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Magíster en Innovación de la Enseñanza, Aprendizaje y Evaluación del Inglés

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION GAP ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT  
HONDURAN NINTH GRADE STUDENTS' SPEAKING FLUENCY**

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

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## **List of Acronyms**

A1: Basic users of language level of English

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

IGA: Information Gap Activities

SEH: Secretary of Education of Honduras

## **Abstract**

This action research explored the contribution of information gap activities to support Honduran ninth-grade students' speaking fluency. Their support on speaking fluency was assessed in terms of speech rate, breakdowns or pauses, and repairs. This study adopted a mixed method approach: quantitative and qualitative. Regarding the sampling of this study, it corresponded to a group of seven Honduran ninth graders who had been learning English for two years, all aged between 14 and 15 years old with an A1 English level. These students are currently part of a rural context in a public high school in a town in the department of Comayagua, Honduras. The strategy was implemented during seven sessions. Data were collected by applying a pre and post-intervention test, and results were assessed with an analytic rubric; to collect the participants' perceptions, a focus group was conducted. The pre and post-test results showed an improvement in participants' speaking fluency, as they got a higher mean score in the post-test. These results were in agreement with the participants' positive perceptions, who reported that they had noticed an improvement in their oral fluency. Moreover, participants expressed that information gap activities positively impacted upon their motivation, helped them to use the language communicatively, and made them more aware of their mistakes. In conclusion, information gap activities helped learners improve their speaking fluency and might support English teachers in Honduran rural public contexts not to rely upon traditional textbook use and make their classes more motivating and communicative.

## **Keywords**

Information gap activities, Speaking fluency, English as a foreign language, primary education.

## **Resumen**

Esta investigación-acción exploró la contribución de las actividades con vacío de información como apoyo a la fluidez del habla de los estudiantes hondureños de noveno grado, este apoyo fue evaluado en términos de velocidad del habla, rupturas o pausas y reparaciones. Este estudio adoptó un enfoque de método mixto: cuantitativo y cualitativo. En cuanto a la muestra de este estudio, correspondió a un grupo de siete estudiantes hondureños de noveno grado que llevaban dos años aprendiendo inglés, todos ellos con edades comprendidas entre los 14 y 15 años, con un nivel de inglés A1. Estos estudiantes actualmente forman parte de un contexto rural en una escuela secundaria pública en un municipio en el departamento de Comayagua, Honduras. La estrategia de aprendizaje colaborativo fue implementada durante siete semanas. Los datos fueron recolectados 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. Los resultados del pre y post-test mostraron una mejora en la fluidez del habla de los participantes, ya que obtuvieron una nota promedio más alta en el post-test. Estos resultados estuvieron de acuerdo con las percepciones positivas de los participantes, quienes informaron haber notado una mejora en su fluidez oral. Además, los participantes expresaron que las actividades con vacío de información impactaron positivamente en su motivación, los ayudaron a usar el idioma de manera comunicativa y los hicieron más conscientes de sus errores. En conclusión, las actividades con vacío de información ayudaron a los estudiantes a mejorar su fluidez al hablar y pueden ayudar a los profesores de inglés en contextos públicos rurales hondureños a no depender del uso tradicional de libros de texto y hacer que sus clases sean más motivadoras y comunicativas.

### **Palabras Clave**

Actividades con vacío de información, fluidez del habla, inglés como segunda lengua, educación básica.

## **Chapter I: Introduction**

## **1.1 Background Information**

English language learning has gained a lot of importance in recent years in the economic, political, social, and cultural fields in Latin American countries. That is why the demand for people to immerse in this teaching training process to know and manage this language has increased. As a result, English has been included as part of the core curriculum in the Honduran public education system.

Unfortunately, there have not been good results since Honduras remains as one of the Latin American countries with a “regular English proficiency rate in its population”, getting the 55<sup>th</sup> position according to the annual ranking of English proficiency of 112 countries and regions provided by EF institution. (2021, p.22)

One of the causes might be that most teachers do not have adequate didactic resources, and there are few available textbooks which have a grammar focus giving a metalinguistic orientation to the lessons. Due to this, teachers have to be in a constant search for new strategies and techniques to achieve a more effective teaching-learning process.

The majority of Honduran students finish their studies in public high schools with a very low knowledge of English. This research was conducted with a group of 9<sup>th</sup> Honduran graders from a public school located in a town in the department of Comayagua in Honduras ; they have a A1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, 2001). The teacher-researcher have observed this weaknesses in students’ oral fluency because they struggle to keep short, simple conversations orally.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

In public Honduran schools, by the end of ninth-grade students are expected to participate in conversations to share their experiences, opinions, and ideas. They should use English in an autonomous way with their peers and give short presentations in front of the class (Secretary of Education of Honduras [SEH], 2011). Furthermore, the National Curriculum Design for Primary Education in Honduras (2003) has established some competencies that Honduran nine-grade students are expected to achieve at the end of their primary education: Students must be able to use the language orally to produce simple oral messages related to people and events in their environment, and thus meet their communication needs, like recreation or problem-solving.(Secretaría de Estado en el despacho de Educación de Honduras, 2003)

Despite the standards established by the Secretary of Education of Honduras, the reality remains the same “In many public schools, lack of resources and the indifference of educational authorities have left the teaching of English behind.” (Pagoada, 2014, p.2). According to Pagoada (2014), one of the reasons for this

problematic situation is the lack of adequate resources, for example, the textbook that students use.

This is the reality Honduras faces, the textbooks to be used at school are not very appropriate; they are strongly grammar-focused. All the units are full of grammar exercises with no opportunity to develop speaking activities. Hence, teachers need to look for other resources to achieve the standards expected at the end of each grade. Besides this, students are not developing their speaking skills because they spend most of their time memorizing grammar rules.

Therefore, English language fluency is neglected due to the lack of time dedicated to interactive speaking skills that allow learners to use all the vocabulary and grammar they know. That is why this is a crucial area for improvement.

The following action research aims to improve the speaking fluency in a group of ninth-grade students from a public high school in Honduras by implementing the use of information gap activities to develop their speaking fluency in English. When learners use information gap activities, they need to interact with their classmates to get the information they need to fill the gap. The use of this kind of activity in class might become a complement to the textbook that is currently being used.

### **1.3 Aims**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

Explore the contribution of information gap activities to support Honduran ninth-grade students' speaking fluency in English.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives:**

- To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support student's speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.
- To analyze students' perception regarding the use of information gap activities to support their speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns and repairs.

## **Chapter II: Theoretical Framework**

## Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Speaking Skill development

There are different definitions about the speaking skill considering its several characteristics. For example, Richards (2008) states that “speaking refers to the circumstances where the point is on what it is said or done. The message is the central focus alongside the interaction” (p.24). Jondeya states that “speaking is a skill of comprehending, pronouncing, and being fluent and accurate in using grammar and vocabulary” (2011, p.15). According to Nunan (2003) “Speaking is a productive aural/ oral skill and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning” (p.48). Based on all these definitions, it can be declared that speaking is a complex productive skill that includes elements like conveying the message effectively by using vocabulary and grammar to transmit this message. One essential aspect of speaking is the social interaction it generates because when people speak, they are not only producing a set of words, but they are also sharing knowledge. As Jondeya (2011) explains “Speaking is the process of sharing with other persons, one’s knowledge, interests, attitudes, opinions or ideas” (p.15).

Speaking requires the use of many linguistic elements that work together, as it is shown in Figure 1:

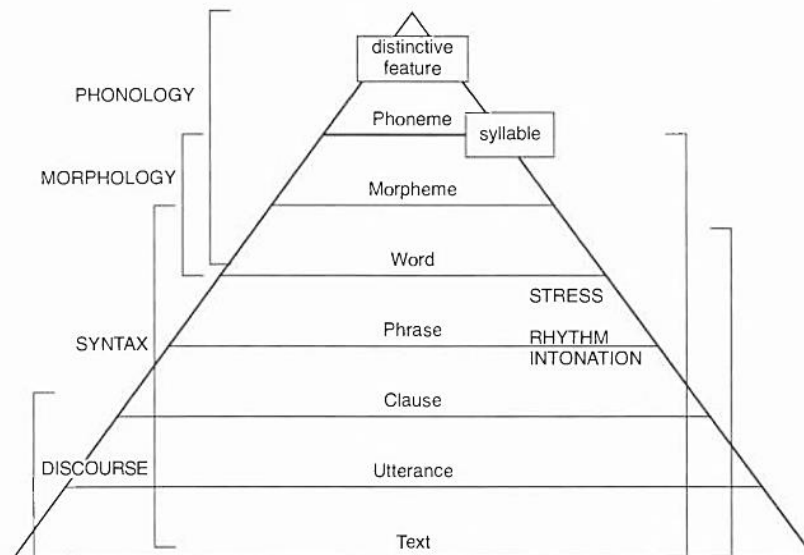


Figure 1: *Interaction in the Language Curriculum Awareness, Autonomy, and Authenticity (Longman, 1996)*

As it can be seen in the previous figure, speaking begins from the smallest unit of language, the phoneme. Using phonemes the speakers can form words, phrases and utterances which correctly structures build texts that we need to communicate.

Managing all these elements can be a great challenge for a beginner taking into account that “First, speaking happens “in real-time”; usually, the person you are talking to is waiting for you to speak right then. Second, when you speak, you cannot edit and revise what you wish to say, as you can if you are writing” (Nunan,2003, p.48). Besides this, other characteristics distinguish spoken language from written language, as it is shown in Figure 2:

| Spoken language                         | Written language                      |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Auditory                                | Visual                                |
| Temporary; immediate reception          | Permanent; delayed reception          |
| Prosody (rhythm, stress intonation)     | Punctuation                           |
| Immediate feedback                      | Delayed or no feedback                |
| Planning and editing limited by channel | Unlimited planning, editing, revision |

Figure 2: Table of *Key Contrasts between Spoken and Written language* (Van Lier, 1995, p.88)

In figure 2 it can be observed that written language is permanent, it allows planning, revision, and editing. On the contrary, oral language is temporary, editions are limited to the channel, and the feedback is received immediately. Therefore, to speak in another language we must manage all the linguistic elements and know how to use them rapidly.

In order to understand what the speaking skill includes it is important to understand what a skill is and the difference between skill and knowledge. According to Bygate (2003) “A fundamental difference is that while both can be understood and memorized, only a skill can be imitated and practiced” (p.4).

An analogy said by Bygate (2003) might be helpful: What knowledge does a car driver need? Clearly, he/she needs to know the names of the controls; where they are; what they do, and how they are operated. However, the driver also needs the skill to be able to use them to guide the car along the road without hitting any objects; besides this, he or she should drive smoothly managing the variations in the road.

In a way, the job we do when we speak is similar. We do not merely know how to assemble sentences in the abstract: we must produce them and adapt them to circumstances. This means that making decisions rapidly, implementing them smoothly, and adjusting our conversation as unexpected problems appear in our

path (Bygate, 2003). In other words, speaking is something that is learned by doing it, hours of memorizing and studying the elements of language will not help to achieve true mastery of the speaking skill. It is necessary to use the language to interact and communicate with other people.

When a learner speaks, it can be stated that he or she needs to use many cognitive and social skills. As Putri (2014) remarks, "It is not merely speaking without any organization or ideas. It needs confidence and competence in order to build a good communication with others" (p.7). Undoubtedly, speaking includes a significant number of aspects that might make it one of the most challenging skills when learning or teaching a language but at the same time one of the most essential.

From the four macro skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), most learners focus on acquiring a good level of speaking because they have the perception that a good level of speaking shows that they are truly proficient in the language. This might be because "most communication is done through speaking; it has an essential function in the human life" (Putri,2014, p.1). Also, because:

Speaking is the skill by which learners are most frequently judged and through which they may make or lose friends. It is the vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and of business. It is also a medium through which much language is learned and which many is particularly conducive for learning. (Bygate,2003, p.2)

That is why most language learners demand to be fluent when speaking; as Defrioka (2016) says, "Students consequently often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English class on the basis of how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency" (p.117).

## **2.2 Teaching Speaking in the EFL/ESL classroom**

Given the importance of the speaking skill, experts have studied how to teach it in the most appropriate way. According to Rao( 2012, p.24), these are the beliefs that have emerged:

Of the four skills, listening and speaking are taught and learned in quick succession. The teacher introduces the language item in the class and the learners situationalize it;

- Speech is the best introduction to other language learning skills. Learning through speaking is a natural way of learning a foreign language.

- Speech is important because it provides the opportunity for the practical usage of a foreign language.

- Speech brings fluency, correction then accuracy among EFL learners; and

- It enables the teacher to use the class time economically.

This means that the teaching speaking time positively impacts the learning process of students, since it paths the way to learn the other skills, and it is the most natural way to teach a second language.

Teaching speaking should be a fundamental part from the beginning of each EFL /ESL course; thus, it will provide learners the opportunity to use the language naturally and interactively, helping them to acquire the proficiency they demand. English teachers feel this pressure from learners to be fluent or proficient when speaking the language, so they constantly search for innovative teaching methodologies or techniques. This is not an easy task because there are many learner difficulties they have to take into account, which according to Thornbury (2005, p.39) are :

- 1) Knowledge factors: the learner does not yet know aspects of the language that enable production.
- 2) Skills factors: the learner's knowledge is not sufficiently automated to ensure fluency.
- 3) Affective factors, such as lack of confidence or self-consciousness, which might inhibit fluency.

