



Student Symposium: An Experience of Insertion in Professional Fields

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ABSTRACT

The insertion of students from the beginning of their training in the fields and areas of action is one of the strengths of the educational model of UNAN-Managua to develop competencies. The Hispanic Language and Literature program has as a strategic action of its curricular design the gradual integration of students in teaching, research, pedagogical advice, and management. The first approach of the students with the object of the profession is in the classrooms of secondary education through the planning and execution of the student symposium. This experience is the one described in this work, which is why it is governed by the sociocritical paradigm, the qualitative approach, and the type of educational

action research. The population was made up of first-year students of Hispanic Language and Literature, academic year 2023 and the team of teachers who attended the first semester. The sample consisted of 49 students and 9 teachers, selected for convenience. An online interview guide and a documentary analysis guide were used to collect the information. The most relevant results focus on the two main actors of the teaching-learning process: the students developed conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal skills for the execution of the student symposium and the teacher's promoted teamwork, formation of values, and development of skills and abilities.

INTRODUCTION

The curricular model of UNAN-Managua is based on the acquisition of skills, abilities, and attitudes that allow students to face the demands of the national and regional context. In the search for the potential advancement of students, the educational model has the integration of essential knowledge as a strategic dimension for the development of competencies. This allows the mobilization of the body of knowledge for the resolution of problems related to the areas of action.

From the implementation of the competency-based model, students of the Hispanic Language and Literature career, from the first academic semester, are integrated into the areas of action through the process of planning and execution of the integration strategy. First-year students, whose learning process is the object of study of this research, have an approach to high school students through the **student symposium**, an integrative strategy of the semester.

It is necessary to clarify that the student symposium as an integration strategy is an incipient line of research. The methodology, which has been applied to guide the learning process of the students of the degree, is the product of the reflection and didactic experience of the teaching team of the first semester. In the search for antecedents related to the object of study, it was found that symposia are organized by the scientific community for the dissemination of knowledge in different areas of science. Therefore, this article is considered one of the first contributions to the application of the symposium as a strategy that allows students to demonstrate the level of development achieved in the first semester of their training.

The theoretical basis of this article corresponds to the educational model of UNAN-Managua to develop competencies. The first corresponds to the learning model, in the document Semester and Daily Planning, it is stated that student learning must be built through stages. Each should represent a developmental stage in the achievement of the semester's objectives. During this process, the student must be confronted with problematic situations in the real context that favor autonomy, self-regulation, and motivation toward the object of study of the profession (National Autonomous University of Nicaragua, Managua, 2020). The student symposium has been mediated in correspondence with this methodological approach, as it has been developed

from three main phases: planning, execution, and evaluation. In addition, the interaction of students with students in the first grades of secondary education has been encouraged.

The second element is integration at the level of teaching work. According to what is established in the Curriculum Design to develop competencies, the team of academics is responsible for operationalizing the curriculum. This process must start from the analysis of the level of competencies that students must demonstrate in a semester or year to the assessment of the programs, the curricular components, and the integrative strategy. Reflection on this last element requires a conscious process with an interdisciplinary vision because it is the one that allows the contribution of each component to be consolidated, as well as the obtaining of evidence on the student's performance (National Autonomous University of Nicaragua, Managua, 2020). These didactic guidelines were the basis for guiding student learning. Teachers have been encouraged to provide the essential knowledge and procedures for student participation in the student symposium.

METHODOLOGY

This research is governed by the socio-critical paradigm, the qualitative approach, and the type of educational action research. The study was carried out in the first academic semester of 2023 with a population of 100 first-year students of the Hispanic Language and Literature career, morning, afternoon, and professionalization shift (Saturday) and 09 teachers who taught the curricular components: Linguistic Tools I, Reading Workshop, Oral Communication, Office Automation I, and Integrative I.

The sample consisted of 49 students and 07 teachers. The sampling applied was for convenience, students were chosen based on the following criteria: belonging to the class group, systematic attendance, participation in formative and summative assessments, performance in the semester, and participation in the integrative strategy. For the selection of the teachers, the active participation in the work sessions of the team, accompaniment of the students, the contribution in the process of preparation, and fulfillment of roles during the development of the integrative strategy were considered.

