of language. Speaking and hearing others' meaningful oral utterances are part of said engagement. Most language learners view speaking as a crucial skill for learning a second language, and their success in doing so is determined by how well they can communicate orally (Nunan,1999; Nunan,2002).

Speaking is a valuable skill because it involves actively using language to convey meaning so that others can understand it, argues Cameron (2001). As defined by Nunan (1999), speaking is the capacity for conversation. If people have good communication skills, they are encouraged to communicate their thoughts or opinions in their original language to further their understanding of one another. Thus, it is key for students who are learning a foreign language to improve this skill to be understood and get their message through, as it is the case of the participants of this study.

However, speaking skill is referred to as a problematic ability to evaluate since people may concentrate on numerous elements and qualities, such as fluency (Fulcher, 2003). Teachers experience difficulties while assessing their students' speaking because of the different forms that it can take, including monolog, paired chat, and group discussion (Fan & Yan, 2020), as well as the various situations it can occur in, including planned or unplanned situations (Carter & McCarthy, 2015). Therefore, to assist students in this process, teachers have embraced a variety of evaluation methodologies, including oral portfolios (Cronenberg, 2020), speaking scales and scoring (Hughes, 2013), and technology tools (Sánchez, 2019).

2.4 The importance of speaking skills in the EFL classroom

The speaking skill holds significant importance in the EFL (English as a foreign language onwards) classroom for several reasons. Firstly, it is essential for effective communication both in academic and real-world context (Akter,2024). Secondly, Kadamovna (2021) states that speaking skills are crucial for careers success and personal life, as they enhance confidence and the ability to express their ideas clearly. Rao (2012) described the following beliefs which have emerged regarding the four skills:

1. Listening and speaking are taught and learned in quick succession, with the teacher introducing the language item in the class, and the learners familiarizing it.
2. Speech is considered the most effective introduction to other language learning skills, and learning through speaking is a natural way of learning a foreign language.
3. Speech is crucial because it offers the opportunity for the practical usage of a foreign language.
4. Speech contributes to fluency, correction, and accuracy among EFL learners, and it enables the teacher to utilize the class time efficiently.

The teaching of speaking skills has a positive impact on students' learning process as it guides the way for learning other skills and is the most natural way to teach a second language. It should be a fundamental part of every EFL course from the beginning, providing learners with the opportunity to use the language naturally and interactively, thus helping them acquire the proficiency they need. English teachers often feel pressure from learners to be fluent or proficient in speaking the language, leading them to constantly search for innovative teaching methodologies or techniques. However, this is not an easy task due to various learner difficulties, including knowledge factors, skills factors, and affective factors such as lack of confidence or self-consciousness, which can inhibit fluency (Thornbury, 2005).

As suggested by Namaziondost et. al (2014) teachers can create an environment filled with interactive and engaging activities to enhance students' speaking skills. It is essential that language teachers' pay attention to teaching speaking, rather than leading the students to pure memorization, providing a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place is desired. To support the creation of this rich environment, Nunan (2002) and Kayi (2006) offered key principles and strategies for effective teaching of speaking:

1. Understanding the difference between second and foreign languages.
2. Allocating time for students to practice and focus on fluency and accuracy.
3. Limiting teachers' speaking time and encouraging students to speak as much as possible through group work.
4. Designing speaking tasks that involve negotiating meaning.

5. Planning and developing activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking.
6. Asking eliciting questions to prompt students' speaking, such as "What do you mean? How did you reach that conclusion?"
7. Providing written feedback to students, like "Your presentation was really great. It was a good job."
8. Avoiding correction of learners' pronunciation mistakes during speeches to prevent distractions.
9. Teachers should include speaking activities outside the classroom.

In conclusion, teaching speaking should be a fundamental part of each EFL course as it is one of the most important components of communication is speaking. Speaking skills are essential for effective communication, career success and personal development. Furthermore, teachers play a critical role in developing speaking skills through various strategies and activities, contributing to the overall language proficiency of EFL learners.

2.5 Fluency

According to Harmer (2007), in order to speak fluently in English, learners need to be able to pronounce phonemes correctly, use appropriate stress and intonation patterns, and speak in connected speech. However, speaking involves more than just these aspects. Learners must also be able to speak in a range of different genres and situations, use a range of conversational and conversational repair strategies, and survive in typical function exchanges. The ability to speak fluently also presupposes the ability to process information and language on the spot. There are six important things that can make someone more fluent and confident in speaking: confidence, fluency, and accuracy, finding the right words, showing where we are going, keeping the listeners interested, and sounding natural.

Koponen (as cited in Luoma, 2004) describes fluency as the seamless flow and rhythm of speech, encompassing factors like speech rate, length of expressions, coherence of ideas, and the absence of disruptive pauses. Additionally, Stockdale (2009) suggests that fluency in a foreign language mirrors native speaker proficiency,

characterized by minimal silent pauses, filled pauses (such as 'ooo' and 'emm'), self-corrections, false starts, and hesitations. Similarly, Lennon (as cited in Cucchiarini, Strik, and Boves, 2002) defines fluency as the ability to speak at the same pace as native speakers, devoid of silent pauses, hesitations, filled pauses, self-corrections, repetitions, and false starts. This understanding of fluency specifically applies to non-native language learners, indicating that fluency entails the capability to speak in a manner akin to native speakers of the learned language.

Fluency is associated with speed, pace, flow, and rhythm of speech but not only these aspects need to be considered. Rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections are all factors that contribute to fluency. First, the rate, the number of syllables spoken by a minute, the higher the fluency (Ginther et al.,2010). Second, hesitations are related to the number of pauses a person does in a determined time. Therefore, in fluent speech, pauses in the flow are expected at sentence and phrase boundaries. Some other causes to make pauses when learners speak may be due to a lack of vocabulary, time to reformulate the sentence or just distraction (Park, 2016). Third, as Schegloff (2007) stated, repetitions occur when a speaker repeats a word or phrase, and corrections are made when a speaker corrects themselves after making an error. All in all, when assessing fluency, it is important to consider not just speed and flow but also rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections provide a comprehensive understanding of one's speaking ability.

Many researchers, such as Kormos (2006) and Segalowitz (2010), argue that speaking fluency is the outcome of automated language production skills. Automatization can be understood as the result of continuous practice. There have been teaching methodologies proposed to enhance the speaking fluency of learners. Segalowitz's ACCESS model (2005) consists of three phases of sequenced activities aimed at developing automatic fluency. The model includes the following phases:

A) Creative Automatization: This phase involves tasks that encourage teachers to elicit target formulaic language from students and allow them to use these utterances repeatedly.

B) Language Consolidation: In this phase, learners' complete fluency and accuracy tasks to focus on areas of difficulty they encountered during the first phase.

C) Free Communication: Students engage in communicative activities that allow them to produce target phrases in various contexts.

Skill acquisition theory (DeKeyser, 2007), which emphasizes the importance of practice and experience, is a framework that explains the process of acquiring proficiency in a second language (L2). According to this theory, L2 speakers cannot produce language automatically until they have a considerable amount of experience with the target language. This idea is supported by the significant amount of time needed for adult learners to achieve high levels of speaking fluency in foreign languages. In summary, skill acquisition theory highlights the significance of practice and experience in achieving fluency in L2 languages.

Furthermore, Segalowitz (2005) had identified seven factors that can affect the ability of second language speakers to produce speech fluently. These factors include not knowing the necessary lexical items for microplanning, inadequate linguistic knowledge when creating a surface structure, inability to retrieve lexical items, inadequate morpho-phonological knowledge when creating the phonological plan, inability to automatically access and produce gestural scores associated with the second language and having to devote more attentional resources for self-monitoring compared to L1 use. While some of these factors are related to a lack of knowledge of certain aspects of the L2 and cross-linguistic transfer between the L1 and L2, many of them relate to automaticity, which refers to the efficiency with which the mind can process language. To produce speech fluently, speakers must be able to automatically process and produce language.

In order to improve automaticity to gain fluency, there are activities that are inherently repetitive in nature. Therefore, to provide students with the opportunity to repeat previously used items and forms during meaningful interactions has been supported by research into fluency activities and task repetition (Bygate, 1991; De Jong & Perfetti, 2011).

Task planning has garnered significant attention from researchers in recent years, and its impact on language learners' fluency in various studies has been investigated in various studies. One such study, conducted on Iranian EFL learners at Islamic Azad University by Farde Davaji and Ghoorchaei (2023), aimed to investigate the effects of pre-task planning on fluency and accuracy. The study found that the

experimental group, which was provided with a 10-minute planning time before task performance, showed better fluency and complexity in their oral performance compared to the control group, which had zero planning time. The research findings indicate that different types of tasks, along with different planning conditions during the pre-task planning stage, contribute to fluency of oral performance. Moreover, this study aligns with previous research by Yuan and Ellis (2005), reinforcing the idea that allowing learners the opportunity to engage in planning before task performance yields beneficial outcomes for fluency. Ellis's classification of task-based planning into pre-task and within-task planning, further nuanced by guided and unguided, detailed, or undetailed planning, offers a comprehensive framework to understand the various dimensions of planning and their implications for oral proficiency.

The concept presented discusses different types of planning and their impact on oral performance, as outlined by Yuan and Ellis (2005) and Farde Davaji and Ghoorchaei (2023). Yuan and Ellis identified two principal types of task-based planning: pre-task planning and within-task planning. Pre-task planning involves rehearsal and strategic planning, while within-task planning involves pressured and unpressured planning. Both pre-task and within-task planning can be categorized as unguided or guided planning, with guided planning further categorized as detailed or undetailed planning. The study focuses on pre-task planning (strategic planning), the amount of time given for pre-task planning, and its impact on oral performance.

All in all, it is important to consider different planning conditions during the pre-task phase and their nuanced impacts on oral language performance. It emphasizes the efficacy of strategic, unguided pre-task planning in fostering enhanced fluency and complexity among language learners, adding depth to our understanding of how task planning influences oral fluency.

2.5.1 Strategies to improve speaking skill and fluency

According to Nunan (1999), success in language learning is measured in terms of the ability to hold a conversation in the target language. Hence, if the language learners fail to learn how to speak or do not get any opportunity to speak in the language classroom, they may soon get de-motivated and lose interest in learning the language. Nunan also states that a common issue in EFL contexts is due to the

learners' lack of opportunities to practice their speaking abilities. In fact, language learners in EFL context may only have limited speaking activities inside the classrooms. However, if the right activities are taught in the right way, speaking in class can be a lot of fun. This can also raise language learners' motivation.

The development of approaches that could improve student speaking skills and provide students more opportunities to communicate and express themselves in the target language are all matters that teachers may do to assist students learn English effectively (Namaziandost et al., 2020) and teachers need to keep in mind four characteristics while designing their own fluency activities, a message focus, easy material, pressure to go faster, and quality of practice. From these four aspects choosing easy material is important because it is hard to become fluent while exposed to difficult material (Muller et al., 2014).

Lynch and McLean (2001) claimed that ESP was one of the first to investigate task repetition to promote fluency in the EFL classroom. In this study, fourteen English language learners completed a poster-carousel activity in which they had to respond continually to the same or similar questions from fellow students regarding a poster they had created. Lynch and McLean concluded that task repetition improves linguistic accuracy as well as fluency. In another study, Bygate (2001) compared the performance of forty-eight ESL learners on story and interview tasks on two occasions, separated by a 10-week delay. The study discovered that repeating the assignment had a substantial impact on the fluency of the learners' performances; however, no statistically significant effect was found.

The 4/3/2 technique studied by Santos and Ramírez Avila (2022) serves as a valuable tool for supporting students' fluency. This technique employs three-structured rounds approach to speaking and listening. In the initial round, students share their thoughts on a given topic for four minutes, promoting comprehensive articulation of their ideas. Subsequently, in the second round, they summarize their ideas into a three-minute discussion in which they must prioritize and synthesize their thoughts. Lastly, in the third round, students must summarize their ideas within a concise two-minute presentation. As the time allocated decreases with each round, students develop the skill to express themselves more fluently and concisely. This technique

not only enhances speaking confidence but also nurtures the capacity to adapt language to various contexts and audiences.