Language teachers should consider the previous aspects when they are designing the activities to foster speaking in the classroom. In this way, teachers can create an environment full of interactive and attractive activities as Abdulayeva (2014) states "it is essential that language teachers pay considerable attention to teaching speaking, rather than leading the students to pure memorization, providing a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place is desired" (p.31).To achieve these appropriate conditions in the classroom. Nunan (2003) and Kayi (2006) suggest some principles:

1. Teachers should know the difference between second and foreign language.
2. The teachers should give students time to practice considering fluency and accuracy.
3. The teachers should limit their talking time and provides opportunities for students to speak as much as possible through group work.
4. The teacher should design speaking tasks that involve negotiation of meaning.
5. The teacher should plan and develop activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking.
6. To prompt students speaking time teachers should ask eliciting questions such as "What do you mean? How did you reach that conclusion?"
7. The teachers should provide written feedback like "Your presentation was really great. It was a good job.
8. When students are giving a speech or an oral presentation teachers should not correct learners' pronunciation mistakes to avoid distraction from their speech.

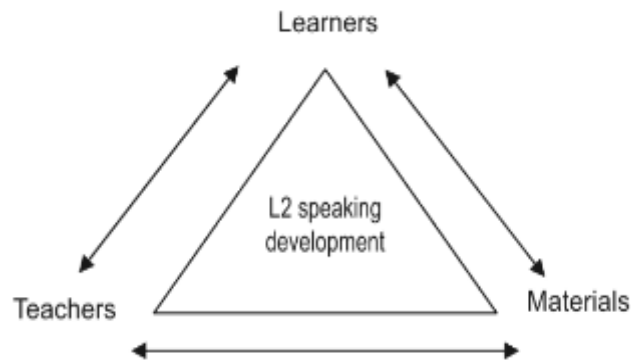
9. The teachers should include speaking activities not only in class but also out of class; contact parents and other people who can help.

Another important set of principles for teaching speaking is the one suggested by Anuradha et al (2014, p.15):

- Encourage students to speak right from the first day. If not, as early as possible.
- Tolerate the students if some of them simply repeat what they say.
- If a student gives one word answer to any question, bear it for the time being.
- Let the learners speak actively with whatever English knowledge they have.
- Propose structures/phrases/words and let the learners use it in different situation and drill as much as possible.
- Encourage back-chaining or tail-forwarding technique to make long sentences by combining more than ten sentences.
- Organize role play and pair-work as much as possible and monitor the learners to correct the active ones and activate the passive ones.
- Be well organized in advance in terms of lesson planning, activities, and tasks.
- Let the learners commit errors and mistakes at the primary stage. Interruption and correction hinder fluency and discourage the learner.

It is important to bear in mind these principles because teaching speaking to beginners requires being cautious with every word or phrase that is said during the class, not to inhibit student participation but to motivate them to talk using the words or phrases they know from the very beginning. Likewise, to teach speaking effectively is essential to know that all the elements involved play an important role but students should be the center.

Figure 3 shows how learners, teachers, and materials should be connected and work together to achieve the L2 speaking development.



*Figure 3: The key success factors, in second language development. (Goh & Burn,2012, p.6)*

“Learners are positioned at the apex of the triangle to indicate that their needs, goals, and outcomes are the most important considerations. However, they can only achieve their objectives if they are supported by well-informed teachers and effective materials” (Goh & Burn, 2012, p.6). This means that learners, teachers, and materials are fundamental factors that help each other and if one of them is missing, L2 speaking development cannot take place. Furthermore, teachers need to have certain competencies for example: they have to be able to develop the speaking skill of students with a communicative focus combining language input with communicative output. “Language input comes in the form of teacher talk, listening activities, reading passages, and the language heard and read outside of class. It gives learners the material they need to begin producing language themselves” (Decker,2012, p.26).

When learners are equipped with the language, they need to complete the task, they will produce the information or outcome expected to achieve the objective of the task. Nevertheless, the responsibility not only relies on teachers, students should take the speaking practice seriously because speaking in a foreign language is something challenging that not only requires a certain amount of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, it also requires to practice through communication and socialization.(Namaziandost et.al ,2019, p.3)

To become fluent in speaking, learners should know that speaking fluency also includes being proficient in the three components of speaking: Knowledge of the language, Communication Strategies, Core speaking skills (Goh and Burns, 2012), as it is shown in Figure 4:

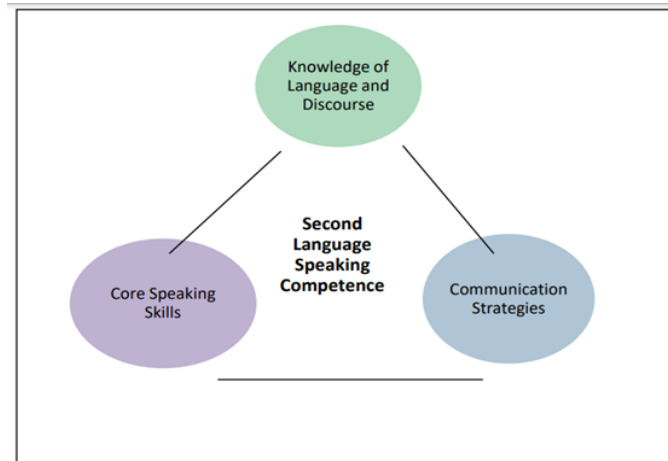


Figure 4: Components of second language speaking competence (Goh and Burns, 2012, p. 53)

Figure 4 portrays how knowledge of the language and discourse, core speaking skills, and communication strategies complement each other for the communication process to take place; since they must all be used constantly and progressively when we are establishing an interaction using oral language.

### 2.3 Teaching Speaking according to School Curricula in Honduras

The National Curriculum Design for Primary Education of Honduras (2003) has established some competencies that Honduran students are expected to have at the end of their basic education (ninth grade):

- Students show confidence security and favorable attitudes toward oral communication
- Students use English orally to meet their communication needs, for recreation, to solve problems and to know themselves.
- Students produce simple oral dialogic messages related to people and events in the immediate school environment (Secretaria de Estado en el Despacho de Educación de Honduras, 2003,p.61-62)

Additionally, the National Secretariat of Education has established the National Education Standards for English from first to ninth grade (2011) based on the National Curriculum Design:

Standard 1: Students engage in conversations, provide, and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions (interpersonal).

Standard 2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics (interpretive).

Standard 3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics (presentational) (p.9)

To achieve these goals is suggested the use of the task-based approach, which according to Secretaria de Estado en el Despacho de Educación de Honduras (2003) “emphasizes the processes of interaction in the classroom as an element for the collective construction of meaning and the linguistic system” (p.61)

## **2.4 Developing learner’s speaking fluency**

Speaking skill has different elements; some authors call them macro skills other call them micro-skills. Harmer (2007) names them categories; he explains that “there are two speaking categories: accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, and fluency, considered to be ‘the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously’” (p.112).

The second category mentioned here is the one that will be discussed. People have different perceptions about the concept of fluency, depending on the point of view they have. Hartmann & Stork (1976) affirm that a speaker is fluent when he or she is able to use the correct structures of a language at normal speed, which means speaks “naturally with concentration on the content delivery, rather than focusing on the form or structure of a language” (p.40). This definition describes exactly the competencies that most learners expect to acquire when they are learning a language.

### **2.4.1 Aspects of Fluency**

Many learners consider themselves fluent in a language when they feel comfortable and confident communicating in the language or when they can take part in a conversation easily, but fluency goes beyond that.

When researchers study fluency, they use two simple measurements; one is the rate of speech, how many syllables you produce over a given time, the second is the length of utterances, how many words you can produce in a continued string of speech without hesitation or pauses” (Jones,2022, p.3)

From the ideas stated before, it can be said that fluency includes different dimensions, the quantitative dimension such as the number of syllables or length of utterances over a given time, and the qualitative dimension: how confident or comfortable a speaker is when using the language in a conversation in a daily life context.

Similarly, Tavakoli (2020) described two kinds of fluency: utterance fluency and perceived fluency. Utterance fluency “relates to the measurable aspects of fluency in uttered speech such as speed, pausing, and hesitation; and perceived fluency represents the inferences listeners make about speakers’ cognitive fluency based on their perceptions of the speech that they hear”. (p.170)

From the two areas described above, this action research study will focus on the first one: utterance fluency because it encloses measurable aspects like:

- Speech Rate: the number of words per minute for a speech sample.
- Fluency Breakdown: the average length of pauses at the end of AS units.
- Repair: the numbers of strings in a speech sample that are repeated with some modifications to syntax, morphology, or word order, etc. (Skehan,2009, p.518)

There are other aspects considered to be essential parts of fluency, but these three have been chosen because they provide a clear view of the level of fluency in a language learner. For example, the level of speech rate is one aspect that most people identify when labeling someone as a fluent speaker, as well as pauses which are normal and even necessary when we speak. As Brown(2014) states

Pauses allow the speaker to take breath. Speakers cannot realistically continue speaking without a pause for more than about five seconds. Pauses are therefore important in that they allow the speaker to replenish the pulmonic egressive airstream that is essential for English speech” (p.114).

However, too many pauses during a speech are a sign of lack of fluency thus, they constantly break the transmission of the message and make it hard to get it for the hearer. The other aspect to be analyzed are repairs which occur in three phases: The first phase involves the monitoring of one’s own speech and the interruption of the flow of speech when the problem is detected, the second phase is characterized by hesitations and the use of so-called editing terms, and the third phase consists of making the proper repair (Willem,1983).For example, when a learner says “ *I want to bought a necklas*” then he makes a pause and uses editing terms like “I want to bought a necklis... a necklaes...a necklace” and finally says “ *I want to bought a necklace*”

Being aware of these aspects is a great advantage for teachers when developing a speaking fluency task so they can identify the learner’s weaknesses and give appropriate feedback. Yet teachers need to be careful at the moment of giving feedback because one reason for the lack of fluency among students is that often in a “classroom everything a student says is scrutinized for mistakes. This not only affects their confidence but also means that they spend time running through the words in their head before opening their mouth” (Tennant, 2020)

That is why it is so important to help students build confidence in their ability to say what they want and give them plenty of opportunities to practice. As Kay (2008) stated: in order to foster fluency in our learners, we should keep in mind that it is more important for students to be interested in the activity than to be accurate, and if they are worried about what the teacher is going to say then they are going to feel inhibited, and they will not say what they would otherwise want to say.

## 2.5 The role of Information Gap Activities to promote speaking

To improve students' speaking fluency, one communicative activity that has gained fame because of its several advantages is the use of information gap activities. Before describing the advantages, it is important to define the word "gap". A gap "is that one student has some information, but the other student doesn't have it, which means they have a gap, and they need to interact to fill the gap" (Rahimi, 2016, p.78). Knowing what a gap is, it is time now to describe an information gap activity. Larseen-Freeman (2003, p.65) states that "an information-gap task is a technique in which learners are missing the needed information to complete a task or solve a problem, and they have to communicate with their classmates to fill in the gaps".

These kinds of activities are meaningful because they emulate what really happens in real communication every day thus, spoken exchanges take place because there is some sort of information gap between the participants. The output of information gap activities involves a similar real information gap. Decker (2012) remarks "To complete the task, students must reduce or eliminate the information gap; the language is a tool, not an end in itself" (p.27).

Another vital aspect to take into account is the information with which the students work. There are two types: supplied-to-the-learner and supplied-by-the-learner.

1) Supplied-to-the-learner: this kind of information is the one that is given by the teacher to one or more group members. An example could be giving one person one version of a picture, giving another version of the same picture to their partner, and asking them to identify the differences between the two pictures (Susanti, 2007).

2) Supplied-by-the-learner: this is when the learner already possesses unique information that the others do not have. The case of asking students to interview each other about their families would be unique information that learners supply from the knowledge they already possess (Jacobs, 1998).

As well, it is important to know what kind of questions can be asked during information gap activities:

- Referential question: is a question to which the person asking does not know the answer. For example, Where are you from? or What is your name? The purpose of asking these questions is to discover information.
- Display question: is a question to which the person asking does know the answer. For example, What color is my sweater? The teacher clearly knows the answer. The purpose of asking is to promote speaking (Bilash,2011)

## 2.5.1 Type of Information Gap Activities

There are also different kinds of information gap activities as Ellis (1999) explains:

- One way of communication: It is when one student owns information that the other one does not have. For instance, one learner describes a picture, and the other one must draw it.
- Two-way communication: It is when two directions interaction takes place. Both learners have different information, and they have to negotiate to solve the activity. For example, when both students have different pictures and have to find the differences, this activity is called Spot the differences.

Therefore, using information gap activities involves several different parts or elements to consider, in order to use them effectively and obtain all the advantages, which are described by The Bureau of Educational and Cultural as follow :

- Increase student motivation: students communicate for a purpose as they exchange and collect information needed to complete the task. Also, students get to feel like important “experts” because everyone has task-essential information.
- Incorporate authentic communication situations and materials: while teachers provide level-appropriate scaffolding and language frameworks, communication during information gaps is often unscripted, reflecting the communication format student will encounter in everyday situations.
- Can be creatively designed to focus on meaning, form, and/or curriculum content: Teachers can create activities that require students to use recently taught vocabulary and grammatical forms orally, or they can build information gap activities around themes such as science or history.
- Encourage critical thinking skills and teamwork: students often exercise problem-solving skills during these activities, determine what data is missing, and categorize and analyze it. They are collaborating with classmates to successfully achieve the activity’s objectives. Affairs (U.S. State Department, 2015).

It can be remarked that information gap activities give students the chance to share information while they are involved in reaching the same purpose; information gap activities provide learners with a not structured environment but a more communicative one. As Harris (1990) states, information gap is the best technique for second language learners; it can provide learners with a good opportunity to use the sentences they learn, it also allows learners to talk, exchange information, and interact over time, and the tasks will make the lesson more interesting and motivate the learner to speak more than their teacher.

