

**The Implementation of Collaborative Learning to Foster Students' Speaking Skill Level in
the English Knowledge Construction Process.**

Pedagogical Proposal Action Research Project

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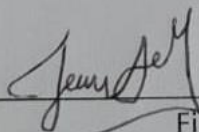
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Abstract

The current pedagogical proposal is carried out as the final project for a requirement to obtain the degree of licentiate in the English Teaching major at Universidad Latina de Costa Rica, Pérez Zeledón. Furthermore, this proposal has been developed due to the desideratum to find a remedy to foster students' English-speaking skills in the Costa Rica educational system since it is paramount to be able to speak English in this globalized era. Aiming to improve this skill, researchers have brought forward a proposal that consists of useful innovative strategies which are grounded in the collaborative learning approach. Hence, this project is being carried out in a manner that English teachers' can implement innovative strategies to aid learners to foster their speaking abilities in their knowledge construction process. This proposal is of great significance since there are presented the researcher's findings on the information gathered during the development of this alternative methodological proposal, including the information gathered in the literature review, where the indicators and variables were assessed in-depth, and the literature collected aided to acknowledge the necessity of this proposal. Along with how collaborative learning benefits the development of students speaking level in the knowledge construction process. Moreover, this current proposal might contribute to other areas such as further research, innovations, or changes in the teaching English methods. In a nutshell, it is through innovation and that theory and practice in a proposal are worthy, and this proposal is developed aiming at bringing about positive changes within the Costa Rican Educational System.

Keywords: knowledge construction process, speaking skills level, collaborative learning

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Dedicatory

We are grateful to many people for motivating us throughout our journey. Let us begin by thanking God since he has been our source of strength throughout this process. Furthermore, we dedicate this to our families for their endless love, support, and encouragement. Moreover, we are proud of ourselves because from this process we learned a lot, despite it was not easy and many obstacles came up, we always had the courage that helped us to continue to reach our goal. Finally, this triumph is also dedicated to all the teachers who influence students' future with their endless effort, guidance, and willingness to improve their education.

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Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This first chapter allows the reader to know about the explanation of the rationale in which is going to be presented the necessity of the topic under study and clarify the importance and its role in the current body of knowledge. Also, this section presents the purpose of searching about the implementation of collaborative learning to foster the speaking skill level to solve the communicative student's problems in the learning construction process as well as the implementation of English as part of the Costa Rican curriculum and the main objectives in the English Syllabus through the Action-Oriented Approach. The following segments of the paper include all the previous aspects, as the central components to develop the first part of the current alternative methodological proposal. Nowadays, due to the integration of international markets around the world in a global way, the English language is one of the most used to communicate when it comes to business, tourism, science, technology, media, health, and education. According to Purpura (2016) cited by The Ministry of Public Education in Costa Rica (MEP) in its English Syllabus 2016 states the following:

Over the years, the geopolitical and technological forces in the workplace have increased the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that people need to perform their jobs. We are now asked to read, listen, and synthesize large amounts of information from several sources via multiple modalities; search for information, judge its accuracy, and evaluate its applicability; and use communication technologies to collaborate in teams whose members represent a diverse global community (National Research Council, 1999, 2001). Importantly, many of us are asked to do this in a second, foreign, or heritage language (L2), requiring competencies for communicating ideas and establishing relationships in culturally respectful ways (p.12).

For the previous reason, English has been integrated as part of the Costa Rican curriculum as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and its implementation has as purpose, to provide students with what is needed to communicate effectively in a second language. Besides, according to El Estado de la Educación Costarricense (2017), it was approved in the year 2016 new programs of English for the first stages of education to improve the English proficiency level, considering these stages of formation as the time when any language bases are established. Concerning the above, at present, it is sought to implement this language early, in order to achieve a better level of its management and the different skills that are required in higher academic degrees. Therefore, the MEP in English Syllabus 2016, established that:

Speaking English fluently is one of the abilities a 21st Century learner must develop to have access to better life opportunities. The Costa Rican educational system is committed to achieving this goal of having bilingual citizens in two or more languages employing a comprehensive, articulated curriculum from kindergarten through high school. Given this mandate, the new curriculum has been sequenced so that learners reach a minimum level of English proficiency of A2 when completing primary education and B1 or B2 (depending on the study plans) when completing secondary education progressively, according to the levels described by the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) (p.4).

The data exposed above highlights the importance of mastering English as a second language in the frame of all the skills related to the language and the proficiency level that any person should have in the different phases of his educational process regarding this idiom in Costa Rica, and in this way, to have abilities that help students to create better life opportunities for the present generation.

As it was mentioned in this first section, the chapter aims to present the reader the main elements that will be carried out, including the rationale, the purpose of researching about the topic under study, the importance of improving the proficiency level in English as a Foreign Language in Costa Rica and a general view of the goal of the English Syllabus after 2016, when the Ministry of Public Education implemented changes to improve the competence in students as users of the language. The next segment presents why is important to implement collaborative learning to foster the speaking skill level in the learning construction process and explores its main significance in carrying out the implementation.

1.2. Rationale

English is a widely spoken language that has become almost a necessity in Costa Rica. For this reason, EFL instruction was incorporated into the Costa Rican educational system. Besides, Costa Rica started to incorporate English instruction because of the need to learn English for commercial reasons and engagement in business and commerce with foreign countries. Campos (2012) also added that “English is widely regarded as a gateway to wealth for national economies, organizations, and individuals.” (p.164). English is the dominant language when talking about the business language context, and it has become almost a necessity for people to speak English to have more work opportunities.

When discussing English as a Foreign Language instruction in Costa Rica, it is quite common to hear about the need of improving student's English-speaking skills. Furthermore, there is great communication demand when learning a language. Based on this huge demand, many teaching approaches have emerged in Costa Rica EFL instruction. However, there is still a necessity to improve the language learner's communicative proficiency. Therefore, there is a need to open a room for reflection about this concern. The English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación

Diversificada. (2016) asserted that “Speaking English fluently is one of the abilities a 21st Century learner must develop to have access to better life opportunities” (p.4). This highlights the attention placed on the goal that the Costa Rican educational Instruction has for speaking English fluently.

Concerning the changes done by the MEP in the English Syllabus, Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica y la Educación Diversificada (2016), refers to project work as a part of the action-oriented approach because it is a learner-centered, process-oriented, and collaborative task. For instance, they support their ideas with one of the most known philosophical foundations as is the case of constructivism, in which it states the next; “The learner constructs and reconstructs understanding and learnings based on prior knowledge from his/her life and in exchange with others” (p.16).

Concerning the above, collaborative work enriches communicative competence in English because through collaboration students can develop the ability to use the language in the real situation in a friendly and trustful ambiance in class, this situation encourages students to share ideas and opinions to present group results formed by each personal background knowledge. This paper talks about collaborative learning to foster the speaking skill level in the learning construction process.

Other investigations also support the benefits that cooperative learning brings to students. In a study about the effects of cooperative learning in students’ academic and social skills, Petty (1997) examined a Grade 6 class and two Grade 9 classes in Northern Chicago, Illinois. Prior to the introduction of cooperative learning techniques, children had trouble participating in class lectures and retaining instructional materials, as documented through teacher observations and student surveys. Following the implementation of cooperative learning techniques, students exhibited greater involvement in class lectures/discussions, increased retention, and a greater

transfer of learning. The studies discussed before to show the positive effects of cooperative learning techniques on improving student's construction process.

Furthermore, According to Kristiawan (2013), Cooperative learning is the key to deal with children with various abilities and diverse areas of intelligence. This learning method lets the students search and find out the best path to learn given subjects by themselves. Students are free to express what they have in mind to complete the tasks given during the lesson (p.6). As mentioned in the above argument cooperative learning leads students to a more active learning construction process in which they feel comfortable to participate and explore by themselves.

This current project proposal seeks to explore the implementation of collaborative learning as a strategy to help students improve their speaking level through activities and class projects that involved teamwork, grouping, collaboration, and the important role of the teacher as guide and monitor in the class to create the space in which learners would make use of the English language as much as possible and to communicate orally with their partners and teacher to later make them do the same out of the class. The following section provides an explanation of the purpose of this project and how it intends to bring solutions through the search for information related to the subject under study.

1.3. Purpose

The current project is carried out because of the extant need to foster students speaking skills in Costa Rican in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. The current section of the chapter encompasses information that supports this project. When talking about teaching English, it is vital to mention that the main goal for teachers is to enhance the student's speaking skills. As Richards (2006) expressed "Communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of

communicative competence.” (p.2). When discussing the importance of oral communication skills, it is also important to mention the relevance that linguistic communicative competence has, since there is a big connection between speaking skill and communicative competence considering that communicative competence is reflected in the ability to produce the language.

Communicative competence comprises an extremely vital role in the English learning process. For this reason, it is worthy to discuss communicative competence in this paper. Before going beyond, the meaning of communicative competence will be explained. According to Richards (2006), communicative competence refers to “being able to use the language for meaningful communication” (p. 3). This definition highlights that to be communicative competent it is required a good understanding of the language to use it appropriately in a different context of situations.

When a person is communicative competent, he or she can communicate effectively in a purposeful way. There is a great need for developing English communication skills, since communication is the main purpose of a language and, therefore, the main purpose of this project is to enhance the oral linguistic skill utilizing the implementation of cooperative learning to foster the speaking skill in the EFL classroom. Cooperative learning is a pedagogical practice that promotes interaction among students. According to Gillies (2016) “Cooperative learning involves students working together to achieve common goals or complete group tasks.” (p.39). As cited before, cooperative learning aims at having students working together to achieve a goal or a task. This is a way for students to interact while learning and achieving language tasks together.

Because of the reasons explained before, this project is being carried out. Moreover, it may be very useful for teachers to use cooperative learning as a useful tool that may bring about many benefits to class development and class objectives achievement. This research will serve as a

source of information for teachers and searchers in the educational field, but more specifically in English teaching. This research aims at helping English teacher's methodology since it may provide teachers with rich information that adjusts to the MEP's syllabus and aims as well as and students' needs in Costa Rica EFL teaching.

To sum up this chapter, group work time is a relevant part of the learning process. As it was discussed before, teamwork can contribute to the learner's linguistic skills through interaction and working together in the completion of tasks. The implementation of cooperative learning in English classrooms in Costa Rica fosters the development of the students' linguistic skills and helps students achieving the task process being more meaningful. This section of the chapter covered the purpose of the current project, through the appliance of collaborative learning strategies the students will be able to use their language meaningfully to achieve the classroom tasks and thus, improve their communicative competence. This is the purpose this alternative proposal has. Through this research, it is aimed to find out how the implementation of collaborative learning can foster speaking skills. However, in the following section, the objectives of this project will be detailed.

1.3.1. General Objective

To develop a proposal for pedagogical action that involves collaborative learning to foster English Speaking skills level in the learning construction process.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

1.3.2.1. To state the need to enhance learners' speaking competence through the application of collaborative learning in the learning construction process

1.3.2.2. To substantiate conceptually collaborative learning to foster learners' speaking competence in the learning construction process.

1.3.2.3. To plan sequential activities that allow the implementation of collaborative learning to foster learners' speaking competence in the learning construction process.

1.3.3. Research questions

When carrying out research, it is essential to formulate a research question, however, it can be one of the most difficult parts of the process, but it can give the researcher the path to follow during the development of the project. According to Alvesson and Sandberg (2013), developing and formulating the research question is the most critical step and it is fundamental in all theory development since the questions encourage reflection and trigger intellectual activity. Besides, it is necessary to establish a clear idea from the beginning, understanding and being aware of what the research will solve or what are the conclusions that are going to raise during the process, in relation with the previous, White (2017) states that "It's very important to have a clear idea of the type of answers that are possible given the nature of your questions, and it can even be useful to make predictions about what the result might be" (p.1).

As is already known, formulating research questions is one of the most difficult steps when developing a research project, but this difficulty is proportional to the importance of making the right decision when choosing the question or questions to research about, for the reason that it is

on what the researcher would focus the interest. Additionally, it is crucial to form a clear overview about the topic and keep the flow of associated ideas, following a line on the research, but at the same time, be open-minded to detect the additional information that can enrich the topic throughout the process.

1.3.3.1. How is the collaborative learning implementation affected by interpersonal and small group skills?

1.3.3.2. How does the students' role affect the implementation of collaborative learning?

1.3.3.3. How does the students' role affect the implementation of collaborative learning?

1.3.3.4. How does the action-oriented approach help to improve the students learning process?

1.3.3.5. How is the learning process improved by the use of a didactic sequence?

1.3.3.6. How does the implementation of tasks in group work improve the learning process?

1.3.3.7. How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's accuracy?

1.3.3.8. How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's fluency?

1.3.3.9. How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's appropriacy?

1.4 Hypothesis

One necessary aspect in the research development is to trace a clear path that provides researchers with a basis to meet the specific goals of the research. In furtherance of these aims, first, researchers should know the information they want to obtain and the specific aspects they should focus on. This can be done by formulating a hypothesis, which is an effective mechanism

that plays an important role in the research field. Certainly, Kumar (2011) argues that "The formulation of a hypothesis provides a study with focus. It tells you what specific aspects of a research problem to investigate." (chap.6). When conducting a research study, the hypothesis brings you the direction and procedures to follow, it helps the researcher to know in which aspect they should place importance the most. Besides, it helps the researcher to understand the research problem. Furthermore, Kabir (2016) states "The word hypothesis consists of two words: Hypo + thesis = Hypothesis. 'Hypo' means tentative or subject to the verification and 'Thesis' means a statement about solution of a problem." (p.52.) As stated, before hypotheses are is a clear statement that speculates what researchers expect to obtain and confirm and, this speculation is summarized in a clear statement that brings a possible solution to a problem. Hence, researchers decided to construct a hypothesis for this research. The following is a statement that clearly shows what researchers seek to prove throughout this research:

Hypothesis

The implementation of cooperative learning in the learning construction process helps to foster the speaking skill level.

1.5 Chapter's Conclusion

This chapter emphasized the vital aspects of this project and how the speaking level of the students can be fostered by implementing collaborative learning in the knowledge construction process. The general objective and specific objectives to carry out this research are already clearly established. Moreover, there is some data about previous research that provided a glance and meaningful information. Furthermore, the purpose of the topic under study was highlighted, which explained the reason and the need for this project to be developed. Finally, the research questions are going to work as guidance during the process of this action research and will be answered

through the investigation process. There's a huge necessity for this project to be carried out to address the concern.

As previously mentioned, the speaking skill carries great importance since communicating effectively is the main purpose when teaching English, and speaking the English language fluently allows learners to find better job opportunities. The way students become more competent is by practicing and therefore, students must have fruitful speaking opportunities in order to improve their speaking proficiency skills. In this process, teachers hold an important role, considering that for this goal to be fulfilled, the teacher should guide and monitor the class and try to create a favorable space in which learners feel comfortable to use English as much as possible for communicative purposes and in different contexts and real-life situations. Consequently, the incorporation of collaborative learning provides pupils with a friendlier learning environment since it allows them to put into practice their interpersonal skills when working as a team. Moreover, collaborative learning leads to a more active environment where students feel more comfortable and freer when exploring and putting into practice what they have learned while achieving tasks together. This at the same time, allows students to share ideas, opinions, and exchange important information in a trustful environment and thus, present favorable group results. Finally, the implementation of collaborative learning can have positive effects on students' communicative competence and its success involves not only learners but also teachers' roles. This chapter intended to provide deep and clear insights regarding the criteria considered for the development of this research; it is a goal for English teachers to foster students' speaking abilities. However, it has been difficult to achieve that goal and try to find the way, and that is the aim and the importance of this research to be developed. In the next section of this research, readers will be provided with more information supported by professional argumentation.

Chapter II Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

To reinforce this Alternative Methodological Proposal, in the development of this chapter are included concepts and definitions that define the variables and their indicators as active elements that take part in this project and help establishing a guide during the process. The integration of variables it is essential to understand and follow a line on what can be found throughout the research, by describing the variables that will be carry out in the study and analyzing how these variables are related, the researcher finds an order to follow, taking into consideration these variables as the factors that can affect the results in the research. For instance, to support what was mentioned before, Sampieri (2010), comments; the variables acquire value for the research when they become related to other variables, that is, if they are part of a hypothesis or a theory. In addition, this segment will cover three variables strongly related one to each other, the first variable is Collaborative Learning which includes, interpersonal and small group skill, Teacher's role and Students' role, as its main indicators to be developed. Regarding to Collaborative learning (CL), Laal and Ghodsi (2011, p.486) state that; "Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product". With this been said, it is clear that CL plays a huge role in the learning process since it is the approach that allows students interact with each other and come up with group results, working as vehicle to enhance students' learning.

The second variable is speaking skills, it contemplates accuracy, fluency and appropriacy, all these concepts are described as the main elements to be discuss. As stated by Chaney, 1998, (p. 13), cited by Yunsel & Inan (2014) Speaking can be defined as “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts”. Moreover, speaking skill is of great impact when learning any language and it is a process that deserved a deeper understanding to facilitate tools that allow students improve when sharing thoughts and communicating with others.

On the other hand, the third and last variable that will be studied in this chapter is Knowledge Construction Process. This concept involves action-oriented approach, didactic sequence and task, considering these elements as the most important to describe when referring to it. For instance, the Knowledge Construction process extends itself to the whole process of learning, both for academic and social as well as for cultural learning. Likewise, Banks and McGee (2010) state the following, "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 references, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it" (p.20). For this reason, it is necessary to go deep in this topic and investigate how the entire environment in the classroom as well as outside, impacts in the students 'learning construction process.

In summary, it is essential to review the literature to identify the main concepts that are related to the subject of study. Additionally, by investigating the variables and analyzing them, it allows the reader to visualize their distribution and see how they are related to each other, to achieve a better understanding of these concepts and thus provide the project with the most accurate information. In the next segment of this paper, these elements described above will be defined and analyzed in depth, in order to provide a complete vision and thus highlight the importance they have in the current body of knowledge in relation to this study that is carried out.

2.2 Collaborative Learning

The first variable in a simple meaning can be described as stated in Oxford English Dictionary as; “involving, or done by, several people or groups of people working together”. Nevertheless, in the context of learning, Collaborative learning provides students with an approach in which they can work together, allowing them to interact and share knowledge to get to show a product as a group. For instance, in the Learning Construction Process, CL is extremely related and has been widely used through the last years supported by very important theories that make it part of the educational bases that we know today, in a similar way, Rutherford (2014) refers to the topic commenting that collaborative learning has risen in its significance in recent decades, largely through the recognition of its value supported by numerous key theorists of social-constructivism and situated learning. This means that real learning involves people participating actively in order to construct their knowledge and this creates at the same time meaning for real activities. Furthermore, we humans have been so successful as a species because of our ability to apply our intelligence to cooperate with others to accomplish group goals. (Yash & Agrawal,2011). It is difficult to think about tasks that do not require the help or cooperation of

others; and this is not different in the educational environment. In the learning environment, cooperation is as important as any other skill since through cooperation we share our knowledge and help each other in the learning construction process. Yash & Agrawal (2011) also explain how cooperative learning works: “The teacher explains the task, teaches any concepts or procedures the students need in order to complete the assignment, and structures the cooperation among students. Students work on the assignment until all group members have successfully understood and completed it. While the students work together the teacher moves from group to group systematically monitoring their interaction.” Cooperative learning enhances students to be cooperative by means of knowledge sharing, active participation, interaction, and helping each other. It is important to highlight that as mentioned in the previous cite, the teacher’s role is also important since besides explaining the topic they have to monitor pupils’ interaction and performing. Slavin (1996) defines cooperative learning as "instructional programs in which students work in small groups to help one another master academic content....” As mentioned by Slavin, cooperative learning encourage students to assist one another in order to improve their learning. Besides, Cooperative learning creates student’s positive Interdependence because team members are obliged to rely on one another to achieve their goal (Johnson ,1991). This positive interdependence is impacted by students’ reactions toward small group work. Consequently, learner’s role is also extremely important for when having students working in small groups. Another important element that has a great impact when implementing collaborative learning strategies are interpersonal and group work skills. For students to help each other and work cooperatively, learners should develop their social abilities. A learner that lacks interpersonal skills would not be able to collaborate and help their partners maximize their potential. The success of small group work also depends upon students behaviors and interpersonal skills. Skinner, Hyde,

McPherson, & Simpson (2016) state that “Experientially-based small-group learning allow opportunities for practice, reflection, self-evaluation and feedback and as such can improve students’ interpersonal skills” Interpersonal skills and group work bring about many benefits in cooperative learning since they are capable to evaluate themselves and their classmate’s progress. After the above mentioned, it is worth highlighting the importance teacher’s role, students role and interpersonal groupwork skills have when implementing collaborative learning. Subsequently, in the next segment these indicators will be deeply developed.

2.2.1 Interpersonal and Small-Group Skills

On many occasions trying to maintain the flow of work in the class with the students is complicated, in most of the times it is possible to find very varied groups, no matter how small these groups are, they will always be composed of different personalities, as expected. This mixture of personalities, far from being a detrimental factor for the teacher when trying to work with his students, can be a great advantage if know how to combine students and make them work together.

Related to the above, in regards to Collaborative Learning, the first indicator to describe is; interpersonal and small-group skills, this concept refers to the capacity that students have to integrate and participate at the time to work in small groups and the ability to achieve the flow of shared ideas that allow them to generate knowledge through those interactions. Consequently, Frey et all (2009) stablishes the following “Knowledge is built and extended through the exchange of ideas and that students should be encouraged to question and push each other’s understanding” (p.13). Furthermore, people do not know how to interact with others, unless interpersonal skills appears right when they need it. For this reason, students must be taught about these skills and

motivated to use them, if group members lack interpersonal and small - group skills to cooperate, the collaborative group will not be productive.

As has already been discussed at this point, CL is related to the way in which a product is achieved, the completion of a task or the solution of a problem through a group of students working together where an exchange of ideas is presented. Although, the synthesis of this concept sounds simple, it is not so simple, and students are required to have interpersonal and small-group skills in order to carry out the work successfully. This element in turn is determined by the academic part, which involves planning, instructions, time management, among others, and on the other hand, the social part, which refers to the interaction of the group members with each other. In the same line, Jolliffe (2017) states the following:

“Interpersonal and small - group skills consist of two elements: the academic (task) skills, such as following instructions, staying on task, planning and reviewing progress, managing time, generating and elaborating on ideas. The second element concern the interpersonal skill such as listening to others, encouraging, achieving a consensus, conflict resolutions and valuing others”(p.4).

Synthesizing the aforementioned, interpersonal and small-group skills are an essential part of the elements that must be taken into account when making use of CL as an approach to enrich the Learning Construction Process, for this reason, it is indispensable to develop actions that allow students improve their interpersonal relationships through group activities during class to ensure that learning is conveyed more efficiently in real contexts through face-to-face interactions. Likewise, other aspects that are directly related to this topic should be studied in depth, such as the role of the student and the role of the teacher, which will be analyzed in the next segment.

2.2.2. Student's role

Learners are a vital part of the learning construction process in EFL classrooms. In order to fulfill learners' needs and improve their learning construction process, teachers need to know the importance of the role students play in this process. Besides, it is fundamental for pupils to understand and be aware of their role in learning as well. When talking about EFL instruction, it is necessary to highlight that the success of students' language learning construction process not only depends on the teacher but also on how students perform their role in class.

In the MEP's English syllabus III ciclo y educación diversificada (2016) it is pointed out that "the learner/social agent is not an empty vessel but a whole person with values, beliefs, and identity, and a language or languages." (p.31). As stated previously, students have an active role in the learning process. Due to this, students must be perceived as a whole individual with uniqueness concerning values, beliefs, identity, and cultural aspects that entail each person. Teachers should identify all of these aspects and subsequently, try to fulfill individual learners' needs. Treating students as a whole person boosts their learning and encourages them to have an active role and responsibility for their knowledge acquisition which plays an important role in their learning construction process.

Moreover, the new English Syllabus (2016) describes learners as "an agent/performer with intercultural awareness skills. Autonomous, works cooperatively, interacts with others, investigates and solves problems using the tools at his/her disposal (general and specific competencies). Develops metacognitive, reflective, and critical thinking strategies for successful completion of the task." (p. 33). As stated above, learners should be provided with active learning. Learners should have awareness about the active role they have in their learning construction process, by being involved in collaborative activities, social interaction, and being autonomous.

This means that learners should have a sense of responsibility for their improvement, be willing to solve problems they may face in the learning environment and be able to assess and understand their learning performance. Thus, they would be aware when a learning role has been reached and when they are struggling, they will try to find possible solutions. For this reason, the previous learners' characteristics stated by the MEP English syllabus benefit students learning construction process.

Furthermore, Barrantes and Olivares, (2013) illustrated "The concept of autonomy denotes a psychological, social and emotional inner process. Students rupture from the teacher's total control has given rise to a feeling of autonomy." (p.236) Autonomy, lead students to steady progress in their learning construction process because when learners feel responsible about their progress, they prepare themselves to socially interact with their partners and this allows them to construct a collaborative learning process rather than learning through the teacher's dependence.

Moreover, students should be the central actors in EFL classrooms. This means learners should be the most important performers and the knowledge they obtain depends on their effort they put in and outside the class. Jacobs & Dury, (2016) argue that "The expectation of student-centered pedagogy is that students are active participants in the learning process rather than receivers of knowledge from the teachers." (p.2) This states that when students are the center of the class, they have more active participation which is fundamental for learners. This idea of student-centered learning allows learners to learn how to learn by themselves, rather than being just passive receivers they are the ones in charge of their learning, and they are the central players in the class and the constructors of their knowledge. Besides, Barrantes and Olivares, (2013) asserted that "learner-centered education has shown to increase motivation for learning and greater satisfaction with school duties; both of these outcomes lead to greater linguistic achievement."