One of the most effective strategies to increase speaking fluency is to record audios. A short paragraph is read aloud and recorded by the learner and the student then listens to the record and rerecords it until they are persuaded that it is the greatest recording (Muller et al., 2014). In this light, it is important to discuss an extensive study conducted in Ecuador, in which Chamba and Gabilanes (2019) demonstrate the effects of authentic aids on students' oral fluency through audio recordings. The participants were 31 students from two courses who were given cards with various topics to choose from. The students chose their favorite topics and spoke for two or three minutes. Their voice was recorded using a digital voice recorder. The students start and stop recording at any time by pressing the button. The experimental group's findings revealed that authentic materials have a significant impact on EFL learners. Participants in the experimental group improved their oral fluency from the pre-test to the post-test.

2.6 Elevator Pitch as a strategy to improve fluency in speaking skill in EFL

Harmer (2007) defined three major reasons for getting students to speak in a classroom: speaking activities that provide rehearsal opportunities, speaking tasks in which students try to use any or all the language they know by providing feedback for both teachers and students, and more opportunities for students to activate various elements of language they have stored in their brains. Speaking activities can be regarded as always assisting both students and teachers in acquiring a real-life situation for communication reasons. As a result, O'Leary (2008) emphasizes that "an Elevator Pitch is a teaching and communication tool that will help learners articulate the message" (p. 5).

Sridhar and Sahana (2016) states that the Elevator pitch briefly describes a product or service and its value proposition. A successful pitch persuades the listener to make the speaker's desired decision. The pitch is usually thirty seconds or one minute long and its primary purpose is to provide a clear, concise, and memorable summary of a project. According to a course work designed by Sridhar and Sahana in the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay on *Creating Your Elevator Speech*, a

well-crafted elevator speech should be precise; the problem should be emphasized, good examples should be used, and the speech should be free of vague points.

Moreover, when the speaker is given the option to repeat the task, a large chunk of the conceptualizing, formulating, and articulating process is already accomplished, and as a result, attentional resources are free up to be directed to various dimensions of oral output (Bygate & Samuda, 2005; Yoshimura & MacWhinney, 2017). This may result in an improvement in the speaker's language production of the identical meanings expressed in the first task performance. According to Bygate (2001), task repetition is very effective for improving task performer fluency. Probably because when they already know what they will say in their task performance, they have more mental space available to employ in the formulation stage of the language required to communicate their thoughts, resulting in a reduction in the amount of the language required to describe their thoughts.

Pincus (2007) published a checklist that included the following elements when students create their Elevator Pitch:

- 1) know your purpose
- 2) know your target
- 3) focus on being authentic
- 4) being specific
- 5) be prepared
- 6) be concise
- 7) solve a problem
- 8) show your passion and practice.

In addition, it is necessary to have refined speaking skills that includes a good vocabulary, wise word usage, and the ability to manage time.

The researcher Sagimin (2015) aimed to investigate and to analyze how the Elevator Pitch technique is implemented to enhance third semester of English department students' speaking ability in Pamulang University. Based on the data collected by the researcher, it is concluded that the implementation of Elevator Pitch in teaching how to speak is helpful and easy to conduct. The results of this study reported that students can produce the pitch easily, focus on their ideas and be able

to explain them briefly and concisely. This aligns with what Beltran-Palanquez (2022) explained that the elevator pitch is a fluency activity that encourages ESP students to talk and deliver fluent messages. Sagimin reflected upon the results of his study that students felt it was easy to conduct and to implement the technique when drilling their speaking skill since the technique has some easy steps to be learned such as planning or designing, crafting, memorizing, practicing, and performing (O'Leary, 2008; Morgan & Wright, 2021) (See Figure 1). They state that Elevator pitch technique was helpful to train their speaking skill language because they have good opportunity to use and to practice the language.

Figure 1

The Steps of the Elevator Pitch Adapted from O' Leary's Theory



Source: Adapted from O' Leary's theory (2008)

The study concluded that Elevator Pitch is useful for English students at Pamulang University's Faculty of Letters in particular, and for other faculties or institutions in general, in developing speaking skills. As a result, Sagimin (2015) argues that the Elevator Pitch technique is offered as one of the thrilling teaching strategies in speaking class. This strategy appears to be an appropriate alternative for a speaking class, particularly for students who frequently utilize English as a means of communication in an office setting or job, as well as those who deliver speeches or present brief presentations in front of others. Students are urged to produce any conceivable speech in various settings of their working field and interest when delivering an Elevator pitch, such as presenting and promoting the product, or conducting a presentation in a meeting and elaborating ideas.

As the elevator pitch embraces practicing students can gain fluency in their speaking skill when they can practice saying their pitch by oral repetition (Yoshimura & MacWhinney, 2017). When language learners must complete an oral task that is meaning-focused and outcome-oriented, they are naturally induced to deal with what

they intend to say first, a process known as "conceptualization" (Skehan, 2009). During their first task performance, speakers are primarily concerned with the production of the preverbal message; as a result, they pay little attention to lexicon-grammatical selection, which occurs spontaneously during the formulation stage.

Chapter III Research Design

3.1. Type of research

This study is conceived as action research, as it is conducted to improve educational practice inside the classroom and to provide a valuable way to extend teaching skills and gain more understanding of ourselves as teachers, our classroom, and our students (Burns, 2010). The main aim of this type of study is to identify a problematic situation and start to intervene to bring improvements regarding the identified issue (Burns, as cited in Cornwell 1999, p. 5). In the context where this action research took place, the problematic situation was related to students' fluency when speaking.

Along the same line, reflection is associated with action research because the teachers become 'investigators' or 'explorers' of their own teaching context (Burns, 2010). This is a key characteristic of action research as it allows teachers to "self-reflect, self-evaluate, and self-manage the research autonomously and responsibly" (Collins, 2009, p.215). All these steps were overseen by the research practitioner herself, so the key feature stated by Collins was met thoroughly.

In addition, the action research design is suitable for this study due to its spiral self-reflective characteristics, as it follows significant steps such as planning the interventions, implementing the Elevator Pitch technique in the class (acting and observing the change), reflecting on processes of change, and re-planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000).

3.2. Research Problem

According to the Mineduc (2017b) it is expected that students from eleventh grade in Chile can present information orally, participate in interactions, react to oral texts and to demonstrate knowledge and use of the language in conversations, discussions, and presentations. The expected level for eleventh graders is B1 level, which according to the CEFRL corresponds to independent users of the language, i.e., those who have the necessary fluency to communicate without effort with native speakers.

However, this is not the current situation for a group of six eleventh-grade students from a vocational public high school in Hualqui, Chile. These students exhibit

difficulties in their speaking fluency in English and observations performed for this study reveal that these eleventh graders struggle to communicate in English when they try. Daily exposure to English is insufficient to encourage students to improve their speaking abilities. They are unable to communicate clearly about subjects they have already studied. They frequently take long, silent pauses while repeating the same topic multiple times; as a result, they have a very low level of oral fluency. This lack of oral fluency is seen in their low speech rate, extensive pauses, hesitations, and many corrections when speaking. This has been a difficulty that has prevented students from obtaining the desired level of English at the end of high school as well as when they complete their vocational program and enter the labor market. As a result, it is critical to address this shortcoming by developing a teaching strategy that supports students in achieving better results.

Therefore, the Elevator Pitch is shown as a technique to speak out clearly and concisely within thirty seconds to one minute and helps to prepare what someone wants to speak about. For example, in an interview process, students can talk about job responsibilities and frame the speech to be smooth, smart, and rehearsed due to its recitation practice (Yoshimura & MacWhinney, 2017). With the implementation of this strategy, it may support eleventh-grade students' fluency to decrease the hesitations, the pauses, and corrections when they speak out.

3.3. Research Question and Objectives

To what extent does the Elevator Pitch contribute to eleventh grade students' fluency?

General Objective

To analyze the contribution of the Elevator Pitch to support eleventh grade students' fluency.

Specific Objectives

SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections.

SO2: To identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch.

3.4. Participants

The process of selecting this sampling is purposive because it is chosen based on a specific purpose and the participants are selected according to the needs of this study (Arikunto, 2010).

The participants of this action research are six students, three boys and three girls who attended all eight interventions sessions designed for this investigation. These students belong to an eleventh-grade class and are between fifteen and seventeen years old. These six students attend to a public high school in Hualqui, Chile. This high school offers scientific-humanistic and vocational programs. This specific class belongs to Administration and Human Resources. The participants have been exposed to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for three years, with two hours of English a week.

3.5. Stages of the action research study

This study started as a piloting experience with a different group from the same level in the same school. The researcher had the opportunity to apply the pre-intervention test (a short oral presentation) and measure how much language these participants could produce and how much time they took to finish the task. After the piloting, the researcher applied the pre-intervention test to assess their initial level of fluency. Then, four sessions were planned (See Table 1).

Finally, a focus group along with a Likert Scale were implemented to collect information on the students' perceptions of the process.

The graphic description of the action plan's stages, which were described previously, can be seen in the following figure (See Figure 2).

Figure 2

Action Plan



Source: own elaboration

3.5.1 Intervention sessions

Table 1

Action Research Intervention Sessions

Sessions	Activities and Procedures	Time	Research Objective
Session 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the Elevator Pitch and its features. - Creation of a sticky note on Jamboard with the key elements of the Elevator Pitch. - Pair work to create an Elevator Pitch - Feedback - Rehearsal and recording 	90 minutes	SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, pauses and corrections.
Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to the concept of fluency and related concepts (fluency, speech rate, hesitations, corrections, and repetitions) - Outline about a topic - Feedback and private rehearsal - Recording an-audio 	90 minutes	SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, pauses and corrections.
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading aloud a short passage - Pair work by reading and providing feedback - Practicing and recording the previous pitch 	90 minutes	SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, pauses and corrections.

Session 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlighting the main features of the Elevator Pitch and the concept of fluency. - Rehearsal of the pitch - Switching roles - Private rehearsal - Recording and sending the final pitch 	60 minutes	SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, pauses and corrections.
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3.6. Data Collection Techniques

To collect the necessary data, different instruments were used. A pre- and post-intervention test were applied to assess the contribution of the Elevator Pitch to participants' oral fluency.

3.6.1. A pre- and post-intervention test

The pre- and post-intervention test for this action research were measured using an analytical rubric described in the following section (See Appendix A). The descriptors were adapted to fit in the rate descriptor (2 minutes) to 1 minute pitch for the B1 level, due to this being the expected level for the eleventh-grade students from Administration program according to the Ministry of Education (2016). The only change applied to the Fluency Rubric (Santos & Ramirez Avila, 2022) was to reduce the rate descriptor from 120 to 60 words, based on the length of time of each intervention, originally 2 minutes, in this case one-minute pitch.

The pre-intervention test consisted of recording a one-minute audio developed individually by all six students before the Elevator Pitch. The pre-intervention test had the following steps: 1) students wrote in their notebooks a paragraph introducing themselves (giving their name, age, the place they live and activities they like to do) and another paragraph giving the reason behind their choice of their technical program. 2) students read their paragraphs aloud and recorded themselves and 3) students sent their audios. After the four intervention sessions were completed, the same group of six students took the post-intervention test individually. The post-intervention test consisted of recording a one-minute pitch. The post-test had the

following steps: 1) students wrote in their notebooks a paragraph introducing themselves (giving their name, age, the place they live and activities they like to do) and another paragraph giving two reasons why they must be hired in a company. 2) students practiced their pitches and 3) they recorded themselves an audio and sent their audios.