Information was collected using an online interview guide and a document analysis guide. The interview guide was provided via email and WhatsApp groups. For the processing and analysis of the results, the comparison and contrast between instruments, the components of the UNAN-Managua model to develop competencies, and the curricular design of the Hispanic Language and Literature career were applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are derived from the analysis of the answers obtained from the interview guide applied to students and teachers of the Hispanic Language and Literature career. It was structured with open questions to promote reflection among students and teachers on training as secondary school teachers.

The information provided by the students showed that they achieved an important development in conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal knowledge from the student symposium. In addition, they developed awareness of the contribution of each component to the realization of the integrative strategy from the dimensions of competence: conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal.

Table 1 presents the classification of the student’s responses to the first question. These are in three columns: conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal. According to the students’ opinion, the teachers considered a comprehensive education. In addition, they stated that all of them contributed to the formation of theoretical knowledge, procedures, and attitudes, which had an impact on strengthening their self-esteem and capacities for the execution of the integration strategy.

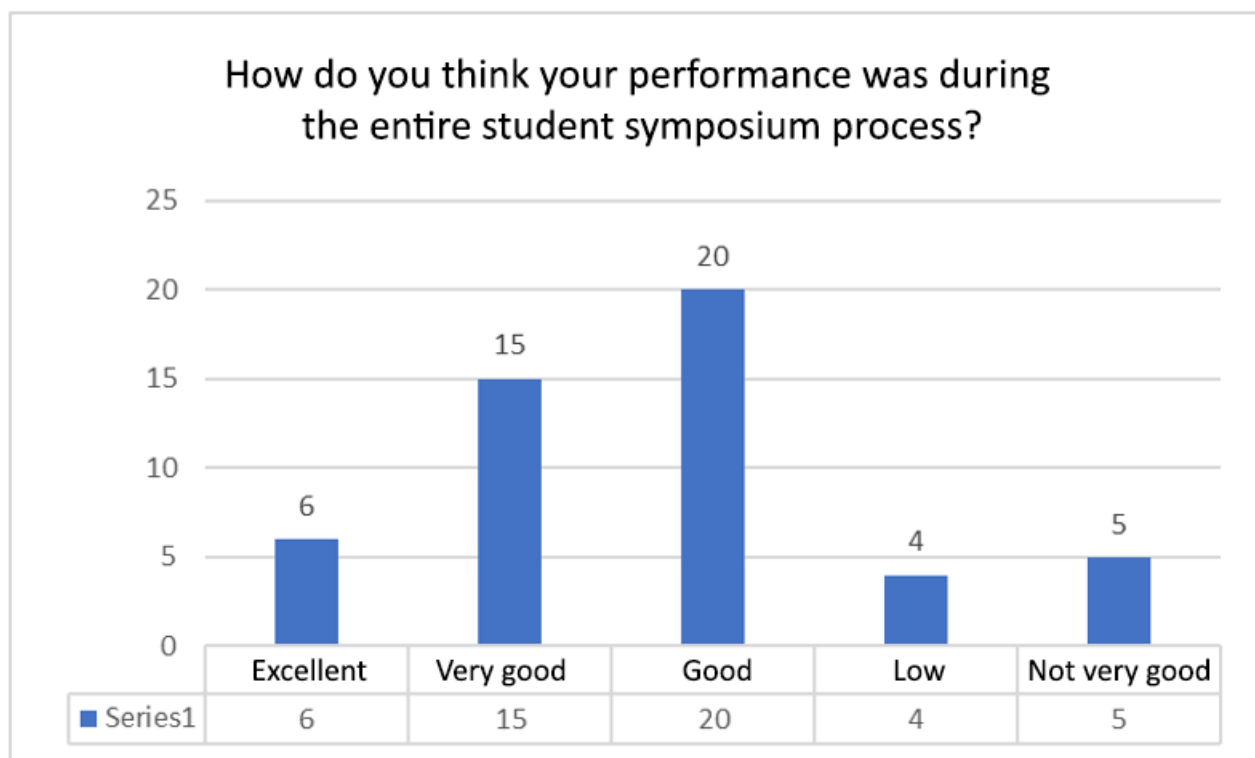
The first aspect that was considered in the interview guide was the students’ vision of the preparation for the student symposium. Table 1 shows the student’s opinions about the teaching work. They expressed that the process was difficult, but they achieved satisfactory results. In addition, they mention that they had accompaniment in each phase of the symposium, this was important to improve their performance.

