

Implementation of Constructivist method by using real life scenarios to improve English oral communication skills on students of 7th grade at CINDEA San Vito High School during 2021

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**Universidad Latina de Costa Rica
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Approval Sheet

Jury

This Project was approved by the jury of Language Teaching, from Universidad Latina de Costa Rica, Ciudad Neilly; as a requirement to get the title of Baccalaureate on English Teaching

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Abstract

Currently, education is governed by the constructivist paradigm, which establishes the student as the protagonist in the construction of their own learning. This thesis was raised in order to give an opinion and provide guidance on the possibility of developing constructivist activities for a better performance of oral communication, related to the teaching of English through constructivism. In addition, it represents the review of a set of research and other publications related to constructivist principles and is aimed at seventh-level adult students of a public institution, which aims to help these students achieve their goals.

It is intended to highlight how the implementation of this type of constructivist activities, through real scenarios in the classroom, can improve learning outcomes and in this way, motivate students to promote communication in English, while finding a way to increase the effectiveness of learning and the performance of each student. For the development of this research, the methodology, both deductive and inductive, was used. Only descriptive research was used, this due to the current situation caused by COVID-19, which means that it will not be applied to students but will help visualize scenarios and conclusions. In addition, in this study qualitative analysis was used for its development. Based on the information gathered during this research, it can be said that the use of constructivism in the teaching of a second language is an effective and very assertive method.

Resumen Ejecutivo

Actualmente, la educación se rige por el paradigma constructivista, que establece al alumno como protagonista en la construcción de su propio aprendizaje. Esta tesis se planteó con el fin de opinar y orientar sobre la posibilidad de desarrollar actividades constructivistas para un mejor desempeño de la comunicación oral, relacionada con la enseñanza del inglés a través del constructivismo. Además, representa el estudio de un conjunto de investigaciones y publicaciones relacionadas con principios constructivistas y está dirigida a estudiantes adultos de séptimo nivel de una institución pública, que tiene como objetivo ayudarlos a alcanzar sus metas.

Se pretende resaltar cómo la implementación de este tipo de actividades constructivistas, a través de escenarios reales en el aula, puede mejorar los resultados del aprendizaje y de esta manera, motivar a los estudiantes a promover la comunicación en inglés, al tiempo que encuentra una manera de incrementar la efectividad del aprendizaje y el desempeño de cada alumno. Para el desarrollo de esta investigación se utilizó la metodología, tanto deductiva como inductiva. Solo se utilizó investigación descriptiva, esto debido a la situación actual provocada por el COVID-19, lo que significa que no se aplicará a los estudiantes, sino que ayudará a visualizar escenarios y conclusiones. Además, en este estudio se utilizó el análisis cualitativo para su desarrollo. Con base en la información recopilada durante esta investigación, se puede decir que el uso del constructivismo en la enseñanza de una segunda lengua es un método eficaz y muy asertivo.

Thought

“Discipline, sooner or later, will overcome the intelligence”. (Japanese Proverbs)

Dedicatory

I dedicate this work mainly to God, for being my creator, for providing me with His protection and being for me every second, for always listening to my anxieties and filling me with encouragement, strength, and health, and for helping me successfully to fulfill my long-awaited career.

To my life partner, Mainor and our children Valeria, Daniel, and Adrian, for all their support, patience and understanding during the process. You were my greatest inspiration and support to become a professional. I love you all deeply.

To my whole family for unconditional support, for always being in my life not only bringing good things, but also for their great support at this stage of my life, pushing me to be better every step of the way.

To my great friend and partner Jessica, who deserves the best praise for her intelligence and dedication. She has been my right hand all this time. I thank her for her selfless help, for helping me when I always needed it, for contributing considerably to our project. Without her, this work would not be the same. We complement each other perfectly to successfully achieve this thesis, which, although it brought us gray days, today it gives us the greatest satisfaction.

Mónica Retana Villegas

Dedicatory

First, I want to thank God who gave me the necessary strength to overcome this process. I feel very privileged for this opportunity that has allowed me to grow both professionally and personally.

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Finally, I want to thank my family for being so patient to me, especially to my mom and my husband for tolerating so much stress and so many afternoons away from home, thanks for supporting me during these years. You were my inspiration and I hope my professional performance rewards your support.

Jessica Rodriguez Reyes

Gratefulness

My thanks are first addressed to those who have forged my way and led me on the right path, to God, who is with me at all times helping me to learn from my mistakes and not to make them again. He is the one who guides the fate of my life.

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Mónica Retana Villegas

Gratefulness

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Nowadays, English is an indispensable tool in everyone's life. Thanks to advances in technology, there are different ways and means to learn a second language. It is also very aware that educational institutions play a very important role in the bilingual training of our citizens, where, from an early age, they are absorbing that necessary knowledge for their general development and thus, the acquisition of a second language.

In the last decade, the teaching of English has taken a significant turn. This is because the educational system was trying to teach perfect English with a poor approach that focused on grammatical forms and correction of students in their attempt. Today, there are new methods where the educational system aims for students to have the ability to communicate and in the process be able to correct themselves and achieve their goals according to their effort. At the same time, using real scenarios and situations of daily life, students feel more identified and motivated.

Because of all these changes in teaching, the curriculum in the schools was modified, but many of the school practices must be updated, so that students can overcome the barriers that limit their good performance in a second language. This is where the constructivist method comes into action, since its focus is the own construction of learning, which is produced day by day as a result of the interaction of the environment and the internal dispositions of each individual. This will provide ways to contextualize the environment and thus, awaken their interest and motivation in the acquisition of a second language, in this case, English, being the student ultimately responsible for his or her own learning process.

This thesis focuses on improving oral communication in English where, once students feel confident in themselves, they can correct their deficiencies. In addition, it is intended that students learn to think in English, and, in the pursuit of this goal, activities based on constructivism will be implemented using real-life scenarios.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to the knowledge acquired during the years of study at the university and through lived experiences, it has been noticed the deficiency in the use of methods and activities that currently exist in our institutions. Study programs have changed, but there is still much to implement, mainly when it comes to learning a new language. Here it is when the constructivist

method comes handy since it is based or focuses mainly on the construction of one's own learning, with each individual being responsible for it.