3.6.2. Analytic Rubric

The researcher was able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each participant's performance by using an analytic rubric which is defined as a set of criteria/rules or guidelines that can be used to assess one's work or the success of a task (Berger, 2011). Similarly, a distinct score is assigned to each trait, and each judgment is then combined to determine the quality of the response (Miller, 2013). This instrument gave extensive information on each learner's oral fluency.

An analytic rubric is used in this study and was adapted from prior action research conducted by Santos and Ramirez, and it was used to examine the information obtained in the pre- and post-intervention tests. The four elements of fluency described by Bosket et., al (2003) were included in this rubric. The following criteria are worth three points each, for 12 points: a) speech rate; b) hesitations; c) repetitions and d) corrections. According to each student's performance on the pre and post-intervention test, the researcher assigned a mark ranging from one to three in each part of the rubric.

3.6.3. Likert Scale

A Likert scale helped the researcher gain a deeper insight on students' perspectives of spoken fluency and the Elevator Pitch. Some advantages of Likert scales are that data is gathered quickly and they can provide highly reliable estimations and the data they provide can be established through a variety of means (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014). Thus, a Likert scale is a measurement tool with various options, allowing students to express their opinions, attitudes, or feelings regarding a specific issue by selecting from multiple categories.

After the intervention sessions, students answered an eleven-statement scale that included the following three dimensions in Spanish: i) fluidez, ii) expresión oral and iii) clases de inglés. Four questions about fluency and its elements (rate, hesitations, corrections, and repetitions), three questions about oral expression, and four questions about the English class. They decided regarding five levels of agreement: i) totally disagree ii) disagree iii) neutral iv) agree v) totally agree. (See Appendix B).

3.6.4. Focus Group

According to Morgan and Krueger (1988), Robson (2002) and Gibbs (2012) the gathered data that the focus group provides is due to the empowerment of participants to speak out. To collect information about participants' perceptions the teacher-researcher developed a focus group (See Appendix C). The focus group was created by the researcher, and it consisted of seven questions regarding the students' perceptions towards the use of the Elevator Pitch to improve speaking fluency (See Appendix C). To design the instrument the teacher-researcher created an *ad.hoc* focus group considering the following dimensions: a) four questions about students' perception regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch and b) two questions about the English class and the implementation of this technique.

3.6.5. Validation of instruments

Since the researcher created the questions of the focus group and the Likert scale, and adapted the analytic rubric for the pre, post-intervention test, it was necessary to validate the instruments. All the instruments were sent to three university professors, in-service teachers, an educational psychologist, and the vocational program coordinator in the school. All the experts analyzed the instruments after reading the research question and objectives. It included an additional chart, so each expert could select if they suggested maintaining, modifying, or removing the aspects of the instruments (See Appendix D). Furthermore, their comments and observations were considered to improve the instruments.

3.7. Data Analysis Techniques

3.7.1 Descriptive statistics

The students' fluency data from the pre and post intervention test were compared by using a descriptive statistics analysis. The mean score was used as a measure of central tendency to describe the progress of oral fluency achieved by students in the pre- and post-intervention test. Similarly, the average of each fluency aspect (speech rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections) was calculated to determine which aspect was weaker.

The data collected from the Likert scale was also analyzed using Descriptive Analysis, focusing on measures of frequency and percentages. This type of analysis provides an overview of participants' responses, allowing the researcher to find trends or patterns in the distribution of responses across the scale.

3.7.2 Thematic Analysis

The data obtained from the focus group was recorded in audio and transcribed. To analyze this data thematic analysis technique was used, which Braun and Clarke (2006) defines as a tool that the researcher can focus on and code for specific words or patterns that inform the research question. It is a method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set. Thematic analysis is also useful for summarizing key features of a large data set, as it forces the researcher to take a well-structured approach to handling data, helping to produce a clear and organized final report (King, 2004). Following the thematic analysis stages proposed by Braun and Clarke, the researcher coded the data, identifying different categories.

Chapter IV: Findings

In this chapter, the data collected throughout the intervention is presented. The quantitative data was collected at the beginning through the pre-intervention test and at the end through the post-intervention test. The results of both tests were assessed by an analytic rubric. (See Appendix 1). Finally, the Likert Scale was conducted after the post intervention test.

The qualitative data was gathered through a focus group, where the participants answered questions once the intervention was over. The data are presented according to each specific objective (See in Chapter III) defined for this action research.

4.1 SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections

The usefulness of the Elevator Pitch regarding participants' speaking fluency is assessed in terms of speech rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections. Besides, the participants' mean scores, mean differences, and standard deviation were calculated in the pre-and post-intervention tests. The maximum score in the analytic rubric to evaluate students' fluency is 12 points. The participants' scores are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Participants' Overall Scores in the Pre- and Post-Intervention Test

Fluency Level				
Participants	Pre- Intervention Test		Post-intervention test	
	Score	Percentage of Achievement	Score	Percentage of Achievement
Student 1	5	42%	9	75%
Student 2	7	58%	12	100%
Student 3	11	92%	12	100%
Student 4	10	83%	12	100%
Student 5	9	75%	11	92%
Student 6	7	58%	9	75%
Mean Score	8		11	

Standard Deviation	2.23	1.47
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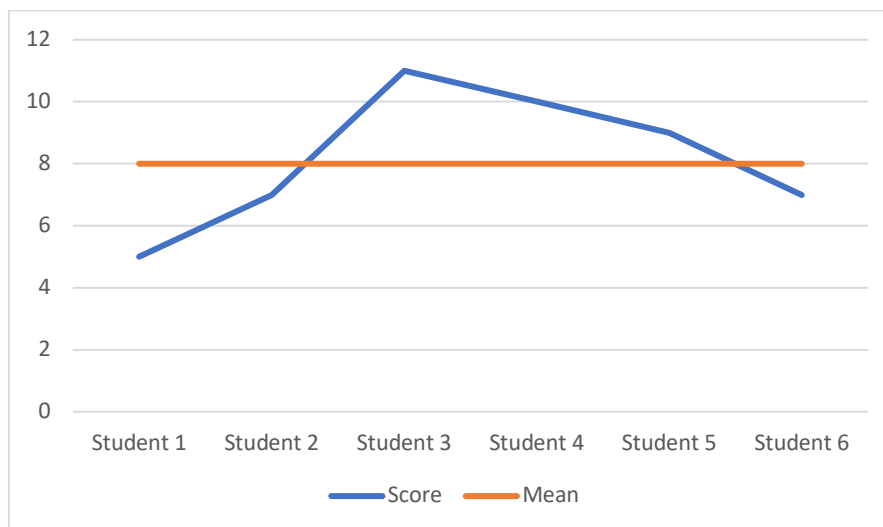
Source: Self-elaboration

As shown in **Error! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.**, there was an improvement in the participants' speaking fluency after the intervention. This improvement can be observed in the post-intervention test final mean score, which was 11 points, representing 90% of achievement compared with 68% of achievement in the pre-intervention test with a mean score of 8 points. It can also be noticed that in the pre-intervention test, none of the students achieved 100% of the task, but in the post-intervention test, three students (50% of the participants) obtained 100% of achievement.

Another important point is the standard deviation of the pre-intervention test results, which show the dispersion of the scores in terms of students' fluency level, which in this case reached 2.23. As the results show, 67% of students report scores near the mean, except for students 1 and 3, who presented 5 and 11 points respectively. This is represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Standard Deviation (Pre-Intervention test)



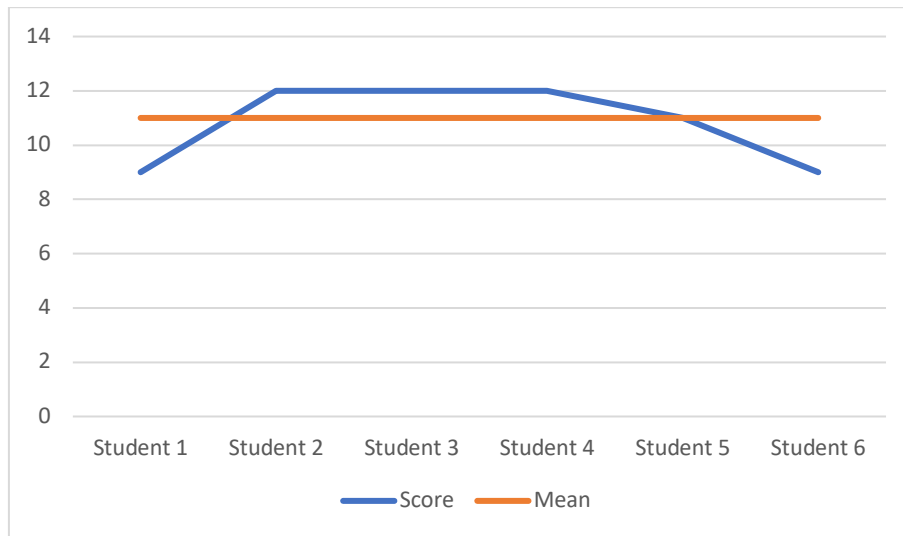
Source: self-elaboration

The standard deviation of the post-intervention test results is 1.47, which means that participants' scores were much closer to the mean score that was 11. This low

standard deviation indicates the data is reliable as the results are more homogenous.
This is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Standard Deviation (Post- Intervention test)

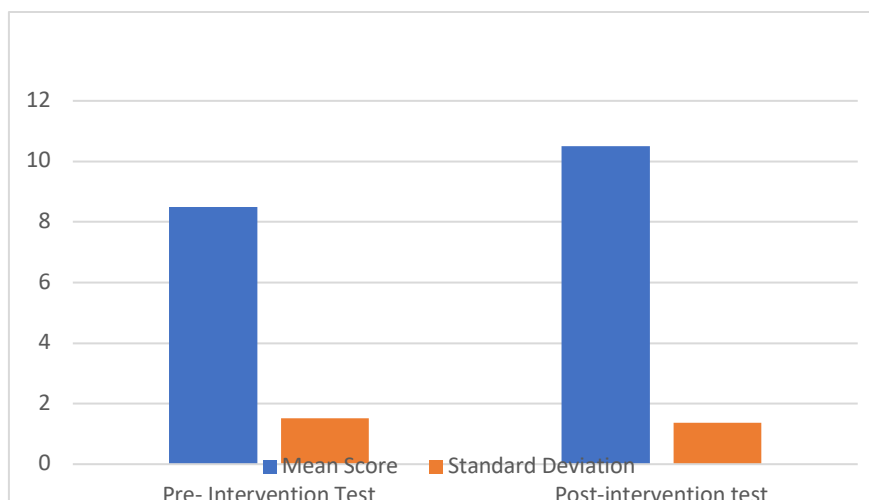


Source: self-elaboration

Considering these results, it can be stated that the final scores draw near the mean score of the post-intervention test, moving forward to the highest score. This shows the tendency towards improvement of the scores. The mean score standard deviation differences between the participants' fluency in the pre and the post-intervention test are displayed in the Figure 5.