(P.326). As previously expressed, learners-centered education brings about many advantages in students learning construction process because when students feel they handle an important role in the class, their motivation toward the learning process increases and their satisfaction regarding their achievements. These benefits at the same time foster students' linguistic skills.

Students' roles have incredible importance when teachers apply collaborative learning strategies in EFL classrooms. Here a description of collaborative learning: Collaborative learning (CL) is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. In the CL environment, the learners are challenged both socially and emotionally as they listen to different perspectives and defend their ideas. In so doing, the learners begin to create their unique conceptual frameworks and not rely solely on an expert's or a text's framework. In a CL setting, learners have the opportunity to converse with peers, present and defend ideas, exchange diverse beliefs, question other conceptual frameworks, and are actively engaged (Srinivas, H., 2011). As stated, collaborative learning involves pupils working together to achieve a task. Here students have to use the language to communicate their ideas, share opinions, find solutions. This means that students have to keep their active role when they work in groups. For this reason, it is important to highlight that student's roles have an incredible impact on collaborative learning. When each player understands his/her role in the learning construction process, they are more likely to take responsibility for their learning, this consequently, impacts small group work positively.

CL occurs when small groups of students help each other to learn. CL is sometimes misunderstood. It is not having students talk to each other, either face-to-face or in a computer conference, while they do their assignments. It is not having them do the task individually and then have those who finish first help those who have not yet finished. And it is certainly not having one or a few students

do all the work, while the others append their names to the report (Klemm, W.R., 1994). When each learner takes responsibility for the important role they have, communicative interaction and teamwork improve subsequently because collaborative learning is about students working together to help each other. All of these aspects mentioned afore lead to the successful achievement of team tasks and thus, the learning construction process improves.

To sum up, teachers should let pupils know they are social agents in the class. They should develop an awareness of their learning process, learn how to be autonomous, and work cooperatively. When students get to know they are the main players in the class, they know that each of their movements has a consequence not only in their learning construction process and but also in their classmates'. Besides, learners should have a sense of autonomy, for his, they must be challenged in their learning process for them to feel responsible for their knowledge acquisition. Additionally, pupils must have active participation and teachers should provide them with challenging tasks that motivate them to use the language for communicative competence. Students should be the center of the class the main participants so that they realized they handle a vital role and their motivation toward the learning construction process increases. It is necessary to mention that teachers also carry an important role in EFL classrooms. For a successful learning the construction process, it is also indispensable that teachers consider students the main members and so fulfill their needs to help them manage their role and perform their duties by giving their best. Hence, the next segment examines the teacher's role in depth.

2.2.3 Teachers' role

When talking about EFL instruction it is worth deepening on the indispensable role teachers handle and the great impact teachers have on students' language learning construction process. The teachers' role is relevant since they are meant to help and guide learners in their learning construction process. For this reason, the teacher's role has been studied throughout the years. Costa Rica's educational context requires English teachers to be tailored to fit the teacher profile demanded by the English syllabus. This teacher profile entails many aspects. For instance, as far as language knowledge is concerned, "The teacher is certified with B2/C1 English language proficiency" (English Syllabus, 2016,p .28). This is one of the features teachers must comply with concerning knowledge aspects. However, the role of a teacher is more extensive, and it is not based solely on giving information or transmitting language knowledge to students: Nevertheless, the role of teachers has been changing through time.

Conventionally, teachers are meant to be the center of the class, in charge of transferring information. Garrett (2008) expressed that, "These forms of instruction lend themselves to having the teacher stand in the front of the classroom while all students work on the same task." This teacher-centered role consists of teachers giving instructions and ask students to complete a task. Perhaps, this conventional role is not beneficial for student's language development since it does not permit learners to explore and be autonomous. The English syllabus (2016) summarizes a definition of teacher's role as the following: "The teacher is a facilitator and helps the learner to become autonomous. She/he takes several roles such as coach, resource person, advisor, organizer, and facilitator for the learner's successful completion of the task. (p. 27). The aforementioned expressed that the teacher's role should lie in being a facilitator rather than a leader because teacher-centered classrooms do not allow learners to participate actively in their learning

construction process. It also states teachers should be a helper in students' completion of tasks. Furthermore, teachers should develop students' sense of autonomy. This means teachers should let students navigate by themselves in the learning construction process. When teachers let students explore, they become critical thinkers and explore their creativity, thus this helps them develop their autonomy.

Along with the previous teacher profile, in Costa Rica, the MEP's guidelines also require teachers to develop students' communicative skills in the English language so that they can communicate in English in real-life situations. English syllabus (2016) stated that teachers should "Designs effective lesson planning based on integrated communicative tasks and context to develop knowledge skills and attitudes for communication using English. "(p.28). Teachers should provide learners with a range of contexts that allow them to use the language for real communicative purposes. Related to this, we must mention that teachers also play an important role when implementing collaborative learning strategies in class. As cited by Gillies & Ashman & Terwel (2021) "Teachers play an important role in promoting interactions among students and cooperative learning provides opportunities for these interactions to be encouraged. "(Gillies & Ashman & Terwel,2021). In short, Collaborative learning provides students more with more opportunities for practicing the language and develop their linguistic competence. Teachers must therefore promote discourse among students and encourage them to create social interaction and help each other. The frequency of the multidirectional responses that occurred in the cooperative groups both among the students and with their teachers may also have emerged from the group tasks which were generally open and discovery-based and required students to exchange information and ideas in order to find a solution to the problem. (Gillies,2004).

As mentioned previously, teachers have a great impact on students cooperatively since students model the teacher's role, Thus, students learn how to interact and help their partners thanks to the teachers' behaviors. This means that teachers can teach pupils how to interact and work cooperatively.

To conclude, the learning process entails lots of elements that are essential for fostering student's language skills and teachers carry a pivotal role. This role entails more than just being a source of knowledge and give instructions. Teachers are in charge of guiding learners in the building of their learning construction process by showing them the path for discovering and critical thinking. Besides, teachers should be aware that students are the center of the class and perform an active role. Besides, teachers should encourage pupils to construct their learning by challenging them when performing tasks, this implies that students should be provided with tasks that motivate them to explore and find solutions by themselves. This brings about benefits to students' learning construction process because it increases students' sense of autonomy toward their learning. Furthermore, teachers should create positive cooperative learning experiences in their classrooms. The previous also includes teachers understanding that they have a role in promoting student interactions during small group discussions. Also, helping students to interact and work cooperatively not only enables students to learn from each other but also empowers their responsibility for the tasks they must complete and the decisions they have to make. Furthermore, when students learn how to interact among them, cooperative work fosters students speaking skills. It is known that improving students speaking skills is a crucial part of the language learning process and a difficult task for teachers. Hadriana (2008) cited that "Learning to speak requires more than grammatical and semantic rules. Learners are also required to know how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange." (p.38) In short, to foster students'

speaking skills learners must be able to speak fluently appropriately and accurately. For these reasons, accuracy, fluency, and appropriacy are important indicators for speaking skills variable. This variable and its indicators will be studied in depth in the next segment.

2.3 Speaking Skills

Language is the main tool for communication among people. Hence, many countries emphasize teaching languages other than the native language to their citizens. And English has become an important foreign language that opens a bridge of opportunities around the world. We can say any person without oral communication skills will suffer in this era of competition and may find it difficult to achieve a higher position. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Burns & Joyce, 1997). It is worthy to say that the speaking is the most important skill when learning a language in order to communicate well in this global society and be an independent user of the language. Consequently, teachers should enhance oral communication skills in EFL classrooms by implementing oral activities that help them improve their learning construction process. In the case of English as in any language, there are two kinds of skills: receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills have to do with listening and reading, the productive skills have to do with writing and speaking.

First, it is primordial to define the term speaking skills and how these skills are developed in students' language learning, taking into consideration that when learning a foreign language, the main goal is to use the language for communication. In order to understand the tremendous importance speaking skills have in the language learning construction process, Chaney, 1998, (p.

13), cited by Yunsel & Inan (2014) states that speaking can be defined as, “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts”. In other words, speaking skill refers to the ability in which the user of a language transmits thoughts, ideas, emotions, or simply communicates with others in a different social context. Besides, when studying English as a foreign language (EFL), developing speaking skills is fundamental for the students’ learning construction process, because the interaction performs by them when sharing ideas, thoughts, and feelings inside or outside the class, reinforces the ability to communicate with others allowing them to practice in more realistic scenarios. and thereby strengthen these skills in a more familiar context, facilitating them not only what they are learning about the language meanings but also learning about the sounds, uses in the indicated context, and much more. Furthermore, Burns and Seidlhofer (2010) state: “learning speaking, whether in a first or other language, involves developing subtle and detailed knowledge about why, how and when to communicate, and complex skills for producing and managing interaction, such as asking a question or obtaining a turn. One of the most important aspects of everyday talk is that it always takes place in cultural and social contexts” (p.197). To highlight the above, developing speaking skills requires, in addition to the academic part, the inclusion of both cultural and social components. With that been said, it is easy to infer that the integration of these components must also be carried out in the student's learning construction process, guided by the teacher in the class, thus in this way students can familiarize themselves with the contents, facilitating them the understanding and thereby encouraging them to learn. Furthermore, speaking instruction is important because it helps students acquire EFL speaking skills thus converse spontaneously and naturally with native speakers. Furthermore, if the right speaking activities are taught in the classroom, speaking can raise general learners' motivation and make the English language

classroom a fun and dynamic place to be (Nunan, 1999 & Celce-Murcia, 2001). When students have real speaking opportunities in the classroom their role as learners become more active. Thus, it is extremely important to engage students in interactive oral activities where they can develop their confidence when using the language. However, developing students speaking skills is not only about gaining confidence because many factors should be taken into account as far as communicative skills are concerned.

Besides, it is valuable to mention that when considering speaking skills, it embraces some other factors that influence good communication such as accuracy, fluency, and appropriacy. The speaking skill variable shows the great importance the speaking skill has when learning a second language, However, in order to be successful when communicating, it is vital to take into consideration all the aspects that may impact the communication skills. Learning a language is more than learning grammar structures and rules. Students also need to know about all the factors that affect good communication and transmission of the message in the target language. Developing students' speaking skills go beyond teaching them to write and memorize the intended message; it is about integrating the ahead mentioned elements so that students can communicate effectively and clearly.

One of the important elements for communicating successfully is accuracy, Basta (2011) argues that “accuracy is one of the prerequisites for successful language learning in the Communicative Language setting, for grammatically correct communication followed by an adequate word choice and proper pronunciation facilitates language learning and language acquisition. (p.45). When having a conversation, it is important to highlight the importance of accuracy since to transmit a clear message it is necessary to be knowledgeable about the language. This embraces the correct use of grammatical rules, word choice, and clear pronunciation. If a

pupil does use the rules correctly, the pronunciation is not clear, and word choice is not appropriate, then the message will not be conveyed successfully. For this reason, accuracy is vital in students' knowledge construction process.

Another important element is fluency since to communicate effectively students need to handle the conversation with no problems. Richards (2006) declared fluency as “the natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence” (p.14). To transmit the message correctly, the conversation should flow without unnatural pauses or too much hesitation. Consequently, fluency plays a crucial role in the knowledge construction process.

Furthermore, when using the language, it is important to be careful with the context in which the message will be transmitted. Bilborough (2015) explains “When we talk about the appropriacy of something, we mean whether it is suitable or acceptable in that situation.” In other words, being careful with the type of language used when communicating in a different context or with different people is also an important aspect that may affect communication. Thus, if teachers provide students with communicative opportunities in different contexts, this will help pupils in their knowledge construction process.

To sum up, as English is widely spoken worldwide, there is a need for pupils to improve the speaking skills in order to be successful when communicating. Therefore, when learning a foreign language, the classroom becomes an ideal place to acquire good communication skills, particularly, speaking skills. The teachers have to understand the great importance developing students' speaking skills have in their learning construction process, and thus, try to implement communicative activities in the classroom.

Communicating successfully in a foreign language encompasses more than mastering its grammar and pronunciation and word choice, students should be able to keep the conversation going with clearness. Besides, having general knowledge about the language is extremely fundamental, this includes the different social contexts in which the language can be used. For this reason, pupils should communicate with accuracy, fluency, and appropriacy. Having already mentioned the great importance these three elements have in the speaking skill, the next segment will develop with greater depth the term accuracy and the huge role it has on students' development of speaking skills and knowledge construction process.

2.3.1 Accuracy

Communicating clearly with others is the main goal when learning a language and accuracy is undoubtedly an important element to create proficiency and good communication in language learning. Regarding accuracy, when referring to the students' learning construction process in EFL classrooms, the first step to be taken should be, to define the meaning of accuracy when it is related to the use of a specific language to communicate, the importance in the learning process, the aspects involved concerning the speaking skills, and its role in the proficient level when learners make use of the language. To give a start with the definition, Michel (2017) comments about accuracy saying that it refers to target-like-use of a language that is error-free speech or writing, and it is strongly related to the choice of the linguistic norm, for example, a prescriptive grammatical description of the target language or native speaker usage. In this context, accuracy as a general term must refer to a specific use of the language, the linguistic norm and must take into account the variations that it can have even in the same country.

In a similar meaning, Schroeder (2013) states that “Linguistic Accuracy is the ability to be free from errors while using language to communicate in either writing or speech”(p.4). In terms of EFL teaching, the goal has always been to reach a competence level as close as a native speaker. Although the term "free from errors" refers to a reality that does not happen even in native speakers, taking into consideration that there will always be errors, no matter how small, it is possible to develop language skills that allow reaching levels very similar to those possessed by a person who has a certain language as their mother tongue. Additionally, reaching this level is not simple, to use the language accurately, students should use the correct spelling, use grammar correctly, use the correct pronunciation and choose the correct vocabulary in the right context.

Furthermore, Richard (2012) states that “accuracy is the capacity to use the language in ways that are grammatically and phonological appropriate to use the correct grammar, the correct syntax, and the correct pronunciation”. Communicating a message accurately embraces the way the message is carried out, in other words, the accurate use of rules, grammatical structures, clear pronunciation to transmit the message with ease and clearness. If one of these elements is not managed, it means the student lacks proficiency in the target language, and therefore the intended message will not be transmitted successfully.

Additionally, accuracy is an important element of speaking skills, due to the fact being communicative competent by the new English Syllabus III ciclo y educacion diversificada (2016) is that an individual has the capacity “to utilize mental representations of language knowledge built up through practice or experience in order to convey meaning. Language ability is a combination of language knowledge and strategic competence” (p.346). In short, accuracy means not only being able to speak a language but being capable of using it precisely to convey meaning successfully

and clearly. If a student lacks accuracy, the receptor may not understand the real meaning when trying to communicate and thus, the conversation will be affected when having students working together for oral production activities. Here, the huge significance accuracy has in the knowledge construction process and the development of speaking skills.

To conclude, improving the accuracy with which students use the language, is vital and is essential to generate awareness about this importance in the learners, in this way, they can provide feedback both for their classmates and for themselves, making the learning and teaching process a matter that is not only the teacher's responsibility but students' as well. Eventually, when trying to communicate with others, it is necessary to know which structures are correct and how to use the available language to convey meaning successfully. Accuracy refers not only to be able to speak but also embraces the correct use of syntax and pronunciation. The information provided shows that accuracy improves the communication among students and at the same time improves their knowledge construction process.

All the information mentioned above clarifies a short part of what speaking a language applies. However, speaking a language entails some other aspects. Fluency is, for instance, another important element that should be considered when learning a language since it allows speakers to transmit the message clearly without trouble. Subsequently, the next segment will emphasize the relevance fluency has on students speaking skills.

2.3.2 Fluency

This section aims at describing features that establish fluency on the part of the speaker and shows how it influences the learning construction process for EFL students. In addition, when

talking about fluency, it refers to one of the components that are part of speaking skills and although all of them are highly relevant, this particular element is shown as one with tremendous relevance and it is seen almost as a tangible result of the ability acquired by the learner during his learning construction process, for instance, fluency is related to the final product in this process when the learned language is used to verbally communicate. The elements that make up the speaking skills, seem to be directly linked to the structure of the language being learned. Some elements such as vocabulary, grammar, and merely linguistic components are of great importance for the development of the learning construction process in EFL. However, fluency, being no less important, differs a little concerning these components, since its main characteristic is that it has a direct relationship with the performance of the speaker, besides, it is at the time of using the language when the speaker's ability regarding his degree of fluency is shown. In relation to the above Götz (2013) refers to the following:

“Fluency differs from the other elements of oral proficiency in one important aspect. Whereas such elements as idiomaticness, appropriateness, lexical range, and syntactic complexity can all be assigned to linguistic knowledge, fluency is purely a performance phenomenon: there is (presumably) no fluency ‘store’. Rather [...], the psycholinguistic processes of speech planning and speech production are functioning easily and efficiently” (p.13).

For the previous reason, being fluent is an aspect of such relevance in the learning construction process in EFL, and teachers must stimulate their students to improve it by providing them with tools that allow guide them to a higher fluency level when speaking.

On the other hand, in English teaching, fluency is generally related to how competent the learners are when making use of the language or the ability to speak the closest to a native speaker,

consequently, in the learning construction process, fluency is associated with the naturalness in which the language should be used and the speed with which the message is transmitted. Additionally, Wood (2012) comments that fluency is often used as a synonym for effective spoken use of a language. It is frequently used to mean “native-like,” having a high overall degree of proficiency, or having a "good command" of a language. In the language teaching profession, fluency is generally more tightly defined. We tend to use the word to mean a naturalness of flow of speech or speed of oral performance.

To rephrase it, fluency is highly associated with speaking ability, since to keep a conversation ongoing, speakers should be fluent. Likewise, fluency requires a good command of the language. If the speaker does not have a good command of the language, he/she will struggle and hesitate when trying to convey oral messages. To reinforce the previous definition of fluency, Zhang (2009) affirmed that fluency is defined as the ability to communicate an intended message; to adjust the messages according to the responses of the listener; to produce coherent utterance and stretches of speech; to respond and speak with continuity, and to use strategies to aid communication when the appropriate vocabulary or grammar is not available. (p. 94). This means that when the speaker is fluent, his/her language will be flexible enough to find suitable words or phrases required in any situation. When a learner is fluent, the language is not limited and there is an ability to keep the flow of the conversation no matter the subject.

Furthermore, fluency is related to using all speaking skills in the context of the time-bound nature of speaking. It relies on the speaker's ability to use facilitation skills (fillers, lexical phrases, ellipsis...etc.) and compensation skills (self-correction, rephrasing, or repeating) to cope with ongoing fast communication (Widdowson, 1998 & Segalowitz, 2000). When students have developed their fluency, they are able to correct and monitor themselves when making a mistake.

Therefore, it should be stressed the great importance fluency plays on the learning construction process.

Being fluent in communicating involves not only conveying meaning but also understanding and interpreting the message correctly. Consequently, pupils should be provided with authentic input and context employing interactive speaking activities that allow them to use the language to transfer meaning in real contexts. After all the information mentioned, it worthy to highlight that fluency is a required element to foster students speaking skills. Moreover, fluency can greatly improve students' knowledge construction process because when a student is fluent, he /she will feel confident enough to monitor their learning process. As mentioned before, fostering students speaking skills involve understanding, conveying meaning in different and spontaneous situations with ease, and a good command of the language, so that it will enable pupils to use the language for different purposes in an effective way.

When talking about using language purposefully, it is necessary to emphasize the huge role appropriacy also plays in speaking skills. For this reason, the next segment will widen this alternative methodological proposal by going deeper into the role of appropriacy in language learner's knowledge construction process.

2.3.3 Appropriacy

Language is a required means of communication among the members of society. Without language, communication among individuals would not be possible. Hence, communicating with people from different countries implies speakers to have knowledge about different cultures, behaviors, and all the aspects that make people different from one another. As there are different

elements that entail a language, it is crucial to understand that the use of them may vary from one context to another. Subsequently, to communicate effectively, it is essential to manage the language in different situations.

In relation to the above, the fact of using the language in an appropriate way in time and space and towards the indicated person or group of people, also extends to the integration of certain cultural and social elements in the learning construction process. Likewise, these elements must be present in the classroom so that the appropriate use of the language is built from there and that the learners are aware of the variety of scenarios in which the idiom can be used. In addition to this, English syllabus (2016) in its section "Learning to be and to live in community" states: "This learning implies the development of such qualities as: knowledge and understanding of self and others; appreciation of the diversity of the human race, and an awareness of the similarities between; and the interdependence of all humans" (p.21). As a speaker, it is worthy not only to think about producing coherent sentences and using a clear pronunciation. In other words, it is not only important to think about what to say, but also how to say it, thus, another competent the speaker should also think about, is how to use the language appropriately and effectively for different audiences and situations, since to use language effectively for communicating ideas with clarity, the speaker should use the appropriate language when speaking. Therefore, when learning a foreign language, students should be provided with a variety of contexts that expose them to a rich variety of structures and vocabulary. Bilborough (2015) explains that "Appropriacy focuses on the type of language that you use in a particular situation or with a particular group of people." (n.p). In means, appropriacy is geared towards effective communication in different contexts. For EFL learners is extremely important to be careful with the situation in which the message will be transmitted since the language used, must fit the audience and the situation. A learner who has not

developed appropriacy when speaking will not be linguistically competent when being exposed to different scenarios. Likewise, Kukiboyeva, M & Jabborova, D. (2018) define that,

“Appropriacy refers to the degree of fit or suitability that there is between a piece of language and the social context in which it is used. When the piece of language matches the social context, it is said to be appropriate. When it doesn't match it is said to be inappropriate. To match, it needs to be of the equivalent degree of formality. Appropriacy can be seen in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, or discourse”. (p.7).

As noted above, appropriacy is also tied to the use of proper pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse. In other words, the context of a conversation is taken into consideration besides what is being said. If speakers don't have appropriacy when speaking, some misunderstandings may emerge, and this may lead to problems between. For this reason, being able to distinguish the context in which the language should be used is essential for learners to choose the suitable words and type of discourse that fits the audience. Hence, pupils need to improve their appropriacy to improve their speaking skills. Subsequently, they should be provided with different scenarios that allow them to foster their speaking skills. In relation with this, English Syllabus (2016) highlights the importance of using domains in the learning construction process and refers to its definition in this curriculum as the contexts or situations of target language use that provide authenticity to language tasks where learners will be likely to function linguistically. By the same token, this underscores the importance of integrating tasks that involve diverse scenarios and different contexts that provide the student with the tools they need to make appropriate use of language whenever the opportunity arises.

To conclude, language is essential to communicate between different situations and scenarios, as well as with different groups of people. Therefore, the appropriate use of language is

a fundamental aspect in the development of speaking skills and for this reason is has been included to activities and tasks a variety of scenarios and contexts to be carried out in the learning construction process regarding the teaching of EFL. This brings about benefits to students' because it increases students' s awareness respecting the appropriate use of the language among different situations. The previous also includes the use of domains in the curriculum, referring to all contexts that learners might find inside and outside the class, preparing them to face the reality once the opportunity is presented. In short, to foster students' speaking skills, learners must be able to speak fluently, accurately, and appropriately. It means that students must improve all these aspects during their learning process. For these reasons, Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence and Tasks are essential indicators to develop as part of the Learning Construction Process variable and thus, will be covered in depth in the next section.

2.4 Knowledge Construction Process

In the context of learning, it is important to think of the terms “new ideas” and “knowledge construction” and understand how to make them emerge in the pupils' minds. Encouraging students to generate new ideas and with this construct their knowledge should be the goal for every teacher, as well as being interested in the process by which students generate these ideas and learning. Likewise, the knowledge construction is a process by which students generate ideas and understandings, the focus of classroom instruction should be on helping students to learn and experience this process.

Learning activities that are higher on the knowledge construction give students more opportunity to construct ideas, connect them to other content and internalize understandings, all this to be applied in the class as well as outside the classroom. In relation to this, in the most

accurate meaning of this process, Banks (2002) states: "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 references, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it"(p. 14). Regarding the previous, it can be said that the learning construction is a process that contemplates multiple elements that are not necessarily found within the class but that with the help of the teacher and the structure with which learning is developed in the classroom, allows the student built the knowledge that he/she will later apply in his/her social, professional, and cultural environment outside of class.

In addition, in the general framework of learning, the construction process is based on the idea that every person constructs his/her own meaning from the environmental factors to what he/she is expose to. In regard to previous Huttner et al (2011) comment that learning construction is about social constructivism based on the notion that the individuals learn by constructing meaning by negotiating their cognitive resources and new input in social settings. For instance, the focus in the class should be the construction of new meanings and new understandings by exposing the students to social contexts both in the classroom as well as outside the classroom, with this, they are being guided by the teacher as a the one in charge of monitoring and clarifying the interpretation of learners.

In order to go further and to obtain a better understanding on how knowledge is built in regard to this alternative methodological proposal, this segment will describe and analyze the three most important indicators with which the knowledge construction process is related. The first indicator to describe and analyze in this proposal is, The Action-Oriented Approach. In regard to this approach, Samuda & Bygate (2008) refers that it 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. For this reason, this approach is of vital importance in the learning construction process and will be analyzed in depth later in this section.

Moreover, another essential indicator for this variable is the didactic sequence. When talking about constructing meaning and understanding, it is pivotal to talk about the performance of activities in the class. Lessons can follow a task-based sequence that will focus on linguistic and nonlinguistic items. (MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, 2016). The sequence the teacher sets for the activities to be carried out, may impact students' acquisition of knowledge, so organizing the learning activities in a coherent manner is of paramount importance. Hence, the didactic sequence will also be analyzed in this chapter.

