

**The Implementation of Communicative Games for enhancing the Speaking Skill in the  
Knowledge Construction Process**

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**Author's Notes:**

This pedagogical proposal is a graduation project which is a requirement for the approval for course approval: Lin-10. Seminario de Investigación II.

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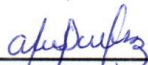
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## **Abstract**

The present action-research investigation represents the final project that is required to obtain the degree of licentiate in the English Teaching major at Universidad Latina de Costa Rica. This action-research investigation contains a proposal English educational system of the Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica, with the topic “The Implementation of Communicative Games for enhancing the Speaking Skill in the Knowledge Construction Process”. The objective of this research project is to determine how the strategy using communicative games can reinforce the speaking skill competence among high school students. Therefore, the literature review shows information gathered that is related to the main variables of the study: collaborative learning, speaking skill, and knowledge construction process.

Because this is an action-research project, an alternative methodological proposal is presented in order to establish that communicative games can help learners to achieve speaking skill with the implementation of three different strategies designed to be carried out in proposal that can be applied in any educational institution of the Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica.

Finally, the conclusions and recommendations for the participant parties (principal and English teachers of Costa Rica educational system) reflect the main findings of the study, as well as the proposed actions that need to be taken in order to help learners to achieve better speaking competence through the use of communicative games in the knowledge construction process.

Keywords: communicative games, knowledge construction process, speaking skill.

## **Acknowledgment**

We want thank to Lic. Iván Mora Hernandez for guiding us throughout the development of this project. Thanks for your instruction professor.

## **Dedictory**

We dedicate our Graduation Project to our families who have been our support and motivation during these years. And even more important, we dedicate this project to God for giving us the strength and determination to be able to successfully conclude this process.

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## **Chapter I Introduction**

### **1.1 Introductory paragraph.**

Learning is a phenomenon that takes place from the birth of the human being and continues throughout his life. Every teacher will have the possibility to help build knowledge, as well to impact students' life. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said (1948) “If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.” (as quoted in Lahey, 2019, p. 11). A good teacher not only teaches but also gives the possibilities for the students to actively participate in building their knowledge. The first chapter has great relevance because it will detail why there is a need to implement in Costa Rican classroom communicative games as an important strategy to enhance the speaking skill in the knowledge construction process. Initially, through the rationale, it will be explained in detail why it is necessary to establish a pedagogical proposal to strengthen speaking skill through communicative games and collaborative learning. Cruz et al. (2011) mention why games are a valuable resource “games facilitate teaching through experience by offering immediate feedback and engaging the learner’s attention” (p.207). This segment explains to the reader that communicative games offer a lot of advantages; it is a truly flexible tool, allow to integrate language skills and also make teamwork more attractive to students.

The second segment of this chapter is the purpose, it will explain the main points to be achieved with this proposal. As the main argument, it is totally necessary to strengthen the deficiencies that students present, since it is clear that speaking skill is one of the skills that are most difficult to achieve in students which is going to be an argument in the purpose. According to Purpura (2016, as it is cited in Ministerio de Educación Pública (2016), Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada. P.12), it is expected that learners should use correctly student's second language “L2 users must demonstrate that they have the skills needed to process information, reason from evidence, make decisions, solve problems, self-regulate, collaborate, and learn – and they need to do this in their L2” (p.190). To achieve the goals proposed in the Action Oriented Approach the teacher must implement appropriate strategies such as communicative games with the unification with collaborative learning, it will allow the student to improve the speaking skill in a more attractive way. Following the purpose, the general objective is set which seeks to propose a pedagogical action for implementing communicative games for improving student’s speaking skill. The first specific objectives established the need to describe English teaching techniques for implementing communicative games for enhancing student’s speaking



skill. The second one establishes the need to identify communicative games for improving student's speaking skill, and the last one that is indeed important is to propose English learning activities for implementing communicative games for improving student's speaking skill. Finally, chapter one contains the research questions and the hypothesis.

In summary, this pedagogical proposal seeks to demonstrate to the reader the need to incorporate communicative games as a valuable resource, which is capable of improving the teaching process since it can become a very versatile strategy for teachers and hand in hand with collaborative learning, students' language skills can be strengthened and integrated. This is why the reader is invited to continue reading the next segment of this pedagogical proposal, which has relevant information and can be applied to any educational institution of the country.

## **1.2 Rationale**

The implementation of communicative games for enhancing the speaking skill in the knowledge construction process is indeed a need in the educative system. The outcomes of this proposal seek to contribute to the field of education, specifically the teaching of English in Costa Rica by informing the importance of developing pedagogical action using communicative games to reinforce the speaking skill among high school students. Speaking is one of the four main skills. To be communicatively competent students need to develop speaking skills and only through integrating activities like games, it will be achieved. According to MEP (2016) in the English Syllabus, Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, "Schools will provide learners with opportunities for harmonious living and active participation in the solution of problems in a collaborative way" (p.16). In support of it, communicative games can lead schools to success. Some concerns arose with the lack of using effective group work to improve the speaking skill during the lessons, which leaves many gaps in the learning process that this proposal aims to cover. To start acquiring a language the child tries to imitate adults; however, if the child plays with other children, his language learning develops faster because grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation is learned in a stressed-free environment with children committing the same kind of mistakes. Harmer (2007) mentions, "Children do not focus on what is being taught, but also learn all sorts of other things at the same time, taking information from whatever is going on around them" (p. 14). Regarding this principle, communicative games can bring the same kind of atmosphere into

the class allowing the students to perform the language while they are playing. Wright (2006) mentions, “Some games give the learners considerable support in the language needed for the game, and other games offer a stimulus and context, but no specific language focus” (p.24). This means that by playing the students have the possibility of acquiring the language unconsciously since they are focused on playing and not precisely on grammar, pronunciation, or even on making mistakes, but rather on completing the task while having fun. The learning process embraces many strategies or activities to reach second language learning, and the pedagogical action involving communicative games can help students to get this task. Unfortunately, the improvement of the speaking skill is not a priority for teachers that normally stimulate in reading and writing, but not in speaking. Most teachers use games just as a past-time activity but these games lack of pedagogical content do not help to enrich the learning process.

One strong reason to propose this project is to help teachers to plan activities that allow communicative games and understand the variables that should be taken into account to implement games. It is an innovative project that can function as reference data for other future studies. The information presented in the project is a relevant addition to the field because it will clarify why implementing games during the lessons is a valuable part of learning a foreign language meaningfully. Not knowing its importance might lead the teachers not to implement this during the lesson. By becoming aware of its use, they can contribute to the field of education. When talking about communicative games, teachers have to know that collaborative learning is a technique attached and they need to have a clear concept of it and how it is related to communicative games. According to Gillies (2015) “Collaborative learning is well-recognized as a pedagogical practice that promotes socialization and learning among students.” (p. 3). It enables learning and participation through the input of the learner, collaboration, and integration of skills. Collaborative learning makes students assume new roles they are not used to. Within collaborative learning, the teachers can increase group work, strengthen interpersonal skills, and student’s self-efficacy. Group work is part of collaborative learning because students need each other to finish the tasks the teacher assigns. Learners improve interpersonal skills, the interaction, and communication they usually have with their partners. Self-efficacy will be also improved in students that will discover their capacity when making decisions to solve problems and developing leadership during group work.

Another contribution to the knowledge construction process this proposal aims to reach is to strengthen the speaking skill. Games by themselves are activities that involve and engage different kinds of students. When playing, learners use the language without thinking of grammar structure or pronunciation but of the functional words, they need to reach the task assigned. Teachers would need some didactic resources to make students learn while having fun and this aspect is discussed in Chapter Two. To manage a meaningful use of communicative games, teachers have to monitor the games and have a specific role in the class. For that reason, this project offers some ideas to assess group work. To achieve effective speaking performance, monitoring of the student's progress is needed. According to Scheerens, J., Glas, C., & Thomas. S. (2007), in the book *Educational Evaluation, Assessment, and Monitoring* stated, "the term monitoring is to be seen as a further qualification of evaluation, stressing the association with ongoing information gathering as a basis for management decisions" (p.3). It means that monitoring gives valuable information to the teacher. Two main reasons to monitor is to regulate the desired levels of quality and support improvement in education. Monitoring is a must when developing activities such as games or teamwork in order to guide the learning process. During activities regarding group work, it is mandatory to integrate language skills in the process of producing the target language orally. To become an English user, the student deals with vocabulary, grammar, listening tasks, and written production. Learners feel frustrated with the great amount of information, but they will learn new skills in a relaxing way thanks to games. To reach the integration of the skills, teachers have to apply teaching strategies that will be overcome later in this proposal as well as the relevance of meaningful learning. At the end, the knowledge of all these factors will lead teachers to well-planned communicative games.

Communicative games are pedagogical activities and they should be planned following the basic principles of the Action Oriented Approach as a methodological framework. This proposal helps teachers to review and consider basic principles, dimensions of learning, and language use stated in the Action Oriented Approach. This approach integrates group work activities to solve real tasks and motivates the interaction among learners where the teachers will know what their role in the class is. The Action Oriented Approach improves the way that teachers usually give their classes through the integration of language skills. Regarding the integration of skills, MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada*, states that teachers "can combine oral or written comprehension with oral and written production, depending

on the pedagogical purpose of the lesson” (p.35). From these skills, speaking skill is one of the most difficult skills to be reached and students are not developing language skills effectively. This fact results from stressful and boring environments where learners do not feel comfortable when speaking. Most learners feel confident when they are with their friends or partners, and that is why implementing communicative games in the learning process is a great necessity to overcome oral weakness. To enhance the speaking skill in the learning process, the English Programs divides speaking into spoken interaction and spoken production. This project has an interest in the spoken interaction because it encourages collaborative strategies, exposes students to the target language and students interact in activities where they face real-life tasks. Communicative games contribute to this goal because students are exposed to the target language and work together to achieve the task they are assigned to. Teachers need to comprehend the importance of tasks in the development of communicative games. For this reason, they will find useful the information this project offers regarding real-life situations immersed in real tasks. These situations enrich the students’ participation and engagement in the activity because they will find them useful and attached to real issues they can face outside the classroom.

Teachers can certainly trust the implementation of communicative games in their classroom and this proposal can give them a great guide to make it a successful experience. Using games, teachers can foster the speaking skill instead of emphasizing reading or writing. The new English Program looks for the development of collaborative learning to improve speaking, and communicative games are ideal to reach a higher use of spoken interaction. The teachers should have a new role and monitor the activities and the learner’s engagement. The main objective of this proposal is to foster speaking skill, so teachers will find resources and information for success when implementing games. They will have clear how to bring games to the classroom following the principles of the Action Oriented Approach integrating real-life tasks. The teacher can have in this proposal a tool to contribute to the learning process.

To sum up, it is stated that this proposal can contribute to the field of education, to the teacher and the students’ knowledge construction. The implementation of communicative games in the learning process can definitely strengthen a difficult skill as speaking is and overcome the lack of active participation. Communicative games bring not only a relaxing atmosphere but also meaningful learning and real tasks to the classroom. This proposal helps teachers to have data

about how developing activities that allow communicative games taking into account collaborative learning, the learning process, and the principles of the Action Oriented Approach to foster the speaking skill. Furthermore, students will benefit from the implementation of communicative games regarding the interaction among partners and how they can improve interpersonal skills through group work. Group work incentives the spoken interaction that exposes learners to the target language while solving real tasks. To continue with the development of this proposal, the purpose of this project will be explained to make clear its objectives.

### **1.3 Purpose**

The purpose of this action research is to develop a proposal for pedagogical action that involves communicative games in the classroom to foster speaking skill in the knowledge construction process of the students. It should be mentioned that education is a changing process that always seeks to be renewed through the study, innovation, and implementation of new strategies, it is under this principle that it is necessary to develop a pedagogical proposal that seeks to significantly improve the process of learning a second language in Costa Rican classrooms. In order to contextualize why a nation needs to acquire a new language, it is necessary to understand that the implementation of English in the educational system is fully linked to the economic and social development of the country. This shows how the student population must develop language skills for social and economic development because language proficiency would give students a better job and personal opportunities. According to data from the MEP, the Costa Rican educational model implemented teaching English in classrooms "in the 1990s that the country took the challenge of achieving a public education that taught a second language". Banks. J (2012) mentions the percentage of Costa Rican population that dominated English in 2010 "written by outside consultants and published by Consejo Nacional de Rectores of Costa Rica, concluded on the basis of CRML data that only about 10% of Costa Ricans age 10 and older are competent in English". This exemplifies that in the first years of teaching the language in public and private education in Costa Rica, the proficiency of the language reached in the population aged ten and over was not significant enough, which leads to rethinking whether the scope of the educational system of the English subject has been what was expected. According to MEP (2016), in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, it sets out the purpose of curriculums to

strengthen the learning of a second language through the goal of transforming English Classrooms across Costa Rica through Action-Oriented Approach as an important new methodology. The teacher should be aware that appropriate strategies and methods need to be implemented to strengthen students' weaknesses in order to improve the knowledge construction process. Therefore, this proposal seeks to enhance learners' speaking skill through the application of communicative games as an important resource. Wright. A (2006) stated how useful can be the implementation of communicative games in the knowledge construction process:

Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part, and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information. Games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than merely study it. (p. 2)

This means that games bring the possibility to the teacher to get the students' attention, becomes the knowledge construction process is more natural, which could be compared to when children learn through play or from the people around them. Communicative games allow the student to use language and at the same time allow the integration of other linguistic skills. Learning through play provides real situations and is also a very flexible method, it allows activities to be adapted to any situation according to the curricular program. A great advantage of the implementation of communicative games is that students experience the language by having fun, a more meaningful way they are not worried about making a mistake. Brown. H (2007) expressed, "We can make things meaningful if necessary and if we are strongly motivated to do so" (p.93). Communicative games can motivate the students, also brings the possibility to strengthen speaking skill in a more comfortable way, the game hand in hand with collaborative learning, allow the student to feel motivated when they are performing the task and encourage them to use language while having fun in a pleasant work environment.

MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, establishes that high school students are expected to achieve an approximately B1 level of English proficiency, this bands of the Common European Framework describes the proficiency levels reached by the students based on the accumulated evidence collected over time from the activities,

tasks, or projects that the student develops in the lessons (p.11). MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated that it is expected that students will be able to: "Express self reasonably accurately in familiar, predictable situations and know enough vocabulary to talk about family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and news and current events". (p.11). Unfortunately, in most cases, students are unable to develop the expected language skills, and they have problems mainly in speaking skill.

Clearly, something has failed despite great efforts to improve the way classes are taught. The difficulties encountered for students to be able to develop speaking skill are probably not deficiencies in the curriculum but can be how activities are implemented or developed within the classroom. Teachers often fall into the routine and do not have an adequate interest in the student reaching the achievements that the education system expects in their curriculum programs. Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (2002) mention the role of the teacher in the learning process

Teachers do not simply implement the curriculum. They define and refine the curriculum; they interpret and transform the curriculum in a way that makes learning more manageable for the learners. In other words, it is what teachers think and does at the classroom level that eventually determines what learners learn in the classroom. (p. 385)

This exemplifies how the teacher can plan activities to improve the knowledge construction process and have the opportunity to implement strategies to strengthen the weaknesses of the speaking skill. Talking about communicative games, it refers to all those activities in which the student practices the speaking ability and that make the student learn unconsciously, there are a large number of resources that the teacher has to implement in the lesson, but the teacher and the student must find communicative games as a fundamental tool to strengthen the classes. Thomas (2008) indicated "It is important that in the field of education that we better understand the purpose and potentials of games in education" (p.13). Evidently, not all games can be adapted to the syllabus, but if the teacher feels the need for innovation and to improve the knowledge construction process, the teacher will make an appropriate selection. It is important to mention that implementing games does not mean that activities are going to be more complex, there are really simple activities in which students can practice what is learned within the classroom, but in this time implementing teamwork for example describing an image with a classmate, telling a story in a group way according to a sequence of images, a role play, or just describe an object. Fostering

the speaking skill through communicative games is essential to make students produce the target language in a funny, relaxing, and meaningful environment. The knowledge construction process would be enriched with activities that enhance group work, develop interpersonal skills, and integrate different language skills. Students can discover abilities they never imagine using in a second language class that will help them to fulfill each task assigned.

To conclude, it is necessary to mention that the Costa Rican educational system regarding the teaching of English as a foreign language has made strong modifications in the curricular program through the implementation of the Action-Oriented Approach, which is a new methodology that seeks to offer to the student population a quality education following the needs demanded by a globalized society typical of the 21st century. Communicative games and collaborative learning offer to the teacher several appropriate and adaptable strategies to strengthen the deficiencies that students present in terms of speaking skill, since students will be able to integrate language skills in a more natural and as a main result communicative games will allow the student fosters their ability to speak while they are completing the task. That is why this proposal seeks to establish the importance of implementing communicative games in classrooms as a fundamental tool to strengthen the ability of speech in students, allowing them to actively participate and have fun in the competition of the task. The next segment of this pedagogical proposal will establish the general objective and the specific objectives that are expected to be achieved in terms of the implementation of communicative games to foster the speaking skills in the knowledge construction process.

## **1.4. Objectives**

### **1.4.1 General Objective**

To propose a pedagogical action for implementing communicative games for improving student's speaking skill.

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

To describe English teaching techniques for implementing communicative games for enhancing student's speaking skill

To identify communicative games for improving student's speaking skill



To propose English learning activities for implementing communicative games for improving student's speaking skill

### **1.5. Research Questions**

How does group work effectiveness is achieved by implementing collaborative learning?

How are the interpersonal skills improved by implementing collaborative learning?

How is self-efficacy achieved by the implementation of collaborative learning?

How do communicative games help to improve the speaking skill?

How does monitoring contribute to enhance learners' speaking skill?

How is speaking skill improved by the integration of the skills?

How does the Action Oriented Approach help to improve learners' knowledge construction?

How is knowledge construction improved by the use of didactic sequence?

How does the implementation of tasks improve knowledge construction?

### **1.6. Hypothesis**

The implementation of communicative games in the knowledge construction process helps to enhance students speaking skill.

### **1.7. Chapter's Conclusion**

During the development of this chapter, the rationale and the purpose of the proposal were stated as well as the objectives, the research questions, and the hypothesis. Each of them exposed how this project will help the teachers and students during the learning of a second language

specifically the speaking skill by means of communicative games. It also states the objectives this proposal aims to reach through the development of the purpose and the research questions that will be answered along the chapters.

The rationale established that this proposal can contribute to the field of education, to the teacher and the students' knowledge construction considering variables such as collaborative learning, speaking skill, and knowledge construction process. The implementation of communicative games in the knowledge construction process can strengthen a difficult skill as speaking skill is to solve the lack of active participation. Communicative games bring a relaxing atmosphere and meaningful learning using real tasks in the classroom. This proposal helps teachers to have data about how developing activities that allow communicative games taking into account the variables mentioned before and the principles of the Action Oriented Approach to foster the speaking skill. Furthermore, students will benefit from communicative games regarding the interaction among partners and how they can improve interpersonal skills through group work. Group work motivates spoken interaction that exposes learners to a new language while solving real tasks. The purpose of this pedagogical proposal was clearly stated in this chapter, giving an explanation about the objectives to be reached with this project. These objectives respond to demands made by the current education as a result of a globalized society. The Action Oriented Approach offers changes to the Costa Rican Educational System integrating English skills and giving strategies to reinforce abilities such as speaking a language. Communicative games are tools that can foster the speaking while students are fulfilling tasks. That is why this proposal seeks to state the significance of implementing these games in the classroom.

The research questions were given in this chapter as a guide to help teachers solve doubts that emerge about this project. This proposal will give answers to questions about how to achieve group work effectiveness, how to improve interpersonal skills, and how to achieve self-efficacy by implementing collaborative learning. This pedagogical proposal also gives answers to questions about how the speaking skill is improved by communicative games, monitoring, and skills integration. Finally, questions like how the Action Oriented Approach, the use of didactic sequence and the implementation of tasks can improve the knowledge construction of learners, will be answered in this project. This project also proposes a hypothesis; the implementation of communicative games in the knowledge construction process helps to foster students speaking

skill. This hypothesis will be proved along with the different chapters of this proposal. The second chapter of this pedagogical proposal has important arguments for this pedagogical proposal, it will describe and analyze the different variables and the importance they have to reach the objectives proposed to enhance the knowledge construction process of students.

## **Chapter II Literature Review**

## 2.1 Introductory paragraph

The second chapter of this action research is relevant since it is in this section the variables selected in this pedagogical proposal will be developed, which will be the methodological principles that lead this study. Through these variables, it seeks to define the importance of implementing communicative games for enhancing the speaking skill in the knowledge construction process of students of Third Cycle and Diversified Education of the educational system in Costa Rica. Throughout the history of education, human beings have established different learning theories which seek to justify how the learner acquires knowledge and under what factors knowledge is influenced. Schunk (2012) describes Vygotsky's theory of learning:

Vygotsky's stresses the interaction of interpersonal, and individual factors as the key to human development... Vygotsky's theory illuminate the point that learning and development cannot be dissociated from their context. The way that learners interact with their worlds—with the persons, objects, and institutions in it—transforms their thinking. The meanings of concepts change as they are linked with the world. (p.242)

This theory describes important elements that reveal that learning should be more than the traditional way students acquire knowledge, Vygotsky states that learning the language and cognitive development is closely related to the interaction of people and their context, this is something that is closely related to the Syllabus through the Action Oriented Approach. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada states that education envisions learners as active agents of change, that can “Use knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond school contexts” “Express their own points of view” (p.13). In the educational approach of the English Syllabus, as indicated in the previous quote, it means the curriculum seeks to prepare competent people with the use of language, who can express their knowledge, skills and points of view using the second language according to the context; which it can be achieved through collaborative games.

The variables “Collaborative learning, speaking skill and the knowledge construction process”, defines arguments to show to the reader that there is an important need to implement communicative games in the knowledge construction process to strengthen speaking skill in students. The first variable established in this pedagogical proposal is collaborative learning, which

is a methodological strategy of great weight for the learning process since it facilitates the opportunity for students to develop linguistic activities in a group. Sharratt, L. (2016) stated “Collaborative Learning approach in the classroom develops significant academic and social benefits for students. Collaborative Learning promotes critical thinking, develops confidence, supports oral language and communication skills, and creates an environment of active and involved learning” (para. 3, preface). Collaborative learning is an approach that allows students through group work to develop linguistic and cognitive abilities, where students can contribute knowledge, to produce according to the context in which they are, while putting the second language into practice in a more natural way, which allows the student becomes a real social agent.

The second variable of this methodological proposal is speaking skill, which is one of the most important points of this proposal that seeks to strengthen the ability of students to use the target language. Richards.C (2008), in the book *Teaching Listening and Speaking* stated:

Fluency became a goal for speaking courses and this could be developed through the use of information-gap and other tasks that required learners to attempt real communication, despite limited proficiency in English. In so doing, learners would develop communication strategies and engage in negotiation of meaning, both of which were considered essential to the development of oral skills. (p. 2)

The above text mentions that approaches to teaching English continue to be modified to strengthen how students acquire the speaking skill. Through this variable is possible to demonstrate the need to develop appropriate communication strategies, which will allow students to participate in the knowledge construction process of their speaking skill, which will be possible with the implementation of communicative games and collaborative learning being these activities of great pedagogical value for the teacher and the student.

The last variable is the knowledge construction process which has great relevance to Costa Rican education, Banks (1996) defines “The knowledge construction process relates to the extent to which teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference... within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it (as quoted in Banks, A. & Banks, M., 2019, p. 22). It is necessary to mention that learning a second language is not just talking about grammar and vocabulary, the language is impregnated with the cultural contexts of the language and the context in which it develops which is largely explicit in the English programs. MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer*

Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated “Communicative activities become actions that the learner/social agent performs in order to build up general competences and communicative language competences” “The goal is successful action and accomplishment of tasks in a particular scenario and domain aligned to the learner’s life experience and personality” The principles of the Action Oriented Approach that it is a priority that the student participates in the knowledge construction process using the language according to the context, life experiences through the different scenarios.

As a summary, it is necessary to inform the reader about the importance of these variables of this pedagogical proposal, that are fundamental elements that allow supporting the weaknesses that students present in terms of speaking skill. Collaborative learning enhances speaking skill, through group work they can naturally use the target language. Speaking skill is a necessary ability that the student needs to develop through appropriate communication strategies like communicative games and collaborative learning that are stated in this proposal. The last variable is the knowledge construction process, which is an ideal complement to the variables since it is stated in the syllabus the student must participate actively in the knowledge construction process using the target language according to the context, life experiences through the different scenarios. Certainly, there are strong arguments in these variables that lead this pedagogical proposal. Therefore, the reader is invited to continue with the next segment of this chapter in which these important elements of this research for action will be developed in-depth.

## **2.2. Collaborative Learning**

When the teacher wants to propose a new strategy to improve the work within the classroom, considering collaborative learning is an option since collaborative learning offers a great number of advantages in order to improve the knowledge construction process and more when it is trying to teach a second language. How can collaborative learning be defined? California Public Schools in the book English Language Arts/ English Language Development Framework (2015) defines collaborative learning as a social interaction between students, "Collaborative learning, which may occur face-to-face or virtually, involves two or more students working together toward a shared academic goal. Each student contributes to the other students' learning". Pritchard (2009) stated that the brain responds to social engagement:

Work with others can be a stimulus to greater enjoyment of learning and to deeper levels of thought about the topic in question. The notion of the social brain, though not couched in identical terms, can be seen to form a part of the movement towards collaborative learning and working in groups, which has developed out of the work of the social constructivists, including Vygotsky and Bruner, who both stress the importance of dialogue and the use of language as a medium for learning. Learning is deeply influenced by social interactions and relationships. (p. 92)

Collaborative learning is more than just sharing an assignment with a classmate, is about to share knowledge, ideas, to develop interpersonal skills, real group work. Smith and MacGregor (1992) define the term as follows:

“Collaborative learning” is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together. Usually, students are working in groups of two or more, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, or meanings, or creating a product. Collaborative learning activities vary widely, but most center on students’ exploration or application of the course material, not simply the teacher’s presentation or explication of it. (as is quote, Pixel, 2014, p. 491)

Collaborative learning allows students to develop different cognitive skills, such as critical thinking, to develop the ability to investigate as a group, which will make it easier for them to learn the target language. Therefore, collaborative learning is established as one of the three variables in this action research. Collaborative learning has a great impact on this proposal, for which certain indicators were selected, which are closely linked to this knowledge construction process; one of these indicators is group work effectiveness. “Well-designed group work, therefore, offers a particular kind of language-rich context that cannot be duplicated in whole-class work” (Gibbons, 2015, p.50) many students are afraid of making mistakes when they are speaking in front of the whole class, so group work can be effective as it creates a more pleasant environment that in some cases the whole class don’t bring. The second indicator is interpersonal skills when collaborative learning is implemented in the classroom, it is necessary that students to learn how to work harmoniously, assuming that all students have different social and personal contexts in their lives, which will be a skill that will help them in their daily lives and the knowledge construction process. The last indicator of this pedagogical proposal is self-efficacy. Schunk (2012) stated “self-efficacy



refers to personal beliefs about one's capabilities to learn or perform actions" (p. 146), students should understand that they are able to complete the tasks, and they are the most important part of the knowledge construction process.