Figure 5

Mean Scores and SD of Participants' Fluency Level - Pre- and Post-Intervention Test

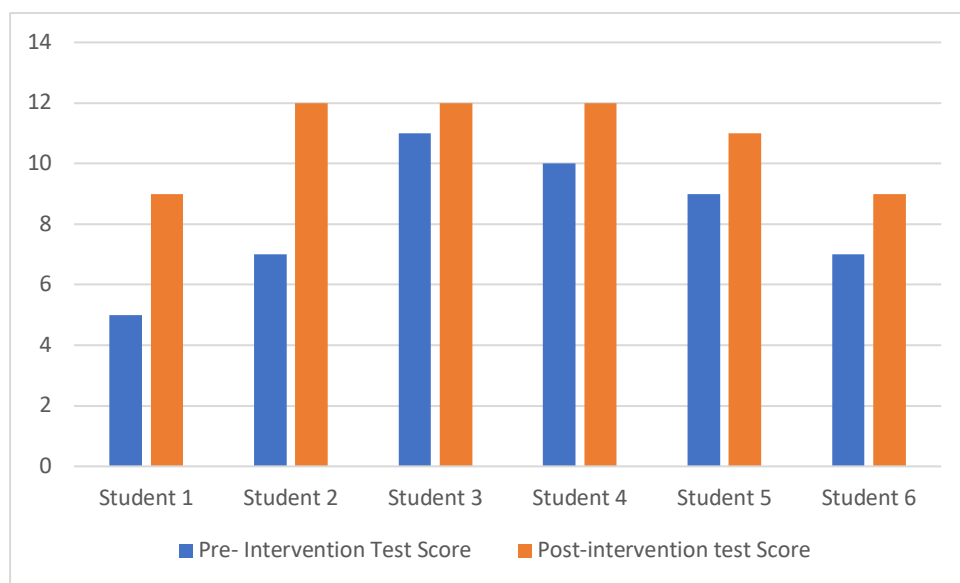


Source: self-elaboration

The mean difference between the participants' fluency level in the pre-intervention and the post-intervention test was 3 points, which is an increase from their initial performance. These points equal a 22% of achievement between their performances (68%-90%) as a group. Thus, it can be stated that students' initial level of fluency increased after the sessions using the Elevator Pitch as a support for their oral fluency. In Figure 6, the improvement of each participant regarding their fluency level can be observed in terms of their mean score.

Figure 6

Students' Fluency Level between the Pre- and Post-intervention Test Scores



Source: self-elaboration

As evidenced in Figure 6, all participants improved their oral fluency level while using The Elevator Pitch because they all achieved higher scores after the intervention. While, in the pre-intervention test, the highest score was 11 points (achieved by one participant); in the post-intervention test, three participants (50%) reached the maximum expected score of 12 points in the fluency rubric. Another relevant point is the noticeable improvement shown by student 2, who obtained 7 points on the pre-intervention test and 12 points on the post-intervention test.

4.1.1 Analysis of participants' level of speech rate

The level of speech rate observed in the group of participants was assessed through an analytic rubric, considering three levels of mastery shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Speech Rate Levels of the Analytic Rubric

Speech Rate Levels		
Needs Improvement (1 point)	Very Good (2 points)	Excellent (3 points)
The speaker speaks 20 to 39 words.	The speaker speaks 40-59 words.	The speaker speaks 60 or more words.

Source: adapted from Santos and Ramirez Avila (2022)

The participants' individual scores, mean score, and standard deviations from the pre and post-intervention tests in terms of their speech rate are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4

Participants' Scores, in the Pre- and Post-Intervention Test regarding Speech Rate

Speech Rate				
Participants	Pre- Intervention Test		Post-intervention test	
	Score	Level of Achievement	Score	Level of Achievement
Student 1	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 2	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 3	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 4	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 5	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 6	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Mean Score	2.50		3.00	
Standard Deviation	0.55		0.00	

Source: self-elaboration

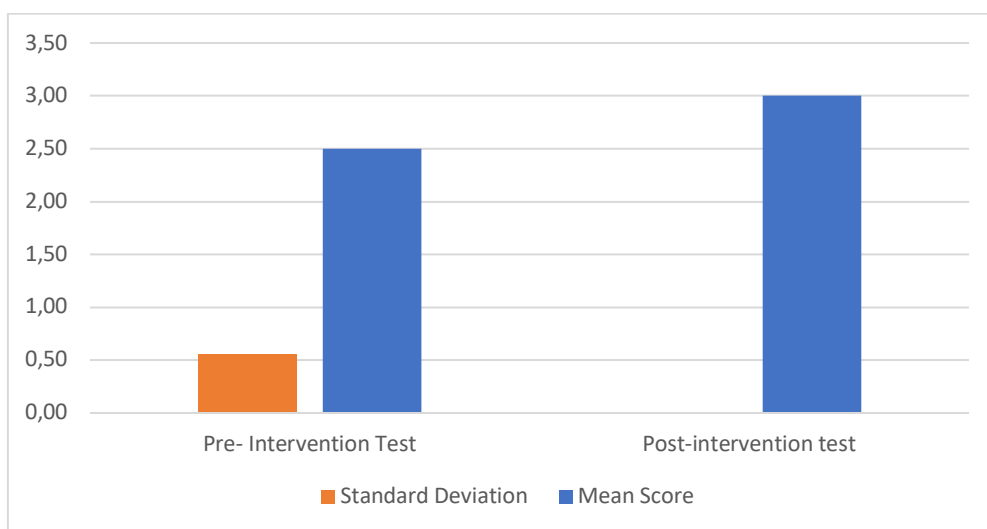
As observed in **¡Error! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.**, three of the participants (50%) improved their level of speech rate in the post-intervention test from the "Very good" level to "Excellent" level. In the pre-intervention test, three of them were placed at the "Excellent" level (50%), the same result in the post-intervention test.

It can be said that all students reached "Very good" and "Excellent" level of achievement in the pre-intervention test regarding speech rate. After implementing the Elevator Pitch, three participants placed in the "Very good" level speech rate, improved their rate to "Excellent" level. This is observed in the mean score from the pre-intervention test, that it was 2.50, and the mean score from the post-intervention test, was 3.0. In conclusion, there is an improvement of 0.50 mean score (See Figure 7).

All the participants obtained the maximum score, so the standard deviation in the post-intervention test is equal to 0, that means that all students had an "Excellent" level of Achievement (Figure 7). The comparison between the mean score and standard deviation from pre-intervention test and the post-intervention test in terms of speech rate can be observed in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Participants' Speech Rate



Source: self-elaboration

4.1.2 Analysis of participants' level of hesitations

In order to determine the changes in the hesitations in the participants' fluency, an analytic rubric was used during the pre- and post-intervention test, considering three levels of mastery:

Table 3

Hesitations Levels of the Analytic Rubric

Hesitations Levels		
Needs Improvement (1 point)	Very Good (2 points)	Excellent (3 points)
The speaker has many hesitations (4 or more hesitations)	The speaker has some noticeable hesitations (from 2-3) and short pauses (3 seconds or less)	The speaker has few noticeable hesitations (1 or less) and few short pauses

Source: adapted from Santos and Ramirez Avila (2022)

The participants' scores, as well as the mean scores and standard deviation between the pre- and post-intervention tests, are displayed in Table .

Table 6

Pre- and post-intervention Test Individual Scores regard on Hesitations

Speech Rate				
Participants	Pre- Intervention Test		Post-intervention test	
	Score	Level of Achievement	Score	Level of Achievement
Student 1	1	Needs Improvement	2	Very Good
Student 2	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 3	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 4	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 5	2	Very Good	2	Very Good
Student 6	1	Needs Improvement	2	Very Good
Mean Score	1.67		2.50	

Standard Deviation	0.52	0.55
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Source: Self-elaboration

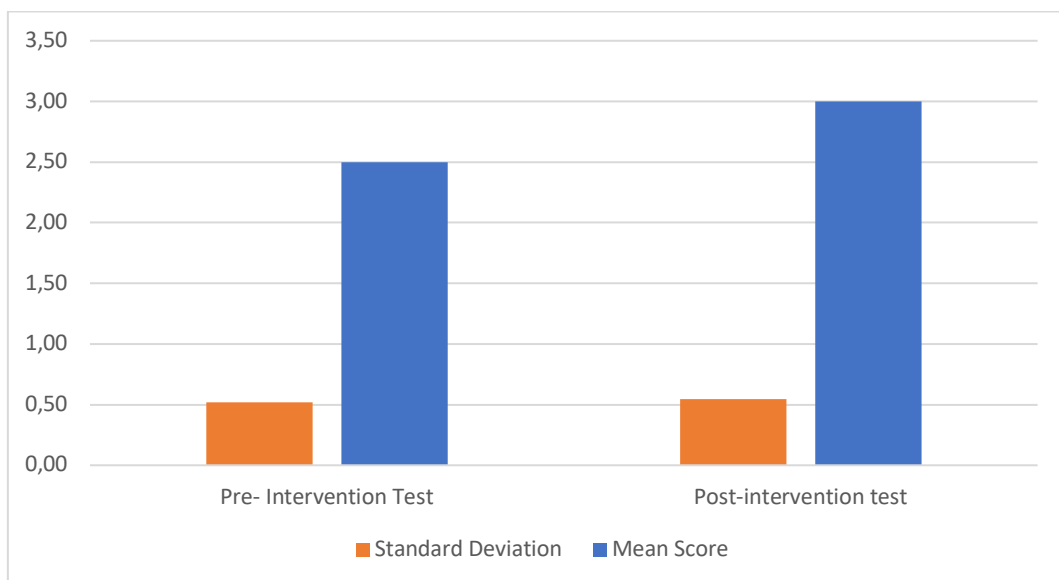
In Table , it can be observed that two students' level of hesitations in the pre intervention test is found in the descriptor "Needs Improvement" and the other four students are placed "Very Good". The pre-intervention test mean score was 1.67 points, and the post- intervention test mean score was 2.50, which shows an improvement of 0.83 points. It can be noticed that in this aspect the participants demonstrated a decreasing of hesitations after using the Elevator Pitch, with 50% of the participants obtaining an "Excellent" level of achievement.

Furthermore, the mean score in the pre- and the post-intervention test shows an increase in all the students except from student 5, who maintain the level "Very Good".

Besides the difference between the mean scores, it is also important to pay attention to the standard deviation for this criterion. These differences can be seen in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Participants' Hesitations



Source: Self-elaboration

The dispersion of results of the pre-intervention test is 0.52 points, so the scores are not very dispersed. This means that the scores per student are close to the mean and the sample tends to be homogenous. That is to say that students' performances in terms of speech rate seem to be similar. However, the standard deviation in the post-intervention test is higher, with a result of 0.55. Although the difference may seem little, this still indicates that results are more dispersed in comparison to their initial performance in their pre intervention test. Therefore, the results are clustered further around the mean, so students' performance in the speech rate criterion tends to be not as homogenous as in the pre intervention test counterpart.

4.1.3 Analysis of Participants' Level of Repetitions

The participants' level of repetitions was assessed through an analytic rubric, considering the following levels of mastery:

Table 7

Repetitions Level of the Analytic Rubric

Repetition Levels		
Needs Improvement (1 point)	Very Good (2 points)	Excellent (3 points)
The speaker makes many repetitions (4 or more)	The speaker makes some repetitions (from 2-3)	The speaker makes a few repetitions (1 or less)

Source: Self-elaboration based on Santos and Ramirez Avila (2022).

The participants' individual scores and mean scores between the pre and post intervention test in terms of repetitions before and after using the Elevator Pitch are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Pre- and Post-Intervention Test Individual Scores and Levels of Repetitions

Repetitions Rate				
Participants	Pre- Intervention Test		Post-intervention test	
	Score	Level of Achievement	Score	Level of Achievement

Student 1	1	Needs Improvement	2	Very Good
Student 2	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 3	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 4	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 5	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 6	2	Very Good	2	Very Good
Mean Score	2.17		2.67	
	0.75		0.52	

Source: Self-elaboration

According to Table 8, five of the students are placed on "Excellent" or "Very Good" level of repetitions in the pre-intervention test, which means they repeated the sentences with modifications very few times at the beginning. However, in the post-intervention test, three of the students (student 1, 2 and 5) moved from "Very Good" to "Excellent" (50% of improvement), and three students (student 3, 4 and 6) maintained their scores being placed on the same level of achievement (50%).