Table 1

First question: How did the teachers prepare you to participate in the student symposium?		
Conceptual	Procedural	Attitudinal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning of the activities to be carried out • With theoretical information • Discourse construction • With Guidance • They provided knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To express and explain ourselves • Organize activities • Research on the topic • Strategically • Conduct the symposium dynamically • We carry out internships • To apply techniques • Doing simulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With patience • Comprehensively: Values, Skills and Attitudes • They gave me confidence

Figure 1 shows the students' assessment of their performance. There are 15 students on the Very Good scale and 20 students on the Good scale. Based on the above, it is demonstrated that there is a process of internalization of the evaluation of learning in coherence with the UNAN-Managua model to develop competence. In the Regulations on Evaluation, Academic Promotion and Equivalences, it is stated that evaluation is qualitative and participatory, that is, the level of development of students is monitored in each phase of the integrative strategy through self-evaluation, co-evaluation, and hetero-evaluation (UNAN, Managua, 2021). In the Hispanic Language and Literature degree, a critical attitude is fostered in future professionals from the first year of the degree:

Figure 1.



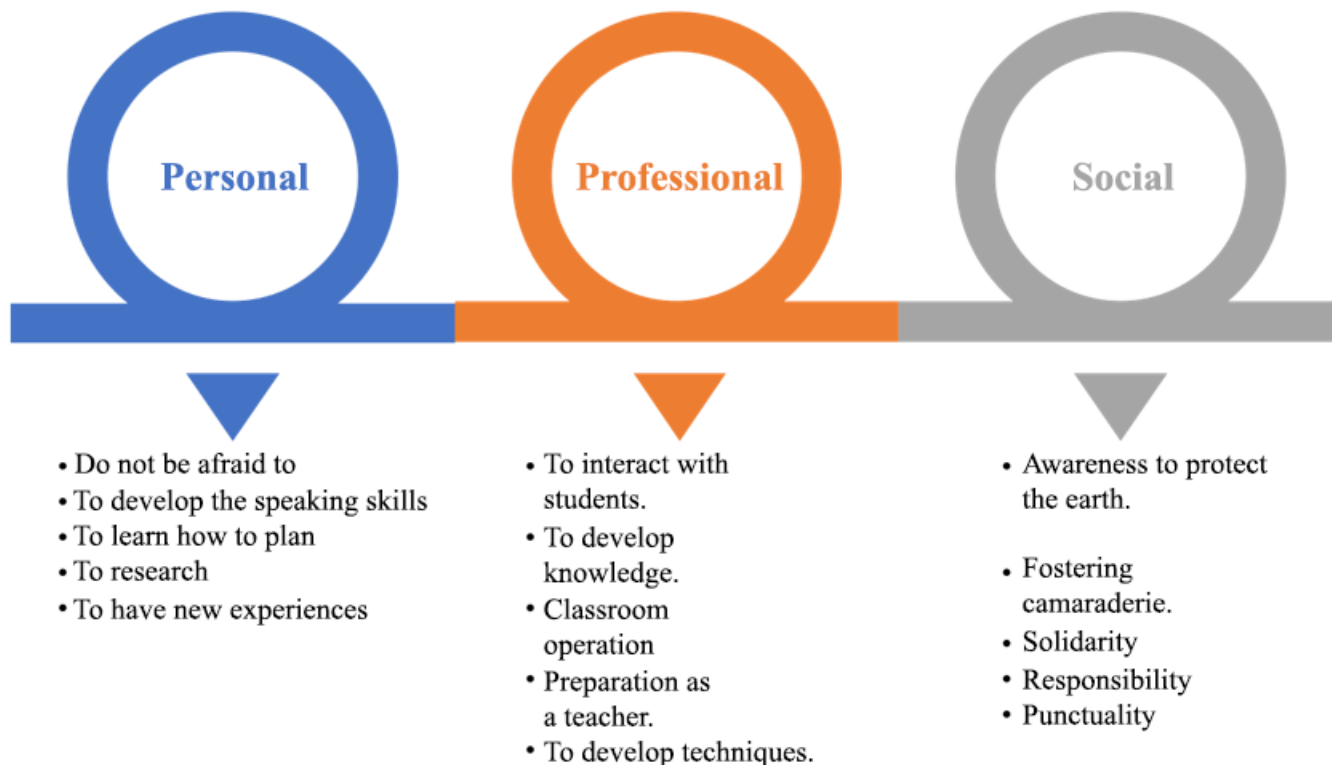
One of the main actions of the integrative strategy is the internalization of procedures, to achieve this, the knowledge acquired in the other components is integrated, as well as the values to be developed in the semester. The latter are derived from principles and values declared by the university. In the first semester, responsibility, tolerance, punctuality, and respect for the environment are encouraged.