Besides the last indicator under study, is the task. Tasks refer to the activities carried out which look forward the fulfillment of the class goal. The MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, (2016) define tasks as “A goal oriented communicative activity with a specific outcome, where the emphasis is on exchanging meaning, not producing specific language forms.” Tasks encompass a pivotal importance since they promote interaction and foster students learning construction process, and thus the role they entail, will be studied with deepen in throughout the current chapter.

Knowledge construction process plays an important role in the effectiveness of learning a language focusing on how students acquire knowledge. The process of constructing student knowledge, involves an analysis the three indicators already mentioned; hence, the next segment will focus on the action-oriented approach since it plays a paramount of importance in this context.

2.4.1 Action Oriented Approach

As mentioned before, the Action Oriented approach is one of the latest communicative language methodologies and has among its main characteristics the use of tasks by which students make their knowledge known, this perspective considers the students as the central character in their construction process. For instance, In Costa Rica, MEP in the English Syllabus, (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada refers to this approach and states the following:

“An Action-Oriented Approach sees students as active agents responsible for their own progress in learning and sees communication as a social activity designed to accomplish specific tasks. Within this approach to English language learning, students develop communicative competence, gain knowledge of various English cultures, and develop their full potential as national and global citizens” (p.28).

Taking into consideration the above and emphasizing that the human being is a social being and that communication is essential to carry out the process of socialization, providing tools that help strengthen communication skills in the development of a language such as English is of great importance, in addition, ensuring that students can communicate effectively in English and being this idiom of great universal relevance, allow students to greater intercultural interaction and thereby enrich their knowledge.

On the other hand, this approach is inclined to include not only this social and cultural part mentioned above for communication, but also how the use of the language should be integrated in its different contexts to achieve effective communication and how it changes when different components such as the idea being communicate, the speaker and listener or the situations co-relates. Likewise, Picardo (2014) states:

“In order to communicate effectively, one must know not only how a language works, but also what parts of the language to use and when. These vary depending on the situation, the context, the listener, and the communication intention. For example, we speak very differently to members of our family, friends, co-workers, and strangers.” (p.12).

That is to say, since the use of language varies depending on the person and the situation where the conversation is taking place, listeners need to make use of background knowledge and previous utterances to be able to infer the speaker’s intended message successfully. For the reason previously stated, there is a necessity provide EFL learners with opportunities to use the language in different contexts. Samuda & Bygate, (2008) argued that the action-oriented approach is one of the latest communicative language methodologies which emphasizes what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competencies in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios. (as cited in MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion diversifiada, 2016). Here, according to this approach, in order to communicate successfully, huge importance should be placed on what learners know about the language, but also on what learners do with the knowledge they have acquired.

According to the MEP syllabus what learners do is also extremely important for their learning construction process. This learning implies the application of knowledge into practice. Learning to do this shows a shift from skill to competence. This shift involves the ability to communicate effectively with others and promotes an aptitude toward teamwork and social skills. (MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion diversifiada, 2016). It means, learning a language not only implies the development of cognitive skills but, there is also an extraordinary relevance of what students can do with the knowledge they have. Furthermore, the ability to use the language for communication as well as putting into practice their social skills are important

factors since all of these elements guide EFL learners toward a successful construction of their learning process.

Moreover, to develop effective English lessons using the Action-Oriented Approach, teachers should provide learners with tasks that enable their communication in real-life situations. Consequently, the MEP English syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, 2016 proposes the use of action-oriented tasks, and here a description of them: Purposeful acts are set in a context that learners could face in everyday life in a variety of situations. These tasks are open-ended and complex, requiring a variety of knowledge and skills, and many possible paths are leading to attaining the specific end goal.

These tasks are purposeful activities that lead the learning to productive communication. This is done by providing the students with complex activities that include using a variety of language in different situations, it also requires students to make use of their different skills and not only the cognitive one, to fulfill the main goal. Definitively, the implementation of the action-oriented entails the development of students' skills which makes this approach very complete and useful. Then, this approach will foster students learning construction process because students are conducted to a successful use of language by using the knowledge they have when being exposed to real-life situations.

As mentioned above, learning a language implies that students should be able to put their knowledge into practice when communicating with different people, and in different circumstances. Additionally, as having already mentioned, according to this approach, students should be active agents, responsible for their learning construction process, which helps them develop communicative competence, and gain knowledge about different cultures. Furthermore, teachers need to provide a learning environment where students can explore their learning, apply

their knowledge and their social skills in order to use the language in a variety of situations. Thus, the activities the teacher uses should be purposeful and have the right sequence that guides learners to a communicative goal. Subsequently, the de following indicator will extend the subject of didactic sequence, which has to do with how the activities should be implemented to help learners fulfill a communicative goal successfully, is also worthy to mention that this following indicator is extremely important for students learning construction process.

2.4.2 Didactic Sequence

The learning construction process is quite complex and the professionals in education could easily lose their way when teaching if there is not a guide for these professionals to follow. In addition, certain structures regarding organization and execution must be followed for the development of classroom activities, in order to ensure the correct steps for achieving the highest performance in the tasks and guarantee that they are being fulfilled, on the other hand, it is of utmost importance for the educator to have these structures and steps, since they allow them to visualize the improvement by monitoring closely the students learning process.

In relation with this, didactic sequence becomes that essential tool that allows teachers to have an order during the implementation of activities in the class, giving structure to the beginning, during its development and lastly, to the result expected. Likewise, Soler Pardo et al (2013) refer to the theme in the following way:

A didactic sequence is a group of learning activities set in a specific order which takes into account the student's progress. The didactic sequence starts with an initial production; it is followed by a series of workshops and ends up with a final

production. At the beginning of the sequence, students must be told the goals of the work they are going to carry out in the workshop and particularly the final production, must be integrated within a project which provides it with a clear objective and a communicative dimension that should ideally go beyond the framework of the class. This project or final task gives a meaning to the activities and thus increases the students' motivation. The teacher will see these activities as meaningful tools that may enable them to reach the final target. (p32)

In regards with the above, in the teaching process it is necessary to have a structure that works as a guide for the execution of the activities and projects seen in class, thus both the students as well as the teacher can carry out the learning process in an organized way. Viewed in this way, in the case of EFL, it cannot be exempted from this didactic organization and it is important to break down these structures into more specific steps so that, the development of each skill is done in a staggered manner.

According to the MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada (2016) “Lessons can follow a task-based sequence that will focus on linguistic and nonlinguistic items such as phonemic awareness, language forms, vocabulary, oral or written comprehension and oral or written production, development of cognitive or socio-affective strategies, etc.” As just mentioned above this sequence for activities is based on linguistic or nonlinguistic items that are going to depend upon the language skill the teacher pretends to foster. Furthermore, the product plays an important role here since there is where students show the knowledge they gained during sequence of tasks.

Besides, the MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, (2016) states that:

The teacher will prepare tasks for students to develop their communicative competence. One of these tasks takes the form of a mini-project at the end of each unit. For example, writing a class book based on a story with each student producing one page of the book with drawings and sentence frames. Students' products can begin with a simple drawing and a label written by the teacher. Over time, the student can orally dictate and then later write one word to fill in the sentence frame.

In the case of speaking skills, the primary goal is to lead learners to oral performances where they can use the language for communication in real-life contexts. According to the MEP syllabus, these oral performances usually include participating in personal exchanges, role-plays, interviews, talk shows, debates, oral presentations, and impromptu speeches. (MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, 2016). Furthermore, the MEP syllabus also mentions that the development of the oral production skill should be divided into two different areas which are the spoken interaction and spoken production; these areas describe the role learners have in oral communicative activities. Here the description for both areas, given by the MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada(2016) : Spoken interaction (planning, organizing, rehearsing, and interacting) and spoken production (planning, organizing, rehearsing, and producing).

As stated previously in the case of the spoken interaction, it has to do with interactive activities where the student plans, organizes, practices, and interacts with their classmates, here the student has the role of listener and speaker, there should be oral production of all the students and also a collaborative and social interaction environment is developed. In the second area, students have to present orally what they practiced the oral production is received by the audience.

To sum up, didactic sequence makes it possible for teachers to develop a topic successfully including purposeful activities that follow a sequence with different degrees of difficulty. The implementation of the didactic sequence is extremely important for the learning construction process since it allows learners to follow different steps in an organized form to reach the main aim. Besides, teachers should know that didactic sequence takes into account students' progress and for this reason there it is important to set a coherent order when developing the learning activities that may fulfill students' needs.

On the other side, here the task plays enormous importance as well, since every task should be previously thought or planned with the purpose of helping learners develop their oral speaking proficiency in the learning construction process. Since tasks also comprise a big role, the next segment will go deeper on the importance they play in the English learning process.

2.4.3 Tasks

In the learning construction process, it is important to ensure that students understand and manipulate the information, pupils need to interact with each other, have exchanges of ideas and produce results based on the knowledge previously acquired. In addition, tasks are in the frame of teaching the concept that present these elements by implementing them in the class, tasks are related to all activities or exercises carried out in the classroom with the purpose of allow students to construct and show the knowledge gain from the content they are being exposed. In relation with this, Lee (2000) states the following: "A task is (1) a classroom activity or exercise that has (a) an objective attainable only by the interaction among participants, (b) a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and (c) a focus on meaning exchange; (2) a language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and/or produce the target language as they perform some set of workplans. (p.32).

The use of task to develop skills in EFL classes tends to strengthen the learning process of students and are important for them to exploit their skills and expand their knowledge. The whole process when completing a task represents complexity, it extend from the starting steps when learners have to interpret the instructions to get an overview of what they have to do, then during the process when they have to communicate to each other in English , so it encourage them to use the language and generate ideas to express themselves and finally, when presenting the product, which is basically the result of what the students gathered from the information they were exposed.

In regards with the previous mentioned, in Costa Rica according to the English Syllabus, (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada, there is an important relation between the Action Oriented Approach which is the one currently used and task implementation in class:

“Tasks in the Action-Oriented Approach often involve the creation of a product as the students perform the task. This product may be a brochure for tourists, a blog entry, or a fund-raising project for a humanitarian cause. “However, not only the specific outcome, but also the process, which leads to the final result, is important for communication in the language classroom: this involves a step-by-step organization, learners’ activation of strategies and competences, consideration of the setting and social forms, as well as materials and support” (p.29).

As stated above when performing tasks not only the product is important, but also the knowledge students acquire when performing each task, each step may have a big impact on students learning construction process and so they should be carefully designed by the teachers. For instance, in the case of speaking skills, tasks should be chosen with the purpose of reinforcing their oral communication skills. Here, the teacher can implement communicative and interactive activities that lead students to oral production and interaction.

Besides, Brown (2001) argues that more of the speaking tasks must have an interactive and spontaneous outcome. Learners should be taught words, phrases, idioms, and colloquial language. Phonemic awareness along with phonological awareness will be developed progressively so that learners get the stress, rhythm, and intonation of natural English speech. (as cited in MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion diversifiada, 2016). As afore stated, in the case of speaking tasks should be designed to have students interacting with each other during the process so that at the end, pupils are able to show their knowledge in the spoken production. It should be stressed that this product has to be spontaneous, which means the objective of speaking tasks is not having students producing what they memorized, on the contrary, students should be able to use the knowledge and the phrases or language they acquired to show a final spontaneous product. In short, oral communicative tasks aim at enabling the students to think and generate sentences on their own naturally. Therefore, the reasons previously mentioned show that the tasks play a relevant role in students' English learning construction process.

To conclude, it is important to create a positive environment to encourage the learners' interaction. As such, they can express their thought and opinions, feeling afraid of making mistakes. Hence, the activities developed in class should be carefully designed by the teacher. Additionally, all the steps must be important for students learning the construction process. It means, not only the final task has relevance, but all of them play an important role. Furthermore, the product should also show student oral production skills spontaneously rather than rote learning since the main aim when learning a language is to use it for spontaneous communication.

Furthermore, the interaction all time and the collaborative environment among students is extremely important. There should be interaction all the time in a collaborative environment, leaving behind their fear of making mistakes and perceiving speaking as a process of continuous

practice. Finally, the importance of tasks and the appropriacy of the tasks used in class lies on the big impact it has on students' communicative skills and learning construction process since by developing interactive and communicative tasks, the students can make huge progress in the development of speaking skills, which let them interact in different situations using the foreign language in a fruitful form.

2.5 Chapter's Conclusion

This chapter synthesized the most important variables and their indicators related to this alternative methodological proposal, as well as the importance that these elements have for the learning construction process. In the first section it is exposed collaborative learning as the first variable, CL is widely used nowadays in the development of the learning construction process, today's classes are focused on collaborative work, exchanges of ideas between the participants and group results showing by students as active agents in their own learning process. This direction on teaching is essential, especially in the current social environment where jobs are mainly focus on collaborative work as the key to succeed. Likewise, (Yanh & Agrawaal, 2011) comment that we as humans have been so successful a species because of our ability to apply our intelligence to collaborate with others to accomplish group goals.

For this reason, CL has been broken down to show the main concepts and their importance in the collaborative approach. Therefore, the next highlights the importance of interpersonal and small-group skills, this aspect refers to the ability of students to interact with others, allowing them the exchange of ideas when working together, which enriches their learning process, as mentioned previously in this chapter Frey et al (2009) establishes the following "Knowledge is built and extended through the exchange of ideas and that students should be encouraged to question and push each other's understanding" (p.13).

On the other hand, the student's role is an element of tremendous relevance in CL, in the MEP's English syllabus (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada it is pointed out that: "the learner/social agent is not an empty vessel but a whole person with values, beliefs, and identity, and a language or languages." (p.31). As stated previously, students have an active role in the learning process. Students must be perceived as a whole individual with values, beliefs and identity including the cultural aspects that entail each person. Teachers should identify all of these aspects and subsequently, try to fulfill individual learners' needs, encourages them to have an active role and responsibility for their knowledge acquisition which plays an important role in their learning construction process.

As the last indicator of CL but not the least important, it is the teacher's role. As is already known, the educator must be a guide, he must be an authority, but above all, when it is about CL, the teacher must be a monitor and let the students develop their capacity, being they the central axis of their learning process. For instance, English syllabus (2016) Tercer ciclo y Educación Diversificada summarizes a definition of teacher's role as the following: "The teacher is a facilitator and helps the learner to become autonomous. She/he takes several roles such as coach, resource person, advisor, organizer, and facilitator for the learner's successful completion of the task. (p. 27). The previously expressed that the teacher's role should lie in being a facilitator rather than a leader because teacher-centered classrooms do not allow learners to participate actively in their learning construction process.

The second variable analyzed in this alternative methodological proposal refers to speaking skills and its great importance when learning a second language, However, in order to be successful when communicating, it is vital to take into consideration all the aspects that may impact the communication skills. Learning a language is more than learning the language structures . Students

also need to know about all the factors that affect good communication and transmission of the message in the target language. Developing students' speaking skills is about integrating elements such as accuracy, fluency and appropriacy so that students can communicate effectively and clearly.

Consequently, accuracy plays an relevant role in verbal communication. As it was seen in the development of accuracy as the first indicator of Speaking Skills, Richard (2012) states that “accuracy is the capacity to use the language in ways that are grammatically and phonological appropriate to use the correct grammar, the correct syntax, and the correct pronunciation”. Communicating a message accurately embraces the way the message is carried out, in means, the accurate use of rules, grammatical structures, clear pronunciation to transmit the message with ease and clearness. Undoubtedly, accuracy is a key element to improve during the learning construction process, in order to improve the students' abilities when communicating in the target language. Furthermore, fluency is also an indicator of great importance in speaking skills and it is generally related to how competent the learners are when making use of the language or the ability to speak the closest to a native speaker.

In the learning construction process, fluency is associated with the naturalness in which the language should be used and the speed with which the message is transmitted. Additionally, as previously cited, Wood (2012) comments that fluency is often used as a synonym for effective spoken use of a language. It is frequently used to mean “native-like,” having a high overall degree of proficiency, or having a "good command" of a language. In addition, pupils should be provided with authentic input and context employing interactive speaking activities that allow them to use the language to transfer meaning in real contexts. Additionally, fluency can greatly improve

students' knowledge construction process because when a student is fluent, he /she will feel confident enough to monitor their learning process.

In Addition, as the last speaking skill indicator, appropriacy is a concept that was also describe and studied in this paper for its relevant role in the learning construction process when it comes to ELF. Regarding this, it is important for learners to be careful with the situation in which the message will be transited since the language used, must fit the audience and the situation. A learner who has not developed appropriacy when speaking will not be linguistically competent when being exposed to different scenarios. In relation with this, Kukiboyeva ,M & Jabborova, D. (2018) states: "Appropriacy refers to the degree of fit or suitability that there is between a piece of language and the social context in which it is used. When the piece of language matches the social context, it is said to be appropriate" (p.7). Therefore, the appropriate use of language is a fundamental aspect in the development of speaking skills, for this reason; it has been included to activities and tasks a variety of scenarios and contexts to be carried out in the learning construction process regarding the teaching of EFL in order to improve this element in learners when using the language.

The third variable developed in this methodological research proposal was the Learning construction process which comprises how the meaning is built by exposing students to different social contexts in the classroom and also outside, here the teachers play an important role to clarify learners doubts and monitor they knowledge acquisitions. As stated by Banks (2002) "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 references, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it"(p. 14). The knowledge construction process foster students' construction of ideas and

understandings, the focus of classroom instruction should be on helping students to learn and experience this learning process. So, the learning activities implemented by the teachers should be rich since they are the elevator toward their learning construction process.

Consequently, the construction of the learning process is impacted by different elements. The first indicator for this variable is the action-oriented approach. As previously mentioned by Samuda & Bygate, (2008) in this chapter, “The action-oriented approach emphasizes what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competencies in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios.” Here it is worthy to highlight those students play an important role since they should be social agents and responsible of their own learning construction process. Furthermore, the action-oriented approach aims at enhancing student’s communication skills by the incorporation of activities that provide language learners with meaningful contexts and real-life scenarios.

The second indicator developed for this variable was the didactic sequence which accounts organization for the development of activities. As already stated in this chapter by Soler Pardo (2013) “A didactic sequence is a group of learning activities set in a specific order which takes into account the student’s progress.” Didactic sequence has a huge importance in the learning construction process since it guides learners to the fulfillment of a specific goal. Besides, teachers should be aware that didactic sequence should take into consideration takes students’ progress and for this reason the importance of organizing the tasks in a coherent manner that lead students to a fruitful product.

The last indicator, however, one that encompasses a huge importance, is the task. As just mentioned, afore tasks are an essential part of didactic sequence since all the tasks should promote rich speaking practice. As argued in this chapter by Lee (2000) “A task is a classroom activity or

exercise that has an objective attainable only by the interaction among participants. “Having analyzed this definition, tasks should motivate students to participate and interact among them in order to improve their language skills. When talking about tasks not only the product is important, but each task followed has such a big impact on students’ learning.

Hence, when talking about the success of students’ knowledge construction process, the action approach plays an important role since it emphasizes on what a learner is able to do with their knowledge. Then, the way a teacher organizes the activities also entails a huge importance, and finally each individual task in the process affects students learning construction process. After this, it is worthy to say that all indicators go hand by hand and have such a great influence on students’ progress.

Chapter III Design and Method

3.1 Introduction

When developing an investigation, it is essential to be clear about all the aspects that will be taken throughout the proposal and the main characteristics that it presents. This chapter is focused on different aspects such as the research method, type of approach, data collection tools, and instruments. These elements are necessary for the research process to support the whole alternative methodological proposal, working on these elements is crucial to guide the investigation in the correct direction to collect the right information according to the purpose of the research. In this section, it is explained in detail the methodological framework that will be used at the time of gathering information. Thus, it will be exposed the importance this proposal presents in such a way that it is possible to find a solution or improvement to the latent issue that students are having in the development of speaking skills. The role of this chapter is vital as it provides researchers the necessary orientation to achieve the objectives in this proposal.

One of the main aspects that should be reviewed to clarify the intention of the proposal, before going striate to the research method is the research design. As a definition of the research design, "it refers to the procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies" (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007, p.58). In other words, the research design sets the procedure on the required data, the methods to be applied to collect and analyze this data, and how all of this is going to contribute to the entire result in the research. Regarding the previously mentioned and because of its features, it is the exploratory research design the one that can be better carried out in the current proposal. Exploratory research is commonly used when it is necessary to search the literature for a better understanding of the topic under investigation to come up with ideas, solutions, or improvements to the problem studied. Into the bargain, Saunders et al., (2007) stated that exploratory research is conducted when enough is not known about a

phenomenon and a problem that has not been clearly defined. It does not aim to provide the final and conclusive answers to all questions but merely explores the research topic with varying levels of depth.

On the other hand, the research method applied in this alternative methodological proposal is fundamental to support the value of developing this investigation concisely and clearly. In order to develop this proposal, the method suggested to be applied is the action-research, this method is about detecting the problem and trying to create a solution or improvements by collecting information that provides a better understanding and thus, more efficient ideas. Concerning this, Burns (2010) states: “The central idea of the action part of AR is to intervene deliberately in the problematic situation to bring about changes and, even better, improvements in practice. Importantly, the improvements that happen in AR are ones based on information (or to use the research term, data) that an action researcher collects systematically” (p.2).

For the previous reason, the action research is of huge importance to develop the current alternative methodological proposal and will be studied deeply during the development of this chapter. Consequently, the next component described in this segment is the type of approach. In regard to this research, the approach to be used will be mixed, which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative. This type of approach is of great value when collecting data, since by showing both options the information collected will be more varied and therefore, will show a broader vision of the matter under investigation. Likewise, Creswell & Plano (2011) comment that this approach focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.

The foregoing refers to the significance of this approach by allowing a wide and varied amount of data collected, for this reason, its use in the current alternative methodological proposal is recommended and will be studied with greater relevance throughout this chapter.

Thereafter, this chapter also sets out various tools for gathering indispensable data. These methods imply the interaction between researchers and participants and are one of the most important stages when conducting research. Kabir (2016) mentions that “Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes.” (p.202) Thus, the purpose of data collection is to gather valid evidence that then, can be utilized to analyze outcomes and building a bridge for answering previously stated questions,

Data collection is a very demanding job for a researcher which needs to use a certain instrument to collect the data from a selected sample population. It is vital to highlight that the instruments are an essential part and; therefore, should be designed accurately in order to obtain valid information that helps maintain the integrity of the research. As mentioned afore, the data collection procedure entails information about the instruments that will be implemented. The data collection will be defined according to the type of research and approach.

In the case of this alternative methodological proposal, three instruments will be used. These instruments are a diagnostic test, pre-test, and post-test. The previous instruments will help the researcher obtain the necessary data to support the arguments.

The first instrument is essential for this alternative methodological proposal since it aims at measuring learners’ strengths and weaknesses on a specific subject and this at the same time,

allows researchers to look forward to improvement. According to Gani (2015), DA improves teaching and learning in education as it identifies the strength and weaknesses of students and also as an indicator of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the education system. That is to say, diagnostic tests give attention to an individual's educational weakness or learning struggles and identify the gaps in students' have and; therefore, attempt to find some solutions. Diagnosis and remediation go together and teachers need to understand the learners' mastery of language or a subject with the purpose of finding a possible solution. For this reason, mentioned afore, this instrument is taken as an important part of this methodological proposal.

Furthermore, regarding the pre-test and post-test instruments, Salkind (2010) mentions that “The basic premise behind the pretest-posttest design involves obtaining a pretest measure of the outcome of interest prior to administering some treatment, followed by a posttest on the same measure after treatment occurs.” (n.p) Thus, Pre-test and diagnostic tests aim at measuring baseline knowledge at the beginning of the administration of some treatment and; subsequently, compare it with the knowledge obtained at the end. The pre-test and post-test instruments entail huge importance on this research since it allows researchers to be informed about pupils' progression and growth on the subject matter.

To conclude, this chapter encompasses great relevance for this alternative research proposal as it exposes the means for collecting data. From initiation of a research to the ultimate culmination, many segments are vital in order to maintain the integrity of the research. Besides, for a successful conduction of research, researchers need to be knowledgeable about the research method, otherwise, the investigation cannot be developed concisely. Furthermore, the research method chosen for this alternative research proposal will help to analyze the data and intervene in the

phenomena since important improvements can be made in action research thanks to the information that is systematically collected through the AR method. Additionally, the mixed approach is of huge importance for this investigation since it provides varied information qualitatively and quantitatively. Furthermore, the data collection and the instruments are meant for this investigation because the data gathered through these tools will permit researchers to validate the initial hypotheses, and reinforce the arguments exposed in the literature framework, and also find answers for research questions. Also, the information gathered can be analyzed and utilized to look forward to possible solutions. As mentioned afore the research method is of vast significance for this research as it guides researchers in the process and provides the reader to critically evaluate the study's overall validity and reliability of the investigation. For this reason, the next segment will strengthen and examine with more depth the research method which is utilized for this alternative methodological proposal.

3.2 Research Method

When developing research and striving to obtain answers about certain phenomena, it is fundamental to follow steps or procedures to gather and analyze the data successfully. Hence, when developing research, a method should be utilized since this is a pivotal part for the research to be carried out with clearly identified deliverables and targets. In the case of the current alternative methodological proposal; the research method used is action research since it implies detecting a phenomenon in the classroom environment and; thenceforth, apply the most pertinent solution. Ferrance (2000) explains the term action research as "a disciplined inquiry done by a teacher with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future. This research is carried out within the context of the teacher's environment" (p.2). That is to say, action research involves professionals working in their respective fields, more specifically; it takes place in the educational area and endeavors to examine phenomena faced in the classroom context. Furthermore, the term action research implicitly tells that this research methodology requires some hands-on problems or phenomena under study. Moreover, Ferrance (2000) also adds that "Action research is not about learning why we do certain things, but rather how we can do things better. It is about how we can change our instruction to impact students."(p.3) In other words, the main concern of the action research approach is to provoke positive changes or improvements in the educational field. Hence, this method is not just about examining or attempting to find answers for phenomena to happen but also undertaking effective and feasible actions for the issue with the eye toward obtaining positive outcomes.