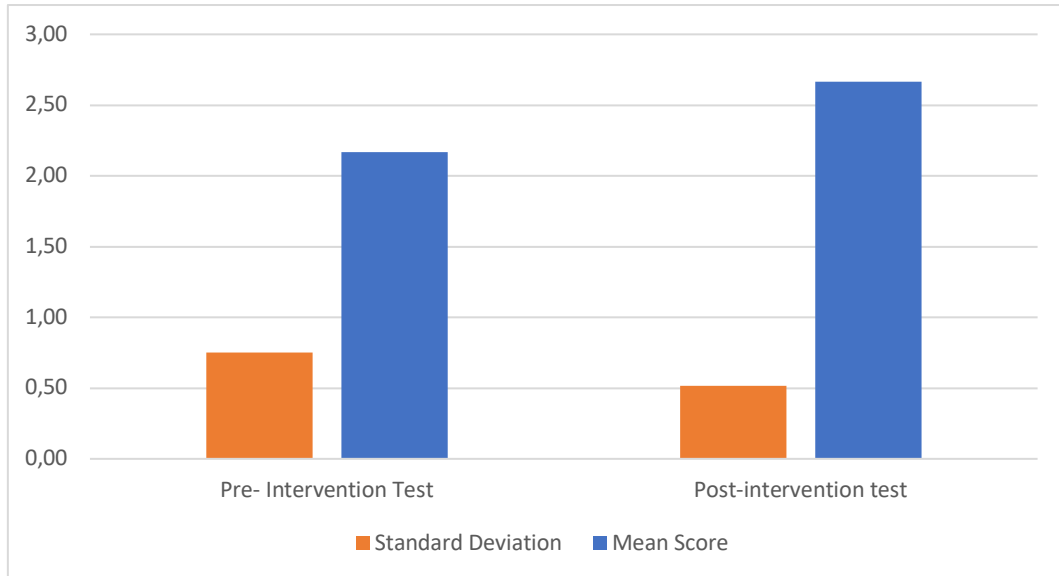
The pre-intervention test mean score was 2.17 points, and the post-intervention test one was 2.67, which shows an improvement of 0.50 points. Therefore, it can be noticed that participants showed a decrease of repetitions after using the Elevator Pitch, with 67% of the participants obtaining an "Excellent" level of Achievement.

Furthermore, it is also important to pay attention to the standard deviation for the Repetition rate. The first pre-intervention test standard deviation is 0.75, which means results are homogeneous and close to the mean, except for Student 1, who achieved the Needs Improvement level. As for the post-intervention test, the standard deviation is 0.52, thus results are closer to the mean than its predecessor.

This difference in the dispersion and the mean difference can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Participants' level of Repetitions



Source: self-elaboration

4.1.4 Analysis of Participants' Level of corrections

The participants' level of corrections was assessed through an analytic rubric, considering the following levels of mastery:

Table 9

Corrections Level of the Analytic Rubric

Corrections Levels		
Needs Improvement (1 point)	Very Good (2 points)	Excellent (3 points)
The speaker makes many corrections (4 or more)	The speaker makes some corrections (from 2-3)	The speaker makes a few corrections (1 or less)

Source: adapted from Santos and Ramirez Avila (2022)

The participants' individual correction levels scores and mean scores between the pre and post intervention test before and after using the Elevator Pitch are displayed in Table

Table 10

Pre- and Post-Intervention Test individual Scores and Levels of Corrections

Corrections Rate				
Participants	Pre- Intervention Test		Post-intervention test	
	Score	Level of Achievement	Score	Level of Achievement
Student 1	1	Needs Improvement	2	Very Good
Student 2	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 3	3	Excellent	3	Excellent
Student 4	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 5	2	Very Good	3	Excellent
Student 6	2	Very Good	2	Very Good
Mean Score	2.17		2.67	
Standard Deviation	0.75		0.52	

Source: self-elaboration

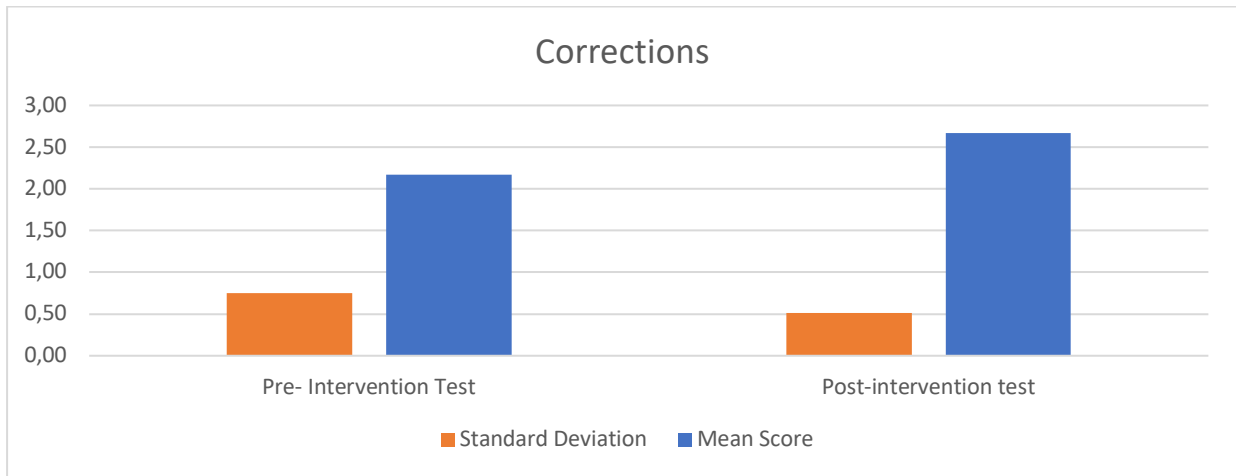
According to Table , three of the students demonstrated "Very Good" level of repetitions in the pre-intervention test, this means they repeated the sentences with modifications very few times at the beginning. However, in the post-intervention test, three of the students (student 1, 4 and 5) showed improvement (50%), and three students (student 2, 3 and 6) maintained their scores (50%).

The pre-intervention test mean score was 2.17 points, and the post-intervention test mean score was 2.67, which shows an improvement of 0.50 points. It can be noticed that in this aspect the participants demonstrated a decreasing of corrections after using the Elevator Pitch, with 67% of the participants obtained an "Excellent" level of achievement.

This difference in the dispersion and the mean difference can be seen in the following Figure 10.

Figure 10

Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Participants' Level of Corrections



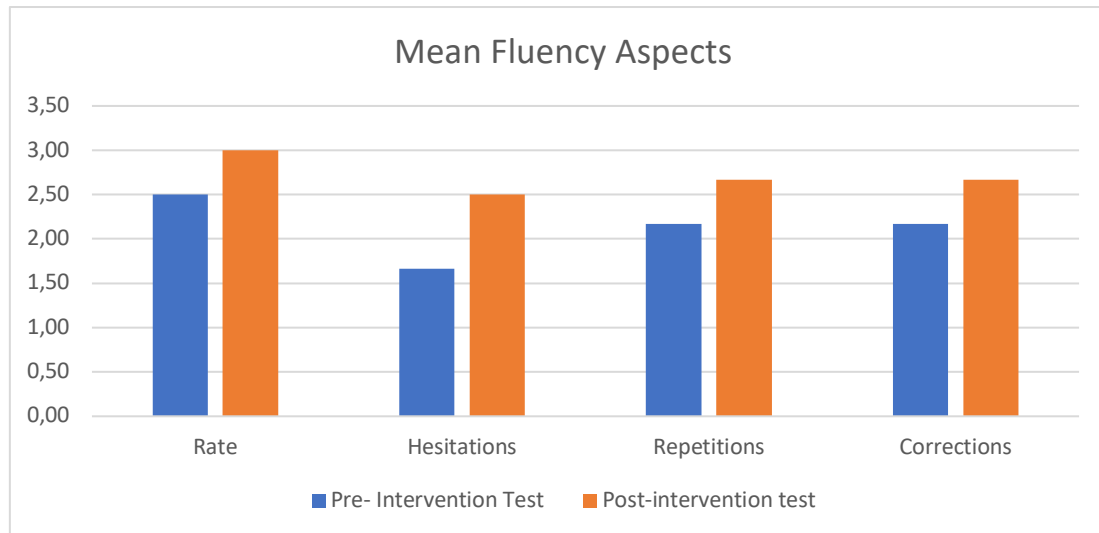
Source: self-elaboration

The dispersion of results of the pre-intervention test is 0.75 points from the mean score, so the scores tend to be homogenous except for student 1, who achieved the "Needs Improvement" level. Nonetheless, in the post-intervention test the standard deviation is 0.52; scores are more clustered around the mean, being more homogeneous than the previous performances for this criterion.

The comparison of the mean scores of four aspects analyzed in the pre- and post-intervention tests results can be seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Comparison of Mean Scores of Each fluency Aspect assessed: speech rate, hesitations, repetitions, and corrections



Source: self-elaboration

Figure 11 shows each fluency aspect after the intervention. Before the intervention, participants showed a 2.5 mean score in the Speech rate, which means that they were able to produce some sentences in one minute, with evenness and flow. In terms of hesitations, participants showed a mean score that corresponds to 1.62, in other words, their sentences were sometimes interrupted by hesitations. In the repetition aspect, participants obtained a mean score of 2.17, this means that the sentences they produced were sometimes repeated with modifications. Regarding the Corrections aspect, the results shared the same mean score as in the Repetitions aspect.

After using the Elevator Pitch during the intervention, three participants increased their speech rate in one point, which means that the student achieved the Excellent level of mastery. Three of the participants maintained Excellent level of Achievement. Therefore, all the students obtain an Excellent level of Achievement. Regarding hesitations, the participants increase of 0.83 mean score, achieving the best score expected in this aspect. In the Repetitions and Corrections aspects, there is an equal statistical behavior in the mean score and the standard deviation. Both

means score increase showing an improvement, and the standard deviation decreases showing that all the students draw near to the mean score.

Furthermore, to set whether the results are statistically significant, the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test was used for the analysis of the difference between the pre and post intervention test. It is worth noting that this test sets a null hypothesis (H_0 : there is no statistically significant difference between the results from both tests) and an alternative hypothesis (H_a : there is a statistically significant difference between both tests) with a set significance level of .05.

The results from the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Test statistics of Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test

	<i>Results from pre and post-intervention tests</i>
<i>Z-score</i>	<i>-1.92154</i>
<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (p-value)</i>	<i>.05486</i>

Source: self-elaboration

As Table 11 shows, the p-value is higher than the significance level (.055 > .05). Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no statistically significant difference between the results from both tests.

Despite the result from the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test, it is important to mention again that the scores in the post intervention test have shown an improvement in the participants' speaking fluency when using the Elevator Pitch.

4.2 SO2: To identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch when performing oral presentations.

To identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the impact of the Elevator Pitch in the English class, a Likert scale survey was conducted. This instrument contains two dimensions: a) fluency and b) the use of the Elevator Pitch.

Results from both Dimensions I and II are shown in Tables 12 and 13 below.

4.2.1 Dimension I: Fluency

The participants' responses regarding Dimension 1 are displayed in table 12 in their corresponding percentages per level of agreement.

Table 4

Students' Responses regarding Dimension I: Fluency

Criterios/ Niveles de concordancia	Totalmente en Desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Ni deacuerdo ni desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
1.El uso del Elevator Pitch en las clases de inglés me ha ayudado a mejorar mi fluidez en la expresión oral en inglés.	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%
2. La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a mejorar la velocidad al hablar en inglés.	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
3. La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos pausas al hablar en inglés.	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%
4.La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos repeticiones de palabras o frases al hablar en inglés.	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%
5.La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a corregirme menos al hablar en inglés.	0%	0%	40%	20%	40%

Source: self-elaboration

As Table 12 shows, most participants' responses are "De acuerdo" and "Totalmente de Acuerdo" in different statements. This means that the majority agrees on the contribution of the Elevator Pitch to support their fluency. However, some participants expressed neither agreement nor disagreement in Statements 1, 4, and 5. For this one, two participants (40%) are unsure about their self-correcting skill when speaking in English due to the practice with the Elevator Pitch.