Among the most common problems that are seen are the lack of interest on the part of the students in the class, problems of attention and concentration, and the use of repetitive teaching patterns, which leads to students not feeling motivated. On the other hand, in our educational system the teaching-learning process does not prove to be entirely pleasant for our students. In some cases, they see this process as something boring, not fun at all. This can be present for different reasons, such as lack of interest in the need of acquiring a second language and a sign of demotivation by the discomfort caused by talking or expressing themselves about topics of which they have no idea and, even worse, in a language they barely know.

The results obtained will serve for teachers to promote the use of this and other methods as well as the strategic implementation of activities that involve all students in the educational process, both to motivate them, to develop in them oral communication skills in the English language and to increase the interest and motivation of students in learning English as well.

1.3 Justification

The main theme of this research project is to implement the constructivist method to improve oral communication skills in English in 7th grade students of CINDEA San Vito, where our main objective is to use constructivist activities to contextualize learning outcomes and motivate students to promote communication. This project was born because of the need that exists in this educational center, for a method that motivates and encourages students to learn a second language, in this case English, through activities that allow them to improve their ability to communicate in English.

It is very clear that the curricula, methods, and activities used in the process of teaching a second language must be according to the needs and characteristics of the student population to which it is addressed, as well as the social economic and educational environment in which it is intended to implement. Therefore, the constructivist method will be used in this project, since with the use of this method, it is intended to contextualize learning through activities based on real life scenarios and everyday situations, and that students are motivated to learn the language and express

themselves orally, without that characteristic fear of making mistakes present in this learning processes.

Considering that the implementation of this method has a great demand, more so in the case of a different student population, where ages go from 15 years of age and above. To reach this goal, activities that involve all students equally in oral activities will be developed, implementing mainly real-life scenarios. This will involve students in the learning process by using language and situations they are likely to experience in their lives.

It is intended, throughout this work, to provide a guide or set of principles, along with activities to be developed in the classroom to help teachers achieve their goals by using language in context.

1.4 Hypothesis

The use of real-life scenarios in the teaching-learning process will develop skills such as thinking in the target language and not merely a matter of translation from one language to another.

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

- To implement constructivist activities to contextualize learning outcomes and motivate students to promote communication.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

- To explain constructivist method to improve activities in the class.
- To implement real-life scenarios tasks to enhance students in speaking skills.
- To establish assessment strategies for measuring the level of achievement of students.

1.6 Scopes and Limitations

This study focuses on analyzing strategies to improve English oral communication in high school students from a rural area of Costa Rica, where the use of constructivism and its most important element, which is contextualization, was suggested.

The research focuses on demonstrating the needs that students have in the educational system to use techniques according to the new era. The use of real-life scenarios supports the above, since they invite students to participate and therefore, build their own knowledge.

Some of the most notorious limitations to mention is the lack of clarity of the constructivist concept since, most of the time, it is related to merely physical processes, and leaves aside the mental part such as the construction of knowledge.

It can also be mentioned that this project could not be applied as it is traditionally done, since the educational system implemented certain restrictions, due to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. Therefore, our conclusions are based on assumptions supported by analysis of other research.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL
FRAMEWORK

2.1 Background

Since the 20th century, reference has been made to the term constructivism. It focuses education on a new paradigm which tries to adjust to the constant changes that our society undergoes, especially driven by technological advances. With the incorporation of constructivism, students go from having a passive role to becoming active and, in addition, be the center of the educational process and responsible for their own learning under the guidance and supervision of teachers who are governed by objectives, contents, and rubrics to achieve educational success.

To better understand the previous text, the definition of constructivism must be addressed. Abbott (1999) justifies it as:

A theory where the student learns something new, incorporates it into their previous experiences and into their own mental structures. Each new information is assimilated and deposited in a network of knowledge and experiences that previously exist in the subject, as a result it can be said that learning is neither passive nor objective, on the contrary, it is a subjective process that each person is constantly modifying to the light of their experiences.

Constructivism differs greatly with psychological currents such as behaviorism and cognitivism since it positions the student as the main axis of education. In this method, learning is not originated due to a simple response to the environment, nor to merely cognitive processes, but rather, to that transformation of information by interaction with the environment, where knowledge is built because it is given meaning.

Many have been the authors who have contributed ideas to constructivist theories. It can be said that constructivism is a set of theories with different perspectives. This research will be focused on 3 authors:

- Genetic or psychological constructivism, by Jean Piaget from 1952.
- Disciplinary constructivism, by David Ausubel from 1963.
- Social constructivism, by Lev Vygotsky from 1978.

Even though, none of these 3 authors called themselves constructivists, all their ideas were directed at this theory. Now it is possible to deeply analyze a little into each of them.

Jean Piaget (1896-1980) was a Swiss psychologist and biologist, known for his contributions to genetic epistemology. His initial studies, around 1952, referred to the theory of knowledge being linked to the biological processes of adaptation to the external world. In fact, his approach was always epistemological and scientific, but his ideas were the basis for the application of constructivism in education.

In the early 1970s, some educators began to show interest in Piaget's studies and took as a reference his initial psychological contributions on the stages of cognitive development of children, in which he emphasized that children's thinking was no less competent than adults, and that they are born with a basic mental structure which they later develop. From that, they also deduced that knowledge is constructed by the learner and not something that is imposed.

According to Feldman (2004), the four stages of Piaget's cognitive development can be summarized like this:

- First stage: Sensorimotor, age range: birth to about 24 months
- Second stage: Preoperational, age range: about 24 months to about 6 years
- Third stage: Concrete operations, age range: about 6 years to about 12 years
- Fourth stage: Formal operations, age range: about 12 years to about 18 years and beyond.

Piaget also stood out for the development of constructivist theory and for the study of childhood patterns. In addition, he was characterized by defending that human knowledge is a consequence of the interaction between the individual and the reality in which he inhabits. He also focused on investigating how people build their knowledge from their interaction with reality. This author came to recognize that there are certain innate capacities in the human being that allow him to act in the world from birth. This is seen in the ability of people to transmit or receive information from an early age.

Piaget's point of view was of the development of knowledge per se, and less directed his research to education, but his contributions have made teachers value the knowledge of their students as a basis to build their new ideas.