Moreover, Tripp (2005) contemplates that action research "should be able to bridge both the theory into practice transition, and the practice into theory transformation, though it shows little

sign of doing so, perhaps because it is so orientated to improving practice” (p.11). This argument demonstrates that theory, practice, transition, and change go hand in hand. This relation is beneficial because the teacher must know not only about the practice or the theory an investigation entails, but also how to solve the problem in the area where it is required.

Described in a more detailed way, there are also different types of action research and which one to use in an investigation will depend directly on the focus of the research and the number of participants it includes. In regard to this, Ferrance (2000) refers to four types; Individual action research, usually focuses on a single issue in the classroom, the teacher may be seeking solutions to problems of classroom management, instructional strategies, use of materials, or student learning. The second one is School-wide research, which focuses on issues common to all, for example, a school may have a concern about the lack of parental involvement in activities and is looking for a way to reach more parents to involve them in meaningful ways. The third one is, District-wide research, it is far more complex and utilizes more resources, but the rewards can be great. Issues can be organizational, community-based, performance-based, or processes for decision-making, this type may choose to address a problem common to several schools or one of organizational management.

The number four is the Collaborative action research, and it is the one recommended to carry out the current alternative methodological proposal. This type of action research may include as few as two teachers or a group of several teachers and others interested in addressing a classroom or department issue. This issue may involve one classroom or a common problem shared by many classrooms.

In addition, to develop the collaborative action research, it is necessary to include a considerable number of participants, in this case from the educational center in which the proposal will be carried out, According to VanBaren, J (2019):

“Collaborative research involves a group of people researching a specified topic. With collaborative research, more than one person is involved in the implementation of the new program. Typically, a group of students, larger than just one class, are tested, and the results are analyzed. Many times, collaborative research involves both teachers and the principal of the school. This type of research offers the collaboration of many people working jointly on one subject” (p.2). As mentioned above, in the collaborative action research it is presented a group being under investigation towards a latent problem, and the participants are the teacher, principals, and students. For this reason, taking into consideration the four different types of action research, the one that is suggested to use in this alternative methodological proposal is the collaborative one.

To sum up, action research seeks transformative change through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research, which is linked together by critical reflection. Besides, through the action research, it is possible to analyze any social situation, in this case, in the educational context to promote change and participation from external sources in the given setting. The main concern of the action research approach is to provoke changes after having analyzed problems within the sample of the population studied. Furthermore, when considering the action research method, it is essential to state that it is used to give reliability to the investigation. In consideration of this, it is concluded that the action research method has an essential role in this alternative methodological proposal since it seems to diagnose a problem, study it, and provide solutions for the issue. Therefore, through the implementation of this action-research alternative methodological proposal teachers will be able to improve the oral skill that will facilitate the development and

enhancement of the learning construction process. Furthermore, as previously stated there many types of action research; however, the one that will be used for convenience is collaborative action research since it implies collaboration of many people working together on a specific subject and it also involves the implementation of the solution for the group of people under study.

To implement remediation, researchers need an approach since it is of great importance to defines how the data will be collected, to give validity to an investigation, the results must be strengthened by evidence. In the case of this investigation, as it was mentioned, the mixed approach will be utilized since it works to compare and contrast the information found and guides researchers to triangulate the data that will be collected through the application of the instruments. Subsequently, because of the huge space that the approach occupies in this research, it will be examined in the next section.

3.3 Type of Approach

Regarding the current alternative methodological proposal, this segment will study and analyze the type of approach that will be used as a recommendation in this alternative methodological proposal as well as its relevance in the development of the paper. The type of approach relates to the plan and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Besides, there are three types of approaches used when carrying out research, which are going to be mentioned and describe according to their main features in the following lines.

Concerning the previous, the qualitative approach consists in the immersion of the researchers into the group of people that is being studied, it is an approach more for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups give to a social or human problem, it also consists

in a comparison between the elements gathered instead of using the mathematical data. Likewise, Kumar (2018) stated that:

“it is a type of social science research that collects in works with non-numerical data that seeks to interpret meaning from this data that help us understand social life through the study of target population or places. It is the observations and interpretation of people's perception of different events, and it takes a snapshot of people's perception in a national setting. (p.2)

In other words, the qualitative approach makes use of data collection without numerical measurement to support the research questions in the process of investigation, the qualitative approach consists of exploring theoretical perspectives with the purpose of understanding and interpreting the subject matter.

On the other hand, the quantitative design is of great value, since it includes the administration of instruments in such a way the researcher can measure and test the relationships that it might have with the variables gathering numerical information that allows a broader understanding between them. According to Leavy (2017) stated that:

“This type of research involves measuring variables and testing relationships between variables to reveal patterns, correlations, or causal relationships. Researchers may employ the linear method of data collection and analysis that results in statistical data. The values underlying quantitative research include neutrality, objectivity, and the acquisition of sizeable scope of knowledge” (p.9).

Based on this information, this investigation also applies the quantitative approach due to the fact that one of its aims is to graph all the data obtained for showing reliability through the data procedure method chosen. The use of statistical data for the research descriptions and analysis

reduces allow researchers to obtain valid information, for this reason, the quantitative is of huge relevance since it provides findings more objectively.

Based on the above, it can be said that both the qualitative approach, which refers more to perceptive and opinion concepts, and the quantitative approach that shows a more numerical trend, both have characteristics that are very beneficial when used in the development of research and it would be worthwhile not to deprive of its benefits.

Finally, the approach that is recommended to be used to carry out the data collection in the ongoing proposal is mixed. The mixed approach in the research process is characterized by the combination of qualitative and quantitative research components. For instance, according to the purpose of this alternative methodological proposal, it can be used the following definition of mixed methods research as is stated by Johnson et al. (2007), "Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e. g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration" p. 123.

For this reason, it is more helpful to administrate a mixed approach due to it provides more detailed information about the problem under study. Using the mixed method makes the data obtained more accurate since it eliminates the error factor that both methods (qualitative and quantitative) might have when using them individually. One of the benefits of a mixed investigation is the possibility of carrying out a "triangulation" of methods or the possibility of studying the same phenomenon in different ways. Likewise, it can also be said that using both methods during an investigation it makes the quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other. This means that the disadvantages of each method are counteracted, and the results

produced are more satisfactory. The implementation of this type of approach is fundamental to understand the topic of this investigation with tools and instruments that work together.

In short, the possibility of combining both the qualitative and the quantitative approach when carrying out an investigation process, as is the case of the innovation that is presented in this alternative methodological proposal, allows to complement the best of both approaches and thus guarantee a more complete collection of information, in this way, the implementation of the mixed approach is recommended as the principal to be used for gathering the data in this proposal. Therefore, in the following section, will be described and analyzed in depth the components and instruments that are going to be used in the data collection, which is of utmost importance to obtain a clear overview with the purpose of achieving a better understanding of the problem presented in this alternative methodological proposal.

3.4 Data collection

This section is of paramount importance for this alternative methodological proposal as it is through data collection that the quality of information needed by the researchers can be obtained. Besides, as alluded to in earlier chapters, this methodological proposal is based on the action research method and here the data collection plays a tremendous role. Johnson (2012) mentions that “Action research is not simply writing about what you think to be true; rather, it is collecting data and making conclusions based on that data “(p.1). This would firmly imply that data collection is an essential part of the action research and without this information making conclusions will not be possible. Therefore, using action research as a tool allows making valid conclusions and on-going changes in the subject matter in the educational field.

Moreover, this data is of huge importance for further analysis since this information permits researchers to provide answers to problems and analyze new insight to great effect. In the research field, the data is of prominent importance since it refers to raw information that has not been subjected to interpretation by the researcher and is still in its original form (Räsänen & Nyce 2013). Thus, data is any information that has been gathered in its original form in order to validate research and keep its integrity. Furthermore, the collection of data allows examination, triangulation, and explanation of the subject matter. Inasmuch as this step is of vast relevance necessary when carrying out an investigation, it will be part of the current alternative methodological proposal.

Besides, it is essential to specify the methods to be utilized to generate data and to justify why these methods are considered to be the most appropriate. Ferrance (2000) added that “The collection of data is an important step in deciding what action needs to be taken. Multiple sources of data are used to better understand the scope of happenings in the classroom or school.” (p.11) As previously stated, in the investigation field, there are different types of data collection instruments that facilitate the gathering of information. The same author also mentions that some of the vehicles for the collection data are: journals, interviews, questionnaires, checklists, diaries, portfolios, surveys, case studies, self-assessments, photos, among more.

Despite the different kinds of mechanisms to compile the data researchers need to choose carefully the ones that best fit their needs and context. In the case of the current study a diagnostic test, pre-test, and post-test will be the instruments used to answer the research questions for this alternative methodological proposal. These instruments were chosen because they allow researchers to meet learners' gaps and struggles, measure the knowledge at the beginning of the process and then measure outcomes after implementing innovative treatment. That is to say, these

instruments will provide researchers with highly rich information that will be utilized to act and obtain a result. Hence, it is important to mention that these types of data collection and tools have a high prominence in the development of an inquiry because they provided the research with reliability and validity. Besides, Ferrance (2000) explains that an important step in action research is to use the information from the data collection and compare it to the current literature, and thereafter design a plan of action that will allow you put hands on the problem and to study that change. In the case of this alternative methodological proposal, action will be taken after collecting the data and having analyzed it. Researchers will attempt some remedy for the problem and here innovation plays an important role since innovative techniques will be used in order to help students foster their speaking skills.

To conclude, data collection allows researchers to gather and measure information in an organized manner, this enables researchers to answer questions, test hypothesis and analyze results. Hence, the data collection is such an important source in the research field because thanks to it, it is possible to validate the study. Moreover, in the action research method data collection plays a relevant role since primary information is needed in order to resolve the phenomenon. Besides, the way in which researchers collect the data may vary depending on the emphasis researchers want to give their investigation regardless of the field of study or preference for defining data. In the case, the information gathered will be qualitative and quantitative since the mixed approach is the one utilized.

It is important to highlight that accurate data collection is essential for maintaining the integrity of research and the selection of appropriate data collection instruments plays an important part in the data collection since by these means is that researchers will obtain the necessary information to maintain the integrity of the investigation. As mentioned afore because of the huge

importance the instruments have in the data collection the next segment will deepen and widen the instruments used for this alternative methodological proposal.

3.4.1 Instruments

One of the most relevant processes in an investigation is the data collection, it is the key to support any research and regarding the current process, it will be of great importance to hold up the action research that it is recommended to carry out. The data collection is essential to make the information reliable and credible at the time of answering the questions that are involved in the study. Besides, Parveen & Showkat (2017), commented that data is the heart of any research design, irrespective of the field of study, they also mentioned that any research begins with certain questions, which need to be answered and data collection is the process of gathering the desirable information carefully, with least possible distortion, so that the analysis may provide answers that are credible and stand to logic. For this reason, it is of great importance to carry out the data collection carefully and precisely, since if it is done properly, it will provide the research with the necessary answers to reach clear conclusions on the problem that this alternative methodological proposal tries to solve.

In regard to data collection, it is necessary to describe the role of the instruments that it uses to collect the information, what they are, and how they work in this process. Moreover, the instruments are tools designed to gather information related to the members that take part in the research in such a way it provides valid arguments for the action research development. Likewise, Khan & Adil (2011) refer that; "The collected evident is called data and the tools for this are called data collecting devices or tools, which is a common phenomenon in the behavioral research. These

tools help to analyze the responses of a population and related variables and by careful interpretation of the sample”.

Consequently, the instruments are tools designed to gather information related to the members that are involved as part of the research, in a way that provides valid arguments for the action research that will be developed. For instance, to obtain the information in this alternative methodological proposal, three different instruments are recommended to be administered; the first one is a diagnostic test, this instrument will provide the researcher with a clear idea of where the students are, what is their proficiency level and will show what are their strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, Cohen et al. (2017) stated:

“Diagnostic tests are designed to identify particular strengths, weaknesses, and problems in the aspect with which they are concerned (akin to going to a doctor with a medical complaint). Diagnostic tests identify needs, difficulties, successes, and where problems arise. Whilst teachers are constantly diagnosing students’ needs, difficulties, strengths, weaknesses and problems” (p.565).

Whith this being said, it is clear that the diagnostic test will be of great help for researchers to identify the proficiency level students have and with this come up with actions that throughout this proposal allow them to provide improvements to the current problem. For this reason, the diagnostic test deserves to be studied in-depth in the next section. Consequently, the next instruments that will be described and analyzed in this section are the pre-test and post-test. In this action research, the pre-test and post-test will allow the researcher to obtain a clearer idea about the performance of the students during their learning construction process. In relation with this, Bonate (2000) comments that the pre-test and post-test data appears when the same experimental unit is measure on some variable on two different occasions or at the same time in different testing

conditions, he also refers to the type of pre-test and post-test design in which one subject is measure in two separate occasions for the researcher to determine if there is a difference between the first and second measurement.

To sum up, as mentioned in this segment the data is of paramount importance for research since the analysis of reliable data provides credible answers to draw conclusions and apply the remedy to the problem. As aforementioned throughout this chapter, the instruments are essential means to collect this data and for that reason is that choosing the appropriate instruments carefully is of prominent importance. For this alternative methodological proposal, the three instruments utilized are the diagnostic test, pre, and post-test. The three instruments entail a relevant role in the achievement of the research objective. First, the diagnostic test help identify the gaps students may have in their learning process, more specifically in speaking skills. Besides, the pre-test instrument permits researchers to measure students' knowledge or skills. In this case, it will let researchers measure pupil's oral communication skills. The third instrument chosen was the pre-test that will be administered after applying some remedy to compare the results with the ones obtained in the pre-test to see if the implementation of cooperative learning innovative techniques helped to improve students' oral skills.

After the aforementioned it is important to highlight that by administering the previous instruments in this alternative methodological proposal, the researcher will not just identify the students speaking skills by using diagnostic tests, but also measure if the implementation of collaborative learning to foster speaking skills will produce positive results after taking care of the data collection by administering also pre-test and post-test instruments. For this reason, these elements will study broadly in the following part of this alternative methodological proposal that is being carried out.

3.4.1.1 Diagnostic Test

The assessment process has always been important in the learning construction process to determine the students' skills or abilities in specific areas and therefore try to improve students' learning. Concerning this, Sun & Suzuki (2013) commented that assessment provides teachers with information about such things as whether students have learned enough or what to teach them, they also mentioned that teachers are expected to use assessment results to improve their teaching and organize a sound instruction plan for facilitating students' educational development. That is to say, assessment is a process that provides data about learners' knowledge and skills. This information is of valuable importance for teachers to improve their teaching techniques and instruction to foster student's skills.

Regarding this alternative methodological proposal, this section presents the diagnostic test as the one to be designed to collect the necessary information to measure the students' speaking skill level. This instrument will be administered to a group of students to collect information related to the topic under study. Furthermore, the diagnostic test has its main objective to identify the validity of the hypothesis and the research questions that provide support in the development of this proposal. Moreover, the statement of the problem in the current action research is the implementation of collaborative learning to foster the speaking skill level in the learning construction process, in such a way learner will improve their language competence during their learning process. Also, by administering the diagnostic test, researchers will identify what students need to reinforce and improve concerning their speaking skills level and thus, expand their knowledge to come up with possible solutions to meet these needs.

Concerning the aforesaid, Alderson (2005) stated that; "Diagnostic tests are designed to identify both strengths and weaknesses in a learner's knowledge and use of language. Focusing on

strengths will enable the identification of the level a learner has reached and focusing on weaknesses or possible areas for improvement should lead to remediation or further instruction". For this reason, it can be concluded that the diagnostic test provides important information to identify strengths and weaknesses that students might have during their learning process, and it is essential because researchers can identify aspects and thus make improvements on the topic they are working on. On the other hand, Alderson (2005) also refers to diagnostic tests commenting that they should enable detailed analysis and report of responses to tasks and must give detailed feedback which can be acted upon and test results and feedback should be provided as soon as possible after the test, which will present a positive effect since students will immediately correct their errors or at least start working on improvements.

Likewise, Kumar (2016) explains that :

“The diagnosis is essentially the task of locating more specifically those factors which bear more causal relation to the progress of learning of a pupil or a group of pupils. If the educational diagnosis is to be handmade for effective teaching. The essence of educational diagnosis is the identification of some of the causes of learning difficulty and some of the potential educational assets so that, by giving proper attention to these factors, more effective learning may result. “
(p.9)

Concerning Kumar's argument, the application of diagnostic tests not only provides data about students' achievement but also shows the instructional effectiveness of teaching instruction as well examining learners performance in their learning construction process. Besides, through diagnosis, it can be determined students' degree of construction in a specific area or specific skills. And therefore, place attention to the deficiencies found.

3.4.1.2 Pre-test

The pre-test instrument is of relevant importance for this alternative methodological proposal since it is a type of assessment that allows researchers to collect essential data concerning student's speaking skills preliminary to a treatment. Meidasari (2015) argues that “Assessment and evaluation are essential components of teaching and learning in English language arts. Without an effective evaluation program, it is impossible to know whether students have learned, whether teaching has been effective, or how best to address student learning needs. “ (p.225). Assessment is an integral part of students' learning construction process that helps identify if students have learned what was expected and whether students' needs are met or not.

Therefore, using data collection tools to assess pupils' needs and knowledge is of paramount importance in the research field. This is action research that makes use of the qualitative and quantitative approach in order to collect data to explore the phenomena and therefore, apply innovative techniques to improve student's oral communication proficiency in the English language. Consequently, to know the level of students' oral proficiency, it is necessary to apply a pretest that will let researchers measure students' knowledge.

The pre-test evaluation model aims to measure the baseline knowledge of participants at the beginning of a course (Malik, 2019, p.4). So, the pre-test refers to the application of the test to a sample group for initial measurement. In the case of this proposal, the pretest will be applied with the purpose of obtaining information about students' knowledge before being exposed to an experimental treatment that will be administered.

Thus, the pre-test is a useful tool for researchers to assess students' knowledge in the respective field. In the case of this study, researchers aim at measuring students speaking skills. Guskey (2018) cited, "...pre-assessments provide essential data about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students bring to learning tasks. They stress that teachers need this information to plan appropriate and effective instructional activities..."(p.1). To implement innovative techniques researchers first need to identify students' learners' speaking proficiency, for this, the pre-test will be the means to measure students' speaking skills by applying different oral tests preliminary to the implementation of collaborative learning techniques. This oral pretest will allow the measurement of students' accuracy fluency and appropriacy and consequently apply some remedy to foster their oral skill in the learning process.

3.4.1.3 Post-test

In the light of the last segment, the pre-test instrument was explained as an important data collection tool for carrying out this alternative methodological proposal. As aforementioned in the previous segment, the pre-test allows researchers to evaluate student's knowledge before administering some treatment. Furthermore, the pre- post-test process aims at the following: First, the pre-test can be used to assess prior knowledge. Second, when used in conjunction with the post-test it is possible to assess the knowledge obtained at the end of a current course. (Caris et al.,2004) That is to say, that the post-test is of prominent importance since it makes possible the measurement of knowledge after administering some treatment. These assessment tools can be used to tap into students' knowledge at the beginning and to evaluate how well they have learned at the end of a process.

Kirkpatrick (1998) defines learning as the extent to which participants change attitudes, increase knowledge, and/or increase skill as a result of attending a program. (p1). Concerning the authors' definition of learning, it is a process of change that has to do with the acquisition of knowledge or skills and after experiencing or being exposed to a program or a process.

In view of this, it should be underscored that when finishing administering some treatment it is extremely important to test students' learning, knowledge, or understanding concerning a certain subject or area.

Kirkpatrick (1998) explains that:

“The pre-test and post-test are designed using the learning objectives established for the module/course. Both tests consist of the same test items. However, the pre-test is given to participants before they begin the module/course as a means of measuring how much they know about the topic. At the conclusion of the module/course, the participants take the post-test that measures their ability to apply knowledge or perform a specific task. “(p.3).

Concerning the author's argument, the post-test is of great use as it allows be informed about student's progression and growth of a subject matter. Thereupon, in the matter of this alternative methodological proposal, the post-test will be of paramount importance since this instrument will permit the assessment of the speaking skills after applying innovative techniques to foster students' oral communication skills. Furthermore, Malik (2019) “Comparing participants' post-test scores to their pre-test scores enables to see whether the activity was successful in increasing participants' knowledge of the taught content. “(p.4). About this, the post-test results will be analyzed by researchers and compared to pre-test results to determine if students gained positive outcomes regarding their speaking skills.

To conclude, the instruments are important tools that enable the collection of data in the research field. The instruments mentioned in this chapter grant the gathering of reliable information that will serve for future analysis. For this alternative methodological proposal, the three instruments chosen, cover a very important role in the achievement of the research objective. The diagnostic test help identify the needs and difficulties that learner have in a specific area. In this case their oral communication skills. This instrument entails huge importance because it serves as a start point for researchers to implement innovation to improve the issue found. Then, the pre-test instrument is also fundamental as it allows the measurement of students' knowledge. In this case, it will let researchers know about students' proficiency level in their oral communication skills. Finally, the pre-test instrument will let researchers compare the results with the ones obtained in the pre-test. This in order to see if the innovation applied helped foster students speaking skills and made some improvement. For the reasons mentioned above, is that the instruments chosen are necessary to achieve the objective of this alternative methodological proposal. Since this chapter covers great importance for the development of this research, the most important points will be summarized in the next segment.

3.5 Chapter's Conclusion

This chapter entailed extremely important elements for this alternative methodological proposal such as the research method, type of approach, data collection tools, and instruments. These aspects cover huge importance when researching since they provide researchers with the correct path and steps for collecting information that is necessary to support the literature provided in a previous chapter. Furthermore, the information provided in this chapter will permit an accurate

development of this alternative methodological proposal because it conducts the researchers toward the correct orientation for the selection regarding the methodology, approach, and tools to obtain valuable data that help achieve the objectives of the current investigation.

One of the main aspects covered in this chapter was the research method utilized. The one applied in this research is action research since it aims at looking for remediation of phenomena. The main objective of AR is to step in an issue to provoke positive changes (Burns, 2010, p.2). Concerning the author's argument, in the matter of this proposal. The AR method will make it possible to implement collaborative learning to foster learners speaking skills. These innovative techniques expect to bring about great improvement for the research problem.

The type of approach was another relevant aspect covered throughout this chapter, the one used for this alternative methodological proposal is the mixed approach since it allows the collection variety of reliable evidence. This approach focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. (Creswell & Plano, 2011). It can be contemplated that the mixed approach entails important elements such as data collection and qualitative and quantitative elements. To maintain the integrity of the results the information and literature must be strengthened by valid data. Thus, when considering this type of approach, it allows the comparison and contrast of the data gathered. So, it makes it possible -the triangulation of information after the application of instruments. This approach covers huge importance since it provides the gathering of rich, reliable information to validate the importance of carrying out this alternative methodological proposal,

Moreover, the data collection tools are of huge importance for further analysis as the data collected permits researchers to provide answers to problems and analyze the phenomenon. Ferrance (2000) explained that “The collection of data is an important step in deciding what action needs to be taken. Multiple sources of data are used to better understand the scope of happenings in the classroom or school.” (p.11). Hence the data collection procedure has a high prominence in the process of investigation since it provides validity and reliability of the research.

Concerning the data collection, the instruments are tools designed to gather information related to the population that takes part in the research to provide validity to action research development. The instruments used to collect the necessary information for this alternative methodological proposal were explained throughout this chapter. First, the diagnostic test is implemented with the purpose of obtaining data concerning students' gaps in the learning process. Alderson (2005) stated that; “Diagnostic tests are designed to identify both strengths and weaknesses in a learner’s knowledge and use of language. This instrument help researchers identify problems students might have during their learning process and therefore researchers can build a path on the aspects they need to work on.

Besides, the pre and post-test are also important tools of assessment that allow researchers to gather information regarding learners' pre and post-knowledge. First, the pre-test can be used to assess prior knowledge. Second, when used in conjunction with the post-test it is possible to assess the knowledge obtained at the end of a current course. (Caris et al.,2004). These instruments are of paramount importance since when applying a pre-test researcher will obtain information about students speaking skills and then compare the post-test scores to see if improvement appeared after the application of collaborative learning techniques.

All the parts this chapter entailed make it possible to enrich this alternative methodological proposal, each of the parts mentioned has a purpose that helps achieve the objectives of the current alternative methodological proposal which aim at fostering students speaking skills through the application of innovative techniques when implementing collaborative learning in EFL classrooms.

Chapter IV Action Plan Proposal

4.1 Introduction

Nowadays, being able to communicate in English has become an essential aspect in the different international markets such as health, education, employment and in social interaction in general. Due to the scope that technology has achieved, today people can be in contact with others in real time even if they are miles away and belong to other countries. For this reason, issues such as education, employment, health, among others, they can be developed from distance if they can be linked in a single language such as the English language currently does, this fact allows interaction between the global community, creating the necessity of being capable to interact in English to be part of it. According to Sharifian (2009), English rapidly develops more complex relationships within and between communities around the world and it continues expanding taking its role as a global language. In addition, education is a fundamental part if it is intended that in a country where English is not the native language, students achieve a competent level in the use of English, in order to integrate them more easily into international markets once they finish their learning construction process at the secondary level.