In conclusion, the Collaborative learning definition allows the teacher to know about the importance of this variable in the knowledge construction process. Group work can have huge effective benefits for the knowledge construction process, it creates a pleasant work environment for students. Interpersonal skills can be an important part of the knowledge construction process because all students have different contexts in their lives, so students must know to learn how take advantage of it. Self-efficacy is an important point in this proposal because the student should know that they are the most important part of the knowledge construction process. To continue with the next section of this pedagogical proposal, these elements will be developed, and it will be explained in detail how it can contribute directly to the knowledge construction process.

### **2.2.1 Group work effectiveness**

Throughout this chapter, some of the principles that determine the effectiveness of the work have been mentioned and how this methodology allows students to actively participate in the knowledge construction process. Westergaard (2009) sets the definition of the group "a group made up of individuals with shared needs who will benefit from the opportunity to work with, and learn from others in order to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes" (p. 6). In the past, learning was limited to students sitting at their desks and working along, while the teacher magisterially guided the class, while student participation was not significant enough. At present, group work can be applied to many social contexts, but in education, it provides important benefits and is effective for the knowledge construction process, since it allows students to actively participate and develop different skills while interacting. with others. There are strong grounds to believe that how activities are developed within the classroom affects the students' knowledge construction process, but the students and the teacher must understand the objective that is expected to be achieved through teamwork. Maginn (2004) exemplifies the importance of goal setting in the knowledge construction process, "A team without a goal is like a ship without a destination. There's plenty of ocean out there for the team to figuratively float around on and yet never get anywhere—endless meetings, unsatisfying discussions, half-hearted decisions. What every team need is a solid, clear, and achievable goal" (p.1). Pupils can achieve through teamwork the goals

that are set in the construction of knowledge, both the teacher and the student must have clear goals and purposes that are expected to archive in order to improve the use of the target language.

Many students have certain needs related to the knowledge construction process, because not all learn in the same way, with the same speed, and at the same time. Therefore, every teacher must fully understand that under their hands is the possibility of providing students with a quality education according to their educational needs. Collaborative work offers the teacher the possibility of implementing pedagogical activities that are significant in the learning process, such as real-life situations, games, innovations, simply investigating a topic through group work. Kutnick & Blatchford (2014) explain some of the reasons why it is necessary for group work within the classroom.

First, students with similar levels of achievement can sit together, allowing a teacher to assign learning tasks tailored to the level of achievement. Second, if students sit in these small groups and perform similar tasks, the teacher may be free to focus on specific children who need specific help and support.

As indicated in the previous quote, group work provides a great contribution to the knowledge construction process of students, so at the same time, it gives the teacher the possibility of forming different types of groups according to the characteristics and needs of students, and also have the opportunity to provide more individualized support according to the learning needs of students. When students work in a group, each of the members plays an important role in the construction of knowledge. Cook (2009) in the book *Building a High Performance Team* stated, “In high-performance teams, members have a high degree of trust and respect for each other. There is the recognition that everyone has diverse skills and backgrounds and that all contributions are valid”.

An important quality of group work is that it allows real work time to be accomplished. Many times, in the classrooms, students lose time when they are supposed to be working, and often the teacher cannot control that effective working time. On the contrary, well-structured group work allows students to take advantage of the time, of course, the teacher must have adequate management of the group, and to control the students are working on the task, or that the activities are carried out according to agreed and in the established time, which it can be call monitoring, but this will be explained explicitly later. Collaborative learning allows the teacher to have a lower

profile since the student takes a more leading role in the construction of knowledge, which is a basic principle of Action-Oriented Approach, MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada stated that teacher should, “Helps the learner become autonomous and be successful in the completion of the task” (p.27). While students complete the task, the teacher has the opportunity to support students who are falling behind schedule or need more support to complete the activity. Kutnick & Blatchford (2014) indicate “students who work in small groups will be more focused on their learning activity, will have the opportunity to help each other with similar tasks, and will be less dependent on the teacher for support and direction of their learning”, group work allows students to support each other and complete activities while sharing their knowledge which makes the effective learning time more meaningful.

Finally, the effectiveness of group work is significant for the knowledge construction process, when students work as a team it is easier to put the language into practice and develop different skills. Teamwork allows students to achieve learning goals, also allows the teacher to have better management of the group and provide students with better attention according to their needs, which makes the effective working time valuable.

### **2.2.2. Interpersonal Skills**

Our students can benefit from being part of collaborative learning activities because they are community members. However, they are also individuals that mean having different backgrounds and interpersonal skills. Noonan (2017) says that “Interpersonal competences help us interact with others successfully and include assertiveness and conflict management” (p.2) This situation lets the students bring more ideas to collaborative group work. Collaborative learning promotes and improves interpersonal skills because by enhancing personal skills, students can contribute to group work. Collaborative learning leads to participatory contexts where learners put into practice skills such as communication, teamwork, responsibility, motivation, and even patience that help to engage each other in the group. There are many interpersonal skills improved thanks to collaborative learning. Being good listeners, effective in communication, and in active teamwork are among the most important interpersonal skills developed by students. When students work together to solve an activity in class, they have to listen to their partners’ opinions and try to use the target language to be understood by the others. According to Reddy (2012) “Friendship and positive child-adult relationships are developed through positive conversational exchanges

that reflect the ability to cooperate in play, resolve conflicts, and explore feelings and shared experiences.” (p.58) These skills mentioned by Reddy are fostered by group work and communicative games. At the beginning, learners will find difficult to complete the task, but if teachers bring to class well-planned activities like communicative games, students get accustomed to this interaction enriching their interpersonal skills. Improving the skills mentioned, students can be able to solve any task with enough motivation to participate. To come to an end, teachers will find useful collaborative activities like communicative games to improve interpersonal skills because learners are social agents and participating would make them feel integrated. Their ability to communicate, to work in a group being good listeners will be increased to reach goals. To continue talking about the importance of collaborative learning in the knowledge construction process, it is necessary to explain the importance of rapport in the development of interpersonal skills.

Regarding the improvement of interpersonal skills through collaborative learning, it is absolutely necessary to talk about rapport. Rapport can be defined as the relationship between teachers and students. Sometimes it is resembled in positive and joyful atmosphere in the classroom but it is not always true. Harmer. J (2007) explains about rapport the following argument:

In part, successful rapport derives from the student’s perception of the teacher as a good leader and a successful professional. If, when teachers come to the class, students can see that they are well-organized and well-prepared (that is, they have thought about what they are going to do in the lesson), they are likely to have confidence in their teacher. Such confidence is an essential component in the successful relationship between students and their teachers. (p.113)

It means that teachers should be prepared and work on well-designed activities if they want to have a positive relationship with their students. The students can identify if the teacher is not a competent professional and they will lose interest in any task proposed by the teacher. Besides, rapport is the relationship among students as well. Collaborative learning activities and communicative games would not be successful if the atmosphere among students is hostile and they do not have empathy. The teacher needs the capacity to plan activities in which students can feel comfortable to participate. If the activities are funny and have a clear goal, the students will

trust the teacher and will feel confident when participating. This means that rapport is an essential element to be taken into account when planning games. Students should not be grouped with partners they do not feel comfortable with. The teacher would be responsible for a concise organization of the groups. He has to take into account the learning styles, the level of English and the empathy learners feel. To sum up, to improve interpersonal skills through collaborative learning, rapport has to be considered when designing activities like games. The teacher must demonstrate his professionalism to increase confidence among learners and incentivize a positive group work atmosphere. It is time to remark on another element to foster interpersonal skills; the students' interaction, that will be developed in the following paragraph.

To improve interpersonal skills by using collaborative learning, teachers must consider the students' interaction. When students work together for a long period of time, they have to learn how to work with others. Groups usually have different levels of proficiency; they can be mixed groups with men and women having different interests. That is why, Larsen, D and Anderson, M (2011) state that collaborative learning "allows students to learn from each other and also gives them practice in how to get along with people different from themselves" (p.238) This explains how collaborative activities incentive interaction and the exchange of knowledge. The interaction creates different scenarios in the development of group work. Communicating with each other, students construct their knowledge. When the activity is focused on reading and writing, students have less opportunity to interact, but when they participate in group work, the interaction is significantly high. According to Harmer (2007) "Most of the language we hear is given to us in typical social and emotional interactions so that as we hear language, we also hear the ways in which that language is used." (p.47) It means pupils need interaction with others to learn the target language. Collaborative learning improves interaction among students depending on the task assigned. Depending on the task learners can give multiple answers to contribute to the group. This contribution makes learners use the language and forget about being criticized. Sometimes people working in a group cannot stand each other and that would raise some interpersonal issues. It is important to focus on collaborative learning as a tool to improve interpersonal skills, but when rapport is not going correctly, it is better to restate the kind of groups established for the group work. On the other hand, if the relationship between the teacher and students is kind, the student's interaction will motivate the fulfillment of any task.

As teachers can observe, collaborative learning activities, specifically communicative games improve interpersonal skills. As social agents, learners want to be integrated into activities in which they communicate, listen to others, and give their opinion. That is why these interpersonal skills improve. Also, as part of interpersonal skills, rapport should be considered when planning group work. If the teacher plans concrete activities and brings a positive atmosphere to the class, students will feel confident, motivated, and able to participate in the teacher's proposal. Furthermore, teachers have to think of how students' interaction can affect the goal of each task. He must plan how to set groups, how learners interact depending on the task, levels of proficiency, and rapport. Following the same further, teachers will learn how important self-efficacy is in the knowledge construction process and how it is achieved by collaborative learning.

### **2.2.3. Self-efficacy**

Through collaborative learning specifically with communicative games, the learners can achieve self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to how confident students feel in their ability to read, write, speak, and understanding languages. People with high efficacy levels see new tasks as a challenge instead of an impossible task to finish. That is why, having a high self-efficacy gives students motivation essential to the knowledge construction process. Urdu and Pajares (2006) mention that, "Considerable progress has been achieved in documenting the positive role of self-efficacy beliefs in students' academic interest, motivation, management of academic stressors, and growth of cognitive competences." (p.10) This means that experts have given self-efficacy a positive role in the knowledge construction process that every teacher has to consider. Some interpersonal skills are part of self-efficacy and have to be developed to achieve it. Among these interpersonal skills, teachers will find leadership, decision making, and problem-solving. Leadership is a skill that does not fit every learner's profile but in which he has to work. During collaborative learning activities, leadership is of great importance because students can build their own knowledge by making their groups reach the tasks given. According to English, F. (2006) the traditional meaning of leadership is seen "as management of influence or management of meaning models. Management of influence refers to leadership that directly influences follower behavior to accomplish organizational goals." (p.563) It means that a leader's function enriches group work in collaborative learning, enhancing self-efficacy. Leadership is necessary to avoid chaos and give the group a dynamic behavior in which any member of the group is adaptive and able to solve problems. However, it can be difficult because during collaborative activities

different opinions are given. Leaders are those able to organize these opinions and achieve goals by means of interaction and creative ideas. As it was explained, it is essential to achieve self-efficacy to make students feel confident and motivated during collaborative activities. Skills like leadership give learners a high level of confidence. When students are leaders, they build their own knowledge by helping others to reach a goal. The group organized by leaders will be dynamic and focused on the task given. During the next paragraph, the readers will find the importance of decision-making to foster self- efficacy through collaborative learning.

Students can achieve self-efficacy being good leaders as much as possible and leadership leads to decision-making during collaborative learning activities. If a group of students has a good leader, he will involve the others in the decision-making process. The teacher will give learners information and resources for them to make decisions about how to solve the task assigned. Some students will take a leader's role, but the whole group has to take part in decision-making. English (2006) remarks that "Collaborative leaders seek input from those affected by the decision while working actively with individuals and groups in making the decisions. They keep an open mind and are willing to adjust predetermined positions." (p.572) It suggests that even when some students are leaders, they have to make every participant give their ideas. During the decision-making process, students share opinions and reach a solution for their tasks together. Its incentives engagement and a dynamic atmosphere to achieve goals. When implementing collaborative group activities, decision-making enables the opportunity to enhance the knowledge construction process and achieve self-efficacy. The decision-making process can be effective depending on the task given, the information and input students have and the capacity to solve problems. The task has to be attractive and based on learners' level of English to motivate learning. The teacher needs to plan adequate tasks by giving correct and enough information to be followed by students. In this way, students will have the capacity to fulfill the task. In summary, collaborative learning involves decision-making that improves self-efficacy. Learners have to collaborate and take decisions to solve a task and the teacher will give the information and resources needed to achieve it. Even the leaders who organize group work have to take into account the partner's ideas. The engagement and motivation will be part of the decision-making process but they will appear depending on the task, the information, and the input of each learner. To continue explaining how to achieve self-efficacy it is necessary to understand the role of problem-solving in collaborative activities.

Students achieve self-efficacy through collaborative learning because when participating in group work activities like games, they have to be effective in problem-solving. If students solve tasks in groups, they will feel integrated and confident with their abilities to learn. Problem-solving is part of a collaborative learning process that focuses on learner's engagement and the generation of answers. Students have to discuss what the problem is all about, which ideas they generate to solve it, and enjoy while playing in the case of communicative games. Creamin (2009) acknowledges, "Creative teachers, when invited to respond to children's problems during collaborative work, frequently employ reverse questioning, passing back the responsibility, for solving difficulties to the learners, enquiring for example 'How could you deal with this problem do you think? What ideas have you got?'" (p.17) It shows how problem-solving encourages students to share their knowledge and abilities guided by the teacher who does not give the answers. When giving learners space to solve the tasks, teachers manifest their capacity to respect learners and their decisions. Learners also learn to be responsible, creative, and effective to work with partners. These skills inserted in group work increases the level of self-efficacy and motivates students to continue their knowledge construction process.

To conclude, teachers need to have clear that leadership, decision-making, and problem-solving are part of collaborative learning. By developing these skills, students' self-efficacy is achieved. Leadership is a concept to be managed during group work or games to improve students' confidence. Each group needs a leader to organize the task, but in the end, each member of the group benefits from the dynamic organization. Decision-making has also a great role to achieve self-efficacy. If teachers give the correct information and resources, learners will find solutions to giving their ideas. Problem-solving goes hand- to- hand with decision-making because learners feel integrated and respected by teachers and co-workers in the desire of solving a task. Being responsible for their own knowledge construction will increase confidence and motivation. To continue with the importance of variables in the knowledge construction process, the reader will find information about speaking skill; the second variable of this proposal.

### **2.3 Speaking skill**

It is common that when a pupil wants to learn a language, the first thing that is thought about is acquiring the ability to speak the language fluently, so it can be said that the acquisition of the speaking skill is one of the most desired to achieve. Christine, C. & Burns, A. (2012) stated,



“Mastering English speaking skills is a priority for second language learners. Pupils often evaluate their language learning success, as well as the effectiveness of their English course, based on how well they feel they have improved their speaking skill”. The variable speaking skill is one of the pillars of this pedagogical proposal. The speaking skill is a compound word, Oxford University Press. (2020) defines, “Speak: (language) speak something, to be able to use a particular language”, “Skill: he ability to do something well, a particular ability or type of ability”, So it can be stated that speaking skill is the ability to speak using language correctly, therefore, pupils must develop communicative competence, which is mentioned by Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (2002):

Given that communicative competence is the goal of a language classroom, instruction needs to point toward all of its components: organizational. Communicative goals are best achieved by giving due attention to language use and not just usage, to fluency and not just accuracy, to authentic language and contexts, and to students' eventual need to apply classroom learning to heretofore unrehearsed contexts in the real world (p. 13).

MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, “The development of communicative competence in English is an aspiration and a request of the Costa Rican society upon the educational system” (p. 4). In the process of learning a second language, pupils must develop proficiency in speaking skills in order to make the knowledge construction process meaningful for pupils through an appropriate methodology and according to the needs of learners. In literature, many approaches seek to instruct how to learn a second language, but this pedagogical proposal focuses on exposing pupils to the language in different real-life situations, which is one of the main principles of the Action Oriented Approach. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, “The students are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real life contexts meaningfully” (p.25). Speaking skills are essential in the knowledge construction process and the acquisition of the target language for learners of Academic English.

From the variable speaking skill of this pedagogical proposal, the following indicators were selected: communicative games, monitoring, and integration skill. Through which it is expected to strengthen the speaking skill in the social agents of the Tercer Ciclo de Educación Diversificada of the Costa Rican educational system, these indicators will be detailed below, and the importance they have in the knowledge construction process of the pupils.

The use of communicative games in the knowledge construction process can be meaningful for pupils, starting from the point that they offer the opportunity to learn more naturally. Pinker (1994) mentions language learning as an instinct, “Language is a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic” (as is quoted in Brown, D., 2007, p. 6). Communicative games provide the possibility of establishing a freer way of learning in which learners are not focused on rigid instructions such as grammatical structures or on learning vocabulary for an exam, on the contrary, it makes learning more memorable. Wright, A. et al. (2006) defines “game’ to mean an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging, and an activity in which the learners play and usually interact with others” (p.I). As the previous quote shows, communicative games are a great learning tool that allows the social agents to actively participate in the knowledge construction process since while having fun, they put into practice the target language in a spontaneous way.

The following information is based on the second indicator Monitoring, which is a classroom management technique, which makes it a valuable element in the learners' knowledge construction process because it allows the work within the classroom to be effective. MEP (2016) define monitoring as a strategy for checking the progress in learning situations or carrying a learning task (p. 353). This learning strategy allows the teacher to control how activities are carried out within the classroom. Clarke (2005) mentions, “you will need to monitor and assess pupils’ progress and attainment to ensure that the lesson is being effective and is likely to deliver the pupil learning intended”. Besides, Kyriacou.C. (2007) mentions, “at the same time, this will also give you feedback on what aspects of the lesson, as originally planned, need ongoing modification and adaptation to maintain effectiveness” (p.28). Monitoring brings with it a series of advantages such as showing the progress of the pupils, planning strategies to improve the knowledge construction process of learners and allowing to establish learning goals according to the needs of the social agent, which will be developed in-depth later.

The following information is based on the third last indicator that is skill integration. As mentioned above, many people believe that speaking ability is the central skill about mastering a second language, but it is necessary to indicate that the integration of speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills is necessary for the knowledge construction process, which emphasizes

strengthening how pupils learn the language and become proficient language agent. Bailev and Sasage, (1994). mention that speaking skill requires the integration of the skills, "activity requiring the integration of many subsystems. . . all these factors combine to make speaking a second or foreign language a formidable task for language learners. . . . vet for many people, speaking is seen as the central skill" (quote in the book Celce-Murcia, 2002, p. 103). Also, MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, "teachers can select three or four goals per week from the units. They can combine oral or written comprehension with oral and written production, depending on the pedagogical purpose of the lesson" (p.35). Besides, MEP (2016) stated "Speaking English fluently is one of the abilities a 21st Century learner must develop to have access to better life opportunities" (p. 4). Focusing on a single skill can become detrimental because to master a second language it is necessary to integrate linguistic skills so that pupils learn to communicate successfully orally or in writing, and also be able to understand what they hear or can read; in this way, they can be competent with the use of language and therefore have better opportunities in their life.

The previous paragraphs deal mainly with the variable speaking skill, which is one of the elements that lead this pedagogical proposal because learners must develop the speaking skill which is essential in the learners' knowledge construction process; as well as the hand of its indicators, it seeks to demonstrate how communicative games are a great learning tool that allows pupils to actively participate in their knowledge construction process, using monitoring offers a series of advantages, it allows to demonstrate the learners progress, plan strategies to improve the knowledge construction process, as well as it is necessary to integrate language skills so that learners are competent with the use of language; as a synthesis, the variable speaking skill and its indicators are relevant in the knowledge construction process, and are also essential in this pedagogical proposal. In the following segment of information, the indicators: communicative games, monitoring, and skill integration are developed order to give a broad perspective of the relevance that has in the knowledge construction process to improve learners' speaking skills.

### **2.3.1 Communicative games**

Certainly, the teacher and the learners play a very important role in education, it is on their hands that the knowledge construction process becomes more significant, which is achieved through a correct stimulus and a pleasant work environment. Cremin, T, (2009) stated, "Teaching

and learning English is, at its richest, an energizing, purposeful and imaginatively vital experience for all involved, developing youngsters' competence, confidence, and creativity as well as building positive attitudes to learning" (p.1). Communicative games are a relevant piece in this pedagogical proposal, through this learning strategy it is possible to enhance the pupils' knowledge construction process. Communicative games are an attractive and innovative way of learning, which captures the learners' attention, allowing the learner to develop several abilities and skills naturally, and mainly provides the opportunity to expose the pupil to language in real-life situations. Wright, A., et al (2006) determinates that games can be a meaningful resource:

Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part, and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information. Games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than merely study it. (p.2)

By playing, learners can easily develop speaking skills as it allows them to experience the target language. The games provide certain competitiveness, which makes learners feel motivated to participate in the activities that the teacher establishes, which is an important advantage since it allows pupils to put into practice previous knowledge or strive to learn new knowledge. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Cielo y Educación Diversificada indicates "Application of meaningful learning is fundamental for longlasting learning" (p.20). Communicative games allow the knowledge construction process to be more meaningful for social agents, because learners are not focused on strict learning models, but rather learn in a more free and entertaining way. Cremin (2009) mentions the characteristics of limited education, "At its poorest, English teaching and learning can be a dry, didactic experience, focused on the instruction of assessable skills, and paying little attention to children's affective or creative development as language learners and language users" (p.6). It is necessary for the teacher to value games as a significant tool, which is capable of motivating learners to actively participate in the knowledge construction process, only if the teacher values this tool, he will be able to get the most out of it and as a result, the effectiveness of this resource will not be the same.

Games are more effective at motivating learners than traditional methods that are complex and difficult, and achieving proficiency in these areas generally requires long periods of focused

practice. Games can be very helpful in exposing children to concepts and showing how fascinating they are (Schrier, 2014, p.24). Teachers have available a variety of communicative games that can be easily adapted to the Syllabus. Harmer, J. (2003) mentions some of the communicative games that strengthen the speaking skill:

Games which are designed to provoke communication between students frequently depend on an information gap so that one student has to talk to a partner in order to solve a puzzle, draw a picture (describe and draw), put things in the right order (describe and arrange), or find similarities and differences between pictures. Television and radio games, imported into the classroom, often provide good fluency activities. (p. 272)

A great advantage of communicative games is that the teacher does not need extra financial resources, the teacher can adapt the available teaching materials, such as flashcards, images, paper, scissors, books, or objects available at home or in the classroom. The main resource that teachers require is their creativity, it is necessary that teachers feel the need to innovate and apply new strategies that strengthen the knowledge construction process. There are different types of games that are used to strengthen the knowledge construction process of social agents, for example, those that strengthen speaking skills will be mentioned, the type of game called “Caring and sharing’ in which the learner shares personal information with other learners. Games in which the learner identifies, discriminates, guesses, speculates, in this type of game the learner is challenged to identify something difficult to identify about something which is then compared with the facts. Descriptive games in which the learner has to describe something to another learner, by speaking or writing, so the other learner can, for example, draw a picture. Another type of game is in which the learner is asked to connect, compare, match or group various items of information, perhaps pictures or texts, objectively or subjectively, then the learner has to describe or comment on the pairs or groups of information. Finally, some types of games in which the learner tries to remember something and then communicate what he or she remembers. (Wright, A, et al., 2006). The communicative games are closely linked to collaborative work since in the performance of the activities the learners must work as a team, this will improve their leadership capacity, they must put their language skills into practice, as well as they must discuss how they will execute the activities to achieve the learning goals. Blidi (2017) mentions some characteristics of collaborative learning:

Collaborative learning is a stage towards learner autonomy development within a gradual approach that helps learners build self-confidence and self-esteem, which will ultimately enable them to develop learner autonomy. In fact, teachers confirm their students' need for discussion with peers, clarity of instruction, and guidance. (p. 39)

Khine, M. (2011) mentions, "studies show that 'learning through play' provides a successful education experience. In general, game playing consists of rules, goals, engagement, challenge, feedback, fun, interactive, outcome and immediate reward". Also, MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, "English Curriculum and its ultimate goal -- the learner's development of English communicative competence and integral growth". Through communicative games, the learners will be able to strengthen speaking skills and develop communicative competence, which is one of the basic principles of Action Oriented Approach.

The previous information deals mainly with the indicator communicative games, which is a relevant element in this pedagogical proposal. The fundamental purpose of this section is to demonstrate how communicative games can significantly improve the learners' knowledge construction process, since they are an attractive and innovative method of learning, it is a strategy that gets the pupils' attention, allows the pupil to develop language skills, mainly speaking skill to the hand of collaborative learning and, mainly promotes that the learner uses the target language through real-life situations, which is one of the goals according to the Action Oriented Approach. In the next segment, the indicator is developed deeply, to demonstrate that monitoring has important elements that strengthen the knowledge construction process.

### **2.3.2 Monitoring**

Teaching is an art that can positively impact people's lives, "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge"- Albert Einstein. (as is quoted, Ramsey, D. 2006). The information that will be detailed below is based on the second indicator of the speaking skill variable. Monitoring constitutes an essential element in the knowledge construction process since it allows observation, positive reinforcement, and formative evaluation the teacher will be able to identify the way the learners' knowledge construction process advances. When the teacher fulfills this essential role, he ensures by monitoring that the learners' learning process is ongoing and under the correct direction, with the fundamental purpose of achieving

learning goals, as well as allowing them to establish new paths to achieve these goals. MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada* cited, “Monitoring is a strategy for checking the progress in the learning situations or carrying a learning task”

The role of the teacher is fundamental in the knowledge construction process. MEP (2016) mentions the role of the teacher, “The teacher is a facilitator and helps the learner to become autonomous. S/he takes several roles such as coach, resource person, advisor, organizer, and facilitator for the learner’s successful completion of the task.” (p.27) This classroom management technique brings the possibility to the teacher to identify the learner's needs, strengths, and weaknesses in terms of learning the target language. Also, Davis, B. (2009) stated, “Monitoring classwork activities is a central aspect of teaching and is bound up with your decision-making about the progress of the lesson and the feedback you give to pupils to facilitate their learning”. As mentioned in the previous quote, monitoring allows the teacher to improve their role as a facilitator of the learners' knowledge construction process, which allows establishing new strategies to improve the deficiencies or needs that the teacher could detect in the social agent, which will allow the teacher to maintain a broad vision, so that they can make decisions regarding the planning of the lesson or can determine if it is necessary to retake a topic, or if they can continue to the next level.