## 2.6 The PPP Teaching Model

One suitable approach to implement information gap activities is the PPP teaching model, which gives learners an adequate sequence to achieve the objectives at the end of the class. This approach consists of three stages:

- Presentation: is the form of an introduction to the structure of new vocabulary at the beginning of the class.
- Practice: emphasizes the activities of students practicing the new vocabulary obtained in previous activities.
- Product: in this stage, learners are expected to be able to use the language acquired in communicative activities (Apriliadi, 2022, p.211)

A good description of each stage to be implemented in an EFL classroom is the one suggested by the TEFL International Language Services (2022):

**Presentation:** attractively present the target language; the language will be of more interest to the students if it is put into some context that the students are familiar with so they can relate easier.

**Practice:** it can roughly be defined as the rehearsal of certain behaviors with the objective of consolidating learning and improving performance. Of course, whilst it is important to select an appropriate activity, it is equally important to issue clear and unambiguous instructions for the activity itself. Hence, all students are clear as to what is expected of them.

**Production:** the students have now had the target language presented to them clearly and have had an opportunity to practice it in a controlled environment. As with the practice stage, now it is the time to initiate an activity that allows them opportunities to use the target language in the classroom. In fact, the characteristics of a production stage activity are quite like the practice stage with one key difference: student autonomy.

## 2.7 Previous studies about the use of information gap activities as a strategy to support students' speaking fluency.

Previous studies have shown that these activities allow students to talk and interact in a meaningful way. For instance, in recent research conducted by Rini (2017) after using information gap activities with a group of seventh-grade students she concluded the participants improve their speaking fluency better than those who were not exposed to information gap activities. In addition, Ortiz (2019) stated that after using information gap activities with a group of 23 eighth-grade students, information gap activities positively impacted students' oral fluency, allowing them to interact and use the language to communicate. Likewise, Linanti (2017) conducted action research with 28 eighth graders who used information gap activities for almost a month; the finding of the research showed that the use of information gap activities

improved the students speaking skill according to the results of the students speaking scores. In the pre-intervention test, the average score was 68.2, and in the post-intervention test was 75.1; the improvement was 6.9.

Another research showed that information gap activity is also a trigger for students' willingness to communicate. According to Humaera et al.(2022), after three meetings with 31 students whose average age was sixteen years old, the data analysis revealed that implementing information gap activities in the classroom while teaching English increased students' willingness to communicate; they got motivated and confident to speak, they also improved their behavioral intention to communicate.

In the case of Amaliani (2011) the researcher implemented the use of information gap activities to specifically improve students' mastery of the Simple Past Tense. The data was analyzed through observation, interview, and test. Based on the results of these instruments, the researcher concluded that there was a significant improvement in teaching Simple Past by using Information gap activities at the Second Grade of SMP Islam Terpadu Annajiah Cibinong.

Indeed, using information gap activities brings a lot of benefits for students as well as for teachers to improve their speaking skill to become fluent speakers in and outside the classroom.

## **Chapter III: Methodology**

## **Chapter III: Methodology**

### **3.1 Type of Study**

This present study is an action research as it aims to act towards a situation that needs to be improved and at the same time produces new information. As Burns (2015) states

Action research (AR) is a research approach that is grounded in practical action (the action component) while at the same time focused on generating, informing, and building theory (the research component). These two components work in combination (p.1)

This study presents the two components since it focuses on applying the use of information gap activities as an innovative collaborative strategy in the English classes to improve students' speaking fluency and in this way generates new insights about how to improve fluency in class. The teacher-researcher chose to work with speaking fluency after observing that most students had problems when speaking in class. As Miller (2007, p.7) explains, "Action research is a natural part of teaching. Teachers are continually observing students, collecting data, and changing strategies or techniques to improve student learning."

To improve the problematic situation identified, an intervention was developed. In this intervention, participants had six sessions in their EFL classes during which they used information gap activities, and their progress was monitored through a pre and post-intervention test. That is why action research is the most suitable option as Tomal (2010) describes in action research, "the researcher utilizes appropriate intervention to collect and analyze data and then to implement actions to address educational issues" (p.14).

As Mason (2002) states when developing a qualitative research it is necessary to follow "a logic which underpins the way you design your research project as a potential answer to your research questions [...] it is the logic that informs-although does not dictate-your decisions"(p.18) .In order to achieve this, the current study is constructed around a predictive puzzle because one of the expected results is to get the likely outcome in students' speaking fluency after using a new strategy during an established period of time. In addition, this study is considered as a descriptive study as it aims to characterize a phenomenon as it is (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) and it answers the questions about who, what, where, when and to what extent the use of information gap activities support participants' speaking fluency.

### **3.2 Participants**

The sampling for this study is a group of ninth graders who have been learning English for two years. Nevertheless, they have been taught English with a grammar-

focused methodology, with no time for developing interactive speaking activities. At this point, they are in their third year of English learning, but they can barely say some short sentences, and they are not used to developing speaking activities during English classes. Being part of this study gave them opportunity to experience interactive English classes with activities designed to foster speaking.

As this action research was carried out online using the video conferencing application Zoom, the teacher-researcher used a non-probabilistic purposive sampling. "In this type of sampling, the members for a sample are selected according to the purpose of the study. It is also called deliberate sampling" (Bhardwaj, 2019, p.161). This type of sampling allowed the teacher-researcher to get only the participants who had access to internet, a laptop, or any other gadget to connect to the sessions.

Additionally, participants were all from 9<sup>th</sup> grade, all of them aged between 14 and 15 years old with a level of English equivalent to A1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (2001). Using these criteria, 7 students voluntarily accepted to participate in the action research.

These students attended a public high school in Lamani, a town located in the central region of Honduras. This region is a vulnerable context, where the public education system does not give much attention to English teaching. However, in 2012, the government established English as a mandatory subject. As shown in article 60 of Ley Fundamental de Educación, (2012): "The national curriculum must incorporate the teaching of English from preschool level onwards, at least the English language teaching in different modalities of the national education system, as well as the use of ICTs" (p.A.12). Therefore, these students have been learning English for two years (two chronological hours a week), with no exposure to the language out of the school.

### **3.3 Research Question**

In this action research, the following research question emerged:

How does the use of information gap activities support a group of Honduran ninth-grade students' speaking fluency in English?

### **3.4 Research Objectives**

#### **3.4.1 General Objective**

Explore Honduran ninth-grade students' perceptions about their speaking fluency improvement in English through the use of information gap activities

#### **3.4.2 Specific Objectives:**

-To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support student's speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.

-To analyze students' perception regarding the use of information gap activities to support their speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns and repairs.

### **3.5 Research Problem**

The problem approached in the following research is that ninth-grade students from a rural public high school in Honduras present difficulties in their speaking fluency in English; they are able to handle the grammar rules and structures but struggle to use this knowledge orally to form simple sentences or questions in a conversation. This weakness was identified by the teacher, who realized that students were not accustomed to doing communicative activities in class; as a result, they had a very low level of oral fluency.

This deficient level of oral fluency is evidenced in their slow speech rate and the use of long pauses that break communication. This has been a problem that has prevented them from reaching the expected level of English at the end of high school. Hence, it is essential to tackle this weakness by providing a teaching strategy or a didactic tool to help teachers and students get better results.

### **3.6 Stages of the action plan**

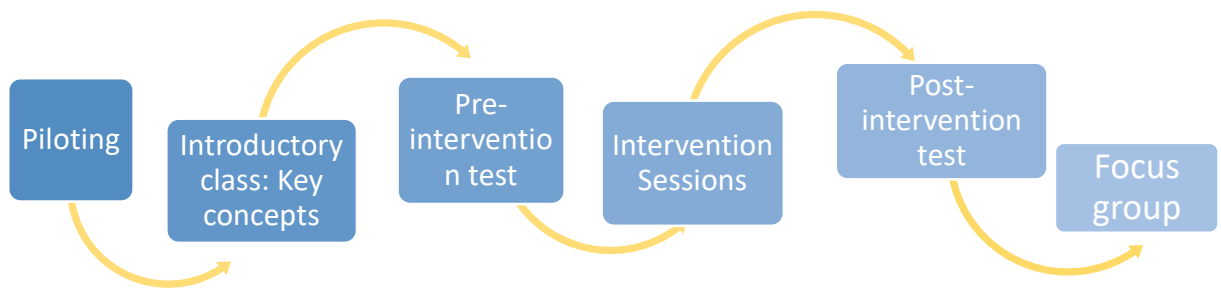
This study started as a piloting experience, in which the researcher had the opportunity to use the pre-intervention test (an information gap activity) and measure how much language the participants could produce in the activities planned and also how much time they took to finish the task. After the piloting, the researcher introduced her lesson explaining key concepts related to the concept of fluency, such as fluency itself, speech rate, breakdowns, repairs, and the guidelines to use information gap activities.

When the participants were familiarized with these critical concepts, the researcher applied the pre-intervention test to assess their initial level of fluency. Then seven sessions using information gap activities following the regular ninth-grade topics were carried out (See the summary of the intervention plan below) and ended up with a post-intervention test to assess their improvement. Both test results were analyzed through an analytic rubric that included three fluency aspects: speech rate, pauses, and repairs. Finally, a focus group was developed to collect information on the students' perceptions of the process.

The graphic description of the stages of the action plan, which were described previously, can be seen in the following figure.

## Figure 5

*Stages of the action plan*



*Source: Self-elaboration*

### 3.7 Summary of the intervention plan

- Due to the fact, that the participants were in Honduras, and the teacher-researcher was in Chile, these classes were hold online using the virtual platform (Zoom).(For further details see Appendix A)

**Table 1:** *Summary of the intervention plan*

| <b>Date</b>          | <b>Activities and Procedures</b>  | <b>Time</b> | <b>Research Objective</b>  |
|----------------------|---|-------------|--|
| May 29 <sup>th</sup> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation of the keywords needed to develop the information gap activity.</li> <li>2.Explanation of how to ask and answer questions about personal information</li> </ol>  | 55 minutes  | SO 1: To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the participants' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs. |
| May 30 <sup>th</sup> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.First information gap activity</li> <li>2. Feedback</li> </ol>   | 65 minutes  | .  |
| May 31 <sup>st</sup> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation of the keywords needed to develop the information gap activity</li> <li>2. Explanation of how to use <i>There is and there are</i> in affirmative and interrogative forms, and prepositions of place.</li> </ol> | 55 minutes  | .  |
| Jun 1 <sup>st</sup>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Second information gap activity</li> <li>2..Feedback</li> </ol>   | 65 minutes  | .  |
| Jun 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation of the keywords needed to develop the information gap activity.</li> <li>2. Explanation of how to ask about what people are wearing.</li> </ol>  | 55 minutes  | .  |

Source: *Self-elaboration*

### **3.8 Data Collection Techniques**

To collect the necessary data, different methods were used. A pre and post-intervention test were applied to assess the contribution of information gap activities on participants' oral fluency. An analytic rubric was used to analyze the information gathered in the pre and post-intervention test in order to describe the oral fluency levels of students in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs. Finally, the teacher-researcher applied a focus group to explore the participant's perceptions regarding the use of information gap activities upon their speaking fluency.

#### **3.8.1 A Pre and Post-intervention test.**

The pre-intervention test was applied to assess the initial level of students' speaking fluency; as affirmed by Brown (2001,p.380) "A test is a method to measure a person's ability or knowledge in a given domain" or as Syahrums & Salim (2016, p.161) state a test is "an instrument or tool of measuring behavior or the performance of somebody". The pre-intervention test (see Appendix B) consisted of an information gap activity (adapted from ISLCollective) in which participants had to complete the personal information of different superheroes by asking and answering close and open-ended questions; this task allowed the participants to speak out and use the vocabulary and grammar structures they knew, such as Simple Present in affirmative, and interrogative form, numbers, countries and nationalities.

The post-intervention test (see Appendix C) was another information gap activity, but in this case, students had to complete the gaps by exchanging information about the actions different characters liked to do; they had to use English to inquire about likes and dislikes to complete the task. In terms of grammar structures, they used Simple Present open-ended questions, and in terms of vocabulary, they used hobbies, food and drinks. The post-intervention test was applied after using different information gap activities during the intervention to determine whether these kinds of activities had made a difference in participants' results.

Both tests were information gap activities, in this way students "will be making free use of whatever English they can recall to express the things that they really wanted to say or write in the process of achieving the task goal"(Willis & Willis 2007,p.5)

#### **3.8.2 An Analytic Rubric**

To analyze the information gathered in the pre and post-intervention test an analytic rubric adapted from a previous action research carried out by Ortiz in 2019 (see Appendix D) was used. This rubric included the three aspects of fluency described by Skehan (2009):

- Speech Rate: The number of words per minute for a speech sample.
- Fluency Breakdown: The average length of pauses at the end of AS units.

- Repair: The numbers of strings in a speech sample that are repeated with some modifications to syntax, morphology, or word order, etc. (p.518)

There are other aspects considered essential parts of fluency (complexity, accuracy, and lexical diversity) but the three previous aspects described were chosen because they provided a clear view of the level of fluency in a language learner.

Through the use of the analytic rubric, the researcher was able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each student's performance since one of the advantages of using an analytic rubric is that it "breaks up a product or performance into discrete dimensions and judges each separately. Consequently, a separate score is provided for each trait and then combining each judgment to make a decision on the quality of the response" (Linn & Gronlund, 2000, p.67). This instrument provided detailed and specific information about each learner regarding their oral fluency.