On the other hand, this alternative methodological proposal aims to show the importance and the need of develop a competent communication in English through the use of collaborative learning in the class to enhance speaking skills by the students' interaction. Speaking skills are necessary since they are the main product when learning a language and the development of this skill is directly related to how much students make use of the target language in class by practicing in real scenarios to later use the language effectively outside the class, additionally Ashton-Hay and Pillay (2010) also insert that collaborative learning can be used to provide a more inclusive and dynamic education for diverse learners, generating significant outcomes and benefits which resonate with the real world. Which means that collaborative learning provides students with the

opportunity to interact and show their improvements in a more active and friendly ambience before going to those interactions that they will have with the target culture outside the class.

The previous are just some of the aspects that give a clear understanding of why speaking skills need to be taken into consideration at the time of teaching and learning a second language and to provide students with these skills that will help them in the future to have better life opportunities with respect to all the areas mentioned above.

Furthermore, regarding the importance the speaking skill has in the English learning construction process, in this chapter it is also taken into consideration elements that will sustain this action research along the chapter. First, this chapter includes the justification in which the reader obtains a clear idea of why it is important to develop the current alternative methodological proposal to enhance students speaking skills through collaborative learning, then it is also broken-down to analyze its relevance to foster the knowledge construction process and why it is a necessity and besides what are the scopes related to it.

Additionally, this chapter also includes the alternative methodological proposal implementation considering three different strategies that help to support this action research. These strategies are made with the purpose of supporting and providing evidence of the objective that this proposal has. All these activities are made considering the speaking skill and the different indicators presented in this proposal, each strategy presents how they are composed regarding the variable that it belongs to, the indicator and all the elements that should be taking into consideration when performing an activity in the class, describing the process and every stage of the didactic sequence in which they are going to be developed as well as the way they are evaluated.

As mentioned above, achieving a competent level of the use of the English language is of great importance, since nowadays due to globalization, this language has become one of the most used as universal languages in international markets in areas such as health, education, and employment in general. For this reason, it is important to take action on the reinforcement of speaking skills in the English language and implement strategies in the class that help improve this ability through collaborative learning, so that students feel confident once they face real life outside of class. Likewise, this chapter presents elements that will support this alternative methodological proposal and the sequential implementation of the strategies to be used. Therefore, the first point to be developed in the next section is the justification, which aims to go through the importance and need of the implementation of these strategies as the practical element in the development of the speaking skills in English learning construction process.

4. 2 Title of the proposal

The Implementation of Collaborative Learning Strategies to foster students' Speaking skill level in the knowledge construction process.

4.3 Justification

The current alternative methodological proposal embodies useful strategies that can be implemented with the purpose of fostering student's oral skills. These strategies are fully innovative since innovation is a significant element in the language teaching and learning field. Innovation endeavors to give rise to educational improvement by doing something which is perceived by implementers as new or different. It is also related to the term "change." (Carless, 2012, p.1) It is known and not a secret that teaching speaking has always been a burden for English teachers despite the hard efforts made through time; therefore, it is extremely necessary to make

substantive changes. If some improvement is needed, some changes must be done, and innovation is a bridge that may bring about positive outcomes in the educational field.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned innovative strategies are prepared by the researchers and take into consideration the Action-Oriented Approach as well as the different scenarios that the new syllabus provides. The topics used in the activities are the same topics that the new syllabus provides. On the other hand, the didactic sequence that will be used to develop the learning strategies to foster students' speaking skills is planning, organizing, rehearsing, and interacting/producing. Moreover, the strategies are designed for pupils to work in small- groups since the strategies are aimed at fostering students' speaking skills by promoting collaboration among them.

One of the main objectives of Costa Rican education concerning the English language is to enable students' oral communication so that they would be able to access to a better quality of life. According to the English Syllabus, Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) "Speaking English fluently is one of the abilities a 21st Century learner must develop to have access to better life opportunities." (p.4). The aforesaid advocates that there is a huge necessity for some hands-on in order to help students develop and improve this fundamental skill which may lead them to better job opportunities in the future. For this reason, there should be placed much importance on the activities implemented in the classroom since they have a wide impact when trying to obtain positive changes and improvements as far as the speaking skill is concerned.

Along the same lines, teachers should consider wisely effective strategies for enhancing pupils' oral skills; for this, it is of paramount relevance to include fruitful and enjoyable tasks that promote socialization and interaction among students. Pourhossein (2014) expressed that "For

learners who are studying English in a non-English speaking setting, it is very important to experience real communicative situations in which they will learn how to express their views and opinions, and to develop their oral fluency and accuracy which are very essential for the success of FL communication.” (p.1). By way of explanation, building interaction among pupils provides them with wide possibilities to use the target language spontaneously in different contexts as well as share ideas and opinions flexibly. This interaction helps to develop important indicators such as accuracy, fluency, and appropriacy which are of huge importance for being communicative competent. Thus, having students working together to promote interaction should definitely take place in the classroom and especially in the second or foreign language classroom as many improvements may arise thanks to this.

The strategies designed by researchers are created by implementing collaborative learning (CL) which promotes this important interaction among pupils in the English language. CL occurs when small groups of students help each other to learn. CL is sometimes misunderstood. It is not having students talk to each other, either face-to-face or in a computer conference, while they do their individual assignments. It is not having them do the task individually and then have those who finish first help those who have not yet finished. And it is certainly not having one or a few students do all the work, while the others append their names to the report. (Laal, Marjan & Laal, Mozghan, 2012 as cited in Klemm, W.R., 1994). That is to say, collaborative learning not only implies learners working together, but helping each other to achieve the task. That means, here not only the individual learning progression is important, but the progression of all the team members. So, when students work collaboratively, interaction, decision making, and negotiation emerge. Consequently, researchers see necessary to design and implementation of innovative strategies based of the collaborative learning approach in EFL classrooms.

Besides, the main purpose of an English teacher should be to help learners to communicate effectively in different contexts. In the light of this, methodologies implemented in the English classroom setting should be participative, dynamic and offers the opportunity for real use of the language” (English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada, 2016, p.22). To be specific, the activities carried out in the English classrooms must be communicative, interactive, and bear resemblance to real-life situations so that students can not only learn English to accomplish class tasks but also improve their language in a way that they can be able to communicate with English native speakers out of the classroom with fluency, appropriacy, and accuracy. For all the reasons above-mentioned this alternative methodological proposal takes into consideration all the aspects that must be included in the implementation of collaborative learning strategies so that, after applying constantly these strategies, a huge improvement in students' communicative competence will be seen.

Furthermore, Tarvin (2015) stated that "communicative competence can be defined as the ability to use language, or to communicate, in a culturally-appropriate manner to make meaning and accomplish social tasks with efficacy and fluency through extended interactions". (p.2). Thus, being communicative competent implies the ability have a fluent conversation with appropriateness when socializing with people of a different culture. For this reason, is that researchers find extraordinarily indispensable to create strategies based on the collaborative learning approach. Moreover, Solner (2012) explained that “Collaborative learning strategies provide the frameworks and step-by-step processes to facilitate interdependence among group members, active participation, interactive dialogue, and cocreation of academic products, all of which are hallmarks of collaborative learning. In essence, these strategies are the architecture or infrastructure to facilitate construction of knowledge among students.”(p.1). In short, the

application of the strategies in this alternative methodological proposal, increase the chance that all students may benefit by mutual help in the achievement of a common goal. To achieve this, each member must be actively engaged so that it allows students to practice their speaking skills and build self-confidence when working in small groups.

Summarizing the above information, this alternative methodological proposal is extremely necessary to foster students' communicative skills. Hence, useful strategies are created by researchers to achieve this difficult task of improving students' communicative competence. As noted in this chapter, speaking has been considered as a necessity for Costa Rican citizens due to its importance in many fields such as industry, economy, and job recruitment. However, it has been difficult to foster this skill, and therefore, some solutions for the problem must be implemented. In the light of this, the implementation of innovative collaborative learning strategies may bring remedy to this problem. It is important to highlight, that these strategies are a necessity for students to have many opportunities to access better life conditions after improving their speaking skills and that is why researchers found the need to design these strategies which will be explained in detailed in the next segment.

4.4 Alternative methodological Proposal

This section entails the methodological proposal to foster learners' speaking skill employing three strategies which are considered to be extremely necessary to foster students' oral ability. To accomplish the improvement of this skill it is also important to take into account aspects such as fluency, capacity, and accuracy. The proposed strategies are also focused on the development of these three indicators. Furthermore, this proposal is aimed at fostering oral communication skills by implementing collaborative learning strategies where students have plenty of opportunities to

interact among them while constructing learning. Interaction encourages learners to negotiate for more input and produce comprehensible output (Salma, 2020 as cited in Crandall, 1999). When learners interact with each other in small groups they are provided with more opportunities for listening to their peers and producing orally.

Salma (2020) also asserts that:

Collaborative learning is an effective approach to implement in educational settings owing to its advantages to enhance social interaction, student-centeredness, and learner autonomy. While learners endeavor to accomplish a task in groups, they exchange ideas and create understanding which helps them with better achievement. Collaborative learning is also effectively used in language learning. Interaction leads to the development of communicative competence. (p.4) Thus, it is clear that collaboration provides great benefits to participants since learning opportunities increase thanks to the interaction in the target language which also leads to better achievement of the task together. So, incorporating these types of activities in which working in small is part of the classroom setting triggers learner's speaking skills. Consequently, the three strategies designed by researchers are made considering the principles of collaborative learning. The strategies are made taking into consideration the development of the three indicators already mentioned. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the strategies are considered to be innovative and created with communicative purposes to develop students' interest and willingness to participate and produce the language orally in real-life scenarios. Moreover, these strategies are also based on the action-oriented approach which is one of the latest communicative language methodologies which emphasizes what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competencies in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios. (English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y educacion diversificada, 2016, p.27) . Through the

implementation of these strategies, students will be exposed to different scenarios y which they will use different language structures that fit with the context, having a variety of discourse help students develop to use the language with appropriacy. Also working in groups will help students develop their fluency and accuracy for discussing, giving opinions, expressing ideas, and helping each other in the development of the learning construction process. For this reason, these strategies are necessary to fulfill the objective of fostering students speaking skills.

Concerning the first strategy, "Let's act it out!", it aims at fostering students speaking skills by making use of interesting dialogue that reflects real-life scenarios. Furthermore, this activity takes into account students' interests in the entertainment field so that the material and language used would be catching for them. Moreover, to take part in real-life conversations, learners must have preparation time to use the language accurately, also in this activity pupils work in small groups so that they will have opportunities to give feedback to each other regarding the use of language structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Besides, this strategy is based on the didactic sequence proposed by the MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada. Teaching in the new era demands active participation from the students and active planning from the teachers. The English Syllabus states (2016) an individual has the capacity "to utilize mental representations of language knowledge built up through practice or experience to convey meaning. Language ability is a combination of language knowledge and strategic competence" (p.346). In short, success in the language learning construction process can be achieved through an organized set of activities that combine organizing, planning, rehearsing, interacting, and describing practices and experiences. Regarding this first strategy, In the first step, students will have the opportunities to share their opinions and likes and make a decision collaboratively. Proponents of collaborative

learning emphasize that critical thinking skills allow learners to analyze arguments and make decisions (Salma, 2020 as cited in Paul, 1992; Willingham, 2007). Making decisions together and analyzing arguments is an important part of the collaborative learning approach and brings many advantages for students in the learning construction process since they develop their critical thinking skills. In the organizing step, students have opportunities to get familiar with the language used in the real-life scenario taking into account the accurate use of language. Then, students have a chance to rehearse their ideas by working collaboratively they are going to give feedback to each other performance and language use. Finally, students have the opportunity to produce and interact with the rest of the class with what they prepared by working collaboratively, students are expected to use the language accurately.

Concerning the second strategy named “ Back to the time!”, it is also based on the didactic sequence previously mentioned. The second strategy has as its main objective to improve students speaking skills by making use of interesting information to use the language with appropriacy for students to comment and participate in small group practices. Regarding this strategy, students also work collaboratively. In the planning time, students make decisions together by taking into account all the members' opinions. Then, they will have some time to do some research on a certain topic. Here it is important to highlight that they are going to investigate the topic together. Here, learners are in charge of their learning processes with autonomy which is an important principle in a student-centered classroom and collaborative learning. Furthermore, these strategies are based on the action-oriented approach which according to the Mep syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) “sees students as active agents responsible for their progress in learning and sees communication as a social activity designed to accomplish specific

tasks.”(p.27). In other words, students are autonomous and in charge of their learning construction process. Furthermore, it is important to mention that the teacher is going to have an important role in these strategies since he/she will monitor students encouraging them in a supportive way. The role of the teacher is relevant since they are the facilitators of this process. English Syllabus, (2016) cited that, "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). The teacher has a relevant role in the development of learning activities the teacher is a facilitator and monitors pupils' learning. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that when working together each member has an active role in the activity. In the last step, students are going to interact with the rest of their classmates by performing an expository report in which each student has an important role, and the language they use has to suit the formal setting. This activity will allow learners to use the language with appropriacy while learning about history and having fun when performing their roles for this strategy the interaction is an essential part of the task achievement.

Finally, the third strategy named, "Tell me a story", intends to foster students' speaking skills by making use of important past tense events for the students to ask and answer questions fluently. Fluency is an important element of the speaking skills which can be enhanced when through the incorporation of collaborative learning strategies since when working together students feel more comfortable and the opportunities to practice the language orally increase. According to Salma (2020) “ In language learning the creation of a relaxed learning setting holds an important place as anxiety may hinder learning. Collaboration language learning has the potential to reduce stress and anxiety and offers a relaxed learning environment. Learners interact

with their peers feeling comfortable and confident. Face-to-face interaction with each other reduces their pressure and encourages them for better achievement.” (n.p) Moreover, this strategy is also based on the didactic sequence already mentioned. In the first stage, in the planning time students are going to organize their ideas with the material provided by the teacher, then will students create a story together taking into account all members ideas and making agreement together, and using the material provided by the teacher. It is important to highlight that each member has an important active role in the task achievement ideas. Salma (2020) explains that Simultaneous interaction and equal participation are important principles because for the participants to benefit from the task all participants should equally participate in it until they achieve a product. (p.2) In the collaborative learning approach all members need to have an active role so it benefits students in a way that they have plenty of opportunities to construct knowledge together. Then, the pupils will have some time to rehearse the language and give feedback to each other. Novitasari (2019) expressed that “Group processing is needed to be done to see a group’s performance. Group members should discuss regularly and openly to express concern on making better progress and achievement. Thus, the members should review what should and should not be done to maximize the results”. In the last phase, each team shares the final product with the rest of the class students should not read and some improvisation will take part of this strategy and some time for asking and answering spontaneous questions related to the topic will be given at the end.

To sum up, it is important to highlight that these activities aim at fostering students speaking skills by working in small groups, Asonitou (2013) stated that working in a team considers that "communication skills such as defending points of view orally and in writing, active listening, critical reading, and oral presentations using visual aids are scaffolded” (p.3).

Pupils feel more comfortable and willing to participate freely when they are with their classmates in a relaxed environment, this author argues that it is utilizing debating ideas, active listening, critical reading, oral practice in groups learners will develop their speaking skills. The previous strategies take into account the learners' and teachers' roles which are of huge importance when working together. Also, it is important to mention that interaction and small group skills are developed through the implementation of these strategies since as mentioned before students have real opportunities to discuss, give opinions and make decisions. Since teamwork allows the exchange of ideas, thoughts, perspectives, and to achieve the complete a task, the learners' ability to express themselves with fluency, accuracy, and appropriacy is also triggered. Besides, the didactic sequence used for the development of activities helps students get prepared for the achievement of a task which leads them to a product in which they use the language meaningfully. Finally, it is important to spotlight that achievement student's communicative competence entails different factors. Thereby, all the elements needed to foster students' communication skills when designing classroom strategies should be taken into consideration carefully.

4.4.1 Importance

The current alternative methodological proposal aims to foster speaking skills through implementing collaborative learning strategies. This implementation is presented as a tool to enrich the learning construction process, since these strategies bring an innovative option for teachers and students, allowing the teachers to implement the contents in a more interactive and fun way and on the other hand, providing students with well-structured activities based on the real-life situation which allow them to demonstrate the abilities they have to solve problems related to English learning while working collaboratively, improving their learning construction process. Likewise,

MEP in the English Syllabus, Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica y la Educación Diversificada (2016) states the following:

“Language teaching requires the design and implementation of concrete, meaningful and relevant real-life situations for students to demonstrate their English language abilities through tasks. This envisions the English classroom as a social, collaborative, action-oriented linguistic environment” (p.32).

Based on the previous mentioned, it is clear that nowadays it is very valuable to create and implement innovative strategies taking into consideration the needs of both, teachers who sometimes lack more dynamic strategies as well as students who require that these strategies allow interactions more focused on collaboration for comprehensive learning during class.

Furthermore, for teachers, it is essential to come up with changes and innovative ideas to achieve learners' expectations, at present time, traditional activities are no longer so functional, especially in today's world, that due to the use of technology students are provided with a huge number of options and with unlimited access in just one click or just swiping their finger in their cellphone's screen. Moreover, innovating is not just making changes to achieve improvements, there is a long way when there is a will to innovate, and going through it requires time and investigation to carry out implementations that add value and meaning, when it comes to filling up necessities in pupils, for instance, it is essential to consider both the pedagogical practice, as well as the concepts involved, thus these forays that are intended to be carried out show the best result for the instructor and the student. Additionally, Davison (2005) comments that when examining

innovation in education is necessary to investigate how pedagogical practices can be improved and more importantly the affordances for reconceptualizing and redefining learning.

For this reason, the integration of new practices and innovative strategies should be included as an important tool to bring benefits to the development of the various areas that constitute the learning construction. In addition, many alternative options can be extremely useful since these different strategies present a new concept and new ways to learn, which is always attractive for pupils. The alternative methodological proposal that has been presented, will support learner's knowledge by giving them what they need to strengthen them in the weaknesses they have regarding speaking skills.

Related to the above, the Costa Rican Educational System highlights the importance of being able to communicate competently in the English language and is intended to prepare students to use English in real-life situations and contexts. Therefore, in the MEP, Programa de Inglés y Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica y la Educación Diversificada (2016) it is stated that "speaking English fluently is a skill that students must develop to increase economic growth and create quality jobs" (p. 16).

To achieve this goal, the teachers are challenged to innovate with the purpose of incorporate any tool that helps and encourages learners to be competent when using English orally. With the implementation of this alternative methodological proposal, professors will be able to present to students some options for them to use the language naturally, allowing them to develop their speaking skills through the interactions they can create and from the ones they can participate in the class. Likewise, Genesee et al (2006) express that language use contributes to language development when it is exposed as interactive classroom activities, including paired activities, cooperative groups, and independent work time where students are allowed to converse and assist

one another. Consequently, these strategies intend to offer this type of methodology, which allows greater participation by students, forcing them in some way to have to exchange ideas and generally build short conversations to achieve group results to complete tasks, which undoubtedly enriches the learning construction process.

According to the previous information, it is mentioned that this alternative methodological proposal, line up to contribute to the learning construction process, by presenting the implementation of collaborative learning strategies that can help teachers to incorporate innovative and useful activities, but also help students to use the English language in a way in which they can perform in different contexts. As an essential skill to be developed, this alternative aims to foster the speaking skills level because of the lack of competence that has been detected when learners are using the English language orally. According to the English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica y la Educación Diversificada (2016) “Learners who receive English lessons in elementary and high schools are not reaching the expected English proficiency levels after eleven or twelve years of instruction” (p.12). For this reason, it is worthy of considering that this alternative methodological proposal is given to enhance the students' communicative competence level by implementing innovative and creative activities.

Additionally, students increase their level of performance when the teachers develop the lessons in an interactive way. The reason why is that pupils use to be more engaged due to the lessons tends to be more interesting for them during the learning process. Moreover, the implementation of collaborative learning strategies in EFL instruction causes positive impacts on the teaching and learning construction process which contributes to the purpose of this project.

On the other hand, in this section, we have subtly covered the importance of the implementation of this methodological proposal to provide strategies that facilitate the knowledge

construction process. However, the course of this implementation needs to take a look and go even deeper wondering, why is this implementation necessary?. With this being said, the following segment presents a broader vision of the needs that such implementation can meet in the current educational system by providing relevant information.

4.4.2 Necessity

In this globalization era, it has become a necessity to learn communication skills since that is the main medium to express ideas and opinions clearly when interacting with others. Thus, it is of tremendous importance to have mastery of the target language, and English has become widely spoken all over the world. For this reason, EFL learners need to acquire and foster their speaking skills. The English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada states that “English has become the language of international and intercultural communication and trade among countries. It has the status of a lingua franca, the language for transmission of scientific and academic knowledge, and the main door to cutting-age technology. (p.4.) Consequently, it is of paramount necessity for Costa Rican English language learners to acquire good communication skills, and thus, teachers need to implement a variety of teaching strategies in the classrooms to help pupils improve their language competence. Furthermore, English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada also (2016) suggests that:

Teaching-learning strategies are fundamental in the learning process, to enable learners to become intentionally controlled, more independent, and autonomous. Learning strategies cannot be seen apart from learning style preferences (within a continuum) and the combination of methodology and materials as well. (p.48).

In other words, when considering the learning construction process and the fostering of language communication skills, it is fundamental to take into account aspects that entail enormous importance here, as are the teaching strategies, especially when it comes to the development of speaking skills. So, the combination of methodology and strategies in the learning environment needs to challenge learners to become independent and autonomous so that they may become competent users of the language.

Considering the communication skills, there is still a need for some improvement in this area despite much effort that has been done. For this reason, there is a need of seeking innovative strategies. The primary purpose of the new syllabus according to the English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) is “the implementation of innovative communicative language teaching methodologies” (p.23). Innovation is critically important in the learning field and therefore, teachers need to make use of innovative strategies which may have a new and positive result in students' speaking skills level in the learning construction process, and this is in fact, what the current alternative methodological proposal aims at. So that is why researchers find it of urgent necessity to apply the proposed innovative strategies. As already mentioned in the preceding chapters, the main objective of this current alternative methodological proposal is to implement innovative strategies based on the collaborative learning approach to foster students' speaking skills in the learning construction process. The term CL refers to an instruction method in which learners at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal. The learners are responsible for one another's learning as well as their own. Thus, the success of one learner helps other students to be successful (Laal & Ghodsi., 2012 as cited in Gokhale, A.A., 1995). That is to say, CL strategies look after the progress of all the team members, so success is collective rather than individual and this helps pupils be successful when trying to

achieve a goal. Thus, the previous information argues that by implementing collaborative learning in the English classroom learners may become more successful in their learning construction process in English.

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the main concern is that students are not mastering the language to communicate effectively, and therefore, it is extremely necessary creation of innovative strategies through which the huge need to speak the English language effectively is enhanced in the pupils. The creation of innovative strategies in this alternative methodological proposal seeks to meet this need of fostering student's language learning construction process, specifically, the speaking skills and it is through collaborative learning that pupils may greatly improve this important skill. Embark (2013) explains that "The active participation of English language learners is in carrying out communication activities such as pair and group work, role-plays, games and problem-solving independently can develop their communication skills to be able to apply what they learn in classrooms in the outside world." (p.107). By way of explanation, it is important to highlight that integrating communicative group work activities may lead to a great improvement in students language learning construction process and the speaking skills as these collaborative strategies are student-centered, so they provide pupils with more opportunities to participate and use the target language for communication. According to the Mep English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016), Teaching learning strategies are fundamental in the learning process, to enable learners to become intentionally controlled, more independent and autonomous. (p.50). In other words, the implementation of new strategies should have as one of its main objectives to enhance student's independence and autonomy. These aspects are of essential importance for students to construct their learning. Fostering students' language learning construction process entails a variety of factors that should be considered when

implementing activities in the classroom setting for this reason this alternative methodological proposal aims at implementing a set of activities that were created taking into consideration these aspects under the previous investigation.

4.4.3 Scopes

In this section of the proposal, the scopes are defined to improve the investigation, the scopes are based on the nine research questions and their importance while developing the proposal. Scopes can help describe the goals that the researchers want to stretch. Likewise, Cohen, Lawrence, and Morrison (2018) comments that the scope of the research returns to the opening remarks of the paper, concerning the need to narrow down the field of the study. They also advise that a single piece of research be narrow and limited in scope to achieve manageability as well as rigor. As the saying goes, ‘the best way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time! In the same way, thought this section will be presented every research question and an explanation of what is pretended to achieve in every single one of them.

- 1.¿How is the collaborative learning implementation affected by interpersonal and small group skills?

The learners as active agents in the construction process are required to poses interpersonal and small group skills for them to be able to interact more easily during their learning process, concerning this Sharratt & Planche (2016), mentioned that interpersonal skills include areas such as teamwork, complex communication, resilience and conscientiousness, and students should develop these areas to become critical thinkers, able to apply and transfer knowledge and be ready to work in collaborative teams.

Furthermore, these skills need to be taking into consideration when implementing strategies in the class to avoid the lack of participation and poor interactions between learners and from students to teachers. For this reason, English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) refers to this topic mentioning that, the design of the syllabus adopts the socio-constructivist theory of learning, encouraging active learner's participation, interaction, and its adaptation to the context.

This integration in the educational system promotes the development of these interpersonal skills allowing students greater participation and thus more effective results during their learning construction process.

- 2.¿How does the teacher's role affect the implementation of collaborative learning?

When referring to EFL instruction, it is crucial to refer also to the impact that has the teachers' role in the language learning construction process. The teachers' role is relevant since they are meant to help and guide learners in their learning process. In regards to the previous, The English syllabus (2016) defines this role as: "The teacher is a facilitator and helps the learner to become autonomous. She/he takes several roles such as coach, resource person, advisor, organizer, and facilitator for the learner's successful completion of the task. (p. 27). Despite the previous facets that are given to the professional in English teaching, they should also be able to promote interactions and collaborative learning among students. Likewise, Poehner (2008) argues that students' development occurs through participation in activities that are beyond learners' current level of ability, which means that teachers should not wait for students to have the proficiency level they might think students need to participate more, but instead, create the opportunities for students to practice the language and thus, the ability will come from those interactions.