Monitoring is a face-to-face technique, which is not only about lowering the role of the teacher, but about the teacher taking advantage of work time by providing support to their pupils, the teacher must lower their role, but the learner must be clear that the teacher is there to help them, while the teacher circulates in the room, he must generate an environment of trust in which the learners feel the freedom to clarify their doubts and if necessary the teacher will reinforce the instructions. Kyriacou.C. (2007) stated:

The most important skill involved in maintaining pupils’ involvement is that of carefully monitoring pupils’ progress. This should be done actively, through circulating around the room and asking probing questions, and passively, by having well established routines whereby pupils are encouraged to ask for help. (p.58)

An important detail for the monitoring to be effective is to have an adequate organization of the classroom, the location of the work groups is important, the teacher must arrange the class in an adequate way which allows him to observe all the pupils at the same time. Monitoring can

be individual or group, it is important a proper selection of the members of the workgroup, it is also important to rotate the group members to promote interpersonal skills, the teacher may make modifications according to what he considers necessary to improve the knowledge construction process. A proper organization of the classroom creates a pleasant learning environment. Harmer (2007). Indicated:

The point of all these different sitting (and standing) arrangements is that we should choose the best one for the students and, especially, the task. Insofar as we can make a general statement about it, it is worth pointing out that, where possible, varying the seating arrangements will make our lessons more dynamic and enjoyable. (p.164)

In addition, the teacher will be able to play with collaborative work, modifying the size of the workgroups according to special situations that arise in the classroom such as when the pupils are not working properly, teacher will be able to make the necessary modifications. Kyriacou.C. (2007) stated, “Feedback on assessments aims not only to be diagnostic and corrective, but also to encourage further effort and maintain self-confidence, which involves follow-up comments, help or work with particular pupils as appropriate” (p, 13). Monitoring facilitates the correction of errors but also makes feedback more effective in learners, since if the feedback is done in a stimulating way the pupil will feel motivated to improve, which becomes a positive stimulus and reinforcement for learners.

Scheerens, J. et al, (2003) mention, “Educational monitoring and evaluation is definitely part of the rhetoric of systematic educational innovation. It is part and parcel of any type of rational planning scheme used in the preparation of reform and improvement programs” (p.10). Monitoring is not only about seeing that learners complete the established activities, monitoring comprises a process of evaluation and collection of information, in which it is necessary for the teacher to archive all the information obtained, so that based on this information he can take appropriate actions for the improvement of the knowledge construction process. MEP (2016) mention the purpose assessment in education:

Assessment refers to all the strategies used to collect information on a learner’s knowledge, skills, and abilities, usually at the classroom level. Assessment practices go beyond what has traditionally been performed in the English classroom, which has been focused mainly



on measuring the mastery of language contents, in detriment of language skills and communicative competence. (p.52)

The purpose of monitoring the learner is that the teacher through a formative evaluation can make the right decisions regarding the knowledge construction process. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada establishes the importance of formative assessment to improve learners' language skills, as well as allowing to set short and long-term goals:

Formative assessment is used to monitor student learning. It helps to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work and to recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately. It can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and improve students' learning. (p.51)

To sum. Monitoring is an essential class management technique in this pedagogical proposal. Monitoring generates favorable learning situations for the learners' knowledge construction process, through monitoring the teacher will provide positive reinforcement to learners, improve the learning environment, as well as through observation, information gathering, and formative assessment the teacher will be able to make the right decisions to strengthen the learners' knowledge construction process. In the next segment of information, the indicator skill integration is described, in order to give a broad perspective on how it can enhance the knowledge construction process to improve linguistic competence in social agents.

### **2.3.3 Skill integration**

In the past, the teaching of English was focused on segregated learning models where learning was divided into reading strategies, listening strategies, speaking strategies, and writing strategies, the teacher focused on traditional methods that did not provide meaningful learning. Nunan, D. (2004) mentions, "These days it is generally accepted that language is more than a set of grammatical rules, with attendant sets of vocabulary, to be memorized. It is a dynamic resource for creating meaning" (p. 6). In the following segment of information, the skill integration indicator is developed, which is relevant in this pedagogical proposal, starting from the point that to achieve an appropriate level of efficiency of the target language, it is necessary that learning must be focused on integrating the four linguistic skills through appropriate learning strategies, which will give students the tools to become a competent social agent in a globalized society.

MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mentions the purpose of the English Educational System of Costa Rica, “The development of the learner’s communicative competence as well as the knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and competences of a 21st century citizen. This requires the implementation of innovative communicative language teaching methodologies” (p. 21). The educational system of Costa Rica has integrated a new approach to achieving bilingual goals in order to be competent in a globalized society. MEP (2016) defines skill integration as, “Combination of two or more language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing when working with tasks so students will incorporate important aspects into their language learning” (p.349). To affirm that language learning can be achieved successfully by developing only some skill is wrong, language is intertwined with different linguistic abilities, so it is necessary to integrate skills through learning strategies and meaningful activities to achieve that the knowledge construction process becomes effective. For example, the teacher asks students to listen to something or a record telephone conversation and take a message or notes and ask them to prepare a spoken summary of something they have read information on the internet as a preparation for a role-play. Almost any speaking activity is bound to involve listening, of course, but sometimes when students are involved in some kind of cooperative writing they will be speaking, listening, writing, and reading almost simultaneously. (Harmer, 2007, p. 273). Also, Nunan, D (2004) stated:

The learner must distinguish between the forms he has mastered as part of his linguistic competence and the communicative functions which they perform. In other words, items mastered as part of a linguistic system must also be understood as part of a communicative system. (p.9)

This means that in the student's knowledge construction process, learning is significant through the integration of different elements that language involves, such as the speaking skill, listening skill, reading skill, and writing skill. Teachers tend to divide the four skills into two types, receptive skills for reading and listening in which meaning is extracted from the discourse that are passive skills, and productive skills for speaking and writing that are classified as active skills. When people speak or write are producing language, and no one would argue with the idea that language activation takes place when they are doing this. But reading and listening also demand language activation, students cannot access meaning unless their brains are fully engaged with the

texts creating. In other words, they have to think to understand, using any language knowledge to get meaning from what they are seeing or hearing (Harmer, 2007, p. 264). It is important to emphasize that the above information does not mean that the sequence of integration of skills in the curricular plans is not relevant, on the contrary, it is analyzed in depth in the indicator knowledge construction process. Based on the information mentioned by Harmer, it can be stated that to use the target language learners have to integrate linguistic skills (speaking skill, listening skill, reading skill, and writing skill) and to produce it requires the activation and integration of language elements, as well as that the learner uses previous knowledge.

MEP (2016), in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada* stresses the importance of a Task-based Approach, “one of the latest communicative language methodologies which emphasize what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competences in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios” (p. 25). Ellis, R., et al., (2019) define the Task-based approach:

Constitutes an approach to language teaching that prioritizes meaning but does not neglect form. It emphasizes the importance of engaging learners' natural abilities for acquiring language incidentally as they engage with language as a meaning-making tool; it thus contrasts with structural approaches that emphasize language as an object to be systematically taught and intentionally learned. (p.1)

This learning model allows integrating the different linguistic skills to make the process of building knowledge meaningful for the learners, which is widely reflected in the English Syllabus. Students are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real-life contexts meaningfully, the learner executes language performances, in oral or written form, the learner responds to language functions and are carried out in specific scenarios through communicative activities are task-based and real-life. (MEP, 2016, p. 28)

In short, skill integration is a vital piece to achieve an appropriate level of communicative competence, it is necessary that learning must integrate the four linguistic skills through appropriate learning strategies, meaningful activities would benefit the knowledge construction process by making learners competent users of the language in a demanding society. In the next segment of information, the variable knowledge construction process is developed, and its

indicators are described to give an extensive perception of how it can enhance the knowledge construction process to improve the learners' speaking skill.

#### **2.4. Knowledge Construction Process**

The knowledge construction process is developed at younger ages when the child receives information from his environment and transforms it into new knowledge. This process is part of a continuous learning. Mayer (2002, as cited in Ambrose et al., 2010) mentions “learning is a process that leads to change, which occurs as a result of experience and increases the potential for improved performance and future learning.” (p.3) It gives importance to the knowledge construction process; a process in which pupils have experiences that change what they learn continuously to have a better performance. Fiorella & Mayer (2015) add “learning is not simply a process of adding information to memory, as in a computer, instead, learning depends both on what is presented and, on the learner’s, cognitive processing during learning.” (p.5) It means that learning is developed depending on the input given to the social agent and his cognitive process. Finding the way to construct knowledge is an uncertain issue since the pupils and their backgrounds can be different. However, teachers can take advantage of different approaches and methods to build knowledge through learning experiences. This proposal seeks to use communicative games as a tool to foster the construction of knowledge and improve the pupils' learning. Barkley (2010) says that “teachers can take advantage of game characteristics (goals, rules, challenge, interaction) and types (puzzles, role-playing, strategy, board games, and so forth).” (p.138) These elements of communicative games have features useful to improve the knowledge construction process and enrich learning.

To understand how knowledge construction process can be improved, it is necessary to explain three indicators of this variable. The Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence, and tasks. The AOA is the first indicator chosen to improve knowledge construction process. To teach the Target Language, each teacher has to follow the approach stated in the Costa Rican National English Program. According to MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, the Action-Oriented Approach is “one of the latest communicative language methodologies which places emphasis on what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competences in meaningful context and real-life scenarios.” (p.25) It means this approach wants the learner to build their own

knowledge through experiences based on situations they face at anytime and anywhere. Teachers have to assign meaningful tasks for pupils to improve their skills and enhance their language performance. To guide the learning process, this approach offers principles and dimensions of learning that are going to be detailed later on.

The second indicator is Didactic Sequence. Every process has different stages and learning is not an exception. According to Orlich et al., (2007) “A sequence is an instructional process because it establishes a schedule for learning the various parts of the related contents,” (p.134) To construct knowledge, the social agent goes through different stages having an initial exposure to language, a task to be achieved and a final product. This indicator will explain the importance of input, spoken interaction, production, and feedback as some elements important to fulfil Didactic Sequence.

Finally, readers will find tasks as the third indicator proposed to improve knowledge construction process. A more specific definition of the task will be given later in the development of this indicator. Meanwhile, readers may find significant information about tasks. Edwards & Willis (2005) say “Tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are at the heart of the second language.” (p.16) It means tasks are mainly a tool to learn the Target Language because, through these activities, pupils experience interaction with the language and the interchange of information with other peers giving appropriate feedback. Teachers need to include organized tasks in their planning to improve academic success. Regarding the improvement of learners’ knowledge, Bloom (1974, as cited in Reddy, 2002) explains that “The amount of time-on-task is an important contributor to academic success because learning is heavily dependent on the amount of time on task.” (p.90) It points to tasks as relevant in the development of learning and the time learners spend on the task will be supportive in the knowledge construction process.

To sum up, this introduction gives a global vision about how important is the knowledge construction process in the pupils’ learning. In the first section, the Action-Oriented Approach is extensively detailed as through this methodology it is possible to improve the knowledge construction process, it also explains how through a proper execution of the Didactic Sequence and Task teachers can enhance the learners' knowledge construction process. To continue with this proposal, in the following paragraphs the indicators listed above are developed and described in-

depth, to offer an overview of the relevance that has the variable in the knowledge construction process.

### **2.4.1. Action-Oriented Approach**

As in any educational process, learning a target language does not happen in an instant, it depends largely on the approach that is given to the learning process. To support the educational needs of English teaching, Ministerio de Educacion Publica developed in 2016 the English Curriculum “Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada”, which seeks to improve the learners' knowledge construction process through the vision of the Action-Oriented Approach in order to have social agents that manage the target language. According to MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, “The Costa Rican educational system is committed to achieving this goal of having bilingual citizens in two or more languages by means of a comprehensive, articulated curriculum from kindergarten through high school”. Based on the previous quote, the AOA indicator is a methodology that must be applied to strengthen the process of building knowledge of the learners to successfully achieve the goals proposed in the Costa Rican educational system in terms of English teaching.

Piccardo. & North. (2019) mention “the AOA ‘views users and learners of a language primarily as “social agents”, i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action’ (Council of Europe, 2001: 9)” It is necessary to establish a vision of the study as a social agent, where the learner will develop activities in different situations and scenarios according to the context in order to make learning meaningful. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated:

The CEFR defines communication as a social act, where learners are social agents, developing a range of general and specific communicative language competences, moving from learning about the language to learning to communicate in the language in active, spontaneous, and authentic language interaction. (p. 24)

In fact, every activity that improves the knowledge construction process must be based on The National Syllabus that involves the principles of the Action-Oriented Approach. English teachers plan their activities following these principles which aims to prepare social agents to be

autonomous in their knowledge construction process, interacting and working with others in collaborative ways, and being able to solve problems of real-world contexts. To know the scope of this approach in the knowledge construction process, teachers must analyze the basic principles that guide this process. According to MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada the principles are the following:

1. The students are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real-life contexts meaningfully.
2. Language performances, in oral or written form, respond to language functions and are carried out in specific scenarios.
3. Enabling and communicative activities are task-based and real-life.
4. Learners use authentic materials as comprehensible input, as much as possible.
5. The ICT become an important tool to create meaningful learning experiences.
6. A great degree of autonomy is placed on the learner; therefore, the teacher works in the development of learners' meta-cognitive, meta-affective, and meta-social strategies.
7. Intercultural awareness plays an important role for getting meaning across and facilitating communication among cultures.
8. Vocabulary, syntax, cohesive forms, and phonology are taught with the purpose of facilitating communication. (MEP, p.25.)

The previous quote contains relevant elements that were mentioned through the Collaborative learning and Speaking skill variables, where communicative games and collaborative learning are valued as an important learning tool that allows social agents to use the target language in real-life situations, where students develop productive skills, but at the same time integrate language skills to carry out the task through specific scenarios. Also, learners develop meta-cognitive, meta-affective, and meta-social skills, such as interpersonal skills, teamwork, self-efficacy, which is widely reflected in the basic principles of the AOA. The approach also states that teachers have to give learners authentic materials to make the learning experience as real as possible. Regarding real experiences, the AOA takes advantage of ICT (Information Communication Technologies) to create real contexts in which pupils can interact with authentic information. As it was stated before, MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada establishes

the ICT is a wonderful tool to “create meaningful learning experiences” (p. 25). Realia is effective and easy to understand when pupils are exposed to videos, chats, music, cultural exchanges, and social networks. This approach wants the learner to use the information and learn the target language to communicate their ideas and be an effective user of English. Well-planned Communicative games are activities that allow the pupils’ interaction, the experience of real-life tasks, and the production of communication in order to solve a task. Teachers who integrate these games in the knowledge construction process can assure the accomplishment of the main Action-Oriented Approach principles.

To continue stating how the AOA helps to improve the knowledge construction process, the Dimensions of learning derived from the approach must be highlighted and understood by teachers. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada points to three dimensions of learning: learning to know, learning to do, and learning to be and live in the community. This program describes each of the dimensions of learning giving the elements to be learned during the knowledge construction process. First, social agents learn to know about the grammar-sentence frame that focuses on grammar components, vocabulary needed to perform tasks, and phonetic awareness that refers to the ability to hear and identify sounds. Then, pupils need to learn to do. This dimension of learning includes discourse markers and functions that pretend learners to use language for a purpose. Having a reason to learn a language can easily motivate an individual to learn a different language. There are many different purposes to learn a language. Harmer (2007) highlights some of the reasons for a learner to speak a language. He says that learners may need English “to learn legal language, or the language of tourism, banking or nursing, for example. An extremely popular strand of ESP is the teaching of business English, where students learn about how to operate in English in the business world.” (p.11) The English Syllabus seeks to give social agents purposes to make learning a new language an interesting task. Finally, pupils have to learn to be and live in a community. It includes the psychosocial, sociocultural, social language, and idioms. When designing group work activities, teachers should consider the context in which the target language is being taught and the students’ background. Teachers have to teach idioms or phrases used in English speaking countries. As teachers can observe, the dimensions of learning in the AOA foster the knowledge construction process developing different skills.



The AOA fosters the learners' use of language for different purposes and the language use focuses more on meaning rather than grammar structure. Teachers have to encourage learners to use language to communicate with partners. Most learners can understand what is being said but they cannot produce correct utterances. However, the information is delivered and understood by the other classmates who achieve the task goal. Communicative games; for example, lead pupils to use the language to accomplish a task. Willis (2003) says “Communicative activities leading from improvisation to consolidation provide a context for learning to use language. Within this context, we need to provide a focus on language to promote language learning.” (p. 59) It means the members of any group work activity will start improvising the language used, but as they interact using it, they construct their knowledge. Language use in communicative activities gives a more active role to future global citizens who need the language to be included in the current society. For social agents to use language, teachers must provide the correct input and vocabulary to be learned. Renandya and Puji (2016) say “learners need varied and meaningful practice in using language they previously learned.” (p.7) It indicates that learners can use the language during different activities but they need enough vocabulary to take part in the solution of tasks and improve their knowledge. In other words, the input received during the knowledge construction process has a big role when fulfilling tasks.

In summary, the basic principles of the AOA seek to integrate social agents in real-life scenarios, help them to experience ICT to interact with the real world through authentic tasks where communicative games can contribute with comprehensible input. To improve the knowledge construction process, the AOA aims to apply the dimensions of learning. In the Learn to know dimension, social agents learn grammar components, vocabulary, and phonetics. Learn to do focuses on the functions of the language. And the Learn to be and live in a community makes the learners understand idioms and phrases used in the English culture. The knowledge construction process in pupils is also improved by language to communicate their ideas, but teachers have to give the correct input to reach their goals. Following the same further, teachers will read in the next paragraphs how important the didactic sequence is in the knowledge construction process and how it is achieved.

#### **2.4.2. Didactic Sequence**

The knowledge construction process as any other process, gives pupils the opportunity to build learning step by step following a coordinated order. It is why Didactic Sequence is of

importance in the knowledge construction process since it is a group of learning activities with a specific order that considers the student's knowledge. Through organized activities with a starting production, students will develop skills while completing a task until they come to a final production of knowledge. Orlich et al., (2007) describe sequencing:

Sequencing is the art of developing a logical plan for instructional activities that will help your students effectively master a body of knowledge or discipline in an organized way. Presenting knowledge in a series of carefully interrelated steps not only helps students to master content but also develops their information-processing skills-that is, their ability to think. (p.134)

This description points to the importance this process has on the knowledge construction process. To make didactic sequence useful teachers have to start with input. Input has participation in didactic sequence activities because there is no learning without input. Input is the language to which learners are exposed to and the interaction with other partners will improve the quality of input. Edwards and Willis (2005) propose an Interaction Hypothesis Perspective. "According to the Interaction Hypothesis, negotiation of meaning provides learners with opportunities for both the provision of comprehensible input and the production of modified output. These are both believed to be necessary for language development." (p. 21) It refers to how important input is to learn a language and improve knowledge construction process. Nevertheless, when planning activities such as communicative games, teachers need to be careful with the quality and level of input. Learners will work on the same task and the level of input given should be accorded to the student's language level. As a result, when learners exchange the information, they will understand each other, turning the information into comprehensible input. At the end, there will be correct feedback and a high language production.

This proposal aims to enhance speaking skill through communicative games and the spoken interaction has a role during these activities. Before producing the language, pupils follow an ordered process where the exposition to the target language goes first. Then, they have an initial production, they interact with partners to reach the task goal and finally, they have a final production. This paragraph is focused mainly on spoken interaction. According to MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada, speaking is divided into spoken interaction and spoken production. In spoken interaction, the learner is "a speaker and a listener. There is a participation of one or more interlocutors. Different socio-cognitive and

collaborative strategies are constantly employed during interaction.” (p.45) It means that through spoken interaction there is active communication among learners and group work activities are ideal to have the interaction needed. Spoken interaction sequence goes from planning, organizing, rehearsing, and interacting meanwhile spoken production embraces planning, organizing, rehearsing, and producing. Among activities in which spoken interaction is immersed, pupils can perform a casual conversation about any real issue, having a role-play in any public institution, interviews, and even debates. When developing these tasks, learners use their input, the information given by the teacher, and vocabulary to communicate their ideas to reach the goal of the task. Suresh et al., (2011) mention “Teams need people who speak up and express their thoughts and ideas clearly, directly, honestly, and with respect for others and for the work of the team.” (p.102) That means that collaborative activities let pupils express their thoughts and develop language. The spoken interaction among learners generates at the end a better production of the language and meaningful feedback. Teachers must plan the kind of task they want to assign to give learners the correct data and input.

The last stage of the didactic sequence has as main objective the production of the target language. Production of language contributes to the knowledge construction process since it corroborates if the learning procedure has been correct. Edwards and Willis (2005) comment that in the “production stage, often called the ‘free stage’, the learner is expected to reproduce the target language more spontaneously and flexibly, for example in a communication task or a role-play activity.” (p.14) This observation explains the importance of production and how activities like communicative games can give learners a relaxing environment to help them with the development of a final product. If learners have had an appropriate input and a well-planned task, the production of the foreign language would be easier. However, teachers must consider that pupils are not going to have the same production. Some of them will continue committing mistakes and having a low level of English performance. Another reason to consider production an important stage for the knowledge construction process is the possibility learners have to get feedback. Cremin, et al (2009) say “The ability to give and receive criticism is an essential part of creativity, so teachers will want to encourage evaluation through supportive and honest feedback, as well as self-reflection and review.” (p.9) It means that teachers have to encourage learners to make peer review of their development. Feedback allows students to focus on their weaknesses and improve the knowledge construction process.

To conclude, Didactic Sequence improves the knowledge construction process using learning activities in a specific order. Through these activities, learners can develop knowledge and skills in interrelated steps. To have a successful Didactic Sequence, the social agent needs to have comprehensible input that is the language he is exposed to. When playing communicative games, social agents exchange information turning it into input to be used in the production of language. Spoken interaction has a role to produce the language. Learners interact listening and speaking to each other and fulfill a task. During the interaction, communication takes place when solving real-life tasks resulting in a final product; speaking the target language. The last stage of the Didactic Sequence is production and feedback. Production will be the result of organized learning activities. This production is not always appropriate but allows the feedback necessary to improve knowledge. To continue with the development of the proposal, the reader will find information about the importance of tasks to improve the knowledge construction process in the description of the third indicator.

### **2.4.3. Tasks**

Tasks give pupils a purpose to learn the Target language and the task used during group work is of great relevance to improve the knowledge construction process. Edwards & Willis (2005) mention that “There is some kind of purpose or goal set for the task, so that learners know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the task.” (p.3) It means tasks offer meaningful learning of the language that leads to the improvement of the knowledge construction process. MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada* highlights the meaning of task:

Tasks are defined as any purposeful action considered by an individual, necessary to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfill, or an objective to be achieved. Tasks are set in a context that learners would face in everyday life within scenarios and domains (p.26)

According to this concept, tasks have a specific purpose considered a goal the pupils need to reach to get an expected production. In the case of this proposal, learners will perform communicative games with tasks that are developed in a group and in a stressed-free environment. Tasks should have certain features to be effective. For instance, tasks are based on real-life

situations. This feature of tasks improves the knowledge construction process because it makes learning meaningful for students. Real-life situations are common issues that can be presented in any context: for example, a conversation at a restaurant or playing charades with friends. Learners would need to face problems they can meet every day and find or produce a solution. When solving tasks, social agents integrate skills such as listening and speaking spontaneously increasing their knowledge of the language. MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada* also explains that “The learner is not speaking or writing for the teacher or pretending to speak or write to another person, but rather speaking or writing in a real-life context for a social purpose.” (p.26) It means tasks should be designed to enroll in social issues because language is not learned to face the class activity but the real world.

During the development of this chapter, teachers have read about enhancing collaborative learning, how to develop speaking skill through communicative games, and how to improve the knowledge construction process. Unfortunately, enormous efforts made by teachers would not be enough if pupils do not have active participation in the solution of tasks. To solve a task like the one offered by communicative games, students communicate and share their ideas to fulfill it. Some learners do not want to participate making the task fulfillment difficult. The learner’s active participation is necessary to build cognitive processes. According to Vygotsky (1987, as cited in Willis, 2005) “external, social activities in which the learner participates are the main source of mental/cognitive activities.” (p.24) It means that when learners interact, they develop the cognitive process. Social agents internalize language through active participation. For this reason, teachers can observe how students with poor abilities to speak the target language start producing more complex sentences and solve tasks during group work activities. These activities enhance pupils’ responsibility and active participation. Felder and Brend (1996, as cited in Rienandya and Puji, 2016) state that “students are responsible for their learning, and using self-paced and/ or cooperative (team-based) learning.” (p. 14) Based on this idea, teachers can assure the use of games in class will fortify the participation of learners even when they do not like to get involved in the solution of the task.

Active pupils’ participation is attached to engagement. Learners need engagement in the task assigned to feel confident and motivated. Without motivation, learners do not participate in fulfilling the task. This proposal aims to develop communicative games that can foster engagement in students. Cremin et al., (2009) state that “time for deep immersion and engagement in the theme

or genre will need to be provided, as well as dedicated time for play- engaged mental and physical play- with textual patterns, puzzles, conventions, materials, and ideas.” (p.7) It explains games can achieve engagement because while playing, learners have time to feel confident and develop mental and physical activities at the same time. Children develop social and cognitive abilities when they are engaged to games. The vocabulary or input they are exposed to during gaming helps to develop their knowledge construction process. Krashen (1984, as cited in Harmer, 2007) claims that “language which we acquire subconsciously (especially when it is anxiety free) is language we can easily use in spontaneous conversation.” (p.50) According to this argument, games are tools in which an anxiety-free environment allows the language performance to spontaneously improving the speaking production.

To sum up, tasks are actions with a purpose to be achieved. Communicative games are effective to fulfill these tasks because pupils will learn by interacting with other learners and in a relaxing environment. To be meaningful, tasks are based on real-life situations that can be presented in any context. Pupils will learn how to face a situation in any place outside the class. To achieve the tasks 'goals, pupils have to participate actively and, in this way, build their own knowledge. Social agents can internalize the language by participating in group work activities and enhancing the speaking skill when producing new words. When students participate, they get engaged to the task and start feeling confident. Teachers have to take time to engage pupils physically and emotionally. Feeling engaged, they will be motivated to reach the task assigned. In the following segment of information, there is a synthesis of the main ideas established in chapter II that reflect the importance of the selected variables in the knowledge construction process.

## **2.5. Chapter's Conclusion**

In conclusion, the second chapter of this alternative methodological proposal contains important points that substantiate how through the selected variables it is possible to improve the knowledge construction process of the learners. The variables developed were collaborative learning, speaking skill, and the knowledge construction process that show the importance of implementing communicative games to improve the knowledge construction process and enhance the speaking skill.