The third question: How did the development of the student symposium contribute to your teacher training? Its purpose was to identify the relevance of the student symposium as a strategy. The students stated that it allowed them to contextualize themselves with their professional training. The responses show that the students recognize that the process

of the integrative strategy generates a transformation on a personal, professional, and social level because it confronts them with one of the areas of action of the language and literature professional: teaching.

Figure 1.

How did the development of the student symposium contribute to your training as a teacher?



The fourth question: What is your learning experience in running the student symposium in the classrooms of secondary schools? Below are some of their responses:

- *It was a unique experience in several ways, and it helped me a lot to be able to visualize myself teaching and using techniques that are necessary to provide a good quality education.*
- *I liked that from the first year of the degree we are already interacting with the students and being able to create innovative strategies that can help them strengthen their knowledge.*
- *Through the activity, at school and being in front of the students I realized that it is the profession I want for my life, to be a teacher is to be able to teach, to give knowledge to those who ask for it or need it, it is to be able to see your students train and grow so that they are professionals, leaving with the satisfaction of being able to say that I did a good job training so many professionals, And that one day they can say “she was my teacher of language and literature” is not always satisfactory the monetary value, for your work it is not, it is much*

happier to know that you did a good job and recognize your achievements with a simple “thank you for teaching us everything you know”

The students' contributions validated the relevance of the student symposium as an integrative strategy. They confirmed that it allowed them to recognize their vocation as a teacher, as well as their motivation towards the object of study of the profession. These opinions represent a strength of the curricular design of the career since professional training is prioritized to guarantee the permanence and promotion of students.

Table 2 summarizes the students' view of the contribution of each component to the implementation of the integrative strategy. The aspects identified are: the students established how each component provided them with procedural knowledge, integrated learning, properly delimited the contents of the components, and recognized the values as practical learning content for life. The results show that the students have internalized and integrated the knowledge provided from each component for the realization of the student symposium.

Table 2.

Question: What was the contribution of each component during the process of organizing the integrative strategy "Student Symposium"?				
Office Automation I	Language Tool I	Reading Workshop	Oral communication	Integrator I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out work with aesthetics. • Preparation of slide presentations. • Use of technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordering the oral and written text • Recognize the language level for the exhibition. • Writing the speech. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for information. • Application of APA (American Psychologists Association) regulations, • Search trusted sources, • Process information. • Writing ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the expression and how to present the work to the public, • Development of oral expression techniques. • Domain of the stage, • Proficiency in non-verbal language during the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communication with my peers and interact with people of different temperaments. • Teamwork. • Use of the Guiding Bases for Action. • Strengthening of values, camaraderie, tolerance, and respect. • Organization of a symposium. • Development of responsibility.

The following section presents the analysis of the information provided by the teachers about the first question: What was their contribution to the development of the integrative strategy “student symposium”? It is shown how the teachers managed the conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal contents for the execution of the integrative strategy. In the integration process, the functionality of the object of study of each component and its contribution to the construction of essential knowledge for the participation of students in the student symposium was evidenced.

Table 3 contains the teachers’ responses on the contribution of each component. student. The teachers’ responses were consistent with the results in Table 2.