In short, collaborative learning provides students with more opportunities for practicing the language and develop their linguistic competence. Teachers must promote these interactions to

make them happen, including collaborative strategies and encouraging learners to participate while implementing activities.

- 3.¿How does the students' role affect the implementation of collaborative learning?

Students are an essential part of the learning construction process in EFL classrooms, and it is necessary to understand their role to fulfill their needs and improve their learning construction process. English Syllabus (2016) placed the students as a central element and describes learners as "an agent/performer with intercultural awareness skills. Autonomous, works cooperatively, interacts with others, investigates and solves problems using the tools at his/her disposal (general and specific competencies). Develops metacognitive, reflective, and critical thinking strategies for successful completion of the task." (p. 33).

This means that when students are the center of the class, they have more active participation which is in collaborative learning vital for learners. This idea of student-centered learning allows students to know how to learn by themselves, rather than being just passive receivers of information, in this case, they are the ones in charge of their learning, and thus, the constructors of their knowledge.

By the use of collaborative learning strategies combined with the students' role as centered agents in their learning construction process, the learners have the opportunity to interact with peers and present their ideas by diverse exchanges.

- 4. How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's accuracy?

Related to EFL learning, accuracy is an important element of speaking skills. Communicating a message accurately enfold the way the message is transmitted, according to Yuan & Ellis (2003) accuracy demonstrates “the extent to which the language produced conforms to language norms”, in other words, it refers to the accurate use of rules, grammatical structures and pronunciation when transmitting the message with ease and clearness.

For this reason, the learners’ accuracy level plays an important role when developing speaking skills in the class and the lack of any of these elements might interrupt the communicative process. In short, accuracy refers to being able to speak a language and capable to use it precisely to convey meaning successfully and clearly. If a student lacks accuracy, the communication process will be affected and when having students working together for oral production activities it will be more difficult to develop speaking skills to strengthen the knowledge construction process.

- 5. How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's fluency?

In regard to fluency, it can be said that this particular element represents great relevance since it is seen almost as the result of the ability acquired by the learner during the development of his speaking skills. About this, Götz (2013) comments that some language researchers have offered different aspects that contribute to describe this term as overall oral proficiency in a speech, this means that fluency is not only about speed and pronunciation, nevertheless, it encompasses important elements like the case of the global understanding of the language to generate answers in the expected time.

In addition, fluency is commonly related to how competent the learners are when using the language orally and the ability to speak the closest to a native speaker. Concerning this, Wood (2012) expresses that fluency is often used as a synonym for effective spoken use of a language and it is frequently used to mean “native-like,” having a high overall degree of proficiency. Moreover, fluency can greatly improve students’ knowledge construction process because when a student is fluent, he /she will feel confident enough to monitor their learning process, but the lack of fluency during the development of the speaking skills can be harmful to learners since it can be converted into less participation and lack of self-confidence when making use of the language.

- 6.How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's appropriacy?

For EFL students, it is very important to be able to manage the situation in which the message will be transmitted when using the language orally, the reason why is because the language used must fit the audience and the situation. The previous refers to the element in speaking skills that can be described as appropriacy, which is closely related to the effectiveness in communication in different contexts.

About the previous mentioned, English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016), highlights the importance of using domains in the learning construction process and refers to its definition in this curriculum as the contexts or situations of target language use that provide authenticity to language tasks where learners will be likely to function linguistically. Consequently, a student who has not developed appropriacy through the process to improve his speaking skills will lack the competence to use the language linguistically correct when being exposed to different scenarios. For this reason, being able to distinguish the context in which the language should be used, will also help learners to choose the suitable words and way to talk that fits better the audience, likewise, it is essential for learners to be exposed to situations that allow

them to use the language in different context and scenarios for them to develop their speaking skills effectively.

- 7.How does the action-oriented approach help to improve the students learning process?

The Action-oriented approach is a communicative language methodology that uses tasks for students to construct their knowledge. This approach is focused on the students as the central element in the learning construction process, it means that students are with the guide of the teacher their creators of knowledge. In Costa Rica, MEP in the English Syllabus, (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada is currently using this approach and refers to it in the following way:

“An Action-Oriented Approach sees students as active agents responsible for their progress in learning and sees communication as a social activity designed to accomplish specific tasks. Within this approach to English language learning, students develop communicative competence, gain knowledge of various English cultures, and develop their full potential as national and global citizens” (p.28).

Respecting the above mentioned, as this approach allows the use of language through the implementation of tasks, focusing on real-life situations and with a part in a social environment, students can develop communication skills through the interactions that they are exposed during class in the development of these tasks, in this way, the use of the language is trained in the classroom, and it is integrated into in the learning construction process to eventually be used outside of class by the students.

- 8. How is the learning process improved using a didactic sequence?

In the EFL instructions, didactics sequence takes an important role due to students need to be guided by the teacher while completing the tasks, when the teacher follows a sequence, students will be able to respond properly to the activity that is being developed. According to Viales & Carmona (2014) “the primary role of the teacher in the classroom is to facilitate the student-student communication process through effective learning task” (p.399)

White respect to the above, in the learning process it is necessary to have a structure that works as a guide when carrying out the activities and projects to develop in class, in that way, students will have a structure to follow to help to avoid ambiguity during the performance of the task and in the other hand the teacher will have a base to help him guide himself when it is necessary to give feedback to students, for this reason, the didactic sequence is a great tool to improve the learning construction process in an organized way.

- 9. How does the implementation of tasks in group work improve the learning process?

The use of tasks in group work to develop skills in EFL classes helps students in their learning process because it brings autonomy by make them work by themselves and somehow forcing them to work collaboratively to come up with results as a group. Likewise, Cohen & Lotan (2014) comments that when the teachers give students a group task and allow them to struggle on their own and make mistakes, he delegates authority. Delegating authority in instructional tasks makes students responsible for specific parts of their work, also, another feature of a small group task is that members need one another to some degree to complete the task.

In addition, when performing tasks is also important to take into consideration despite the results, the knowledge students acquire when performing each task, during the performance each

step may have a big impact on the group since this interaction enriches the learning construction process and so teachers should be carefully designing these activities.

In conclusion, the evidenced scopes show the importance of the different elements that have been presented. Firstly, it shows how collaborative learning and interpersonal and small group skills affect this implementation, on the other hand, it is also shown how the roles of the teacher and the student have a close relationship since they are essential elements in the development of learning. Likewise, the scope of some of the different elements that make up speaking skills is presented, such as accuracy, fluency, and appropriacy, and how these elements play a very fundamental role in the development of these skills. Finally, this section shows how other elements, including the action research approach, didactic sequence, and group task implementation, are related and participate in the improvement of the learning process. With all these elements described, then the next section, ventures into the implementation of the alternative methodological proposal to put into practice all the valuable information that has been provided throughout this proposal.

4.5 Alternative Methodological Proposal Implementation

This following section provides a deep explanation about how the three different teaching strategies are divided and organized. In addition, the three strategies are developed to be implemented in ninth grade, using Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada (2016) from MEP for the elaboration. Additionally, in the first strategy is develop the unit three, with the scenario “Lights, Camera & Action”, this strategy will put into use the

theme “What’s on TV?” in order to provide learners real and relevant content of the English language. Consequently, the assessment strategy provides the guidance for the sake to accomplish the main goal of the first strategy. Thus, the assessment strategy used is “Describes what is occurring in a film or book and indicates his/her personal opinion about it”. As a result, this first strategy aims to allow learners to identify expressions that are used in normal conversation on TV among native English speakers, for such reason the chosen assessment strategy will help to demonstrate the pupils’ abilities. In this way, the productive didactic sequence provides specific steps that must be developed during the speaking tasks, they are; Planning, Organizing, Rehearsing, Describing and Dramatizing. The previous are the steps that the second language educator must follow in order to integrate this strategy during their lesson’s development.

In addition, this first strategy is named “Let’s act it out!” and the main objective is to improve students speaking skills by making use of interesting dialogue scripts for students to use the language accurately with the purpose of giving a short-prepared presentation dramatizing a TV show/news by means of collaborative learning. However, this strategy is composed of an objective, a process, evidence, and an evaluation stage to evaluate the learners’ aptitudes at the end of the productive didactic sequence. In the same way, within this strategy it is expected to improve the students’ learning process when developing speaking tasks by using TV content as authentic incoming language.

Furthermore, in the second strategy is develop the unit four, with the scenario “In public eye” and the theme “Contributions of Outstanding Figures to Society” in order to provide learners real and relevant content of the English language. Additionally, the assessment strategy used is “Offers an opinion about outstanding figures’ positive and questionable actions in readings, texts, reports,

and breaking news examined in class”. This second strategy aims to allow learners to provide personal opinions that can be used in conversations appropriately when making use of English language, for such reason the chosen assessment strategy will help to demonstrate the learners speaking skills. Likewise, productive didactic sequence provides specific steps that must be developed during the speaking tasks, they are; Planning, Organizing, Rehearsing, Describing and Dramatizing. The mentioned steps are the ones that the second language teacher must follow in order to integrate this strategy during their lessons. In addition, this second strategy is named “Back to the time” and the main objective is to improve students speaking skills by making use of interesting information with the purpose of using the language appropriately to offer an opinion about outstanding figures’ positive and questionable actions by means of collaborative learning. Moreover, the strategy is composed of a process, evidence, and an evaluation stage to assess the learners’ aptitudes at the end of the productive didactic sequence.

Finally, the third strategy will be taking into consideration the unit one, making use of the scenario “Time to Have Fun! ” in which this strategy will include the theme “Once Upon a Time I Enjoyed...” with the purpose of providing learners relevant content of the English language. Likewise, the assessment strategy which is “Asks and answers questions, about experiences, events, past experiences” will provide a guide to accomplish the main goal of this third strategy allowing learners to interact with each other expressing their experiences increasing the possibility for them to improve their speaking ability. Additionally, the production didactic sequence that is used for this strategy is Planning, Organizing, Rehearsing, Describing and Interacting, in which the teachers as well as the learners are going to be provided with the steps to develop the speaking tasks. In addition, this third strategy is named “What’s on your bucket list!”

and the main objective is to improve students' speaking skills by making use of important past tense events for the students to ask and answer questions fluently. Furthermore, this strategy is composed of an objective, process, evidence, and the corresponding evaluation stage to evaluate the learners' aptitudes at the end of the productive didactic sequence. In this way, within this strategy it is expected to improve the students' learning process and fluency when having interesting conversations in which they use their personal experiences. Lastly, in the following segment is described how the first teaching strategy is applied in the collaborative learning to aid ninth-grade learners to strengthen their speaking skill level in their English knowledge construction process.

4.5.1 Description of the first strategy

First Strategy: Let's act it out!

Objective:

To improve students speaking skills by making use of interesting dialogue scripts for students to use the language accurately with the purpose of giving a short-prepared presentation dramatizing a TV show/news.

Variable:

Speaking skills

Indicator:

Accuracy

Level:

Ninth grade

Unit:

Three

Scenario:

Lights, Camera & Action

Theme:

What's on TV?

Assessment Strategy:

Describes what is occurring in a film or book and indicates his/her personal opinion about it

Didactic Sequence:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Rehearsing
- Describing
- Dramatizing
- Evaluation

Planning

In the first step, the teacher gets students in groups. Then, the teacher shows students a movie scene twice by using a video for them to dramatize it later. Each group should take notes about what happens in the scene while the video is being played in order to obtain details about the main events of the scene. The teacher explains to students that they will be allowed to make some changes in the scene, but keeping the same sequence of the scene events.

Source: <https://youtu.be/Z4DDrBjEBHE>



Organizing

In this step, pupils organize their ideas of how to dramatize the movie scene they have chosen. Collaboratively, assign roles to each other. Afterward, they write down the script in the chart provided by the teacher. The teacher provides students with the original script and also with an empty template for students to write their script.

ORIGINAL SCRIPT**FILM TITLE: DESPICABLE ME****SCENE: BEDTIME STORY****CHARACTER NAMES AND DIALOGUE WITH STAGE DIRECTIONS IN BRACKETS**

Gru: Come on now, it's bedtime. Did you brush your teeth? Let me smell. Let me smell. You did not! Put on your PGs. Hold still. Okay, seriously! Seriously! This is beddie-bye time, right now. I'm not kidding around. I mean it!

Edith: But we're not tired!

Gru: Well, I am tired.

Agnes: Will you read us a bedtime story?

[pause]

-Gru: No.

-Agnes: Pretty please?

-Gru: The physical appearance of the "please" makes no difference. It is still no, so go to sleep.

-Edith: But we can't. We're all hyper!

-Margo: And without a bedtime story, we'll just keep getting up and bugging you. All night long.

-Gru: [sighs] Fine.

All right, all right. Sleepy Kittens.

Sleepy Kittens?

- What are these?

- **Agnes:** Puppets.

You use them when you tell the story.

Gru: Okay, let's get this over with.

"Three little kittens loved to play,
they had fun in the sun all day.

"Then their mother came out and said,
"Time for kittens to go to bed.""

Wow! This is garbage.

You actually like this?

Agnes: Keep reading!

- Come on!

- **Gru:** All right, all right, all right.

"Three little kittens started to bawl,

"Mommy, we're not tired at all.'

"Their mother smiled and said with a purr,

"Fine, but at least

you should brush your fur."



-Edith: Now you brush the fur.

-Gru: This is literature?

A 2-year-old could have written this.

All right.

"Three little kittens with fur all brushed

"said, 'We can't sleep, we feel too rushed!'

"Their mother replied, with a voice like silk,

"Fine, but at least

you should drink your milk."

-Agnes: Now make them drink the milk.

Gru: I don't like this book.

Gru: This is going on forever.

"Three little kittens, with milk all gone,

rubbed their eyes and started to yawn.

"We can't sleep, we can't even try.'

Then their mother sang a lullaby.

"Good night kittens, close your eyes.

Sleep in peace until you rise.

"Though while you sleep, we are apart,

"your mommy loves you with all her heart."

The end. Okay, good night.

- Agnes: Wait!

- Gru: What?

-Agnes: What about good night kisses?

-Gru: No, no. There will be no kissing or hugging
or kissing.

Margo: He is not gonna kiss us good night, Agnes.

I like him. He's nice.

-Edith: *[turns off her light]* But scary.

Like Santa!

Instructions: Write your own script by following the same sequence of the movie scene.

FILM TITLE: DESPICABLE ME

SCENE: BEDTIME STORY

CHARACTER NAMES AND DIALOGUE WITH STAGE DIRECTIONS IN BRACKETS

-Gru:

-Edith:

-Gru:

-Agnes:

-Gru:

-Agnes:

-Gru:

-Edith:

-Margo:

-Gru:

- Agnes:

-Agnes:

- Gru:

-Edith: -

-Gru:

-Agnes:

- Agnes:

- Gru:

-Agnes:

-Gru:

-Edith:



Source: Own elaboration

Rehearsing

In this step, the learners practice or rehearse the scene together by using the dialogue script they created. They give each other feedback regarding their performance and the language use: grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary so that the scene's dialogue can be transmitted clearly.

Instructions: Write your own script by following the same movie scene

FILM TITLE: DESPICABLE ME
SCENE: BEDTIME STORY

CHARACTER NAMES AND DIALOGUE WITH STAGE DIRECTIONS IN BRACKETS

Gru: Come on! It's bedtime. Are you ready to sleep? Did you already brush your teeth? Did you put on your pajamas? Did you go to pee? Let's go to bed, now!

Edith: Oh! But we don't want to sleep yet. We want to play more.

[jumping around]

Gru: Well, I do want to sleep, I'm exhausted.

Agnes: What about a bedtime story? Please!

-Gru: No., not, I'm so tired.

-Agnes: Please, please, please, I beg you, please, just a short one!

-Gru: I said, no!

-Edith: Please, we can't sleep. We still have much energy.

-Margo: Please, read us a story or we will keep on bothering you.

-Gru: *[sighs]* Ok! Ok! I will read it but promise me you will try to sleep.

All right, all right. Give me a book Margo.

Margo: Here you have. I like this one.

Gru: All right,

One upon a time there were three kittens that didn't want to sleep, so their dad was really angry.....

Edith: Please use the puppets.

Agnes: yes, please

Margo: You use them when you tell the story to make it funnier.

Gru: Okay, let's get started!

"Three little kittens wanted to play all day long,
they had fun and jumped a lot.

"Then their dad came out and said,
it is time to go to bed."

[using the puppets]

Edith: Keep reading!

Gru: All right, all right, all right.
 "Three little kittens started to jump around,
 "They said, dad we're not tired at all.'
 "Their dad smiled and said it is time to brush your teeth and fall asleep"
-Edith: Now, make the puppet sleep.
-Gru: Oh, is this literature, seriously?
 "Their dad replied, let's go to sleep but before you should drink your milk."
-Agnes: Now make the puppets drink the milk.
Gru: OK, "Three little kittens, drank their milk,
 rubbed their eyes and started to yawn.
 But they couldn't fall asleep, so their dad sang them a lullaby and said,
 "Good night kittens, close your eyes. "
[gets out of the room]
- Agnes: Wait!
- Gru: What?
-Agnes: What about good night kisses?
-Gru: OK
[Gives them a good night kiss]

Source: Own elaboration

Describing

In this phase, the teacher shows in a PowerPoint slide some questions, students ask these questions to their classmates in the group, this way they review their roles and the chronological time of the scene they will perform to clarify details about the roles they must play when presenting.



Source: Own elaboration

Dramatizing

In this last step, students get in front of the class, and by using the roles they assigned to each group member students dramatize the movie scene using the dialogue they have constructed.



Source: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/3B9Rn7JpUBw/maxresdefault.jpg>

Evaluation

The teacher projects a different movie scene for students in which they can also watch the subtitles (dialogue). After watching the scene and reading the dialogue presented in the scene, the teacher provides each group with one specific question about the scene and asks them to refer orally about the main idea as well as answer the specific question, students comment in their groups about what the scene is about to construct their opinion collaboratively, they have 10 minutes to discuss before presenting their answers.



Source: <https://youtu.be/Rnww09Z0l6w>

Based on the next, present what happened in the video clip. (10 min to prepare).

- Give a general opinion of what is happening in the scene.
- Why is the mother angry with the boy?



Source: Own elaboration

Explanation of the Teaching Strategy

The creation of a variety of strategies in order to foster students speaking skills process is the main objective of this alternative methodological proposal and thus, researchers propose three innovative strategies based on the implementation of collaborative learning to achieve this objective which is not an easy task for teachers. "Speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face. Speaking is considered the most important of the four language skills of English. Even the learners who learn the language for so many years find it difficult to speak in real-time situations when it is demanded. (Rao, 2019 as cited in Madrid,& McLaren , 2006,). Developing students speaking skills is not an easy task for teachers and for this reason is

that it is extremely necessary to implement innovative strategies to help students develop their communicative skills for them to be able to transmit the message clearly and spontaneously.

The first teaching strategy created with the purpose of developing this important skill is named, "Let's act it out!" and through the implementation of this strategy, it is aimed to foster students speaking skills by making use of interesting dialogue scripts for students to use the language accurately with the purpose of giving a short-prepared presentation dramatizing a TV show/news.

This activity will be used for ninth graders and the scenario used is Lights, Camera & Action. It is important to highlight that the material used is designed by researchers taking into consideration students' interests so that and with the purpose of using the material innovatively. Besides, as aforementioned, this strategy has been designed based on the collaborative learning approach and thus all its stages are based on small group activities. Moreover, this strategy is based on the didactic sequence proposed by the Mep English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada and it entails the following phases planning, organizing, rehearsing, describing, dramatizing, and evaluation. In the planning part, students are gotten in groups by the teacher, and they take notes about a video by working collaboratively.

In the organizing part, the students will have some time to arrange ideas and make decisions together in the same groups. In this part, students will assign roles to each other and create a dialogue script based on a guide provided by the teacher, it is important to highlight that making decisions together and creating products is an essential part of collaborative learning. In the third stage, students will have some time to rehearse what they will dramatize, here students practice orally the dialogue script they created together.

It is important to mention that in this stage pupils will give feedback to each other regarding their performance and the language use: grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, so that the scene's dialogue can be transmitted clear and accurately since this is the indicator expected to be developed through the implementation of this activity. Then in the fourth part of this teaching activity, which is describing, in this stage students will use some questions as a guide, these questions help them to oversee how the events are developed and the time in which they occur by describing what happens in the scene in order to clarify the details and how they have to perform it. The last stage in the activity is called "dramatizing", it is related to the assessment strategy which is "Gives a short-prepared presentation dramatizing a TV show/news", in this part students have to present what they have prepared during the previous stages to develop a short presentation by performing a movie scene using the dialogue they have created.

Apart from these 5 stages previously presented, the teacher will use an activity to evaluate if the objective assigned for this strategy was achieved. In this activity the teacher projects a scene with subtitles (dialogue), in the same group, students by working collaboratively have to construct their opinion about what is presented in the scene, then they have to present their answer to the class.

The strategy that has been presented implements a holistic order by using a didactic sequence in which students can structurally construct their knowledge. All the steps that have been taking through the development of this first strategy present how it is designed, how it should be developed, and finally how the strategy will be evaluated. Likewise, Programa de Estudios de Inglés, Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada states that "Task design, task performance, and assessment become a fundamental unit of instructed learning", the aforementioned evidence the

importance of considering every stage when creating and implementing strategies to contribute to the learning construction process.

4.5.2 Description of the Second Strategy

Second Strategy:

Back to the time

Objective:

To improve students speaking skills by making use of interesting information with the purpose of using the language appropriately to offer an opinion about outstanding figures' positive and questionable actions.

Variable:

Speaking skills

Indicator:

Appropriacy

Level:

Ninth grade

Unit:

Four

Scenario:

In public eye!

Theme:

Contributions of Outstanding Figures to Society

Assessment Strategy:

Offers an opinion about outstanding figures' positive and questionable actions in readings, texts, reports, and breaking news examined in class.

Didactic Sequence:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Rehearsing
- Describing
- Interacting

Planning

In this first step first the teacher announces students that they are going to create a podcast show. The teacher explains to students what a podcast is and also shows them an example by using a YouTube video.

Podcast Example: Podcast How To Crush Conversation In A Small Group



Source: <https://youtu.be/PYPKVZ0FBng>

Then, the teacher gets students into small groups of three people. Afterward, the T shows S a video of famous outstanding figures of society called "Top 10 people who changed the world". Once learners watch it, they choose two people from the video, and in the small groups, comment about the most important contributions these people did as well as some questionable actions based on their opinion in order to perform a live podcast in front of the class.



Source: <https://youtu.be/Oi36yMik6jo>

Organizing

In the second step, by working collaboratively students investigate the contributions and biography of the outstanding two figures they have chosen by reading or and

watching the video again. Students take notes of the most important contributions and facts and organize their ideas in two columns writing in one column what they think were positive contributions and in the other column what they think were questionable actions. Besides, students should choose an original name for their podcast show and assign roles to develop the podcast, the podcast name should be a descriptive name of what the podcast is about. The teacher provides students with a blank template for students to organize and write down their ideas collaboratively.

PODCAST NAME: _____		
Name	Positive Aspect	Questionable Aspect
Martin Luther King	Was a Baptist minister and social rights activist in the United States in the 1950s and '60s. He was a leader of the American civil rights movement. He organized several peaceful protests.	
Adolf Hitler		Carried out a murder of some 6 million Jews, along with other victims of the Holocaust

Source: Own elaboration

Rehearsing

In this phase, students get prepared to share the information with the rest of the class by practicing in their groups, talking about both the positive and the questionable aspects. Each member talks about important contributions of the figures or questionable aspects and gives his/her opinion. Students practice it with their peers by sitting in a line with their chairs and using a bottle or any object pretending to be their microphone. While practicing the podcast, they give each other feedback about the language use since they must use appropriate language for a podcast show.



Source: <https://thedailytalkshow.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2019/08/The-Daily-Talk-Show-426-800x450.jpg>

Describing:

Students get in front of the class and present what the podcast is about in order to describe what they are going to be presenting. Students also present to the audience (rest of the class) the main contributions (positive or questionable) that these figures did that changed the world that we know today.

Example: Hi everyone, today in this podcast called “back to the past” we are going to present two important figures that changed the development of the world, through history.

The first figure is Martin Luther King he was

The second Historical figure is Adolf Hitler he was

Source: Own elaboration

Interacting

In this phase, students interact with the rest of their classmates. Each group presents their podcast performs their podcast show by going deeper into the topic by commenting and giving opinions on the contributions and actions described above. Here the podcasters also interact with the audience or guests. Podcasters ask the audience some questions and the audience also have the opportunity to ask questions to the hosts or podcasters

Positive and questionable actions of outstanding people.
Questions for the guests



What do you think about Martin Luther King contributions to society? What’s your opinion about his protests?

What do you think about what Hitler did to Jewish people?

Source: Own elaboration

Evaluation

The whole group gets together in a semi-circle, with the use of a projector the teacher presents students an online game called "The fortune wheel " in which students make the wheel spin by asking the T to click on the action bottom in the wheel, once the wheel stops and shows a student's name, the student has to tell the whole class who is for him/her an outstanding figures of society and what is the fact that makes this person to be such a great human being. Once the student gives her/ his opinion about the outstanding figures of society they chose, he/she makes the wheel spin in order to have a different student participating.