In addition, we can see that Item 4 "La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos repeticiones de palabras o frases al hablar en inglés" shows the

highest levels of agreement (Completamente de acuerdo) in comparison to the other items, where three out of the six participants have chosen this option.

4.2.2 Rating Dimension II: The use of the Elevator Pitch

The participants' responses regarding Dimension II are displayed in the table 13 with their corresponding percentages per level of agreement.

Table 13

Students' Responses regarding Dimension II: The use of the Elevator Pitch

Criterios/ Niveles de concordancia	Totalmente en Desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Ni deacuerdo ni en desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
6. Me siento cómodo/a utilizando el Elevator Pitch en clases de inglés.	0%	0%	40%	0%	60%
7. Me siento más confiado/a para hablar en inglés en frente de mis compañeros(as) después de utilizar el Elevator Pitch.	0%	0%	40%	40%	20%
8. Creo que utilizar el Elevator Pitch en clase de inglés me ha ayudado a mejorar mis habilidades orales en inglés.	0%	0%	20%	20%	60%
9. Creo que la práctica del Elevator Pitch es una herramienta efectiva para mejorar la fluidez de la expresión oral en inglés.	0%	0%	20%	20%	60%

Source: Self elaboration

As Table 13 shows, participants' responses are mostly spread between "Totalmente de acuerdo" and "De acuerdo" in the different statements. This seems to show that learners regard the use of this strategy as something useful in their learning of English. Nonetheless, some participants expressed neither agreement nor disagreement on some of the items from this dimension. For instance, Items 6 and 7

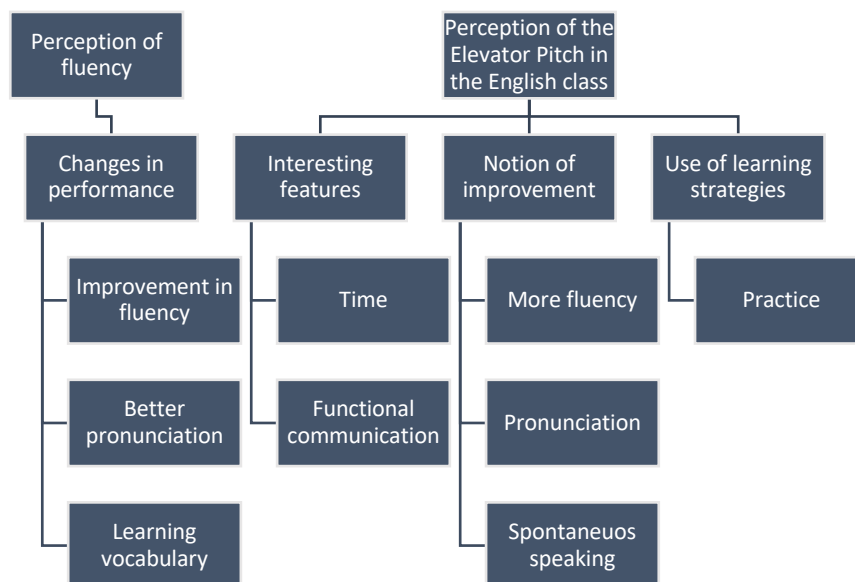
had two participants neither agreeing nor disagreeing, which could mean that these participants are still uncertain about their confidence when they speak in English.

4.3 SO2: To identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch when performing oral presentations.

Moreover, the second data collection instrument (focus group) included opening questions and follow-up questions. Every utterance was transcribed and categorized. Two dimensions and four themes emerged from participants' responses, which have been established for the analysis of students' perceptions towards their experience of being exposed to the Elevator Pitch strategy. From these four themes, nine sub-themes have emerged. The following results were taken from the focus group to uncover and analyze the students' perception towards the use of the Elevator Pitch after the interventions. Figure 12 shows the students' most recurrent answers in terms of preference about the use of the Elevator Pitch during the intervention.

Figure 12

Students' Perceptions Themes and sub-Themes



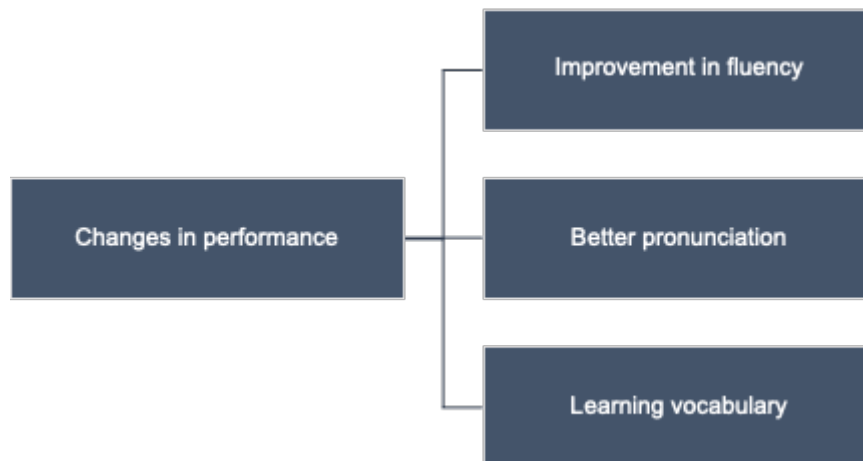
Source: self-elaboration

4.3.1 Dimension 1: Perception of fluency

The content analysis of participants' responses will be displayed in the following sections. The theme and its and sub-themes of this dimension are seen in Figure 13.

Figure 13

Dimension 1: Perception of the Fluency



Source: self-elaboration

Improvement in fluency

Five participants seem to regard this as an important aspect, since they stated in their responses that after using the Elevator Pitch in the English class, fluency is a skill they have been developed. Examples of this can be seen in what participants 1 and 4 have stated:

“mejoré mi fluidez en inglés” (I improved my fluency in English)
(P1_FocusGroup).

“hablo un poco más fluido ahora” (I speak a little bit more fluently now)
(P4_FocusGroup).

Better Pronunciation

Two participants expressed their perceptions regarding their perception of fluency and how the Elevator Pitch helped them to improve their pronunciation when they speak English in class as shown in the excerpt below:

“Mejóro mucho mi pronunciación y mi fluidez” (My pronunciation and my fluency improved) (P5_FocusGroup).

“Ahora puedo pronunciar mucho mejor las palabras” (now I can pronounce the words much better) (P2_FocusGroup).

Learning vocabulary

Based on participants' responses, this sub-category was the second to be regarded after using the Elevator Pitch in class. In this case three participants mentioned how the Elevator Pitch helped them to increase vocabulary when they prepare and practice one minute pitch

"He aumentado bastante mi vocabulario y ahora sé ciertas palabras que antes no sabía" (my vocabulary has increased and now I know certain words than I did not know before) (P5_Focus Group).

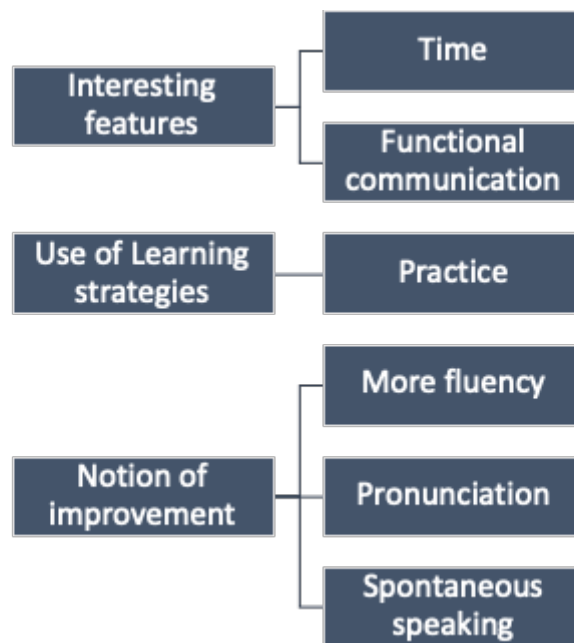
"Ahora se más palabras en inglés" (now I know more words in English) (P3_FocusGroup).

4.3.2 Dimension 2: Perception of the Elevator Pitch in the English class

Participants' perceptions of the Elevator Pitch in the English class pointed out three themes with seven sub-themes (See Figure 14).

Figure 14

Themes, and Sub-Themes for Students' Perceptions



Source: self-elaboration

Time

According to what was expressed in the first question of the focus group, two of six participants manifested that time was important to gain fluency when they practiced the Elevator Pitch. In the following quote is expressed a perception of time as an interesting feature:

“Lo común es que uno escribe, eso se traduce y eso queda en el cuaderno, pero aquí había que escribirlo, traducirlo y después practicarlo muchas veces, grabar y volverlo a grabar y que tenía que ser sólo en un minuto”. (One usually writes and that is translated and that stays in the notebook, but here it has been written, translated and then recorded, recorded again and that had to be in one minute) (P1_FocusGroup).

“practicábamos el pitch tantas veces era necesario hasta que lo aprendíamos bien” (“We practiced the pitch as many times as necessary until we learned it well) (P4_FocusGroup).

Functional Communication

Among the participants' responses, favourable perceptions were identified. For two participants, the Elevator Pitch allowed them to speak about themselves and how they may use this strategy in the future.

“Nos ayudó a dar información de lo que a nosotros nos gusta” (It helped us give information about what we like) (P4_FocusGroup).

“Ahora puedo dar mi información personal en inglés y vender productos” (I can now give personal information in English and sell products). (P1_FocusGroup).

Practice

Within this sub-theme, participants seemed to have valued the usefulness of the Elevator Pitch when they practiced several times what they wanted to say in one minute. As it can be seen in Figure 14, two of the participants agreed on this perception when they overcame difficulties at the moment of preparing their pitch:

superé a base de la práctica y la constancia” (I got over it based on practice and consistency). (P4_FocusGroup).

“Pude practicar muchas veces hasta que saliera bien” (I was able to practice many times until I got it right). (P5_FocusGroup).

More fluency

Similar to the previous sub-theme, this subtheme was also mentioned by two participants. Regarding the notion of improvement theme, students perceived the practice to achieve more fluency when they perform the Elevator Pitch as:

“Si, creo que la práctica es como un funcionamiento perfecto para poder hablar de forma más fluida en inglés”. (Yes, I believe that practice is like a perfect functioning to being able to speak more fluently in English). (P4_FocusGroup).

“Siento que ahora hablo más fluido y más palabras” (I feel like now I speak more fluently and with more words(P2_FocusGroup)).

Regarding all the participants' responses in the focus group, it can be stated that most of them seem to value the use of the Elevator Pitch as a helpful strategy to support their fluency. Moreover, they also appear to hold in high regard how practicing has helped them improve other aspects as the use of time or vocabulary acquisition. To sum up, the findings from the content analysis have shown the positive effect participants see in their own performances when using the Elevator Pitch.

Chapter V: Discussion

This chapter aims to discuss the research question stated for this action research by analyzing the two specific objectives in relation to the results and findings that were supported by the literature review. This chapter also discusses research limitations and implications concerning the use of the Elevator Pitch to support eleventh grade students' speaking fluency.

The findings of this action research study will be examined in the light of the literature and discussed by specific objective. A summary of the findings per specific objective will be shown to guide the analysis.

5.1 SO1: To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, repetitions and corrections.

Regarding specific objective 1, it can be said that the Elevator Pitch technique contributed to improving the participants' speaking fluency by increasing their speech rate and decreasing the number of extended hesitations, repetitions, and corrections. Particularly, this improvement can be observed in the post intervention test final mean score, which was 11 points, representing 90% of achievement compared with 68% of achievement in the pre intervention test. Another important point is that all the students (100%) reported an improvement in their level of fluency. Similar improvements on speaking fluency are stated by Sagimin (2015), in his investigation it is reflected that this technique could make an important contribution to students' speaking fluency. What is more, Sagimin's investigation showed that this technique was helpful to train English students' speaking skill in producing the language fluently, concisely, and smoothly because students have several opportunities to use and practice by crafting, drilling, practicing, and memorizing. According to what this action research found, these results shown important consequences for the broader domain of fostering students' fluency since the Elevator Pitch required individual practice through oral repetition, as indicated by Yoshimura and MacWhinney (2017).