Another of the most notable personalities of constructivism was the American psychologist and pedagogue David Paul Ausubel (1918 - 2008). He was born in Brooklyn, New York and studied psychiatry, psychology, and medicine.

One of the contributions that Ausubel made was the concept of meaningful learning that was proposed in 1963. The psychologist considered that learning should be receptive and meaningful and defined meaningful learning as “situations in which the content of the learning task is presented to the student instead of being discovered independently” (Ausubel, 1963). In other words, to obtain meaningful learning, meaning must be given to the contents so that, the student feels genuine interest in the subject and integrates it with his cognitive part in a natural way, in response to his own inquiries according to his concerns.

Like Piaget's ideas, Ausubel considers that the student must be active and responsible for the construction of knowledge. The teacher will only be a guide, leaving aside the old practices where the teacher transmitted information.

He also states that the student learns when he relates the new knowledge with what he already has, that is, that the learning content must be structured in itself and with respect to the knowledge that the learner already has.

For Ausubel, memorization is a mechanical process that does not help to achieve the teaching goals. On the other hand, it considers that the student's prior knowledge is the most important factor influencing learning, without neglecting the environment where the educational process takes place, and the student's predisposition to learn.

From Ausubel's ideas, other authors come to emphasize the importance of constructivism in education. Gowin (1981) stated, based on Ausubel's theory, that for the proper development of knowledge, there must be a triad between the teacher, student, and teaching materials, and with this it can be exemplified the meaning of the word contextualization.

Another author that is worth mentioning is Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) who is one of the clearest exponents of modern constructivist theory. He was born in Russia and studied law, sociology, linguistics, psychology and philosophy. He was also a writer and published six books

related to psychology. Unlike Piaget, most of his studies were directed to child development and education.

Vygotsky's theory, known as social constructivism, and prominent as a theory of development, was a pioneer in the study of cultural-historical psychology. In his studies, he highlighted that children's learning is built with the contribution of the social environment. Authors such as Payer (2005), explain Vygotsky's theory emphasizing that "the student builds his own understanding in his own mind. Thus, knowledge will be the result of the process of interaction between the subject and the environment, understanding this environment as something not only physical, but also social and cultural".

Today, Vygotsky is considered one of the most famous and influential psychologists. He was characterized by defending the importance of culture in the development of children. In addition, he ensures that the child will develop skills and experiences that are related to their cultural environment. For Vygotsky, the individual development of each person cannot be understood without considering the environment in which this person develops.

In general, constructivism is a pedagogical model that raises the need to provide students with a series of tools that allow them to build their own criteria and learnings, which will help them solve any problem in the future. Likewise, this pedagogical model considers that a person is not the result of their environment. For constructivism, every individual is formed from a self-construction, which is done continuously and is influenced by reality and by the internal skills of the person. The constructivist option arises after a process of changes in the interpretation of the teaching and learning processes that responds to the three classic metaphors of learning: learning as the acquisition of responses, learning as the acquisition of knowledge, and learning as the construction of meanings. These transformations in the interpretation of the learner are due to a paradigm shift in educational psychology that has led from the behavioral paradigm (learning as the acquisition of responses) to the constructivist paradigm (learning as the construction of meanings).

2.2 Constructivism in Costa Rica

Constructivism is an epistemological position or way of explaining how the human being, throughout their personal history, develops their intellect and shapes their knowledge. It is based on the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky and Ausubel, who proposed, that each person should create their knowledge.

To focus or talk about the Constructivist technique in Costa Rica, it is important to say that it became popular approximately since the 90s because before that date, all the credit was assured by the behavioral approach and, of course, all its conceptions regarding the acquisition of knowledge and the different roles: of the educator, the student, the parents, the textbooks, the techniques or methodological strategies, among others. Now, the difficult thing here has been the change of culture, that is, to unlearn what has been learned from the behavioral approach and to adopt constructivist ideas; seen of course, with a lot of doubt, distrust, and little credibility.

In November 2016, after a series of debates and reflections, the *Consejo Superior de Educación* takes the agreement No. 03-65-2016 that proposes the elaboration of a new educational policy that implements these four moments or phases, in order to guide Costa Rican education to a new stage of its development and where, in its philosophical framework is located the Constructivism, which proposes the maximum and multifaceted development of the capacities and interests of students and where the purpose is fulfilled when learning is considered in the context of a society, taking into account the previous experiences and the mental structures of the students who participate in the processes of construction of knowledge. This occurs in an interaction between the internal mental level and social exchange.

The Educational Policy of our country is nourished by three philosophical visions, which focus on an integral vision of the human being (Política Educativa, 2017, Ministerio de Educación Pública):

- Humanist: as a basis for the search for the full realization of the human being, of the person endowed with dignity and courage, capable of seeking its perfection through the realization of the values stipulated in the educational legislation, both those of an individual and those of a social nature.

- Rationalist: as the recognition that the human being is endowed with a rational capacity, which can objectively capture reality in all its forms, build and continuously perfect knowledge, and make possible human progress and understanding among people.

- Constructivist: as the effort in acting, considering that education must start from the cognitive situation of the student, their individuality, their interests, and idiosyncrasies, so it must recognize the specific culture of the student with their respective knowledge structures already formed and undertake a formative action of the student and the knowledge that transforms them mutually.

In addition to being a philosophical vision, the constructivist approach is one of the foundations of Pedagogical Mediation. It is intended to achieve the main objective of education, which is the integral formation of students, the same as with traditional practice, where students learn to repeat their teachers and as a product repeated knowledge is obtained. This knowledge is not lasting nor significant, and therefore, this goal had not been achieved.

For this and many more reasons is that the Ministry of Education decided to implement, in the educational scenarios with the intervention of the educators, a pedagogical mediation with constructivist foundation, which entails to educate in, by and for the development of the objectives.

This is where, about this concept, Gutiérrez & Prieto (1993) stated that:

Educating in enjoyment means generating enthusiasm. Generate it always, in each and every one of the activities, of the exercises, of the practices, of the environments, of the relationships, of the results, of the progress, even of the errors. What does an educational process sustained by enthusiasm mean? It means that all participants feel alive, share their creativity, generate original responses, have fun, play and enjoy (p. 35).