Table 3

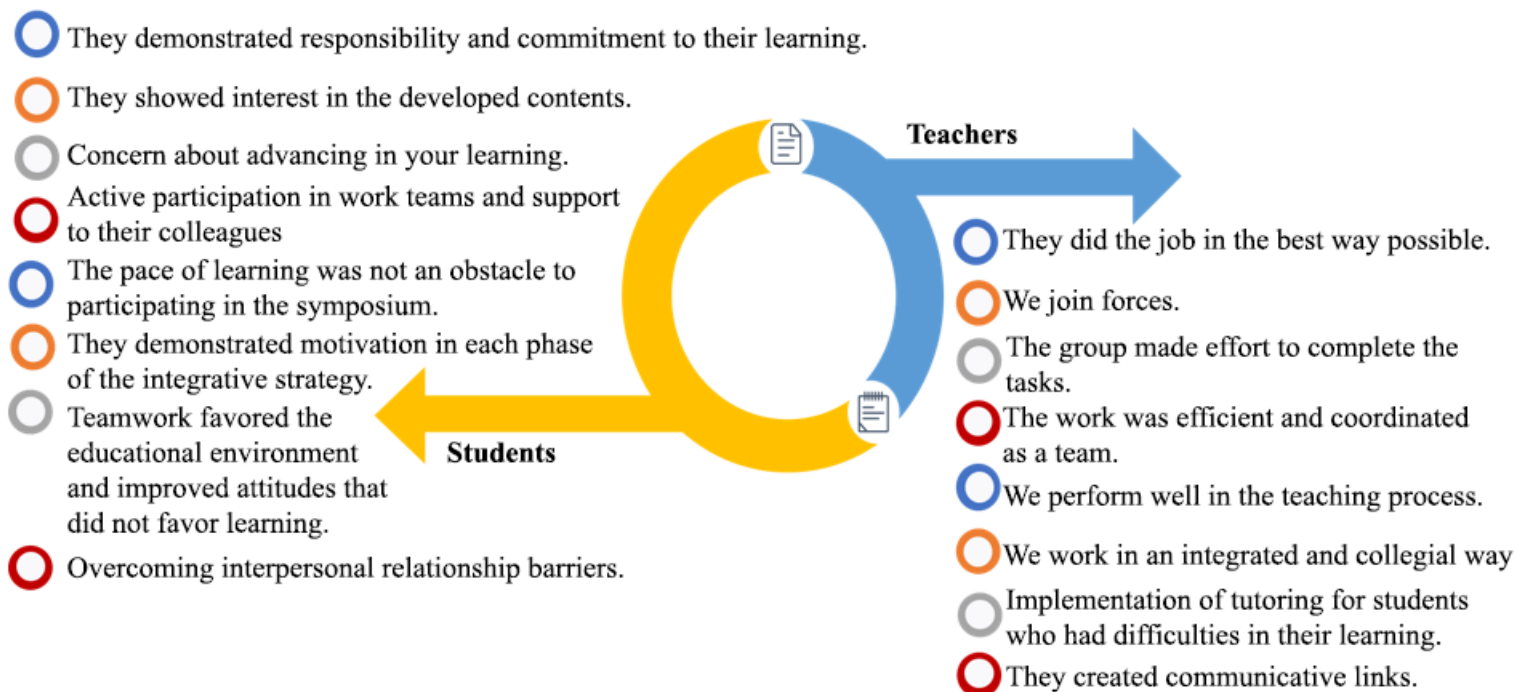
Office Automation I	Language Tool I	Reading Workshop	Oral communication	Integrator I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of browsers and web search engines, information search strategies. • Use of tools for online collaborative work (email, office 365, cloud storage). Use of digital tools for the preparation of presentations as a support tool. (PowerPoint) Tools for the elaboration of support material, triptych (Publisher). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate oral verbal language and language level. • Concordance and grammatical coherence. • Speech markers to have fluidity, meaning, and cohesion during your presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading comprehension strategies and information search. • Analysis, synthesis, and processing of information. • Graphic organizers to present the information. • Citation in oral discourse. • Referencing of the sources used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosodic elements. • Expression strategies. • Audience interaction techniques. • All of these are related to kinesics, proxemics, and paralinguistics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide the process of the integrative strategy. • Promote self-management and self-regulation through the BOA (Orientated Bases of the action) of the student symposium. • Encourage teamwork, respect, punctuality, and responsibility. Accompany the process of developing skills and learning outcomes. • Establish links with the areas of action.

Regarding question 2, how do you think the teachers and students performed in the realization of the integrative strategy “student symposium”? It was identified that the teachers highlighted the performance of the students before and during the classes and that the knowledge provided was evidenced in the planning and execution of the student symposium. In addition, they stated that the integration of the students was visible in all the processes.

They recognized their progress in working in interdisciplinary teams. The responses showed that success is shared between students and teachers. In other words, the level of progress of students is the product of the proper operationalization of the curriculum.