The analytic rubric had four levels of performance for each aspect. The highest one was Excellent, which will add four points to the overall score; the lowest one was Poor, which added one point to the overall score. Each aspect had a description, including the number of sentences that were being evaluated.

### **3.8.3 A Focus Group**

To collect information about participants' perceptions the teacher- researcher developed a focus group (See Appendix E). This method allowed students to express themselves in a comfortable environment and express their opinions about their experiences. According to Krueger and Casey (2009) "A focus group study is a carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment" (p.2).

Another significant advantage of doing focus groups is that" they offer the chance to observe participants engaging in interaction that is concentrated on attitudes and experiences which are of interest to the researcher" (Morgan,1984, p.259).

To construct the instrument the previous study of Ortiz (2019) was taken as reference, and all the questions were written considering the following dimensions:

The students' perceptions about the use of information gap activities:

- In relation to the speaking time during the class.
- In relation to their oral fluency.
- In relations to their levels of speech rate, breakdowns and repairs.

### **3.8.4 Validation of instruments**

Due to the fact that the researcher created the question for the focus groups and adapted the pre, post-intervention test, and the analytic rubric, it was necessary to

validate the instruments. All the instruments were sent to three university professors and three colleagues who were in-service teachers, who are experts in terms of English teaching and research. They carefully analyzed the instruments, after reading the research objectives and provided feedback. An additional chart was included in the validation letter, so specialist could select if they suggested maintaining, modifying, or removing the aspects of the instruments (See Appendix F) .Moreover, their comments and observations were considered to improve the instruments.

### **3.9. Data Analysis Techniques**

In order to analyze the quantitative data collected from the pre and post-intervention test, the researcher used descriptive statistics. According to Tomal (2010, p.96), “Descriptive statistics refer to visual graphics, charts, diagrams, and basic mathematics to describe and summarize the data.” Measures of central tendency were used, especially the mean or average of the scores that participants got in the pre and post-intervention test. The mean score was used as a measure of central tendency to describe the level of oral fluency achieved by students in the pre and post-intervention test. Likewise, the researcher calculated the average of each fluency aspect (speech rate, pauses, and repairs) to determine which aspect was more deficient.

#### **3.9.1 Mean Difference**

In order to describe the improvement of the initial results and the results after the intervention, the mean difference was calculated taking into account the overall results and the specific results of each fluency aspect.

#### **3.9.2 Standard Deviation**

To contextualize the average results, the researcher described the distribution of the data before and after the intervention using measures of dispersion such as the standard deviation. Using this analysis, the teacher-researcher was able to identify if there had been a difference between the students’ initial results and the results after the intervention, also the researcher was able to describe the level of fluency of each participant, and compare which specific aspects had shown an improvement a decrease or had remained the same.

#### **3.9.3 Thematic Analysis**

The data obtained from the focus group was recorded in audio, video and transcripts. To analyze this data thematic analysis was used, which in Sandelowski’s words (2000) is “a form of analysis for verbal and visual data oriented toward summarizing the informational content of the data set” (p.337). The researcher coded the data identifying different categories following the thematic analysis stages suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006): Familiarization: This phase provides the bedrock for the rest of the analysis. The researcher should read and re-read in depth the data to

immerse himself and get familiar with all the aspects. The second stage is generating initial codes: The researcher should identify interesting features of the data with codes. The third stage is searching for themes: This stage involves sorting the different codes into potential themes, the researcher should think about the relationship between codes, between themes, and between different levels of themes. The fourth state is reviewing: during this stage, it will become evident that some candidate themes are not really themes, while others might collapse into each other, and other ones might need to be broken down into separate themes. The last stage is defining and naming: When the researcher has a satisfactory map of the data, he should identify the data each theme captures and why this data is relevant.

## **Chapter IV: Findings**

## Chapter IV: Findings

In this chapter, the data collected all along 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 after the teaching strategy implementation. The results of both tests were assessed through an analytic rubric. The qualitative data was gathered through the focus group where the participants answered a set of questions once the intervention was over. The data is presented according to each specific objective defined for this action research.

### 4.1 SO1: To assess the use of information gap activities to support the student's speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs

In order to assess the usefulness of the information gap activities to improve learners' speaking fluency in terms of their speech rate, breakdowns or pauses, and repairs, the participants' mean scores, mean differences, and standard deviation were calculated in both the pre and the post-intervention test. The maximum score in the analytic rubric used to evaluate students' fluency was 12 points. The participants' scores are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** *Participants' Scores, in the Pre and Post-intervention test*

| Participants              | Fluency Level         |                           |                        |                           |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
|                           | Pre-intervention test |                           | Post-intervention test |                           |
|                           | Score                 | Percentage of Achievement | Score                  | Percentage of Achievement |
| Student 1                 | 4                     | 33%                       | 8                      | 67%                       |
| Student 2                 | 10                    | 83%                       | 12                     | 100%                      |
| Student 3                 | 10                    | 83%                       | 12                     | 100%                      |
| Student 4                 | 8                     | 67%                       | 9                      | 75%                       |
| Student 5                 | 7                     | 58%                       | 10                     | 83%                       |
| Student 6                 | 10                    | 83%                       | 12                     | 100%                      |
| Student 7                 | 10                    | 83%                       | 12                     | 100%                      |
| <b>Mean Score</b>         | <b>8</b>              | <b>67</b>                 | <b>11</b>              | <b>92</b>                 |
| <b>Standard Deviation</b> | <b>2.3</b>            |                           | <b>1.7</b>             |                           |

Source: *Self-elaboration*

As shown in Table 2, there was an improvement in the participants' speaking fluency after the intervention. This improvement can be clearly observed in the post-intervention test final mean score, which was 11 points, representing 92% of achievement compared with the 67% 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, 4 students (50% of the participants) got a 100% of achievement. It is also important to highlight that the lowest improvement was 8% of achievement got by student 4. In conclusion, all participants showed an improvement in their fluency level.

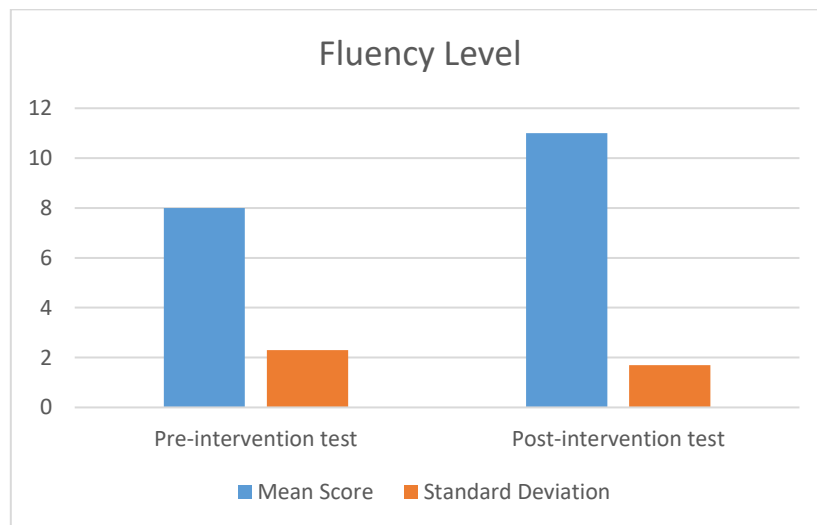
Another important point is the standard deviation of the pre-intervention test results, which shows the dispersion of the scores in terms of students' fluency level, which in this case reached 2.3. This standard deviation is high; thus, it demonstrates a low level of reliability in the pre-intervention test results because there is a high variation among the participants' scores.

The standard deviation of the post-intervention test results is 1.7, which means that participants' scores were much closer to the mean core that was 11. This low standard deviation indicates the data is reliable as the results are more homogenous.

Taking into account these results, it can be stated that the final scores got closer to 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 and standard deviation differences between the participants' fluency in the pre and the post-intervention test are displayed in the following figure.

**Figure 6**

*Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Participants' Fluency Level between the Pre and Post-intervention test.*

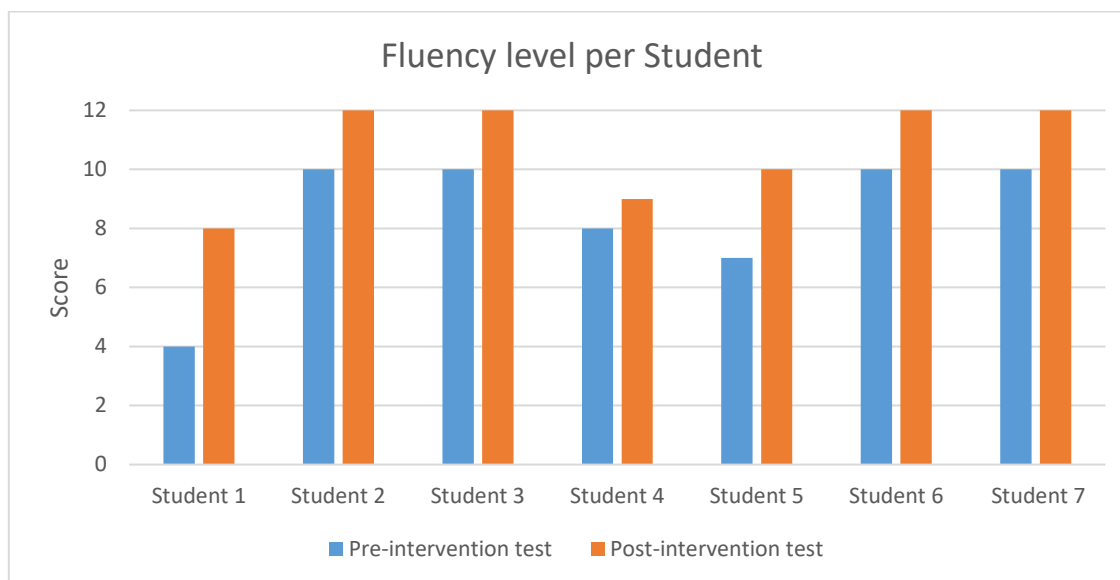


*Source: Self-elaboration*

The mean difference between the participants' fluency level in the pre-intervention test and the post-intervention test was 3 points and a 25% percentage of achievement was observed, which shows that the students' initial level of fluency increased after the sessions using information gap activities 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 7**

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



*Source: Self-elaboration*

As evidenced in Figure 7, all the participants improved their oral fluency level while using information gap activities because they all achieved higher scores after the intervention. It is important to notice that in the pre-intervention test, the highest score was 10 points (achieved by 4 participants), but in the post-intervention test, 4 participants (57 %) reached the maximum expected score, 12 points. Another relevant point is the noticeable improvement shown by Student 1, who got 4 points in the pre-intervention test and 8 points in 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, taking into account four levels of mastery shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Speech Rate Levels of the Analytic Rubric*

| Speech Rate Levels   |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Excellent (4 points)                                       | Very Good (3 points)                               | Deficient (2 points)                                  | Poor (1 point)                                  |
| Produce most of the sentences (12) with evenness and flow. | Produce some (8) sentences with evenness and flow. | Few (6) sentences are produced with evenness and flow | No sentence is produced with evenness and flow. |

*Source: Self-elaboration*

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

**Table 4**

*Pre and Post-intervention test Individual Scores and Levels of Speech Rate*

| <b>Speech Rate</b>        |                        |                  |                        |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Participants              | Pre –intervention test |                  | Post-intervention test |                  |
|                           | Score                  | Level            | Score                  | Level            |
| Student 1                 | 2                      | Deficient        | 3                      | Very Good        |
| Student 2                 | 3                      | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 3                 | 3                      | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 4                 | 2                      | Deficient        | 2                      | Deficient        |
| Student 5                 | 1                      | Poor             | 3                      | Very Good        |
| Student 6                 | 3                      | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 7                 | 3                      | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| <b>Mean score</b>         | <b>2.4</b>             | <b>Deficient</b> | <b>3.4</b>             | <b>Very Good</b> |
| <b>Standard Deviation</b> | <b>0.8</b>             |                  | <b>0.8</b>             |                  |

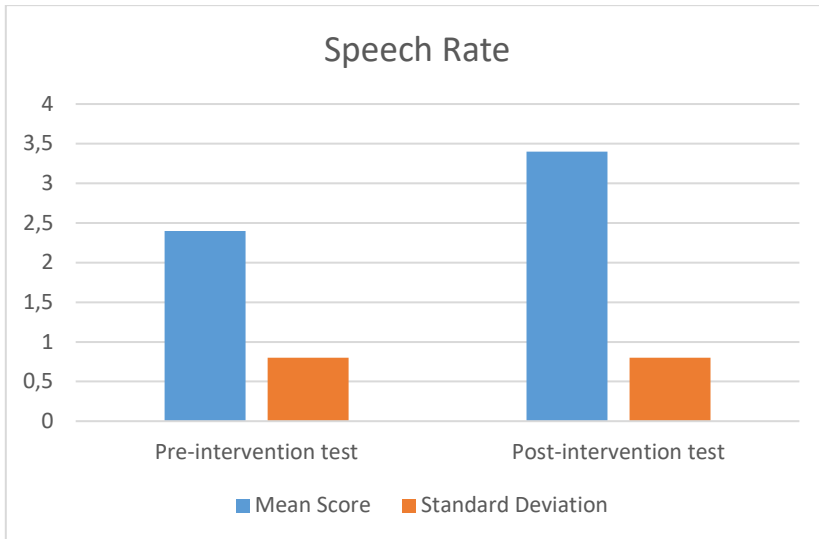
Source: *Self-elaboration*

As it can be observed in Table 4, most of the participants (85.7%) improved their level of speech rate in the post-intervention test because in the pre-intervention test some of them were placed in the “Poor”(14%) “Deficient” (29%) or “Very Good “(57%) level of speech rate. Only student N° 4, did not show any difference in the speech rate level after the intervention being placed in the same category Deficient; nevertheless, student N° 5 showed a great improvement from the lowest score 1 (Poor level), to 3 (Very Good level of speech rate).