This means that learning must cease to be an activity contrary to the will of many students. For this reason, an adequate pedagogical mediation can avoid the apathy of young people, can make it interesting to attend school or college, improve student discipline, turn educational classrooms into pleasant, harmonious places; where the self-respect of the students, of the classmates and of the teachers is breathed. In addition, something very important can make teaching more tolerable and enjoyable.

Thus, and given the current situation of education, the proposal of a new educational policy, inclusive and based on constructivist practice becomes the best option to minimize learning barriers. Constructivist techniques, such as classroom practices, are inclusive, active, flexible, and innovative; becoming a viable option to incorporate inclusive education in the public institutions of our country. This way, and with the implementation of changes in teaching methodologies, the constant stimulation of social skills in students can be achieved, which will strengthen values such as tolerance, respect, order, and collaboration, as well as the exercise of ethics; therefore, forming citizens with a high knowledge of their skills for life and for coexistence in any social context.

According to Gutiérrez & Prieto (1993, p. 37)

An education with meaning educates protagonists, beings for which each and every one of the activities, each and every one of the concepts, each and every one of the projects, means something for their life. It is that significance the starting point of the significance of the world and of others.

2.3 Constructivism techniques

All constructive learning implies a construction that is carried out through a mental process that ends with the acquisition of new knowledge. But in this process, it is not only the new knowledge that has been acquired, but, and above all, the possibility of building it. The teaching-learning process of English as a second language has been presented in various ways throughout this century. For the most part, they have been variations of educational theories historically ranging from the behaviorist, the cognitive to the constructivist.

Constructivism helps explain the processes of acquisition and development of speaking skills and strategies for understanding a language. To help interpret the flood of oral communication, the teacher can provide constructivist strategies and techniques as steppingstones that make it easier for the student to discover and build knowledge and meanings and exchange ideas and learning experiences. The use of constructivist techniques in the classroom for the teaching-learning process of a second language, in this case English, helps promote interaction between students and teamwork, as well as allowing less advantaged students to benefit from collaboration and interaction with students with higher skills to receive guidance, clarifications,

and explanations, reducing their level of anxiety and therefore, the affective filter. In summary, their motivation towards teamwork and learning increases.

The constructivist conception assumes that in school students learn and develop to the extent that they can construct meanings that are according to the contents that appear in the school curriculum. Dewey (1938) affirms that “Learning is a social activity, it is something we do together, in interaction with each other, rather than an abstract concept.” This construction implies the active participation of the student and the help of the teacher who acts as a guide and mediator between the child and the culture. The teacher should reduce their level of authority, so that the student is motivated and confident when learning or knowing school contents and offers the teacher a framework to analyze, meditate and inform many of the decisions you make to plan and define the teaching process. In addition, it provides you with some criteria that makes it easier for you to reflect and allows you to understand what is happening in the classroom. It is common for the teacher to ask questions as basic as: what do my students learn? Do they learn? What can I or should I do to make them learn? or how should I teach them? What do I want them to learn?

It is necessary to emphasize that the success of these work tools lies in the methodological and attitude change of the learner. The teacher can use these strategies and techniques to promote meaningful learning in students. For example, speaking in English about topics that students know to activate previous knowledge and/or build bridges between the latter and new knowledge, but also to promote attention, coding deep processing of information and/or reinforcement of the learning of new information.

2.4 Constructivism techniques for students to find language useful in their own context

The teaching process is based on helping students in their learning process, it does not mean that they cannot make mistakes, but to be able to learn from them and improve every day. Thus, they ensure a more effective command of the English language. For this, it is important that the student can work responsibly and on his own account be able to issue criteria. It is important to know that, in general, errors are common in the evolution of adequate learning. In addition, the teacher must be able to face their appearance, qualify them, identify them, and find out the causes, as well as correct them in the most appropriate way and timely. Silva & Ávila (1998) mentioned

that “learning is a complex process defined by the limits of growth, cognitive structure and the ability to change.”

Some of the procedures to obtain a good and authentic learning could be, first to diagnose and second, to rectify errors, which requires many revisions to discard them and that the students master the subject or the material that is being used.

Learning using the constructivist method requires a construction process, which is carried out in different stages to achieve, through a mental process, the acquisition of new knowledge. But in this process, it is not only the new knowledge that is acquired, but, and above all, the possibility of building it day by day.

To achieve educational success, constructivism provides invaluable techniques for which it is essential that the teacher knows these benefits and be aware of the scope they can have and this way, the potential of each student and their abilities can be exploited. Jonassen (1997) considers that “students need to make judgments about the problem and defend them by expressing their opinions or personal beliefs”. For this reason, constructivist learning promotes logical and intellectual learning of the student where experiences and connections with daily life play a very important role in their performance and learning. Through the accommodation and assimilation of each of these experiences, the required success is obtained in the construction of new knowledge where assimilation makes a person incorporate new experiences to old experiences allowing the development of new points of view, evaluate what is relevant and, ultimately, change perceptions.

On the other hand, accommodation makes the student rethink the environment and new experiences in the already existing mental capacity. It is very important that students are exposed to real cases, that they interact with other students so that they can exchange experiences, as well as the experience in the classroom that is vital, that is why contextualization is also one of the most effective practices when it comes to apply constructivism, since it implies treating each issue as something real, where the environment is the protagonist so that everything is clearer and more acceptable.

Group activities are excellent for constructivist learning where students share their ideas and seek solutions without feeling intimidated, since it is with their own classmates that they work

and share. For example, if a student says something wrong, he feels much less exposed to share it with his classmates than to do it in front of the teacher.

On the other hand, the use of mind maps or any technological material that visually represents the activities is very useful to attract the student and make them feel more excited and engaged.

Holding discussion forums is another excellent alternative since students will have the opportunity to share their ideas and it is very important that they are heard. As teachers, it is important to spend time simply by listening to their opinions and in this way the class can be more enriching, without having to talk so much, simply showing interest in the students' comments.

If you have access to technological devices, there is no excuse not to use them. The students are natives of technology and obviously they will present more attention if you use updated and current applications, which makes the class dynamic and entertaining and where the only mission of the teacher is to be a guide so that the students can be incorporated into the activities, as well as to today's society.