Furthermore, the Elevator Pitch technique shares some similarities with the technique known as 4/3/2, because both methods aim to deliver fluent messages in a limited amount of time (Beltrán-Palanquez, 2023; Santos & Ramírez-Ávila, 2023). In the case of the 4/3/2 technique, Santos and Ramirez-Ávila (2022) observed that after implementing this technique in an exploratory group, significant improvements were noted in the post-intervention test. These improvements encompass enhanced

English-speaking speed, a reduction in filled and silent pauses, fewer repetitions, and a decrease in the number of corrections required. Namely, the participants of this action research also saw improvement in some of these criteria (e.g. repetition or correction levels). These positive outcomes highlight the efficacy of concise communication techniques like 4/3/2 and the Elevator Pitch in supporting students' fluency. The improvements on students' fluency shown in this action research is directly linked to the efficacy of concise communication techniques like the Elevator Pitch and 4/3/2 in supporting students' fluency. Overall, the use of these concise communication strategies has contributed to the observed improvements in fluency, as they encourage students to speak more fluidly, with greater confidence, and with reduced pauses, repetitions, and corrections when students speak English.

Additionally, when considering how planning and practice are pivotal for a good pitch, the features, and benefits of strategic planning (Farde Davaji & Ghoorchaiei, 2023; Moradi & Talebi, 2014; Yuan & Ellis, 2003) play a crucial role, as the Elevator Pitch technique provides room for these learning strategies. This technique provides learners with several opportunities to rehearse students' fluency by crafting, drilling, practicing, and memorizing (Morgan & Wright, 2021; O'Leary, 2008). Besides, Sagimin (2015) and Farde Davaji and Ghoorchaiei (2023) highlight the importance of planning in language learning, particularly in relation to speaking skills. Therefore, strategic planning is a crucial aspect of an elevator pitch. It comes into play when crafting an elevator pitch, as it involves rehearsing and planning the key points and structure of the pitch to effectively capture the listener's attention and communicate the intended message within a short time frame. It is essential for developing and supporting students' fluency.

This technique appears to be an appropriate alternative for a speaking class, particularly for students who frequently utilize English as a means of communication in an office setting or job, as well as those who deliver speeches or present brief presentations in front of others. Students are urged to produce any conceivable speech in various settings of their working field and interest when delivering an Elevator pitch, such as presenting and promoting the product, or conducting a presentation in a meeting and elaborating ideas.

As the elevator pitch embraces practicing (Morgan & Wright, 2021; O'Leary, 2008; Sagimin, 2015), students from the vocational program of Administration and Human Resources can gain fluency in their speaking skill when they can practice saying their pitch by oral repetition.

5.2 SO2: To identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch when performing oral presentations

Data obtained through the focus group responses and the thematic analysis reflected that the participants' perceptions were mostly positive and favorable regarding the use of the Elevator Pitch and their fluency performance.

Sagimin reported that using the Elevator Pitch was easy to conduct and to implement in drilling students' speaking skill since the technique has some easy steps to be learned such as planning or designing, crafting, memorizing, practicing, and performing. The same author mentions that the Elevator pitch technique was helpful to train his students' skill in producing language because they have good opportunity to use and to practice the language. Particularly, some participants from this study reported in the focus group that practice was important for them when they performed the Elevator Pitch in each session. "*Practice*" as a sub-theme in the focus group was seen as a valuable and useful tool when students overcome difficulties preparing their pitch.

O'Leary emphasized that "an Elevator Pitch is a teaching and communication tool that will help learners articulate the message" (p. 5). This demonstrates that participants' perceptions of their communication skills have been significantly impacted by the usage of the Elevator Pitch as a fluency improvement tool because it has improved their confidence in speaking in addition to their fluency. Regarding all the participants' responses in the focus group of this action research, fluency is a sub-theme in the notion of improving, due to the students perceiving the practice to achieve more fluency when they perform the Elevator Pitch. As a result, incorporating the Elevator Pitch into the EFL learning process delivers multiple benefits to communication enhancement and equips students for success in a variety of areas. The students showed positive perceptions towards speaking activities using the Elevator Pitch. They expressed their perception in two dimensions: perception of fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch in the English class. Learners point out that

the Elevator Pitch helped them to express their ideas fluently, they learnt new words and they improved their pronunciation as well. They also felt they the Elevator Pitch helped them to speak English confidently, because the practice gives them the opportunity to improve their pitch (Morgan & Wright, 2021; Sagimin, 2015).

The Likert scale survey revealed the students' perception after using the Elevator Pitch in the English class were predominantly satisfactory. Sagimin (2015) argues that the Elevator Pitch technique is offered as one of the thrilling teaching strategies in speaking class. This strategy appears to be a suitable and appropriate alternative for speaking lessons, particularly for students who frequently utilize English as a means of communication in an office setting or job, as well as those who deliver speeches or present brief presentations in front of others.

Another important factor is to analyze the significant impact of the use of the Elevator Pitch on other communicational skills, Rao (2019) defined such as clarity and conciseness, confidence, listening skills, non-verbal communication, time management, storytelling, among others. Likewise, the same author states that these communicational skills are helpful for students when they must settle down in their professions and they can demonstrate these skills during a job interview or an oral presentation. As this action research has demonstrated, speaking fluency is closely linked to the effective use of the Elevator Pitch in vocational programs. By honing the ability of delivering a concise Elevator Pitch students from this study can enhance their overall communication skills in their job setting and their professional communication.

5.3 Limitations

The implementation of the Elevator Pitch as teaching technique to enhance students' fluency in a group of eleventh grade students within the context of a public high school in Chile provides a favorable method for developing communication skills. However, while the potential benefits of implementing the Elevator Pitch in the English class are apparent, it is essential to acknowledge and to address certain limitations that may impact the successful integration of the Elevator Pitch into the vocational education program of Chilean public high school. By recognizing these limitations,

teachers and stakeholders can make informed decisions about the implementation of the Elevator Pitch as a tool to enhance students' fluency.

The main drawback encountered had to do with the participants' attendance through the whole process of intervention. Though only six participants successfully completed the intervention, originally eleven students participated in this investigation and five of them had to cease participation due to health and familiar issues.

Holding the interventions sessions in the school lab caused another drawback to the development of the action plan, in relation to technical problems and lack of technological knowledge by the participants. Some participants had technical difficulties in the first intervention. For example, some of them reported problems with the computers and a slow internet connection. Other participants had difficulties using Microsoft Word and sending emails. Consequently, the teacher-researcher decided to develop the intervention plan in the students' classroom where the participants feel more comfortable using their phones and their notebooks.

There were also some challenges during the interventions. The first was that the participants were not used to working with time limits, although they tried to, they did not finish the tasks completely so the teacher-researcher concluded that some stages needed to be longer in terms of time. The second challenge was that one participant presented difficulties writing and speaking in Spanish, so writing and speaking in English was also a struggle. The cause of this delayed his process to achieve the task, however, the participant was helped by teacher of special education and the teacher-researcher decided to adapt the speaking fluency rubric.

5.4 Implications

Considering the results obtained in this study, some key implications lie in the usefulness of the Elevator Pitch. This technique may help students from this or similar contexts or vocational programs in Chile to improve their fluency when speaking English, other aspects like language systems such as pronunciation or vocabulary, and at the same time it may help them in their professional development. That is to say, the Elevator Pitch poses benefits for both language and vocational learning, which is supported with what Sagimin claimed regarding the beneficial aspects of this technique. Moreover, this is also illustrated in some themes and sub-themes that

emerged in the focus group, such as, their perception of fluency, familiarity with the language or vocabulary acquisition.

Furthermore, another implication is related to the shift in the methodology implemented in the English lessons. Students reported in the focus group that they now find the lessons more communicative-oriented and relatable, as it allowed them to share information about themselves and their interests as well. Thus, for the researcher this implication provides feedback to vary the teaching techniques implemented in the classroom to make lessons more communicative and appealing to the learners. Changing the methodology in the classroom has a significant impact on both students and the teacher- researcher due to the choice of instructional methods and various aspects of the learning environment and my role as an educator.

Some implications for further research based on using the Elevator Pitch to support students' fluency contemplate pedagogical approaches and students' development in terms of implementing this technique with different groups from other contexts apart from vocational education. This may provide teachers with a comprehensive understanding of how the use of Elevator Pitch can foster fluency skills among different students.

Examining the use of this strategy holds profound implications for me as a teacher-researcher. First and foremost, it highlights the potential of innovative teaching methods to enhance students' communication skills within a vocational context. As a teacher, I can integrate the Elevator Pitch technique as a pedagogical to help my students develop fluency and communication skills, which are vital for their future careers. This study also underscores the importance of tailoring teaching strategies to the specific needs and backgrounds of students, particularly in diverse educational settings like the one in Chile.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary of the main findings

Conclusion from this action research based on the use of the Elevator Pitch to support eleven-grade students reveal several key findings, personal reflections and recommendations regarding the contribution provided by the Elevator Pitch on the English-speaking fluency.

The major finding of this action research study is related to the use of the Elevator Pitch technique as a tool to supporting the participants of this study.

Firstly, the Elevator Pitch helped all the participants to improve their speech rate, they avoided extended hesitations and decreased repetitions and corrections in one minute speech as indicated by the results of the post intervention test. Comparing the pre and post intervention test yields three different outcomes. On one hand, all the participants increased their scores in the fluency rubric, that was 68% in the “good level” and moved forward to the “excellent level”. There were two cases in which the participants did not decrease hesitations, corrections, and repetitions because their level of fluency was not high, and they needed further practice. In addition, there was a particular participant who improved his fluency, which may be explained due to their private speech and peer feedback that were developing in interventions 3 and 4. Nevertheless, there were also two cases in which the participants who had a higher level of English did not show any improvement in their speech rate during both the pre and post intervention test.

Secondly, participants’ perceptions about the contribution of the Elevator Pitch to support their speaking fluency were mostly favorable. The participants agreed that the Elevator Pitch was useful to practice oral fluency and after the intervention they feel more confident when they speak. What is more, some students agreed that the Elevator Pitch helped them to develop their ideas better and they had more chances to improve their pronunciation.

Thirdly, results seem to indicate that there is a relation between the participants’ time practice and their increase in speaking fluency. That is to say that students who practiced more when using the Elevator Pitch were the ones that improved their post intervention test and hence, their speaking fluency. This is probably because they devoted more time to practice and therefore more chances to improve when they received peer feedback. This finding highlighted the importance of private speech as

Khorshidi & Abadikhah (2013) demonstrated that private speech functioned to manage students' speech, structure their sentences, and get control over the task. Therefore, when students practice the Elevator Pitch by private speech, they have numerous instances of reading aloud, repetition, planning and managing student's thoughts.

Furthermore, the results also revealed that practice is important when students use the Elevator Pitch because without practice, students may struggle to deliver a message without refining their and including irrelevant details. Along with Anani and Gordani (2015) stated that private speech helps in focusing attention on students' cognitive development in general. This kind of practice has a lot of applications from repeating linguistic structures and memorizing lexical items to rehearsing language tasks and monitoring their linguistic progress by thinking through or talking about it. Thus, they can improve their articulatory pronunciation and delivery, they can focus on speaking clearly, using the appropriate tone and pace, and making their message engaging.

Finally, through practice, students can adapt their pitches in various situations, such as job interviews, networking events, or project presentations. This adaptability is crucial due to the participants' vocational program.