It can be said that students' speech rate improved after the intervention, as the mean score from the pre-intervention test was 2.4 (Deficient), and the mean score from the post-intervention test was 3.4 (Very Good). Even though it was not the best score they could get, they increased the level by 1 point. It can also be observed that the results of the pre-intervention test have a dispersion of 0.8 from the mean of 2.4, which means that most of the students' speech rates, before the intervention, were close to a Deficient level. The standard deviation from the post-intervention test was 0.8 from the mean score of 3.4. Both standard deviations are very low, meaning there was not much variation in the scores of the participants obtained very similar scores and very close to the mean in the pre-intervention test and also in the post-intervention test, which shows a high degree of reliability in the data. This means that the use of the information gap activities produced a similar impact in the participants' speech rate, they all showed similar progress after the intervention. 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 8:

**Figure 8**

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



Source: *Self-elaboration*

4.1.2 Analysis of Participants' level of pauses or breakdowns

In order to determine changes in the pauses or breakdowns in the participants' fluency, the analytic rubric was used during the pre and post-intervention test, taking into account four levels of mastery:

**Table 5**

*Pauses or Breakdowns Levels of the Analytic Rubric*

| Pauses or Breakdown Levels     |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Excellent<br>(4 points)        | Very Good<br>(3 points)  | Deficient<br>(2 points)  | Poor<br>(1 point)  |
| Sentences (3) show hesitations | Sentences are sometimes (6) interrupted by pauses or breakdowns. | Sentences are constantly (10) interrupted by pauses or breakdowns. | Sentences are always interrupted by pauses or breakdowns |

Source: *Self-elaboration*

The participants' scores, as well as the mean scores and standard deviation between the pre and post-intervention test, are displayed in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Pre and Post-intervention test Individual Scores and Levels of Pauses or Breakdowns*

| <b>Pauses or Breakdowns</b> |                       |                  |                        |                  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Participants                | Pre-intervention test |                  | Post-intervention test |                  |
|                             | Score                 | Level            | Score                  | Level            |
| Student 1                   | 1                     | Poor             | 3                      | <i>Very good</i> |
| Student 2                   | 3                     | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 3                   | 3                     | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 4                   | 2                     | Deficient        | 3                      | <i>Very good</i> |
| Student 5                   | 3                     | Very good        | 3                      | <i>Very good</i> |
| Student 6                   | 3                     | Very good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 7                   | 4                     | Excellent        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| <b>Mean Score</b>           | <b>2.7</b>            | <b>Very good</b> | <b>3.6</b>             | <b>Excellent</b> |
| <b>Standard Deviation</b>   | <b>0.9</b>            |                  | <b>0.5</b>             |                  |

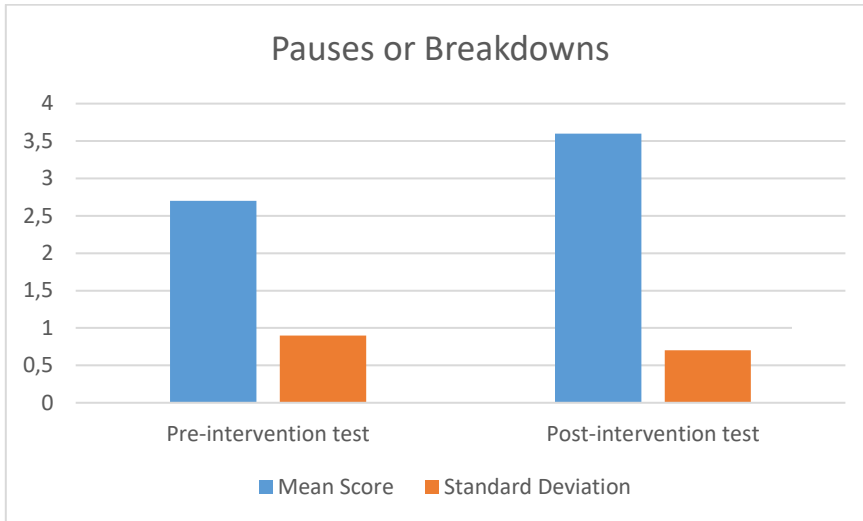
*Self-elaboration*

In Table 6 it can be observed that the most common level of pauses in the pre-intervention test was found in the descriptor “Very Good”, thus 4 students (57%) achieved this level, also it can be noticed that only one student got the lowest grade or got a Poor level of pauses before the intervention. In contrast, in the post-intervention test results, none of the students showed a Poor level of pauses; they all got a Very Good or Excellent level. The pre-intervention test mean score was 2.7 points or Very Good level, and the post-intervention test mean score was 3.6, which shows an improvement of 0.9 points. It can be noticed that in this aspect the participants demonstrated a good level before the intervention but they did increase their level after using information gap activities.

Besides the difference between the mean scores, it is also important to see the standard deviation in this aspect. The dispersion of results of the pre-intervention test is 0.9 points from the mean score, so the scores are not very dispersed from the mean. This proved what has been previously discussed, that most of the students got very good results before the intervention. The standard deviation from the post-intervention test results is 0.5 points. If compared the standard deviations of both tests, there is a decrease of 0.4 during the post-intervention test, which means that the participants’ scores became even less spread, and closer to the mean score due to the improvement made in the post-intervention test. Both standard deviations are low, which evidences that the participants’ performance was consistent in this fluency aspect, therefore the data has a high degree of reliability. This difference in the dispersion and the mean difference can be seen in the following Figure 9:

**Figure 9**

Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of participants' Pauses or Breakdowns



*Self-elaboration*

#### 4.1.3 Analysis of Participants' Level of Repairs

The participants' level of repairs was assessed through an analytic rubric, taking into account the following levels of mastery:

**Table 7**

*Repairs Levels of the Analytic Rubric*

| Level of Repairs  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Excellent<br>(4 points)                                     | Very Good<br>(3 points)                                  | Deficient<br>(2 points)                                    | Poor<br>(1 point)                                  |
| Occasionally (3) sentences are repeated with modifications. | Sentences are sometimes (6) repeated with modifications. | Sentences are constantly (10) repeated with modifications. | All the sentences are repeated with modifications. |

*Self-elaboration*

The participants' individual scores and mean scores between the pre and post-intervention test in terms of repairs before and after using information gap activities are displayed in Table 8:

**Table 8***Pre and Post-intervention test Individual Scores and Levels of Repairs*

| <b>Repairs</b>            |                       |                  |                        |                  |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Participants              | Pre-intervention test |                  | Post-intervention test |                  |
|                           | Score                 | Level            | Score                  | Level            |
| Student 1                 | 1                     | Poor             | 2                      | Deficient        |
| Student 2                 | 4                     | Excellent        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 3                 | 4                     | Excellent        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 4                 | 4                     | Excellent        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 5                 | 3                     | Very Good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 6                 | 4                     | Excellent        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| Student 7                 | 3                     | Very Good        | 4                      | Excellent        |
| <b>Mean Score</b>         | <b>3.3</b>            | <b>Very Good</b> | <b>3.7</b>             | <b>Excellent</b> |
| <b>Standard Deviation</b> | <b>1.1</b>            |                  | <b>0.7</b>             |                  |

*Source: Self-elaboration*

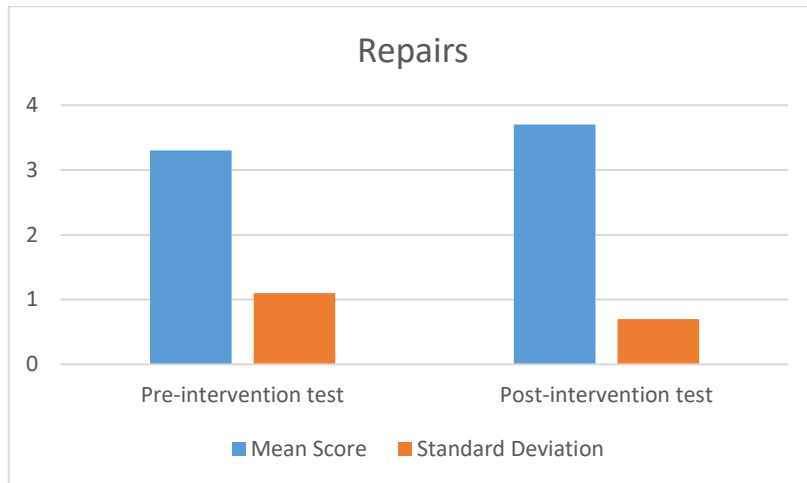
According to Table 8, most of the students demonstrated Excellent or Very Good initial level of repairs, this means they repeated the sentences with modifications very few times at the beginning. However, in the post-intervention test, 90% of the students got the best score or showed an Excellent level of repair. It is also important to remark that there was one participant who improved one point his/her score from the pre to the post-intervention test, but he still showed a Deficient level of repairs after the intervention.

Regarding the mean scores, there was a small difference of 0.4 points between the pre and post-intervention test, thus the pre-intervention test mean score was 3.3 and the post-intervention test mean score was 3.7, this is the lowest difference in the comparison of the pre-intervention test and post-intervention test mean scores among the three aspects of fluency evaluated. Even though it is a slight difference, participants did show an improvement in their performance in terms of repairs.

The dispersion of the results from the pre-intervention test scores is 1.1 points, which is the aspect with the most dispersed results from the mean; this implies that there was not a stable or consistent performance of participants in this aspect during the pre-intervention test, which shows a low-reliability level. Furthermore, the standard deviation of the post-intervention test results is 0.7 points. This standard deviation means the participants' scores became less spread and closer to the mean score, which shows a tendency towards Excellent in the post-intervention test and an excellent level of reliability.

**Figure 10**

*Comparison of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of participants' level of repairs.*

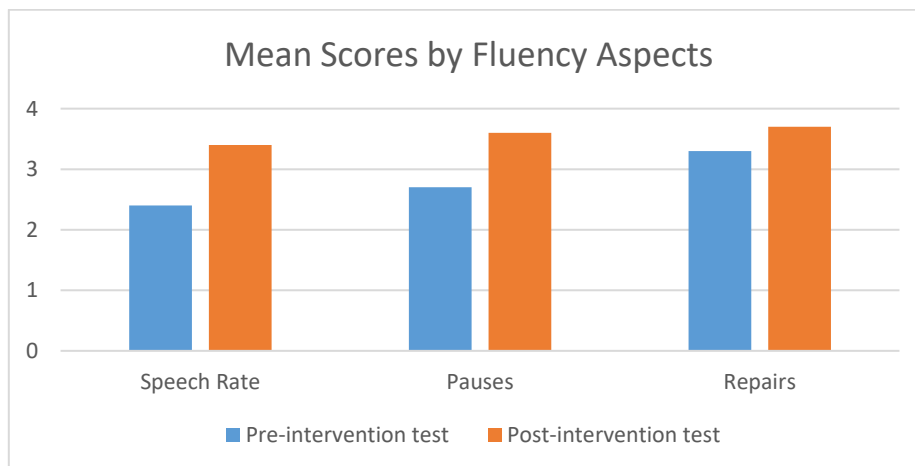


*Source: Self-elaboration*

The data portrayed in Figure 10 demonstrated that participants indeed improved at the end of the process, even though they showed very good results before the intervention. It can also be seen the difference between the standard deviation in the pre and post-intervention test, which is 0.4, which shows that the pre-intervention test scores have a very high variation; on the contrary, the post-intervention test scores are closer to the mean so they are consistent and reliable.

The comparison of the mean scores of three aspects analyzed in the pre and post-intervention tests results can be seen in the following figure:

**Figure 11: Comparison of Mean Scores of Each fluency Aspect assessed: Speech Rate, Breakdowns, and Repairs**



*Source: Self-elaboration*

Figure 11 shows a clear improvement in each aspect before and after the intervention. Before the intervention participants showed a mean score that was placed in the Deficient descriptor in speech rate, which meant that they were not able to produce any sentence with evenness and flow; in terms of breakdowns, participants showed a mean score that corresponded to a Very Good level, in other words their sentences were sometimes interrupted by pauses; in the repairs aspect, participants obtained a mean of Very Good level so the sentences they produced were sometimes repeated with modifications.

After using information gap activities during the intervention, participants showed an improvement of 1 point in their speech rate, getting closer to the Excellent level of speech rate, which is when they were able to produce all the sentences with evenness and flow. Regarding breakdowns or pauses, participants got an increase of 0.9 points, achieving the best score expected in this aspect, that is when their sentences just showed some hesitations but no breakdowns. In the repairs aspect, the participants showed an Excellent level with an improvement of 0.4 points, that is when just three sentences produced are repeated with modifications.

The aspect that demonstrated a greater improvement was pauses or breakdowns, and the aspect that showed the lowest improvement was repairs.

**4.2 SO2: To analyze the learners’ perception regarding the use of information gap activities to support their speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.**

To analyze participants’ views about the process of using information gap activities to support their speaking fluency, a focus group was conducted in their mother tongue and their opinions and perspectives on the topic were analyzed through a thematic analysis. Seven students took part in this focus group. Figure 11 shows the thematic analysis of the students’ perceptions gathered during the focus group.