It is the teacher's obligation to never assume that the student knows. Although it may seem very basic, before each topic to be developed there must be an assurance that they understand the context. For example, if the beach is to be discussed, it cannot be assumed that all students have gone on vacation to the beach. Imagine how sad it would be for a student to pretend to speak and think about something they do not know. Therefore, the teacher must be original and with the help of teaching materials, capture the attention of the students. Bringing items that are used on a trip to the beach such as an umbrella and a towel, a cooler and the like, could be of great help, it would facilitate the role of being a guide.

Finally, it is important to mention that, in constructivist techniques, the attitude of the teacher plays an important role. He ought to be dynamic, charismatic, positive, and sensitive to assess the student's opinion, which reflects his work as a teacher.

2.5 The implementation of real-life scenarios

According to Gray (1995), “empowerment and autonomy are goals of the constructivist technique”, in this way they learn on their own, from their experiences. It means that constructivism is the teaching method that raises the educational level of students through various real-life scenarios that promote their learning. Constructivism provides students the tools to be able to build their own knowledge, considering the result of previous experiences obtained in the environment that surrounds them, so the use of real-life scenarios is essential. That is, the student interprets the information, behaviors, attitudes, or skills previously acquired that are real to achieve meaningful learning, leading to discover their motivation and commitment to learn. In this model, each student is responsible for their educational process. However, the teacher creates the optimal conditions using real examples and activities, which makes them become a facilitator that guides them progressively during this process.

Through problems, questions and dynamics for the class, the teacher allows the student to develop in a favorable environment and provides the necessary tools to achieve it. For the construction of knowledge, the student selects and organizes information from different sources, establishing relationships between the new learning material and their previous knowledge.

Gray (1995) also indicates that the characteristics of a constructivist classroom are as follows:

- Methods where the students are actively involved.
- A suitable environment to create in order to produce meaning.
- Always focused on interaction and student-centered.
- Forms of control that involve them being self-controlling and autonomous.

Theorists of constructivism, such as Vygotsky (1978), say that “the more attractive an activity is, the more significant the long-term learning will be obtained”. It is not the same to explain what a tree is, theoretically, then go out, touch it, climb it, smell it, feel it with own hands and have fun knowing it. Obviously, the second experience will generate a much more meaningful and therefore lasting learning of how a tree is.

It is the same with a language, Spanish is learned because parents sang to babies in Spanish. You cannot reproduce that tenderness in a classroom, but you can imitate as far as possible the fun and interest that something simple as game can generate in a classroom where a language is learned. It does not mean that people must live playing games all the time, but the more fun, real, and playful the experience is, the more meaningful the learning will be and remain with our students for longer.

The techniques of constructivism positively influence the student population in oral communication process. Some features that can be highlighted are:

- Interaction between students and teamwork.
- Collaboration and oral interaction, reducing the level of anxiety.
- Achievement through oral communication and not by simple repetition or memorization.
- Discussion, thus sowing concern and the desire to continue investigating the subject matter of teaching.
- Greater meaning to content and concepts.
- Graphical visualization of the interaction of contents to rank them or simply compare them quickly and effectively.
- Integration of content with previous knowledge which stimulates the development of speaking skills.
- Display of content on a simple conversation.

2.6 The habit of “thinking in English”.

Training our mind to think in English will help us improve our skills when learning this language. Knutson (2006) declared that “our brain is a muscle, the most important in our body, and as such, we must train it”. Just as the runner trains their legs to be stronger, the English learners can also train their brains to learn more and better.

Studies have shown that thinking things in a foreign language makes it easier to learn a new, better, and more rational language.

When learning English or another language different from the one of origin, it is very common that mistakes are going to be made preventing the acquisition of the necessary fluency.

Students tend to translate word by word or a phrase from Spanish to English, which makes it impossible for their brain to think clearly about the other language, so it is quite complicated. The fact is that there are some words in English that can be similar, which makes it inevitable at the beginning of learning or even at an intermediate level. Therefore, the habit of thinking in English from a very early age should be encouraged, with something very basic and simple.

For example, start by teaching them from a young age to think in unique words. They may not yet be able to make important decisions in English, but they may notice their environment in English by thinking about the names of the objects they see, or the actions they do, this can bring our students closer to fluency. It is not very difficult, but it requires conscious effort, practice and of course, the best attitude. It is here where, a suitable environment and even the way of giving the indications by the teacher, has importance even, his or her tone of voice. The teacher must create an enjoyable, positive environment. It is known that, with constructivism, students learn by doing, in a contextualized way, with resources, materials and topics of their environment, of their interest, where they are focused on the development of the activity and not on translation of word by word.

The main goal is to know how to stop thinking in Spanish and to think about the language it is being learned, in this case English. In other words, starting to build knowledge without knowing it, speaking in English whenever the opportunity exists, accompanied or not, let the words flow without paying so much attention to the pronunciation or say exactly the right words. The important thing here will be, that, they learn to express themselves freely so that they can unlock their minds and prepare them to absorb new knowledge, which will help them gain fluency and a better understanding of the language, allowing the words to flow. Constructivism opens the door for this to become a reality since, when learning by doing, the student will not be focused on the teaching process but will put into practice something of their interest without worrying that they are learning. That means that they are building knowledge without knowing it.

2.7 The importance of assessment strategies in the learning process.

Evaluation is the guide to detect how well the teacher and the student are doing. Most teachers use the traditional way of assessing students that are tests.

In Costa Rica three forms are used: diagnostic, formative and summative. The diagnostic evaluation is an instrument that is applied at the beginning of the school period to detect the initial state of the student. The formative evaluation measures learning in process and detects gaps or deficiencies along the way. In addition, it allows the student to practice skills and strengthen weaknesses. In formative assessment, it is very common to use rubrics to measure student's performance in class activities. Finally, the summative evaluation which helps to organize the educational system to get final results on the achievements of each student.

It can be highlighted the role that formative assessment plays in the constructivist method to improve English oral communication since it allows practicing and reinforcing previous topics until students achieve the goals.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL
FRAMEWORK

3.1 Research Method

The research method in order to develop this investigation were inductive and deductive. According to Trochim (2006) “deductive reasoning works from the more general to the more specific. Sometimes this is informally called a “top-down” approach”. He also specifies that “inductive reasoning works the other way, moving from specific observations to broader generalizations and theories, this is a “bottom up” approach”.