Collaborative learning is an approach that enhances the learners' knowledge construction process, through the indicators selected; group work, interpersonal skills, and self-efficacy pupils can develop linguistic and cognitive abilities that allow the student to become a real social agent able to use the target language efficiently. Group work takes into account the learner's needs, allows pupils to put into practice the language and develop skills, allows teachers to manage the group work, and make effective working time valuable. Collaborative learning with the hand of communicative games improves interpersonal skills. As social agents, learners need to be integrated into activities in which they communicate, listen to others, and give their opinion to improve interpersonal skills. Also, rapport is essential in the knowledge construction process to enrich interpersonal skills within the classroom and should be considered when planning group works. The teacher must plan concrete activities that bring a positive atmosphere to the class, students will feel confident, motivated, and able to participate in the teacher's proposal. Furthermore, teachers should value how students' interaction can affect the goal of each task. Educators must plan how to set groups, how learners interact depending on the task, levels of proficiency, and rapport. Regarding self-efficacy teachers need to have clear that leadership, decision-making, and problem-solving are part of collaborative learning. By developing these skills, students' self-efficacy is achieved. Teachers must give the correct information, instructions, and resources to complete the task properly. It is necessary to implement activities in which students develop problem-solving and decision-making to achieve self-efficacy, it allows learners to feel integrated and as a result, motivate the learner to complete the task. Implementing activities that involve collaborative learning and self-efficacy makes pupils responsible and aware that they are an essential part of the knowledge construction process.

In short, Speaking skill as the second variable in this chapter. Speaking skill is an essential ability in the knowledge construction process and the acquisition of the target language. Communicative games, monitoring, and skills integration are the indicators that support how the speaking skill can be improved by the application of these methods within the classroom. Communicative games can significantly improve the learners' knowledge construction process since they are an attractive and innovative method of learning. Communicative games is a strategy that gets the pupils' attention, allows the pupil to develop language skills easily. Speaking skill to the hand of collaborative learning and communicative games promotes that the learner uses the target language through real-life situations, which is one of the goals according to the Action-

Oriented Approach. On the other hand, monitoring is an essential class management technique in this pedagogical proposal. Monitoring generates favorable learning situations in the learners' knowledge construction process, implementing this technique in the class provides positive reinforcement to learners, improve the learning environment, as well as through observation, information gathering, and formative assessment the teacher will be able to make the right decisions to strengthen the learners' knowledge construction process. Finally, skill integration is described as a vital piece to reach an appropriate level of communicative competence, it is necessary that learning must integrate the four linguistic skills through appropriate learning strategies, meaningful activities that would benefit the knowledge construction process by making learners competent users of the language in a demanding society.

Finally, the knowledge construction process is the third variable exposed in this alternative methodological proposal. This variable comprises pertinent elements as indicators; Action-Oriented Approach, didactic sequence, and tasks that enhance the pupil's learning. One of the basic principles of the AOA seeks to integrate social agents in real-life scenarios to help them to experience ICT to interact with the real world through authentic tasks where communicative games can contribute with comprehensible input. To improve the knowledge construction process, the AOA aims to apply the dimensions of learning. In the Learn to know dimension, social agents learn grammar components, vocabulary, and phonetics. Learn to do focuses on the functions of the language. And the Learn to be and live in a community makes the learners understand idioms and phrases used in the English culture. The knowledge construction process in pupils is also improved by language to communicate their ideas, but teachers have to give the correct input to reach their goals. In the second indicator, teachers read about how Didactic Sequence improves the knowledge construction process using learning activities in a specific order. Through these activities, learners can develop knowledge and skills in interrelated steps. To have a successful Didactic Sequence, the social agent needs to have comprehensible input that is the language he is exposed to. Playing communicative games, social agents exchange information turning it into input to be used in the production of language. Spoken interaction has a role to produce the language. Learners interact listening and speaking to each other and fulfill a task. During the interaction, communication takes place when solving real-life tasks resulting in a final product; speaking the target language. The last stage of the Didactic Sequence is production and feedback. Production will be the result of organized learning activities. This production is not always



appropriate but allows the feedback necessary to improve knowledge. Tasks were described as actions with a purpose to be achieved. Communicative games are effective to fulfill these tasks because pupils will learn by interacting with other learners and in a relaxing environment. To be meaningful, tasks are based on real-life situations that can be presented in any context. Pupils will learn how to face a situation in any place outside the class. To achieve the tasks' goals, pupils have to participate actively and, in this way, build their own knowledge. Social agents can internalize the language by participating in group work activities and enhancing the speaking skill when producing new words. When students participate, they get engaged to the task and start feeling confident. Teachers have to take time to engage pupils physically and emotionally. Feeling engaged, they will be motivated to reach the task assigned. The third chapter of this methodological proposal will describe the research method, in this segment of information details highly the design and method and analyze the context in which this proposal can be applied.

### **Chapter III Design and Method**

### 3.1. Chapter's Introductory Paragraph

Chapter three outlines the research methodology of this alternative methodological proposal. In more details, this part highlights the research method used, the approach, data collection tools, and instruments.

This proposal has as a research method the Action Research specifically the Collaborative-Exploratory Action Research. The Action research takes actions to overcome gaps in the teaching-learning system giving possible improvements with teachers and students as participants in these actions. According to Burns (2010) “in AR, a teacher becomes an ‘investigator’ or ‘explorer’ of his or her personal teaching context, while at the same time being one of the participants in it.” (p. 13) It means that to succeed in the Action Research, the teacher must be an explorer and participant at the same time. Regarding Collaborative Action Research, Norton (2009 as cited in Staniforth and Harland, 2003) says “Intervention using Collaborative Research provides a genuine opportunity for newly appointed academics to validate and contest their tacit knowledge, challenge ideas and values and gain support for their immediate need.” (p.43) Collaborative Action Research helps to give solutions to educational weaknesses using the ideas and collaboration of the teachers and social agents. In the case of this proposal, the implementation of communicative games pretends to enhance the speaking skill, a skill difficult to perform by pupils during group work.

This proposal also adopts the Mixed Method as a type of approach. This chapter explains the reasons to use a mixed method, how is it embraced, and some definitions of it. The mixed method is described by Creswell (2014) as “an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks.” (p.32) It means that the mixed approach takes elements of both methods. Creswell (2014) also mentions that in a mixed method, the format is also designed both qualitative and quantitative format. The format used has the rationale, the purpose, research questions, and data collection tools to mention some components of the mixed method. The data collected needs more than numbers to understand the problem to be solved. The mixed method uses numbers, words, and observation to have knowledge of the problem in depth. This proposal establishes the rationale, the purpose and research questions to be answered in the literature review, and explains the possible instruments to gather the

information needed to understand how communicative games can enhance the speaking skill in the knowledge construction process.

Regarding the importance of data collection tools, Creswell (2009) offers the following argument:

Data differs in terms of open-ended versus closed-ended responses. Some forms of data, such as interviews and observations, can be either quantitative or qualitative depending on how open (qualitative) or closed (quantitative) the response options might be in an interview or checklist for an observation. (p.199)

It means that the mixed method allows wide data collection tools in which quantitative and qualitative data is obtained. Among these tools there are questionnaires, surveys, interviews and observations. The procedure of data collection and analysis needs a sampling, sources of information and data analysis taking into consideration the limitations of the process. In a mixed method, the results of qualitative tools can explain the results of quantitative results. Because of the nature of this proposal, a description of data collection tools is given and the importance of applying instrumentation to understand the need of implementing communicative games to foster the speaking skill is also offered.

During the development of this chapter, the instrumentation and its importance is described. The pretest, the diagnosis test, and the posttest are the three instruments proposed to be applied to the sampling. These instruments give reliability to the proposal. In the pretest and posttest, for example, two versions of the same test are administered to the same sampling in different periods of time. Mackey & Grass (2005) in the book "Second Language Research" claim:

There are times when it is necessary to determine the equivalence of two tests, as, for example, in a pretest and posttest. Quite clearly, it would be inappropriate to have one version of a test be easier than the other because the results of gains based on treatment would be artificially high or artificially low." (p.130)

It refers to the fact that to obtain a reliable result in the development of the proposal, the instrument applied to the participants it must be the same one at the beginning and at the end of the proposal.

To sum up, chapter three develops the Action Research mainly the Collaborative-Exploratory Action Research. This research takes actions to offer improvements in any educational problem detected and helps participants in the researcher's own professional field. The pedagogical proposal has a mixed method as the type of approach that involves both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This method not only collects data such as numbers but also subjective information of the sampling. Chapter three describes data collection tools and the instrumentation which are pretest, posttest, and diagnostic test. Following the same further, the following section develops the type of research in-depth. It explains the purpose of the Action Research, how to implement it and its relevance.

### **3.2. Research Method**

Taking into consideration the rationale and purpose, this proposal takes the Action Research to generate a solution to improve the speaking skill and contribute to the field of education. This research guides the teachers to discover if they need to incorporate communicative games to reduce this gap in the knowledge construction process. First of all, it is essential to have clear what Action Research is in order to understand the whole process. Goodnough (2011) comments that "Action Research is systematic, intentional research that is carried out by practitioners themselves and is not imposed by others." (p.5) In addition, Cornwell (1999) gives a wide definition of Action Research:

A self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry by participants who are at the same time members of the research community. The aim is to identify problematic situations or issues considered by the participants to be worthy of investigation in order to bring about critically informed changes in practice. (As cited in Burns 2010, p.5)

As it is explained, the participants in the Action Research are also part of the community in which the problem is found, giving them a meaningful goal to bring changes into their professional field where more agents are correlated. For this reason, this proposal also takes the Collaborative Exploratory Action Research which adds other elements. Goodnough (2011) claims that AR "becomes collaborative where groups of individuals pose questions that move beyond the self. In this form of reflection, there is a move towards understanding the actions of others and how the

self is constructed in relation to the social context.” (p.6) This explanation gives importance to the social context in which the participants of the proposal are immersed, how they have a role in the solution of a problematic situation detected and the information they can offer.

Regarding Exploratory Action Research, Smith & Rebolledo (2016) say “Exploratory Action Research is a way to explore, understand and improve our practice as teachers.” (p.20) It suggests that before giving possible solutions to a problem, the situations in the teaching process should be analyzed. Sometimes taking a decision too quickly and without exploring the situation further, can involve incorrect assumptions. Because of that assertion, Smith and Rebolledo (2016) explain Exploratory AR has some stages. One has to do with planning questions and how to get data. The second one refers to gathering data and the last one is about answering questions based on data. In this way, Collaborative Exploratory AR gives reliability to the alternative methodological proposal. When trying to find the correlation between AR and Collaborative AR, Kember gives a clarification:

They also both share the practice of collaborative reflection. One of the great advantages of working together as opposed to working individually, according to Revans, is that an individual can only work effectively to solve those issues, problems or dilemmas over which that individuals has some power to change. Collectively, the power is greater. (As cited in Norton 2009, p.31)

It explains that a proposal is not reliable and does not have any meaningful function if the other participants do not have any participation in the development of this one.

Educational research goes beyond knowing based on personal experience; it needs to find answers and explore issues by stablishing a systematic process of collecting and interpreting data that leads to conclusions. It is necessary to have a clear idea of the AR purposes to decide if it is the best guide for a proposal. One important goal of the AR is explained by Mills (2018). He says that AR is able to be an agent of educational change because it makes professionals to implement actions or reforms to foster any weakness through Collaborative Research. Noffke (1997) points to three main purposes:

- a) personal growth (developing new insights into one’s own professional knowledge and practice),
- b) professional understanding (teachers’ development and generation of

new knowledge in the area of teaching and learning; and c) political empowerment (becoming aware of economic, social, gender, and racial inequities) (As cited in Goodnough, 2011, p.6)

These four AR purposes are a guide to the participants to understand why this proposal takes the Collaborative Exploratory AR. This proposal seeks to improve the speaking skill by means of pedagogical actions in the classroom. Through communicative games the teacher, the social agents and the proposer together in a systematic process, observe the phenomena, collect information during the implementation of the proposal and analyze the results. However, this proposal does not embrace data collection and analysis because it is a proposal that offers ideas to diminish a gap in the knowledge construction process.

To develop an AR methodological proposal like this one, is not an unpredictable process. It has a cycle to be followed in order to be reliable. First of all, the participants have to agree with the idea of being part of the implementation. As Brydon & Miller (2014) say, the AR “best involves participants who are engaged and committed. Facilitation can also welcome and make visible different points of view or opinions and highlight diverse roles and collective responsibility to support the work and learning.” (p.335) These words support the fact that this is a Collaborative Action Research where every participant has a role to overcome the problem detected. Norton (2009) proposes a cycle for AR. He says that the first step is to observe if there is something that is not working as it should be and has to be improved. Then, it is important to plan an action to change this situation. Next, participants carry out the change and finally, they analyze the effects of the change. In addition, Kemmis et al., (2014) claims AR has a “Reconnaissance phase in which participants went out to collect initial data. More data is collected to see the effects of the action to be analyzed to see if there are the desired effects.” (p.9)

Regarding these steps, this AR methodological proposal establishes there is a gap in the speaking skill performance that has to be improved with the collaboration of teachers and social agents. Moreover, in its rationale and purpose, this proposal shows the pedagogical action to be carried out through communicative games. To support this action, the literature review sustains the relevance this action has for other authors. The phase in which the action is carried out is not executed because it is a proposal, as well as the final stage in which data is collected. However, this proposal seeks to apply instruments such as the pretest, the posttest and the diagnosis test

because as Brydon & Miller (2014) say; Data Collection is an essential part of the AR and it facilitates designs with the one's participants can self-document. This AR methodological proposal is relevant because participants in Second Language teaching can improve the knowledge construction process through the implementation of communicative games. This action can enhance the speaking skill and can be adapted to any context. Smith & Rebolledo (2016) say “we can continue to adapt and improve the change that we introduce for as long as we keep teaching.” (p.79) It means that professionals in the same field can take this proposal, improve it and collect data through the suggested instruments. These professionals must identify if this proposal can solve their lack of speaking skill performance in the class. Louis et al., (2018) comment “It is also useful for the researcher to identify what benefit the research will bring, and to whom, as this helps to focus the research and its audience.” (p.157) This proposal follows every step of a Collaborative Exploratory AR to bridge the gap in the knowledge construction process regarding the speaking skill.

In summary, this methodological proposal takes the Collaborative Exploratory AR to generate a solution to improve the lack of speaking skill performance and contribute to the educational field. It guides teachers to incorporate communicative games and reduce this problematic situation detected. It suggests exploration of the situations before giving solutions. The AR is an agent of change making professionals to implement actions to foster weaknesses. This AR has as purpose the personal growth, the professional and the political empowerment. The AR follows a cycle in which the support of the participants is essential. This AR proposal follows this cycle first establishing the lack of speaking skill performance as the problem to be healed. The pedagogical action is stated in the rationale and purpose. Then, the literature review is made to give support to the implementation of this action. It also suggests data collection instruments, but the performance of the action and the results cannot be carried out because of the nature of the proposal. This proposal also follows a specific type of approach that is explained in the next section of the chapter.

### **3. 3 Type of approach**

All research requires an adequate selection of the research method, as it was determined in the previous section, action research is a research method whose main purpose is to take actions to improve deficiencies found in a selected study. Riazi, M.A. (2016) stated, “The main purpose



of action research is thus taking action to solve a local problem or to improve practice” (p. 5). To make this effective is also necessary to make a proper selection of the type of approach either qualitative, quantitative, or mixed, which also includes the application of a scientific method for gathering information. Edmonds & Kennedy (2017) establish the importance of making adequate contextualization in the selection of the type of approach. “Lacking a proper conceptualization of a research design makes it difficult to apply an appropriate design based on the research question(s) or stated hypotheses. Implementing a flawed or inappropriate design will unequivocally lead to spurious, meaningless, or invalid results” (p.1). In the past, qualitative and quantitative research approaches were seen as two different things, although each has different characteristics, both are effective methods that provide important information to research. Creswell (2009) cited, “Qualitative and quantitative approaches should not be viewed as polar opposites or dichotomies; instead, they represent different ends on a continuum (Newman&Benz, 1998)”. In addition, Krug & Schlüter (2013) mention some differences between qualitative and quantitative approach:

A qualitative study typically focuses on one or a few piece(s) of evidence and analyses it in detail and with a view to a variety of its characteristics. It can investigate aspects that are difficult or impossible to quantify, such as associations, implications, opinions and feelings. In contrast, a quantitative study characteristically aims at numbers, counts or statistical measures, which is why it tends to involve a maximally large number of examples

The qualitative approach allows the contextualization of observable data, characteristics that cannot be measured in other approaches, it focuses on the observation of phenomena, as well as on human behavior. Lodico, et al. (2006) stated: “Qualitative research approaches collect data through observations, interviews, and document analysis and summarize the findings primarily through narrative or verbal means”. On the other hand, the quantitative approach focuses on the interpretation of the information numerically, based on mathematical calculations and data collection statistically, which allows generalizing the results more exactly. Also, Burns, A. (2010) stated, “quantitative data can have a very important place in the way we discover things and present our findings. We can gain insights about the extents, measures, or ‘weighings up’ of the main issues that are important to our research focus”

This action research proposes an alternative methodological proposal, which seeks to establish learning strategies such as communicative games and collaborative work to enhance the speaking skill. This proposal will function as a guide for the teacher to improve the learners' knowledge construction process. The collection of information plays a fundamental role to support the investigation, as well as it allows to sustain the process of knowledge construction process, Amedeo, et al (2008) indicate, "The purpose of collecting data is to provide information that contributes to knowledge acquisition. This contribution enables understanding and comprehension of complex settings that might otherwise remain mysterious" (p, 67). Therefore, for this alternative methodological proposal, a mixed method is selected; which allows the teacher or the researcher to collect the information both qualitatively and quantitatively. Creswell & Plano (2007) stated the definition of mixed-method, "mixed-method designs as those that include at least one quantitative method (designed to collect numbers) and one qualitative method (designed to collect words)" (paragraph, 5). Therefore, it is important to mention that, being an alternative proposal, which will not be applied by the researcher but will mainly seek to offer the teacher a methodological approach to correct deficiencies or needs found in the learners. The mixed method also provides the methodological support in the construction of this alternative methodological proposal, since the method comprises all stages of the investigation. A mixed methods approach can apply to all the stages and areas of research: philosophical foundations and paradigms; as well as in methodology, research questions, and design; instrumentation, sampling, validity, reliability, data collection; data analysis and interpretation of outcomes and uses of the research (Cohen, 2017, p. 33). The mixed method is relevant in the construction of this alternative methodological proposal since it was applied in the different sections of this action research qualitatively by reviewing the literature, it also establishes the importance of the teacher implementing quantitative instruments such as diagnostic test, pre-test, and post-test to collect information on time. By implementing a mixed approach, a teacher who develops this alternative methodological proposal will be able to collect information statistically by applying quantitative instruments of the mixed approach. On the other hand, the person who applies this methodological proposal will be able to collect qualitative information, through observation, of the interaction with students, as well as through the identification of observable phenomena that occur in the classrooms. Leavy (2017) mentions an important advantage of the approach when obtaining field information through observation, "The major advantage of this approach is that you could collect rich data with descriptions and

examples, and the participants' language and concerns would be at the Forefront" (p. 19). In addition, Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) stated "Mixed methods is a rich field for the combination of data because with this design "words, pictures, and narrative can be used to add meaning to numbers" (as is cited, Hesse-Biber, 2010). Besides, Cohen et al (2017) mention the purpose of the application of a mixed method "to give a richer and more reliable understanding (broader and deeper) of a phenomenon than a single approach would yield" (p. 32). The selection of the mixed approach will lead to obtaining more reliable results, as well as a broader perspective of how significant the application of this proposal could be to strengthen the learners' knowledge construction process.

To summarize, the mixed method provides methodological support to this alternative methodological proposal, the mixed approach allows establishing a methodological framework which contains all the elements and segments of the research. Besides, this proposal functions as a guide for the teacher to improve the students' knowledge construction process through learning strategies such as communicative games and collaborative work to enhance the speaking skill, being an alternative methodological proposal that can be applied by the teacher, it contains a quantitative and qualitative approach to establish an adequate selection of data for data collection. Therefore, in the following segment of information, the Data collection Tools is detailed in-depth as a guide for the teacher, which suggests appropriate methods for collecting information.

### **3.4 Data Collection Tools**

As part of this alternative pedagogical proposal, it establishes the importance that through the Mixed Method the teacher uses data collection tools, in order to collect valuable information that will allow them to establish alternative strategies or plans to improve the knowledge construction process of the learners, which is one of the main purposes in this Action Research. Lodico et al. (2006) stated "to qualify as research, action research must include a plan for systematically collecting and analyzing data" (p. 292). It is necessary to establish adequate strategies to collect information to achieve reliable results. Rose et. al (2019) indicated "For research in applied linguistics, the successful elicitation and collection of data is a key challenge to obtaining reliable and valid data for analysis" (p.vii). Besides, Efron & Ravid (2013) stated, "in teacher research, the data collection effort is purposeful, deliberate, organized, and systematic. The information we gather from our data may serve as evidence that confirms our insights and validates

our intuition”. (p.85). The book *Data Collection Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, mention some data collection tools as a method used to gather information:

Data collection refers to the actual methods used to gather data for analysis. Popular data collection research methods include, but are not limited to, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, tests, language elicitation tasks, corpora and observations. Research designs do not dictate how data are collected but rather provide the framework and philosophy within which a researcher collects the data. (Rose, H., et al, 2019, p.3)

There are a wide variety of tools that the researcher can use to collect information easily, among the most common are: questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, tests, and observations, both qualitative and quantitative tools of the mixed approach. In this information section of the third chapter, data collection tools and instruments are described, which are suggested to the teacher to be applied to improve the knowledge construction process, which are diagnostic tests, pretests, and posttests. Also, the relevance of data collection tools, instruments, diagnostic tests, pretest, and posttest will be detailed in-depth; as fundamental tools to properly guide the application of this alternative methodological proposal. In which the teacher takes the role of the researcher, who should sharpen their ability to observe, to collect information and mainly the interest of improving their professional role, and finally with the information collected, the teacher can apply the strategies proposed in this alternative methodological proposal. Khan (2008) mentions the role of the researcher in gathering information, “Construction of data collecting devices is an important task of the researcher. A researcher needs many data gathering tools and devices, which may vary in their complexity, design, administration, and interpretation.” (p.97).

As mentioned above, one of the suggested instruments is the diagnostic test, which has the purpose not only to measure deficiencies in learners but also to measure the real level of knowledge of learners regarding a specific topic, as well as skills, strengths and needs of learners. Radha (2016) mentions some of the characteristics of the diagnostic test:

A diagnostic test is a measure of a student's current level of knowledge and skill. Using a diagnostic test, a teacher can assess how well the student is able to solve similar problems indicating his understanding of the concepts under study. (p. 163)

The diagnostic test allows to identify the weak areas of the student's learning in the specific contents, it also allows an early diagnosis of the learning problems and difficulties of the students, it also allows teachers to detect certain problems in the specific learning points as well as It also allows modifying the study program to correct the deficiencies found. (Sharma, 2020, pp. 19- 20). On the other hand, in this alternative methodological proposal, it is suggested to apply pretest and posttest, which is a type of information collection tool that is applied by the teacher that allows the effectiveness of the methodological proposal and the improvement of the knowledge construction process. In pretest–posttest designs the dependent variable or variables are measured before the intervention (i.e., the pretest) and after the intervention (i.e., the posttest). Typically, measures used in the pretest and the posttest are the same, and changes in the dependent variable from pretest to posttest are interpreted to reflect the effectiveness of the intervention (the independent variable). (Frey, 2018, p. 1292). In other words, the pretest and posttest are instruments that go hand in hand, the pretest is applied before establishing the proposed methodology, while the posttest will be applied after the methodological strategy in order to identify its effectiveness.

In summary, the data collection tools are valuable instruments in the application of this alternative methodological proposal, which allows collecting valid information, and which also allows the teacher to establish alternative strategies or plans to improve the knowledge construction process of learners. Also, being an alternative methodological proposal that will only be applied by the teacher, it provides a guide that suggests relevant instruments such as the diagnostic test, pretest, and posttest. The application of instruments will be very useful for the researcher who applies this methodological proposal since it will provide the guidelines to take action, in the next segment of information the selected instruments are developed in-depth.

### **3.4.1 Instruments**

Data Collection, as it was explained, needs instruments to collect information and give the results of the proposal. However, participants sometimes do not have clear what an instrument is and what to do with the information gathered. This section offers a guide to make participants understand the meaning of the instrument, the purpose of it, and how to use the information collected. Besides, this section explains the three instruments proposed in this alternative methodological proposal: the diagnostic test, the pre, and posttests.

To start with, it is of importance to know the meaning of the instrument and its function in a research. Creswell (2012) gives a concise definition for instrument, he says “An instrument is a tool for measuring, observing, or documenting quantitative data. Identified before the researchers collect data, the instrument may be a test, questionnaire, tall and sheet, observational checklist, inventory; or assessment instruments.” (p.151) In addition, Wilkinson & Birmingham (2003) claim “Research instruments are simply devices for obtaining information relevant to your research project.” (p.3) As it is described, an instrument is a tool by which the researcher gets the information needed to obtain reliable results, these instruments can be used depending on the type of approach. Regarding types of instruments, Cohen et al., (2007) comment “Instruments can measure qualitative data using interviews, observations, documents, and records.” (p.432) This proposal has the diagnostic test, the pre and posttests as the appropriate instruments for an Action Research Proposal.

It is also meaningful to establish the purpose of an instrument. The main purpose of an instrument would be collecting information for a research. According to Creswell (2012) “Researchers use instruments to measure achievement, assess individual ability, observe behavior, develop a psychological profile of an individual.” (p.151) It means that an instrument enables the researcher to get different types of information in a project. To apply an instrument, the researcher needs the sampling of the research. Wilkinson & Birmingham (2003) say “Stratified sampling means establishing your population (such as students) and taking from within that population a sample that represents the whole.” (p.19) This means the sampling represents a bigger population to be benefited by the implementation of a proposal and the possible results of this one. Another doubt researcher may have been what to do with the data collected. Creswell (2014) comments that after applying instruments such as tests, the results can be reported using tables and figures in a specific section labeled “Results.” These tables and figures summarize the data collected to answer questions and hypothesis established in the proposal. The results obtained through instruments give explanations to the findings.

In brief, instruments are tools to measure data, devices to get the information needed to give reliability to the alternative methodological proposal. The purpose of an instrument is to collect the information using sampling and measure the information to report it using tables and

figures. To continue with the understanding of instruments, the next section describes the diagnostic test, the pretest, and posttest in depth that are the instruments used in this proposal.