**Figure 12**

*Thematic Analysis on the participants’ perceptions about Information Gap Activities*

| Themes   | Sub-themes                         | Frequency | Examples   |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Information gap activities support in speaking fluency | 1. Fluency level improvement.      | 6         | <p><i>“Mi fluidez no era muy buena, ahorita que tuvimos estas clases mejoré”</i></p> <p><i>“Mejoré un poco más profe”</i></p>                    |
| Contribution of IGA in students’ speech rate.          | 1. Improvement of the speech rate. | 2         | <p><i>“profe yo siento que ha cambiado, para mi siento que ha cambiado. Puedo responder un poquito más rápido, he mejorado en responder”</i></p> |

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Contribution of IGA in students' level of pauses. | 1.Improvement of the level of pauses   | 5 | <i>“Pues para mí antes tenía más pausas y durante iban pasando las actividades que íbamos haciendo iba como mejorando “</i>  |
| Participants' awareness of mistakes.              | 1. No repairs before IGA due to lack of awareness of mistakes.   | 7 | <i>“En las clases de antes como no se fijaban en las reparaciones, lo profesores no se fijaban y pues tampoco nosotros. Pero usted si reparo más en eso y nos ayudó a corregimos”</i>  |
|   | 2. More repairs during the use IGA.  | 6 | <i>“A mí lo que me confundía era He y She pero luego como dicen me caía el veinte y lo corregía”</i>   |
| Appropriate time for the development of IGA.      | 1. Need to increase time for developing the IGA  | 4 | <i>“Para mí la explicación estaba perfecto el tiempo, pero igual como dice mi compañera hubiera querido que fuera más tiempo para la práctica oral”</i>  |
|   | 2. Need to increase time for both the presentation of the language and for the development of the IGA. | 2 | <i>“Falto tiempo para ambos, profe”</i>  |
| IGA in the English Classes.                       | 1. Increase of speaking time during English classes.   | 4 | <i>“Para mí es mayor (el Tiempo de speaking)en las clases(sesiones con el uso de IGA) que tenemos aquí con usted”</i>  |
|   | 2. Time increment to use the language communicatively.   | 7 | <i>“Antes en las clases, solo escribir oraciones, no practicamos mucho el speaking no tenemos un espacio de poder hablarlo”</i><br><br><i>“En las clases de antes Si solo escribir oraciones, pero no decirlas, solo escribirlas”</i>    |
|   | 3. Students' motivation about the use of IGA.  | 7 | <i>“A mí me gustó profe, porque ahí(en el desarrollo de las IGA) hay tiempo para pronunciar las palabras nos dan correcciones de las palabras, entonces nos queda más claro a nosotros y así podemos avanzar en el inglés hablando “</i> |

Source: Self-elaboration

The analysis of Figure 12 will be addressed starting by the sub-themes with most frequent answers, which were *“Time increment to use the language communicatively”*, *“Student’s motivation about the use of IGA”* and *“No repairs before IGA due to lack of awareness of mistakes”*. All of the participants (7 participants, 100%) supported these ideas strongly. This shows that all of them agreed that using this strategy during the English classes gave them the opportunity

to interact with their classmates and learn at the same time, and this triggered their motivation. Even though motivation and the communicative use of the language were not strictly related with the objectives of the research, they emerged with a high level of frequency during the focus group.

The third sub-theme in which 100% of the participants agreed is related with the level of repairs: *“No repairs before IGA due to lack of awareness of mistakes”*. This theme might have emerged because participants could not compare if they had had more or fewer repairs before the intervention as they had never experienced this kind of oral interactive activity where they could identify their mistakes and correct themselves while speaking. In fact, this is portrayed in the pre-intervention test results, which showed that the highest score (3.3) of the three aspects assessed was achieved in the level of repairs, meaning that students had very few repairs before the intervention. In addition, six participants (90%) concluded that after using information gap activities they were more aware of the mistakes they were doing and how to repair them appropriately.

According to the participants' perceptions the use of information gap activities did help them to improve their fluency level, 90% of the participants agreed that they had noticed an improvement throughout the process of using information gap activities, which is evidenced in the quantitative results of the post-intervention test. Regarding the speech rate, 2 (28%) participants expressed that they could speak faster or with a better flow than before the intervention, even though most of them (90%) improved their test scores in this aspect. In terms of the level of pauses or breakdowns, 71% of the participants expressed a contribution of information gap activities to their level of pauses or breakdowns, they said that they used to produce more pauses or breakdowns before the intervention, which is in accordance with the mean difference registered in this aspect in the pre and post-intervention test, that is 0.9.

During the focus group 6 participants expressed some suggestions in relation to the time spent on doing IGA: 4 of them (57%) expressed they would prefer to have more time for the development of the information gap activity during the class, and 2 of them (28%) said they would like to had more time for the two stages of the activity; the first stage: the explanation of the language, the second stage: the development of the IGA itself. It is remarkable that 57% participants expressed they liked the improvement they had noticed in their speaking fluency during the English classes as a result of the information gap activities.

## **Chapter V: Discussion**

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This chapter will discuss the data gathered to answer the research question: How does the use of information gap activities support the speaking fluency in Honduran ninth-grade students? This question was addressed using quantitative and qualitative techniques to analyze the data. The quantitative data arose as a response to specific objective 1, and the qualitative data arose as a response to specific objective 2.

Concerning specific objective 1: To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the student's speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs, the results showed that after using information gap activities during the intervention, all the participants improved their speaking fluency level; this can be seen in the results of the pre and post-intervention tests. The pre-intervention test mean score was 8 out of 12, and in the post-intervention test the mean score was 11 out of 12; there was an improvement of 3 points.

To analyze this improvement more in-depth it is necessary to consider the three aspects of fluency that were assessed: speech rate, pauses or breakdowns, and repairs. The most remarkable improvement was registered in the level of **speech rate**; thus, participants got an increment of 1 point of difference between the mean scores of the pre and post-intervention test. In terms of **pauses**, there was an improvement of 0.9 points in the mean scores. Still, the best grade after the intervention was in the level of **repairs**, as participants got a mean score of 3.7 out of 4, meaning that they had an excellent level of repairs after using information gap activities.

It can be declared that after using information gap activities during a period, the ninth-grade students were able to produce sentences with a better speech rate, with fewer pauses, and repeating or modifying fewer sentences. These results are in line with what Ortiz (2019) concluded after conducting action research using information gap activities with 28 eighth graders; he affirmed information gap activities impacted students' oral fluency, as they could produce utterances that were characterized by evenness and flow and with very occasionally hesitations and rephrasing. These results are also similar to the ones gathered by Riny (2017) and Linaanti (2017). They found that students' scores of fluency level were higher in the post-intervention test after using information gap activities in the intervention.

Similarly, the action research carried out by Namaziandost et al.(2019) verified that information gap activities help to improve speech rate and reduce the number of repetitions of words, phrases, or clauses, and the number of lexico-syntactic reformulations for correction or repairs. This researcher identified an improvement

in these fluency aspects in the scores of the participants that used information gap activities during a period.

Regarding specific objective 2: To analyze the learner's perception regarding the use of information gap activities to support their speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.

The participants' perceptions collected through a focus group after the intervention were in agreement with the quantitative results because 90% (6 answers) of them agreed that they had noticed an improvement in their **fluency level** after using information gap activities. In terms of **pauses or breakdowns**, 71% of the participants reported a reduction in the **pauses** after the intervention. However, in the aspect of **speech rate**, the students' perceptions differed from their results in the pre and post-intervention test, because only (28%) 2 reported an improvement in their speech rate, even though 90% did improve their speech rate level in the post-test.

On the level of **repairs**, the participants provided some interesting opinions. They were supposed to compare if they had fewer or more repairs before the intervention, but they were not able to do it, as they did not exhibit any level of repairs before the intervention. This might be due to the novelty of information gap activities because they have never experienced this kind of activity in which they could identify the mistakes and correct them while speaking. Therefore, a new benefit of using information gap activities arose: "Getting awareness of mistakes" this perception was supported by 100% of the participants who agreed that before the intervention they were not aware of their mistakes and how to repair them. This result is supported by Mumford and Darn (2020) who said: When learners are motivated to speak, they produce more language, and they become "hypothesis testers" and "risk takers", thus, they make more mistakes but they are capable of self-correction.

Two other themes emerged during the focus group: "The communicative use of the languages through information gap activities" and "Students' motivation towards information gap activities". Even though these two aspects were not strictly related to the objectives of the research, they exhibited the highest frequency of answers since 100% of the participants agreed they liked using information gap activities in class as they allowed them to interact and communicate with their peers using the language, and these made them feel more motivated.

Some of them expressed that in class, before the intervention, they had not had opportunities to use the language communicatively as they just practiced the grammar rules in a written way. Information gap activities allowed them to use the grammar knowledge they already had in conversations instead of the traditional use

of the textbook. When completing an information gap activity, students' conversations emulate what happens in an authentic context using English. As Prabhu,1987 (as cited in Namaziandost,2019,) stated, "information gap activities give the opportunity to work on negotiation meaning, enable learners to feel comfortable to speak, and increase communicative practice maximally." (p.13). In addition, Harris (1990) states, information gap is the best technique for second language learners; it can provide learners with a good opportunity to use the sentences they learn, it also allows learners to talk, exchange information, and interact over time, and the tasks will make the lesson more interesting. Information gap activities allowed students to have small conversations in which they could exchange personal information or share their likes and dislikes more fluently; this triggered their motivation as they felt they could finally use the language to establish genuine communication with someone else.

Regarding motivation, all of them strongly supported the idea that they felt more motivated in class using information gap activities. Some participants expressed that being able to complete the task successfully using English communicatively and having time to identify their mistakes and correct themselves increased their motivation. These perceptions are similar to the results obtained by Humaera et al. (2022) in a recent study, in which the analysis revealed that "implementing information gap activities in the classroom while teaching English increased students' willingness to communicate; they got motivated and confident to speak, they also improved their behavioral intention to communicate"(p.1).These increments in students' willingness to communicate and confidence to speak were also shown by the participants of the present action research, which evidenced the positive impact that information gap activities had on learners' motivation.

The participants' motivation towards the use of information gap activities is also in congruence with one of the benefits stated in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (U.S. State Department,2015), which mentions that information gap activities "increase student motivation: students communicate for a purpose as they exchange and collect information needed to complete the task. Also, students get to feel like important "experts" because everyone has task-essential information." (p.1)

Taking into account that the use of information gap activities was totally new for the participants of this research, they showed a robust willingness to participate and a solid engagement to learn communicatively using the language.

## 5.1 Limitations

Some limitations were found during the implementation of this action research. First, it is important to mention that the results achieved could have been different if the intervention had been applied to a larger sample of participants and in a face-to-face context. A larger sample of participants would have provided more consistent results. The fact that the intervention was developed online using the video conferencing application Zoom might have affected the results, because participants had to learn and adapt not only to the new kind of speaking activities (information gap activities), but also to the management of Zoom application using the microphone at the right times so as not to interrupt the flow of information. Nevertheless, if the intervention had been carried out face-to-face, the students would have been able to focus all their attention on the development of the strategy itself without worrying about technical issues, and they would also have had more authentic and faster interaction.

Holding the intervention sessions online caused the main drawbacks to the development of the action plan, which were technical problems. Participants had a lot of connectivity and technical difficulties during the process; for example, some of them could not listen to their classmates or could not speak because their microphones did not work well; on some occasions, they left the meeting in the middle of the activity and were not able to complete the task. Consequently, not all the students that took part in the intervention sessions were considered for the final sample because they could not connect in all the sessions or connect to do the post-intervention test. Therefore, the teacher-researcher decided to take as a sample just the participants that had attended all the sessions, 12 participants were part of the sessions, but just 7 of them were persistent during the whole process.

There were also some challenges during the intervention, the first was that students took longer than expected to understand the instructions to complete the information gap activities. During the first information gap activities, they tried to start but they got confused with their turns or the way they had to fill in the gaps and interrupted the activity process to ask the teacher to repeat the instructions.

Taking into account that participants took long time to comprehend the instructions to develop the information gap activities, the researcher concluded that explaining the instructions is a key point for the effectiveness of this kind of activity

The second was time the information gap activities were done, as they also took longer than expected to finish each activity because it took them time to start speaking or producing sentences. The cause of this delay might have been because at the beginning of the intervention the researcher explained to them the rubric of evaluation and the aspect that would be measured, being aware of this might have

produced pressure on them not to make mistakes, and produce perfect sentences with a perfect speech rate and without pauses or repairs.

Each session was expected to last one hour, but since the first session took two hours, the researcher made the decision to extend the intervention period to have more sessions lasting only one hour per day. Because after two hours, the students might feel overwhelmed, and this might affect their productivity.

## **5.2 Implications**

Regardless of the limitations, some methodological implications are worth considering. To begin with, the information gap activities that were used during the intervention sessions were adapted following the regular topic proposed by the National Curriculum of Honduras for ninth graders. Therefore, information gap activities can be designed for each topic and thus be implemented in the English classes in the context of the public system to reduce the grammatical focus and build a more interactive and communicative environment.

The results of this action research reveal that information gap activities can be used as a new strategy or tool worth considering as part of English classes in a rural public system context. The use of information gap activities might support teachers not to rely upon the traditional use of the textbook. In this way, the students might show better results in their speaking fluency skill. " EFL teachers may include these types of activities to promote and refine speaking skills in the classroom, as they can be adapted and carried out by using any topic and content" (Lindsay, 2000, as cited by Ortiz,2019,p.120)

During this study, the teacher-researcher observed how the students overcame the difficulty they had in engaging in short conversations, and how their motivation and enthusiasm increased when participating in the information gap activities. This evidenced that information gap activities provide an innovative and practical way to achieve the objectives of each class. Additionally, these activities allowed the teacher-researcher to have a less leading role, since she was only a guide while the students completed the tasks.