The previous definitions help to establish that in this research the deductive method was applied when a study of constructivist theory was investigated and the different points of view of authors who generally have similar conclusions. On the other hand, the inductive method will be used in observations and other techniques that will be applied to students at CINDEA San Vito High School.

It is important to highlight that when applying this research special emphasis should be given to the inductive method, since it seeks that “the students attempt to analyze the data or scenario and solve the problem, they generate a need for facts, rules, procedures, and guiding principles” (Price & Felder 2006) and this is basically a principle of constructivism which is the central theme of the research.

3.2 Type of Investigation

Due to the global crisis caused by COVID-19, educational institutions in our country and the rest of the world have had to change their traditional teaching methods to try to maintain the progress of students in education. At the beginning of the pandemic, classes were suspended to study and define the course to choose, followed by virtual classes, and currently working with virtual and face-to-face classes, applying different protocols in both. Therefore, this research has been exclusively descriptive, since it applies criteria that support this type of research as confirmed by authors such as Boudah (2011) who stated that “descriptive research is used to describe the features of or provide a picture of a condition or phenomenon”. This means that this research will not be applied to students but is only a study that will help us visualize possible scenarios and conclusions.

3.3 Research Approach

The qualitative approach aims at in-depth analysis that facilitates the understanding of phenomena. It is inductive and seeks to understand the complexity of reality, so that it interprets human behavior from the frame of reference of the person acting (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). It makes it possible to substantially explore people's experience, knowledge, and worldview. In addition, it identifies how the dominant ideology or social discourse affects their lives, so that people's resistance, adaptation or complicity with social structures and power relations are understood. (Profitt, 2003).

The qualitative approach in this research work was the most pertinent since it allowed us to know and deepen the perception that students have in relation to learning English, as well as to know their limitations, their needs, and their greatest fears. All this leads to understand and provide a better way to teach a second language, which is through real-life scenarios with everyday situations.

3.4 Sources and Subjects of Information

Information sources are all the various types of documents that contain useful data and an adequate amount of information or knowledge that can help the development of a certain work, that is why it is very important to know, distinguish, and select the appropriate sources of information so that the work being done is reliable and has the required validity. These sources can also vary, depending on the work to be done.

For this research work, the main sources of information have been digital books, therefore, they are very reliable sources of information. In these sources, a lot of content very relevant to the topic and suitable for the proper development of this research process was found. They were very useful content to complete and deepen even more in the selected topic.

3.5 Variables

Variables play an important role in investigation because they are characteristics under study of which an identity or value changes or is possible to change per unit (Shukla 2018). In this case the variables have been carefully selected since it can only be deduced what the possible results would be and from this conclude and define how valid the investigation is.

3.5.1 Variable #1 Age**3.5.1.1 Conceptual Definition.**

Trochim (2006) defines age as “a variable because age can take different values for different people or for the same person at different times”. The age range can give many results depending on the research topic. In this case the age will help to define what are the possible interests of the students since it is not the same to work with children from 6 to 10 years old than with adults between 18 and 30 years old.

3.5.1.2 Instrumental Definition.

For this variable the information was collected through the student files. The student files are available for all the teachers and even digitally through a web-based tool called PIAD provided by the Ministry of Public Education.

3.5.2 Variable #2 Sociocultural Level**3.5.2.1 Conceptual Definition.**

According to Apsalone & Sumilo (2015), sociocultural factors are shared values, norms, and attitudes. It is very important to include this variable in the research to be able to understand the context in which the students develop and be able to be more assertive with their ideas, understand their behaviors and tastes.

3.5.2.2 Instrumental Definition survey.

The perfect instrument to measure this variable is the survey. Check & Schutt (2012) defined it as "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions". More specifically, it was used an online Forms survey with questions about customs, beliefs, tastes and abilities, which will give us a broader outlook about the culture and way of acting of our students in order to apply techniques that give us good management of the classroom and help us achieve meaningful learning according to their needs.

3.5.3. Variable #3 Methodologies Used by Teachers**3.5.3.1 Conceptual Definition.**

The last variable to use is methodology used by teachers, which is defined as the way in which a teacher chooses to explain or teach materials to students so they can learn (Wiesen, n.d.). In this research, this variable is essential because if the teacher does not have the ability to select the appropriate methods according to the context in which it is developed, it will not achieve meaningful learning in students. The choice of suitable methods is part of the skills that a teacher should have.

3.5.3.2 Instrumental Definition.

To measure this variable, the observation method was used. According to Bhasin (2020) it is a way of collecting relevant information and data by observing, for which a data guide will be designed to take into consideration.

3.6 Population and Sample

This research work is addressed to students of seventh level at CINDEA San Vito. The CINDEAS are educational centers aimed at young people and adults, who have not finished primary or secondary school or who want some technical training to have better opportunities in the world of work, where most of the student population are adults. The selected institution has a student population of almost seven hundred students, most of them adults from distant places, who must travel to study after a long day of work on their farms, most of them, as well as housewives who decide to study to have job opportunities for a better future.

This is a very responsible student population with many desires for improvement that makes them want to apply everything they learn day by day to their lives and where the teacher becomes the guide of these students so that they can learn everything that is relevant in the study such as: learn to know, to do, to live and to be. They are students who take advantage of the time, who are determined to study, progress and learn. In general, they are dedicated students, who know what they want.

3.7 Instruments

Research tools or instruments are all available resources that the researcher can use to address problems, a phenomenon, or an investigation and extract information from them. There are a big variety of them, such as surveys, questionnaires, interviews, forms, electronic means, and more, that are used to collect data or information about a specific topic in each job. That is why this research aims, through archiving, survey, and observation, to achieve the development required in this project.

3.7.1. Instrument #1 Files

The files are, according to Peralta (1996) "the instrument used to collect data relating to the integral development of the learner, their interests, needs, abilities, habits, aptitudes, attitudes and others that allow to diagnose and detect progress, potentialities, learning rhythm and limitations. They have the purpose of carrying out follow-up actions and determining the degree of guidance required. They are used to collect and update information in an orderly and cumulative manner because it is a collection of data, which offers a global and objective view of the student"

3.7.2. Instrument #2 Survey

According to Czaja and Blair (1996) "the word survey is used most often to describe a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals." With the use of this instrument, it will better be known the student population to which it is addressed this research work. Specifically, an online tool called Forms will be used.