### **3.4.1.1 Diagnostic test**

Before going deeper into diagnostic test, it is useful to understand the importance of tests in an alternative methodological proposal. According to Pulliam & Stawarski (2008), tests have the following importance:

Testing is important for measuring learning in program evaluations. Pre and post programs comparisons using tests are common. An improvement in test scores shows the change in skills, knowledge, or attitude attributed to the program. The principles of test development are similar to those for the design and development of questionnaires and surveys. (p.13)

As is explained, tests are useful data collection tools specially to detect an improvement in the implementation of a proposal. Tests are also significant in Action Research. Dawson (2009) mentions “In Action Research various types of research method may be used, for example: the diagnosing and evaluating stage may use questionnaires and interviews, whereas focus groups may be used to gauge opinion on the proposed changes.” (p.18)

Diagnostic test is one of the instruments to be implemented in this proposal. After constructing the research instrument such as an interview or a questionnaire, the researcher must test it before using it for obtaining actual data collection. Kumar (2011) comments diagnostic test is an instrument to examine the understanding of each question by the contestants. The group of responders is similar to the proposal sampling. In addition, Kumar established that “The purpose is not to collect data but to identify problems that the potential responders might have in either understanding or interpreting a question.” (p.150) It means that the diagnostic tests identify if there are problems understanding the way a question has been presented and if the meaning is appropriate. The diagnostic test also seeks to see the way contestants interpret the instrument applied. Another purpose of this test is to assess the current attributes of participants. To support this argument, Secolsky & Bryan Deninson (2012) give a wide explanation of diagnostic:

We can make an inference about how well an individual has performed on latent (unobservable) attributes from his/her performance on observable item responses. This pattern of mastered and non-mastered attributes is referred to as the student’s knowledge

state. Diagnosed knowledge state vectors summarizing combinations of attributes mastered and not mastered by students. (p.443)

As it can be observed, diagnostic test can examine not only the students' understanding but also the current knowledge they have in certain areas to offer future expectations about the results of implementing an alternative proposal.

#### **3.4.1.2. Pretest**

The second instrument proposed in this proposal is the pretest. Kumar (2011) says the pretest is "A commonly used method for establishing the reliability of a research tool." (p.170) He adds that pretest and posttest are parallel instruments administered once and then again with similar conditions. Creswell (2012) says "pre-test is a measure on some attribute or characteristic that is assessed for participants in an experiment before they receive a treatment." (p.297) He also says the pre-test can raise expectations on participants that influence the results of the proposal. Lodico et al., (2006) give a simpler definition; they argue "A pretest basically measures whether the experimental and control groups are starting at equal." (p.66) At the end, all these definitions agree with the idea of using this instrument before the implementation of a research proposal and giving reliability to the results by administering a posttest after the proposal mentioned.

As it is stated, the pretest measure how the participants' performance is before implementing a proposal. In the case of this alternative methodological proposal, the pretest must be administered before the implementation of communicative games to enhance the speaking skill. According to Cohen et al., (2007) "The pretest may have questions which differ in form or wording from post-test, though the two tests must test the same groups." (p.432) It means that the questions have to be based on the same content but the questions can be different in the pre-test and the post-test. This way of applying the instrument to avoid the participants' memorization gives a false reliability to the results.

#### **3.4.1.3. Posttest**

After implementing an alternative methodological proposal, it is needed to meet the results of the participants. To measure these results, this proposal suggests the use of a post-test. This is an instrument similar to the pre-test. Creswell (2012) says "the post-test is a measure on some attribute or characteristic that is assessed for participants after a treatment." (p.297) It shows that



post-test is basically the same as pre-test but at a different moment. However, Cohen et al., (2007) mention it is important to avoid constructing a post-test much easier than a pre-test. The difficulty of a post-test must be the same applied in a pre-test. If the post-test is easier than the pre-test, the results can be based on false assumptions and the data collection would be irrelevant. Regarding post-test, Kumber (2011) explains the post-test allows the instrument to be compared with itself but it also has the disadvantage of giving participants the possibility to recall the responses of the previous test. Based on this argument, it is ideal to plan the appropriate time to administering the post test. According to Lodico et al., (2006) it would be beneficial to “increase the amount of time between the pretest and posttest to make it less likely that participants will remember the pretest questions.” (p.94)

To sum up, instruments are essential tools to measure data and give reliable information to the alternative methodological proposal. The instrument's purpose is to collect data using a sampling and report it in tables and figures. This proposal takes the diagnostic test, the pre-test and post-test to collect data. The diagnostic test is used in a research to examine if the participants in a research understand questions and it also identifies problems the potential responders might have. The pre and post tests have the same purpose, to measure certain characteristics assessed on participants on an experiment before and after the implementation of a methodological proposal. The questions on both instruments can change words but keep the same content. The post-test does not have to be easier than the pre-test because it can result in false assumptions. These two tests are functional to compare the results of implementing a proposal in the same group of participants at different times. To continue with this chapter, the next section synthesizes the main ideas of this chapter regarding data collection tools and instruments.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The research method selected in this methodological proposal is the Collaborative-Exploratory Action Research. It takes action to overcome gaps in the teaching-learning system. Collaborative Action Research helps to give solutions to educational weaknesses using the ideas and collaboration of the teachers and social agents. The implementation of the Action Research teacher can improve the students speaking skill by means of pedagogical actions in the classroom. The Action research functions as a guide, that pretends that the educator discovers the need to incorporate communicative games to reduce the gaps in the knowledge construction process. The

participants in the Action Research are an important part of the solution to the problem. Action research gives to teachers a meaningful goal to bring changes into their professional field.

Exploratory Action Research is a way to explore and improve teachers' practice. Collaborative Exploratory AR gives reliability to the alternative methodological proposal that suggests an exploration of the situations before giving solutions. AR methodological proposal is relevant because participants in Second Language teaching can improve the knowledge construction process through the implementation of communicative games. This alternative methodological proposal takes the Collaborative Exploratory AR to generate a solution to improve the lack of speaking skill performance and contribute to the educational field.

To make effective the AR is necessary to make a proper selection of the type of approach either qualitative, quantitative, or mixed. In this alternative methodological proposal, a mixed-method is selected; which allows the teacher or the researcher to collect the information both qualitatively and quantitatively. The mixed-method provides methodological support in the construction of this alternative methodological proposal since the method comprises all stages of the investigation. The mixed-method is relevant in the construction of this alternative methodological proposal since it was applied in the different sections of this AR by reviewing the literature. By implementing a mixed approach, a teacher who develops this alternative methodological proposal will be able to collect information statistically by applying quantitative instruments of the mixed approach. A mixed approach will provide more reliable results, as well as a broader perspective of how significant the application of this proposal could be to strengthen the learners' knowledge construction process because it functions as a guide for the teacher through learning strategies such as communicative games and collaborative work to enhance the speaking skill.

This proposal contains a Mixed method to establish an adequate selection of data collection. Data collection refers to a method used to gather data for analysis, that are valuable instruments in the application of this alternative methodological proposal, which allows collecting valid information, and which also allows the teacher to establish alternative strategies or plans to improve the knowledge construction process of learners. A teacher has a variety of tools that can use to collect information (questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, tests, and observations) qualitative and quantitative tools of the mixed approach. This proposal suggested to the teacher to

apply diagnostic tests, pretests, and posttests to improve the knowledge construction process. The teacher should sharpen their ability to observe, to collect information, and mainly the interest of improving their professional role in order to apply the strategies proposed in this alternative methodological proposal. On the other hand, instruments are tools to measure data, devices to get the information needed to give reliability to the alternative methodological proposal. The purpose of an instrument is to collect the information using sampling and measure the information to report it using tables and figures.

Diagnostic test is one of the instruments suggested in this methodological proposal, the researcher must implement a diagnostic test before the research instrument in order to obtain actual data. The diagnostic tests identify if there are problems to understand the way a question has been presented. A diagnostic test can examine not only the students' understanding but also the current knowledge they have in certain areas.

Pretest and posttest are parallel instruments. The pretest is a measure of some characteristic that is evaluated in students before receiving a new methodology and it gives reliability to the results by administering a posttest after the proposal mentioned. In the case of this alternative methodological proposal, the pretest must be administered before the implementation of communicative games to enhance the speaking skill. On the other hand, after implementing an alternative methodological proposal, in order to measure these results, it is suggested the use of a post-test to meet the results in the learners. Post-test and pre-tests are the same instrument that contains the same content that is expected to be measured, but the difference lies at a different time of application. In short, the pre and post-tests have the purpose to measure a certain characteristic of learners on an experiment before and after the implementation of a methodological proposal. The elements developed in this section form an instrumental guide for the teacher, which are essential tools to measure data and give reliable information to the alternative methodological proposal. The following segment of information, as an important part of this alternative methodological proposal, establishes some effective methodological strategies to strengthen the students' knowledge construction process through collaborative learning and communicative games in order to enhance the speaking skill.

## Chapter IV

#### 4.1 Introductory paragraph

The fourth chapter of this alternative methodological proposal is of relevance because it is the section in which the need of implementing different strategies is stated to reach the enhancing of speaking skill in a second language class.

This chapter proposes the implementation of three different strategies and explains each of the stages of these ones. It is essential to state that this proposal provides teachers with ideas for enhancing the speaking skill but it depends on them the implementation of the proposal. Regarding this argument, McMillan & Weyers (2010) say “Remember that your proposal is only a proposal. You do not need to write the complete work at this stage. You merely need to establish, for the benefit of the reviewing group, that you have chosen a reasonable-topic.” (p.26) However, this proposal goes beyond this argument and offers teachers tools to apply in their planning. This chapter highlights the justification of the proposal, the Alternative Methodological Proposal's importance, necessity, and scopes to foster the knowledge construction process, and the implementation of the strategies with each step to be followed.

First of all, this chapter gives the justification of the proposal establishing strategies to be implemented in the classroom. These strategies follow the main objective of this proposal that is implementing communicative games for enhancing the speaking skill among high school learners. First, it is of importance to be clear about what a strategy is. Orlish et al., (2007) comments that “The term strategy implies thoughtful planning to do something.” (p.4) Orlish et al., (2007) also add that “Teachers develop their science by using carefully planned, fined-tuned lessons that reflect an understanding of many different teaching techniques. They apply each technique skillfully to gain the desired intellectual, social, affective or kinesthetic result.” (p.15) It means that teachers need well-planned strategies to follow during their lessons to reach their goals and the strategies stated in this proposal give this possibility to the teachers. However, it is useful not to forget that the job of a proposal, as Terrel (2015) mention:

Would be to conduct further studies using the same constructs to help better explain or support prior results. We might actually attempt to replicate one or more of the students to determine if the results might be different using another population. (p.6)

According to Terrel, the proposal results may change depending on the population used to implement the strategies.

The definition of strategy is already given as a guide to explain the section of this chapter in which the Alternative Methodological Proposal proposes three different strategies that are well-explained later on. This chapter also shows the importance, the necessity and the scopes this proposal has to foster the knowledge construction process. The importance of this proposal lies in how useful the strategies proposed are to enhance the speaking skill. To learn a new ability, it is essential to take into consideration the knowledge each social agent brings to the class and how implementing well-organized strategies can help his knowledge construction process. Susan Ambrose et al., (2010) say “Students naturally make connections between pieces of knowledge. When those connections form knowledge structures that are accurately and meaningfully organized, students are better able to retrieve and apply their knowledge effectively and efficiently.” (p.4) According to this argument, pupils can take their own and new knowledge and apply it when it is well-organized. That is why the strategies of this proposal are of importance in the knowledge construction process. This proposal is also a necessity to foster the knowledge construction since the strategies proposed help pupils and teachers to face experiences in which they have to solve tasks through group work activities such as communicative games. Ambrose et al., (2010) add that “students enter our classroom not only with skills, knowledge, and abilities, but also with social and emotional experiences that influence what they value, how they perceive themselves and others, and how they will engage in the learning process.” (p.4) The strategies proposed can bring new knowledge into the classroom and also make pupils interact having social and emotional experiences. The scopes of this proposal help to foster the knowledge construction process integrating communicative games that enhance the speaking skill. Through games, pupils have the opportunity to exchange knowledge and improve their speaking ability while interacting with others. Regarding this, Thornbury (2005) highlights the following:

Not all speaking events can rely on quite such a degree of shared knowledge. Explaining street directions to a total stranger or giving a lecture on quantum theory are both uses of speech that will require a considerable degree of explicitness. But because most speaking takes place face to face, and in a shared context, there is generally less need to be as explicit as one might normally be in writing. (p.12)

It means that to be good at speaking, learners do not have to be perfect and through communicative games, pupils can communicate effectively while learning.

This chapter has a section where the Alternative Methodological Proposal is described in detail. This chapter gives a description of three teaching strategies. Each of these strategies is sustained in the Tenth level of the New English Curriculum, unit 1 called “Love What We Do! The weeks of this unit used to apply the strategies are the first three whose themes are: “Help Wanted, Jobs and Working to Live or Living to Work?” The strategies of this proposal are sustained on some assessment strategies that MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, establishes as follows:

Summarizes what has been said about life stories on modeled sentence frames to convey information. Explains with simple words what she/he means with another word orally when she /he can not think of the exact word. Produces face to face conversations and interviews about personal experiences, feelings, opinions and reactions about a job or occupation. (p.235)

The strategies of this proposal also explain the didactic sequence of the speaking skill in the development of each assessment strategy. The didactic sequence used is for spoken interaction that goes from planning, organizing, rehearsing, interacting to describing. Each strategy is composed of a name, an objective to be reached by the teaching strategy, a process that describes aspects such as level, unit, theme, assessment strategy, and explanation of the development of the didactic sequence of the skill and the materials used. Finally, the strategy has an evaluation of the assessment strategy.

In summary, chapter four is of relevance since it is in this section where the need to implement teaching strategies is stated. These strategies give teachers ideas for enhancing the speaking skill. The justification of the proposal is described in this chapter, introducing strategies to reach the implementation of communicative games and improving through them the speaking skill. This chapter describes the importance, the necessity, and the scopes of this proposal to foster the knowledge construction process through communicative games and teaching strategies. This chapter also gives a detailed description of each teaching strategy and the steps to be developed. To continue with this chapter, the following section gives the name of the proposal. Then, the next

paragraph describes the justification of the proposal in depth to offer an overview of the relevance it has in the knowledge construction process specifically to develop the speaking skill.

#### **4.2 Title of the Proposal**

The Implementation of Communicative Games for enhancing the Speaking Skill in the Knowledge Construction Process.

#### **4.3 Justification of the Proposal**

The knowledge construction process is a complex process, which requires appropriate planning by the teacher to achieve the learning goals. Several key factors are considered in the educational process such as the curriculum, type of population, the learners need, as well as strategies used to improve the learner's knowledge construction process. Hall & Hewings (2001) stated “the decisions that teachers are required to make during the instructional process are all driven by the nature of the program, the goals of instruction, and the needs of the individual learners” (p.42). Once learning goals have been defined and the teacher identifies the learners' educational needs, it is possible to establish mediation strategies to improve the knowledge construction process. This methodological proposal is called "The Implementation of Communicative Games for enhancing the Speaking Skill in the Knowledge Construction Process", in which is established the need to implement communicative games as an effective strategy to improve speaking skills in pupils since it contains three alternative methodological strategies that can be applied by the teacher who seeks to improve the successfully the pupils speaking skill. The strategies selected in this proposal are relevant since, although they will be applied only by the teacher, they present a structured guide on how a methodological strategy should be developed. Also, the teacher must bring activities that have been carried out under pedagogical foundations that contain a structured guide of the activities to be carried out, the learning goals, and the times assigned for each activity. Reinhardt (2019) explains the importance of ensuring that students have a clear learning goal “understand the purpose of the game and relate the activities that have taken place during the game to the intended learning outcomes from playing it” (as is quoted, Whitton, 2010, p. 143). Besides, McGuinn and Stevens (2004) stated “the curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively and critically . . . to make a difference for the better. It should give them the opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership” (p.3). Under



this principle, another reason behind this methodological proposal is established, as this will serve as an effective guide that encourages teachers to innovate, by planning similar activities or related to the communicative game and collaborative learning to improve the speaking skill, where the learner can enjoy a quality education.

Without a doubt, communicative games offer a great number of advantages to develop cognitive and interpersonal skills, and it is a great ally to facilitate the acquisition of language in students. Reinhardt (2019). In the book *Gameful Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning* exemplify how useful can be the use of games in the pupil's knowledge construction process of second language learning:

You are learning to play by playing practicing and perfecting skills, acquiring bits of knowledge, setting goals and achieving them. You are deeply engaged, which means your attention is focused on playing at the cognitive, emotional, and perhaps social level. As you achieve your goals, you are highly motivated to keep learning whatever it is you have to new game rules, stories, and language to keep playing.

The above quote exemplifies how the game itself has a positive effect on the people who play it since it allows the development of social and cognitive skills such as creativity, attention, memory, and mainly the language, it already allows in a more relaxed way that students develop the speaking skill. Another characteristic of communicative games is that they are multipurpose. Chang (2011) stated "Games provide learners opportunities to learn. Adaptability: Games can be designed to assign appropriate tasks according to learners' ability levels. (p. 159). This adaptability allows communicative games to be appropriate according to the level of the students or the content to be developed in the different scenarios of the English Syllabus. MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada*, establishes the importance of developing a real-life task in order to develop language skills in learners, so that the knowledge construction process becomes a truly meaningful learning "Learners have to perform real life tasks that can be used in real exchanges out of the classroom setting. Therefore, more of the speaking tasks must have an interactive and spontaneous outcome" (p. 49). Also, Reinhardt (2019) mention that also games allows the integration of skills when learners put into practice the language "L2 instruction should engage learners in meaningful tasks using authentic texts and scenarios, so that language use was the means of interaction, and that grammar study should serve communicative

ends” (p. 142). When students participate in activities with clear pedagogical purposes, it is easier to achieve the learning goals, so through strategies such as communicative games, it is possible to achieve the integration of language skills, strengthening of skills and abilities of students.

In the educational process, it is necessary to establish strategies that can capture the pupil's attention and communicative games are a successful strategy, since they motivate the learner to actively participate in the development of the class, since communicative games are capable of capture the learners' attention easily. Chang et al. (2011) mention “Games are in the form of fun and can make learners feel interested and pleasant during the process of playing games. Play: It provides a form of play and offers learners high motivation to play games and intense pleasure.” (p. 159) Communicative games are a strong advantage for teachers, since when the activities are attractive, the learner and the teacher develop a better affinity. Harmer (2007, p. 113) in the book *The Practice of English Language Teaching* mentions “if we wish to develop a good learning environment in the classroom, we need to establish an appropriate relationship with our students. We need to spend time making sure that teacher-students rapport is positive and useful” (p. 113). Through communicative games, an innovative and creative teacher has the possibility of awakening the interest of students in the knowledge construction process. Through play, the environment within the classroom is more favorable, the teacher makes the lessons more fun for the student, which makes learning meaningful.

In summary, one of the fundamental purposes of this proposal is to establish the need to implement an alternative methodological proposal to strengthen speaking skill through three strategies based on communicative games to improve the knowledge construction process, games provide valuable task, a great variety of advantages in order to improve the speaking skill, for example, it enhances the learners' engagement and motivation, games can be adapted to the tasks, and encourages the use the speaking skill in a natural way, among others. Also, this proposal works as an effective guide, which encourages the teacher to innovate, by planning activities related to communicative games. Therefore, in the following segment of information, it will be detailed in-depth why it is important to develop an alternative methodological proposal and the selected strategies to improve speaking skills will be briefly described.

#### 4.4 Alternative Methodological Proposal

The last section states the need of the implementation of well-structured alternative methodological strategies to enhance the speaking skill through communicative games. It is also essential to know that these strategies are a need to foster the knowledge construction process because through planned strategies educators have a tool to guide their planning with activities in which pupils can interact and construct the language. Teachers have the duty to implement new techniques in the classroom to benefit their pupils. Regarding this argument, Orlish et al., (2007) say that “Obviously, the learner and the learner’s needs are always at the center of this model. It is for the learner that you use different instructional techniques.” (p.29) It gives teachers the obligation to be always looking for new strategies to fulfill the pupil’s needs. The three strategies proposed in this chapter give teachers a guide to create their own strategies but sustained on the ones that are detailed and organized in this proposal. The teaching strategies exposed in this chapter have as main goal to implement communicative games for enhancing the speaking skill taking into consideration indicators such as communicative games, group work, and skills integration. These strategies are a need because as Wright et al., (2006) comment “some games give the learners considerable support in the language needed for the game, and other games offer a stimulus and context, but no specific language focus.” (p.24) As teachers can observe, these three strategies can bring benefits to the pupils ‘knowledge construction process. Each strategy is explained briefly in this section before going deeper. Each of their steps are described in the introductory paragraph. The three strategies are communicative games that allow learners’ interaction.

The first strategy is based on a group work indicator. In this game, four volunteers are given an envelope, three of them with a picture of an occupation and another one empty. They have to describe the pictures in front of the class even the students with the empty envelope. The rest of the students are divided into groups asking questions to guess who the liar is and what names of occupations are being described. This strategy wants pupils to play this game in groups to ask questions based on descriptions of occupations given by their peers. The second strategy uses communicative games as the indicator. In this opportunity, students play a game called “stuck in the traffic”. The class is divided in four groups and these groups walk around the classroom simulating they are a bus. The teacher plays music while students walk around and projects a traffic light in a power point presentation. When the music stops and the traffic light is in red, the students have to stop and explain a negative idea about any job they choose. Then, they continue walking

around. When the music stops again and the traffic light is green, they have to stop and explain a positive idea about a job they like. Finally, when the traffic light is in yellow, the students have to switch groups to continue playing. This strategy fosters collaborative learning and makes pupils participate. The third strategy takes into consideration the integration of the skills. Students take roles in order to complete the task “Job Stands”. Some students are attending a vocational fair where they can find six job stands (stations). The teacher gives to students of each stand a card of possible questions to be asked, but they can ask their own questions. Every student visiting the stations wants to know if they have the profile for each job. They go to each station to have a short interview. They are asked about their abilities and opinion about the jobs. This strategy integrates listening and speaking and makes pupils participate in groups. These three strategies foster group work and collaborative learning improving the speaking skill through communicative games.

#### **4.4.1 Importance**

The introductory paragraph establishes that the importance of this proposal to foster the knowledge construction process lies in the usefulness of the strategies proposed to enhance the speaking skill. It is known that each pupil brings his own knowledge to the class and learns new knowledge depending on well-organized strategies that promote connections to apply this knowledge. To foster the speaking skill, it is meaningful to know which knowledge pupils have. In the case of speaking, Thornbury (2005) argues “knowledge that is relevant to speaking can be categorized either as knowledge of features of language (language knowledge) or knowledge that is independent of language (extralinguistic knowledge).” (p.11) It means that teachers must consider both to plan the correct teaching strategies. The strategies in this proposal, provide the readers with well-structured activities sustained in assessment strategies and the didactic sequence stated by the National English Syllabi. The activities are communicative games in which pupils can apply knowledge to solve tasks. According to Phye (1997) “Personal knowledge construction emphasizes the role of remembering in class learning. Not only does memory play a role in the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of declarative and procedural knowledge but also appears to play a critical role in problem solving.” (p.56) It means teaching strategies can take the personal knowledge and improve it by providing activities in which pupils have to solve a task like in communicative games. However, when applying new teaching strategies, teachers have to consider the success of these strategies also depends on the students’ concern about how their

knowledge is improved by them. Goh & Burns (2012) comments the following about pupils' awareness:

Successful second language speaking development depends as much on teachers and materials, as it does on the learners themselves. They should be encouraged to take responsibility for managing their learning and improving their speaking. They can do this by developing awareness about themselves as second language speakers, by better understanding the nature and demands of speaking, and by critically considering strategies that can facilitate their oral communication. Although speech production is an individual endeavor, every learner's development of second language speaking can be greatly facilitated through working collaboratively with his or her peers." (p. 6)

This proposal is of importance in that it gives both well-structured strategies and collaborative learning through communicative games.

#### **4.4.2 Necessity**

In the previous section, the importance of establishing strategies to optimize the knowledge construction process was established through a clearly defined alternative methodological proposal and organized in order to improve the learners speaking skill. However, it is necessary to establish why it is necessary to promote the knowledge construction process. At present, there has been a growing need to improve the pupils the knowledge construction process in terms of mastery of a second language, since this learning is really valuable for the learners' population. Hayes (2012) mentions how learning should be reflected:

English is a practical subject and teaching and learning must reflect this. Learning will be done through practical activities; students will learn by speaking and listening, creative thinking and doing. [...] The English Syllabus uses a student-centred approach as a vehicle to guide and facilitate students' learning. (p.49)

This means that it is possible through effective and innovative methodological strategies, such as communicative games, to generate creative and active learning, where the learner is the main protagonist in their own knowledge construction process. As has been described throughout this methodological proposal, games are effective strategies to strengthen students' communication skills, mainly speaking skills. Wright, A., et al (2006) mention important characteristics of games:

Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part, and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information. Games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than merely study it. (p.2)

The above quote shows how communicative games contribute important elements to language learning, it already contains characteristics that foster the pupils' knowledge construction process. Enriching or encouraging the knowledge construction process should not be only an option it should be a teacher need since while the social agent interacts in play at the same time, he builds his own knowledge, and thus he will not only be participating in the task but rather will be involved in the activity. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, “Therefore, more of the speaking tasks must have an interactive and spontaneous outcome” (p.49). The communicative games allow the learner to retain the new knowledge and that this learning becomes more meaningful to put what he has spontaneously learned into practice. Nunan (2013). Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language mention the importance of establishing strong learning goals “Needs analysis provides a basis for specifying goals and objectives for a learning program. Goals are broad, general purposes for learning a language” (p. 58). Therefore, there is clearly a need for the activities carried out in the classroom to have a pedagogical basis, with clear purposes and objectives to improve the knowledge construction process of the social agent.

#### **4.4.3 Scopes**

The scope of the implementation of this alternative methodological proposal is to promote the students' knowledge construction process. It has a methodological foundation based on “Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada” under a communicative methodology called Action-Oriented Approach or the Task-based Approach (MEP, 2016, p.28). Therefore, the alternative methodological proposal consists of three methodological strategies that seek to improve speaking ability through the integration of play, group work, and skills integration. The application of these three methodological strategies or similar pedagogical activities that contain pedagogical supports can be really effective to improve the students' knowledge construction process and especially strengthen the speaking skill. Shehadeh (2004) mention the

purpose of the approach “Task-based language teaching (TBLT) proposes the use of tasks as a central component in the language classroom because they provide better contexts for activating learner acquisition processes and promoting L2 learning” (p.15). Communicative games are really versatile tools that can be adapted to the basic principles of curricular programs, through the game students easily learn the target language, since it facilitates real contexts in which students learn while playing in a group or individual, the game allows socialization, leads to discussions, students can share their knowledge and at the same time integrate different language skills. In addition, through the execution of the activities, the students can focus more on the execution of the activity than on the final result. Communicative games can be adapted to the selected didactic sequence, as well as it is possible to integrate the pupil's previous knowledge and allow them to share it with others, which is one of the characteristics that the social agent is expected to develop. The scope of this alternative methodological proposal can be truly beneficial to improve the knowledge construction process since it contains a series of strategies that have well-designed activities that allow improving learning within the classroom. It is important to mention that since it is an alternative methodological proposal that will be applied by the teacher, its success depends on the execution and the interest of the teacher in improving the knowledge construction process. Another fundamental scope of the implementation of the alternative methodological proposal is that it functions as a well-structured guide for the teacher, which also encourages him to be part of the educational change and the improvement of the knowledge construction process.