Source: <https://wordwall.net/es/resource/17682064/outstanding-figures>

Explanation of the Teaching Strategy

The implementation of different strategies to foster the process of developing students' speaking skills is the main objective of this alternative methodological proposal, to continue achieving this objective the researchers propose the second strategy which is also based on the didactic sequence proposed by the MEP Syllabus Tercer ciclo y educacion

diversificada (2016). This innovative strategy that is called “Back to the time” it is based on the implementation of a collaborative learning approach to provide spaces in the class that generates students’ interactions to enhance speaking skills successfully since it is a fundamental aspect when developing the learning construction process in EFL.

In addition, Burns and Seidlhofer (2010) commented that improving speaking skills involves developing subtle and detailed knowledge about why, how, and when to communicate, and complex skills for producing and managing interaction, such as asking a question or obtaining a turn. They also say that one of the most important aspects of everyday talk is that it always takes place in cultural and social contexts. Therefore, the strategy presented offers students the opportunity to use the language with appropriacy through interactions developed collaboratively, and which also requires group work to interpret roles in different scenarios and situations.

For this reason, this strategy aims not only at encouraging learners to use and improve their speaking skills, but also to ensure that the use of the language occurs in certain scenarios and situations that in some way force the student to create appropriate interactions when making use of the language.

Regarding the steps for this teaching strategy, in the first phase, students are given some time to get familiar with the meaning of a podcast and students watch a podcast sample showed by the teacher. Furthermore, students watch a video related to the theme contributions of outstanding figures to society, here, pupils have some time to choose two figures and comment on them in small groups. In the second step, learners have time to investigate more about the two important figures they previously chose, they should also choose a proper name for their podcast show. In the third step, pupils rehearse their ideas and practice their role as podcasters. Something important here is that pupils give help to each other in regards to the proper use of language for a

formal podcast show. In the next step, students make an introduction about the podcast topic for the audience to get familiar with it. Finally, in the interacting phase, pupils will act as podcasters sharing and commenting on information about the two people they chose, The podcasters interact with the guests or audience who are going to participate in an open space. The assessment strategy for this activity is to offer an opinion about outstanding figures' positive and questionable actions in readings, texts, reports, and breaking news examined in class, and for that reason, is the students will have time to share ideas and opinions about positive and questionable actions of the figures they chose to talk about by pretending to be in a podcast show where the rest of their classmates are also going to interact and participate in the show so that they can improve their speaking skills and appropriacy by means of this innovative task.

4.5.3 Description of the Third Strategy

Third Strategy: What's on your bucket list!

Objective:

To improve students' speaking skills by making use of important past tense events for the students to ask and answer questions fluently.

Variable:

Speaking skills

Indicator:

Fluency

Level:

Ninth grade

Unit:

One

Scenario:

Time to Have Fun!

Theme:

Once Upon a Time I Enjoyed...

Assessment Strategy:

Asks and answers questions, about experiences, events, past experiences.

Didactic Sequence:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Rehearsing
- Describing
- Interacting

Planning

The teacher presents students a video in which he shows how to create a “Bucket List” (personal life experiences list) using “Have you ever.....? questions. Then, the T divides the group into 2 and shares 5 questions to each member of the group using “have you ever?” the questions are related to personal life experiences. One group has the same 5 questions and the other group has 5 different questions, each piece of paper that each student has, contains a letter that matches with another student’s piece of paper in the other group. Example (A) from group 1 (A) from group 2.



Source: https://youtu.be/s_IVYrFlkhU

Organizing

In the second step, when the teacher tells students to do it, students have to start asking classmates from the other group which later they have in order to find their pair. Once they find their pair, they ask each other the questions they have and take notes about the answers, once they finish, they exchange their question and ask each other again. After they have completed the 10 questions and have taken notes they give their classmate what they wrote so his classmate can complete his/her "bucket list".

QUESTIONS	
Group 1	Group 2
Have you ever learned to play an instrument? Which one?	Have you ever adopted a homeless pet?
Have you ever cooked an exotic recipe?	Have you ever fallen in love?
Have you ever taken part in a sport team?	Have you ever climbed a mountain?
Have you ever gone camping?	Have you ever stayed in a hotel?
Have you ever travelled to another country?	Have you ever learned a new language?

Source: Own elaboration

My Bucket List

Notes:

Q1. _____

Q2. _____

Q3. _____

Q4. _____

Q5. _____

Q6. _____

Q7. _____

Q8. _____

Q9. _____

Q10. _____

Source: Own elaboration

Rehearsing

In the third step, after having their bucket list ready students use the notes to present their peers their bucket list about the experiences they have lived, in order to practice so they get ready to then present their bucket list to the class without reading the notes.



Source: GettyImages-543526899-58deb3a83df78c5162ef0032.jpg

Describing

In the fourth step, students go in front of the class and orally and without reading, only by looking at the notes, they present their bucket list to their classmate in the class and tell them about the differences that both of them have in their life experiences lists.



Source: images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAsQjRxqFwoTCMDT0aG5qPICFQAAAAAdAAAAABAD

Interacting

After presenting their experiences students perform a conversation in which they ask each other about the most relevant experiences they have lived that make part of their personal experiences in their bucket list and if there is any other that they would like to add.

**In your
bucket list:**

- **What are the three favorite experiences you have had?**
- **What else have you done? Mention some other experiences that aren't in your list, but you would like to add.**

Source: Own elaboration

Evaluation/ assessment

In this part, the teacher uses two boxes, in one box T has all the students' names and in the other box T has different questions about personal experiences. Then, the teacher randomly asks one student to come and without watching, the S has to take one piece of paper from the box that contains one question. Then, the T calls a different student to take one paper from the box that contains the names, and the T asks that students to ask the question to the student with the name he/she obtains from the box, in that way the student being asked has to respond the question about the personal experience his/her classmate is asking to her/him.



EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Have you ever gone to Islan?

Have you ever gone camping?

Have you ever been in a concert?

Have you ever tried an exotic food?

Source: Own elaboration

Explanation of the Teaching Strategy

As mentioned before in different segments, fostering students' speaking skills is a difficult task for English teachers, and therefore, it is the main aim this proposal entails. Hence, to achieve this objective, researchers designed the last strategy which is also based on the implementation of collaborative learning. The essential goal of the former is to keep social relationships, but that of the latter is to pass information and ideas. Because much of our daily communication is interactional, being able to interact is imperative. Thus, language instructors should facilitate learners with meaningful communicative situations about proper topics by applying learner-learner interaction as the key to teach communicative language (Derakhshan & Khalili, Atefeh & Beheshti, 2016 as cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002). Furthermore, since this activity is fully innovative and requires students to work collaboratively, students have plenty of opportunities to develop their speaking skills easier. The name of this third strategy is "what's on your bucket list". This activity aims at improving students' speaking skills by making use of important past tense events, experiences for the students to ask and answer questions fluently. When trying to develop pupils' oral skills, it is also important to take into account all the elements related to this skill and fluency is one of those elements that entail huge importance when it comes to the development of oral skills. For this reason, fluency is the indicator utilized for this strategy. The fostering of learners' fluency is necessary since it leads them to successful communication of ideas, and this is what researchers by implementing this strategy. Furthermore, this strategy allows students to share life experiences with their peers in an interactive manner employing a catching task that helps students foster their fluency level.

Moreover, this strategy is based on the didactic sequence proposed by the MEP syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) Regarding the first step of this activity, the teacher explains to pupils what a bucket list is and splits the group in two. Then, the teacher provides students with some questions about life experiences containing present perfect structure. In the organizing time, pupils get in pairs and discuss the questions they have. In the third step, after having their bucket list ready students write some notes to present their peers their bucket list about the experiences they have lived. In the fourth step, students go to the front of the class and present their bucket lists. Then, in the interacting phase, students perform a conversation in which they ask each other about the most relevant experiences they have lived that make part of their personal experiences in their bucket list and if there is any other that they would like to add. The assessment strategy for this activity is to ask and answers questions, about experiences, events, past experiences. When pupils have the opportunity to share personal experiences and opinions their fluency level increase since talking about personal experiences allows them to talk about a well-known topic and improve the usage of the language and fluency interactively.

4.6 Educational Impact

When referring to the learning construction processes it is important to have goals to establish a clear path for students and teachers. In Costa Rican, one of the most relevant goals concerning education and specifically in English as a foreign language, is the following stated by English Syllabus, Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) "The Costa Rican educational system is committed to achieving the goal of having bilingual citizens in two or more languages employing a comprehensive, articulated curriculum from kindergarten through high school" (p.4). It means the main objective in ELF instruction is to form independent and competent users of

foreign language, in this case, English by developing the abilities necessary through the students learning process.

Regarding the above, this alternative methodological proposal aims through the implementation of collaborative learning strategies to improve students' speaking skills by way of interaction in tasks that allow them to use the language. Likewise, the strategies previously presented also seek to provide students with exchanges that help them acquire knowledge, develop social skills and values since these strategies promote interactions that present situations that are closely related to what learners will face outside of class at the end of their learning process. In addition, English Syllabus, Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) cited that "the purpose of studying English in the Educational System is the development of the learner's communicative competence as well as the knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and competencies of a 21st-century citizen" (p. 3). According to the previous mention, it can be said that besides being a competent user of the language it is necessary also to allow students to construct knowledge, gain skills and develop values, for them to succeed once they are facing the real world outside the classes.

Concerning the above, the strategies proposed in this alternative methodological proposal intend to make use of collaborative learning as a fundamental tool to develop communication skills in students, providing them with different learning options in which students can more easily become familiar with the contents that must be studied, this because by the use of these strategies the contents are developed jointly and not alone, which gives the learner more confidence and makes them feel supported by other opinions, in this case, those from their classmates.

These collaborative learning options allow students to feel more comfortable with their academic duties, which is very beneficial for them and the teacher, thus benefiting the

learning construction process and with this helping to form more capable and successful citizens both inside and outside of classes. In regards, Hunzer (2014) mentioned that collaborative learning is done well, is highly beneficial for everyone instructor and students. Collaborative learning helps students to become accustomed to their academic environment and helps them improve their communication skills, thus enabling students to more successfully negotiate discourse communities both in and out of the class.

In short, by implementing these collaborative learning strategies to improve speaking skills, it is guaranteed that students not only make greater use of language but also integrate knowledge and social skills through the interactions that these strategies offer since they have a style focused on creating an environment in which are presented situations that students will face once they go out into the real world outside of class.

4. 7 Chapter's Conclusion

Within this chapter, there were contemplated elements of paramount relevance for this alternative methodological proposal. This chapter entailed the importance, justification, and necessity for this alternative proposal to be carried out. It was advocated that there is a desideratum for some hands-on to help enhance students speaking skill English level. It is crystal clear that the improvement of this oral skill is a necessity since it opens them a bridge of opportunities for learners to succeed in the job field. On this account, there should be placed more importance on the activities implemented in the classroom setting since they have considerable implications when attempting to obtain positive outcomes and improvements as far as the speaking skill is concerned. Being able to speak English with fluency is an essential skill required in the 21st century to access better life opportunities (Mep Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion diversified, 2016). This argument

highlights that the speaking skill is the language skill in which greater emphasis should be placed: and therefore, English teachers should work on the implementation of strategies to help students meet these requirements, and here is where innovation plays an important role. According to Fuat F. & Dilek, İ.(2016) “An encouraging way of innovation in education would be the teachers searching for creative and innovative solutions to existing problems and carrying out research into instruction and education. “ (p.2557). Innovating is not just implementing new activities, but these activities require the previous study to find the issues that need some remedy.

Likewise, MEP in the English Syllabus, Tercer Ciclo de la Educación General Básica y la Educación Diversificada (2016) states that “Language teaching requires the design and implementation of concrete, meaningful and relevant real-life situations for students to demonstrate their English language abilities through tasks. This envisions the English classroom as a social, collaborative, action-oriented linguistic environment” (p.32). In other words, nowadays the implementation of innovative strategies is of huge importance and thus it is very valuable to create and implement these innovative strategies to quench this necessity of developing students speaking abilities. Furthermore, the tasks should be designed by taking into consideration the needs of students for using the language in real-life events; that is to say, the activities should lead to students' social interaction and be developed under a collaborative ambiance. Concerning this, this alternative methodological proposal aims at fostering learners' speaking skill by employing three strategies which are considered to be extremely necessary to foster students' oral ability. To accomplish the improvement of this skill, it is also important to take into account the indicators such as fluency, capacity, and accuracy and thus the proposed strategies in this chapter are also focused on the development of these three important indicators.

Moreover, the strategies proposed are aimed at fostering oral communication skills by implementing collaborative learning where students may have real-life opportunities to interact and construct meaning in small groups by working collaboratively. When an attempt to achieve a goal in groups, they share ideas and build meaning that leads them to a successful learning process. (Salma, 2020 as cited in Crandall, 1999). CL fosters the students' classroom role since working as a team member gives them the responsibility for their learning construction process; and thus, they attempt at giving their best in the tasks carried out. Besides, according to the MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada, 2016 "methodologies implemented in the English classroom setting should be participative, dynamic and offers the opportunity for real use of the language" (p.22). In the light of this researchers created the activities that can be implemented in the English classroom to promote communication, interaction, and provide learners with speaking activities that reflect real-life scenarios in all their stages, so that students their communicative skill and use their language outside the classrooms with fluency, appropriacy, and accuracy.

Additionally, since the strategies proposed by researchers are innovative and focused on the collaborative learning approach, these strategies will be catching and motivating for students to have an active role in their learning process. According to Babiker (2018), collaborative learning brings about many benefits in the learning construction process since it is a type of student learning instruction, and it increases student self-esteem. (p.142). That is to say, collaborative learning help students develop a positive attitude towards the learning construction process since it helps them to increase their willingness to participate in a comfortable atmosphere where they feel confident enough to use language for communication purposes. In addition, working in small groups through the implementation of communicative innovative activities help students be aware of the

importance their active role has in the learning construction process since the task accomplishment not depends on one member, but all the team members. This fact, lead students to develop interaction at the same time help pupils foster decision and solving problem skills.

Furthermore, when students work in small groups, they have more talking time opportunities while if activities are developed with the whole group or a large group of students, each student seems that the opportunities to participate are limited, especially if more proficient students are always participating actively without leaving much chance of participation for students who struggle the most in the language. Eventually, as noted in this chapter, speaking has been considered a necessity for Costa Rican citizens due to its importance in many fields especially job recruitment. Nevertheless, it has been a difficult task to foster this skill, and therefore, the implementation of innovative collaborative learning strategies proposed by the researchers in this chapter may bring remedy to this current issue despite the different methods implemented in the educational field over the years.

After all, education has been constantly changing through the years and adapted according to the developments within the society that bring about different needs. With the changing needs of the society and global world, the nature of education should be aligned with the requirements of the knowledge society and globalization (Fuat & Dilek, 2016 p.2578). The need for these changes in education also occurs with the teaching of foreign languages such as English. In the case of English, it has developed and become a language learned and spoken worldwide since the use of it nowadays has become broader- ranging than it was in past years. This broader use of English has made individuals more and more interested in the teaching and learning of this important language. For this reason, learning English has also become a requisite as it allows people to compete with others in the professional field. Simultaneously, the requirement of

English management has forced people to find different teaching-learning method options to improve their English-speaking skill level since the method used has undoubtedly a remarkable impact on learner's language skills. For the reason aforementioned is that the teaching of the English language has always been a subject of discussion over the years. The reality is that there have been different methods and approaches that have evolved and changed over the passing years, and there is still a need for implementing new methodologies that seek at fostering English competence. We may define foreign language teaching methods as the systems that show how students can become more active learners during language teaching, beyond being a mere compilation of rules. In other words, it is possible to claim that method in language learning is a teaching element that will help the student achieve the targets of the learning in the fastest and most reliable manner. (Burcu & Abdurrahman 2016). Teaching methods entail huge significance and have had a remarkable impact on students' language learning process. Certainly, a successful learning process depends on the teaching method being implemented since the teaching activities are based on the teaching method. Thanks to these notable consequences teaching methods have on students' mastery of English, language different methods have emerged. In past years English there existed different methods from the ones that are now implemented, and the way English has been taught has changed a lot over time. Some old-fashioned methods included for example memorization, translation, and the teacher used to be the center of the class, students used to have a passive role where the opportunity for oral participation was minimized. For instance, the Grammar translation method (GTM) was a method that had several deductive techniques such as translation of a literary passage and memorization. (Denanda, 2015, p.4) As mentioned before, in most of the traditional methods used, students were passive learners in the class which affected their language learning process, and the speaking skill was not fostered.

Nowadays, thanks to the needs and societies' evolution, new modern methods that allow the fostering of communication skills have emerged. Some of the more recent modern methods utilized in Costa Rica English language teaching are the communicative and action-oriented approaches which both aim at developing students' communication skills. According to the Mep English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) "The purpose of studying English in the Educational System is 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.23). These changes in regard to teaching methods, have had positive outcomes in students' language competence. However, there is still much work to do, and there is not a single method that can be perceived as the perfect one. Currently, in Costa Rica English teaching the action-oriented approach is being used but some characteristics from the communicative approach complement this current approach. The Communicative Approach (CA) and the Action-Oriented Approach (AOA) are different, but yet complementary perspectives for the didactic processes in the English class. Both approaches complement each other and despite the action-oriented approach is the one being utilized some characteristics from the communicative approach is still used. (Mep syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion diversificada, 2016) According to the Mep syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016) A shift from communicative to action-oriented language teaching requires the design and implementation of concrete, meaningful and relevant real-life situations for students to demonstrate their English language abilities through tasks. This envisions the English classroom as a social, collaborative, action-oriented linguistic environment. (As cited in Perrot, 2010). In other words, the shift from the communicative to the action-oriented approach has brought about many positive results since students are provided with tasks that are based on

real-life situations and the classroom activities also intend to enhance students' social and collaborative skills. The action-oriented approach currently used also aims at enhancing students to demonstrate what they are able to do in the language and the ability to use the language communicatively by the implementation of interactive tasks that reflect daily life situations...One of the latest communicative language methodologies which emphasizes what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competencies in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios. (English Mep Syllabus Tercer ciclo y educacion diversificada, 2016 as cited in Samuda & Bygate, 2008) p.27). This method has caused positive changes since students are not receptive learners, but they have active roles in the accomplishments of tasks which makes them responsible for their learning. An important characteristic of the action-oriented approach is the collaborative tasks since interaction among students has positive results in the accomplishment of communicative goals. For this reason, researchers have designed innovative activities based on the implementation of collaborative learning. CL is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. (Laal, Marjan & Laal, Mozghan, p.492 2012). Working collaboratively in the completion of real-life situation communicative tasks for students to show what they can do is a method of teaching that brings positive advantages over the old methods, Thanks to these new methods students play an active role in their language construction process and they have the opportunity to learn by doing by themselves and develop their autonomy which leads to a good result.

Modern teaching methods challenge learners through the implementation of more complex tasks. Also, they are challenges socially by working collaboratively which helps them to develop a sense of responsibility as team members to achieve successfully language tasks. Furthermore, since the

teaching activities are not mechanical as in past years, learners have the opportunity to communicate with peers, present and defend ideas, exchange diverse beliefs, and develop their critical thinking skills and autonomy which are important skills required for the 21 st Century.

On the other hand, as has already been mentioned previously in this alternative methodological proposal, the role of the teacher is of great importance in the students' knowledge construction process, however, nowadays this role has become a little different concerning previous year where the teacher was more a provider of information, which turned the students into recipients of this information. As part of the changes that this figure has undergone in education today, it is said that teachers now must be guides in the learning process, must be an authority but not a dictator, must be an observer and ensure that what is being presented in class is effectively fulfilled but placing students as the center in the learning process, not the teacher. Likewise, English syllabus (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada states: “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”. In this way, the teacher should play different roles to let students construct their knowledge and make them responsible for their learning process.

Despite all these aspects that have been mentioned before, teachers must have a characteristic that seems to have greater significance and importance when it is viewed from a more general angle in the educational setting. This characteristic refers to the openness to change, without a doubt, for many professionals in the educational field, taking a step out of the safe path and daring to try a change is risky and could present stress-laden drawbacks by showing that some actions are not developed as planned but, change in such a changing world is necessary and the

educational system and promoters, in this case, teachers, cannot be left behind. In regard to the previous, some authors have referred to this topic as the following:

Change seems to be a constant in our professional lives as teachers. There is almost a continuous progression and modifications to our current situation, sometimes improving matters and sometimes not, sometimes having beneficial effects and at other times worsening things. But change can be unplanned and chaotic, a random process that occurs to us rather than being controlled for us, and for this reason, some observers prefer to talk of innovation, a process that implies some deliberations and consciousness (Hyland & Wong, 2013, p.2).

In this way, changes in education can be described as the opportunity to innovate, to create new tools and strategies to improve the quality in the way knowledge is transmitted, however, there must be a will to generate changes when it comes to innovation, in the case of teachers, there must be an initiative and desire to change the traditional way of thinking concerning teaching, likewise, this openness of thought allows teachers to see the ambiance in which he /she is working, facilitating these innovations to go hand in hand with the reality that the students face, taking into account cultural and social aspects and in general the context in which the learners are developing their skills, for the innovative proposals to be effective. In addition, Hyland & Wong (2013) also mentioned that innovational changes occur within social and cultural contexts situated in time and space, and models of innovation derive from these social development contexts. This means that first, it is important to be able to see and take into consideration all the elements that are related to the students 'development such as the case of the social and cultural context as well as the environment that surrounds the student and their relationships, teachers must be open-minded and

try new strategies that include not only academics but also all aspects that are part of the effective development of student learning.

In short, it has been mentioned that the task performed by teachers has been very changeable and is currently presented above all as a guide for students where learners are the main character in the classroom, even so, it is the teacher who can include new tools that can make learning easier and more effective for learners. For this reason, in a world that is always changing, it can be said that even though the change and the implementation of innovative tools is important, is even more important the teacher's willingness to open up new horizons and change the traditional way of thinking to give way to new strategies that can enrich their teaching process and with this, the students' knowledge construction process.

On the other hand, the next section will present some of the researchers' reflections towards the experience gathered during the development of this alternative methodological proposal, that can be helpful for other researchers in the field and contribute to further explorations in the teaching and learning process.

Chapter V Reflections

5. 1 Introduction

The current alternative methodological proposal is titled “The implementation of collaborative learning to foster students’ speaking skills level in the knowledge construction process.” The main intention of this proposal is to enhance Costa Rican students’ English speaking level and, therefore, open a bridge of opportunities for students in their future. Aiming to improve this skill, researchers have brought forward a proposal that consists of innovative strategies which are grounded in the collaborative learning approach. Furthermore, this proposal has been developed due to the desideratum to find a remedy to foster students English speaking skills in C.R. According to the English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada (2016) “Learners need an updated curriculum that reflects the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to communicate in a range of language use contexts and to succeed in the information age as 21st-century learners.” (p.12). In other words, some innovation is needed for developing students speaking abilities that meet requirements in this modern and globalized era. Due to the aforementioned, this proposal is being carried out in a manner that students may benefit from this proposal in their knowledge construction process.

This chapter is of great importance since there are presented the researcher's reflections on the information gathered during the development of this alternative methodological proposal, including the information gathered in the literature review, where the indicators and variables were assessed in-depth and the literature collected aided to acknowledge the necessity of this proposal. Along with how collaborative learning benefits the development of students speaking level in the knowledge construction process. Moreover, this current alternative methodological proposal might contribute to other areas such as further research, innovations, or changes in the teaching English

methods. The reflections provided in this chapter are of paramount importance for this alternative methodological which is developed based on the action research approach since the main objective for this proposal to be developed is to provide solutions to the problems found by researchers, in this case, the need for fostering students' speaking level. Action Research (AR) originated from the work of Kurt Lewin during the 1940s and has been summarised as an approach that “combines theory and practice (and researchers and practitioners) through change and reflection in an immediate problematic situation within a mutually acceptable ethical framework” (Costello, G et al., 2015 as cited in Avison et al., 1999). Otherwise stated, action research is aimed at building theories that later on will help determine the best teaching strategies in the knowledge construction process. These practices or strategies have the purpose of facilitating teachers the development of innovative and effective teaching activities. For this reason, drawing reflections is an extremely important part of the action research since literature can't make sense by itself. To wit, it is through innovation and reflections that theory and practice in a proposal are worthy. According to Costello et al., (2015) “Action research is about working towards practical outcomes, and also about creating new forms of understanding, since action without reflection and understanding is blind, just as theory without action is meaningless. (p.4, as cited in Avison et al., 1999)” In a nutshell, action research is carried out to bring about change and, action without previous reflection does not have a purpose neither positive outcomes be guaranteed. For all the reasons mentioned before, it is that reflections are a relevant part of an alternative methodological proposal. The aim of including reflections in this proposal is to suggest appropriate solutions to the issue found.

Besides, these reflections have the purpose of facilitating the process of drawing clear and concise conclusions, and then, give precise recommendations for teachers. It is of great importance to highlight that the reflections, conclusions, and recommendations are correlated respectively.

Hence, pertinent conclusions and recommendations depend on the first step of drawing reflections. Besides, these reflections are crucial since they will answer the research questions stated which are based on the indicators and variables analyzed in the literature review. These nine research questions are of paramount importance because they give the path to draw remedy to the issue . According to Venkatesh (2018), “Research questions are the anchors of the research process, to which all parts are attached. (p.43)” In short, action research is done to answer questions. That is to say, the research questions are tightly linked with the reflections which are the answers and may lead to a solution to the problem.

The current chapter intends to answer the research questions which are based on the variables of the research which are collaborative learning, speaking skills, and knowledge construction process. For this reason, the indicators of each variable are also a relevant part of drawing reflections. Regarding the first variable, the indicators involved are interpersonal and small group skills, teacher's role, and student's role. Besides, the second variable also embraces three indicators such as accuracy, fluency, and appropriacy. In addition, the third variable was examined from the action-oriented approach, didactic sequence, and task. Having already given a vision of this chapter and explained its significance, the reflections will be developed below.