3.7.3. Instrument #3 Observation Method

Observation is one of the most important research methods in social sciences and at the same time one of the most diverse. The term includes several types, techniques, and approaches, which may be difficult to compare in terms of enactment and anticipated results. The choice must be adapted to the research problem and the scientific context. As a matter of fact, observation may be regarded as the basis of everyday social life for most people. It is very important to be diligent observers of behaviors and of the material surroundings. Teachers need to have qualities such as observing, evaluating, drawing conclusions, and making comments on interactions and relations (Ciesielska 2018).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS ANALYSIS

For the development of this chapter, different authors who have studies related to constructivism in education were investigated. The idea is to analyze their proposals and conclusions, which will serve as the basis since this project could not be applied to the group of students suggested due to the global crisis caused by COVID-19.

Among the projects that were studied is the one developed by the author Muna Aljohani of the University of Tabuk in Saudi Arabia entitled Principles of “Constructivism” in Foreign Language Teaching. He says that constructivism made a drastic change in educational processes since previously these were based on behaviorism where the student was a simple receiver of information (2017). Constructivism also focuses on the cognitive part, but this must be contextualized to achieve meaningful learning. On the other hand, the author states that education is no longer a memorization process and that, regardless of what is intended to be taught, the student must be in a suitable environment for the exchange of ideas, which will be the basis for the development of knowledge promoted by correcting misconceptions through experimentation.

Therefore, collaborative learning plays a very important role in this method, where prior knowledge and exchange of ideas make the student understand and apply the knowledge without realizing it. It is worth mentioning that thinking and analyzing are an important part of the teaching-learning process. The application of constructivism for the acquisition of a second language is vital. Aljohani reaffirms the importance of the contextualization raised in his thesis since knowledge is built when each topic is given meaning.

Finally, within the points developed by this author it is mentioned that education must be developed in a spiral so that the student is in constant construction of knowledge. Thus, they can use their previous information and go beyond, confirming what is suggested in this thesis that current education is not a copy and paste of ideas and has become a diverse world of opinions that fit according to each environment.

Another of the investigations on constructivism that contributed to the development of this thesis was the one created by Audrey Gray in which the experiences of Professor Pat Gray are narrated applying a constructivist approach to teaching. It is revealed how the different creations of his students were exhibited in Pat's classrooms, which adorned the place and contributed to the construction of that essential meaningful knowledge in constructivist practices (Gray, 1995). This study highlights the role of the teacher when empowering students to develop their skills and be

more competent at the school and personal level, confirming his role of guide, facilitator and leaving behind the old methodologies that were based on transmitting knowledge. It is shown the complexity of constructivist method. The teacher must stay out of the educational process in such way, that it is the student who builds and advances knowledge. The professional must have skills such as understanding, patience, creativity, and something very important is the clarity with the instructions are given. Otherwise, it will be impossible to create autonomous learners.

One more important aspect mentioned is the type of activities that take place in the classroom. In the case of English oral communication, students should be encouraged to work with their peers so that their minds focus on exchanging ideas or solving cases and forgetting that they are in the middle of the teaching process that often stresses them and fills them with insecurities that make them fail. Therefore, constructivism challenges the student to achieve the goal and offers them an environment that encourages them to achieve it.

Finally, it is important to say that the author mentioned that certain students still have a preference to learn through direct instruction classroom where notes are taken from the teacher, and questions from their notebooks are answered. Pat mentions that this is because the students have not been exposed to current teaching methods that strengthen their self-esteem and autonomy.

Continuing with this process of searching for studies related to this research work, one came up by Esteban De Jesús Vera García, author of the thesis entitled "Applied Constructivism in the Teaching of the Area of Social Sciences in Group 8b in the Ciro Mendía Educational Institution". He shows that constructivism is increasingly used in the field of teaching to get the student to learn in their own way, since it is a method or a theory that has been specialized and that has been the product of the interest of researchers who have seen in this a new way of acquiring and building knowledge in a personal way. According to this study, learning is related to the actions carried out by the teacher to make the information known to the student, as well as a concept or a topic in general, which must be effective and relevant so that it can transform the student into a receiving subject and creator of that information.

The author also highlights the importance for the teacher to know the previous knowledge of his students in order to achieve their highest performance and shows that, to know and learn, the student invents the meaning and transforms the information received according to the help provided by the facilitator. It is important that it is adjusted so that learners achieve autonomy.

One thing in common among the proposals is the emphasis placed on the responses of teachers, who say that the implementation of Constructivism in the classroom may be pertinent. However, they see it as a long work and in common agreement with the educational institution, but they deduce that it can be effective and necessary to provide advantages for the student.

Finally, this research work shows that constructivism proposes many didactic strategies to favor the participation and responsibility of each student in the construction of their learning. The teacher must continuously propose activities, forums, or exhibitions, moments of analysis of problems that make the student to be interested in the subject and motivated to participate in the construction of their own learning, according to their knowledge.

The paper by Booth & Mirsaedi of the Lulea University of Technology "Application of the constructivist theory of active learning in the creation of practical information security laboratories", coincides greatly with this present thesis.

Booth & Mirsaedi (2013) point the importance of finding an appropriate pedagogical approach to learning. Constructivism was one of the best alternatives found for their research and to improve the traditional way of teaching and learning. This is made through collaboration between teachers, as well as providing a student-based environment. In addition, the teacher must be a co-explorer who urges students to ask questions and be active in class to have their own criteria. The teacher must become a personal tutor for each student. They found that constructivism used effectively improves the student's attitude, as it can provide a source of focus on daily activities using technology, something very beneficial today, since students are immersed in the new technological era.