As a summary, it is relevant to establish the importance of an alternative methodological proposal that seeks to provide well-organized methodological strategies that allow improving the students' knowledge construction process and, also facilitate the teaching process. This is also necessary to improve the knowledge construction process of second language learners, since this learning is really valuable for them and also, through strategies it is possible to strengthen educational needs through communicative games. The implementation of this alternative methodological proposal has the scope of fostering the knowledge construction process through an innovative and well-organized way, which has pedagogical support that will allow it to be effective to improve the speaking skill through the established strategies, which will guide the teacher in the innovation process to finally improve the knowledge construction process of the learners. The following information section briefly describes the principles on which the

implementation of this alternative methodological proposal is based and how it is organized to improve the knowledge construction process.

#### **4.5 Alternative Methodological Proposal Implementation**

This section of the chapter offers a detailed description of the three teaching strategies that are sustained on and composed of elements mentioned in the introductory paragraph. Nevertheless, before describing each element in the strategies, it is essential to make an overview of what they refer to. First of all, the strategies are sustained on the level tenth, unit 1 of the new English Curriculum. Themes used from this unit are: “Help Wanted, Jobs and Working to Live or Living to Work? from the four weeks of unit 1. The strategies are sustained in three assessment strategies which are established by MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada:

Summarizes what has been said about life stories on modeled sentence frames to convey information. Explains with simple words what she/he means with another word orally when she /he can not think of the exact word. Produces face to face conversations and interviews about personal experiences, feelings, opinions and reactions about a job or occupation. (p.235)

The didactic sequence is described by MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada as “a set of integrated sequence procedures.” (p.35) These procedures develop different linguistic competencies such as oral comprehension, written comprehension, written production, and oral production. The strategies of this proposal develop the didactic sequence of spoken interaction which encompasses planning, organizing, rehearsing, and interacting. On the other hand, the strategies are composed of a name that are: “Talking about what we love to do, explaining meaning through games and Integrating skills.” The strategies have an objective that is what is expected to be reached at the end of the strategy. The objective of the first strategy pretends pupils to use the target language to describe occupations and jobs using pictures. Through a game and pupils are part of group work. The second strategy’s objective wants pupils to ask and answer questions about parts of pictures that represent occupations, exchanging information and knowledge while playing a game. The third strategy’s objective wants to integrate



listening and speaking skills when listening to descriptions of occupations in a picture made by a group and guessing the occupation by other groups. Also, the strategies have a process to be followed in which their elements, the assessment strategies, and the didactic sequence of the skill are described in detail. The strategies provide the materials used as evidence and finally, they assess the assessment strategy with an evaluation.

To sum up, this section gives readers well-explained and organized strategies with the elements they are composed of and the elements in which they are sustained to guide teachers in the implementation of communicative games. To continue with the development of these strategies the next section describes the first strategy in depth.

#### **4.5.1 Description of first teaching strategy**

##### **First strategy:**

Talking about what we love to do.

##### **Objective:**

To describe jobs in order for students to use the target language orally through games and group work with the purpose of summarizing what has been said about life stories.

##### **Variable:**

Collaborative learning

##### **Indicator:**

Group Work

##### **Level:**

Tenth grade

**Unit:**

Unit 1

**Scenario:**

Love What We Do!

**Theme:**

Help wanted

**Assessment strategy:**

Summarizes what has been said about life stories on modeled sentence frames to convey information to another.

**Didactic sequence:**

Spoken Interaction.

- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Organizing
- ✓ Rehearsing
- ✓ Interacting
- ✓ Describing

**Implementation of the first teaching strategy**

Talking about what we love to do is the first teaching strategy that composes the alternative methodological proposal. It is important to mention that these activities keep accordance with

MEP's syllabus established with the purpose of planning the lessons. Therefore, they are developed following the didactic sequence in order to achieve the assessment strategy defined for the skill of speaking. The purpose of this strategy is to make students use the target language through games and group work when describing jobs. By means of collaborative learning activities, the tenth-grade students are able to convey information about jobs and formulate questions about them. The use of pictures during the activities and the games reinforces the previous language knowledge students have. According to the sequence established in the syllabus, the stages of this strategy is developed as follows:

### Planning

During this step, the teacher shares a picture of some jobs, then he/she encourages the students to recognize some of the occupations and summarize some of the activities related to those people's lives.



Once they recognize important characteristics, the teacher asks the students to form two groups to play a game called "Twister". Group A will form a circle, and the members of group B form another circle around the members of group A. The teacher gives each of the members of group A the name of a job "Farmer" and each member of group B is given the description of a job, for example, "The person who grows fruits and vegetables" or "the person who bakes cakes". Then, the teacher will give different commands for example "group A, move two spaces to the right". As

the students turn, they must ask questions looking for their correct match "Do you plant vegetables and fruits?" (group B). "Yes, I am a Farmer" or "No, I am a baker" (group A). Once they find their partner, they can take a seat.

<b>Taxi driver</b>	A person who drives a taxi as a job
<b>Accountant</b>	Someone who keeps the records of money received, paid by a company or person
<b>Lawyer</b>	Someone whose job is to give advice to people about the law and speak for them in court
<b>Doctor</b>	A person with a medical degree whose job is to treat people who are ill or hurt
<b>Pharmacist</b>	A person who is trained to prepare and give out medicines in a hospital or shop
<b>Artist</b>	Someone who paints, draws, or makes crafts
<b>Farmer</b>	someone who owns or takes care of a farm

### Organizing

In this section of the sequence, the teacher divides the class into groups. The teacher gives each group a puzzle game about some jobs in Costa Rica called "I love what I do". (accountant, actor,

architect, artist, assembler, baker, bus driver, butcher, construction worker, farmer, delivery person, firefighter, fisherman, lawyer, pharmacist, police office, taxi driver, waiter, doctor). Through group work, students must organize the pieces in pairs correctly (image-basic information of the profession). The group that finishes the puzzle first gets a point. Finally, learners summarize what has been said about life stories, important characteristics/information of each job using the vocabulary given.


## Puzzle “I love what I do”

# Instructions

- print the cards
- cut each card, as in the example
- Then you can play




**Delivery person**



He has worked for uber eats the last few months. Now he is saving money for his studies.

**Bus driver**




When he was a child, Max wanted to be a bus driver.

**Doctor**



She had worked at a hospital  
A person you go to see when you have some type of health problem

**Artist**



He had painted famous master pieces.  
He loves colors

The printed material is available at the following link

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13I75ruSzbc81YvVoFxA87SwWR7fKPef/view?usp=sharing>

### Rehearsing

For this stage, each student is given a worksheet, which contains a list of different occupations. Students have to interview their classmates asking them "What had you wanted to be when you were a kid?" Students can select only one occupation. Once the time is up, the teacher asks the students to summarize which was the most dreamed occupation and why they think it was chosen.

"What had you wanted to be when you were a kid?"

Actor	Accountant	Firefighter	Lawyer
Architect	Farmer	Baker	Police Officer
Taxi driver	Pharmacist	Doctor	Bus driver

Sing only one!

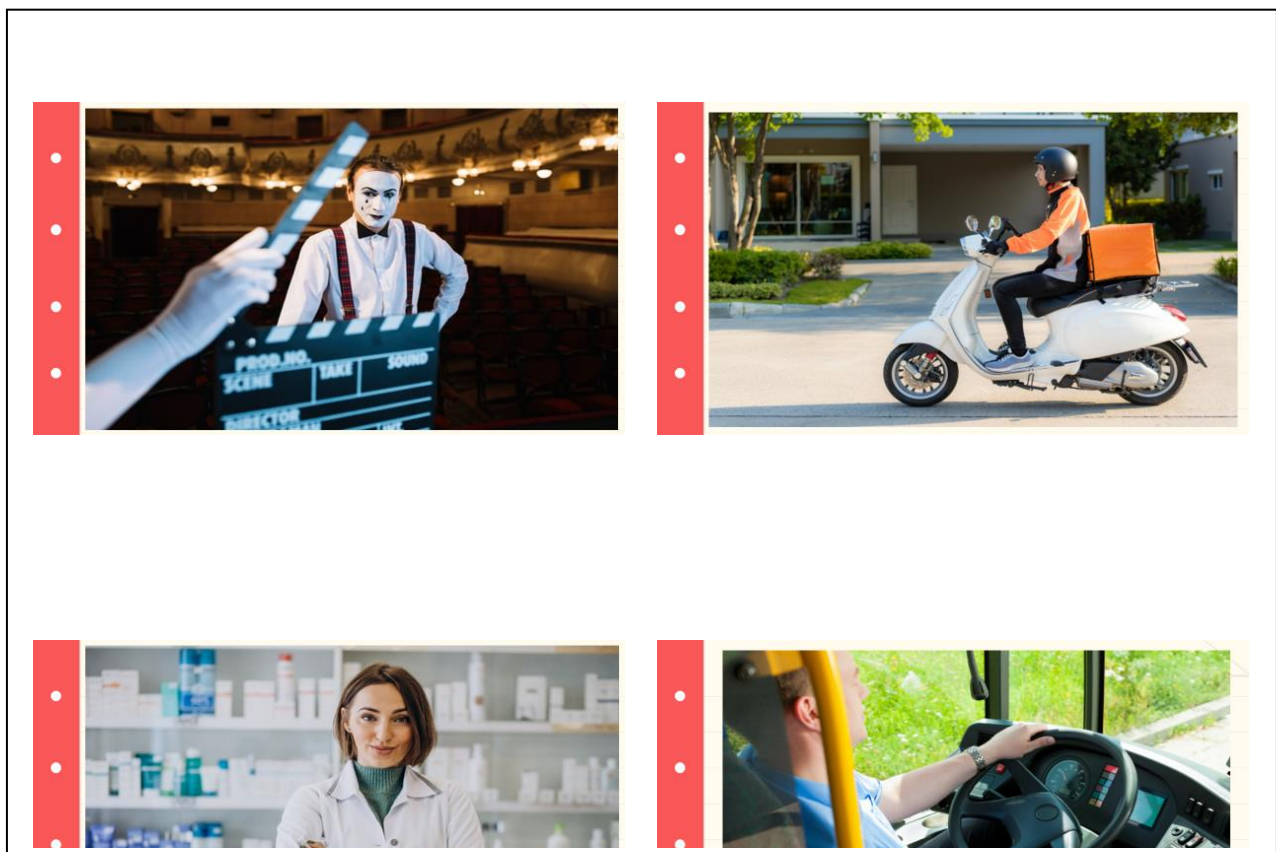
The printed material is available at the following link

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/12\\_TbUoIdFbc3ouYqZ6SsESYyFRtXPO91/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/12_TbUoIdFbc3ouYqZ6SsESYyFRtXPO91/view?usp=sharing)

## Interacting

In this stage, students are divided in four groups to play a game called “The Liar”. In this game four students (one per group) are given an envelope, three of them have a picture of an occupation inside and another one is empty. The students are invited to look at what is inside, being careful not to reveal it to anyone. They take turns describing the pictures of the jobs in front of the class even the student with the empty envelope who has to invent a description to fool the class. The students in each group ask questions to guess who the liar is and what names of occupations are being described. The first one in guessing who “The Liar” is wins. Then, another four students come to the front and the game starts again. In this stage, students make use of the vocabulary and language they have learned to summarize what has been said while collaborating in group work.

The pictures to be described are displayed bellow:



The printed material is available at the following link

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DmWruCX5VnqI4bc3zs\\_4LBUDikBPVUT/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DmWruCX5VnqI4bc3zs_4LBUDikBPVUT/view?usp=sharing)

**Evaluation:**

Finally, with the purpose of assessing the students' achievement of the objective of the strategy, the teacher asks students to divide the class in two groups to prepare a short interview. Some students in a group will answer questions and the others will ask questions. Students from group A take turns interviewing students from group B and vice versa. They ask about what their families do for a living. Example: What does your do for a living? "My father had grown vegetables since he was twenty". Each group asks at least three questions. Every member of the group should be prepared because they do not know who will be interviewed.



#### **4.5.2 Description of the second teaching strategy**

**Second strategy:**

Explaining meaning through games

**Objective of the strategy:**

To give oral information about jobs in order for students to improve the speaking skill through communicative games with the purpose of explaining with simple words what she/he means with another word orally.

**Variable:**

Speaking skill

**Indicator:**

Communicative games

**Level:**

Tenth grade

**Unit:**

One

**Scenario:**

Love What We Do!

**Theme:**

Jobs

**Assessment strategy:**

Explains with simple words what she/he means with another word orally when he/she cannot think of the exact word.

**Didactic Sequence:**

Spoken Interaction.

- Planning
- Organizing
- Rehearsing
- Interacting
- Describing

### **Implementation of the second teaching strategy**

Explaining meaning through games is the second teaching strategy that composes the alternative methodological proposal. It is important to mention that these activities keep accordance with the MEP's syllabus established with the purpose of planning the lessons. Therefore, they are developed following the didactic sequence in order to achieve the assessment strategy defined for the skill of speaking. The purpose of this strategy is to help students give oral information about jobs through communicative games. By means of communicative games, the tenth-grade students are able to explain the meaning of a word using other words. Participating in games fosters collaborative learning and improves the speaking skill. According to the sequence established in the syllabus, the stages of this strategy is developed as follows:

#### **Planning**

In the first section of the didactic sequence, students will play a game called "Crazy Balls". The class is divided in two groups, A and B. Each group chooses some players. These players come to the front to pull out a ball from a "Tombola ball" which has the name and picture of items used in different occupations. Taking turns, each player from group A explains what those items are for in a job. The other players in the group guess the name of the job. Then, players from group B have their turn. The group that spends less time guessing the name of jobs, is the winner.

Suggested material

## Accountant



## Taxi driver



## Lawyer



## Doctor



## Pharmacist



## Artist



## Farmer



## Police officer



## Baker



The printable material is available at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VM-gEVLc1MAakjjGBT9jMzLD8O000zr/view?usp=sharing>

## Organizing

In this section, the class is divided into pairs. The teacher brings to each student a card with a picture of an occupation. Students have one minute to write down the name of items regarding this occupation. When the time is over, in pairs, the teacher asks one student to name orally the words that she/he wrote, and the second student has to guess the name of the occupation. Then they change their role. Finally, the teacher checks the learner's progress and brings feedback.

Suggested material:



The printable material is available at the following link:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RQ4JNuFrZTQYGoKLUBM\\_Y6lua\\_Q7Cw2r/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RQ4JNuFrZTQYGoKLUBM_Y6lua_Q7Cw2r/view?usp=sharing)

## Rehearsing

In this step, the class is divided in 3 groups. The teacher gives each group a set of letters that form the name of a job. The teacher takes the time and after arranging the correct word, the group makes up a sentence about the job without telling the exact name of the job. The group that finishes first wins 3 points, the second group wins 2 points and the third one wins 1 point. Example: The word is “police officer.” The students can say “This person takes criminals to jail.”

## Suggested material

**Talkative scrabble**  
Let's play

**"Talkative Scrabble",**  
The following material contains a list of words with their corresponding spelling which must be cut out by the teacher before giving them to the students, so that they finally organize the words in a correct way

- Firefighter  
**FIREFIGHTER**
- Accountant  
**ACCOUNTANT**
- Actor  
**ACTOR** ✂
- Architect  
**ARCHITECT**
- Artist  
**ARTIST**

**"Talkative Scrabble",**

- Bus Driver  
**BUSDRIIVER**
- Waiter  
**WAITER**
- Baker  
**BAKER** ✂
- Butcher  
**BUTCHER**
- Farmer  
**FARMER**

**"Talkative Scrabble",**

- Pharmacist  
**PHARMACIST**
- Taxi Driver  
**TAXIDRIVER**
- Lawyer  
**LAWYER** ✂
- Architect  
**DOCTOR** **SON**
- Delivery person  
**DELIVERYPER**

The material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

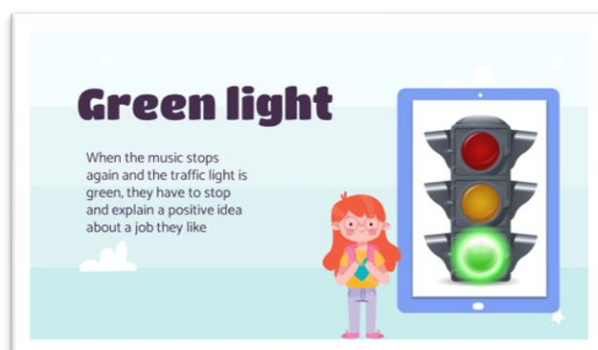
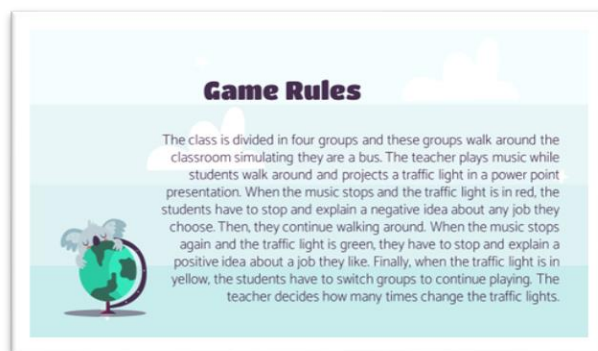
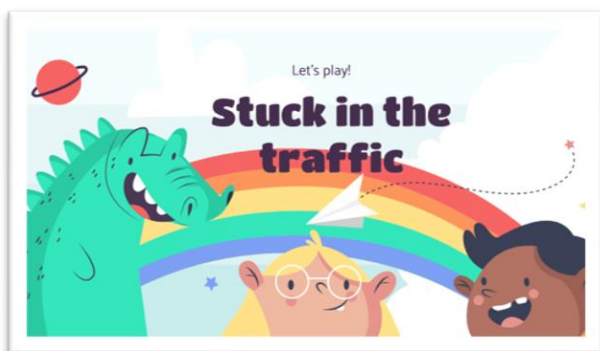
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vIgKDI\\_OMynyB9pZ\\_x4ZrOvQKD3ia787/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vIgKDI_OMynyB9pZ_x4ZrOvQKD3ia787/view?usp=sharing)

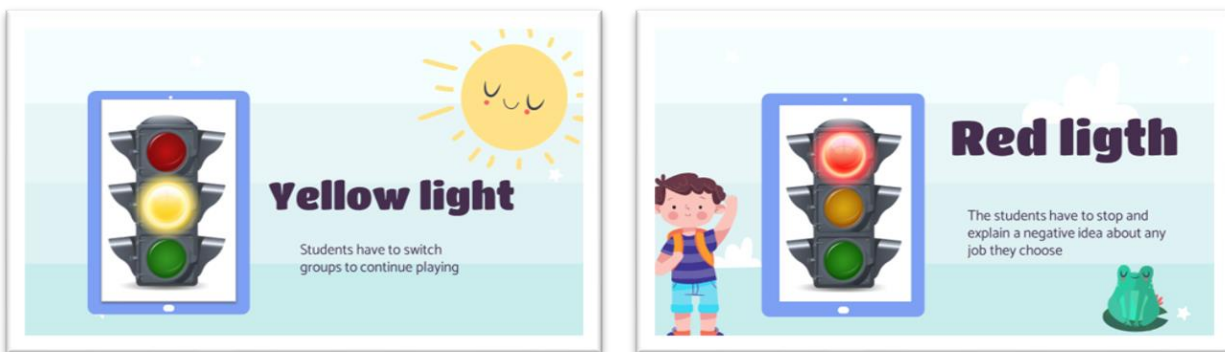
## Interacting

In this step, students play a game called “stuck in the traffic”. The class is divided into learners A and B. Teacher asks learners to walk and dance around the classroom simulating they are a bus in groups. The teacher plays music while students walk around and projects a traffic light in a power point presentation. When the music stops and the traffic light is in red, student A has to stop dancing and take a job item from a box and explains with simple words what it means orally. Then, they continue dancing around. When the music stops again and the traffic light is green, learners B have to stop dancing and take a job item from a box, and explains with simple words what it means orally. Finally, when the traffic light is in yellow, the students have to switch groups to continue playing. The teacher decides how many times change the traffic lights.

Suggested material

Power Point Presentation





The material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task. If you want to use the material download the Power Point Presentation for better results.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/101zxSHdbEho00vfE7qVKJM3xNqq\\_54d0/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/101zxSHdbEho00vfE7qVKJM3xNqq_54d0/view?usp=sharing)

### **Describing**

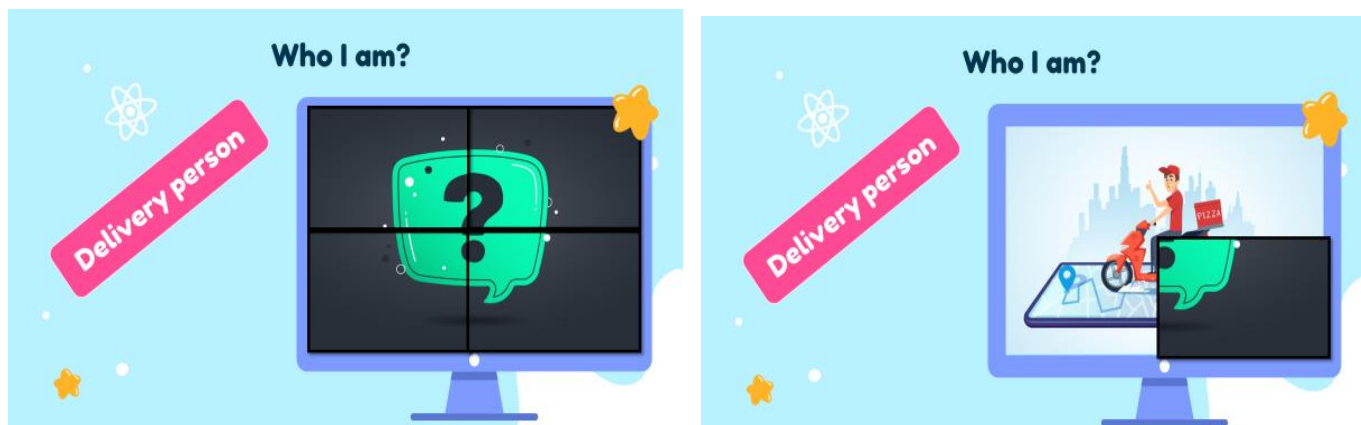
During this stage, the class is divided in two groups, A and B. In a power point presentation, the teacher places a hidden photo. The photo is of an occupation. Students from group A are assigned 5 photographs. They pull out one part of the first photo and offer a short explanation about the hidden job for the other group to guess the name of the job. Each group should ask at least one question and the group that takes less time guessing the name of the five occupations wins. This strategy needs the group collaboration and participation.

The material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

Suggested material

Power Point Presentation





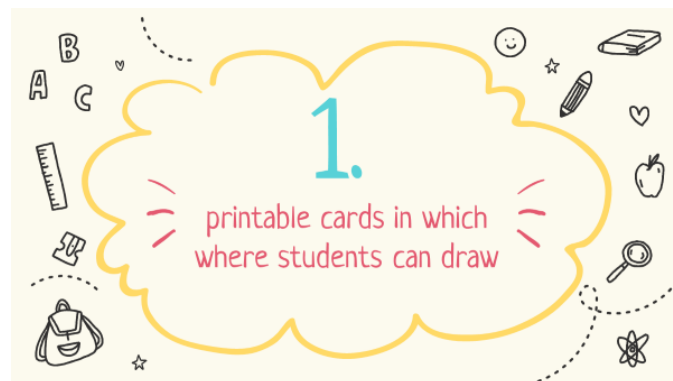
The material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nCFbGfj6iJ8sXAtxI690CZEqkWQ-YN1a/view?usp=sharing>

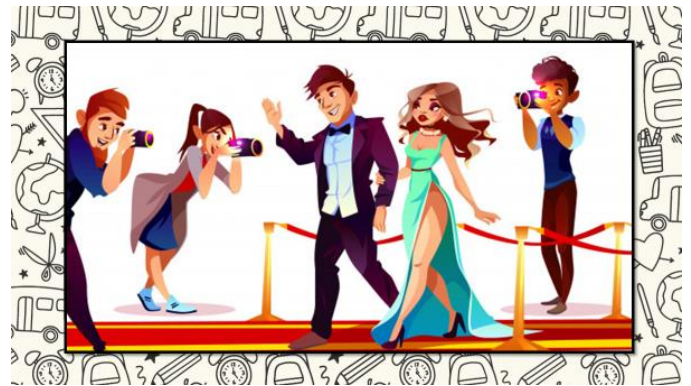
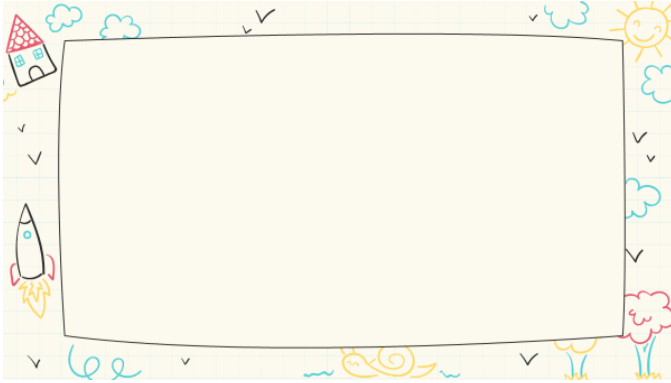
### Evaluation

Finally, for assessing the students' achievement of the activity, students play a final game. Students are divided into students A and B. The teacher gives a card with a picture of a job to students A, and a sheet of paper, and a marker to students B. In pairs, students A sit back-to-back with students B. Student A explains the characteristic of items of a job' related to the occupation of the picture, without saying the name of the occupation. Students B draws a picture based on the explanation given, Then, student B guess the name of the occupation related to those items. Finally, the teacher checks the learner's progress and brings feedback.

Suggested material.







The material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_iat1qIP1QGWWrZgkqPvnS4harD-xz3g/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_iat1qIP1QGWWrZgkqPvnS4harD-xz3g/view?usp=sharing)

### 4.5.3 Description of the third teaching strategy

**Third strategy:**

Integrating skills

**Objective of the strategy:**

To integrate linguistic skills in order for students to use the target language with the purpose of producing face to face conversations and interviews about personal experiences, feelings, opinions and reactions about a job or occupation.