Figure 4.

How do you think the performance of teachers and students was in carrying out the integrative strategy "student symposium"

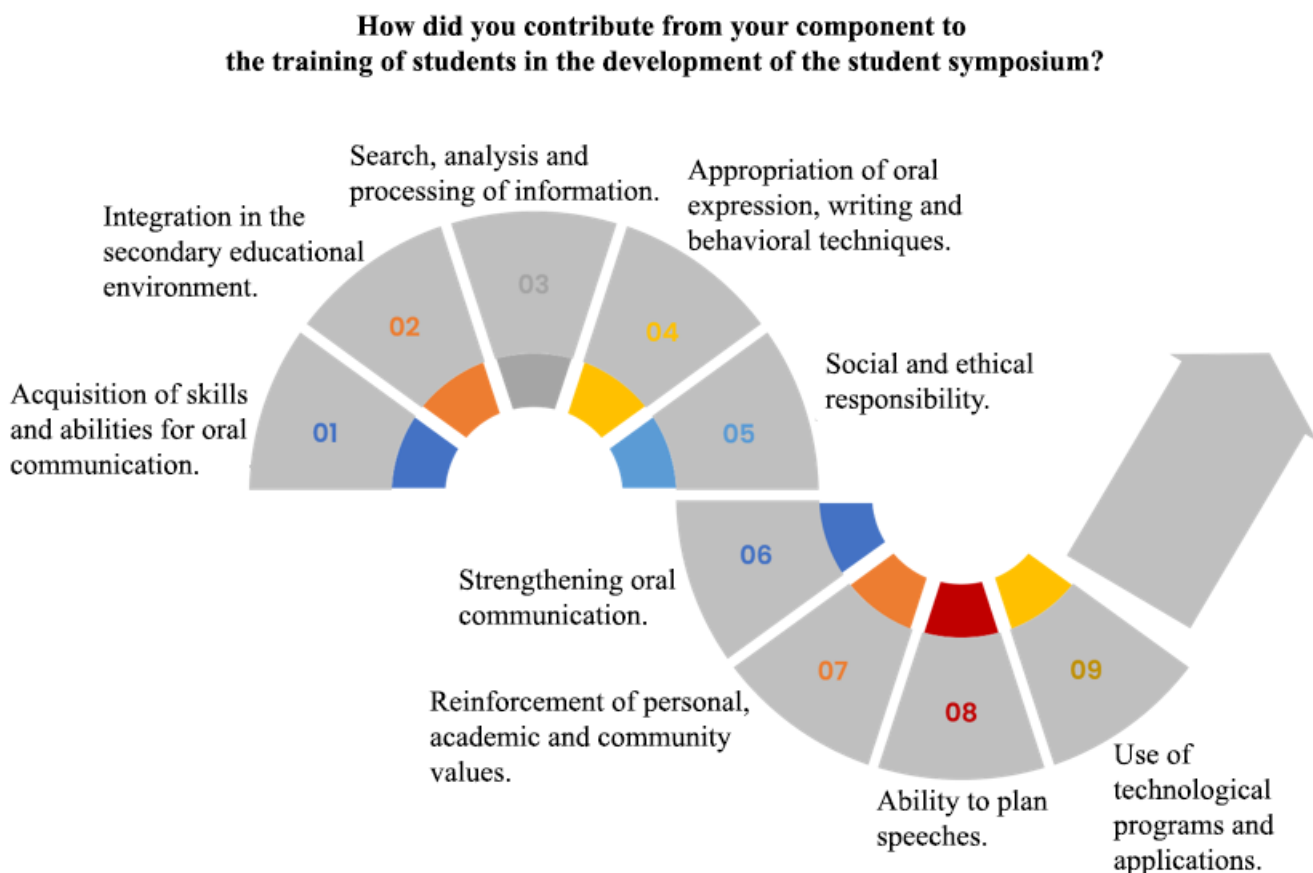


Regarding the third question, how did the development of the student symposium contribute to the formation of the students? The teachers responded that the components favored learning and allowed the acquisition of skills and abilities in the development of communication, appropriation of writing techniques and oral expression; searching, processing, analyzing, and understanding information; forms of social behavior in academic contexts, use of technological applications and programs and integration in the contexts of action. Likewise, teamwork was promoted, which enabled the growth of the students, they internalized values such as empathy, solidarity, responsibility, ethics, honesty, and self-recognition.