An important contribution is that when the student is active in the teaching-learning process, the percentage of retention is improved. They conclude that the most effective way to apply constructivism in classrooms is by asking students to solve authentic real problems and situations, where the student is the center, and the teacher is the support and facilitator, and not through direct answers.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

After the development of this thesis, it is concluded that it is necessary for teachers to keep updated on the different teaching methods since their understanding facilitates an adequate application of these. More specifically in constructivism, it is necessary to know its foundations to understand that it can be applied to almost any subject. The management of this method gives a range of ideas to the teacher, both for the construction of their plans and to correct inconsistencies in their routines in the classroom, since constructivism is based on merely mental processes of knowledge, and not on physical constructions.

The constructivist method fits very well in the teaching of English, and more specifically, in oral communication. It encourages the student to use previous knowledge to build new thoughts. Previous knowledge and the environment motivate the learner to develop new ideas.

Students have an active role in constructivism. They are given the tools to promote self-learning, and this independence helps them to strengthen their self-confidence to the point that they are able to express and share their thoughts. Thus, they can have their own conclusions later and build their new ideals or knowledge.

It was evidenced that the teacher must fulfill a guiding role that invites students to investigate the world of knowledge and leave behind the old teaching practices where the student was a receiver of information unable to argue ideas. Both, the individual and the social part of the students are involved since it implies understanding and guiding the young people in such a way that they investigate, analyze, and understand each situation of the educational process, but this is developed jointly with their peers.

Contextualization is one of the most important elements of constructivism, there is no knowledge without meaning. You cannot learn what is not understood and that is why the teaching work becomes so complex since classes must be planned using the same curriculum but, taking into account the interests, customs, and ideals of each specific region.

The analysis of other research on this topic confirmed how assertive constructivism is for the current learning process. It responds to the new skill needs that our society requires for advancement.

CHAPTER VI
RECOMENDATIONS

There are many problems that arise in the teaching-learning process. The teacher must be attentive to make the pertinent and necessary corrections to achieve a quality process. This will provide knowledge and knowledge for the construction of citizens with their own criteria. It is for this reason that it is necessary that educational centers are continuously evaluating the quality, usefulness, relevance, and viability of their curricula used by each teacher. The goal is to provide the student with an optimal education and achieve true achievements and training processes that concretize an integral, critical, responsible citizen with a sense of belonging to their neighborhood, city, department, and country.

It would be very useful for the corresponding authorities to organize permanent training for all teaching staff, in the application of the constructivist model, with the ultimate purpose of providing adequate techniques and methods to improve the teaching-learning of students.

It is recommended that, in this era of so much change where people live in such an accelerated way and humanity is experiencing so many changes, special attention is given to humanistic education and the achievement of a more significant learning, through motivation and where the student-teacher relationship generates that freedom to have the training and development, according to their abilities and through constructivism.

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ANNEXES

OBSERVATION SHEET

Teacher:

Date:

Group:

1. Does the teacher explain the topic?	Yes	No
2. Does the teacher give clear instructions in English?	Yes	No
3. Does the teacher allow students to express themselves?	Yes	No
4. Do the students speak to each other in English?	Yes	No
5. Does the teacher use examples of real cases to develop the class?	Yes	No
6. Does the teacher encourage students to participate and speak in English?	Yes	No
7. Does the teacher correct all the mistakes students make when speaking?	Yes	No
8. Does the teacher involve students who are not paying attention or participating?	Yes	No
9. What activity did the teacher use for the development of the class?		
10. Did the teacher use technology?	Yes	No
11. What applications were used?		
12. Did the students want to participate in the class activity (s)?	Yes	No
13. Were the students creative?	Yes	No

Additional information:



Sociocultural Information

* Este formulario registrará su nombre, escriba su nombre.

1. Do you like the English language?

Yes

No

2. How much time do you spend learning English?

1 hour a week

2 hours a week

More than 2 hours a week

3. Is there anyone in your family who speaks English?

Yes

No

4. What is your favorite hobby?

5. What season of the year do you prefer?

Rainy season

Dry season

6. What is your favorite holiday?

7. What kind of activities do you prefer?

Those that are developed individually

Those that are developed in groups

8. In what type of environment do you prefer to develop?

Inside the classroom

Outside the classroom

9. Do you have access to technological devices?

Yes

No

10. What profession would you like to study?

11. What is your favorite topic to talk with your friends?

Este contenido no está creado ni respaldado por Microsoft. Los datos que envíe se enviarán al propietario del formulario.

Indicators	Achievement Level				S C O R E
	5 Advanced	4 Proficiency	3 Approaching proficiency	2 Conditional	
Presentation	Student speaks clearly all the time, volume is appropriate, stays on topic 100% of the time, establishes and maintains good posture, uses vocabulary that is appropriate for the audience.	Student speaks clearly most of the time, volume is appropriate most of the time, generally stays on topic, maintains eye contact and good posture for majority of presentation, usually uses vocabulary appropriate for audience.	Student speaks clearly some of the time, strays from topic, has limited eye contact with audience, posture is sometimes poor, volume is not consistent, vocabulary is poor.	Student often mumbles and/or cannot be understood, hard to tell what topic is, slouches and does not make eye contact, makes major grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.	
Comprehension	Student can accurately answer all questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student can accurately answer most questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student can accurately answer few of the questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is unable to accurately answer questions posed by classmates about the topic.	
Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student is generally prepared but needed more rehearsal.	The student is somewhat prepared but lacks rehearsal.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.	
Content	Student shows a full understanding of the topic.	Student shows a general understanding of the topic.	Student shows some understanding of parts of the topic but does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the complete topic.	Student does not seem to understand the topic very well at all.	
Attention to other presentations	Student listens intently as classmates are presenting and does not make distracting noises or movements, Student asks questions.	Student listens intently but may make one distracting noise or movement, Student asks a question.	Student sometimes does not appear to be listening, has head down on desk, is not distracting, and does not attempt to ask any questions.	Student sometimes does not appear to be listening and makes distracting noises or movements, Does not try to ask any questions.	
Props	Student poster(s), PowerPoint slides, costumes, or other props show considerable work/creativity which enhance the quality of the presentation.	Student poster(s), PowerPoint slides, costumes, or other props show some work/creativity, but do not go above and beyond what is asked.	Student poster(s), PowerPoint slides, costumes, or other props are present, but did not completely follow what was assigned.	Student poster(s), PowerPoint slides, costumes, or other props are not used as assigned or distract from the presentation.	