Using information gap activities as part of the procedure of the class can bring not only cognitive benefits but also social affective benefits. It is crucial to mention that all students agreed that before the intervention, they did not have time to use the language communicatively in their classes and felt more motivated using information gap activities. These perceptions are relevant because they show that the students did not only improve their oral fluency but enjoyed the process. As a suggestion, because of the positive results gathered, the National Secretariat of Education of

Honduras could incorporate information gap activities to bolster the communicative and task-based approach in the National Curriculum.

For future research, it would be valuable to analyze the contribution of information gap activities on students' motivation, participation, and communicative use of the language in class. Another recommendation for further research is to compare whether the results are the same if the intervention is conducted in a face-to-face classroom. This investigation might be helpful to other researchers who are investigating implementing innovative, communicative strategies in a public education system.

## **Chapter VI: Conclusions**

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### 6.1. Summary of main findings

Over time, English language learners have based their success in language proficiency on their level of oral fluency (Defrioka,2016), hence teachers feel this demand of achieving their expectations at the end of a course. English teachers from Honduras and students are no exceptions; unfortunately, there has not been much research about improving the level of speaking fluency in the public education in this country. Teachers and students in the public school system in Honduras have been struggling to achieve the required level of oral fluency at the end of their primary and secondary education. This action research aimed at using information gap activities as a strategy to support students' oral fluency in the English language and to enrich teachers with another tool to make it easier to reach the standards established by the Secretariat of Education of Honduras.

The use of information gap activities as a didactic strategy to improve the student's level of oral fluency is recommended based on the following results: First of all, the results of the pre and post-intervention test demonstrated that after using information gap activities during the intervention, the students improved their level of oral fluency by 3 points, getting in the final post-intervention test a mean score of 11 out of 12 points, while in the pre-intervention test they had only got 8.

Second, the mean scores showed that students improved in the three fluency aspects evaluated: speech rate, pauses or breakdowns, and repairs. The aspect that showed the strongest improvement was speech rate, which presented an improvement of 1 point, as they got a mean score of 2.4 out of 4 in the pre-intervention test and a mean score of 3.4 in the post-intervention test. The aspect with the weakest improvement was the level of repairs; participants got a mean score of 3.3 out of 4 in the pre-intervention test and a mean score of 3.7 in the post-intervention test, getting an increment of 0.4

Third, the participants' perceptions about using information gap activities were positive, 90% noticed an improvement in their fluency level. Regarding the three specific aspects of fluency: speech rate, pauses or breakdowns, and repairs, 71% of the participants reported that they have fewer pauses now than before the intervention, and they related this decrease in pauses to the use of information gap activities. Likewise, 28% of them expressed that they noticed an improvement in their speech rate level after using information gap activities during the intervention sessions.

Besides this, the participants reported another benefit after using information gap activities which was: "Getting awareness of mistakes ", 100 % of them agreed they did not used to have repairs before the intervention because they were not aware of their mistakes. Using information gap activities helped them to learn to identify their mistakes and how to correct them appropriately.

The use of the information gap activities allowed the students to use the language communicatively and this triggered their motivation, according to the opinions of 90% of them during the focus group. It is important to highlight that during the focus group, students manifested a strong desire to use information gap activities in their regular English classes. Since when the researcher asked if they could use information gap activities in each regular English Class, what would you think about it? 43% of them said that they liked the idea.

To sum up, information gap activities supported participants' speaking fluency, since they showed an improvement in their level of speech rate, pauses, or breakdowns and repairs in the post-intervention test. Furthermore, information gap activities helped students to feel motivated, to use the language communicatively in class, and to be aware of their mistakes and how to correct them.

## **6.2 Reflections**

Something that caught the teacher-researcher's attention was the fact that participants were good at producing the language to share information; nevertheless, they struggled to receive and comprehend the information to fill the gaps. Investigating why this occurs can be a good subject for further research.

Conducting the present action research has been a meaningful experience for the researcher and the participants. On the one hand, the teacher-researcher developed his ability to adapt to unexpected problems during the process, and her critical thinking to analyze the results and reactions of students to an innovative strategy. Furthermore, the teacher- researcher could see her students' progress during and after the intervention sessions, making them overcome the weakness they used to have in their fluency; thus, it is necessary to reflect on the teaching strategies and search for solutions through the research. Therefore, this study encourages teachers who works on the public system to continually reflect on their teaching practice and try new strategies to leave behind the traditional methods.

On the other hand, learners enjoyed the process showing motivation and commitment to do each information gap activity in the best way. They showed an excellent attitude working in pairs and participating, although this was the first time, they used information gap activities in the English classes. Students voluntarily

participated even though they had to dedicate an extra hour, apart from their regular school hours, to connect to the sessions.

One advantage of the information gap activities is that they are very adaptable. Teachers can adjust or modify them using the target grammar or vocabulary of each unit of the textbook; in this way, they will integrate communication and interaction into their lessons, which will help keep learners motivated and engaged during the class.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Taking into account the challenges that the researcher and participants went through, it is essential to consider the following aspects to get effective results when using information gap activities:

- It is crucial to give participants the chance to choose their partner. In this way, they feel more comfortable and confident in using the language and completing the task.

- Letting students record themselves while doing the information gap activities will be a good idea because they can listen to them later and identify their pauses and repairs.

- Building a safe environment where learners do not feel the pressure of being perfect is essential to prevent them from becoming inhibited. To achieve this, the teacher should tell them that pauses, repairs, or a slow speech rate is normal in the process of acquiring a good fluency level.

For other teachers who want to carry out action research, it is recommended to be flexible during the process of implementing the strategy because changes, reactions, or unexpected results may arise, and although they are not within the plan they are contributions that are worth analyzing.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Intervention Lesson Plan

- Due to the fact, that the participants were in Honduras, and the teacher-researcher was in Chile, these classes were hold online using the virtual platform (Zoom).
- The class consisted of 12 learners studying English in a public high school, who are in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and have a basic A1 level of English.

| Date                 | Objective   | Activities and Procedures  | Time   | Materials   | Assessment  | R Objectives   |
|----------------------|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| May 29 <sup>th</sup> | After using the information gap activity by asking questions about the personal information of some characters. Learners will demonstrate an intermediate level of oral fluency in terms of speech rate, pauses, and repairs. | <p><b>Warm up:</b> Greet the learners and access their prior knowledge regarding how to use information gap activities. They can read the list they wrote the last session.</p> <p>Activate their previous knowledge about jobs and occupations by playing "The hidden picture" and ask students to write on the chatbox the name, the one that writes it first will be the winner.</p> <p><b>Teach the keywords needed to develop the information gap activity.</b></p> <p>Using slides with pictures to teach personal information vocabulary: Single, Married, Children, Doctor, Housewife, Businessman, and other professions. Use the video of "The Hidden picture" of the warm-up stage to review the vocabulary by asking orally to say the vocabulary.</p> <p><b>Teach how to ask and answer questions about personal information</b></p> <p>Teach the structure of the questions:</p> <p>-What does he/she do?<br/>She/He is a...</p> <p>-Is she/he single or married?<br/>She/He is single/married</p> <p>-Does he/she have children?<br/>Yes, she does/No, she doesn't</p> <p>-How many children does he/she have?<br/>She has.....</p> <p><b>Closing</b></p> <p>Make some questions to check understanding:<br/>What do he do? Is it correct? What is the mistake?</p> | <p>Greeting and warm up: <b>15 minutes</b></p> <p>Teach the vocabulary: <b>15 minutes.</b></p> <p>Teach the grammar point: <b>20 minutes</b></p> <p>Check understanding: <b>5 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Total time: 55 minutes</b></p> | <p>The hidden picture<br/><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSdlgxn90HM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSdlgxn90HM</a></p> <p>Flashcards to review:<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LStE5Wzks2g4oXZXGhpGYm6z48zv-Md/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LStE5Wzks2g4oXZXGhpGYm6z48zv-Md/view?usp=sharing</a></p> <p>Slides: Personal Information Questions:<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kKCW9MjDlhuHdIF008TCP-QjNW7Xler4/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kKCW9MjDlhuHdIF008TCP-QjNW7Xler4/view?usp=sharing</a></p> | <p><b>Assessment instance:</b></p> <p>To assess the students' understanding of the key vocabulary and the grammar point, they will answer the teacher's checking questions.</p> | <p><b>SO 1: To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the participants' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.</b></p> |





|                      |  |  |   |  |   |  |
|----------------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| May 30th             |  | <p><b>Warm up</b><br/>Greet the learners and ask some review questions about last class. Review and Model the language they need to use during the information gap activity.</p> <p><b>Do the information gap activity.</b><br/>Explain to Ss that the objective is to practice their oral fluency using what they have learned during the lesson.<br/>Show learners the information gap activity and explore what they know about the characters by asking questions: Do you know this man? Who is he?<br/>Make an example of exchanging information with one of the participants.<br/>Divide the participants into students A and B, sort participants into the breakout rooms, and monitor them.</p> <p><b>Feedback</b><br/>Ask some question s: Was there any question that was more difficult for you to be fluent? Can you explain the reasons?<br/>Give support on that specific use of language.</p> | <p><b>5 minutes</b></p> <p>Show the pictures and set the breakout rooms:<br/><b>10 minutes</b><br/>Develop the I.G.A:<b>45 minutes.</b></p> <p><b>5 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Total time: 65 minutes</b></p>                        | <p>Information gap activity:<br/><a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tsn7FAH7PCoOX7o8VXXesiYkNupD3J1Z/edit?usp=sharing&amp;ouid=108889217883452761682&amp;rtopf=true&amp;sd=true">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tsn7FAH7PCoOX7o8VXXesiYkNupD3J1Z/edit?usp=sharing&amp;ouid=108889217883452761682&amp;rtopf=true&amp;sd=true</a></p>   | <p><b>Assessment instance:</b><br/>The learner's performance during the information gap activity will be assessed through the analytic rubric</p>   | <p><b>SO 1: To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the participants' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.</b></p> |
| May 31 <sup>st</sup> | <p>After using the information gap activity by describing a picture and finding the differences. The learners will demonstrate an upper-intermediate level of fluency in terms of speech rate, pauses and repairs.</p> | <p><b>Greeting and Warm up</b><br/>Greet students and activate their previous knowledge by showing some pictures of bedrooms and asking: How many objects in your bedroom can you name?</p> <p><b>Teach the keywords needed to develop the information gap activity.</b><br/>Using slides with pictures teach the vocabulary: Objects of my bedroom.<br/>Use the same picture of the warm-up stage to ask What can you see in the bedroom? (Elicit the use of there is/there are) How many objects can you name now?</p> <p><b>Teach how to use there is and there are in affirmative and interrogative forms and prepositions of place.</b><br/>Teach the grammatical structure of <i>there is</i> and <i>there are</i> and the preposition of place using flashcards.</p> <p><b>Closing</b><br/>Ask some students to describe objects in a picture in order to check to learners' understanding.</p>       | <p>Greeting and warm up: <b>15 minutes</b></p> <p>Teach the vocabulary: <b>15 minutes.</b></p> <p>Teach the grammar point: <b>20 minutes</b><br/>Check understanding: <b>5 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Total time: 55 minutes</b></p> | <p>Pictures of bedrooms :<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mGsfDC1CvrtbE18xHbv4YvWdK3GF_XFBX/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mGsfDC1CvrtbE18xHbv4YvWdK3GF_XFBX/view?usp=sharing</a></p> <p>Vocabulary and Grammar Slides<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mGsfDC1CvrtbE18xHbv4YvWdK3GF_XFBX/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mGsfDC1CvrtbE18xHbv4YvWdK3GF_XFBX/view?usp=sharing</a></p> | <p><b>Assessment instance:</b><br/>To assess the students' understanding about the key vocabulary and the grammar point they are going to answer the checking questions of the teacher.</p> | <p><b>SO 1: To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the participants' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.</b></p> |

|                        |  |   |   |   |  |   |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| Jun<br>1 <sup>st</sup> |  | <p><b>Warm up</b><br/>Greet the learners and ask some review questions about last class. Review and Model the language they need to use during the information gap activity.</p> <p><b>Do the information gap activity</b><br/>Explain to Ss that the objective is to practice their oral fluency using what they have learned during the lesson<br/>Show learners the information gap activity and make an example of exchanging information with one of the participants.<br/>Divide the participants into students A and Students B, sort participants into the breakout rooms, and monitor them.<br/>Example:<br/>Is there a lamp in your bedroom?<br/>How many...are there in your bedroom?<br/>Is the computer on...?</p> <p><b>Give feedback</b><br/>Ask some question s: Was there any question that was more difficult for you to be fluent? Can you explain the reasons?<br/>Give support on that specific use of language.</p> | <p><b>5 minutes</b></p> <p>Do an example and set the breakout rooms:<br/><b>10 minutes</b><br/>Develop the I.G.A:<b>45 minutes.</b></p> <p><b>5 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Total time 65 hours</b></p> | <p>Information gap activity<br/><a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WZzITSmLUkbKbnGyNRDhgPJ==HAWtRNX/edit?usp=sharing&amp;ouid=108889217883452761682&amp;rtopof=true&amp;sd=true">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WZzITSmLUkbKbnGyNRDhgPJ==HAWtRNX/edit?usp=sharing&amp;ouid=108889217883452761682&amp;rtopof=true&amp;sd=true</a></p> | <p><b>Assessment instance :</b> The learner's performance during the information gap activity will be assessed through the analytic rubric</p> | <p><b>SO 1:</b><br/><b>To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the participants' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.</b></p> |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|