6.2 Personal reflection

Conducting the present action research on integrating the Elevator Pitch to support students' fluency in the vocational program context has been a very enlightening experience for the researcher. The teacher researcher has gained a deeper understanding of the importance of effective communication skills in the context of public high schools in Chile and the most striking revelation was how using the elevator pitch can be adapted to empower students in different vocational programs.

The second reflection centers around the participants of this study. The participants embraced the action research project with a very positive attitude. Students demonstrate a lot of commitment towards the study by participating voluntarily, attending the intervention sessions, and practicing using the Elevator Pitch in and out the classroom setting by finishing the pre and post intervention test accordingly. At the beginning of the intervention, some students were hesitant to practice speaking, however, as they engaged in the Elevator Pitch strategy exercises

and receive constructive feedback, the teacher researcher observed noticeable changes in the participants' confidence. This personal growth not only supported their fluency but also their vocational success.

The teacher researcher considered the experience of having carried out action research as a very satisfactory one for being able to make a positive difference in the participants' experiences in the English class. This judgement is based on participants' focus group, in which all of them perceived the Elevator Pitch as a useful tool to support their speaking fluency. At the same time, this action research exposed some challenges that should be addressed for future implementation. One noticeable challenge was the varying levels of fluency among the participants in the pre-intervention test. Additionally, some students found it difficult to work with time during the intervention, they had lack of time management skill, so students had explicitly been taught on how to manage their time effectively.

As a final observation, this action research has shed light on the potential of the Elevator Pitch as a tool to enhance students' fluency in a group of a vocational program. The impact on students' confidence and communication skills underscores the importance of integrating new techniques into vocational education.

6.3 Further research and recommendations

As stated earlier, the action research process is never finished. Lessons can be learnt from the implications of methodological changes that can be implemented in the teacher's classroom. Similarly, studies on practicing the Elevator pitch not only improved students' fluency but also pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and writing skills. For instance, through oral and written messages, the Elevator Pitch provides opportunities for additional practice on asking questions. The Elevator Pitch can be adapted to different communicational language functions such as the ones that this action research covered and more advanced in all disciplines, for example, launching a project in the school or introducing your own business.

Moreover, an interesting study can be carried out based on the use of audio recordings when students practice their pitches. By meticulously studying these audio recordings, students can self-assess their pronunciation, identify areas for improvement and reflect upon their pronunciation, accuracy, register and use of discourse markers. Having this in mind for future studies, using audio recordings to

support the Elevator Pitch strategy can be a powerful tool for teachers and students because it provides opportunities for self-assessment and make all the necessary adjustments to refine students' communication skills.

Furthermore, action research encourages teachers to continually reflect on their own teaching practice, trying new methods and making informed decisions. As for the teacher researcher of this investigation it is essential to identify areas for further research and recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of this approach. The first consideration is to implement a system for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the use of the Elevator Pitch in the vocational program in a long term-impact, follow up by students who participated in the program and to investigate if they retain fluency and communication skills over an extended period. Similarly, implementing ongoing Elevator Pitch training as a part of the curriculum may transfer effectively to vocational settings and contribute to improving job placement and career success. The second consideration is to explore the contribution of technology, such as video recording or feedback tools, to enhance the Elevator Pitch training. Therefore, providing students with opportunities to receive feedback from teachers and classmates can help students to identify areas for improvement and refine their communication skills effectively.

By addressing long-term impacts and technology integrations, teachers can further enhance the efficacy of the Elevator Pitch as a valuable pedagogical approach. Investigating the feasibility of performing longitudinal studies on the efficacy of the Elevator Pitch approach inside a vocational program in Chile holds tremendous promise for educational research and program enhancement. Researchers and teachers can acquire significant insights into the long-term influence of this strategic communication strategy on students' professional growth by tracking their progress and outcomes over time. Understanding how the Elevator Pitch method affects students' career prospects, self-confidence, and overall success in the job market could provide evidence-based recommendations to Chilean teachers and legislators to improve vocational programs. These studies could provide a complete assessment of the strategy's influence in molding students' career paths, ultimately contributing to the refinement of vocational education to better correspond with the growing demands of the labor market.

Considering all the aforementioned, researching and refining the use of the Elevator Pitch in vocational programs is crucial for ensuring that students from public high schools can develop strong speaking skills. As Rao (2019) states: *“Having good communication skills is the passport to get better employment opportunities”*. Developing good speaking skills is useful for learners when they must settle down in their professions. For example, professionals must give oral presentations, or promote products for their companies. Therefore, speaking skills are the most essential skills for all the learners who wish to learn English to enhance their career, improve business, build confidence levels, obtaining better job opportunities, making public speeches, attending interviews give presentations and so on. Once students practice these speaking skills, they obtain the mastery of these skills and perform well in the activities in and outside the classroom.

As a closing remark, young learners can benefit from drafting and delivering Elevator pitches. The Elevator Pitch strategy can be adapted effectively for young learners as a valuable skill-development. An Elevator Pitch exercising for young learners would involve teaching them how to confidently express their interests, passions, or goals in a brief, engaging manner. This not only boosts their communication skills but also helps them develop a sense of self-awareness and the ability to organize their thoughts. For instance, sharing their favorite hobbies, describing a school project, or expressing their dreams. This exercise encourages them to become effective communicators and self-acknowledged from an early age.

Appendices

Appendix A: Fluency rubric 1 minute pitch (pre and post intervention test)

Descriptors/ Score	1 point	2 points	3 points
Rate	The speaker speaks 20 to 39 words	The speaker speaks 40-59 words	The speaker speaks 60 or more words
Hesitations	The speaker has many hesitations (4 or more hesitations)	The speaker has some noticeable hesitations (from 2-3) and short pauses (3 seconds or less)	The speaker has few noticeable hesitations (1 or less) and few short pauses
Repetitions	The speaker makes many repetitions (4 or more)	The speaker makes some repetitions (from 2-3)	The speaker makes a few repetitions (1 or less)
Corrections	The speaker makes many corrections (4 or more)	The speaker makes some corrections (from 2-3)	The speaker makes a few corrections (1 or less)
Total:			

Source: own creation based on Santos & Ramírez Avila (2022)

Appendix B: Likert Scale

Criterios/ Niveles de concordancia	Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 punto	En desacuerdo 2 punto	Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo 3 puntos	De acuerdo 4 puntos	Totalmente de acuerdo 5 puntos
DIMENSIÓN I: FLUIDEZ					
1.El uso del Elevator Pitch en las clases de inglés me ha ayudado a mejorar mi fluidez en la expresión oral en inglés.					
2. La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a mejorar la velocidad al hablar en inglés.					
3. La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos pausas al hablar en inglés.					
4.La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos repeticiones de palabras o frases al hablar en inglés.					
5.La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a corregirme menos al hablar en inglés.					
DIMENSION II: THE USE OF THE ELEVATOR PITCH					
6.Me siento cómodo/a utilizando el Elevator Pitch en clases de inglés.					

7. Me siento más confiado/a para hablar en inglés en frente de mis compañeros(as) después de utilizar el Elevator Pitch.					
8. Creo que utilizar el Elevator Pitch en clase de inglés me ha ayudado a mejorar mis habilidades orales en inglés.					
9. Creo que la práctica del Elevator Pitch es una herramienta efectiva para mejorar la fluidez de la expresión oral en inglés.					
DIMENSIÓN III: CLASES DE INGLÉS					
10. Me gustaría seguir utilizando el Elevator Pitch en futuras clases de inglés.					
11. Me gustaría que la herramienta del Elevator Pitch se utilizara en otras asignaturas (no solo en la asignatura de inglés) de la carrera técnico profesional Administración de Recursos Humanos y Logística.					

Appendix C: Focus Group

Dimensions	Questions	Main Ideas
DIMENSION I FLUENCY	1. ¿Cómo te sientes hablando en inglés en la clase después de usar el Elevator Pitch?	
	2. ¿Qué cambios notaste en tu uso del inglés al hablar después de hacer el elevator pitch?	
	3. ¿Crees que ahora hablas más rápido en un minuto?	
	4. ¿Qué dificultades encontraste al presentar tu Elevator pitch de un minuto? ¿Las pudiste superar? ¿Cómo?	
DIMENSION II ENGLISH CLASS	5. ¿Qué es lo que más te llamó la atención de preparar el elevator pitch en la clase de inglés?	
	6. ¿Como crees que el uso del Elevator Pitch podría mejorarse o ampliarse en las clases de inglés?	
DIMENSION III FUTURE GOALS	7. ¿Cómo piensas que el Elevator pitch puede ayudarte en el futuro, tanto en la vida laboral como personal?	

Appendix D: Instruments Validation

Fluency Rubric validation table (Pre intervention)

Write an X to the best level of agreement that suits your validation. Write comments if it is necessary.

SO1: To analyze students' improvement in their fluency when performing oral presentations after using the Elevator pitch.

	I strongly agree	I agree	I am uncertain, I may agree or disagree	I disagree	I strongly disagree	Comments
RATE						
HESITATIONS						
CORRECTIONS						
PAUSES						

Fluency rubric (post intervention)

	I strongly agree	I agree	I am uncertain, I may agree or disagree	I disagree	I strongly disagree
RATE					
HESITATIONS					
CORRECTIONS					
PAUSES					

Likert scale validation table

Write an X to the best level of agreement that suits your validation. Write comments if it is necessary.

SO2: To assess students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch when performing oral presentations.

	Main tain	Mo dif y	Rem ove	Observ ations
Statements				
DIMENSIÓN I: Fluidez				
1.El uso del Elevator Pitch en las clases de inglés me ha ayudado a mejorar mi fluidez en la expresión oral en inglés.				
2. La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a mejorar la velocidad al hablar en inglés.				
3. La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos pausas al hablar en inglés.				
4.La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a realizar menos repeticiones de palabras o frases al hablar en inglés.				

<p>5.La práctica del Elevator Pitch me ayudó a corregirme menos al hablar en inglés.</p>				
<p>DIMENSION II: EXPRESIÓN ORAL</p>				
<p>6.Me siento cómodo/a utilizando el Elevator Pitch en clases de inglés.</p>				
<p>7. Me siento más confiado/a para hablar en inglés en público después de utilizar el Elevator Pitch.</p>				
<p>8. Creo que utilizar el Elevator Pitch en clase de inglés me ha ayudado a mejorar mis habilidades orales en inglés.</p>				
<p>9. Creo que la práctica del Elevator Pitch es una herramienta efectiva para mejorar la fluidez de la expresión oral en inglés.</p>				
<p>DIMENSIÓN III: CLASES DE INGLÉS</p>				
<p>10. Me gustaría seguir utilizando el Elevator Pitch en futuras clases de inglés.</p>				
<p>11. Me gustaría que la herramienta del Elevator Pitch se utilizara en otras asignaturas (no en inglés) de la carrera técnico profesional Administración de Recursos Humanos y Logística.</p>				

Focus Group validation chart.

Write an X to the best level of agreement that suits your validation. Write comments if it is necessary.

SO2: To assess students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch when performing oral presentations.

<u>Question</u>	<u>MAINTAIN</u>	<u>MODIFY</u>	<u>REMOVE</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
1. ¿Cómo te sientes hablando en inglés en la clase? ¿Qué cambios notaste en ti mismo después de hacer el elevator pitch?				
2. ¿Qué es lo que más te llamó la atención de preparar el elevator pitch?				
3. ¿Cómo te sentiste al presentar tu elevator pitch? (por ej: ahora hablas más rápido) ¿Por qué?				
4. ¿Qué dificultades encontraste al realizar el elevator pitch? ¿Las pudiste superar y cómo?				
5. ¿Cómo piensas que el elevator pitch puede ayudarte en el futuro, tanto en la vida laboral como personal?				
6. ¿Crees que el elevator pitch puede ser útil para otras asignaturas? ¿Por qué?				

7. ¿Cómo crees que el uso del elevator pitch podría mejorarse o ampliarse en las clases de inglés?

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