**Variable:**

Speaking skill

**Indicator:**

Skills integration

**Level:**

Tenth grade

**Unit:**

One

**Scenario:**

Love What We Do!

**Theme:**

Working to Live or Living to Work?

**Assessment strategy:**

Produces face to face conversations and interviews about personal experiences, feelings, opinions and reactions about a job or occupation.

**Didactic Sequence:**

Spoken Interaction.

- Planning
- Organizing
- Rehearsing
- Interacting
- Describing

**Implementation of the second teaching strategy**

Integrating skills is the third teaching strategy that composes the alternative methodological proposal. It is important to mention that these activities keep accordance with the MEP's syllabus established with the purpose of planning the lessons. Therefore, they are developed following the didactic sequence in order to achieve the assessment strategy defined for the skill of speaking. The purpose of this strategy is to lead students to integrate skills while playing or doing group work using the target language to produce conversations and interviews. Students can integrate skills such as listening and speaking to foster their language. According to the sequence established in the syllabus, the stages of this strategy is developed as follows:

**Planning**

In the first section of the didactic sequence, the students work in pairs and the teacher gives to them a box with the name of a job. Inside the box, students can find vocabulary, pictures and questions about that job. Students have to produce a conversation based on the words and materials found in the box. The teacher monitors the performance of each conversation.

The printable material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LTW0UWAtpZ0bgHUrUp8-bP1T25rBrjtD/view?usp=sharing>

Suggested material:

## Job Discovery

I wonder what profession it contains....

Printable Material



## Materials

The image below suggests the design of a paper box which can be used for the "Job Discovery" activity.





### POLICE OFFICER

I want to be a ...	love
Where do they work? Patrolling public areas.	care
What do they do? Maintain law and order	duty
Mention some important characteristics of this profession	law
By the way, there's something else I wanted to mention...	permanent job
	night shift
	hard work

**Police officer**





### FIREFIGHTER

I want to be a ...	recue
Where do they work? Fire stations, on the scenes of fires and other emergencies	brave
What do they do? Firefighters control and put out fires and respond to emergencies	emergency
Mention some important characteristics of this profession	duty
By the way...	permanent job
	night shift
	hard work

**Firefighter**



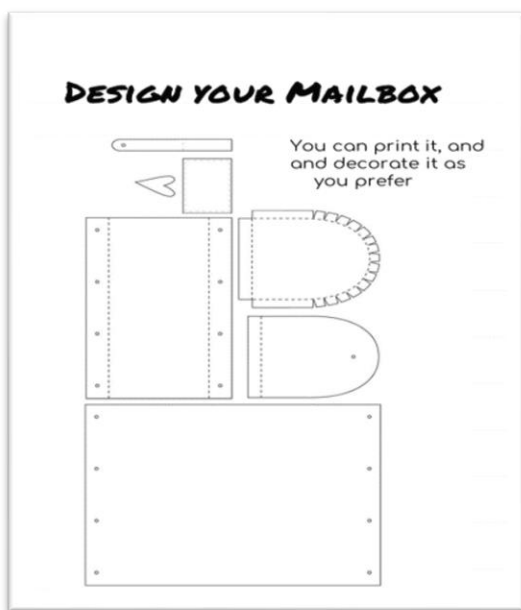
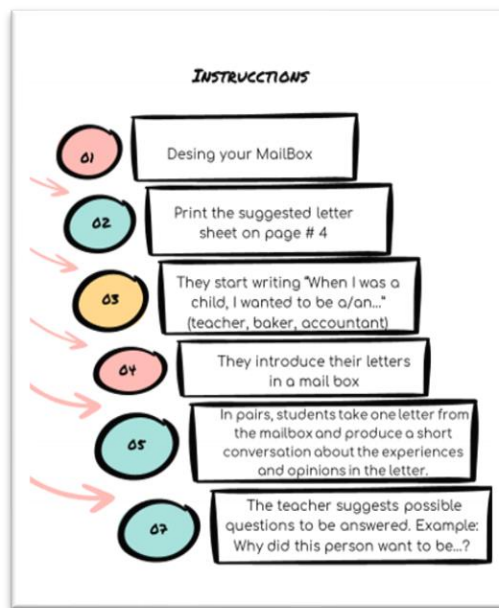


## Organizing

In this step, teacher explains the task "Mailbox", students write an anonymous letter about their dream job. They write about what they wanted to be when they were children and give opinions about the job they wanted. They start writing "When I was a child, I wanted to be a/an..." (teacher, baker, accountant) They introduce their letters in a mailbox the teacher has on his desk. In pairs,

students take one letter from the mailbox and produce a short conversation about the experiences and opinions in the letter. The teacher suggests possible questions to be answered. Example: Why did this person want to be...? The teacher monitors the performance of the task.

Suggested material:





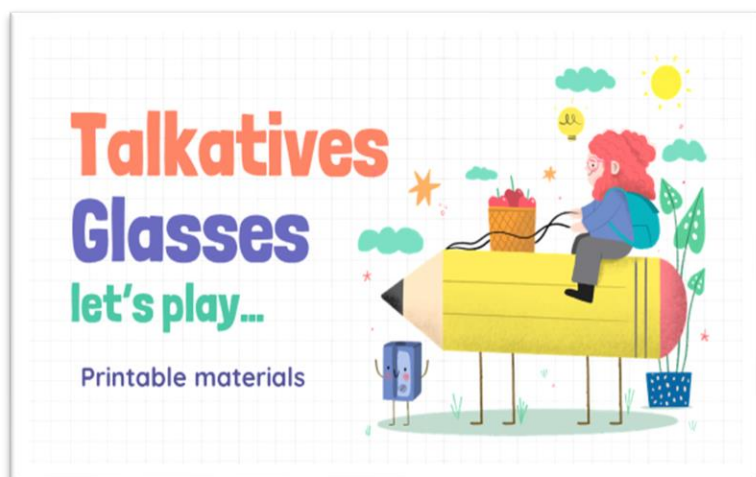
The printable material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11XBNFv\\_i1C54ChptNhxmsbGCMGJPZWDW/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11XBNFv_i1C54ChptNhxmsbGCMGJPZWDW/view?usp=sharing)

## Rehearsing

In this step, teacher explains the task “Talkative Glasses”, the teacher places ten different glasses in a table. These glasses have a number from 1 to 10 stucked on them and popsicles inside. The popsicles have questions students answer in order to produce a conversation based on the questions given. For example, “Would you like to be a doctor? Why? Why not? What do you think is the best about that job? Students in each pair roll a digital dice that gives them the number of their glass. After that, students read the questions in the paddles to start the conversation. After finishing, they roll the dice again to change the number of the glass. In this way, students create new dialogues about different jobs

Suggested material:



### Instructions

<p><b>01</b> The teacher places ten different glasses around the classroom. These glasses have a number from 1 to 10 stucked on them and paddles inside</p>	<p><b>02</b> The paddles have questions students answer in order to produce a conversation based on the questions given</p>
<p><b>03</b> Students in each pair roll a digital dice that gives them the number of their glass</p>	<p><b>04</b> After that, students read the questions in the paddles to start the conversation. After finishing, they roll the dice again to change the number of the glass</p>

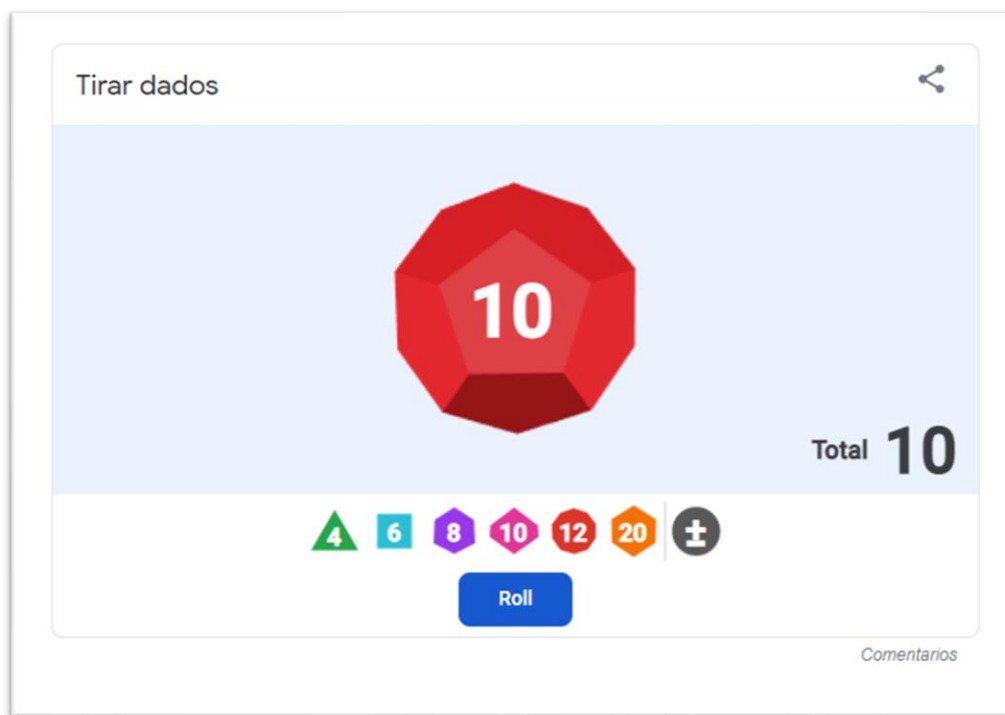


The printable material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X3R0ZSO44pR4IVMw1bayOvTAdfQ3S0K\\_/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X3R0ZSO44pR4IVMw1bayOvTAdfQ3S0K_/view?usp=sharing)

Digital dice: You can program the digital dice according to the number of dice that you need

<https://tinyurl.com/y8rrwlgh>



## Interacting

In this step, students take roles in order to complete the task “Job Stands”. Some students are attending a vocational fair where they can find six job stands (stations). The teacher gives to students of each stand a card of possible questions to be asked, but they can ask their own questions. Every student visiting the stations wants to know if they have the profile for each job. They go to each station to have a short interview. They are asked about their abilities and opinion about the jobs. For example, “Why do you think being a doctor is your dream job?” At the end of the interview, the students in the stands would say if the students interviewed have the profile to fulfill the job.

Suggest material. Printable cards with possible questions.

The printable material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

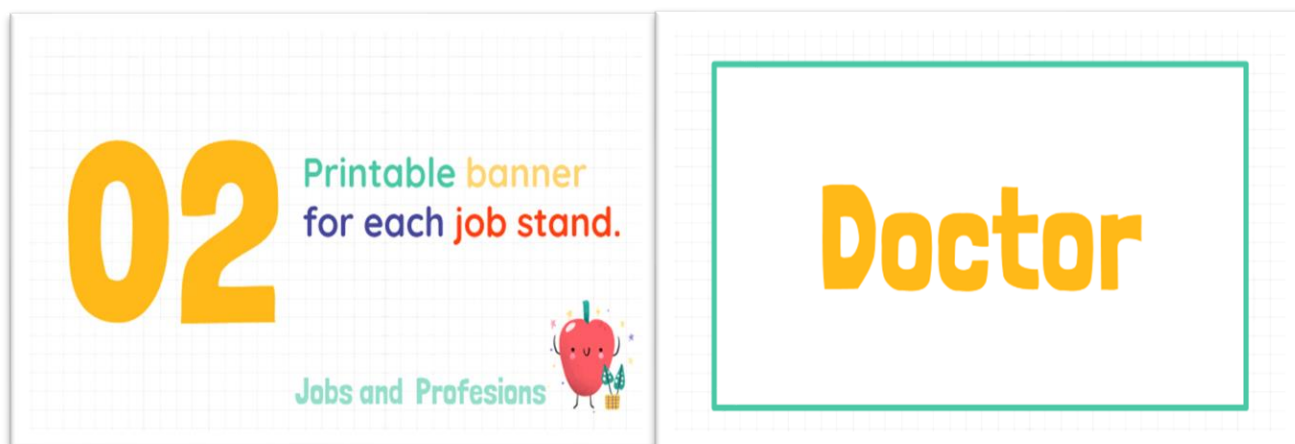
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cQhi-jmmCKdYOsIvgmIq3cXSn-U287sZ/view?usp=sharing>







Printable banners for each station



### Describing

At this stage in the sequence, learners work individually in the task “Job Stations Results”. The teacher provides a survey with possible questions. Each learner applies a survey to 5 different classmates in order to find out which were the job stations in which their profiles best fit. Each learner must take notes of each survey. Finally, as a group, the learners orally share opinions and

reactions about the profession that each found most attractive and the reason why their classmates have these profiles.

Suggest material:



**job stations results**  
Printable material

### 1. What is the job profile in which you best fit?

♥ Job profile

Job	Waiter	Doctor	Police O	firefighter	Teacher	Lawyer
Student 1						
Student 2						
Student 3						
Student 4						
Student 5						

### 2. What do you think is the best about this job?

Student	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

**Instructions**

-  Learners work individually
-  The teacher provides a survey with possible questions, which can be modified
-  Each learner applies a survey to 3 different classmates in order to find out which were the job stations in which their profiles best fit
-  As a group, the learners orally share opinions and reactions about the profession that each found most attractive and the reason why their classmates have these profiles.
-  Each learner must take notes of each survey.



**Survey**



The printable material is available at the following link, it includes all the necessary resources to carry out the task:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LaUIqWz2OAGUNj3IyNw2JPhdI34GKIPq/view?usp=sharing>

## Evaluation

Finally, for assessing the students' achievement of the activity, students record a conversation talking about what they dream job and why they liked this job, teacher shows an example. Then, they send the conversation to another pair of students. The second pair of students write the information they heard in the recording and put it in the mailbox of the teacher.

Suggest material:

Conversation example.

### *My dream Job*

- Ana: Hi Luis. How are you?
- Luis: Fine. Thank you and you?
- Ana: Have you already decided that you want to study when you finish school?
- Luis: No. no yet
- Luis: I was thinking of going to a vocational fair
- Ana: That is perfect.
- Ana: I have always dreamed of being a doctor
- Luis: Really. Would you like to take care of sick people?
- Ana: Yes. I love to help people, I like sciences, and I've always seen Greys' Anatomy.
- Ana: But, tell me about you. What do you like?
- Luis: I am really good at Math
- Ana: Oh, so you are really smart.
- Ana: I think that you can be a Teacher or an Architect
- Luis: Yes, I've thought about it.
- Luis: My Mom always said that.
- Ana: I am sure that you will choose very well. Take care, see you soon Luis.
- Luis: Goodbye Ana. See you later.

Suggest voice recorder:

<https://online-voice-recorder.com/es/>    <https://www.rev.com/onlinevoicerecorder>

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.media.bestrecorder.audiorecorder>

## 4.6 Social and Educational Impact

### 4.6.1 Social Impact

Most sociology theories have focused on education as a strong factor able to modify society. Since education is a tool to generate productivity, industrialized countries look for establishing a line between education, economic and social development. Costa Rica has also experienced the effects of education in its society. The population in Costa Rica usually had agricultural labor and did not attend to school. Fortunately, the governments have made great efforts to have primary school education obligatory for children. Nowadays, education allows individuals to improve their social status. Regarding this argument, Estado de La Nación, Costa Rica (2017) discusses if universities are graduating prepared workers needed by the workforce with the tools to get an appropriate way of life. (p.274) This means that the government pretends to overcome poverty through education. In fact, most educative programs bring big changes to education to prepare individuals to face a globalized economy. English Teaching is part of the plan to educate students and give them tools to improve their lives. MEP (2016) in Programas de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada states that “Speaking English fluently is one of the abilities a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner must develop to have access to better life opportunities.” (p.4) It also adds that “English was declared a national interest to improve the country’s competitiveness to bolster the productive sector.” (p.4) It highlights how the government gives importance to a new language as a tool to lower poverty. Lowering poverty through education can indeed have a social impact. This proposal contributes to the field of education improving the way the target language is learned by pupils. Obviously, the results would foster the speaking skill, giving pupils a tool to open new opportunities in their professions or future jobs. Pupils need to master a new language without being afraid of facing the world. The most academically prepared they are, the greater opportunities they have to change their social position. Schneiner (2018) explains that “a relatively large body of empirical research has demonstrated that social class differences in cognitive skills begin very early in life.” (p.28) It means any effort made to prepare pupils, any change or any new project proposed to improve the pupils’ abilities, gives them a wide world of social and economic improvement.

In the first strategy called “Talking about what we love to do”, students are part of collaborative learning through group work activities specifically communicative games. Pupils are able to use the target language orally to describe jobs. Through games and group work, they have

a strong interaction with their partners that helps them to socialize. As it was mentioned by Sharrat (2016) “Collaborative Learning Approach in the classroom develops significant academic and social benefits for students.” (parr. 3, preface) It can be stated that collaborative learning brings social interaction between students. Pupils are part of a social context in which they are participants. Through this strategy, pupils experience being part of a group that works together to fulfill a task. Westergaard (2009) says “a group is made up of individuals with shared needs who will benefit from the opportunity to work with, and learn from others to develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes.” (p.6) It means that games and group work contribute to form social agents to build a better society. Being participants in group work activities, pupils develop values important for living in a society such as collaboration, friendship, and respect for each other as community members. This strategy can also form future leaders able to solve problems in their communities.

The three strategies in this alternative methodological proposal seek to develop pupils with new abilities that enable them to improve their social and even their economic situation. In the second strategy, pupils are given the information they can use to explain what they mean with other words. This strategy proposes communicative games as a tool to introduce pupils into a more relaxed atmosphere and make them start speaking in the Target language to solve real-life tasks. Interaction given by games, helps learners to have better social development in their classroom. Society demands social agents to be competitive, and enhancing a language skill such as speaking, is a great advantage to fit a demanding social context. Every society has its own requirements and Costa Rica is not an exception. In fact, MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada states “The development of communicative competence in English is an aspiration and a request of the Costa Rican society upon the educational system.” (p.6) Communicative games enhance the speaking skill naturally preparing pupils for the real situations faced in society.

In the strategy called “Integrating Skills” pupils are involved in group work activities and games in which they are able to produce conversations, interviews and they can express opinions. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada defines skill integration as a “Combination of two or more language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing when working with tasks so students will incorporate important aspects into their language learning”. In this way, students are motivated to integrate language skills while playing.

Thanks to this strategy, pupils are introduced to real situations they find in the society. They are enabled to fit a role in a conversation where they feel confident. This ability makes pupils the perfect candidates to face social challenges.

In a summary, education is the best way to positively shape the society of a nation, allowing the population to improve their social status. Therefore, it is important to establish correct educational strategies so that social agents are competent in the use of the language so that they can opt for better job opportunities and therefore strengthen the economy and reduce poverty levels. So, this proposal through its three strategies contributes directly to the field of education and society since it allows improving how social agents learn the target language.

#### **4.6.2 Educational Impact**

Efforts made to construct modern teaching methods, new teaching programs, and new projects for developing changes in the educative system, have a positive educational impact. Burns (2010) says that “The point is that, as teachers, we often see gaps between what is actually happening in our teaching situation and what we would ideally like to see happening.” (p.2) This proposal wants teachers to foster the speaking skill. It is hard for students to complete speaking tasks. Through the activities and games proposed in this alternative methodological proposal, the educational field would obtain results reflected in more interactive, motivated, and skillful pupils. However, changes in planning for the Target language class, have to be accompanied by the rest of the educative community in their efforts to impact the education. Kemmis et al., (2014) comment the following:

When these apparently small, local, efforts connect up, however, across classroom, schools, communities and societies, they can clearly be recognized as contributions not only to the education of the people involved, but also to wider social movements in the interest of the whole human community.” (p.13)

As it can be seen, an alternative methodological proposal like the one presented here can bring benefits from pupils to an entire community because every participant in the educative system is connected. If a proposal shows improvement in groups of pupils, it can result in the improvement of the entire educative system. Kemmis also adds that “an action research initiatives in these areas were and are significant because they connected ordinary people- teachers, students, principals, members of school communities- with social movements changing the communities and societies

around them.” (p.13) This proposal is effective in improving one of the most important language skills. Speaking English fluently must be improved inside the educative field to open opportunities in a competitive world, and education has to be as competitive as the job market is nowadays.

The first strategy changes the traditional methods to enhance the speaking skill. The activities proposed in the didactic sequence of the strategy are collaborative learning activities pupils perform in a group. The implementation of communicative games for enhancing the speaking skill takes advantage of collaborative learning to help teachers change the traditional teaching methods. Collaborative learning is relevant in the strategy because it offers advantages to foster the knowledge construction process. Pupils working together through games stimulate their learning. Pritchard (2009) says that “work with others can be a stimulus to greater enjoyment of learning and to deeper level of thought about the topic in question.” (p.92) Pupils leave behind the old learning method in which they were sitting on a desk and start to interact with their peers to build their own knowledge. The games proposed in this strategy offers teachers significant activities for the learning process, real-life situations, and innovations. Working in groups gives pupils a role when solving a task.

The second strategy leads to the accomplishment of the main goal of this proposal. This strategy proposes communicative games as an innovative method for motivating pupils to speak the Target language, improving in this way the educational field. Using games as part of teachers’ planning increases the possibility to have motivated pupils in the classroom because they feel interested in participating and not in committing mistakes when speaking. As it was mentioned by Richards, J., & Renondya, W. (2002) “communicative goals are best achieved by giving, due attention to language use and not just usage, to fluency and not just accuracy, to authentic language and contexts.” (p.13) It is on this point, where games can facilitate meaningful contexts for learners because communicative games have features traditional teaching methods do not have. They are engaging, spontaneous, and funny activities that provide pupils with a stimulating and pleasant work environment. That is a reason to consider communicative games as an innovative change in education. Regarding this argument, Wright, A. et al., (2006) commented before that “games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful.” (p.2) It can be hard for teachers who prefer traditional methods to get up from their desks and motivate students to play. Nevertheless, they have to consider that every significant change in education has always

found criticism to build new and better innovations. However, the success of a proposal like the use of communicative games depends on how interested a teacher is in improving the knowledge of his pupils.

The third strategy of this alternative methodological proposal brings a great change in the way teachers usually integrate skills in the classroom. It proposes to integrate skills through learning strategies that use communicative games to improve language skills especially speaking. The traditional teaching methods have the teacher as the agent with the main role in the knowledge construction process, making students read and answer questions about texts without producing a single oral English word. This strategy proposes games in which receptive and productive skills are performed. As it was cited by Nunan, D. (2004) “these days it is generally accepted that language is more than a set of grammatical rules, with attendant sets of vocabulary to be memorized. It is a dynamic resource for creating meaning.” (p.6) It means learning a language should be an active and interactive process contrary to a memorization action. Students, as social agents, have to learn the language to perform actions in real-life contexts meaningfully. The third strategy guides students through real-life situations where they need to integrate skills forgetting about stressing grammatical rules, moving around the classroom to fulfill a task.

In summary, it is possible to generate a positive educational impact through alternative methodological proposals for the improvement of student learning. That is why this alternative methodological proposal seeks to significantly improve the educational field in the teaching of English through these three strategies which contain the real tasks and communicative games that allow innovatively and attractively for social agents to improve their language skills and thus achieve the goals proposed in the Costa Rican educational system. Therefore, providing social agents with better opportunities, as well as offering a more competitive education in the face of the demands of a globalized society. In the following segment of information, it is detailed in-depth a conclusion critical analysis of the chapter.

#### **4.7 Chapter’s conclusion critical analysis.**

This alternative methodological proposal states the implementation of games in three strategies that together give the teachers a guide to lead pupils from the traditional teaching



methods to more interactive methods in order to improve the knowledge construction process. This alternative methodological proposal complies with certain principles that were taken into account during its planning, the principle of applicability, viability, and relevance. First, it is a proposal that can be applied in any educational institution of the Third Cycle of Diversified Education in Costa Rica, specifically the tenth level learners. The second principle with which this methodological proposal complies, which is viable since it has no limitation to carrying out an effective application in any educational institution since it provides the teacher with a complete guide of interactive activities, as well as all the material in format PDF which can be printable and is editable. And finally, it is a relevant proposal, since its fundamental principle is to foster speaking skills in the knowledge construction process of the pupils.

Traditional teaching methods usually have the teacher as the center of the process and the students are waiting for instruction without moving or interacting with the rest of the learners. Their learning is limited to reading and answering questions without experiencing significant learning for everyday situations. Learning a language is an active and constantly changing process in which pupils take their input and transform it into new knowledge. However, if teachers want to have a social and educational impact on their pupils, they must be willing to include changes in the teaching-learning process. Teachers can apply modern teaching methods and proposals to help pupils to better their social and economic situations in the future through education. Education is always a way to decrease poverty. Regarding this assertion, Schneider explains the following:

One result of this is the existence of a strong positive relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and the years of school completed by their children. Since, in modern industrialized societies, educational attainment determines occupational attainment, which in turn is strongly related to earning, the sequence of events leading to social reproduction is relatively clear. (Schneider, 2018. P.3)

Education is always changing, giving pupils new ways to learn through new teaching methods in which pupils have a protagonist role. Regarding the Target language learning, they need to experience the use of language integrating the skills with the purpose of being able of communicating their ideas. Pupils cannot achieve speaking proficiency if they do not interact with their peers, solving problems in every task, playing and having fun while learning naturally. Sometimes being SL teachers, makes teachers forget about how new knowledge is learned by

pupils when they are babies. They do not have to forget Krashen (1984 as cited in Harmer 2007) who claims that “language which we acquire subconsciously (especially when it is anxiety-free) is language we can easily use in spontaneous conversation.” (p.50)

Modern teaching methods allow teachers to introduce new learning experiences into the classroom. Students can have a new perspective about what learning is and how significant it is in their life. In fact, Mehring & Leis (2018) mention that “F2F class time involves not only changing in class teaching methods but also adjusting the students’ perception of how they are accustomed to learning and the teacher’s role in the classroom.” (p.2) It suggests that students can have a new role in the classroom as well as the teacher’s role. These roles change when teachers are opened to apply new methods in their classroom. Baker et al., also add the following argument:

Activities that would normally take outside the classroom, conventionally known as homework, are restructured and rescheduled to take place during the times that the class meets face to face(F2F) This significant switch impacts the role and responsibilities of instructors and students alike and holds the potential for improving classroom-based learning experiences for both groups. (Baker et al. 2000, as cited in Mehring & Leis, 2018)

It means new teaching methods change classroom experiences to be more real bringing a more collaborative role of the pupils in the class activity. The class activities can change the boring traditional method into something meaningful and funny. According to Hall & Hewings (2001) to change the traditional method to innovation, teachers must consider the next:

In adopting a methodology characterized by learning and teaching as communicative and differentiated process, the classroom no longer needs to be seen as a pale representation of some outside communicative reality. It can become the meeting-place for realistically motivated communication-as learning, communication about learning, and meta communication. (p.17)

Regarding this, teachers who integrate modern teaching methods in their planning would reach communicative, collaborative, and motivated learning atmospheres. Teachers need indeed more creative pupils in the classroom, leaders with skills to solve real tasks. But, for reaching this goal it is necessary to change the traditional teaching method. Stevens & McGuinn (2004) say “the curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively and critically...to make a difference for the

better. It should give them the opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership.” (p.2) They also add that teachers have to bring tools like technology to the class. With technology, it is more possible to change teacher-centered instruction to a student-centered with task-based learning. It provides environments where students use their new knowledge and having access to feedback, formulate their own ideas, their new language. As it can be seen, modern teaching methods turn students who are always sitting in a chair, reading without any interaction and any task, into students with a reason to use the target language, a reason to learn it to solve a task.