5.2 Reflections

For the variable Collaborative Learning are used the following Indicators: Interpersonal and small group skills, teacher's role, and student's role, from the ones the next research questions are going to be answered.

How is the collaborative learning implementation affected by interpersonal and small group skills?

When considering this question based on collaborative learning as variable and interpersonal and small group skills as its indicator it was found that Frey et al (2009) states the following: "Knowledge is built and extended through the exchange of ideas and that students should be encouraged to question and push each other's understanding". (p.13). Additionally, Jolliffe (2017) comments that Interpersonal and small-group skills consist of two elements, the academic (task) skills, such as following instructions, staying on task, planning and reviewing progress, etc. and the interpersonal skill such as listening to others, encouraging, achieving a consensus, conflict resolutions and valuing others. Synthesizing the aforementioned, interpersonal and small-group skills are an essential part of the elements that must be taken into account when making use of CL to enrich the Learning Construction Process.

How does the teacher's role affect the implementation of collaborative learning?

Based on the variable Collaborative Learning and its indicator of the teacher's role it was found that teachers are meant to be the center of the class, in charge of transferring information. Garrett (2008) expressed that, "These forms of instruction lend themselves to having the teacher stand in the front of the classroom while all students work on the same task." This teacher-centered

role consists of teachers giving instructions and ask students to complete a task. Perhaps, this conventional role is not beneficial for student's language development since it does not permit learners to explore and be autonomous. On the other hand, Programas de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada summarizes a definition of a teacher's role as the following: "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). The aforementioned expressed that the teacher's role should lie in being a facilitator rather than a leader because teacher-centered classrooms do not allow learners to participate actively in their learning construction process.

How does the students' role affect the implementation of collaborative learning?

Regarding collaborative learning as a variable and student's role as its indicator it has been said that when talking about EFL instruction, it is necessary to highlight that the success of students' language learning construction process not only depends on the teacher but also on how students perform their role in class. In addition, in Programas de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada it is pointed out that "the learner/social agent is not an empty vessel but a whole person with values, beliefs, and identity, and a language or languages." (p.31). As stated previously, students have an active role in the learning process, due to this, students must be perceived as a whole individual with uniqueness concerning values beliefs identity, and cultural aspects that entail each person. Moreover, Programas de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada describes learners as "an agent/performer with intercultural awareness skills, autonomous, works cooperatively, interacts with others, investigates and solves problems using the tools at his/her disposal (general and specific competencies). Develops metacognitive,

reflective, and critical thinking strategies for successful completion of the task." (p. 33). For this reason, working with collaborative learning students should be provided with active learning, they should have awareness about the active role they have in their learning construction process.

For the variable Speaking, Skills are used the following Indicators: Accuracy, Fluency, and Appropriacy, from the ones the next research questions are going to be answered.

How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's accuracy?

In regards to Speaking Skills as variable and accuracy as its indicator, Michel (2017) comments that accuracy refers to target-like-use of a language that is error-free speech or writing, and it is strongly related to the choice of the linguistic norm, for example, a prescriptive grammatical description of the target language or native speaker usage. In this context, accuracy as a general term must refer to a specific use of the language, the linguistic norm, and must take into account the variations that it can have even in the same country. Furthermore, Richard (2012) states that "accuracy is the capacity to use the language in ways that are grammatically and phonological appropriate to use the correct grammar, the correct syntax, and the correct pronunciation". In relation with the previous, it is possible to say that the accuracy level affects directly the speaking skills, it means that communicating a message accurately embraces the way the message is transmitted, in other words, the accurate use of rules, grammatical structures, clear pronunciation to transmit the message with ease and clearness.

How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's fluency?

Based on the variable Speaking Skills and its indicator fluency, Wood (2012) comments that fluency is often used as a synonym for effective spoken use of a language. It is frequently used

to mean “native-like,” having a high overall degree of proficiency, or having a "good command" of a language. In the language teaching profession, fluency is generally more tightly defined. We tend to use the word to mean a naturalness of flow of speech or speed of oral performance. Furthermore, fluency is related to using all speaking skills in the context of the time-bound nature of speaking. It relies on the speaker's ability to use facilitation skills (fillers, lexical phrases, ellipsis...etc.) and compensation skills (self-correction, rephrasing, or repeating) to cope with ongoing fast communication (Widdowson, 1998 & Segalowitz, 2000). To rephrase it, fluency is highly associated with speaking ability, since to keep a conversation ongoing, speakers should be fluent.

How is the speaking skill affected by the learner's appropriacy?

Talking about Speaking Skills as variable and appropriacy as its indicator it is possible to say that as a speaker, it is worthy not only to think about producing coherent sentences and using a clear pronunciation but also how to use the language appropriately and effectively for different audiences and situations. In addition, Bilborough (2015) explains that “Appropriacy focuses on the type of language that you use in a particular situation or with a particular group of people.” (n.p). Also, in relation with this, Programas de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada highlights the importance of using domains in the learning construction process and refers to its definition in this curriculum as the contexts or situations of target language use that provide authenticity to language tasks where learners will be likely to function linguistically. Thus, it can be said that appropriacy is tightly related to speaking skills and the way these skills are performed. For the variable Knowledge Construction Process are used the following Indicators: Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence, and Tasks, from the ones the next research questions are going to be answered.

How does the action-oriented approach help to improve the students learning process?

Regarding Knowledge Construction Process as a variable and action-oriented approach as its indicator, the Programa de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada refers to this approach saying that; “ it sees students as active agents responsible for their progress in learning and sees communication as a social activity designed to accomplish specific tasks. Within this approach to English language learning, students develop communicative competence, gain knowledge of various English cultures, and develop their full potential as national and global citizens" (p.28). On the other hand, Samuda & Bygate, (2008) argued that the action-oriented approach is one of the latest communicative language methodologies which emphasizes what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competencies in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios. Related to the previously mentioned, it can be said that the action-oriented approach presents learners with a variety of opportunities by using the cultural and social elements as vehicles to complete tasks using the communicative competencies that students have to enrich their learning construction process.

How is the learning process improved by the use of didactic sequence?

When considering this question based on Knowledge Construction Process as variable and didactic sequence as its indicator, Soler Pardo et all (2013) refers to the didactic sequence in the following way: "A didactic sequence is a group of learning activities set in a specific order which takes into account the student's progress. The didactic sequence starts with an initial production; it is followed by a series of workshops and ends up with a final production" (p.32). Additionally, Programas de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada states: “Lessons can follow a task-based sequence that will focus on linguistic and nonlinguistic items such as phonemic awareness, language forms, vocabulary, oral or written comprehension, and oral or

written production, development of cognitive or socio-affective strategies, etc.". This sequence for activities is based on linguistic or nonlinguistic items that are going to depend upon the language skill the teacher pretends to foster. Furthermore, in the teaching process, it is necessary to have a structure that works as a guide for the execution of the activities and projects seen in class, thus both the students, as well as the teacher, carry out the learning construction process in an organized way to improve it.

How does the implementation of tasks in group work improve the learning process?

Concerning Knowledge construction process and tasks as its indicator Lee (2000) states that "A task is (1) a classroom activity or exercise that has (a) an objective attainable only by the interaction among participants, (b) a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and (c) a focus on the meaning exchange; (2) a language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and/or produce the target language as they perform some set of work plans. (p.32). In addition, Programas de Estudios de Inglés (2016) Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada mentioned that tasks often involve the development of a product as the students perform the task. This product may be a brochure for tourists, a blog entry, or a fundraising project for a humanitarian cause. However, not only the specific outcome but also the process, which leads to the final result, is relevant for communication in the language classroom: this involves a step-by-step organization, learners' activation of strategies and competencies, consideration of the setting and social forms, as well as materials and support. As stated above when performing tasks not only the product is significant, but also the knowledge students acquire when performing each task, each step may have a big impact on students learning construction process.

Chapter VI Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

As has been mentioned previously in preceding chapters, this alternative methodological proposal aims to foster learners' speaking skills through the implementation of collaborative learning in the classroom setting and thus, improve their knowledge construction process. The current proposal shows opportunities for students to improve their speaking skills by working collaboratively. Furthermore, for teachers, it presents a variety of strategies and new ideas to apply in class to help to solve the problem that students face when they must use the foreign language in real situations to communicate orally. Regarding this mentioned issue, Programas de Estudio de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educación Diversificada (2016) states that “learners who receive English lessons in elementary and high schools are not reaching the expected English proficiency levels after eleven or twelve years of instruction”. (p.13). On the other hand, this alternative methodological proposal brings innovative ideas for teachers to apply in class so that students can obtain benefits in their communicative abilities and reach the expected level in their learning construction process.

Additionally, this chapter is of great value for the current proposal since it presents the main researchers' conclusions in the implementation of collaborative learning to foster the speaking skill level in students learning construction process and the importance of the role played by the different aspects that compose it. As the current proposal has been developed based on the action research approach, and this approach is based on finding solutions or finding out alternatives or remedies to improve an issue and bring positive changes, the conclusions that will be presented, are aligned with providing possible solutions in later recommendations to the problem previously mentioned. For this reason, drawing clear conclusions is a relevant part

of this alternative methodological proposal. In addition, Kindon, Pain & Kesby (2007) define the Action Research Approach as one that involves researchers and participants working together to examine a problematic situation or action to change it for the better. To wit, after drawing clear conclusions, researchers will be able to propose some recommendations that aim at bringing positive changes to the issue under study. Likewise, the proposal that has been developed throughout this paper those options to improve the students' learning process, in this chapter the main conclusions reached through the development of the work that has been carried out will be presented in order to provide the reader with a more concrete vision of the relationship that collaborative learning has with the improvement of speaking skills in the learners' knowledge construction process. On the other hand, after showing explicit conclusions, it is possible to mark the path that can lead to future improvements or the beginning of more in-depth research on the topics related to this proposal.

In the body of this chapter, it is presented the different conclusions gathered from the researchers along with the development of the alternative methodological proposal. These conclusions let the readers know about the possible results that can be obtained through the application of this proposal. Furthermore, the chapter conclusions are of great importance since they are in some way the essence of what has been found during the development of the proposal, taking into consideration the literature review in which the three variables: Collaborative learning, speaking skills, and knowledge construction process along with the indicators: Small group skills, teachers' role, students role, accuracy, fluency, appropriacy, didactic sequence, action-oriented approach, and tasks were widely studied. In addition, the conclusion presents also an overview of the findings. According to Smith, A (2008) stated that:

The conclusion is intended to help the reader understand why your research should matter to them after they have finished reading the paper. A conclusion is not merely a summary of the main topics covered or a restatement of your research problem but the synthesis of key points and, if applicable, where you recommend new areas for future research. (p.45)

Concerning the above mentioned, it can be said that a well-developed conclusion chapter provides the reader with a wider view of what the proposal wants to achieve with its implementation. In addition, it is important to emphasize that these conclusions that will be presented below are made based on the reflections already presented in the previous chapter and on the research questions utilized in the development of the alternative methodological proposal.

6.2 Conclusions

For the first variable Collaborative Learning are used the following Indicators: Interpersonal and small group skills, teacher's role, and student's role, from the ones the next conclusions are going to be presented.

Regarding the first indicator from the variable collaborative learning, it can be concluded that interpersonal and small group skills may influence the development of small group activities highly likely. Besides, the teacher may find many differences between students' interpersonal skills, group work skills, personalities, attitudes, and beliefs. However, far from being an impairment, these differences enrich the class and help students improve their learning construction process as they help each other to improve for a shared purpose. Knowledge is constructed through swapping ideas and helping out each other to achieve understanding. (Frey,

2009, p.13). By way of illustration, a product is achieved successfully when working in small groups by exchanging ideas and that is the moment when knowledge is built and so are students speaking abilities fostered.

Concerning the second indicator, the teachers' role, it can be said that this indicator entails huge relevance as teachers should facilitate pupils' participation in their learning construction process "Teachers play an important role in promoting interactions among students... "(Gillies & Ashman & Terwel, 2021). In other words, the teacher plays the role of a facilitator who provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to interact in the target language. Besides, these opportunities to interact are provided by implementing collaborative learning. For this reason, it is concluded that the teacher's role is of paramount importance and may affect students speaking development.

About the third indicator, it is important to highlight that not only does the teacher's role covers great importance, but so does the student's role in class. Barrantes and Olivares, (2013) asserted that "learner-centered education has shown to increase motivation for learning and greater satisfaction with school duties; both of these outcomes lead to greater linguistic achievement." (P.326). Thus, learners have a remarkable impact on their knowledge construction process. Learners are constructing knowledge when they play the role of an active agent to develop autonomy and take on their progress and their classmates' progress when working in small groups. It can be concluded that student-centered learning has positive outcomes since when each learner takes responsibility for the important role they have, communicative interaction and teamwork skills come out, and then, their speaking level is improved.

For the variable speaking skills are used the following Indicators: Accuracy, Fluency, and Appropriacy, from the ones the next conclusions are going to be presented.

In relation to the first indicator from the first variable, accuracy is an important element of speaking skills, according to the new English Syllabus (2016) is that an individual has the capacity "to utilize mental representations of language knowledge built up through practice or experience to convey meaning. Language ability is a combination of language knowledge and strategic competence" (p.346). In short, when having a conversation, accuracy influences the successful transmission of a message, and thus students' accuracy highly affects students speaking skill level. If a student lacks accuracy, the receptor may not interpret the real meaning correctly; consequently, the conversation will be affected when having students working in small group speaking activities. Here can be concluded that accuracy impacts the knowledge construction process and the development of speaking skills.

Regarding the second indicator, fluency, it can be contemplated that fluency is one of the most important components for the speaking skill since it allows communicators to keep the flow of a conversation about a variety of topics. Zhang (2009) affirmed that fluency is defined as the ability to communicate an intended message; to adjust the messages according to the responses of the listener; to produce coherent utterances and stretches of speech; to respond and speak with continuity, and to use strategies to aid communication when the appropriate vocabulary or grammar is not available. (p. 94). To wit, fluency is highly related to the development of the speaking ability as to be able to keep an ongoing conversation, learners shall have a good command of the language. Hence, it can also be concluded that fluency and accuracy are correlated.

About the third indicator from the second variable, appropriacy, it can be concluded that it has a great impact when it comes to communicating effectively for different audiences and

situations since to use language effectively for communicating ideas with clarity, the speaker should use the appropriate language that suits the context. Bilsborough (2015) explains that “Appropriacy focuses on the type of language that you use in a particular situation or with a particular group of people.” (n.p). In means, appropriacy is geared towards effective communication in different contexts. Hence, learners ought to be careful with the situation in which the intended message is transmitted since it must suit the audience's needs. It can be concluded that a learner who develops appropriacy when speaking will be linguistically competent enough when exposed to different scenarios and audiences outside the class.

For the variable Knowledge Construction Process are used the following Indicators: Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence, and Tasks, from the ones the next conclusions are going to be presented.

Regarding the first indicator of the third variable, it helps students built the knowledge they later need to apply in the social, professional, and cultural environment outside of class. Samuda & Bygate, (2008) argued that the action-oriented approach is one of the latest communicative language methodologies which emphasizes what learners know and do to communicate successfully by completing tasks, using general and specific competencies in a meaningful context and real-life scenarios. (as cited in MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversifiada, 2016) Furthermore, it can be concluded that the action-oriented approach fosters pupils’ knowledge construction process as it aids them to construct meaning by negotiation and being exposed to different contexts.

Concerning didactic sequence, it can be said that the way the teacher organizes the classroom activities have a predominant influence on students when it comes to process information and developing tasks. Soler Pardo et al (2013) state that a didactic sequence is a group of learning activities set in a specific order which takes into account the student's progress. (p.32). It can be concluded that the implementation of the didactic sequence is extremely necessary for the learning construction process since it allows learners to follow different steps in an organized form to reach the main aim. According to the English Mep Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016), only the specific outcome, but also the process, which leads to the final result, is important for communication in the language classroom: this involves a step-by-step organization, learners' activation of strategies and competencies, consideration of the setting and social forms, as well as materials and support”(p.29). In short, this organized process help students improve their learning since each stage has a purpose that leads them to a great achievement of a more complex communicative task.

In regards to the third indicator from the third variable, tasks, they entail an important role in the instructional setting since they facilitate the construction of learning by engaging students in the achievement of goals which is usually a communicative spontaneous outcome. Brown (2001) argues that more of the speaking tasks must have an interactive and spontaneous outcome. Learners should be taught words, phrases, idioms, and colloquial language. Phonemic awareness along with phonological awareness will be developed progressively so that learners get the stress, rhythm, and intonation of natural English speech. (as cited in MEP English Syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion diversifiada, 2016). Concerning this indicator, it can be concluded that tasks are designed to have students interacting with each other during the process until the end and thus they aid pupils to improve the construction process noticeably.

Chapter VII Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

As has been mentioned in the preceding sections, the current alternative methodological proposal aspires to foster students' speaking Skills Level in the knowledge construction process by implementing collaborative learning. The present proposal has been created as a way to tackle the lack of good oral skills in students. English Syllabus (2016) confirmed that “Learners who receive English lessons in elementary and high schools are not reaching the expected English proficiency levels after eleven or twelve years of instruction.” (p. 12). In the light of this, it is perceptible that there is a lack of oral ability in the level of English proficiency that has to be met urgently. It is unavoidable to mention that there are diverse factors such as the methodology and teaching strategies that may influence the development of speaking skills. Hence, there is a huge necessity for solutions to this issue, it is important to clarify that many efforts have been done; however, it seems to be a hard task. This proposal also endeavors to aid Costa Rican students to bridge the path of opportunities to succeed in their future by improving their English communication skills. Thereupon, the current proposal was developed to achieve this goal by implementing innovative strategies based on the collaborative learning approach.

This chapter is of paramount significance since it presents the recommendations to improve students' speaking skill levels. It is essential to highlight that these recommendations were drawn thanks to the work done in the current and previous chapters. The recommendations are based on the conclusions that were drawn after examining in- the literature of the issue under study. Furthermore, these recommendations are facilitated to give solutions to the issue and guide teachers to be informed about the different strategies that may help learners to improve their

communicative skills. Before drawing recommendations, the reflections and the conclusions for the three variables and the nine indicators were provided which means that they are correlated.

It is significant to mention that this alternative methodological proposal has been developed based on the action research approach which seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities (Hine, 2013, p.52 as cited in Reason & Bradbury, pp. 9-10). That is to say, it aims at bridging the gap between study an issue and applying the remedy. Besides, before coming up with the solutions or recommendations it is important to draw and examine the reflections as well as the theory and developed throughout the research. Furthermore, according to Hine (2013), “Providing teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and focus to engage in meaningful inquiry about their professional practice will enhance this practice, and effect positive changes concerning the educative goals of the learning community.” (p.153). By way of explanation, teachers engaged in action research also benefit in their field since they will be able to apply the knowledge gained in their classrooms and bring about positive learning outcomes. For these reasons aforementioned, the recommendations facilitated in this alternative methodological proposal entail a remarkable role in the preparation and professional development of teachers as well. In short, recommendations are relevant for an alternative methodological proposal since writing involves the examination of possible solutions and proposing the most effective one. The recommendations provided in this chapter are for the teacher as it is the facilitator in charge of providing the appropriate ambiance, activities, and materials in the classroom. The following recommendations will be orderly presented for the three variables and their nine indicators.

7.2 Recommendations

For the first variable Collaborative Learning are used the following Indicators: Interpersonal and small group skills, teacher's role, and student's role, from the ones the next recommendations are going to be addressed to the teacher.

Concerning the first indicator, interpersonal and small group skills, the teacher must provide students the space and plenty of opportunities in class in which learners interact with each other in small groups, to help them improve their interpersonal abilities, pushing them to active learning and adaptation to context. In addition, according to Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 “The design of the syllabus adopts the socio-constructivist theory of learning, encouraging active learner's participation, interaction, and its adaptation to the context. Based on this, teachers must definitely provide learners with what is necessary to develop their interpersonal and small group skills such as the variety of activities in which learners could discuss, share ideas, opinions and work together to achieve a goal. Hence, the effectiveness of working collaboratively and the group work skills may emerge, and students will benefit from it in their learning construction process.

Concerning the second indicator, the teacher's role in English classroom instruction, it is recommended for teachers to be a facilitator and a guide for students, but also to be able to plan effective lessons in which learners can develop communicative skills and knowledge through the tasks provided in class. Regarding the previously mentioned, Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 stated that teachers should; “Designs effective lesson planning based on integrated communicative tasks and context to develop knowledge skills

and attitudes for communication using English. "(p.28). It means teachers should provide learners with a range plenty of opportunities to practice the language and interact with their peers. Furthermore, teachers must design activities that combine different skills and allow them to use the language for real communicative purposes. Teachers must give students feedback and develop students learning awareness by correcting mistakes and let them be responsible for their progress.

Regarding the student's role in EFL instruction. it is pointed out in Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 that "the learner/social agent is not an empty vessel but a whole person with values, beliefs, and identity, and a language or languages." (p.31). For this reason, teachers must identify all of these aspects and subsequently, try to fulfill individual learners' needs and thus, treating students as a whole person boots their learning and encourages them to have an active role and responsibility for their knowledge acquisition which plays an important role in their learning construction process. Furthermore, the new English Syllabus (2016) that a learner is "an agent/performer with intercultural awareness skills. Autonomous, works cooperatively, interacts with others, investigates and solves problems using the tools at his/her disposal (general and specific competencies). Develops metacognitive, reflective, and critical thinking strategies for successful completion of the task." (p. 33). By way of illustration, learners ought not to have a passive role in the classroom, but an active one. They should be treated as individuals with awareness, independence, skills, and a sense of responsibility to learn. Learners should be challenged in the completion of collaborative tasks ere each member has an active role and help each other to look forward to an improvement in their knowledge construction process.

For the variable speaking skills are used the following Indicators: Accuracy, Fluency, and Appropriacy, from the ones the next recommendations are going to be addressed to the teacher.

When talking about Accuracy in EFL instruction, accuracy is an important element of communicative competence, due to the fact being competent by Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 means that the individual has the capacity "to utilize mental representations of language knowledge built up through practice or experience to convey meaning" (p.346). For this reason, teachers must implement in the class practices and activities in which students can bring up that capacity and improve accuracy through it by the use of in the English language. These practices must be communicative and have a variety of vocabulary and grammar structures so that students can improve their accuracy. Furthermore, teachers should provide learners with communicative small group activities for students to help each other to construct meaning.

Regarding fluency, teachers must from the early stages in the learning construction process, plan lessons with tasks and activities that involved learners' language use and participation to help students develop fluency. According to the English syllabus Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada (2016), Speaking should be divided into two areas: spoken interaction and spoken production; both of them describe specific language users' roles. In the first one, the language user functions as a speaker and as a listener. There is the participation of one or more interlocutors. (p.47) It means, teachers should provide students with activities in which they have to use the foreign language constantly in the class by interacting and producing. This constant participation and active listening will help students use their fluency. In short, teachers must provide students with interactive communicative activities based on a variety of topics for students to improve their mastering in the language knowledge and: therefore, to develop their fluency skills and therefore be more communicative competent.

Concerning appropriacy, learners need to enhance it in order to improve their speaking skills, this is why teachers should be integrated into the class activities using different scenarios and domains that allow students to foster their accuracy level. Likewise, Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 highlights the importance of using domains in the learning construction process and refers to its definition in this curriculum as the contexts or situations of target language use that provide authenticity to language tasks where learners will be likely to function linguistically. It refers to the importance of providing tasks that involve different contexts that provide the student with the tools they need to make appropriate use of language whenever the opportunity arises in informal and formal contexts.

For the variable Knowledge Construction Process are used the following Indicators: Action-Oriented Approach, Didactic Sequence, and Tasks, from the ones the next recommendations are going to be addressed to the teacher.

In regard to the Action-Oriented approach it must be said that teachers working under the guide of this approach must develop classes in which students are the center and they should be provided with activities that allow them to interact with each other, use the language and communicate in order to complete tasks. In addition, Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 states the following:

"An Action-Oriented Approach sees students as active agents responsible for their progress in learning and sees communication as a social activity designed to accomplish specific tasks. Within this approach to English language learning, students develop communicative competence, gain

knowledge of various English cultures, and develop their full potential as national and global citizens" (p.28).

For this reason, teachers are recommended to plan student-centered activities and integrate spaces of socialization for students by implementing collaborative learning activities in class where learners make use of the English language to complete tasks. Besides, teachers should help students develop learning awareness by letting them investigate, experiment, correct their mistakes after giving them feedback, and take responsibility for their own progress.

Regarding didactic sequence in EFL instruction, teachers should develop a topic including purposeful activities that follow a task-based sequence with different degrees of difficulty. Likewise, Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 states "Lessons can follow a task-based sequence that will focus on linguistic and nonlinguistic items such as phonemic awareness, language forms, vocabulary, oral or written comprehension, and oral or written production, development of cognitive or socio-affective strategies, etc.". Teachers must include the implementation of the didactic sequence as an extremely important tool in the learning construction process since it allows learners to follow different steps in an organized form to reach the main aim.

About tasks, it is recommended for teachers not only to carry out the implementation of tasks in class but also to carefully follow up with the whole process when learners are completing the task, providing guidance and making sure students are obtaining the best outcome from its process. In relation to this, Programa de Estudios de Inglés Tercer Ciclo y Educacion Diversificada 2016 mentioned that tasks involve the creation of a product as the students perform the task. However, not only the specific outcome but also the process, which leads to the final result is

important for communication in the language classroom, this involves a step-by-step organization, learners' activation of strategies and competences, consideration of the setting and social forms, as well as materials and support. As it is presented, teachers must ensure that during the development of the task provided, students must be participatory, follow directions and complete what is asked in the way it is supposed to, to obtain the greatest and best learning from it.

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