In the teachers' responses, the significant contributions of Office Automation I, Linguistic Tools I, Reading Workshop, Oral Communication, and Integrative I in the students' learning process were evident. This means that the components contribute to the disciplinary, professional, and comprehensive training of the students of Hispanic Language and Literature. This preparation is relevant to the generation of knowledge linked to science, technology, and the social context.

Students and teachers agree that the development of the student symposium favored the integration of disciplinary knowledge, the strengthening of teamwork, active participation, and the fulfillment of roles with efficiency and effectiveness. The promotion of values contributed to the integral formation, to the achievement of the learning objectives of the semester and contributed to the generic and specific competencies, and guidelines stipulated in the UNAN-Managua Mission "(...) training of comprehensive undergraduate and postgraduate professionals, through a competency-based curricular model (...)" (UNAN-Managua, 2020, p.4).

Figure 2.



A pedagogical aspect considered for the analysis of what is expressed by students and teachers is the learning objectives of the components developed in the first semester of the Hispanic Language and Literature career. Based on these, the effectiveness and efficiency of the competency-based model implemented by the Spanish Department was identified.

The objectives set out in the Curricular Design of the degree became the goals to be achieved by the students. In this analysis, they are the units of measurement for understanding what is expressed in the questionnaires by students and teachers. Below are the learning objectives for each component:

Office Automation I

- Use office automation packages to mediate the teaching-learning process of language and literature.
- Promote care, respect, social responsibility for the environment, risk management, and climate change to strengthen the healthy university.
- Promote teamwork, fostering respect, tolerance, responsibility, and punctuality for their professional performance.

Linguistic Tools I

- Integrate information and communication technology to strengthen learning and the implementation of their work performance.
- Apply knowledge of linguistics to improve reading comprehension and oral expression.
- Value linguistic knowledge and its importance in improving reading comprehension and oral expression.
- Assume a positive attitude towards the basics of linguistics.
- Promote teamwork, fostering respect, tolerance, responsibility, and punctuality for professional performance.

Reading Workshop

- Apply reading comprehension strategies for the analysis and interpretation of academic texts.
- Value reading as a tool for the formation of humanistic values, critical thinking, and autonomous learning.
- Respect the opinions of their peers when conducting teamwork and focus groups.

Oral communication

- Master the basic elements of oral communication, its techniques, and its strategies.
- Apply oral communication strategies in different academic fields.
- Encourage discussion of issues related to care, respect, and social responsibility for the environment for the strengthening of healthy and safe environments.

Integrator I

- Develop the planning of the exhibition of understanding of issues related to the environment, risk management, and climate change.
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- Rehearse the group presentation, assuming responsibility for the use of computer and linguistic knowledge.
- Promote teamwork by fostering respect, tolerance, responsibility, and punctuality for their professional performance.

The main actors of this model (the students) expressed positively that the execution of the integrative strategy and the contribution of each component contributed to the development of conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal knowledge. For their part, the teachers demonstrated with their answers that the learning objectives are the guide for their didactic work in the classroom.

Integration is an essential part of the model for developing competence, around which teachers and students affirmed that it was achieved within the classroom, in the team, and the development of the integrative strategy. It is important to note that integration is an important dimension in this model, and the career has been perfected with each experience.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the results of the interview guide applied to students and teachers, the following conclusions are established:

Students:

- They implemented language skills in the improvement of oral discourse.
- They used the basic office automation packages to develop materials.
- They applied reading comprehension strategies and information-seeking skills.
- They promoted care, respect, and social responsibility for the environment, which was evidenced in the approach to the topics developed in the student symposium.
- They fostered teamwork strategy, values, and principles.
- Appropriation of conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal knowledge for the execution of the student symposium.
- They played the role of facilitators in the classrooms of secondary education.

Teachers:

- They mediated the first semester of the curricular design of the Hispanic Language and Literature career based on the model to develop competencies.
- They guided the students in the planning and execution of the integrative strategy: student symposium.

- The results showed that the learning objectives of the components were achieved, and a better level of interdisciplinary integration was achieved.
- They fostered moral and ethical values that were a substantial contribution to the integral formation of the students.
- They internalized that successful results were possible due to the commitment, dedication, and joint work of students and teachers.

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