|                        |   |   |   |   |  |   |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| Jun<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> | <p>After using the information gap activity by describing a picture and finding the similarities. The learners will demonstrate an advanced fluency level using in terms of speech rate, pauses, and repairs.</p> | <p><b>Greeting and Warm up</b><br/>Greet students and activate their previous knowledge by showing some pictures of people and ask: What is he wearing? What color is her shirt?</p> <p><b>Teach the keywords needed to develop the information gap activity.</b><br/>Using slides with pictures teach the vocabulary: Clothes. Use the same picture of the warm-up stage to ask to describe what each person is wearing.</p> <p><b>Teach how to ask about what people are wearing.</b><br/>Teach the grammar point<br/>-What is he/she wearing?<br/>She/He is wearing...<br/>Is he wearing a sweater?</p> <p><b>Closing</b><br/>Ask some questions to check understanding:<br/>What are he wearing? Is it correct? Can you identify the mistake?</p> | <p>Greeting and warm up: <b>15 minutes</b></p> <p>Teach the vocabulary: <b>15 minutes.</b></p> <p>Teach the grammar point: <b>20 minutes</b><br/>Check understanding: <b>5 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Total time: 55 minutes</b></p> | <p>Pictures of people:<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZSHMoc-c3Fv9ucc0tV6N_kVlpoHV1qI9/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZSHMoc-c3Fv9ucc0tV6N_kVlpoHV1qI9/view?usp=sharing</a></p> <p>Vocabulary Slides:<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rQdEZRbij9gN1SzUcpI-boo_cj9kXMIx/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rQdEZRbij9gN1SzUcpI-boo_cj9kXMIx/view?usp=sharing</a></p> <p>Slides: What is he/she wearing?<br/><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XVflqMJSKIVwib77LT7q1ejo9Rc7uKTD/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XVflqMJSKIVwib77LT7q1ejo9Rc7uKTD/view?usp=sharing</a></p> | <p><b>Assessment instance:</b><br/>To assess the students' understanding of the key vocabulary and the grammar point they are going to answer the checking questions of the teacher.</p> | <p><b>SO1: To assess the contribution of information gap activities to support the participants' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs.</b></p> |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|

## Appendix B: Pre-intervention test

Ask student B question about the personal information of the following character and complete the gaps.

|             |   |   |  |   |
|-------------|---|---|--|---|
|             |  |  |  |  |
| Name        | Spiderman   |   | Wonder Woman   |   |
| Age         | 17 years old  |   |  | 35 years old  |
| Where /from |   | Gotham  | United States(USA)   |   |





Answer student B question with the information of your chart.

*For example: Spiderman is 17 years old.*

Answer student A question with the information of your chart.

*For example Batman is 30 years old.*







Ask student B question about the personal information of the following character and complete the gaps.

|             |   |   |  |   |
|-------------|---|---|--|---|
|             |  |  |  |  |
| Name        |   | Batman  |  | Superman  |
| Age         |   | 30 years old  | 26 years old   |   |
| Where /from | New York  |   |  | Metropolis  |

## Appendix C: Post-intervention test

Ask student B question about the likes and dislikes of the people in his/her picture and complete the gaps.

*Example: What does Elisa like to eat?*







|        | To eat  | To do   | To drink  |
|--------|---|---|---|
| Elisa  |   |  |   |
| Raul   |  |   |  |
| Nelson |   |  |   |
| Julia  |  |  |   |

Answer Student B questions using the information in your chart.

*Example: Elisa likes to eat...*

Answer student A question with the information of your chart.

*Example: Elisa likes to eat...*

|        | To eat  | To do   | To drink  |
|--------|---|---|---|
| Elisa  |  |   |  |
| Raul   |   |  |   |
| Nelson |  |   |  |
| Julia  |   |   |  |

Ask student A question about the likes and dislikes of the people in his/her picture and complete the gaps.

*Example: What does Elisa like to eat?*

## Appendix D: Fluency Rubric (Adapted From Ortiz, 2019)

| Level                       | 4-Excellent   | 3-Very Good  | 2-Deficient  | 1-Poor  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Speech Rate</b>          | Produce most (12) of the sentences with evenness and flow.  | Produce some (8) sentences with evenness and flow.               | Few (6) sentences are produced with evenness and flow.             | No-sentence is produced with evenness and flow.           |
| <b>Breakdowns or Pauses</b> | Sentences show hesitations. (3)                             | Sentences are sometimes (6) interrupted by pauses or breakdowns. | Sentences are constantly (10) interrupted by pauses or breakdowns. | Sentences are always interrupted by pauses or breakdowns. |
| <b>Repair</b>               | Occasionally (3) sentences are repeated with modifications. | Sentences are sometimes (6) repeated with modifications.         | Sentences are constantly (10) repeated with modifications.         | All the sentences are repeated with modifications.        |

## Appendix E: Focus Group

| <b>Dimensions</b>   | <b>Questions</b>  |
|---|---|
| Students' perception about the use of information gap activities in relation to their speaking time during the class. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Puede describir como era el tiempo dedicado para practicar "speaking" en las clases de inglés antes de la intervención?</li> <li>2. ¿Puede describir como era el tiempo dedicado para practicar "speaking" en las clases de inglés durante la intervención?</li> </ol> |
| Students' perception about the use of I.G.A in relation to their oral fluency.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Cómo era tu fluidez oral antes de la intervención?</li> <li>2. ¿Qué paso con tu fluidez oral mientras desarrollas las "information gap activities"?</li> <li>3. ¿Cómo es tu fluidez oral ahora que ya has utilizado "information gap activities"?</li> </ol>           |
| Students' perception about the use of I.G.A. in relation to their speech rate.  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Puedes describir la cantidad de palabras que podías producir cuando hacías una "information gap activity" antes de la intervención?</li> <li>2. ¿Puedes describir la cantidad de palabras que puedes producir ahora en una "information gap activity" ?</li> </ol>     |
| Students' perception about the use of I.G.A in relation to their level of pauses or breakdowns.                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Cómo era la cantidad de pausas o momentos de silencio que hacías mientras desarrollabas una "information gap activity" antes de la intervención? ¿Cómo es ahora?</li> </ol>  |
| Students' perception about the use of I.G.A . in relation to their level of repairs                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Cómo era la cantidad de veces que repetías una oración para decirla correctamente mientras desarrollabas una "information gap activity" antes de la intervención? ¿Cómo es ahora?</li> </ol>   |

## Appendix: F: Validation Instruments

### Validation of Analytic Rubric

Please carefully read the dimensions, levels, and descriptions of the levels of the analytic rubric. If they are well written and designed tick next to the word “Maintain”. If they need rephrasing or you consider another wording, tick next to the word “Modify” and write a suggestion next to the word “observation”. Finally, if the descriptor or dimension is not appropriate, tick next to the word “delete”.

**SO2:** To describe the oral fluency levels of students in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs when describing a picture in an information gap activity

| Level   | 4-Excellent   | 3-Very Good   | 2-Good  | 1-Needs improvement   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Speech Rate</b>  | Produce most of the sentences with evenness and flow.                                   | Produce some sentences with evenness and flow.  | Few sentences are produced with evenness and flow.                                      | Non-sentence is produced with evenness and flow.  |
| <b>Expert Comments</b>  |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> |
| <b>Breakdowns or Pauses</b>   | Sentences are occasionally hesitant.  | Sentences are sometimes interrupted by pauses or breakdowns.                            | Sentences are constantly interrupted by pauses or breakdowns.                           | All the sentences are interrupted by pauses or breakdowns.                              |
| <b>Experts Comments</b>   |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain</b> ____<br><b>Modify</b> ____<br><b>Delete</b> ____<br><b>Observations</b> |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Repair</b>  | Occasionally sentences are repeated with modifications.                  | Sentences are sometimes repeated with modifications.                     | Sentences are constantly repeated with modifications.                    | All the sentences are repeated with modifications.                       |
| <b>Experts Comments</b>  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Maintain _____<br/>Modify _____<br/>Delete _____<br/>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain _____<br/>Modify _____<br/>Delete _____<br/>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain _____<br/>Modify _____<br/>Delete _____<br/>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain _____<br/>Modify _____<br/>Delete _____<br/>Observations</b> | <b>Maintain _____<br/>Modify _____<br/>Delete _____<br/>Observations</b> |

### Validation of Focus Group

Please carefully read each of the questions. If the question is well written and designed, tick the box “keep the question”. If it needs rephrasing or you consider another wording, tick “modify the question” and write a suggestion in the box “observations”. Finally, if the question is not appropriate, tick the box “delete the question”. The dimensions mention the theoretical.

**SO3:** To explore the learners’ perception regarding the use of information gap activities on their speaking fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs when describing a picture.

| Questions   | Dimensions  | Keep | Delete | Modify | Observations |
|---|---|------|--------|--------|--------------|
| ¿Cuánto tiempo dedicaba a practicar “speaking” en las clases de inglés antes de la intervención?            | Students’ perception about the use of information gap activities in relation to their speaking time during the class. |      |        |        |              |
| ¿Cuánto tiempo dedicaba a practicar “speaking” durante la intervención?                                     |   |      |        |        |              |
| ¿Cómo era tu fluidez oral antes de la intervención?   | Students’ perception about the use of I.G.A in relation to their oral fluency.  |      |        |        |              |
| ¿Qué opinas de tu fluidez en Inglés mientras desarrollabas las “information gap activities”?                |   |      |        |        |              |
| ¿Cómo percibes tu fluidez oral en el idioma después de haber desarrollado las “information gap activities”? |   |      |        |        |              |
| ¿Crees que aumentaste el número   | Students’ perception about  |      |        |        |              |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>de palabras en Ingles mientras hacias las "Information Gap Activities?"</p>   | <p>the use of I.G.A. in relation to their speech rate.</p>   |  |  |  |  |
| <p>¿Sientes que hacías muchas pausas o se producían momentos de silencio mientras desarrollabas una "information gap activity" antes de la intervención? ¿Qué cambios observas ahora?</p>                                      | <p>Students' perception about the use of I.G.A in relation to their level of pauses or breakdowns.</p> |  |  |  |  |
| <p>¿Repetías o reformulabas una oración muchas veces antes de decirla correctamente mientras desarrollabas una "information gap activity" antes de la intervención? ¿Qué cambios percibes ahora después de la intervención</p> | <p>Students' perception about the use of I.G.A . in relation to their level of repairs.</p>            |  |  |  |  |

### Validation of Pre and Post-test

Please carefully analyze the instructions and pictures used in the information gap activities. If they are well written and designed tick next to the word "Maintain". If they need rephrasing or you consider another wording, tick next to the word "Modify" and write a suggestion next to the word "observation". Finally, they are not appropriate, tick next to the word "delete".

**SO1:** To assess the contribution of using information gap activities to improve the students' oral fluency in terms of speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs when describing a picture.

#### PRE- TEST

**Instruction 1:** Describe the picture to your classmate.



**Instruction 2:** Check the objects that your classmate mentioned. Write an "X". If your classmate mentions another object add it to the chart.

| Maintain | Observation |
|----------|-------------|
| Modify   |             |
| Delete   |             |
|          |             |

| Maintain | Observation |
|----------|-------------|
| Modify   |             |
| Delete   |             |
|          |             |

| Maintain | Observation |
|----------|-------------|
| Modify   |             |
| Delete   |             |
|          |             |

|                  |        |          |          |                     |                           |       |            |
|------------------|--------|----------|----------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------|------------|
| Ball             | Rug    | Chair    | Computer | Joystick            | Big Lamp                  | Bed   | Speaker    |
|                  |        |          |          |                     |                           |       |            |
| Window           | Sofa   | Boy      | Mouse    | Cup of Coffee       | Keyboard                  | Wires | Small lamp |
|                  |        |          |          |                     |                           |       |            |
| Model of a plane | Papers | CPU      | Tower    | Light under the bed | Light or lamp on the wall |       | Drawer     |
|                  |        |          |          |                     |                           |       |            |
| Desk             | Pillow | Pictures | Shelf    | Mirrors             | Remote Car                |       |            |
|                  |        |          |          |                     |                           |       |            |
|                  |        |          |          |                     |                           |       |            |





| Maintain | Observation |
|----------|-------------|
| Modify   |             |
| Delete   |             |
|          |             |

## Appendix H: Information gap activities completed by a participant.

**STUDENT B**





Answer student A question with the information of your chart.  
 For example *Batman is 30 years old.*

Ask student B question about the personal information of the following character and complete the gaps.







|             |   |   |   |   |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
|             |  |  |  |  |
| Name        | <i>Spiderman</i>  | Batman  | <i>Wonder woman</i>   | Superman  |
| Age         | <i>17 years old</i>   | 30 years old  | 26 years old  | <i>15 years old</i>   |
| Where /from | New York  | <i>Gotham</i>   | <i>United States</i>  | Metropolis  |

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Answer student A question with the information of your chart.  
 Ask student B question about the personal information of the following character and complete the gaps.

|                      |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Superhero            |  |  |  |  |
| Job                  | Housewife   | <i>doctor</i>   | <i>soldier</i>  | Businessman   |
| Relation ship-status | <i>married</i>  | Single  | <i>Married</i>  | Married   |
| Children?            | <i>yes = 3</i>  | No  | No  | <i>yes = 1</i>  |

Example: What does Elisa like to eat?

|        | To eat  | To do   | To drink  |
|--------|---|---|---|
| Elisa  | Hamburger   |  | Coca cola   |
| Raul   |  | ride a boat   |  |
| Nelson | Pizza   |  | milk  |
| Julia  |  |  | Coffee  |

Answer Student B questions using the information in your chart.

Example: Elisa likes to eat...

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