On the other hand, if teachers want to have creative learners, it is necessary to be creative teachers. Teachers have to give up simply covering the printed material but to discover ways to help pupils in learning it. In other words, if teachers want to change students’ learning, they have to change their mindset. Maley & Kiss (2018) comment that teachers must “provide interesting, accurate and relevant input at a level appropriate for the learners. To offer opportunities for massive amounts of practice, without massive boredom.” (p.139) That is why, teachers need to change the way they teach and make students enjoy it. Maley & Kiss (2018) add that “Interestingly a creative teacher is considered to be synonymous with ‘good’ teacher who, among other things, is active, entertaining, friendly, interesting, optimistic, passionate and so on.” (p.144) It is clear that for a teacher to be considered a good teacher, he must forget about following the traditional role of a boring teacher who is always in a desk without interacting with his pupils. The interaction and a good rapport in a class can make a big difference. Regarding this, Scrivener (2014), as it is quoted in Maley & Kiss (2018), argue the following:

Teaching and learning are live. As a teacher I need to be watching, listening, thinking, and intuiting constantly deciding for each individual learner (and with each individual learner) What the thing is that they need to hear, do, see, notice, think about, try, improve or use next. (p.183)

It shows how important the interaction among teachers and students is in order to achieve an active teaching-learning process. Teachers who do not change their mindset about teaching are not able to give significant contributions to their educative field.

The following segment of information gives rise to chapter V Reflections of this alternative methodological proposal in which an abstract of the chapter is developed in depth.

## **Chapter V Reflections**

## 5.1 Introductory paragraph

### Abstract sample

The present action-research investigation represents the final project that is required to obtain the degree of licentiate in the English Teaching major at Universidad Latina de Costa Rica. This action-research investigation contains a proposal English educational system of the Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica, with the topic “The Implementation of Communicative Games for enhancing the Speaking Skill in the Knowledge Construction Process”. The objective of this research project is to determine how the strategy using communicative games can reinforce the speaking skill competence among high school students. Therefore, the literature review shows information gathered that is related to the main variables of the study: collaborative learning, speaking skill, and knowledge construction process.

Because this is an action-research project, an alternative methodological proposal is presented in order to establish that communicative games can help learners to achieve speaking skill with the implementation of three different strategies designed to be carried out in proposal that can be applied in any educational institution of the Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica.

Finally, the conclusions and recommendations for the participant parties (principal and English teachers of Costa Rica educational system) reflect the main findings of the study, as well as the proposed actions that need to be taken in order to help learners to achieve better speaking competence through the use of communicative games in the knowledge construction process.

Keywords: communicative games, knowledge construction process, speaking skill.

The fifth chapter of this action research investigation is a relevant part of this alternative methodological proposal since it contains reflections, conclusions, and recommendations, which seek to answer the main questions of this action research. Christensen (2006) mentions the importance of the research questions for an investigation “It is convenient to pose, by means of one or more questions, the problem to be studied. Asking it in the form of questions has the advantage of presenting it directly, which minimizes distortion of the research” (as is quoted, Hernandez-Sampieri, 2014, pp. 38). Therefore, through these answers, conclusions and

recommendations can be established that guarantee the purposes of the research, which has the purpose of enhancing the knowledge construction process of learners, through the implementation of pedagogical actions by implementing communicative games in order to improve the learners speaking skills of Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica.

As in any research method, it is necessary to answer the research questions that were posed, since the answers to these research questions provide a route that allows the researcher to recognize the main characteristics of the questions in the concrete reality of the research. Leedy and Ormand (2005) mention, “assert that attaining answers to research questions both satisfies the goals of the study and generally contributes to problem-solving within the area of interest” (as is quote, Supino & Borer, 2016, pp. 18). In addition, Ellis and Levy stated, “research questions are important because they serve to operationalize the goals of the study by narrowing them into specific areas of inquiry” (as is quoted, Supino & Borer, 2016, pp. 18). The previous citations mention the importance of the answers to the research questions, and how these allow the researcher to establish reflections, conclusions, and recommendations to certain research.

The questions the nine research questions are derived from the variables and their indicators are closely related, since the research questions in turn form part of the RA theoretical framework in which the problem statement is explicit. Kerlinger and Lee (1986) mention:

An investigation has meaning only when there is a clear nexus between the answers obtained to the research questions and the primary research problem. Like the problem itself, the questions should be clear, concise, optimally lead to testable hypotheses, and collectively capture the overall goal or purpose of the research project. (as is quote, Supino & Borer, 2016, pp. 18).

In the previous quote, it is stated that the research only has meaning when there is a close relationship between the research questions and the research problem in this case the selected variables, so that through the research questions it is possible to establish the reflections, conclusions, and recommendations of the proposal.

In the development of this action research, three variables were selected with their respective indicators and, as previously mentioned, their indicators gave rise to nine research questions, the first variable is Collaborative Learning and its indicators Group Work effectiveness, Interpersonal Skills, and Self-efficacy. The second variable is Speaking Skill with its Communicative Games, monitoring, and skills integration indicators. The third variable is

Knowledge Construction Process and its indicators Action-Oriented Approach, Didactive Sequence, and Tasks. Therefore, in the next segment of information, the research questions are solved in a specific way.

## **5.2 Reflections**

### **How does group work effectiveness is achieved by implementing collaborative learning?**

Through the implementation of collaborative work, it is possible to achieve the effectiveness of group work. Collaborative learning involves two or more students working together toward a shared academic goal. Each student contributes to the other students' learning (California Public Schools, 2015, p.). Besides, MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, envision learners as active agents able to: "use knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond school contexts, express their own points of view, practice peaceful conflict resolution and search for democratic solutions" (p.15). Collaborative learning is a social interaction between students, they as a group share the same purpose of reaching language and that makes the group work effectively. Well-designed group work, therefore, offers a particular kind of language-rich context that cannot be duplicated in whole-class work (Gibbons, 2015, p.50). Through the implementation of methodological strategies based on communicative games, it is possible to implement collaborative learning and therefore achieve the effectiveness of group work since collaborative learning offers favorable learning situations and environments that enhance the knowledge construction process.

### **How are the interpersonal skills improved by implementing collaborative learning?**

By implementing collaborative learning, it is possible to significantly improve interpersonal skills within the classroom, starting from the point that the best way to learn a language is by making use of it through real-life situations. Reddy (2012) mentions the impact of interpersonal skills in education "Friendship and positive child-adult relationships are developed through positive conversational exchanges that reflect the ability to cooperate in play, resolve conflicts, and explore feelings and shared experiences." (p.58). In addition, MEP (2016)

Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mentions, “Learners learn better in collaborative environments and exchanges” (p.22). During collaborative learning, the learner develops interpersonal skills by interacting with classmates in the execution of the proposed strategies, since communicative games require the student to develop good interpersonal skills.

### **How is self-efficacy achieved by the implementation of collaborative learning?**

Through collaborative learning, in the execution of methodological strategies such as real task or communicative games, pupils develop self-efficacy, which is important to strengthen the knowledge construction process. Urdan and Pajares (2006) mention, "Considerable progress has been achieved in documenting the positive role of self-efficacy beliefs in students' academic interest, motivation, management of academic stressors, and growth of cognitive competencies. " (p.10). Also, MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mentions the role of the learner in their own learning process “learners become producers of knowledge, not just consumers. They are subjects of their own knowledge construction process”. Self-efficacy refers to how confident students feel in their ability to read, write, speak, and understand the language, and these characteristics are developed when learners experience collaborative learning.

### **How do communicative games help to improve the speaking skill?**

Communicative games allow the learner to develop the speaking skills because communicative games are an attractive and innovative way of learning, which captures the learners' attention. Wright, A., et al (2006) stated:

Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part, and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information. Games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than merely study it. (p.2)

Through communicative games, pupils learn by playing, and can easily develop speaking skills



because communicative games allow learners to experience the target language in a meaningful way. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mentions the importance of meaningful learning “Application of meaningful learning is fundamental for longlasting learning” (p.22). In addition, MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, “English Curriculum and its ultimate goal the learner’s development of English communicative competence”. The proposed strategies use communicative games as an important teaching strategy, where students will be able to strengthen the speaking skills and develop communicative competence because communicative games exposed learners to language in real-life situations.

### **How does monitoring contribute to enhance learners’ speaking skill?**

Monitoring contributes to enhancing learners’ speaking skill because monitoring is a form of teaching in which the teacher generates a good learning environment. MEP (2016) cited, “Monitoring is a strategy for checking the progress in the learning situations or carrying a learning task”. Good monitoring makes that learners feel the freedom to put into practice the language, they ask, participate, and have a protagonist role in their knowledge construction process. Kyriacou.C. (2007) mentions the advantages of monitoring:

The most important skill involved in maintaining pupils’ involvement is that of carefully monitoring pupils’ progress. This should be done actively, through circulating around the room and asking probing questions, and passively, by having well established routines whereby pupils are encouraged to ask for help. (p.58)

In the application of the strategies proposed is necessary that the teacher applies monitoring, through this teaching technique in the competition of the task the teacher ensure that learners are enhancing the speaking skill, because generates favorable learning situations for the learners, through monitoring the teacher will provide positive reinforcement to learners, in this way in de performance the task they are motivated to complete the activities.

### **How is speaking skill improved by the integration of the skills?**

Implementing skills integration is necessary to improve the speaking skill. In order to achieve competence in the target language, it is necessary that learning must be focused on integrating the four linguistic skills through appropriate learning strategies. MEP (2016) defines skill integration as, “Combination of two or more language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing when working with tasks so students will incorporate important aspects into their language learning” (p.355). Harmer (2007) mention the skill integration in the speaking performance “Almost any speaking activity is bound to involve listening” (p. 273). That is why the strategies proposed contain communicative games in which the learners have to speak and at the same time have to integrate their linguistic skills to complete the task.

### **How does the Action-Oriented Approach help to improve learners’ knowledge construction?**

The Action-Oriented Approach is a new methodology that improves the learners' knowledge construction process through the vision that learners are social agents able to learn the target language. According to MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, the Action-Oriented Approach is “one of the latest communicative language methodologies which places emphasis on what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competences in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios.” (p.28) That means that the action-Oriented Approach helps learners to build their own knowledge through learning experiences in real-life situations. Piccardo. & North. (2019) mention “the AOA ‘views users and learners of a language primarily as “social agents”, i.e., members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action’ (Council of Europe, 2001: 9)”. The Action-Oriented Approach fosters the learners' use of language because it focuses more on meaning rather than grammar structure. The strategies proposed contain meaningful tasks that allow pupils to improve their speaking skill and enhance their knowledge construction process

### **How is knowledge construction improved by the use of didactic sequence?**

Didactic Sequence improves the knowledge construction process because it is a group of learning activities that are planning in a specific order that considers the student's knowledge. Orlich et al., (2007) describe sequencing:

Sequencing is the art of developing a logical plan for instructional activities that will help your students effectively master a body of knowledge or discipline in an organized way. Presenting knowledge in a series of carefully interrelated steps not only helps students to master content but also develops their information-processing skills-that is, their ability to think. (p.134)

In this pedagogical proposal, the proposed strategies take into consideration in a detailed way all the steps of the didactic sequence in accordance with the principles of the Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, learners will develop the speaking skills when they are performing the task in interrelated steps, and as a result, it significantly improves the knowledge construction process.

### **How does the implementation of tasks improve knowledge construction?**

The implementation of tasks improves the knowledge construction process because tasks are meaningful learning experiences. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada highlights the meaning of task "Tasks are defined as any purposeful action considered by an individual, necessary to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfill, or an objective to be achieved". That means tasks are activities with significant pedagogical purposes that can improve the knowledge construction process. Edwards & Willis (2005) mention that "There is some kind of purpose or goal set for the task so learners know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the task." (p.3) It means tasks offer meaningful learning of the language that leads to the improvement of the knowledge construction process.

The strategies proposed in this methodological strategy fulfill the purpose of the tasks, since communicative games are easily adapted and when they are specifically designed and with clear learning goals. In this way task to significantly improve the pupils' knowledge construction process.

## **Chapter VI Conclusions**

## 6.1 Introductory paragraph

The sixth chapter of this action research investigation is a relevant part of this alternative methodological proposal since it is in this chapter where the conclusions obtained from the whole action research process are shared as a guide to be followed by other members of the educative community. At the end of each research process, it is necessary to have an overview about the entire research and state conclusions that lead other members of the educative system through a clear guide about the research. The Indian Distance Education Programme cites “the impact of action taken is evaluated to enable the researcher to draw conclusions and take decisions. The results of the action research are also shared with colleagues, administrators and others who may find the study useful.” (p.33) It gives importance to conclusions because they can be useful tools to be applied. This section gives conclusions that can convince teachers to apply strategies using communicative games in the classroom.

As well as reflections, conclusions must be done at the end of the research process. These conclusions lead the researcher to take decisions about the next steps in the process. Regarding this argument, Burns (2010) states the following:

You will reach a point where you want to bring the process to an end, draw out your overall conclusions and interpretations, and make statements about your research as a whole. This point involves thinking about the entire “story” of research and deciding where it will lead you next. (p.141)

It establishes the necessity to make conclusions to corroborate if the research has had the correct focus and leads to new decisions.

Conclusions respond to variables and indicators in the research. These variables and indicators are factors related to how knowledge construction process is developed. Human beings have established different learning theories which seek to justify how the learner acquires knowledge and under what factors knowledge is influenced. Schunk (2012) describes Vygotsky's theory of learning:

Vygotsky's stresses the interaction of interpersonal, and individual factors as the key to human development... Vygotsky's theory illuminate the point that learning and development cannot be dissociated from their context. The way that learners interact with

their worlds—with the persons, objects, and institutions in it—transforms their thinking.

The meanings of concepts change as they are linked with the world. (p.242)

According to this citation, every variable and indicator must be taken into consideration to understand the knowledge construction process. These interpretations lead the researcher to conclusions to be used as a guide to develop strategies such as the ones proposed in this alternative proposal.

In the development of this action research, three variables were selected with their respective indicators. The first variable is Collaborative Learning and its indicators Group Work effectiveness, Interpersonal Skills, and Self-efficacy. The second variable is Speaking Skill with its Communicative Games, monitoring, and skills integration indicators. The third variable is Knowledge Construction Process and its indicators Action-Oriented Approach, Didactive Sequence, and Tasks. Therefore, in the next segment, the conclusions are established.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

From the variable Collaborative Learning, the following conclusions are stated:

### **Indicator 1: Group Work Effectiveness**

Since Collaborative learning involves students working to reach a goal, group work effectiveness can be achieved by means of collaborative learning activities. Communicative games are collaborative activities in which pupils interact and socialize with their peers achieving group work to solve a task. As cited before, MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, describes learners as active agents able to: “use knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond school contexts, express their own points of view, practice peaceful conflict resolution and search for democratic solutions” (p.15). These abilities are improved during group work making the knowledge construction process possible and effective.

### **Indicator 2: Interpersonal Skills**

Interpersonal skills are improved by implementing collaborative activities such as games.

Games offer real-life situations and tasks in which language must be used. While cooperating in a game, solving a problem, pupils experience interpersonal skills development. Regarding this argument, MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mention, “Learners learn better in collaborative environments and exchanges” (p.22). The interactive environment offered by communicative games improves interpersonal skills and rapport.

### **Indicator 3: Self-efficacy**

Self- efficacy is achieved through collaborative learning activities. Achieving self-efficacy, pupils develop confidence when reading, writing, listening and speaking the target language. Through collaborative learning activities like communicative games, learners develop leadership, decision making and task solving that are of great importance to achieve self-efficacy. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mention the role of the learner in their own learning process “learners become producers of knowledge, not just consumers. They are subjects of their own knowledge construction process”. It means pupils are protagonists of their knowledge construction process and they need self-efficacy to achieve this construction.

From the variable Speaking Skill, the following conclusions are stated:

### **Indicator 4: Communicative Games**

Communicative games help to improve the speaking skill because they make up contexts in which pupils use the language meaningfully. To participate in games, learners must communicate their ideas in order to fulfill a task. Communicative games can be used as teaching strategies where pupils improve and develop speaking skills needed to solve a real-task. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, “English Curriculum and its ultimate goal the learner’s development of English communicative competence”. Through games in any of the three strategies proposed, learners can achieve that effective communicative competence.

**Indicator 5: Monitoring**

Monitoring contributes to enhance pupil's speaking skill because it is a strategy used to observe the progress in learning activities with tasks in which speaking is involved. Monitoring gives learners an important role of participation with the teacher's guide. As mentioned before, MEP (2016) cited, "Monitoring is a strategy for checking the progress in the learning situations or carrying a learning task". It shows the importance it has in the learning process. Through monitoring teachers can give positive reinforcement to pupils.

**Indicator 6: Skills Integration**

The speaking skill is truly improved by integrating skills as well as language competence. Skills integration can be achieved through learning strategies where tasks force pupils to be focused on integrating listening, reading, writing and speaking. MEP (2016) defines skill integration as, "Combination of two or more language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing when working with tasks so students will incorporate important aspects into their language learning" (p.355). Without the skills integration it would be hard to improve the knowledge construction process.

From the variable Knowledge Construction Process, the following conclusions are stated:

**Indicator 7: Action Oriented Approach**

The Action-Oriented Approach improves the knowledge construction process since it is one communicative language methodology focused on the learner's knowledge used to achieve a task offering a real-life setting. According to MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, the Action-Oriented Approach is "one of the latest communicative language methodologies which places emphasis on what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competences in a



meaningful context and real-life scenarios.” (p.28) It means the AOA seeks to give learners a real scenario to develop their abilities when communicating with others.

### **Indicator 8: Didactic Sequence**

Didactic Sequence is a group of learning activities that improve the knowledge construction process. They are planned in an order considering previous knowledge. The order in every learning activity helps pupils to use knowledge in interrelated stages that will result in the improvement of language competence. Orlich et al., (2007) describe the benefits of didactic sequence, they say “Presenting knowledge in a series of carefully interrelated steps not only helps students to master content but also develops their information-processing skills-that is, their ability to think.” (p.134) It shows the importance this order has in the knowledge construction process.

### **Indicator 9: Tasks**

The knowledge construction process is improved by tasks. Tasks are purposeful actions or learning experiences needed to achieve a final goal. Pupils use their knowledge to fulfill the tasks. Communicative games offer meaningful tasks where pupils have to develop communicative competence specially in the speaking skill. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Ingles Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada highlights the meaning of task “Tasks are defined as any purposeful action considered by an individual, necessary to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfill, or an objective to be achieved”. When learners are given a purpose to learn, it would seem easier to solve any task.

## **Chapter VII Recommendations**

## 7.1 Introductory paragraph

The seventh chapter of this action research investigation is of great relevance in this alternative methodological proposal because this chapter offers recommendations to be followed in the development of the teaching strategies proposed with the purpose of helping teachers to take advantage of the proposal. Recommendations serve as a complete guide. Burns (2010) comments the following:

The benefits of presenting our research to other teachers are clear. Teacher accounts allow good teaching and learning ideas to be shared around. Opening up what we do in the classroom inspires us to learn from each other and breaks down classroom isolation. Teachers usually enjoy learning about how other teachers have solved problems they may be experiencing too. They are often surprised, or relieved, to find out that they are not alone in dealing with classroom issues. (p.149)

Burns explains in this citation how important recommendations are to make teachers feel accompanied in the learning-teaching process. This proposal gives strategies and recommendations useful to teachers who want to introduce a new way of fostering speaking in the classroom.

Recommendations are done at the end of any research process as a possible solution for other members in the field of education. The recommendation section is one of the most meaningful sections of a research. Regarding this assertion, Dawson (2009) says:

If you are an employee who has concluded a piece of research for your company, this section could be the most important part of the report. It is for this reason that some written reports contain the recommendation section at the beginning of the report. (p.139)

This section gives participants answers to previous doubts. Terrell (2016) highlights that “The results will include perceived indicators of success, or best practices, in the school district, as well as suggestions by the participants to raise future achievements.” (p.190) It means recommendations bring positive benefits to the teaching experiences. In this case, the recommendations are proposed to achieve the improvement of the speaking skill through strategies in which communicative games are implemented.

Recommendations are based on the information gathered in each variable and indicator as factors that lead to a final result. Every context has its own variables and indicators, but the

recommendations can be a guide in any of them because variables can be shared by different contexts. According to Burns (2010):

More and more, the voices of language teachers from around the world who have done AR are contributing to classroom practice, curriculum development and knowledge about effective ways to teach English in different contexts. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning in our field should become even more open to continuing change and improvement. (p.166)

The variables and indicators in this proposal can be found in different contexts, making recommendations useful to teachers at any school. In the development of this action research, three variables were selected with their respective indicators. The first variable is Collaborative Learning and its indicators Group Work effectiveness, Interpersonal Skills, and Self-efficacy. The second variable is Speaking Skill with its Communicative Games, monitoring, and skills integration indicators. The third variable is Knowledge Construction Process and its indicators Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence, and Tasks. Therefore, in the next segment, the recommendations are stated.

## **7.2 Recommendations**

This Action Research is an alternative methodological proposal, which has the purpose of enhancing the learner's speaking skill of Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica. Based on this the following recommendations are directed to teachers, based on the variable Collaborative Learning and its indicators Group Work Effectiveness, Interpersonal Skills, and Self-efficacy.

- It is recommended to implement learning activities in which students have to make group work effectively, such as communicative games, where students must work sharing their knowledge and at the same time, they can significantly improve their communicative competence. MEP (2016) in Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, describes learners as active agents able to: “use knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond school contexts, express their own points of view, practice peaceful conflict resolution and search for democratic solutions” (p.15). It is possible to achieve the

learning goals proposed in the study programs of the MEP when the teacher applies group work within the classroom. When learners execute tasks in groups, they share their knowledge collaboratively and easily develop their linguistics skills in different learning contexts.

- It is recommended to implement methodological strategies or learning activities in which students develop Interpersonal skills to facilitate the knowledge construction process within the classroom. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mention, “Learners learn better in collaborative environments and exchanges” (p.22). This is possible through the implementation of communicative games since games offer real-life situations where students must put their interpersonal skills into practice. In the execution of communicative games, students must collaboratively solve problems. In the competition of task, they share their knowledge and experiences making learning more meaningful for the learners.
- It is necessary to implement learning activities in which students develop self-efficacy and therefore play a leading role in their own knowledge construction process. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada mention the role of the learner in their own learning process “learners become producers of knowledge, not just consumers. It is possible to improve the knowledge construction process through the implementation of this methodological proposal or similar pedagogical mediation activities designed by the teacher since the student is taken into consideration as a fundamental piece for the execution of the activities and therefore the pupil remains motivated and confident of their abilities while successfully develop the speaking skill.

This Action Research is an alternative methodological proposal, which has the purpose of enhancing the learner’s speaking skill of Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica. Base on this the following recommendations are directed to teachers, based on the variable Speaking Skill and its indicators Communicative Games, Monitoring, and Skills Integration.

- It is recommended that teacher’s value communicative games as valuable learning tools through which it is possible to significantly improve the students' knowledge construction process. Wright, A., et al (2006) stated “Games also help the teacher to create contexts in

which the language is useful and meaningful... Games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than merely study it". (p.2). It is possible to significantly improve the knowledge construction process through the application of communicative games or activities similar to those contained in this alternative methodological proposal. MEP (2016) Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada stated, "English Curriculum and its ultimate goal the learner's development of English communicative competence". Communicative games allow pupils to improve their speaking skills and therefore allow them to develop communicative competence while having fun, making learning meaningful to them.

- It is recommended in all pedagogical mediation that the teacher apply the monitoring technique since it allows the teacher to monitor the progress of the students while they carry out the activities. MEP (2016) cited, "Monitoring is a strategy for checking the progress in the learning situations or carrying a learning task". This technique allows pupils to develop the speaking skill, so that the success in the application of the proposed strategies depends largely on the accompaniment that the teacher does in the execution of the activities, so it is recommended that when the teacher monitor the student provide positive reinforcement, provide knowledge in the execution of activities.
- It is suggested that the teacher takes into account the integration of linguistic skills in order to significantly improve the learner's communicative competence and therefore the knowledge construction process. MEP (2016) defines skill integration as, "Combination of two or more language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing when working with tasks so students will incorporate important aspects into their language learning" (p.355). This is possible to improve through the strategies proposed since they consider the integration of linguistic skills. Communicative games allow the student to easily develop listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills as they are very versatile, so the teacher is must take into account the integration of the skills as an essential point to improve the knowledge construction process in terms of learning a second language.

This Action Research is an alternative methodological proposal, which has the purpose of

enhancing the learner's speaking skill of Third Cycle and Diversified Education in Costa Rica. Based on this the following recommendations are directed to teachers, based on the variable Knowledge Construction Process and its indicators Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence, and Tasks.

- Is recommended to take into account the basic principles of the Action-Oriented Approach when planning pedagogical mediation activities in order to improve the knowledge construction process. According to MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada*, the Action-Oriented Approach is “one of the latest communicative language methodologies which places emphasis on what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competences in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios.” (p.28). Once the teacher has internalized the advantages that this communicative language methodology that is focused on the learner's knowledge in the completion of a task. It is necessary to apply this methodology in daily practice where students can through learning experiences such as communicative games to improve the knowledge construction process.
- It is suggested to follow in detail the steps of the didactic sequence in the formulation of pedagogical mediation strategies. Orlich et al., (2007) describe the benefits of didactic sequence "Presenting knowledge in a series of carefully interrelated steps not only helps students to master content but also develops their information-processing skills-that is, their ability to think." (p.134). Which is possible since in the strategies proposed in this methodological proposal the steps of the didactic sequence are exemplified in detail, so it works as a guide for the teacher in the formulation of pedagogical mediation activities, allowing pupils to learn by steps and at the same time improving the knowledge construction process.
- It is suggested the use of activities that have clear and defined pedagogical supports, such as tasks, which are easily adapted to the objectives contained in the curricular programs. MEP (2016) in *Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada* highlights the meaning of task “Tasks are defined as any purposeful action considered by an individual, necessary to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfill, or an objective to be achieved”. Through the three strategies

proposed in this methodological proposal, it contains real tasks based on communicative games, which allow the student to develop communicative competence, especially speaking skills, while the students have fun and complete the learning goals.



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